

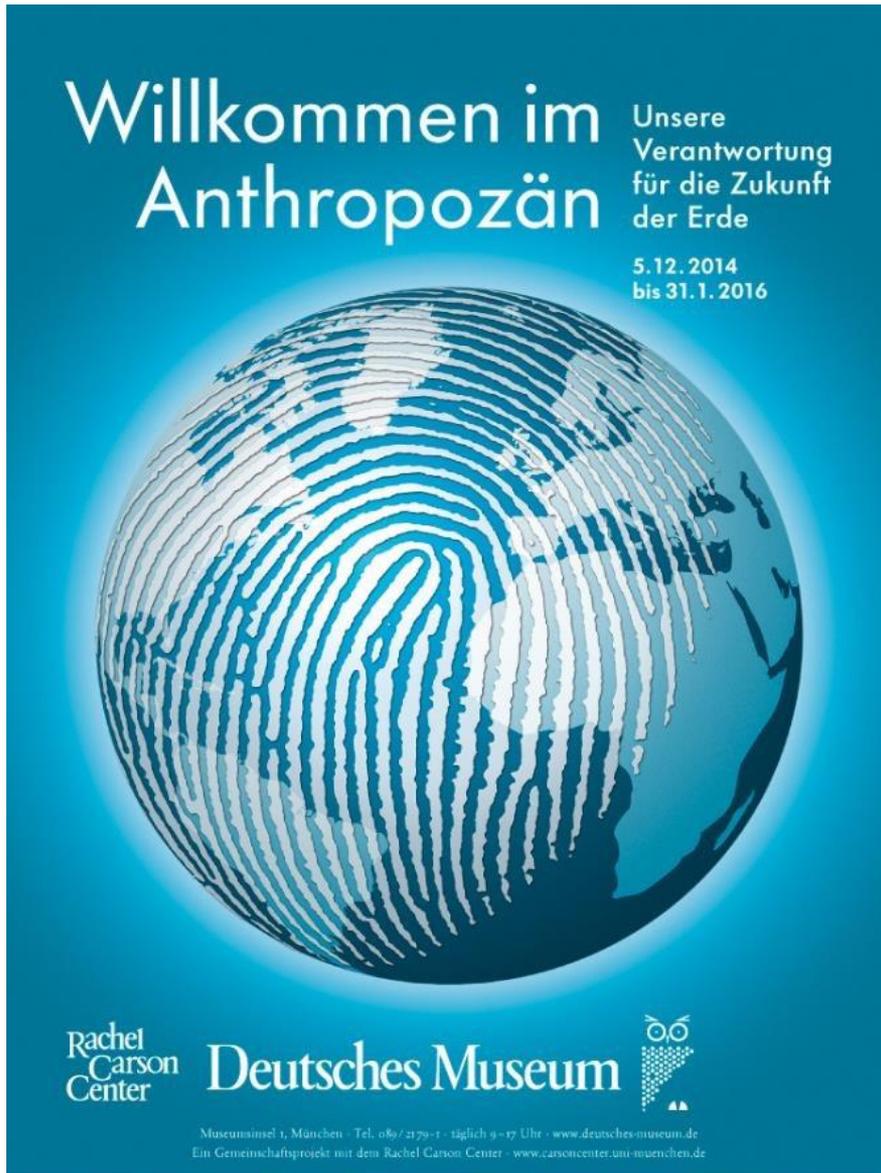
Deutsches Museum



Exhibiting the Anthropocene – and the Technosphere – means breaking away from established knowledge orders

Helmuth Trischler (Deutsches Museum and Rachel Carson Center)
Workshop „Anthropogenic Objects Collecting. Practices for the Age of Humans”
Museum für Naturkunde, April 14, 2021





Opening December 4, 2014, by
Secretary General of UNEP, Achim
Steiner, and Jan Zalasiewicz, Head of
the Anthropocene Working Group

Running until September 30, 2016

Joint project of Deutsches Museum and
Rachel Carson Center

1,400 qm² (≈ 15,000 square feet)

Architects/Designers:

