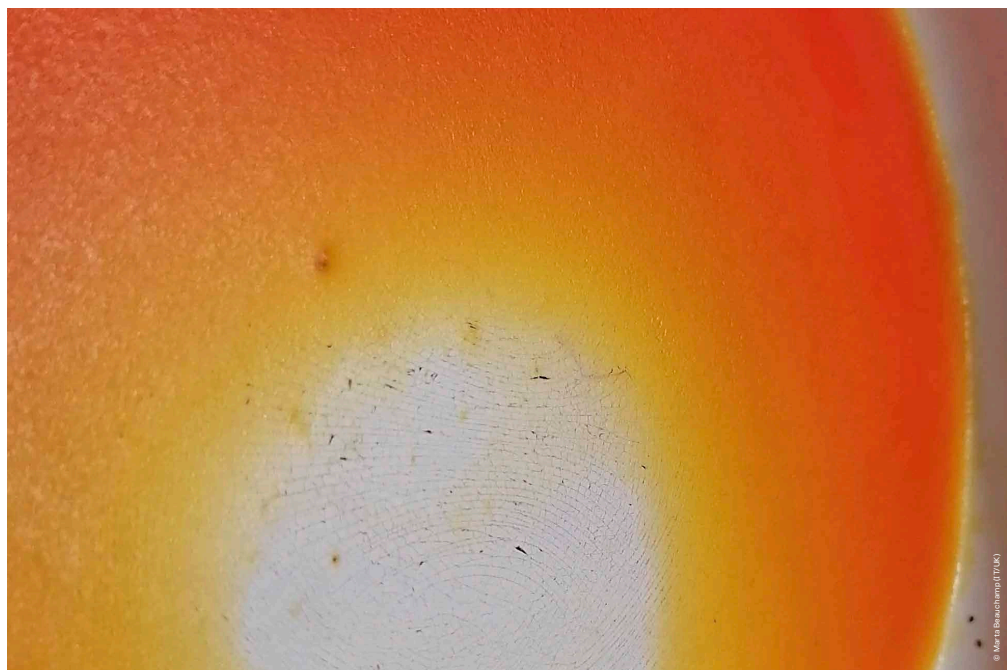


PhD Research Collective Heterotopia

Carolyn Amann (AT), Marta Beauchamp (IT/UK)
Amir Bastan (AT/IR), Emanuel Gollob (AT), Martin Höfer (DE)
Eva Kadlec (AT), Caroline Salfinger (AT), Samet Yalçın (TR)



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↳ Interface Cultures
↳ Media Theories

Institute of Space and Design
↳ Creative Robotics

University of Arts Linz
Department Art and Practice
Seilerstätte 1, 4020 Linz

3. – 8. September 2024
Tue – Sat 16:00 – 20:00
Sun 14:00 – 18:00

0 *Heterotopia* Prologue



When you enter a heterotopia according to Foucault¹, you find yourself in a space that defies the rules of the outside world, questions them and at the same time opens up diverse worlds. People create heterotopias as transitional spaces (such as schools), crisis and deviation spaces (as prisons and clinics), spaces in which time gathers (as in a museum) or gets out of joint (in theater or cemetery). In contrast to a utopia, which has no topological location, heterotopias are concretely anchored in our daily surroundings.

The PhD Research Collective aims to provide an insight into ongoing artistic research. In contrast to conventional exhibitions, the processes on display are not closed, not focused on a specific work, but continue to branch out. One can enter the exhibition space, can observe the opening of ideas, but these remain fleeting, as they are subject to different rules in their orientation. Or one's own world of thought opens up a new space therein, one that could not have been foreseen.

