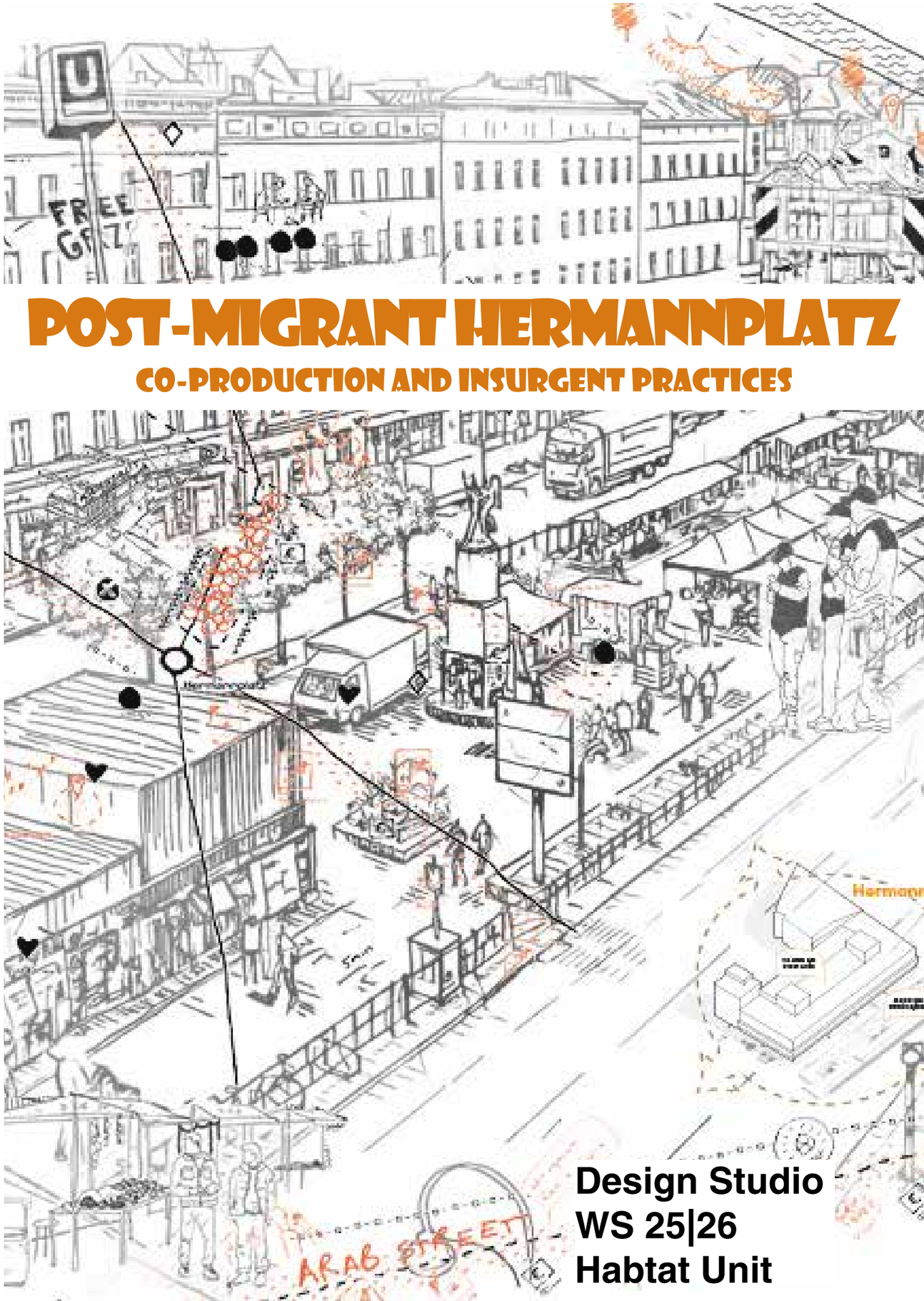


POST-MIGRANT HERMANNPLATZ

CO-PRODUCTION AND INSURGENT PRACTICES

Design Studio
WS 25|26
Habtat Unit

COOPERATION PARTNERS

INPUTS
Dr. Juliana Canedo, insurgent urbanism, senior reseracher (PI) at TU Berlin
Qusay Amer, Researcher & Doctoral Candidate at TU Berlin
Danielle Amorim, doctoral student in Urbanism at UFRJ
Niloufar Tajeri, Mitbegründerin der Initiative Hermannplatz
Emine Yilmaz, Leitung von Dütti-Treff und Dütti-Werkstatt
Robert Barbarino, post-migrant studies
Mohammed Chahrour, Sozialwissenschaftler mit Spezialisierung auf Migration, Anti-Rassismus und Diversität
Prof. Dr. Anna Steigemann, Professorin für die Soziologischen Dimensionen des Raums
querstadtein Stadtrundgang mit Saad: Erinnerungen an die Heimat. Von Al-Nasr in Damaskus zur Sonnenallee
Moritz Ahlert, Kiosk of Solidarity

S A V V Y CONTEMPORARY: Exhibition CLOSE TO HOME.
Remittance Spaces Between Arrival and Return

Group Coops
Gangway e.V. Neukölln Nord, Straßensozialarbeit in Berlin
Hejmo
Stadtteilmütter
Brotpapa
Mobile Stadtteilarbeit
Manege
Junges Tanzhaus
Dütti-Nachbarschaftstreff
Martha Gemeinde
Kiezteff am Vollguter Gemeinschaftsgarten
Helene-Nathan-Bibliothek
Initative Hermannplatz
FamilienzentrumCafés von Hejmo

STUDIO

TEACHING STAFF:
Dr. Juliana Canedo, Danielle Amorim & Qusay Amer

STUDENTS:
Adrian, António, Christina, Daniel, Eileen, Emil, Emilie, Hannah, Jara, Laurenz, Leo, Linus, Lissy, Max, Mona, Ria, Simon, Tim, Yan

BOOKLET by:
Leo & Jara

Urban Design Studio
Habitat Unit
TU Berlin

WS25|26

Habitat Unit

EDITORIAL | INTRO

WELCOME TO THIS MAGAZINE! IT EXAMINES HERMANNPLATZ AND ITS SURROUNDINGS FROM A POST-MIGRANT PERSPECTIVE AND THROUGH THE LENS OF INSURGENT PRACTICE.