Klaus Hollenbeck Architekten

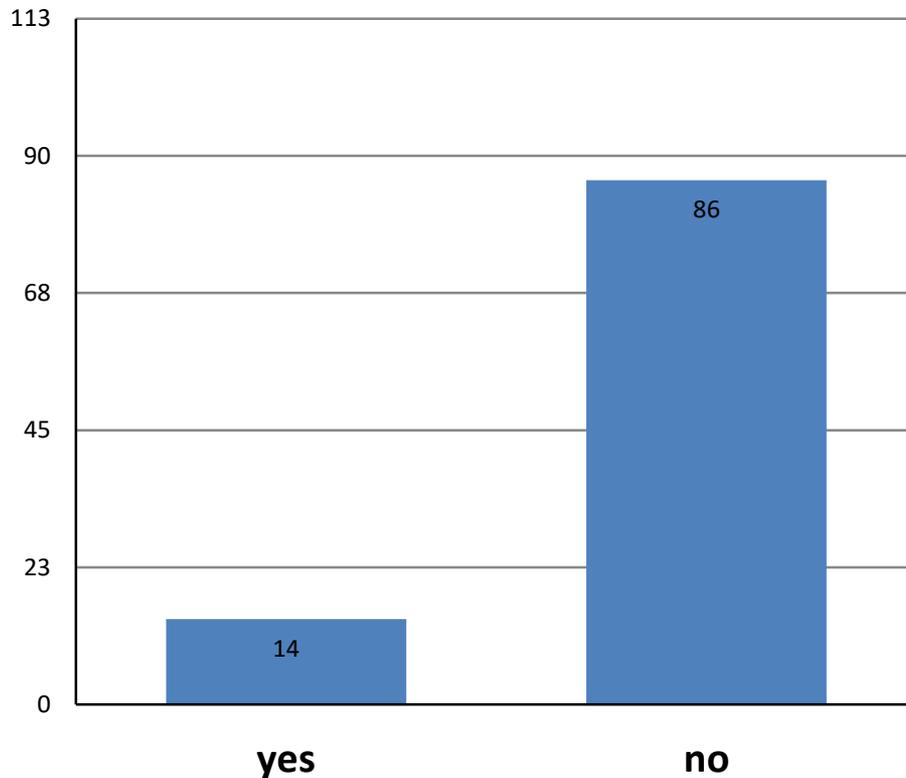
and krafthaus, das Atelier von facts and
fiction, Cologne



Challenges:

- 1) scope of the topic
- 2) openness and topicality of the Anthropocene concept
- 3) newness of the concept to visitors
- 4) trans-sectoral range of the exhibition

Do you know the term “Anthropocene”?



Visitor Survey, Deutsches Museum,
August 2012

If not, what do you think it could mean?

Exemplary answers:

„bacteria or stratum“

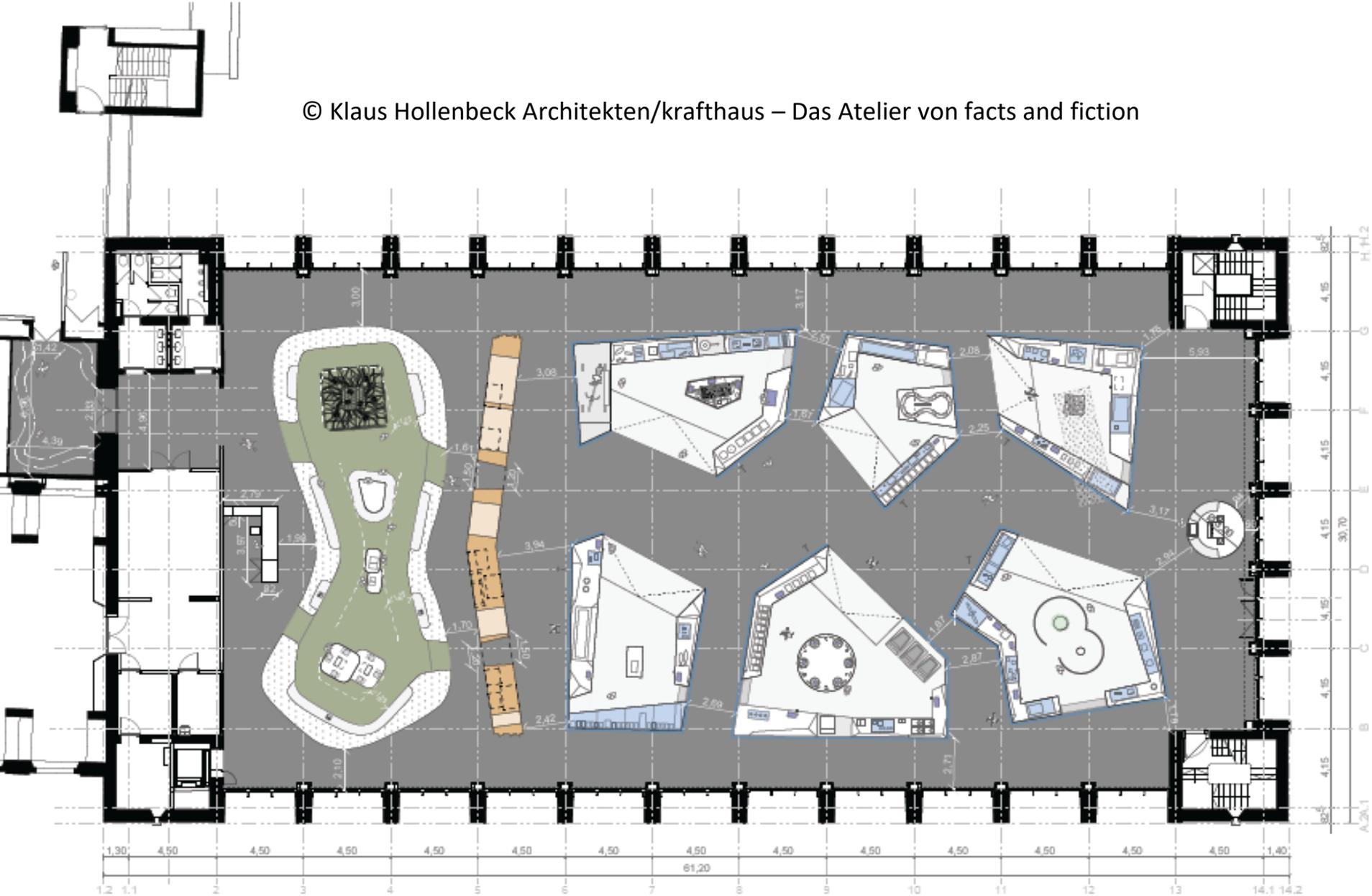
„archaeology“

„new type of propulsive power“

„something medical“

Despite growing interest in certain communities, the term Anthropocene has been still largely unknown to the broader public

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Six Selected Topics

- ⑨ Urbanisation and Resources
- ⑨ Mobility
- ⑨ Human-Machine-Interaction
- ⑨ Nature
- ⑨ Food
- ⑨ Evolution



Er wollte jeden von William Shakespeare
genannten Vogel in Nordamerika ansiedeln.
*He wanted to introduce to North America
every bird mentioned by William Shakespeare.*



Humans and Machines

The relationship between humans and machines is a complex one. It is a relationship that has shaped the course of human history. From the simple tools of the stone age to the sophisticated machines of the modern world, humans have always sought to improve their lives through the use of technology. This relationship has been both symbiotic and contentious, as humans have often feared the power of machines and the potential for job loss and dehumanization. However, it is also clear that machines have the potential to greatly benefit humanity, if used responsibly and ethically.

The history of automation is a long one, starting with the simple tools of the stone age. Over time, humans have developed more complex machines, such as the steam engine and the internal combustion engine. These machines have revolutionized industry and transportation, making it possible for humans to move and work in ways that were previously unimaginable. Today, we are living in an age of artificial intelligence and robotics, where machines are becoming increasingly intelligent and capable of performing tasks that were once thought to be the domain of humans alone.

Species

Species are groups of individuals that share common characteristics and are capable of interbreeding. They are the basic units of biological classification and are used to describe and study the diversity of life on Earth. The process of speciation, which leads to the formation of new species, is a complex one and can occur through a variety of mechanisms, including geographic isolation, genetic drift, and natural selection.

Birds

Birds are a class of animals characterized by feathers, a beak, and the ability to fly. They are the most diverse group of vertebrates on Earth, with over 10,000 species. Birds play a vital role in ecosystems, both as predators and as prey. They are also important to humans, providing food, clothing, and inspiration. The study of birds, known as ornithology, is a branch of biology that has a long and rich history.

Animals

Animals are a group of organisms that are characterized by their ability to move and respond to their environment. They are the most diverse group of organisms on Earth, with over 1.5 million species. Animals play a vital role in ecosystems, both as predators and as prey. They are also important to humans, providing food, clothing, and inspiration. The study of animals, known as zoology, is a branch of biology that has a long and rich history.

Plants

Plants are a group of organisms that are characterized by their ability to photosynthesize and grow. They are the most diverse group of organisms on Earth, with over 300,000 species. Plants play a vital role in ecosystems, both as producers and as consumers. They are also important to humans, providing food, clothing, and inspiration. The study of plants, known as botany, is a branch of biology that has a long and rich history.