1 Cf. Foucault, Michel. *Die Heterotopien. Der utopische Körper*. Suhrkamp: Frankfurt/M, 2021. P. 10ff.

I Carolyn Amann

RHYTHMDECODER FOR SOMAMETRIC-THEORY

Test 1.2 (2024)

The rhythm decoder attempts to bring theory and artistic writing closer together by means of formalization and generates a new verse measure by adding body data generated with a *Garmin Vivosmart 5* wearable. In this somametric-system stress and heart rate have an effect on the accentuation and length of the language; for example, if stress values dominate over theoretical relevance, deletion occurs. The machine-generated body data seems to reveal evidence, a physiological 'knowledge' whose origin must be analyzed. The calculated access to the heart rate via the pulse, the completion of the heart rate variability based on it as a pattern, which is interpolated to a stress value by adding artificial factors, provides unmistakable figures. These can obscure the fact that the measurement of a complex physiological state is abbreviated.

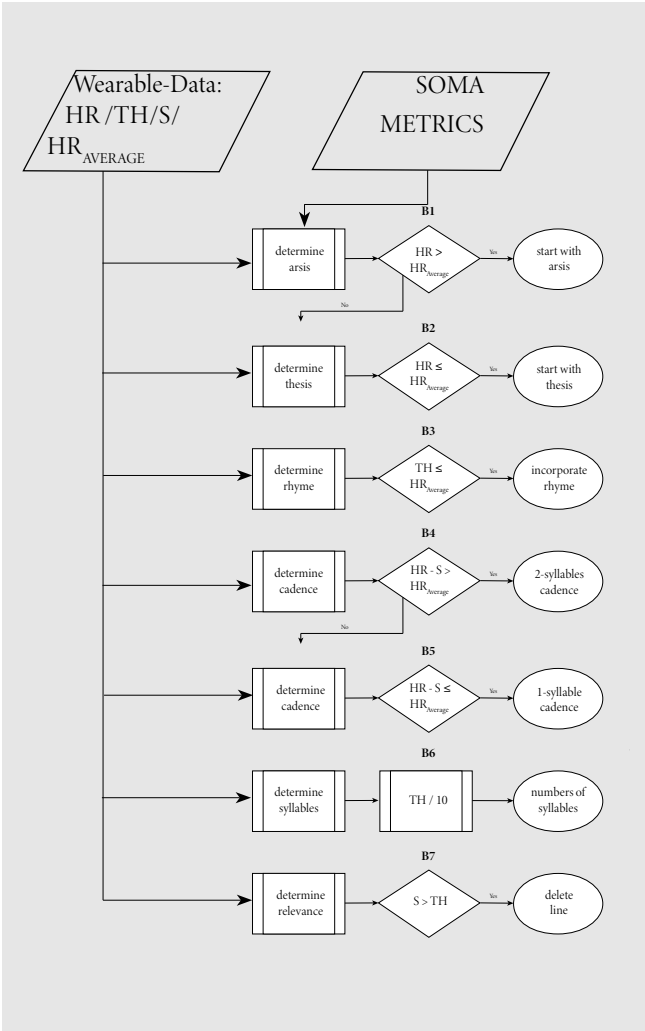
What is not captured by the Rhythmdecoder is the variable *v*, which can be read as Gilles Deleuze's *virtual*. This reading of the virtual differs from the common relationship to digitalization. Deleuze develops the concept of *virtuality* from Spinoza's *potentiality* and thus describes a realm of ideas whose counterpart is actuality, whereby the virtual always remains real. The virtual here is part of the creative process, it creates its structure, but the structure itself is part of the actualization.¹ Applying Karen Barad's *agential realism*, its structuring process can be seen as its materialization (*matter*ing), the virtual as differentiation remains in/ determinate, so that it eludes all measurement.² The *Rhythmdecoder for Somametric-Theory* provides a series of tests for artistic research for the PhD thesis "Superhuman. From

Well-Being to Being-Good", which deals with affective computing and emotional AI from a scientific and language-artistic perspective using wearables, and asks about the changes that AI-supported emotion recognition technologies bring to the self, as well as on a social and political level in the sense of the approach Felix Guattari opens up in his book „Three Ecologies“.³

¹ Cf. Deleuze, Gilles. *Differenz und Wiederholung*. Fink: München, 1992. P. 264 ff.

