
EARTH sharing

EARTH sharing Publishing, 2018

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Authored and designed by Vibeke Jensen in collaboration with
Dino Karabeg for the opening of EARTH lab Bergen, June 22, 2018

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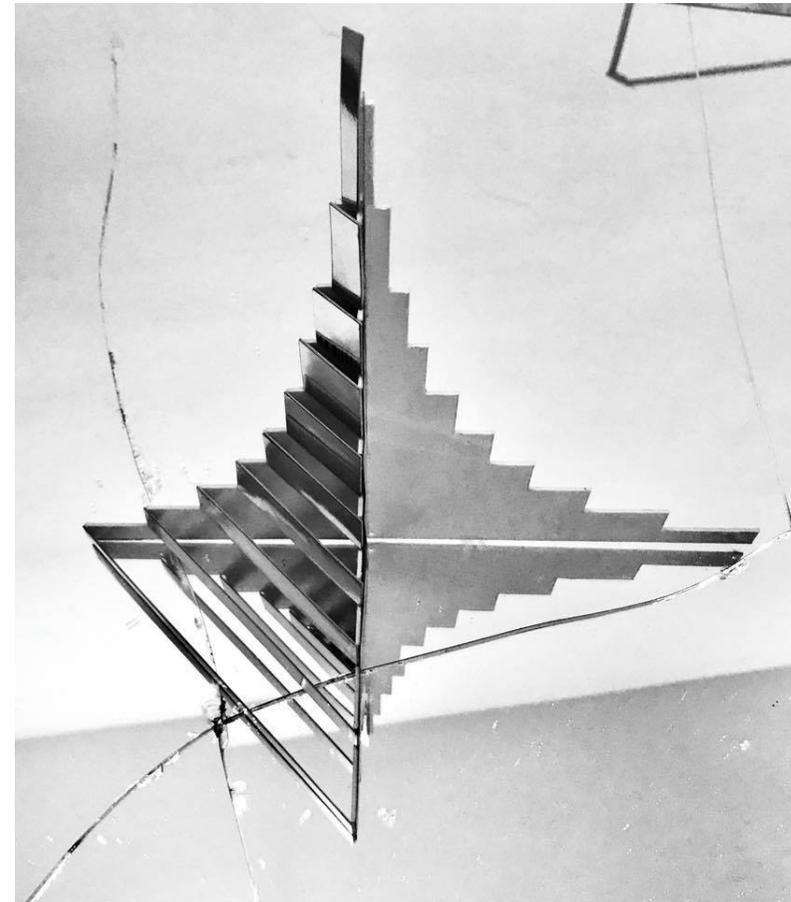
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EARTH lab

Involvement Series

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WORLD domination

*We are on collision course with nature [...] we accelerate into the future without knowing where we are going...**

* Underlined keywords and *quotes in grey italics* reference significant concepts from Dino Karabeg's writing on Polyscopy and Knowledge federation: knowledgefederation.org

The renaissance accelerated scientific development and secularization, the scientific method and the printing press preceded the industrial revolution and immense progress and innovation followed. At the beginning of the 21st century, the faith in the 'invisible hand'¹ of self-regulating markets and unlimited growth had led to a situation where the richest 1% owned more wealth than the rest of the people on the planet – just 8 men held the same wealth as the poorest half of the world population². The free-market economy³ had resulted in an extreme and unjust situation where growth benefited only the richest, while the rest of society – especially the poorest – suffered.

As the economic divide widened, crony capitalism, populism and neo-nationalism weakened democratic processes. A system based on division and separation of all and everything, driven by an endless race for profit and a reduction of life to economic motives, led to unsustainable exploitation of human and natural resources, untenable levels of waste and pollution, and escalating disasters due to climate change. This manmade⁴ planetary condition was the most critical in the history of life on Earth and questions emerged about how to prevent imminent catastrophes and the end of our species' survival.

¹ Adam Smith: *The Wealth of Nations*, 1776

¹ OXFAM report January 2017 <https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/economy-99>