ABOUT

The booklet explains the working methods, research, and approaches to the study area and then turns its attention to the neighborhood itself: it examines its modes of operation through the lens of infrastructure and arrival infrastructure, its historical developments and potential future prospects, the actors involved, and the broader political context. Taken together, these levels form a foundation for understanding the dynamics that shape Hermannplatz.
Building on this, the following sections shift the focus from theory to practice and present the projects, approaches, and proposals developed over the course of the semester.

The STUDIO consists of a group of master students in architecture, urban planning, urban design, and landscape architecture from various semesters, primarily from TU Berlin, though not exclusively. The group came together through a shared interest in the course topic “Post-Migrant Hermannplatz: Insurgent Practice and Co-Production.” Throughout the semester, the work was guided and supported by instructors Juliana, Qusay, and Danielle.

Although this publication was compiled and designed by Jara and Leo, it is the result of a collective process. The content is based on contributions from many participants, including fellow students, instructors, and collaborating partners who helped shape the studio and its outcomes.

HOW TO READ THE BOOKLET - OR NOT

The structure of this publication follows the course of the semester. It begins with a theoretical introduction, followed by an analytical section offering an in-depth examination of the research space, and culminates in applied practice and project work. The focus is on presenting the individual group projects.

QUOTES are visually highlighted with a distinct typeface so that they are easily recognizable as such. They are presented without citing sources and bring together voices from various contexts - such as residents and users of the area, collaboration partners, or students - without prioritizing or ranking individual perspectives.

FOR THE INTENDED READING EXPERIENCE, IT'S RECOMMENDED TO VIEW THE PUBLICATION IN TWO-PAGE MODE !



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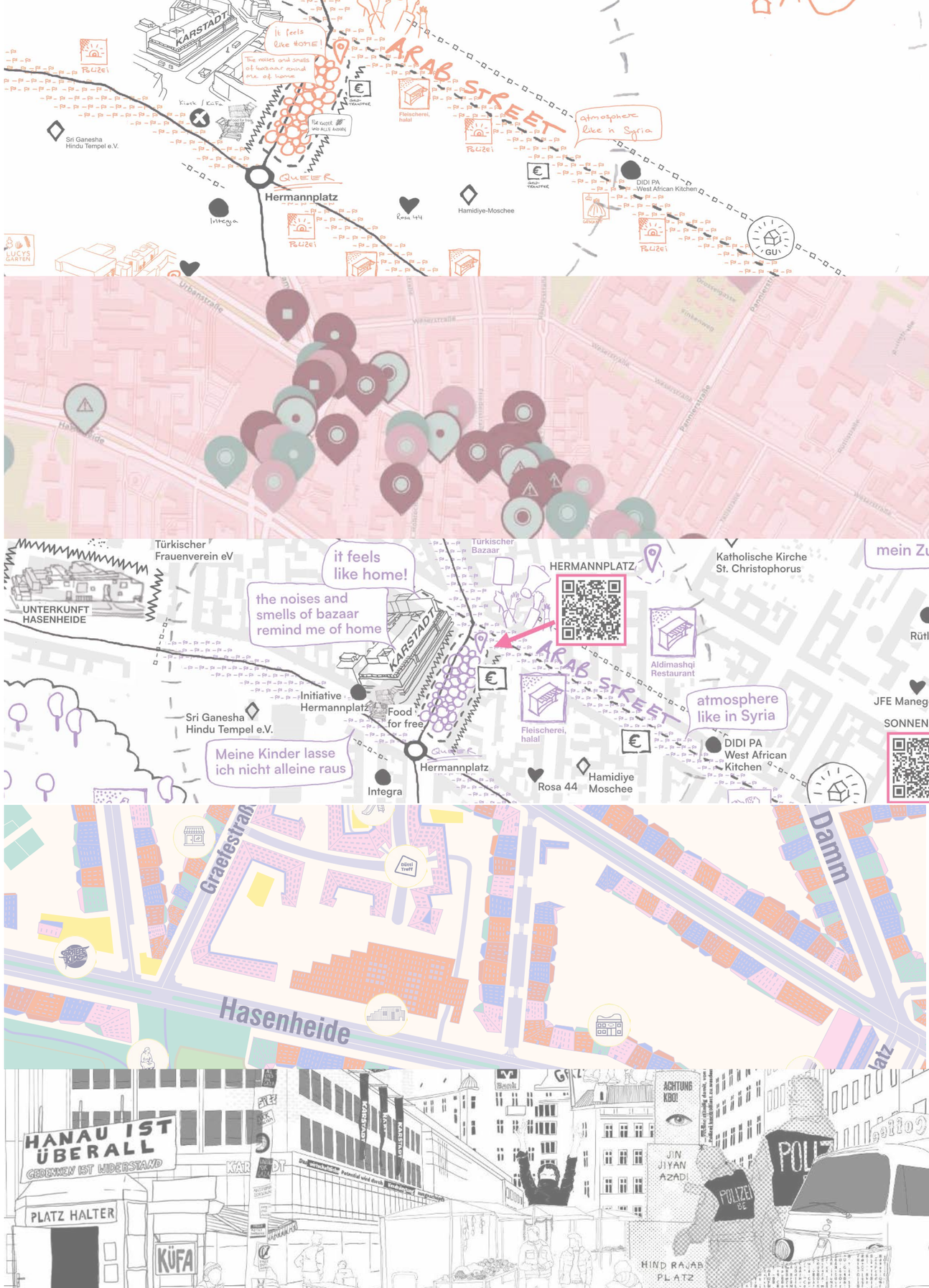
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THEORY FRAMEWORK



RESEARCH AREA

The study area is located on the district border between southeastern Kreuzberg and western Neukölln in Berlin. At the center of the study area lies Hermannplatz, which is designed as an elongated traffic island that widens into a plaza-like space. The plaza area includes, among other things, a central statue and the main entrance to the subway. Another entrance, located in the middle of the square, has been blocked off for several years by a striking wooden structure. The square itself is framed by a half-height fence and the adjacent, heavily trafficked main roads.

