



UTOPIENALE V

/ Nature Art Laboratory

Talks, Workshops and Artistic Field Practice across Ecology, Agriculture and Community

Nature Art Lab asks a central question: how can artistic practice help us imagine and shape more resilient, attentive and sustainable forms of living across ecological, agricultural and community contexts?

Bringing together artists, curators, educators, cultural practitioners, environmental researchers and local initiatives, the conference approaches nature not as a distant subject of representation, but as a living field of relationships — between land, rivers and cities, agriculture and food, knowledge and craft, institutions and communities, memory and future forms of action.

Across Havelberg and Berlin, the programme unfolds through talks, workshops, field-based artistic practice, exhibitions, performance, music and round-table discussions. It moves from rivers, biospheres, renaturated landscapes and the Greening the Negev Desert initiative, through education, youth empowerment, traditional crafts, rural knowledge, food systems and future technologies of life. Rather than separating art from ecology, agriculture or civic life, Nature Art Lab frames artistic practice as a site-specific, collaborative and experimental way of asking urgent questions: How do we learn from place? How can cultural work respond to environmental change without limiting it to a single discipline, method or narrative? How can communities build resilience? The conference invites participants and stakeholders from the fields of art, culture, education, ecology, agriculture and community development to think together about future-oriented models of practice. It proposes the artistic field as a shared laboratory: a space in which observation, creation, dialogue and imagination can connect human and environmental systems, activate local knowledge, and open new perspectives on community, (thr)utopia and cultural futures.

Programme* – 21–24 August 2026

21–23 August > Havelberg

24 August > Berlin

*All sessions will be held in a panel format, with 3–6 leading speakers seated together in front of the participants. One of the speakers will serve as the session moderator. Panel members may present short, focused presentations as part of the session.

First Conference Day — Session A (21.8)

Art, Nature and Ecological Laboratory: Rivers, Biosphere, Desert and Research Spaces

As heat, scarcity of water versus floods, biodiversity loss and fragility of landscapes increasingly shape the conditions of human life, moving education by disaster centre stage: How can artistic field practice help us rethink ecological knowledge as a direct question of survival, care and quality of life?

*Practical outdoor fieldwork/studio by the participating artists will take place from the morning through to the afternoon. Lectures, panel sessions and discussions, as detailed below, will be held in parallel.

· **Anke Leonhardt** — Artist and designer who co-invented Old School ICA; responsible for art direction of UTOPIENALE, publishing, organising and connecting the local environment.

https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_School_-_Institute_for_Contemporary_Art

· **Wolf Guenter Thiel** — Founder of Old School ICA; leads the development and organisation of the UTOPIENALE conference, responsible for content development and invitation of participants.

https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wolf_Guenter_Thiel

· **Doron Polak** — Leads Nature Art Laboratory, facilitates workshops with artists and educational activists and presents the theme of Greening the Negev Desert; connects art, ecology, desert and curating on a global scale.

<https://www.doronpolak.com>

· **Gerald Walter** — Founder of Hayati e.V.; organisation and funding of UTOPIENALE; participates in Nature Art Laboratory and leads a workshop on new models of resilience; connects sustainability, community, nutrition, rurality and future forms of living.

<https://www.hayati-leipzig.org>

· **Marion Zosel-Mohr** — Executive management of voluntary and charitable work in the northern counties of Sachsen-Anhalt; long-term advocate of Old School ICA; introduces to the conference topics in the context of voluntary and charitable work together with Wolf Guenter Thiel.

<https://www.fa-altmark.de>

· **Jella Schnirch** — Managing Administrator of Haus der Flüsse; introduces the conference venue and its facilities; represents the direct connection between the conference, the river, the environment and ecological education.

<https://www.haus-der-fluesse.de>

· **Philippa Engelbrechten** — Business consultant, educator and co-leader of Unfold e.V.; connects to education, empowerment, children and young people, as well as personal and social resilience.

<https://unfold-ev.de>

· **Kerstin Rice** — Artist, educator, co-inventor and leader of TheARCH gUG; engages in traditional crafts, local knowledge, material heritage and community.

<https://www.thearch.org>

· **Anne Baumann** — Artist, educator and department manager of science2public; connecting science, the public, education, community and accessible science communication.

<https://annebaumann.com> <https://www.science2public.com>

First Conference Day — Session B (21.8)

Art, Society and Community: Education, Participation, Civic Resilience and Local Institutions

In a near future marked by social fragmentation, environmental pressure and unequal access to knowledge, how can art, education and local institutions help communities remain connected, capable and resilient?

*Practical outdoor fieldwork/studio by the participating artists will take place from the morning through to the afternoon. The panel sessions, as detailed below, will commence in the afternoon.

· **Halleli Fried** — Leads a workshop with Doron Polak and participates in the discussion; connects art, nature and experimental creative processes.

<https://aicf.org/artist/halleli-fried>

· **Yetiv Zvi Cohen** — Leads a workshop with Doron Polak and participates in the discussion; connects art, nature and experimental creative processes.