³ David Harvey: *A brief history of Neoliberalism*, Oxford University Press 2005

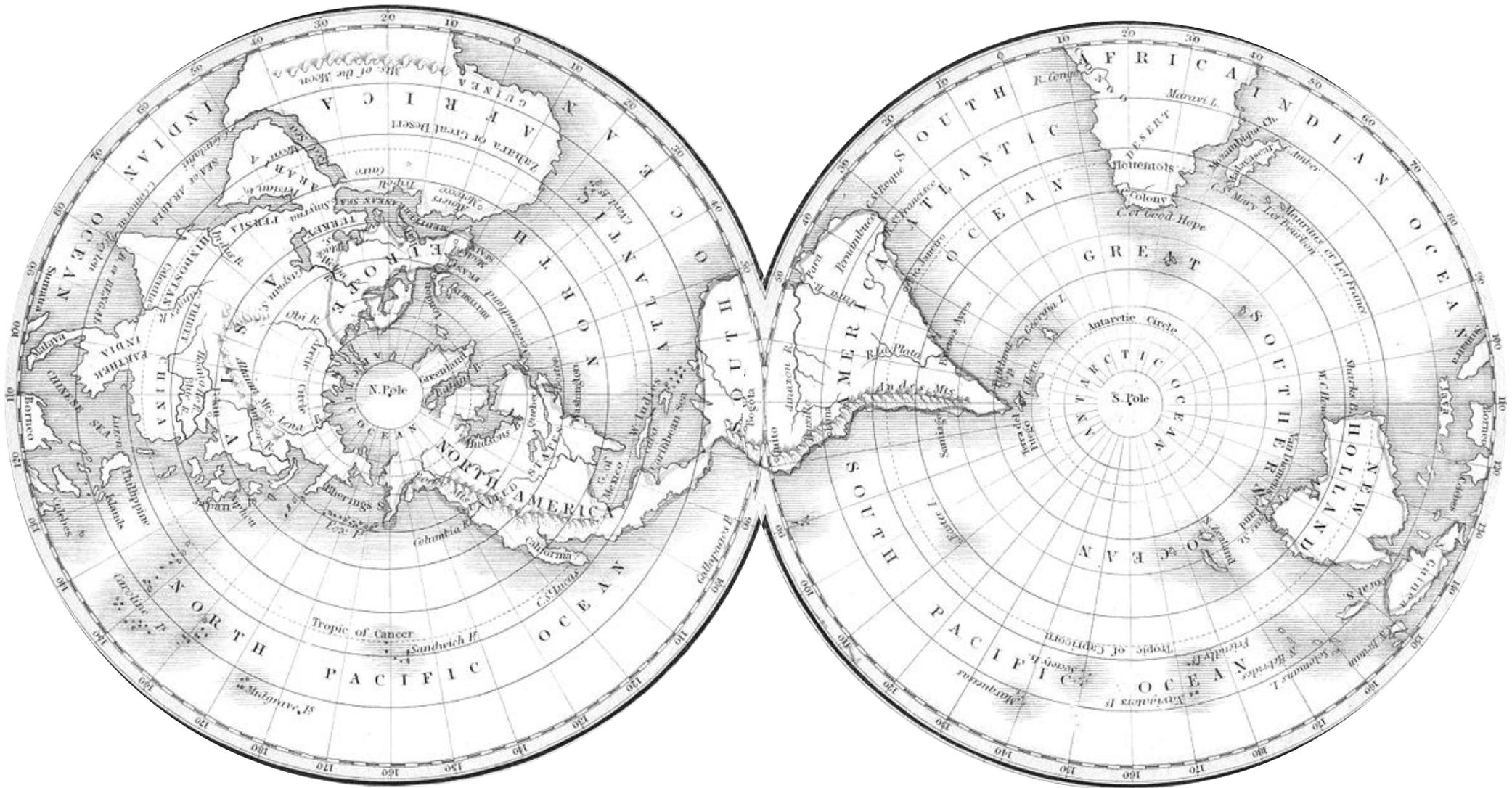
⁴ Carrington, Damian (29.08.2016). In recent centuries, the influence of human behavior on Earth's geology and ecosystems is so significant that a new geological epoch, the *Anthropocene*, has been introduced. "*The Anthropocene epoch: scientists declare dawn of human-influenced age*".



The World, Dubai
[theguardian.com/cities/2018/feb/13/not-end-the-world-return-dubai-ultimate-folly](https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2018/feb/13/not-end-the-world-return-dubai-ultimate-folly)



The Blue Marble
NASA Apollo 17 mission 1972



Paradigm Shift // EARTH sharing

We can change course from unsustainable to thriving [...]

As the urgency of the situation deepened, a budding form of holistic awareness spread – demanding that the benefit of the totality of the planet, (not only all its people but also the biosphere and technosphere⁵), become key to all planning and decision-making. To make this happen, the most beneficial practices, technology and knowledge were gathered across disciplines, combined and broadly communicated. A fundamentally different and open dialog about wellbeing, solidarity and ecology gradually displaced the modernist triad of individualism, domination of nature, and consumerism.

//

A deep shift in how we live and think happened on every level – a simple and fundamental revelation was internalized and guides both individual life choices, and local and global policies: in order to ensure the wellbeing of the planet and everyone and everything living on it, we share and distribute rather than hold on to and amass power. Through freedom from spectacular consumption, a new freedom of thought and action has emerged. By realizing a shared global identity we recognize that everything is connected – we embody others' prosperity and struggles, and the Earth's wellbeing as our own. This universal insight is simply named *EARTH sharing*.

paradigm strategy

self-organization

liberation

pursuit of wholeness

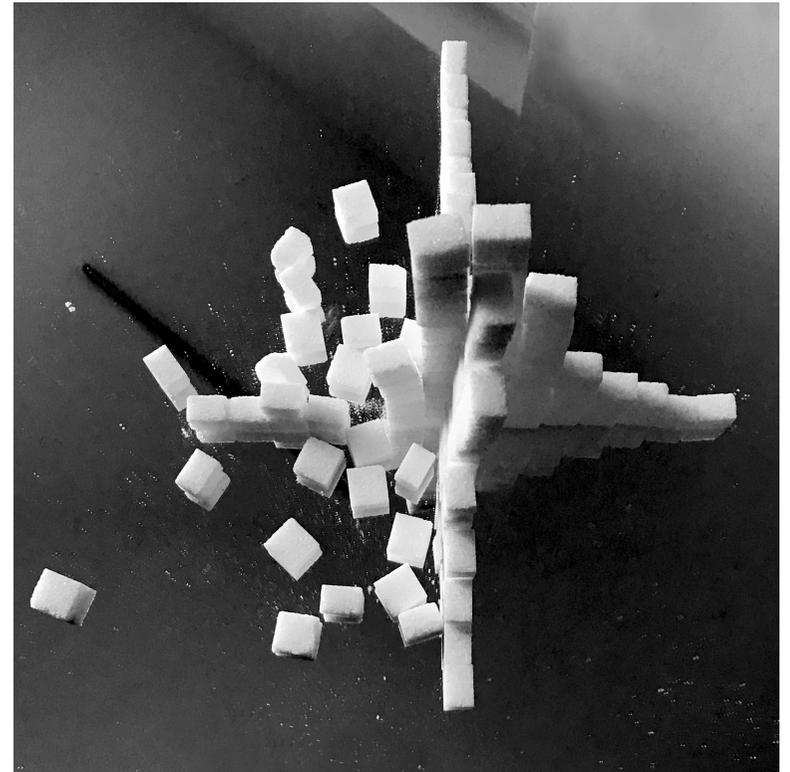
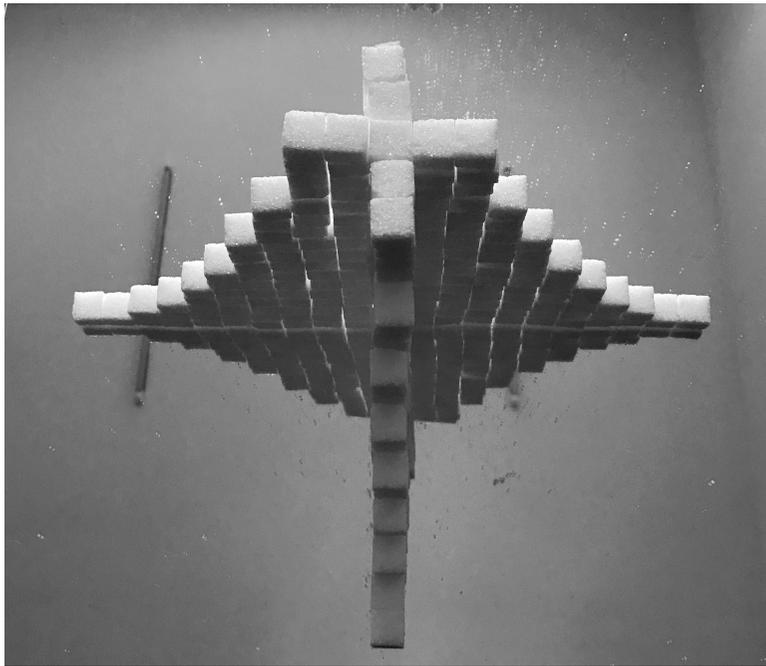
giving advantage to others and selfless service to

