A HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE WORLD OF TOMORROW

INTRO

In 2019, the idea developed for producing a manual that serves as an instruction guide for the planet, containing guidelines that apply to both society as a whole as well as to individuals. These instructions apply to the basic human behaviors and attitudes that can bring our global ecological situation back into balance again.

The "HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE" will consist of artistic, scientific, and abstract concepts - or rather instructions - from various guest authors. The following concept is intended to describe the project in detail in order to inform potential guest authors and to motivate them to participate.

The global "lockdown" of spring 2020 can be understood as a unique planetary situation and should thus be used as an equally unique point of departure for this project.

Tomas Zierhofer-Kin & Rainer Prohaska

The SITUATION - SPRING 2020 - A GLOBAL STATE OF EXCEPTION

Approaching the COVID-19 restrictions as an ecological opportunity
A tiny virus, cunningly jumping from species to species, has managed to accomplish what no one else has until now regarding the greatest threat of all time, the ecological collapse caused by humans. In a very short period of time, COVID-19 has not only brought the modern, globalized world as we know it to a halt, it has also heavily aggravated its foundations.

Capitalism and democracy
What all the scenarios of the manifold threats to the foundations of capitalist cultures have in common is that they have an irrational effect on society, and are thus apparently incomprehensible to human consciousness.
The Coronavirus has managed to create a collective state of fear - unlike the visible effects of climate change, the mass extinction of species, and the many other phenomena caused by the Capitalocene - a fear that has placed a spotlight on science and has driven states to enact measures that were unimaginable before COVID-19.

ECOLOGICAL COLLAPSE IN THE SHADOW OF A PANDEMIC

There may be numerous reasons why this pandemic triggered a collective panic that could lead to such radical measures, whereas the impending ecological collapse remains largely without social or political change.

One reason certainly lies in our historical experience with contagions and temporary states of emergency. Taking drastic measures serves to contain and eradicate the viruses that caused them.

These involved and involve a lengthy, but nevertheless "only" temporary refraining, which promises a definite return to normality and thus to the usual world order.

Another reason may be that until now we have had no referential model in nature regarding the problem of the human destruction of Earth. This is, on all accounts, a fundamentally more complex scenario than that of a pandemic.

The Coronavirus appears as an external threat, which we believe we have not caused. In contrast, the ecological collapse has been caused by our lifestyles, our actions, and "missing" omissions, and subsequently puts many of humanity's rational-industrial achievements since the Enlightenment into question. Humanity itself has turned out to be the virus that has gone rampant, threatening to destroy its own system, its own livelihood.

RETURNING TO "NORMALITY" OR THE TRANSITION TO A "NEW GLOBAL CONDITION"

By trying to stop the virus from spreading as a pandemic with unlimited growth, we at least temporarily disable our own unlimited growth through the prescribed COVID-19 sanctions.

This pandemic can in fact be understood as an opportunity if we recognize the relationship between the impact these sanctions have had and the broad field of measures for containing the ecological and political journey of capitalist culture. The condition of the planet in spring of 2020, can, departing from an ecological perspective, be seen as the ideal testing grounds and an ideal starting point for a sustainable society.

The Austrian philosopher and artist Kilian Jörg wrote in his comment under "The Cold Panic," in *taz* on 14 March 2020, of a "deep need to finally suspend our catastrophic normality." Is "The Cold Panic" that was triggered by the pandemic representative of our latent fear of the far greater threat of ecological collapse? Is there even a collective, subconscious need to finally end this "catastrophic normality" (as the central cause of the impending catastrophe)?

While expressing deep solidarity with those whom it has brought immeasurable physical and economic suffering or even death, the pandemic can, however, be interpreted as an opportunity.
We can also take the Corona pandemic and its many consequences as the impetus for a fundamental rethinking that excludes a return to catastrophic normality. It then becomes a historic opportunity if we recognize it as a laboratory for a post-Corona world, based on other social and ecological paradigms.

OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS OF THIS "NEW GLOBAL CONDITION"

The big question will be who will take the lead in economic, political, and ecological decision-making in this "post-Corona world order"?

Will democracies be overturned or will they reconfigure themselves in regards to redefining the images and narratives of social and ecological utopias?

Will the big corporations be the winners of this crisis, thereby further enforcing their fantasies of unlimited growth in spite of social and ecological needs?
Or will civil society assemble, closely collaborating with art, the natural sciences, and humanities, and draw and create the utopian images and narratives of a possible new world?

The course is set for the phase of returning to a world without sanctions! Will there be a "reset" for

processes such as politics, work, business, travel, agriculture, food, and many other areas that will be brought back to their familiar states before COVID-19 or will the cards be reshuffled for an "other" form of normality? - A "post-Corona" time in a more livable world order!

"A HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE WORLD OF TOMORROW"

The FUTURAMA-LAB invites artists, scientists, and visionaries to contribute building blocks to this modular project, which takes up an old idea from Fluxus, namely that of the score (the format of instruction guides), and redefines it.

The aim is to compile a compendium of instructions for civil society to rebuild the planet as an "escort" for preventing a "reset" to the conditions that existed before COVID-19.
The "Hitchhiker's Guide to the World of Tomorrow" also represents a guide that should accompany us on various real and metaphorical levels as we travel from the world of yesterday to the world of tomorrow.

In addition to "taking action" and "not taking action" (refraining), the poetic instructions of a travel guide to a possible future can play a role in "unlearning" (as Spivak formulated it) ascribed behavioral and thought patterns.

The contributions will be publicized through different media.
The "Hitchhiker's Guide to the World of Tomorrow" will initially accompany people digitally on their journeys to a post-Corona society via social media and then later in printed form. Furthermore, formats and institutions such as festivals, galleries, museums, and events in public space will be the stages for this long-term project.

Due to the global dimension of the travel guide, a high level of diversity of contributions can be expected. The instructions will be articulated differently in China than in Angola, Central Europe, Russia, the United States or Brazil - in geographical, historical, social, and ecological terms.

Since this is a non-profit project, we ask for your contribution in an unpaid form.

INVITED CONTRIBUTIONS / CONTRIBUTIONS VIA "OPEN CALL"

We hereby personally invite you to electronically send us your concepts for instruction guides for taking action or for refraining from action.

The format is open. We look forward to simple lists or essays as well as haikus, poems, drawings or graphics.

The instructions should encourage people to take action in accordance with your "utopian" instructions or to refrain from certain actions in order to verify the usability and future viability of the scores for transforming our society into a more social and ecological one.

ABOUT THE "FUTURAMA-LAB":
http://www.futurama-lab.org