NEXT NATURE
SURVIVAL BLANKET

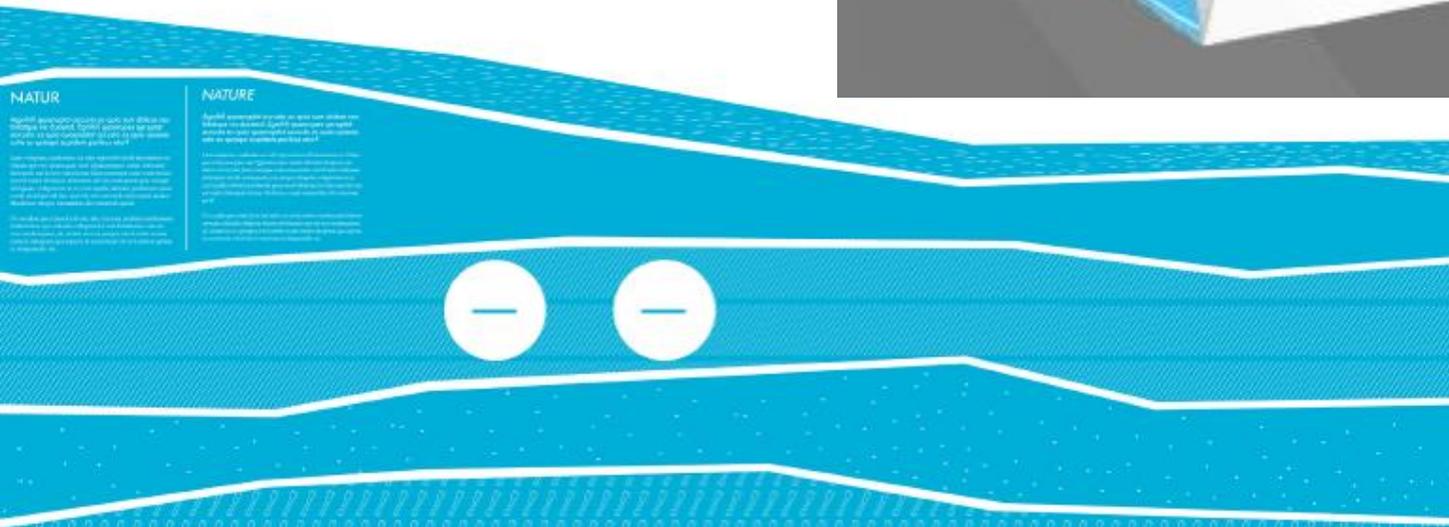
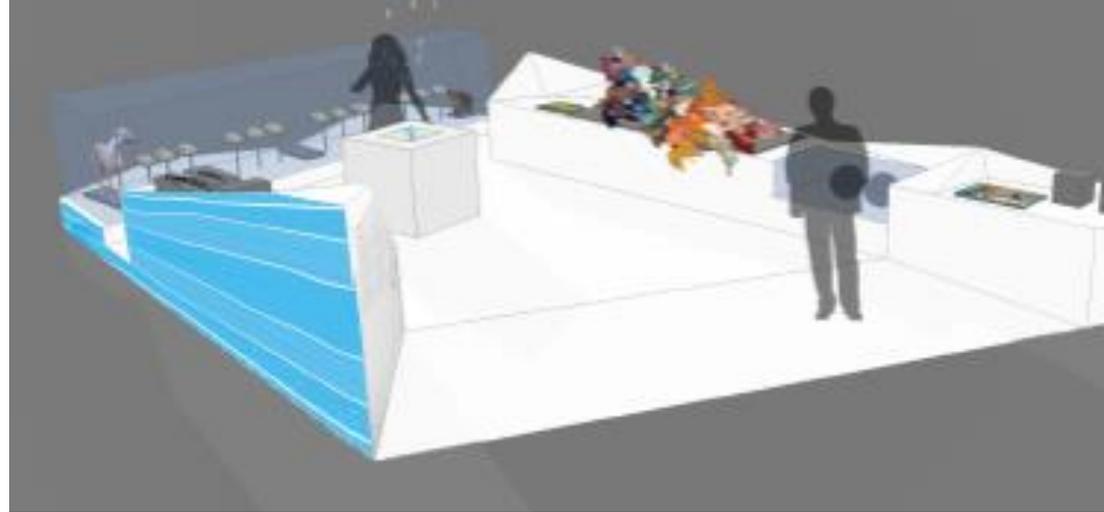
UNIVERSITY OF







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... geological trace ...