humanity are widely understood as the informed

person's way to 'pursue happiness'!

Garden of Liberation

⁵ the *biosphere* is the global ecological system integrating all living beings and their relationships, including their interaction with the elements of the lithosphere, geosphere, hydrosphere, and atmosphere, while the technosphere includes all manmade infrastructure, buildings, waste and installations under, on and above ground.



EARTH transition hubs

Imagine that on a walk in a forest you meet a fairy who wants to grant you a career wish: Whatever you may wish to accomplish, or dream will be granted! What would you choose to contribute to the world? What sort of success would you choose for yourself?

the Game-Changing Game

collective mind

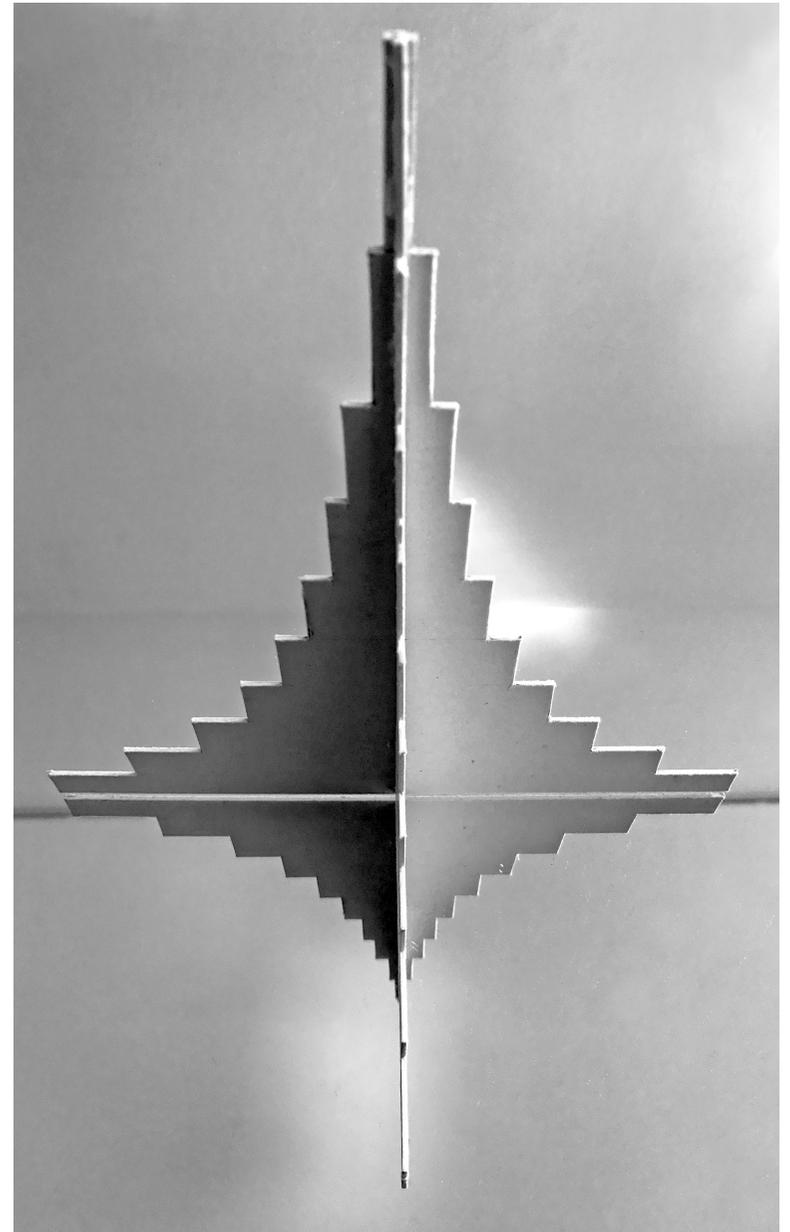
Like all living organism, *EARTH sharing* is in constant development. *Transition hubs* are meeting places where knowledge and experience are shared, and ideas of how to further the wellbeing of the Earth are discussed⁶. Local concerns are connected with collective knowledge and each hub has a different focus encouraging *collective wisdom*⁷, *cooperative strategies* and *sustainable development*⁸. These concepts were developed and to some extent practiced in the past, and are now expanded and implemented to foster equality and diversity, negotiate different needs and interests, and distribute abundances. People participate locally in an ongoing *global re-imagination* of *EARTH sharing* by engaging directly in actions and negotiations at the *transition hubs*. Ideas, resources and needs are shared and communicated online between the networked *hubs* and a democratic and visionary *EARTH parliament*⁹ established to direct sustainable development, and regulate and manage a balanced *EARTH* in the interests of every living being.

