



Visionary Ecologies Summer-Break Workshop 6–8 September 2023

Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society, LMU Munich

REGISTRATION → [HERE](#)

VISIONARY ECOLOGIES: Oracles for Past, Present, and Future More-than-Human Entanglements in Urban Environments

Visionary Ecologies proposes practices of speculating possible visions and strategies that intentionally work toward liberation and alternative futures of environmental justice. The workshop is inspired by “visionary fictions,” a term coined by Adrienne Maree Brown and Walidah Imarisha to distinguish science fiction that has relevance toward building new, freer worlds from the mainstream strain of science fiction, which most often reinforces dominant narratives of power.

This workshop revolves around the oracle, an artifact that allows us to travel through temporalities and parallel dimensions to imagine a place and its ecology in different times and scales. The oracle user can access the “pluriverse,” which is a world where many worlds fit, as Zapatistas of Chiapas put it. In the book *Pluriverse: A Post-Development Dictionary* (Tulika Books, 2019), Kothari et al. envision a “pluriversal” world that overcomes patriarchal attitudes, racism, casteism, and other forms of

discrimination. The oracle invites its user to join a deep process of intellectual, emotional, ethical, and spiritual decolonization.

“Visionary fiction encompasses all of the fantastic, with the arc always bending toward justice. We believe this space is vital for any process of decolonization, because the decolonization of the imagination is the most dangerous and subversive form there is: for it is where all other forms of decolonization are born. Once the imagination is unshackled, liberation is limitless.”

— Adrienne Maree Brown, *Octavia’s Brood: Science Fiction Stories from Social Justice Movements*

WORKSHOP PROGRAM

Day 1—PAST

Time: 10:00–17:00

Location: Rachel Carson Center, Leopoldstraße 11a, 80802 Munich

Introduction to Visionary Ecologies:

- >> Presentation of references, past exercises, and creative workshops;
- >> Introduction to our online platform and our work as a creative lab.

Collective mapping: Oracles for past, present, and future more-than-human entanglements in urban environments. In this session, we will collectively identify interesting entanglements of the human and more-than-human worlds in the city of Munich, such as:

>> A wooden fountain in the Perlacher Forst, which has a guardian dwarf carved on it. Who carved it and why? Was it carved in the past or in the future? Is it to protect the water or remind the user of a forgotten temporality? The water that comes out of the fountain, the voice of the water dwarf, travels from ancient ages to our modern times to speak about the sacrality of the liquid.

>> The Ring, a high-speed river of metal that flows abundantly around Munich; a highway made to reach new heights. A and B have never been closer. House and work, work and house, there is only air in between. The Ring is a high-speed channel of virtuosity, ideas, and BMWs riding waves. This novel ecosystem represents a closed system of egos captured in jars, nitro-bars going up, up, and up. ¡Hola! Now the Ring is even better, lithium took over, oh is that a fossil-fuel monstrosity? No, babe, now you buy electricity, and you buy your ticket to enter this marvelous delirium.

Day 2—PRESENT

Time: 10:00–17:00

Location: City of Munich

(specific locations to be collectively mapped during the first session).

Visionary walk: How can we use the visionary oracle to imagine a new city? Which narratives open up when we use the visionary oracle?

We will visit the milestones of the city that were collectively mapped in the previous session, stopping at each one and sharing thoughts, facts, and speculations about past, present, and future interconnections between more-than-human elements and anthropogenic urban settlement: What can these mapped places and findings in the city tell us about our current time, its complex ecology, and the relation of the human and the nonhuman? How can they become oracles and portals to different times and natures? How can we create visions that make their presence visible, expanding our perception, knowledge, and imagination on their coexistence with us in the city we inhabit? Which temporalities are we immersed in when we walk through the city? How do fictions, ecology, and urbanity interconnect when we pass through a concrete ecosystem?

Day 3—FUTURE

Time: 10:00–17:00

Location: by the Isar River (location to be collectively selected)

Oracular reading of archaeological findings: What can those from the past-present-future tell us about our coexistence with more-than-human worlds?

Participants will need to pick up an element they find during the walk, which will become the starting point for the creation of their visionary ecologies speculative narratives, combining cartographic, imaginary, and ecological aspects in their relation to the city and its nature. These elements will be and will become part of a final activity by the Isar River, where we will collectively explore the meanings of our future. With the elements collected during the walk, we will carry out an oracle altar and a hypothetical exercise where, through an archeology of the future, we will narrate the unearthed dreams and fictions that will tell us about the multispecies present, in the midst of ecological crises and pandemics. We will dream of visions of liberation, justice, and activism for a symbiotic planet.