² Cf. Barad, Karen. „What is the Measure of Nothingness? Infinity, Virtuality, Justice“ In *dOCUMENTA* No. 099 (13). Hatje Cantz: Berlin, 2012. P. 6.

³ Cf. Guattari, Felix. *Drei Ökologien*. Passagen: Wien, 1994.



III. I CA RHYTHMDECODER FOR SOMAMETRIC-THEORY
Test 1.2 (2024)

Method: In a quiet environment, a theoretical text is read as research for the media-theoretical PhD thesis. An acoustic timer sets a minute interval that is noted at the given point in the text. While reading, a smartwatch measures the HR and stress values. The sum of the lines of verse

is determined based on the stress interval of the smartwatch for the duration of the reading time. A poetic text is then created with reference to the theory read, which is referred to as the Original Poem (OP). The respective text passages in the theoretical text are then classified according to their

relevance based on the stress interval. The points assigned from 1-100 represent the YTH values, which are entered into a diagram together with the HR and stress data from the smartwatch. The X-axis defines the time course as a constant.

The somametric conditions that form the Code (C) are now derived from all available Xn values. These derivations are applied to the respective verse line of the original poem (OP) so that a new poetic text is created according to the somametric conditions (DP, Decoded Poem).

$$TH \times v = OP$$

$$\{OP \times SM\} \times v = DP$$

$$v=?$$

TH...Theory

OP...Original Poem

DP...Decoded Poem

SM...Somametrics

II Marta Beauchamp

frequent frogs (in captivity)



III. II MB *frequent frogs* sound installation. 11 wax tubes, 3 wax discs, 2' 59" loop, 6 loudspeakers (dimension variable), 2024. Foto: Lena Baloch

Frequent frogs (in captivity) is an adaptation of a site-specific sound installation commissioned by GRRRLS Kulturverein and developed for the water lily pond of the Austrian Sculpture Park in the occasion of STERRRN festival in June 2024.

Frequent frogs belongs to a body of work concerned with the phenomenon of entrainment. Entrainment describes the temporal adjustment of a rhythm to another rhythm and is of great interest to chronobiologists and ecologists.

Inspiration for the project came from visiting the Sculpture Park in the search for a particularly intense site. Resting on Peter Kogler's furniture sculpture *Untitled* (2014) at the edge of the water-lily pond, the songs of conversing frogs emerged from the still atmosphere of the pond. Listening to them, I witnessed the pattern structure of call and response and tried to deepen myself in understanding the communicative characters of these sounds. Reflecting on this experience, I set off to search for publications that would allow me to learn about the biological

understanding on call and response of frogs and came across literature that describes the oscillator regulating the timing of such calls.

I chose to work on a 1985 Journal of Comparative Physiology publication by biologists Randy Zelik and Peter M. Narins, which summarises their findings on characterising the advertisement call oscillator of Coqui frogs in a 7-page research article consisting of text, figures and tables.

In its original version, the sound installation unfolded on the island of a pond, a space detached by water from the rest of the gardens. During the course of the exhibition day, the wax tubes subtly changed their shape, hence departing from the apparent immobility of sculpture and rather sharing the temporal dynamics of their surrounding environment and that of the sound composition.

A documentation of this work can be found in the artistic practice documentation catalogue.

In its indoors iteration “in captivity” the piece consists of a group of orange wax tubes, of scattered wax discs and of a stereo sound composition. The distribution of the wax discs follows the correlation between intercall interval and stimulus period, plotted in Figure 4, on an imaginary cartesian plane projected into the exhibition space. The composition interweaves field recordings of the lily pond frogs with imitations of these calls produced with a Sirin Moog synthesiser. Windows of overlapping sounds are interrupted by silences filled by a shot of brief sounds, whose timing is based on the distribution plot of Figure 2.

IV Emanuel Gollob

disarming II

Industrial robotics and robotic-relevant machine learning come with pre-inscribed conceptions of human-technology relations, definitions of intelligence, understanding of cognition and a particular perspective on what it means

way of intra-acting with these technicalities, and by doing so also limit potential genesis.