⁶ Global Scenario Group (GSG) defined the *Planetary Phase of civilization* binding the world into a *unitary socio-ecological system*. A theory of a holistic shift in historical dynamics. Paul Raskin, Paul H.Rey. The creation of an ecological civilization requires a social revolution organized democratically from below

⁷ shared or group intelligence that emerges from the collaboration, collective efforts, and coordination of many individuals and appears in consensus decision-making.

⁸ sustainable development seeks to meet human needs without undermining the integrity and stability of the natural systems.

⁹ A transparent worldwide network combining and connecting in a rizomic manner earlier democratic initiatives like *The First General Assembly* (Berlin Nov 2017) proclaimed one world, one parliament representing the unrepresented. Global solidarity with the exploited and oppressed <http://www.general-assembly.net/en/>



EARTH labs

we will recreate communication: The idea is to initiate a public dialog, which will enable us to think together and reach shared key insights [...]

paradigm dialog

systemic innovation

[...] when you want to act so as to contribute positively [...] to global recovery or to be part of “the solution” – just ask yourself “Is this really going to contribute to systemic change? Or am I only seeking solutions within the existing paradigm or system – and by conforming to it, adding to it my own power?”

Each cluster of *transition hubs* holds an *EARTH lab* where public *paradigm dialog* takes place. Creative teams construct situations¹⁰ that engage public participation in active listening, learning and sharing practices. Awareness of the benefits and challenges of cooperation is growing as the individualistic agenda of the past is abandoned. Understanding of solidarity and radical democracy is strengthened, as the benefits of inclusion and openness manifest.

In the *EARTH labs* knowledge is shared and power structures are decoded through dialog, spatial engagement and repositioning. When prioritizing the wellbeing of the EARTH, people re-consider their own roles in relation to exploitation and balance, reflection and contemplation, knowledge and action, form and spatial organization. Centralized organizational structures are compared to distributed and non-hierarchical configurations; horizontality and ground control are related to verticality and overview; and degrees of transparency are investigated. Through these practices the awareness and vocabulary of *EARTH sharing* is constantly developing.

¹⁰ *Preliminary Problems in Constructing a Situation*, French S.I.Journal#1, 1958, *Situationist International Anthology*, Bureau of Public Secrets 1981

EARTH lab Bergen

Centuries ago the advent of science liberated our ancestors from an obsolete worldview and ignited a sweeping wave of change. Can you imagine a similar development today?

To *explode* the message of *EARTH sharing* and construct a *transformative situation* for people, *EARTH* labs are launched at significant sites for a limited time.

The timing of *EARTH lab Bergen* coincides with the 50-year anniversary of 1968¹¹ and 500 years since the renaissance¹², and takes place in a monumental neo-renaissance building, erected as the Bergen office for Norges Bank. The building stands majestically in the bottom of Vågsallmenningen, a *commons* established after the city fire in 1582. Turned obsolete by digital banking, the office was closed down by the turn of the millennium and the building was taken over by the city. Currently the international gallery *Kunsthall 3.14*¹³ is located on the main floor.

The building's former function as a bank, and the vital potential of the timing and the location on the everyday public arena of the *commons* make this a potent site to introduce a paradigm shift.

liberation

Science and Religion

¹¹ Situationist theories behind the student revolution in Paris, *The Revolution of Everyday Life*, *Society of the Spectacle*, *Constructing Situation*; *The Club of Rome*: international think tank established in 1968 in order to study the future prospects of the humankind. A new humanism of people-based development (Aurelio Peccei) human happiness and growth

¹² enlightenment, truth, science, cause and effect

¹³ www.kunsthall314.art/



Norges Bank (Norwegian Bank) building on Vågsallmenningen (common) 1926
Norges Bank_1st floor lobby 1956

EARTH lab Bergen

INSIDE-OUT welcoming commoning¹⁴

transformative situation

From the building's flagpole, the transparent *EARTH flag* with its glimmering seed decal flickers in the wind to welcome all Earth citizens and announce *EARTH lab Bergen* to the city.