In terms of urban planning, Hermannplatz is a major transportation hub. Several main traffic arteries converging radially on the square meet here, connecting it closely to the broader road network. Consequently, daily traffic volume is high, encompassing private motorized vehicles, public transit, and pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

The eastern side of the square is bordered by a multi-story residential development with small-scale retail spaces on the ground floor. The western side is dominated by the large-scale building complex of the Karstadt department store, built in 1929 and renovated several times over the years; as a striking standalone structure, it significantly shapes the urban landscape.

To the southwest of Hermannplatz lies Hasenheide, a sprawling inner-city park. It serves as an important open space in the immediate vicinity of the heavily paved and traffic-dominated square.

In addition to its infrastructural significance, Hermannplatz also fulfills a practical, everyday supply function. On weekdays between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., a weekly market takes place on the square. Thus, at Hermannplatz, transportation infrastructure, a commercial hub, and a public gathering space overlap in a highly dense spatial configuration.

At the same time, the lack of a pleasant atmosphere on the square is frequently discussed. Greenery, shade, and seating are limited, making it difficult to spend extended periods of time in this public space.

Hermannplatz receives significant media attention. Coverage often oscillates between depictions of high crime rates and littering. At the same time, the square is also known for its political significance. Many demonstrations and political gatherings take place at and around Hermannplatz, which also serves as an important site for everyday political expression, such as through graffiti, posters, and flyers.

In addition to Hermannplatz itself, the surrounding area was also a key focus of our research and practices. North Neukölln, in particular, played a central role in the analysis.

The district is historically regarded as a classic working-class neighborhood and is also characterized by a high proportion of the migrant population. Key urban thoroughfares in this context are primarily Sonnenallee and Karl-Marx-Straße, which serve as major shopping and service hubs for the surrounding neighborhood. Along these streets, numerous small shops, restaurants, and ground-floor service establishments define the streetscape. Many of these businesses are run by migrants and reflect the district's cultural diversity. Sonnenallee, in particular, is known far beyond Berlin for its Arab-influenced everyday culture. Restaurants, bakeries, grocery stores, and cultural gathering places make it an important social and economic hub for various communities. This creates an urban space that not only provides functional amenities but also plays a significant role in identity formation, social networking, and everyday interactions.

At the same time, much like Hermannplatz itself, the area is heavily marked by media and societal stigmatization. Narratives about crime, littering, or social problems often shape public perception, while structural causes such as inadequate infrastructure, social inequalities, or political decision-making processes are frequently overlooked.

In parallel, North Neukölln has been undergoing an intensive transformation process for several years. Rising rents, new cultural scenes, and increasing investment pressure are leading to significant gentrification dynamics that are altering existing social structures and creating new lines of conflict within the urban landscape.

POST-MIGRANT PERSPECTIVE

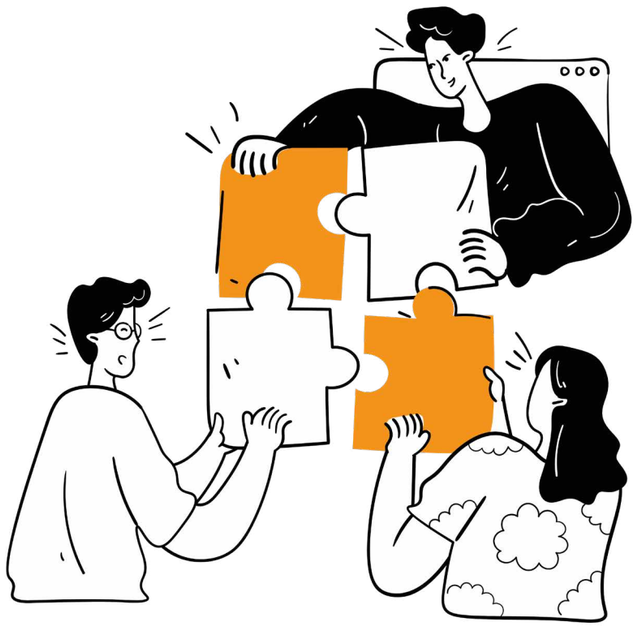
Berlin is widely celebrated as a city of migration and strategically mobilizes diversity as a branding tool to attract tourists, investors, and new residents. This narrative of cosmopolitan openness is particularly evident in districts such as Neukölln, where more than 50% of residents have a migrant background. The district is often portrayed as a hub of cultural hybridity, creative economies, and urban dynamism, yet this positive framing conceals underlying contradictions shaped by neoliberal urban policies and uneven development.

While diversity is marketed and commodified, it is simultaneously problematized in public and political discourse. Stigmatizing narratives attribute urban challenges such as rat infestations, overcrowding, or perceived disorder to migrant communities, obscuring structural causes like inadequate infrastructure, chronic underinvestment, and austerity-driven governance. In this way, migrant populations are often positioned as scapegoats for systemic failures. Such discourses are rarely neutral; they frequently precede and accompany processes of gentrification. As land values rise, neighborhoods like Neukölln become sites of speculative investment, where urban renewal and branding strategies prioritize profitability over the needs of long-term residents, leading to displacement, social fragmentation, and the erosion of existing communities.