<https://2025.bezalel.ac.il/en/graduates/yetiv-zvi-cohen>

· **Michal Fuchs** — Artist and educator; teaches at Burg Giebichenstein University of Art and Design, Halle (Saale).

· **Dan Peled** — Artist, social worker and culture activist; Founder of Katonti contemporary, a mobile, suitcase-sized micro-gallery, showcasing miniature sculptures, paintings and mixed-media art.

<https://sites.google.com/view/katonti/home>

· **Nichol  Vel squez** — Artist, curator and educator; works with Queer Art Bridges and other Berlin-based initiatives, reflects a sustained commitment to artist-led discourse and public engagement.

<https://www.instagram.com/de.velasquez>

· **Gabriel Wolff** — Artist and tattoo artist; writing in an ancient Semitic script, featuring key concepts like Ahava (love) or Shalom (peace).

<https://www.hebrew-tattoos.com>

· **Derk Schneider** — Ranger and educator at Haus der Fl sse; leads the expedition into the biosphere for Nature Art Laboratory.

<https://www.haus-der-fluesse.de>

· **Miriam Zeller** — Discussion facilitator/lead, teacher at Comenius Schule, candidate for Gr ne Landesliste; represents the connection between education, civic activity and the environment.

<https://gruene-jl.de/miriam-zeller-ist-direktkandidatin-fuer-den-bundestagswahlkreis-66>

- **Barbara Rüppel** — Teacher at Diesterweg & Havelberg Gymnasium; represents the local education system and the connection between pupils, culture and art.
<https://www.gymnasium-diesterweg.de>
- **Nerit Baum** — Artist, educator and co-manager of Kunstitut.
<https://kunstitut-altmarkkreis.de>
- **Norbert Krebber** — Farmer, educator and nature activist; connected to environmental education, landscape, community and nature.
<https://www.elbehof.de/vitos-ev>
- **Lado Khartishvili** — Artist and cultural activist; founding member of The Artists Collective (GE) Bouillon Group and Academy of Arts Saxony-Anhalt; presents his site-specific light installation.
<https://ladokhartishvili.wordpress.com> <https://bouillongroup.com>
- **Iv Toshain** — Artist, feminist and cultural activist; presents a new neon light installation.
<https://iv.toshain.com>
- **Hofstetter Kurt** — Conceptual and media artist, composer; presents Lightning Field; intuitive artistic experimentation with Parallelism, Circulation and Inductive Rotation; creating synaesthetic audiovisual works with Barbara Doser under Parallel Media – Barbara Doser II Hofstetter Kurt.
<https://hofstetterkurt.net> <https://barbaradoser.net>

Second Conference Day — Session C (22.8)

Art, Nature and Agriculture: Food, Land, Rurality, Future Agriculture and Life Technologies

As food systems, rural livelihoods and land-based knowledge come under growing ecological, economic and technological pressure, how can artists, researchers and agricultural practitioners imagine fairer and more liveable futures for people and places?

*Practical outdoor fieldwork/studio by the participating artists will take place from the morning through to the afternoon. The panel sessions, as detailed below, will commence in the afternoon.

- **Yair Avivi** — Artist, web designer and entrepreneur; presents High-Tech Kibbutz, co-working and community building.
<https://yairavivi.com>
- **Nicoletta Geiersbach** — Artist, educator and community manager; presents Ökodorf Sieben Linden, community learning, shared living and social processes.
<https://lernorte.gen-deutschland.de>
- **Selina Tenzer** — Farmer, educator and nature activist; presents Waldgärtnerei Kyritz, community-based gardening and forestry, edible landscapes.

<https://www.waldgaertnerei-kyritz.de>

- **Tilo Motschall** — Manager and cultural activist, founder of Lichtblütenfestival; presents the algae farm Algomed, connects algae, food and futuristic agriculture.

<https://algomed.de> <http://lichtbluetenfestival-altmark.de/>

- **Karsten Wittke** — Artist, community manager, ecological and cultural activist; presents the I-KU Weinberg in Baruth, a 1-hectare community vineyard and cultural project run by the I-KU (Institut zur Entwicklung des ländlichen Kulturrums), connects local agriculture, land, wine, art and community.

<https://www.karstenwittke.de> <https://i-ku.net>

- **Liat Danieli** — Artist, educator and cultural activist; bridges art, biology, science and technology.

<https://liatdanieli.com> <https://www.alfredinstitute.org>

- **Kerstin & Miles Rice** — Artists, designers and educators; Lead The ARCH (Alliance for Rare Crafts Heritage), a non-profit organisation, working to protect endangered traditional crafts and intangible cultural heritage through local community programs.

<https://www.thearch.org>

Second Conference Day — Session D (22.8)

Art, Society and Community: Exhibition, Performance, Music and Utopia

When uncertainty, displacement and social anxiety reshape how people experience belonging, how can exhibition, performance, music, and artistic intervention create spaces where communities can rehearse alternative futures?