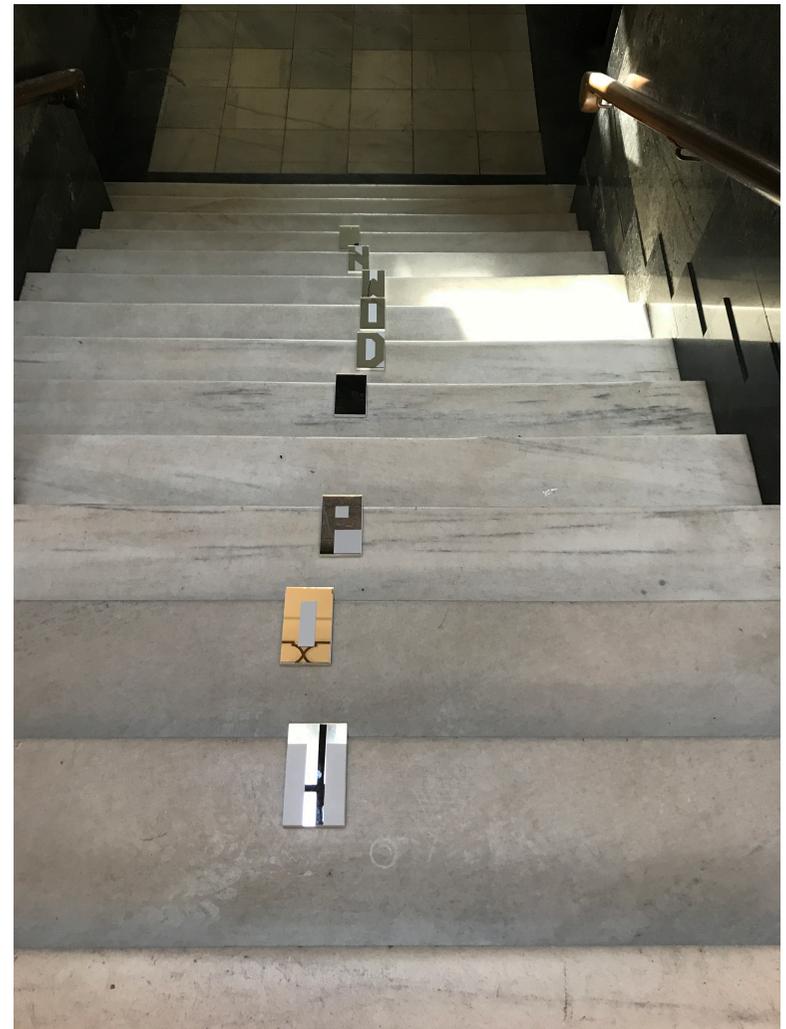
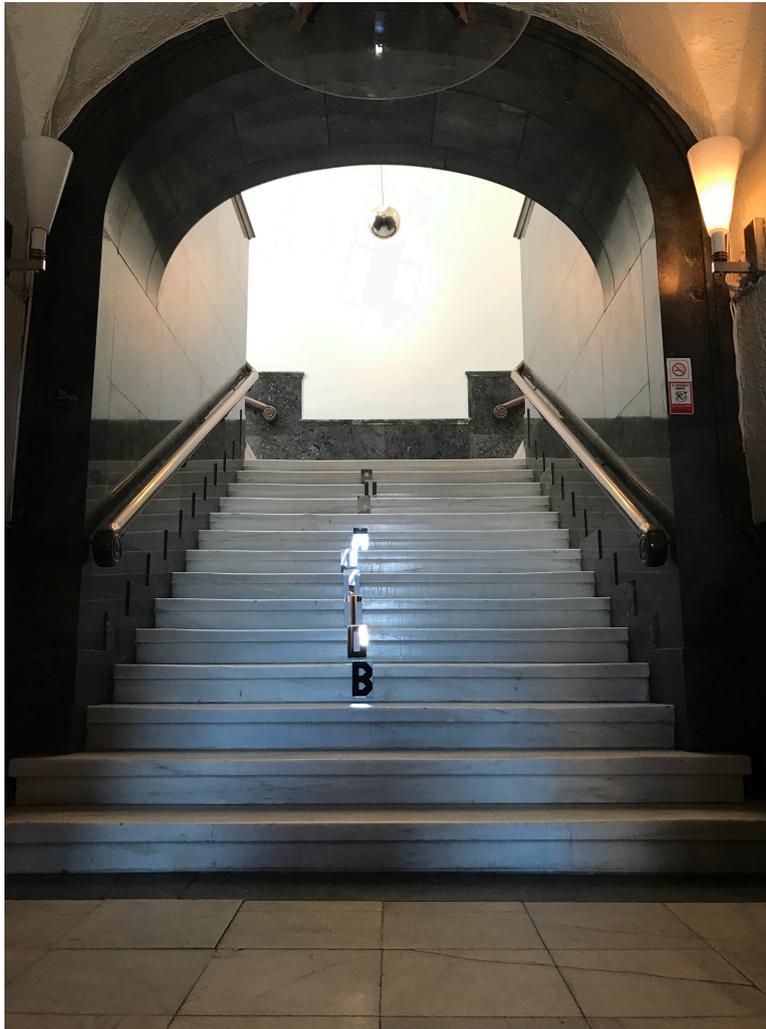
The oversized mirror letters in the windows facing the *commons* spell *E A R T H* upside down to introduce a radically different point of view. While the mirrors allude to former financial institutions' facades, their reflections of the changing outside conditions constitute a subtle but noticeable transformation in the urban space. On sunny afternoons, the word(s) *E A R T H* are reflected on the floor inside where the light and surroundings flow in through open shutters to connect the lab and the everyday life on the commons.¹⁵

Unlimited possibilities for creative work open up on the other side of the Mirror. We can design new research methods, new Internet communication tools, new business models, new kinds of information, new concepts, new ways of structuring information... We can erase disciplinary divisions, integrate sciences with arts and instantiate a whole new way of working with information. On the other side of the mirror we can create new ways of understanding and handling contemporary issues such as sustainability, politics, religion, values, democracy, globalization, healthcare, travel, education, marketing and freedom...

¹⁴ A verb describing the social practices used by commoners in the course of managing shared resources and reclaiming the commons. Popularized by historian Peter Linebaugh

¹⁵ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri: *Empire*, Harvard University Press 2000





BOTTOM-UP-TOP-DOWN

scaling understood as the change of scale, for example from small and local to large and global, and scaling understood as surmounting and climbing. [...]

Upon entering the building, you encounter a series of reflective interventions placed in the central stairwell to the main floor:

- a slanting line of mirror letters spell the term *BOTTOM-UP* on the risers – readable when you ascend, and *TOP-DOWN* on the steps – readable when you descend
- a stepladder is sometimes left on the central landing where the single stairwell divides in two
- hovering above the landing, a polished steel sphere reflects the climbing visitors, the entry and the two upper stairs. Seen from above the sphere depicts a borderless¹⁶ planet. The globe is suspended by a steel rod from the coordinates of Bergen and anchored to the railing by a wooden clamp that reads *GLOBAL* from above and *LOCAL* from below.