Against this backdrop, the master's studio engages with post-migration and insurgent urbanism to develop alternative perspectives for the area around Hermannplatz and Sonnenallee. This urban zone has become a focal point of political debate, shaped by large-scale projects such as the proposed redevelopment of Karstadt and the construction of Berlin's largest refugee accommodation, expected to house over 1,000 people by 2027. These developments highlight tensions between top-down planning approaches and the lived realities of local communities.

Post-migrant perspectives seek to move beyond the binary distinction between "natives" and "migrants," promoting a more inclusive understanding of urban citizenship. They emphasize equal rights, social participation, and the recognition of cultural diversity as a fundamental component of urban life. Migration is thus understood not as a problem to be managed, but as a transformative force that continuously reshapes societies, institutions, and spatial practices.

By centering the needs and perspectives of Neukölln's residents, the studio aims to develop inclusive strategies that actively counter displacement and exclusion. In this context, insurgent urbanism is understood as a political practice that fosters self-determination, solidarity, and spatial justice. Neukölln is thereby reimagined as a dynamic and plural urban space, where difference is seen as a resource and the future of the city is collectively negotiated.



INSURGENT PRACTICE

The concept of "insurgent practice" can be understood as a conflictual, anti-hegemonic, and productive mode of action that emerges in the context of neoliberal urbanization. Its theoretical necessity stems from the transformation of the state and the city in the neoliberal era. As David Harvey describes neoliberalism as "creative destruction," it is a project of comprehensive institutional destruction that dismantles existing social arrangements, collective rights, and public infrastructures (Harvey 2006, pp. 145–146).

This dynamic manifests itself particularly in cities of the Global South. Burte and Kamath speak of a "structural violence of spatial transformation," in which urban spatial production itself must be understood as a form of violence, as it entrenches unequal power relations in cultural, social, and institutional structures (Burte & Kamath 2023, pp. 448–449). They further demonstrate how state-capitalist alliances generate "aspirational spaces," the realization of which leads to displacement, dispossession, and the destruction of lived spaces (Burte & Kamath 2023, p. 455).

Against this backdrop, Faranak Miraftab develops the concept of "insurgent planning." She defines insurgent planning as a radical planning practice that responds to neoliberal domination through apparent inclusion and is characterized as counter-hegemonic, transgressive, and imaginative (Miraftab 2009/2016, pp. 2–3). She makes it particularly clear that neoliberal leadership strategically integrates itself into civil society's decision-making processes to secure hegemonic stability (Miraftab 2009/2016, pp. 3–4).

A central theoretical component is Miraftab's distinction between "inviting spaces" and "invented spaces" (Miraftab 2004, pp. 1–2). Inviting spaces are spaces for participation legitimized by the state or donors, whereas invented spaces emerge from collective action and directly challenge the status quo (Miraftab 2004, p. 2). It is important to note that "grassroots movements" operate flexibly between these spaces and combine strategies of survival with strategies of resistance (Miraftab 2004, pp. 3–5).

Insurgent practice is not only political but also epistemic. Ananya Roy criticizes the fact that cities in the Global South are often represented through the metonymy of the "slum," thereby reducing subaltern urbanities to poverty (Roy 2011, pp. 223–224). For her, subaltern urbanism is an intervention against this "sanctioned ignorance" of metrocentric urban research (Roy 2011, p. 235).

Edgar Pieterse also emphasizes that urban knowledge production in the Global South is not neutral but politically situated and should enable agency (Pieterse 2013, pp. 312–313).

In terms of democratic theory, insurgent practice can be linked to Chantal Mouffe. Mouffe argues that democratic theory must acknowledge the insurmountability of antagonisms and that a model of "agonistic pluralism" is necessary (Mouffe 2000, pp. 6–7; p. 13).

Democracy is thus not a space of rational consensus, but a structured space of conflict. This conflictual nature manifests itself spatially in insurgent practice.

Miraftab also emphasizes the importance of historical awareness: insurgent planning transcends time, place, and action, and aims to deliberately destabilize hegemonic orders (Miraftab 2009/2016, pp. 25–26; pp. 22–23).

THE TEAM



ADRIAN
ANTÓNIO
CHRISTINA
DANI
DANIEL
EILEEN
EMIL
EMILIE
HANNAH
JARA
JULIANA
LAURENZ
LEO
LINUS
LISSY
MAUSI
MAX
MONA
QUSAY
RIA
SIMON
TIM
YAN

Weekly Roles

Each role is to be filled by two people

	Morning Moderation	Time & Break Moderator	Documentation & Follow Up	Space & Environment Care
24.10.	Simon / Jara		Emilie	
29.10.	Emil / Simon	Antonio / Tim	Camillo / Emil	Yan / Jara
06.11.	Laurenz / Camillo	Emil / Daniel	Laurenz	Antonio / Tim
14.11.		Laurenz	Christina / Jara	Max
20.11.	Antonio / Tim	Camillo / Jara	Max / Lissy	Christina
27.11.	Eileen / Camillo	Simon	Antonio / Tim	Daniel
04.12.	Lissy	Linus	Daniel / Simon	Camillo / Eileen
11.12.				Emil
18.12.	Max	Lissy		
08.01. / 15.01.	Daniel/Leo	Antonio / Tim	Leo/Linus	
22.01.	Linus / Mona	Leo	Lissy	Laurenz / Max
29.01.	Laurenz / Jara		Max / Jara	Simon
05.02.				Lissy / Jara
12.02.				