Along with the research question of how AI-driven industrial robotic arms can be re-framed for broader



III. IV EG *disarming II*, performance, installation, video, 2023
© Markus Krampfl

to be efficient and autonomous. Inscriptions that, besides being up to debate, more or less explicitly, organize our

creative genesis, this practice-based PhD attempts to widen the thinking with those concepts through

sensible situations in open performative processes.

As one performative process of the project, the detached robotic arm Agilus durationaly learns and unlearns locomotion on a gym mattress in relation to its embedded virtual concept of its mechanical body and surrounding space. Aiming for strategies to increase the distance from the starting point, resulting in glitches of virtual success and physical struggle, as well as vice versa.

disarming is a performative exploration of the relation between a detached robot arm, a gym mattress, and its human observers. A learning and unlearning of locomotion in less anthropocentric environments and times. The work playfully explores the ambiguity of *disarming* as a process of physical detachment and emotional attachment. Locomotion can be seen as a primal (post-birth) instinct and ultimate act of independence. A robotic limb,

somehow detached from a human-constructed technological body, tries to find concepts for advancing movements even though it initially wasn't made for locomotion – vulnerable yet determined. Parallel to a familiar dystopian plot of technological autonomy and the feelings going with it, witnessing these first clumsy tries may awaken compassion or even a certain emotional bond.

Exhibited as a video installation with an AI continuously re-editing the video *disarming* fuses physical acting with digital observation and vice versa. The same Reinforcement Learning (RL) algorithm learning physical locomotion with the robotic body in the video footage now observes how likely recent social media postings mention "robot" and "arm" in the same post. In reference to this observation, the RL algorithm is set to continuously learn and unlearn how to edit the video scenes to decrease this likelihood.

V Martin Höfer

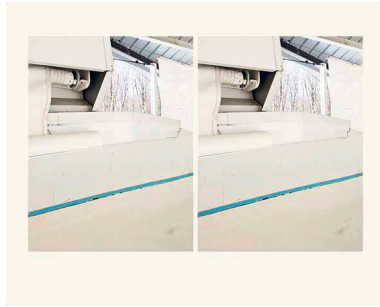
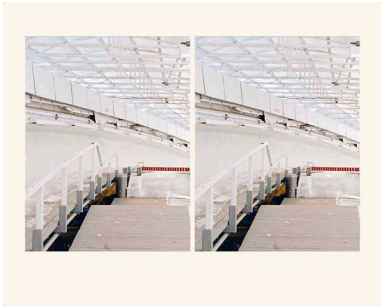
Track is clear. The absence of media.

The media transmission of sports, ensured by numerous cameras and a large team of technicians, is questioned in this work. The presence of moderators and commentators, who accompany the events, is considered an integral part of the sporting presentation. The artistic engagement with the absence of these elements opens new perspectives on the function and space of the sledging track.

The artistic series *Track is clear. The absence of media.* addresses the Olympic bobsled track Mount Van Hoevenberg in Lake Placid, New York. This work reflects on the absence of media presence and examines the significance of the sledging track outside of competitive events. The visual documentation consists of 20 conceptual photographs,

including both panoramic images and close-ups of the bobsled and luge track, taken during times without sporting activities and without the presence of spectators or media representatives. The series addresses the monumental structure of the race track, which resembles an industrial facility more than a sports venue. These constructions, integrated into nature, serve solely the entertainment industry. The title of the series plays on the common announcement that signals to athletes that the track is clear. However, it emphasizes the absence of the elements that make the sledging track a public space. The construction of the track is placed in a historical context. The building for the North America Games in 2001 is viewed as less significant compared to the Olympic Games of 1980.

These considerations lead to a critical reflection on the ethical implications of such construction projects and their impact on the environment. The use of seriality as an aesthetic principle refers to conceptual art and its structured approach. The departure from the notion of the original, as articulated by Duchamp, becomes evident in the work. The idea of art without a unique piece is made tangible through serial production and the associated logic of repetition and variation.