These interventions are tools for shifting positions. They suggest transcendence¹⁷ of fixed relations between top and bottom, and build awareness of the benefit of multiple points of view¹⁸, and moving in-between.

mountain top view

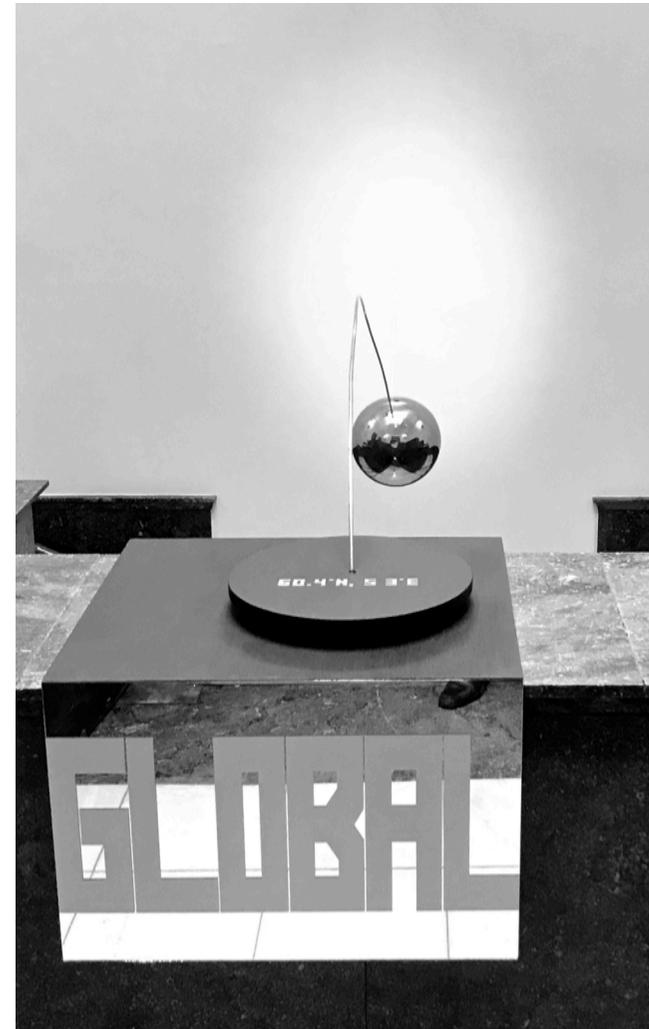
every phenomenon or issue has a certain level or generality or abstraction where it can be most suitably understood and handled; this level is often much higher than where we are accustomed to look and act

polyscopy

¹⁶ borderless inclusive world where all people are EARTH citizens and free to move

¹⁷ from Latin transcendere "climb over or beyond, surmount," from trans- "beyond + scandere "to climb".

¹⁸ Bottom-up organization multi-perspectivism/many sidedness, polyscopy





PYRAMID

The key point dialog resembles a collective climb to a mountaintop, from where we can see clearly the direction we want and need to follow.

[...]

Immediately inside the door to the former bank lobby, you are confronted by the *PYRAMID*¹⁹ - a deconstructed square structure that penetrates the view of the high ceiling, marble columns and row of windows facing the harbor. The slightly slanted steps of the pyramid are low and deep at the bottom and increasingly shallow, steep and inaccessible towards the top.

The pyramid divides the entrance, and you can choose to approach the stratified mirror on the left or the blackboard diagram on the right. Of the two pyramid segments facing the commons, one has mirror-clad risers that reflect the visitors and the space – and missing treads, challenging upward mobility. The last segment has horizontal treads only, its top steps might be removed and positioned on the floor to feed back into the bottom of the pyramid – suggesting redistribution.

The *Pyramid* is a tool to discuss power structures and spatial occupation²⁰ – you can engage the various positions, points of view and hierarchical models offered by its subtractive shape and relate them to the objective of *EARTH sharing*.

power structures

¹⁹ The pyramid is a mental construct, a model of reason and concepts, of social and economic forces of production, of systems, of geometry situated in sensory space. Mirror image interplay between thought and space allowing you to experience your own experience. The pyramid provides overview.

²⁰ Henri Lefebvre; The Production of Space



EARTH lab Bergen: Pyramid of Power



ROUNDTABLE

“If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants” Isaac Newton wrote in 1675. Imagine if we would no longer be able to take advantage of the best insights of our best minds: What sort of problems, and what situation would result? Imagine if we would then regain that ability: What sort of opportunities would open up?

A second structure inhabits the former lobby: contrary to the pyramid this one is horizontal. It is based on a diagram designed to plot cyclical phenomena²¹. The structure functions as a modular *ROUNDTABLE*²² consisting of 12 wedge shaped units on wheels that can be dispersed around the room to accommodate smaller groups, or connected in a radial constellation for larger discussions. The 30° wedges have different depth and allow various distances to the center. Small platforms on wheels provide movable floor level seats.

At the *ROUNDTABLE* people engage in *paradigm dialogs* by uniting around a single and open interaction to think together, listen and talk. High-level insights of the ‘big picture’ are shared between *EARTH citizens* possessing a multitude of low-level insights. The intervention provides opportunities to interrelate all knowledge to recapture a sense of the whole.

paradigm dialog

knowledge federation

²¹ Polar-area diagrams were invented by Florence Nightingale: *Notes on Matters Affecting the Health, Efficiency and Hospital Administration of the British Army*, 1858.

²² The Roundtable complements the Pyramid proposes immediacy of perception and action, sensual experience potentially activating sensory space, energies and impulses, rhythms and flux – of practice performing in space by bridging sensory pleasure and reason.



EARTH lab Bergen: ROUNDTABLE



SAFE space

[...]