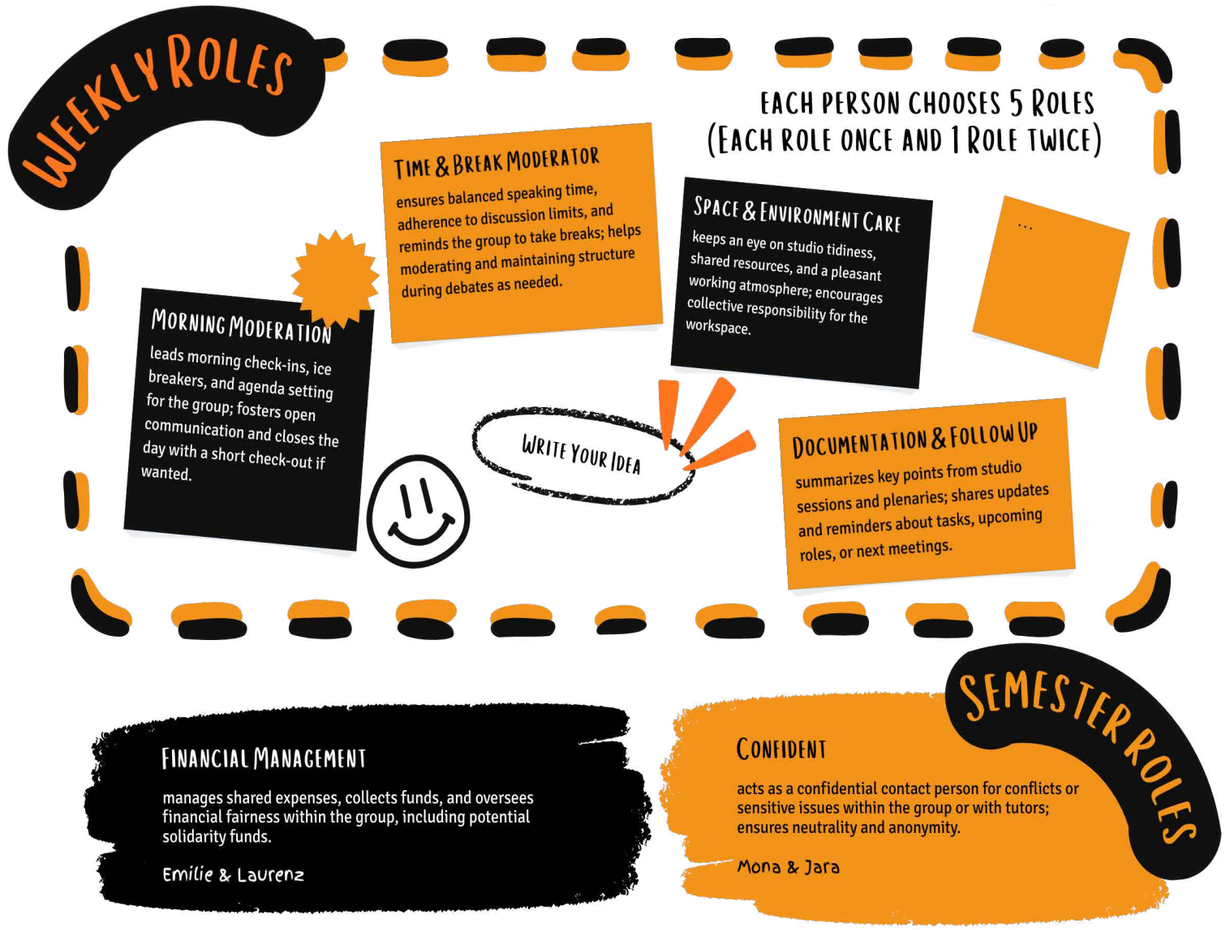
Within the framework of insurgent practice, the studio was conceived as a collective space for learning and co-production rather than as a hierarchically organized design structure. At the outset, the class collaboratively formulated expectations, values, and working principles, which were reflected upon and adjusted over the course of the semester. A central foundation was the collectively developed care practice, which was carried out during the weekly colloquia. This practice encompassed a mindful approach to workload, time, and resources, mutual support, shared responsibility, and transparent communication. Care was taken to ensure that responsibilities rotated to avoid creating hierarchies and to give every person the opportunity to help shape the studio. Roles within the studio were also defined collectively and carried out on a rotating basis.

The overarching framework of the studio emerged through collective decision-making processes and consensual negotiations. Knowledge was shared and produced collaboratively, with individual achievement largely avoided. Top-down productions or working methods were rejected; instead, principles of co-production rather than mere representation were pursued in the studio in accordance with “insurgent practice.” Collaboration with local residents, initiatives, and stakeholders was an integral part of the process, with students viewing themselves not as external experts but as part of ongoing social and spatial processes.

Particular emphasis was placed on collaborative work and learning among equals, on exchange between different groups, and on relational and responsible practices. Design and planning were understood as political, social, and collective practices, rather than as formal or aesthetic production.

Insurgent Practice as a Studio

I really liked how the students appropriated the care practices and other parts in decision-making. For me it really felt that we achieved a collective organization.