... to showcase the geological dimension of the Anthropocene, i.e. the long-term effects of human actions creating a geological layer

... to tie back the selected phenomena to the Anthropocene hypothesis

... to surprise, fascinate and baffle the visitors

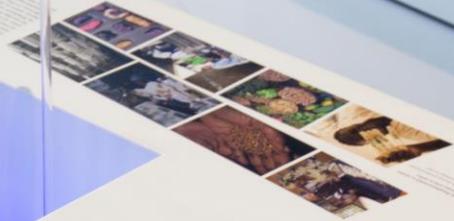




BACK TO THE
FUTURE

1501





Monotonie im Garten Eden

Seit die Menschen vor 10.000 Jahren sesshaft wurden, haben sie in Kleinfeldern, Gärten und Umlandlagen die Bodenmonotonie geschaffen. Die Bodenmonotonie ist die Folge der Monotonie in der Landwirtschaft, die sich aus der Monotonie in der Ernährung ergibt. Sie sind jedoch nicht nur für die Ernährung, sondern auch für die Gesundheit der Menschen von Bedeutung.

Monotony in the Garden of Eden

Ever agricultural societies since 10,000 years ago, when they grew in small fields, gardens and rural areas, the soil monotony has been created. The soil monotony is the result of the monotony in agriculture, which is the result of the monotony in nutrition. It is not only for the nutrition, but also for the health of the people.

Die Bodenmonotonie ist die Folge der Monotonie in der Ernährung. Sie sind jedoch nicht nur für die Ernährung, sondern auch für die Gesundheit der Menschen von Bedeutung.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

Da drückt eine Hausfrau auf einen Knopf
schon räumt sich die Wohnung von selbst.
Roboterähnliche Geräte werten die ganze Wohnung-reinigen,
sich wie Reitermäuse auf von ihnen ausgesandten Wellen entkugeln,
ohne irgendwas anzustößen.

Die ersten US-Fantastik-romane, 1910

...merely to press a button and the house cleans itself:
robot-like appliances will clean the whole house,
riding their way forward like bats using sound waves
without bumping into anything.

Science Fiction, 1910

Computer der Zukunft könnten mit 1000 Vakuumröhren auskommen
und nur 1,5 Tonnen wiegen.

Popular Science, 1947

Computers in the future may only have 1000 vacuum tubes
and perhaps weigh only 1.5 tons.

Popular Science, 1947

Diese ... viele Mängel, als saars es ersthaft
Kommunikationsmittel betrachtet werden kann.

Life, 1947

This ... has too many shortcomings to be seriously
of communication.

Life, 1947





Boeing Model
incorporated and in 1916
Boeing Model
1917



BOEING Model 1917 max. 1000 kg max. 100 passengers

AIRBUS A199 (2010) max. 1000 kg max. 100 passengers

of this
with engine "Wright"
radial engine
any type of aircraft

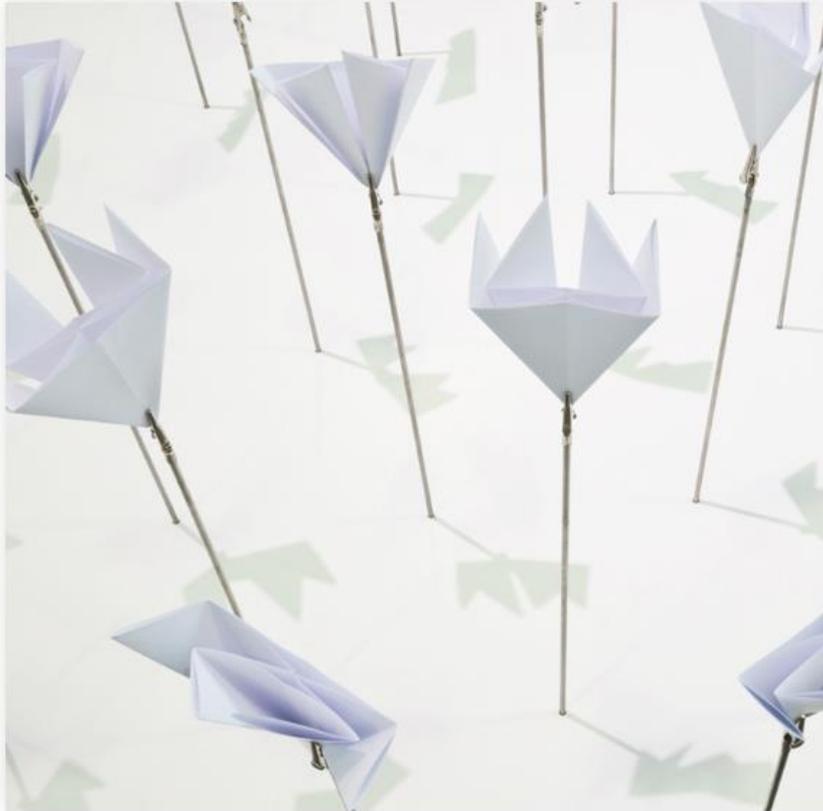
and during the 1910s period
series of new designs and after 1910
and made it possible
to use an aircraft for
the air field.