The massive wide-open door to the vault²³ of the former bank reveals a *magical mirror* where you can not only see the world but also see yourself in the world. You may recognize yourself as a more or less successful player in the competitive game of life. You can discover that you are not an objective observer of the world, but a creative and responsible participant.

On close introspection you may find a way to go through this mirror. Inside the dark vault, a recorded voice reveals how you can liberate yourself from this avatar and instead be part of a global solution.

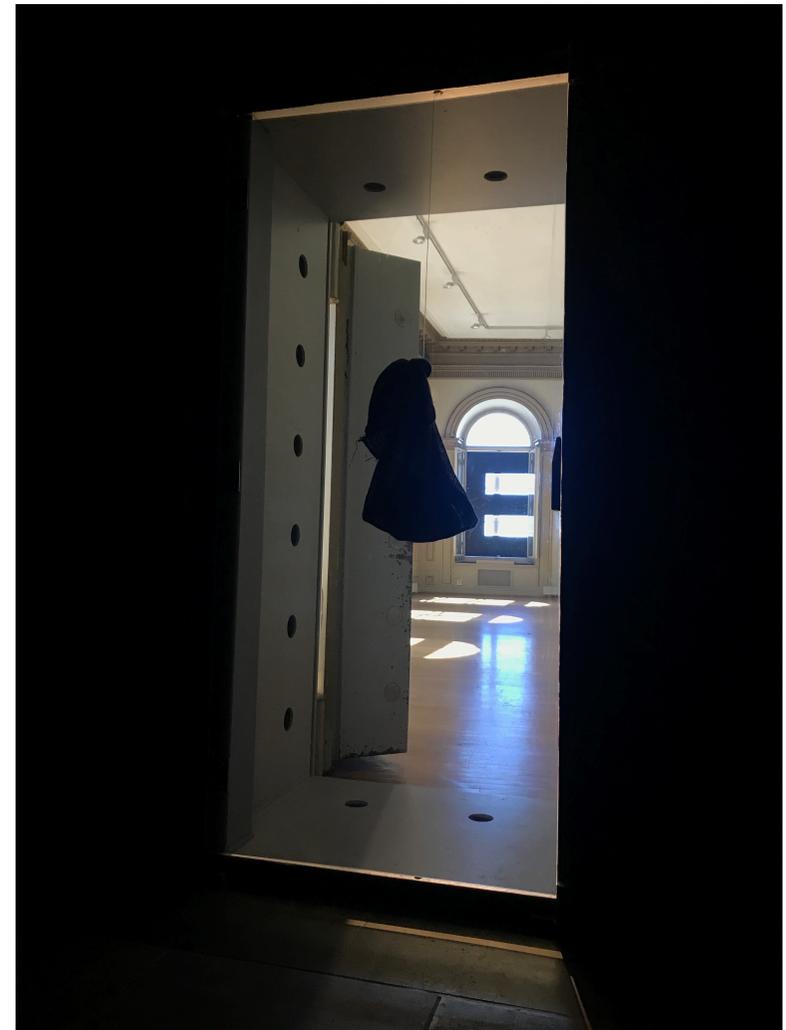
Looking back through the mirror, you can sit down and listen. Maybe you will start to see another reality on the other side of the mirror. The narrative is accompanied by a jar of seeds – if you are ready to engage in a paradigm shift, you are welcome to take one!

magical mirror

Garden of Liberation

make a re-evolutionary step from a homo ludens to become a homo sapiens: giving advantage to others and selfless service to humanity are widely understood as the informed person's way to 'pursue happiness'!

²³ In the old paradigm the vault used to secure the money and valuables of the richest



EARTH lab Bergen: SAFE space

EARTH network

[...]

The cores of the Roundtable wedges contain compartments of soil and biodegradable pots. You can contribute to the online seed bank and its *Visionary Vocabulary*²⁴ for Earth sharing by naming your *Liberation seed* before planting it to grow in the *EARTH lab*, at home or in a communal garden.

The tabletops and letters in the windows are painted black to serve as chalkboards during dialogs and actions. Snapshots of these critical surfaces are shared online in the *EARTH network*²⁵.

The *EARTH lab* interventions incite a creative and political force that exists in the individual and in collaborations. A force that resides in interrelating and sharing insights in everyday decision-making and in building the future – to encourage collective concepts to sprout, and to recognize similarities and accept differences as natural parts of an undivided whole.

EARTH lab Bergen is part of an online network closely related to the concepts of *Polyscopy* and *Knowledge federation*.

Knowledge federation

²⁴ Visionary redistribution, revolving imagination, suggestive ground control, mindful reversal, transformational dialog, resonant balance, situational coexistence...

²⁵ earthsharing.info knowledgefederation.org



EPILOGUE

Let me briefly tell you how I reached the point of proposing a paradigm shift. From early on I was often upset about things I found unjust or outrageous, like when the rector of our university “on principle grounds” refused to address any part of a well-prepared argument; or during *Desert Storm* when anti-ballistic missiles were launched at 10 million GBP each while politicians claimed it was “too expensive” to house the teenagers living in cardboard boxes by Waterloo - “different budgets”. Episodes like these made me profoundly question power structures and priorities.