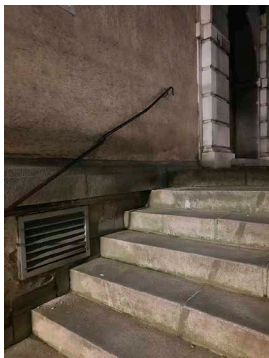
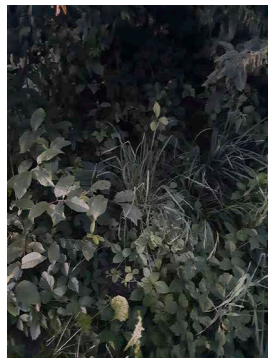
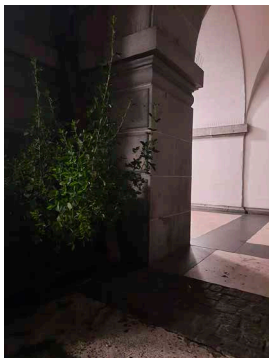
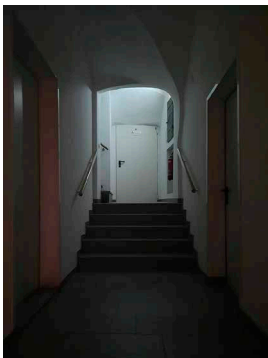


VI Eva Kadlec



III. VIEK *I am not asking anymore II (Böse Blumen)*
Watercolor on Paper, 70 x 100 cm, 2022

- I. IN THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY'(1908), AN OUTLAW IS BREAKING THE FOURTH WALL BY FIRING HIS GUN DIRECTLY AT THE VIEWER. THIS STARTLED MOVIE GOERS AND LATER CENSORS ALIKE. FOR SOME TIME AFTER, MOVIE SCENES WHERE CRIMINALS AIMED GUNS AT THE CAMERA WERE CONSIDERED INAPPROPRIATE BY THE NEW YORK STATE CENSOR BOARD. CONSIDER THIS.
- II. WHERE IS THE TINY GUN COMING FROM? IS THE GUN SO TINY OR THE FLOWER SO GIGANTIC? IN 'IL MERCENARIO' (1968), JACK PALANCE PULLS OUT A TINY LITTLE GUN, WHEN HE SEEMS TO BE LOSING A CARD GAME AT THE SALOON. CONSIDER THIS.
- III. A WHITE HAired POLITICIAN IN A PARKA IS STANDING ON A SIDEWALK. SOMEONE HAS PHOTOSHOPPED A GUN IN HIS HAND. THE ORIGINAL TEXT HAS BEEN ERASED; NOW IT SAYS: I AM NOT ASKING ANYMORE. CONSIDER THIS.
- IV. BURNING FOSSIL FUELS IS A CAUSE OF RAPID GLOBAL WARMING. BURNING FOSSIL FUELS ALSO RELEASES SULFUR DIOXIDE GAS. THIS TURNS INTO SULFURIC ACID AEROSOLS. AEROSOLS SCATTER THE LIGHT AND INCREASE THE BEAUTY OF A SUNSET. CONSIDER THIS.



III. VII CS *In those shady gaps* (series)
C-Print on Alu-Dibond, each 21 x 28 cm, 2024

VII Caroline Salfinger

In those shady gaps

Restlessly wandering around alone through the dark shadows of an endless night. Driven by a feeling kind of related to sleepwalking. A melancholic state of mind making you distant and yet looking closely. Your view an accumulation of loose observations tangled together by a strange tension. All the public grounds you know so well from ever since appear to slip away under the unsettled tread of your feet. They are transformed by shadows and the haze of attunement to something ... other. Although nothing is happening on the surface, there seems to be a certain atmosphere. A vague uncanniness sourced by perceptions that are difficult to grasp in the articulation of words. Who or what is hiding?