By air, and the machine
power to look at the
difficult change,
effect of particles

ing new types of aircraft
land and air sea flying.

Flower bed of the future

Blockieren...



What will the Anthropocene look like in the future? What sort of future do you wish for? What dangers do you see, what motivations are there for change, what are you afraid of, and what are your hopes for the Anthropocene?

Visitors can take a sheet of paper and write on it their thoughts, wishes, fears, and suggestions. They fold the paper and place it on a vacant stem in the flower bed. The flowers planted by visitors during the course of the exhibition are being „harvested“ and presented here.

Click bottom right of presentation.

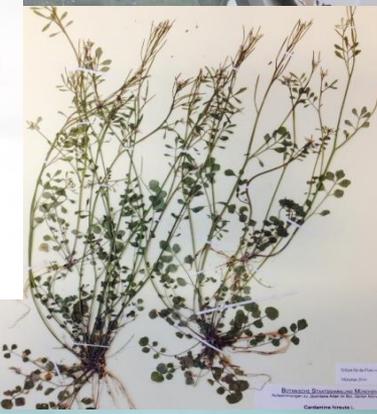
Flower bed of the future

I hope we see our
impact on the world
and the important role we
all play in making it
a better place to live.

- Benjamin Grant

I hope we see our impact on the world and the important role we all play in making it a better place to live.

Benjamin Grant



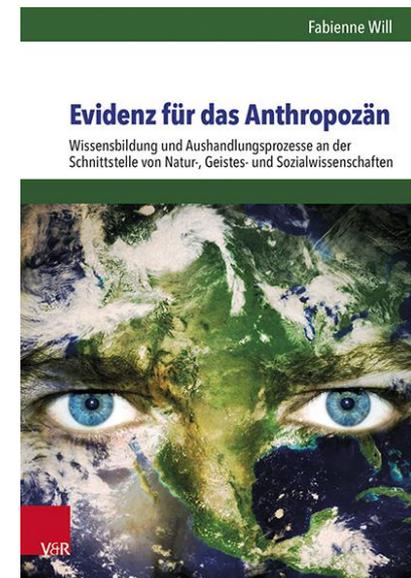
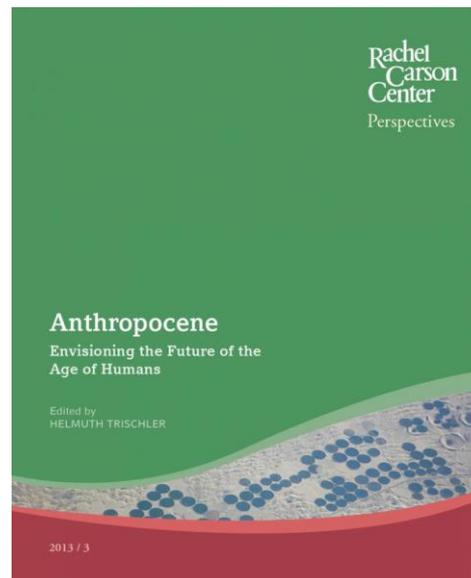
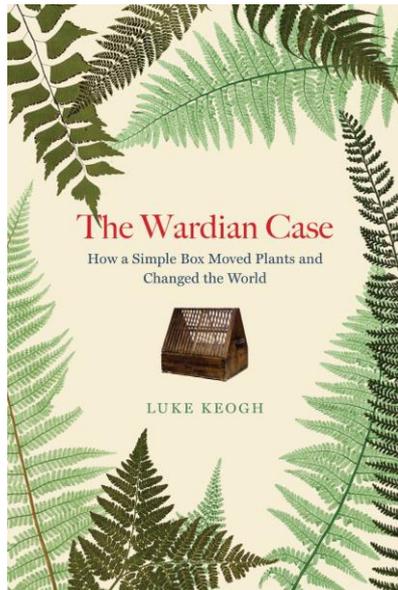
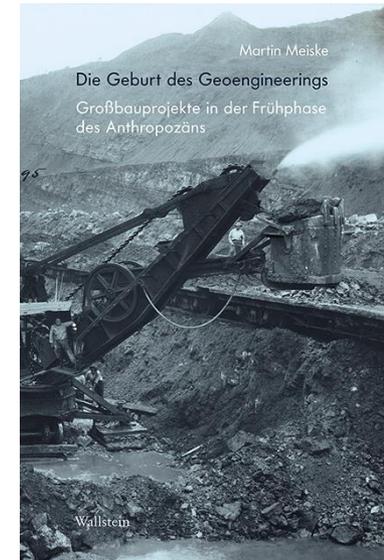
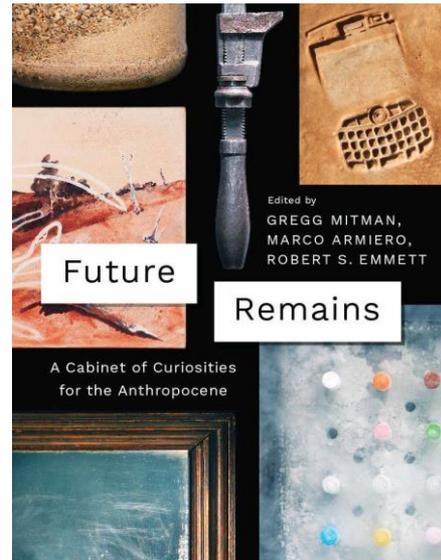
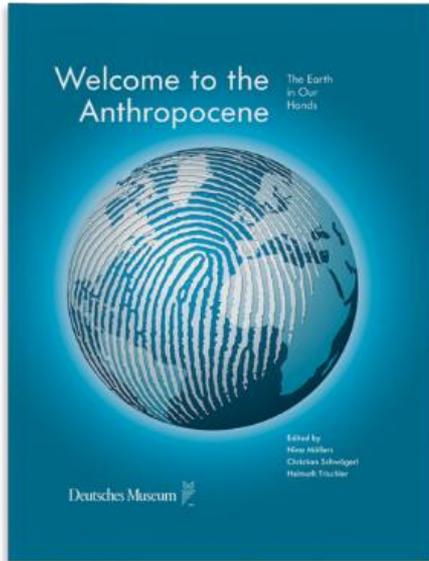
Epistemic Spiral: Exhibitions as Products and Generators of Scholarship – Sources of Input