During my graduate studies in London I was introduced to the writings and actions by the Situationist International (SI) who sought to revolutionize everyday life by uniting life and art and getting people involved in playful experimental behavior like the *dérive* and *constructed situations*. The SI criticized vision as the preferred human sense and pointed out the danger of the seduction by the Spectacle of modern life. In 1967 Guy Debord published *The Society of the Spectacle*, which strongly influenced the student uprising in 1968. Debord describes the transformation of the world into an image: *it is the opposite of dialogue... Everything that was directly lived has moved away into a representation... social life has become mere appearance... turning reality into a reflection of its images...* The Situationists promoted a utopian reversal of the current order, and intervened in a direct activist way, hoping to turn the scopoc regime against itself. They saw the complementary apparatuses of surveillance and spectacle as central to the maintenance of disciplinary or repressive power in the modern world.²⁶

The Situationist demand for engaged passionate participation in life, and their opposition to passive consumption resonated – investigation of vision became

²⁶ Guy Debord: *La Société du Spectacle* 1967, translated by Ken Knabb 2002

my obsession and I adopted their technique of *constructing situations* in my work. I started to reproduce and mirror mechanisms that exist in everyday life, and present them as options by changing some of the parameters. After three years in London I moved to New York where these experiments continued and expanded into visionary collaborative projects like *Unlimited Free Space* (1997).²⁷ This project represented a peak in optimism of what could be possible. In response to NY major Giuliani's under cover "war on crime" I staged playful and subversive situations where you might be caught in the act of secretly watching, where your illusions of privacy were removed and you entered the position of the controlling gaze; and people were challenged to reflect on and actively engage in different points of view. With the aftermath of 9/11 surveillance and control tightened its dual grip on the city, as the Situationists predicted. My work became more critical and revolved around the impact of vision technology and omnipresent suspicion in public space.

In 2007 I met Dino Karabeg during an artist residency in Dale in Sunnfjord. He gave a lecture on *The Mountain View* and introduced the necessity and advantage of a systems understanding that informs the perception on the ground. It made a deep impression and we started a conversation through sporadic meetings and emails. In 2015 he wrote: *I think about you sometimes; how you said if someone would take on the whole thing that you would join. We are doing it! (Long story short...) Let's have a coffee when you're in Oslo?* I was intrigued, but consumed by creating a large installation for the Brugge Triennale²⁸ and by relocating from New York to Berlin. I was co-authoring a book reflecting the security discourse ensuing 9/11: *The City between Freedom and Security*,²⁹ and exploring increasing

migration flows and the efforts to provide for and control them by teaching a master course, *Border Crossing*, at the Bergen School of Architecture. I felt increasingly unsatisfied by critiquing the status quo, which seemed to get worse by the day, and started looking for alternatives. Berlin hosts a rich variety of groups and programs that engage in social and political change, like the *Anthropocene Program* at *Haus der Kulturen der Welt*, which offers invested insight into the human influence on the Earth; and events like *Storming the Reichstag* and *The First General Assembly* that proclaimed: "one world, one parliament"; and Yael Bartana's improvised play *What if Women Ruled the World?* All truly inspiring projects but how do they fit together? How can we break down barriers and gather forces to work together before "the shit hits the fan" as we say in New York? We all breathe the same air - could we become part of a natural and borderless world and experience unity with all of nature and humanity beyond religion and nationality and be one with the universe?

It took me two years to reply to Dino: *I am working on a solo exhibition titled EARTH sharing at Kunsthall 3.14 (which was erected as the first branch of Norges Bank in Bergen). The idea is to engage the visitors in reflection and actions that move from objectives of world domination toward the vision of sharing. I would really like to discuss with you the whole idea and possibilities for collaboration.* When we hooked up, Dino opened a well of insights into how a new paradigm can come into being. At UiO he has developed *Polyscopy*³⁰, an interdisciplinary approach to knowledge in order to *foster the evolution of socio-technical systems including scientific communication, public informing and education, and ultimately of a "collective mind" or "global mind" in an informed society – where what we believe, and the way we orient our action, reflect the state of the art knowledge in relevant areas.*

²⁷ Collaboration w/ Norman Douglas and Bernd Knaller for Steirischer Herbst, Graz 1997

²⁸ Triennale Brugge 2015, *DiamondScope* on Market Square Brugge

²⁹ Co-edited by Deane Simpson, Vibeke Jensen & Ander Rubing, Birkhäuser Verlag 2017

³⁰ <http://knowledgefederation.org/Polyscopy>

Dino has worked on this for more than two decades and it is some pretty exciting stuff! Our collaboration took form by listening, talking and meeting in person and exchanging ideas and references. We pursued the idea of organizing a public dialog at the launch of *EARTH lab Bergen* at Kunsthall 3.14 where the premise is that a shift has already taken place and *EARTH sharing* has replaced the former paradigm of profit and competition. The *EARTH sharing* dialog is activated by the interplay between the public and invited participants and a series of interventions: A Situationist informed *constructed situation* supported by *discursive* or *performative objects* or props aim at informing and liberating habitual thought and behavior and to stimulate change through direct dialog and spatial encounters. The interventions start in the public space in front of the building and on the façade, and continue up through the central staircase into the former bank lobby and vault. The invited participants will engage the visitors in dialog supported and sometimes prompted by these spatial interventions. Each of the interventions is introduced in this booklet. Hopefully we will catch your interest and inspire your participation!

Deep gratitude and my warmest thanks go to the generous people who have made this project possible through their support and contributions: Dino Karabeg – it is an honor to work with you! Dino has introduced me to many amazing thinkers and people in his network, and some of them are joining us for the *EARTH sharing dialog*: David Price is coming from England, and Kjartan Rumsfeld is stopping in Bergen on his way from Australia to Tromsø. My uncompromising, hugely competent and committed partner Santiago De Whale has built the physical interventions in his workshop in Brugge and led the installation in Bergen; *AGC Glass Europe* who sponsored *DiamondScope* in Brugge Triennale 2015 has donated the custom cut mirrors for *EARTH sharing*. Shanghai based curator Biljana Ciric has given valuable feedback on the artistic process. The trust and support of

director Malin Barth, who has followed my praxis since she curated my first solo show in Bergen *Mirror Scope* (2003), has been amazing and her staff at Kunsthall 3.14 a pleasure to work with. In spite of the failed attempts to get external funding for *Earth sharing*, thanks to all of you, this project has materialized and become a work of love.

Vibeke Jensen, June 2018