Is it you? Or is it something else, in the dark corners? It's tricky to pin down. The more you try to see clearly, the more your vision blurs in the gloom. You hesitate. You hurry. Back and forth, stairs up and stairs down. Pausing. Listening attentively. What is resonating? Maybe you should try to sense the vibrations. Being touched by it. Getting in contact. So you carefully try to feel your way forward. Something gently grazes you, like a slight brush stroke. You realize that you are not alone at all, never were. Resistant natures accompany you. Like weeds seeking footholds in the smallest niches, inhabiting the gaps and growing against the seemingly solid stony orders, making them permeable over time.

Oscillating between the public and the private, insights and outlooks, reflection and sensing, the familiar and the uncanny, my arts-based research tries to capture those threshold moments, where borders are dissolved and the ambivalent reigns. Where alienation and empathy coincide, causing the concept of 'the Other' to collapse, opening the way for new alliances and forms of (co)existence.

IX Biographies

PhD Research Collective Members

Carolyn Amann (*1987, AT, based in Vienna) is an Austrian artist and performer, who is part of the department of Media Theories. In her language-artistic and media-theoretical PhD project “Superhuman. From Well-Being to Being-Good” she deals with the effects of affect-sensitive media and Emotional AI in the context of a techno-ecology. She studied theater, film and media studies at the University of Vienna and worked as an assistant director at the Schauspielhaus Graz, Schauspielhaus Wien and Bregenzer Festspiele. Since 2014, she has written stage works for theater and opera, which have premiered at the Landestheater Linz, Theater Münster, Konzerthaus Wien and the Lucerne Theater, among others. In her performances, she combines poetic and dramatic writing with jazz and new music.

Marta Beauchamp (*1990, UK/IT, based in Vienna) is a sound artist and PhD candidate at the department of Interface Cultures. Marta's installations and compositions develop around data drawn from publications about biological rhythms.

Her project “Tipping points in transmediation” investigates a transmediation methodology using intermedia studies tools to analyse completed works and by contextualising them within a wider artistic landscape of transmediation practices. Marta was selected for the 2024 Orpheus Instituut graduate program “Sound Arguments” and is part of the micro museum for sound “TONSPUR”, MQ Wien. She published articles in peer-reviewed journals, including publications on evolutionary chronobiology, and released albums on Quadratisch Rekords and Goldgelb Records.

Amir Bastan (*1991 IR/AT, based in Linz) is a new media artist with a background in fine arts and philosophy and explores the conflict between the conscious and the subconscious. He realizes his works by designing narratives through real-time processes. As PhD candidate and researcher he works at the Creative Robotics department at the University of Arts Linz.

Emanuel Gollob (*1991, AT, based in Vienna) investigates today's relations between humans, artificial intelligence and robots with the goal of making alternative ones bodily experienceable. In parallel, his work traces the change in human tendency to anthropomorphize in connection to digitalization. Gollob graduated from the University of Applied Arts Vienna with a diploma in Design Investigations (2019). Since 2020, Emanuel Gollob has been pursuing an artistic PhD in practice in the field of performativity in human-robot encounters, tackling the research question of how AI-driven industrial robotic arms can be re-framed for broader creative genesis. Hereby, xenomorphosic encounters with industrial robotic arms in public spaces play an essential role in his search.

Martin Höfer (*1982, DE, based in Leipzig) is a conceptual and media artist as well as a member of the PhD Research Collective at the University of Arts Linz. He is conducting research for his doctoral thesis as a university assistant with Hubert Lobnig in Art Practice at the Institute

for Art and Education, focusing on artistic intervention in mass media. The exhibited photographs are excerpts from the series *Track is clear. The absence of media.* which were created as part of his artistic intervention *EISKANAL/ Citius, Altius, Fortius.* and during his four-year tenure as an accredited artist in the coaching staff of the German national bobsled team.

Eva Kadlec (*1985, AT, based in Vienna) is researching digital subcultures at the department of Philosophy of the University of Arts Linz, with the working title: “On Being Online in Late Capitalism. Symptoms and Fantasies in Digital Subcultures”. As a Post-Internet Artist, Eva Kadlec is addressing motives of online cultures in the medium of painting. Her works have been shown in Vienna, Paris, Copenhagen and Istanbul, and are represented in the Public Collection of the City of Vienna and the Graphic Collection of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. At night, she is playing the guitar for the bands ‚Wirtschaftskammer‘ and ‚Magnesium‘.