- discussions with fellows at the Rachel Carson Center
- multiple workshops and conferences
- Anthropocene Campus
- debates with members of the Anthropocene working group
- participatory workshops with the public
- collaborative projects with partnering institutions worldwide (earthwide)

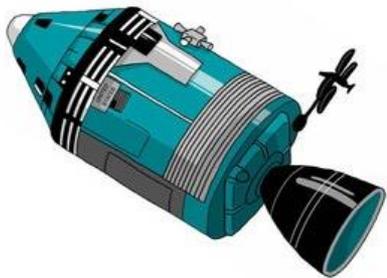
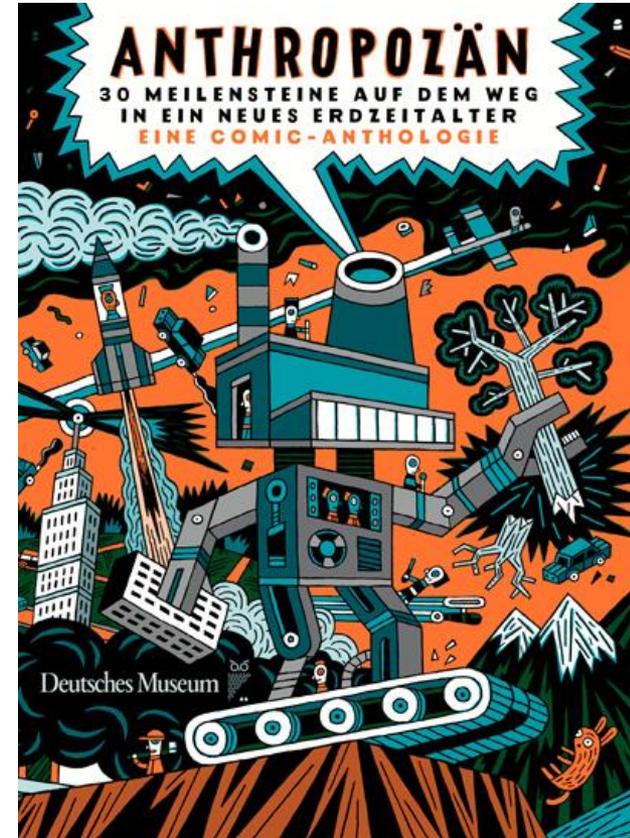
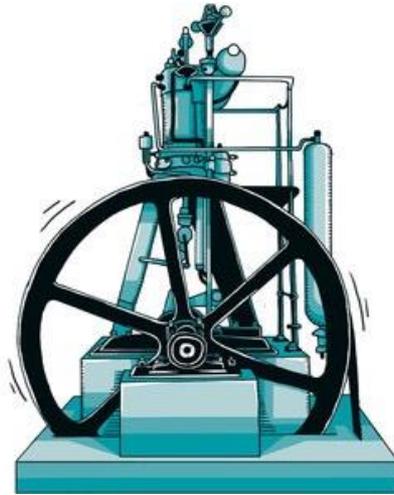
Epistemic Spiral: Exhibitions as Products and Generators of Scholarship – Outputs and Products