*Practical outdoor fieldwork/studio by the participating artists will take place from the morning through to the afternoon. The panel sessions, as detailed below, will commence in the afternoon.

- **Amir Cohen** — Designer and art director; connecting artists from Tel Aviv with artists from Saxony-Anhalt; engages with the connection between curatorial thinking, art, place and identity.

<https://www.972art.com> <https://www.markersart.net/team-and-actions>

- **Boisseau & Westermeyer** — Artists, filmmakers and educators in arts and media relations; playing at Being Human, between AI, animal and plant life: an artistic and philosophical experiment.

<https://www.filmerei.net>

- **Nadine Rennert** — Artist and educator; envoy for inter-being relations, aka Philomena Zenga.

<https://nadinerennert.de/sondergesandte>

- **Norma Drimmer** — Artist and cultural activist; connecting mind, memory and cultural history in multimedia artworks, photography, videos and complex installations.

<https://normadrimmer.com>

· **Sebastian Maas & Karolina Vocke** — Artists, scientists, philosophers; founders of PHILOSOPHISCHE AKADEMIE MÜNCHEN (PAM).

<https://www.heldenreizer.com/sebastian-maas> <https://pam-akademie.de>
www.karolinavocke.net

· **Wieland Krause** — Artist, composer, musician and cultural activist; co-founder of the Academy of Arts Saxony-Anhalt; performs a concert at the conference.

<https://wielandkrause.de>

· **Franziska Seifert** — Artist and founder of Cordts Art Foundation; exhibition and reception at Old School ICA; presentation of large-scale projects of the foundation.

<https://www.bildhauerin-franziska-seifert.de/projekte.htm>
<https://www.cordts-stiftung.de>

· **Sergej Gladkich** — Translator, actor, voice actor; presents a lecture performance about Misspellings & Corrections.

https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sergej_Gladkich

Third Conference Day — Session E (23.8)

City Squeeze vs. Rural Areas and Ideal Spaces: Resilience, Care and Happiness for All

· **Azby Brown** — Artist, scientist and activist; co-inventor of UTOPIENALE and senior consultant of the conference; conceptually connected to the fields of sustainability, material culture, environmental planning and ecological knowledge.

<https://azbybrown.com>

· **Johanna Fick** — Scientific officer and research coordinator at Thünen Institute of Rural Studies; lectures on Valorisation of Landscapes.

<https://www.thuenen.de/de/fachinstitute/laendliche-raeume/lebensverhaeltnisse-in-laendlichen-raeumen/personal/wissenschaftliches-personal/fick-johanna-dr>

· **Norbert Röder** — Senior agricultural scientist and researcher at Thünen Institute of Rural Studies; lectures on Transformation of (Cultural) Landscapes.

<https://www.thuenen.de/de/fachinstitute/laendliche-raeume/lebensverhaeltnisse-in-laendlichen-raeumen/personal/wissenschaftliches-personal/roeder-norbert-dr>

· **Franziska Seifert** — Artist and founder of Cordts Art Foundation; presents Cordts Art Foundation, Arcadia and ideal places for sculpture.

<https://www.bildhauerin-franziska-seifert.de/projekte.htm>
<https://www.cordts-stiftung.de>

· **Kristian von Hornsleth** — Artist, anarchist and artistic activist in social and cultural transforming projects on a global scale; presents the Hornsleth Village Project in Uganda, the Hornsleth

Homeless Tracker Project in the city of London and the ongoing project Democracy for Sale in Copenhagen.

<https://www.hornsleth.com>

· **Suzanna Lauterbach** — Artist, photographer and researcher; presents projects about urban life in Europe, the Middle East and the USA.

<https://suzannalauterbach.com>

· **Maren Ernst** — Linguist and educator on social innovation; Co-founder & CEO Uplift-Aufwind e.V.

<https://www.uplift-aufwind.org/de>

· **Doron Polak** — Presentation of the results of Nature Art Laboratory 2026.

<https://www.doronpolak.com>

Sessions A-E: Brief Structural Note

The division creates a clear conceptual progression:

Session A - Opens the conference with nature, rivers, the biosphere, and an artistic laboratory.

Session B - Shifts the emphasis to education, community and social resilience.

Session C - Focuses on agriculture, food, rurality and life technologies.

Session D - Showcases art, performance, music and cultural utopia.

Session E - Concludes the Havelberg programme with the future of country life, utopia and care.

Session F – Berlin (24.8)

TISH at Studio Norma Drimmer Berlin

Reception and Exhibition at Cordts Art Foundation

curated by **Nicholé Velásquez**

No Gallery, Ludwigkirchstraße 10

Welcome by Tim & Franziska Cordts

(A) Group Exhibition by Artists of the Conference UTOPIENALE V

**(B) Presentation of fair Magazine - Panel with the Editor: Wolf Guenter Thiel;
Franziska Seifert, Norma Drimmer, Kristian von Hornsleth, Wieland Krause**