Caroline Salfinger (*1991, AT, based in Linz) comes from the field of fine arts and studied Painting and Graphics as well as Applied Cultural and Art Studies at the University of Arts Linz. Thematically her art works – mostly realized in the media of oil on canvas or photography – repeatedly

revolve around threshold moments, ambivalence, darkness and melancholy. As PhD candidate and university assistant in the PhD Research Collective and the department of Art History and Art Theory is she currently working on a project entitled “Spaces of Solitude. Figures of Refusal and their Relationship to Space”. Drawing on artistic and theoretical practices and taking selected literary figures as a starting point, she is investigating various spaces of (individual) ‘retreat’, their possible functions and characteristics.

Samet Yalçın (*1987, TUR, based in Istanbul) is PhD candidate at the University of Arts Linz, Department of Art History and Art Theory. With a background in philosophy, sociology, and anthropology from Bogazici University (Istanbul), his research is concerned with the ontology of space/place and the topology of in/finitude. His PhD thesis “Encounters at the End of the World: A Topological Nekrikoi Dialogue Between Heidegger, Platonov, and Fedorov” he investigates how finitude and infinitude are spatially articulated and how groundlessness is expressed across literature, philosophy and visual arts. By engaging Heidegger, Russian Cosmists and Suprematist artists in an experimental dialogue, he seeks to chart a spatial and topological map of in/ finitude, from the confines of the grave to the expanse of the cosmos.