STUDIO PROCESS & WORKING METHODS

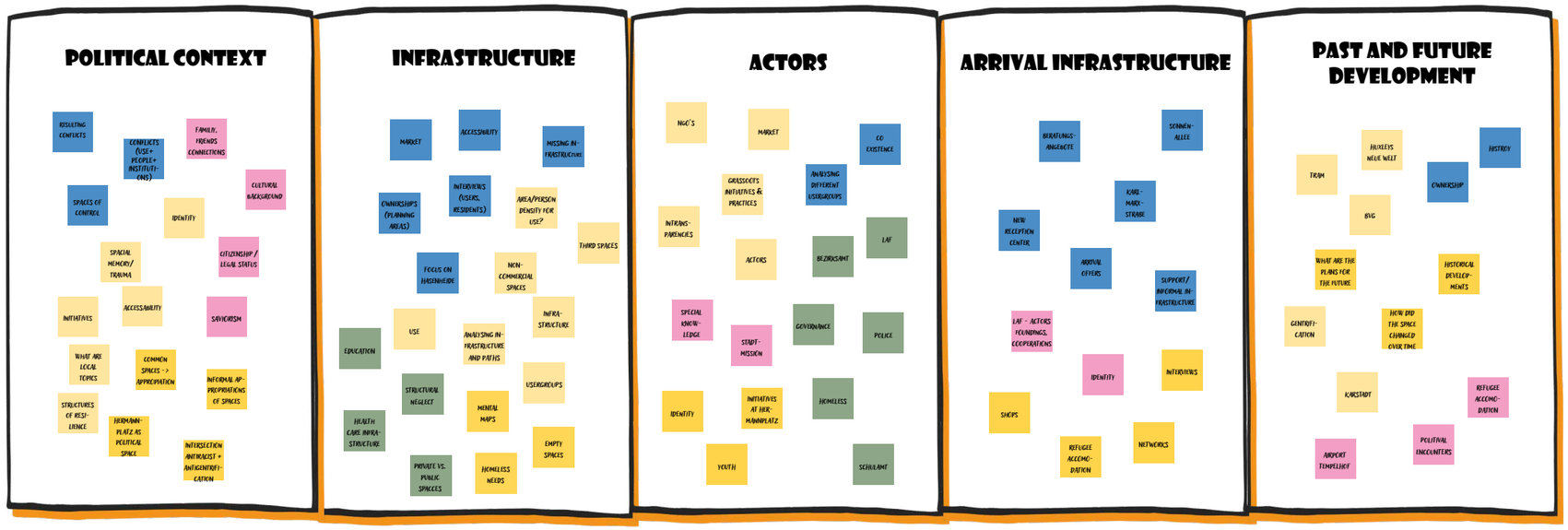
I'M NOT NATURALLY OUTGOING, SO I NEEDED TIME TO FIT IN WITH MY CLASSMATES. NOW I FEEL TOTALLY COMFORTABLE.

WE TRIED TO ALWAYS MAKE A COLLECTIVE DECISION, WHICH IS IMPORTANT TO ME, BUT IT DEFINITELY TAKES PRACTICE...

I FEEL THE DECISION MAKING COULD HAVE BEEN MORE INCLUSIVE, BUT THE SOLUTION ISN'T MORE MODERATION OF TEACHERS



At the beginning of the semester, the group jointly formulated expectations, values, and working principles, which were continuously reflected upon and adjusted as the semester progressed. The studio began with a series of introductory lectures, including presentations by the Hermannplatz Initiative and by Anna Steigemann on the topic "Multi-culti' vs. 'another cell phone store': - Changing ethnic, social, and commercial diversities in Berlin-Neukölln."
In addition, guided tours and collective explorations of the study area took place, which were deepened through conversations and direct encounters on site. This initial phase served to develop an understanding of the context and bring together different perspectives.
On this basis, the course participants collectively decided on the main content areas and guiding questions, and defined the formats in which they would work. The course then divided into several working groups based on thematic interests and shared concerns.
The analysis phase was characterized by weekly plenary sessions in which interim results were presented and discussed.
Ongoing discussions and collective reviews in the studio provided the framework for a process-oriented reflection. At the same time, the groups worked independently but remained closely connected through regular feedback loops.
In terms of content, the analysis phase was geared toward a public kiosk event as an interim format, which served both as a progress report and as an interface with the neighborhood. The goal of the kiosk format was to engage with local residents, create spaces for exchange and conversation, and gather perspectives, opinions, and experiences.
The project was carried out at two locations. First, in the morning at Hermannplatz as part of the Protest Kiosk, and then in the afternoon at the Werner-Düttmann-Siedlung in collaboration with the Kiosk of Solidarity. Preparation and implementation were carried out across groups. Together, the participants developed various methods, formats, and activities to facilitate low-barrier access, spark conversations, and incorporate a diversity of voices.



I FEEL I LEARN A LOT FROM THE EXPERIENCE IN THIS STUDIO.

HOW ABOUT A CARE PRACTICE ?







FOLLOWING THE STRUCTURE OF OUR STUDIO, WE INVITE YOU TO TAKE A MOMENT FOR A SHORT CARE PRACTICE BEFORE CONTINUING. IF YOU PREFER NOT TO PARTICIPATE, FEEL FREE TO SIMPLY SKIP THIS PAGE.

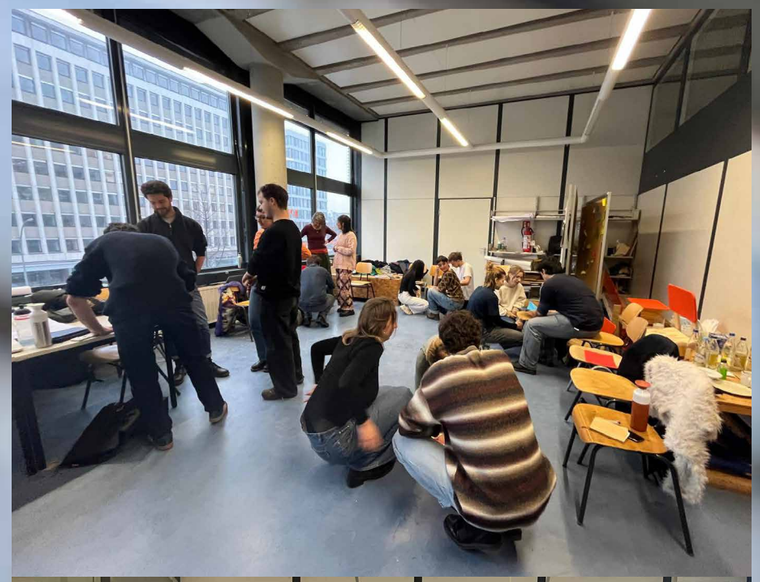
1. Arrive
Find a comfortable position like sitting, standing, or lying down. Gently close your eyes or soften your gaze. Take a slow breath in through your nose and exhale through your mouth. Do this three times.