- *Museums and Climate Change* network: New York conference 2014, Munich conference 2015, etc.
- *Environmental Futures*-project jointly with KTH Stockholm and University of Wisconsin-Madison ==> *Anthropocene Slam* and *Anthropocene: A Cabinet of Curiosities*-exhibition and book
- numerous publications, including the exhibition catalogue, but also peer-reviewed articles
- innovative educational programs (graphic novel, lyrics festival)
- new strategic alliances (*Future Congress* with Federal Government, Club of Rome-lecture series, etc.)





Connecting the special exhibition with the permanent galleries through a graphic novel

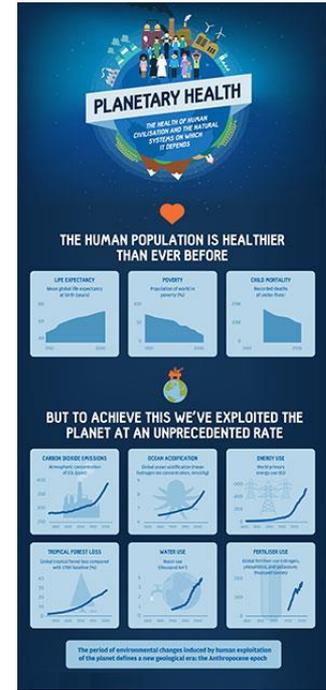


Epistemic Spiral: Exhibitions as Products and Generators of Scholarship – New Ideas and Follow-up Projects

- Research group on *Practicing Evidence - Evidencing Practice*
- International Training Network *ENHANCE* and International Doctoral Program *Re-thinking the Environment*
- Numerous projects of RCC fellows on the Anthropocene
- Follow-up exhibition project on energy transitions at Deutsches Museum
- Munich Science Communication Lab on Planetary Health with Biotopia and Deutsches Museum as joint practice partners

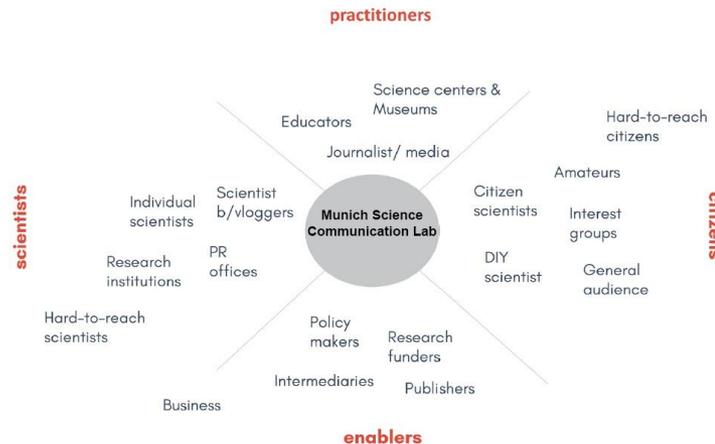


Launched in 2015: *Safeguarding human health in the Anthropocene epoch: report of The Rockefeller Foundation–Lancet Commission on planetary health*



➔ Human health and the health of our planet are inextricably linked. Our civilization depends on human health, flourishing natural systems, and the wise stewardship of natural resources. With natural systems being degraded to an extent unprecedented in human history, both our health and that of our planet are in peril.

Munich Science Communication Lab on Planetary Health



Lessons learned

- The Anthropocene concept stimulates both (great) interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity.
- The Anthropocene asks for new narratives and new temporalities.
- The Anthropocene forces both academia and museums to leave their comfort zones and to critically reflect upon established concepts, practices, and institutional arrangements.
- In the framework of the Anthropocene boundaries – museum boundaries – become blurred, if not obsolete.
- The Anthropocene fosters inter-institutional collaborations.
- The public is not shying away from the complexity of the Anthropocene concept, if publics are addressed as responsible citizens.
- The Anthropocene can serve as a laboratory to experiment with new tools of communication and education in order to foster civic society and sustainability – or may even pave the way for a novel mode of knowledge production and communication, in other words: a new knowledge order.