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III

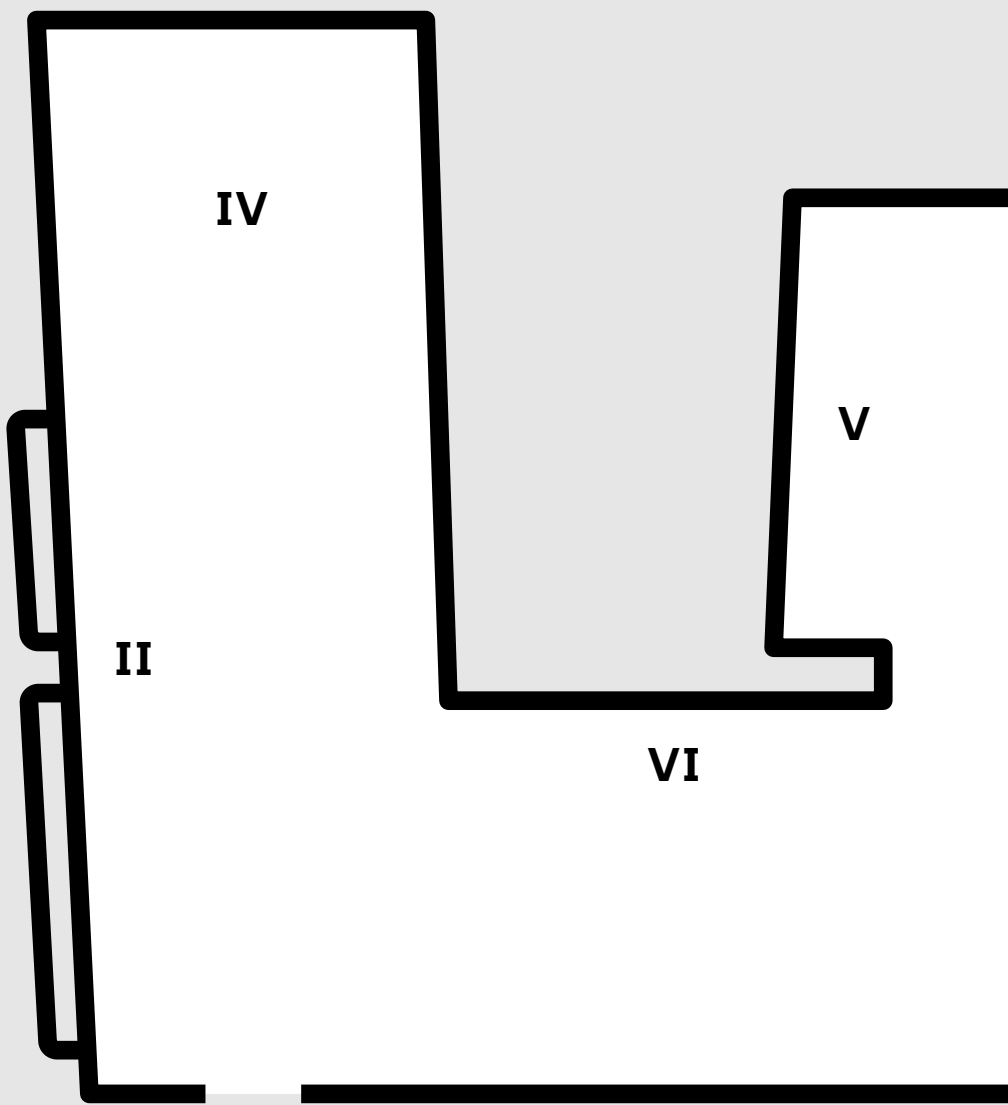
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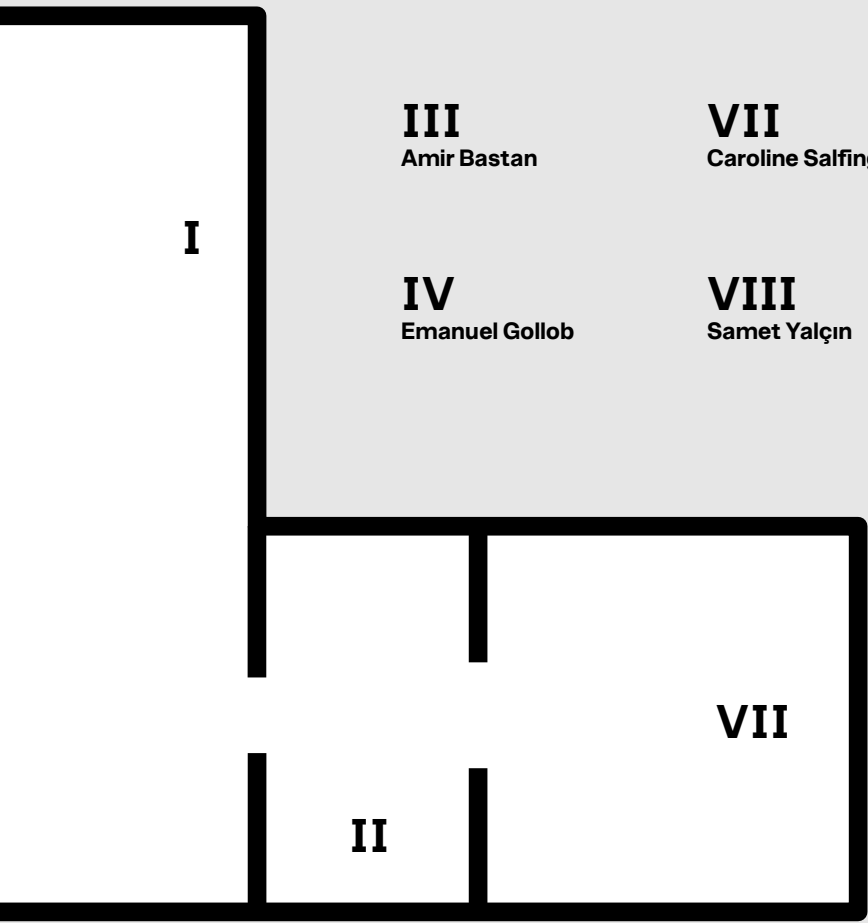
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I
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PhD Research Collective

Heterotopia

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Kunstuni Campus @ Ars Electronica Festival 2024

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