

Climate Walk

Curated by Freddy Paul Grunert

An audio-visual interactive installation on the topic of “Climate – Culture – Change”

Akademie der Künste, Berlin, Visitors Bridge in the Passageway

Opening hours of the Bridge: 10 a.m.–10 p.m., admission free

The Climate Walk, initiated and realized by ZKM | Karlsruhe and Akademie der Künste, Berlin, is an experimental environment project aiming to stimulate and critically discuss ecological thought and action. The start of the Climate Walk coincides with the United Nations Climate Change Conference COP 17 in South Africa and forms a bridge between art and climate, is an invitation to walk towards change—beyond the disciplines of art + science. The Climate Walk focuses on global crises such as climate change and requisite transformations of society in the sense of a viable long-term “culture of co-operation” or new positions that creatively research a responsible-minded art of life. On site or via the Internet worldwide, visitors can contribute questions and comments and thus immerse in the archives of knowledge and experience of most prominent partners to unearth and bring to the surface their correspondence. In order to do so, three interfaces resembling life-sized spinning tops are available on the Visitors Bridge. Passers-by are summoned or encouraged by these interactive, sculptural elements to take action, to literally engage in contact with these spinning top steles in the national languages offered (German, English, Spanish), asking them for a Q&A dance. If, however, the questions are asked via the Internet, the expected answers, which are marked with a timecode, can only be collected on site on the Bridge at the Akademie der Künste in Berlin. Thus, the analog and the digital worlds are linked in reality. The degree of participation determines the most recent level of the thus generated data, which is automatically added to the existing archives of knowledge so that subsequent visitors/users can benefit from the accumulating knowledge. The Climate Walk continues the tradition of discursive dialogical perambulations of an academy in the original sense, revives the question and answer game of scholarly dialogue while walking in a present-day format and gradually transforms positions in a multi-layered way into a self-reflexive, possibly also qualifying social network of its own order. The Climate Walk also refers to the tradition of protest marches, such as the “Walks Against Global Warming” in Australia and Sweden, as well as to a current change of paradigm, the “performative turn.” Human species’ current practice of life—and this not only in industrialized nations—is in a similarly alarming state as are the climate and our earth. The Climate Walk opens up new anthropic resources, such as the “ecology of mind” by Gregory Bateson and Félix Guattari’s term “ecosophy”, which discuss active

protection of the environment by the description of social relations and which make it clear that we have to take our rescue in our own hands, that we have to enable ourselves to get into a position from which we can choose. This change of paradigm goes beyond art and science and links aesthetic, social, and cognitive levels. In an exemplary way, the Climate Walk thus offers a semi-public space which, in the course of a year, evolves into a place or a meeting point of “a continuous second enlightenment” (Peter Weibel). – FPG / CS