2. Feel the Body
Bring your attention to the physical sensations in your body. Notice where your body touches the ground, chair, or floor. Feel the weight of your body and allow your muscles to soften slightly.
Slowly scan your body from head to feet.
Forehead, jaw, shoulders, chest, stomach, legs, feet.
You don’t need to change anything, just notice.

3. Notice Your Inner State
Ask yourself gently: How am I feeling right now? What do I need at this moment?
Allow whatever emotions or thoughts arise to be present without judging them.

4. Self-Compassion Moment
Place a hand on your chest or simply imagine warmth around your body. Silently say something supportive to yourself, for example: “It’s okay to feel this way.”, “I am allowed to take a moment for myself.”, “I can move through this one step at a time.”

5. Return
Take two deeper breaths. Slowly bring your awareness back to the space around you. Move your fingers or shoulders gently, and open your eyes. Take a moment to notice if anything in your body or mind feels slightly different.







URBAN

ANÁLYSIS



PAST & FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HERMANNPLATZ IS THE RESULT OF MANY INTERTWINED PROCESSES, RANGING FROM URBAN PLANNING CHANGES AND SOCIAL DYNAMICS TO INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS. A VISUAL TIMELINE TRACES THESE DEVELOPMENTS ACROSS DIFFERENT TIME PERIODS AND ILLUSTRATES HOW THE PAST AND POTENTIAL FUTURE PROSPECTS ARE INTERCONNECTED.

The Past-and-Future-Development Group is examining the historical development of Hermannplatz and its surroundings. The goal is to make key events, planning decisions, and social changes visible over an extended period and to understand their significance for the site's current situation. The analysis was based on both literature reviews and on-site conversations with passersby. While the literature provided historical and urban planning context, the interviews offered insights into personal memories, perceptions, and current uses of the square.

To bring these different perspectives together, a timeline was developed that depicts key developments along a shared timeline. It serves as an analytical and visual tool to trace changes in the site over several decades and to reveal broader social contexts.

HOW DO YOU IMAGINE HERMANNPLATZ IN 30 YEARS?

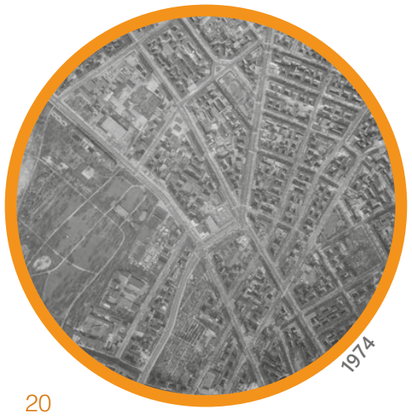
by António, Max, Leo

CO-PRODUCTION with:
bgv employee, bakery of karstadt, coffeebar, fruit seller and market costumers









The research was divided into several sequential phases. It began with exploratory research to gain an initial overview of Hermannplatz and its context. Building on this, books were borrowed and in-depth, topic-specific research was conducted to examine individual aspects more thoroughly.

In the next step, interviews were conducted with passersby on and around Hermannplatz. The goal was to capture both retrospective perspectives on the development of the site and to understand current perceptions and uses. The insights gained from this were used to further deepen the research in a targeted manner. All collected information was then evaluated, checked for relevance, and consolidated in terms of content.

The consolidated results were presented in a timeline, which serves as a central tool for structuring the findings. To avoid overloading the timeline, only the most important topics from the past and with regard to future developments were deliberately included. The population development of Neukölln and Kreuzberg is visible in the background of the timeline. Together with aerial photographs arranged on the sides, dating from 1929 to the present, it becomes clear how demographic development has changed in parallel with urban densification.

The timeline also served as the basis for developing methods that were used in collaboration with the other groups at the kiosk event. This event constituted another part of the research and facilitated a more in-depth exchange with local residents. Using formats such as a card game, targeted conversations on specific topics could be initiated. The methods served as conversation starters and helped bring different perspectives to light.

Subsequently, the timeline was revised again and expanded to include additional topics. It became particularly clear that Hermannplatz is perceived from very different perspectives. While both critical and positive voices were expressed at the protest kiosk directly on Hermannplatz—and some perceived the location as lively and enjoyed using it as a transit point in their daily lives—the mood at the kiosk event at Düttitreff was predominantly negative. There, the square was perceived more as noisy, unsafe, and stressful.

The timeline itself is structured so that a timeline showing the decades runs down the center, making it easy to see when specific events or architectural developments took place. Various eras are marked along this axis, not only to place events in a chronological context but also to situate them within broader historical and political contexts. Colored lines branch out from the central axis, representing different thematic areas such as culture, public transportation, or entertainment.

This can be illustrated using the blue line for public transit as an example. It begins in 1875 with a horse-drawn omnibus line that already served a route roughly corresponding to the current path of the U7. In 1925, a residential building on the western side of the square was demolished to make way for the construction of the Karstadt complex. A unique feature of this complex was the direct access to the subway, which was innovative for its time. In 1966, all tram lines were finally discontinued, so that from then on, only the subway and bus routes characterized public transportation at Hermannplatz.

Further infrastructure developments are planned for the future, including the extension of the M10 tram line, which is set to run from Warschauer Straße to Hermannplatz. In addition, the BVG is planning to extend the U7 line toward BER Airport, which would further integrate Hermannplatz into the wider transit network.





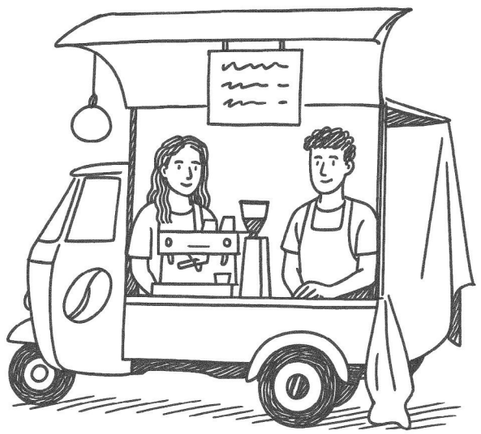




SINCE 2015, THE GROUPS OF PEOPLE WHO BUY FRUIT AND VEGETABLES FROM US HAVE REMAINED LARGELY THE SAME.



THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN SOMEONE WHO WAS STRANGE, BUT TODAY THE QUESTION IS MORE HOW OFTEN A QUESTIONABLE PERSON IS THERE DURING THE DAY.



I'VE BEEN LIVING ON A SIDE STREET OFF HERMANNPLATZ FOR 31 YEARS, BUT I DON'T REALLY SPEND MUCH TIME HERE ANYMORE.



IT WOULD BE GREAT IF THE CONSTRUCTION SITE COULD BE COMPLETED BY THE TIME WE LEAVE. THEN PEOPLE WOULD NOT ONLY WALK PAST TO GET TO THE OTHER ENTRANCE, BUT ALSO COME UP WITH A VIEW OF US



PLEASE ZOOM IN!



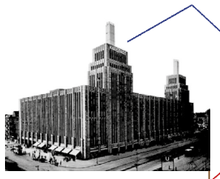
1866 the area arround the mosque at columbiadamm was gifted from wilhelm I to the „ottomanempire" as graveyard

1867 an obelisk was builded with a golden crescent moon

1908 "Gemeinschaftshaus" and "Passage-Kino" arround karl-marx-straße

1909 the first flights happen on the tempelhofer feld

1920 a little house was used to pray





1923 the first airport was built at the northern space of the tempelhofer feld

1927 - 1929 departement store at hermannplatz by philipp schaefer in the expressionist style named karstadt



1936 - 1941 - tempelhof airport was built during the nazi era one og the largest continuous building in europe: 1.2 km long

1940 - 1945 tempelhof airport munitions plant using forced labour during ww II peolple form occupied poland, german annexed land in czechoslovakia and Ostarbeiter

1948 - 1949 tempelhof airport was part of „Luftbrücke" 1948/49 way to overcome the blockade with round about 700 flights per day



1952 martin-luther-chorch was reconstructed after worldwar II

1953 „neue welt" highlights the post-war reconstruktion phase in neukölln

1954 a natural theatre opend in hasenheide

1972 kammerchor was founded by regisseur and componist „winfried radeke" as an opposite to the traditional opera

1976 kammerchor turned into „neukölln opera"



1980 the market „am maybachufer" was established in the late 1980s as a small weekly market selling food and household goods



1984/85 the little house was upgraded to a small mosque with a dome



1988 neukölln opera got a house for themself from the berlin senat

1999-2004 the sehitlik-mosque was builded on the area of the little graveyard-house

2000 tempelhof airport 400 flights per day shooked central Neukölln

2008 tempelhof aiport officaly closed

2012 neukölln opera got a collab with kinder-und-jugendprogramm des-internationalen--literaturfestival of berlin



2022 new refugee accomodation inside the old airport

329.000 neukölln population

151.000 kreuzberg population

94.000 neukölln foreign population

kaiserreich
kaiserreich gründerzeit
ww1
weimar republic
third empire ww2
occup. ger.
federal republic of germany
german democratic republic
german reunification
berlin republic

1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 1960 1970 1980 1990 2000 2010 2020 2030 2040

1839 hasenheide was clusted as „landschaftspark" but the military still used it for shootinglessons

1867 „neue welt" began as a beer garden



1875 Pferdeomnibuslinie drove over the line of (later) U7

1880 rudolf sternecker gots owner of „neue welt" and hosted concerts, vaiety shows and public amusements

1899 the first tram-line opened





1908 foundingstone for martin-luther-church
1909 inaugurated in of martin-luther-church

1925 residential buildings to the west of the square were demolished to make way for the construction of the subway system and Karlstadt which widened the square and gave it its current dimensions

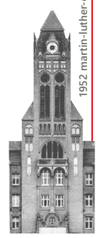


1926 - 1927 U8 and U7 open to service Hermanplatz as a transit hub: U-bahnhof + 15 tram lines

1933 - 1945 „neue welt" during the nazi period, the site hosted propaganda events, illustrating its transformation from a working-class vvenue of solidarity to an instrument of state ideology

1947 the little Street got named "Karl-Marx-Straße" after the philosoph





1953 „neue welt" highlights the post-war reconstruktion phase in neukölln

1954 a natural theatre opend in hasenheide

1960 - 1970 after ww II the „neue welt" became a keylocation in berlin's cultural and music scene. It hosted major international artists.

1966 all tram-lines are closed to service



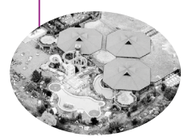


1978 Prpheum got finally demolished because of destruction by war

1982 „neue welt" operations ended

1985 after renovation the venue reopened under the name „huxleys neue welt"

1985 „Blub" (berlin luft- und badeparadies) opened as an aquapark



2001 "concertino neukölln" instrumental ensemble backed by the martin-luther-church

2002 the aquapark was cloed by healthh department because of rats

2004 plans for the construction of a sri ganesha hindu temple start as the district offred the land to the association

2010 the sri ganesha hindu temple started to be slowly built through donations



2012 the sauna of „blub" closed

2020 martin-luther-church congregation

2020 the tech boom has caused the indian diaspora in berlin to grow and therefore the donations as well

2023 after 20 years the sri ganesha hindu temple opened



2030 the tram m10 extension from Warschauerstraße to the north of the square



2040 bvg plant the extension of U7 from Rudow all the way to the airport

SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE, IF BASED ON COMMUNITY, CAN BECOME INSURGENT PRACTICES

INFRASTRUCTURE

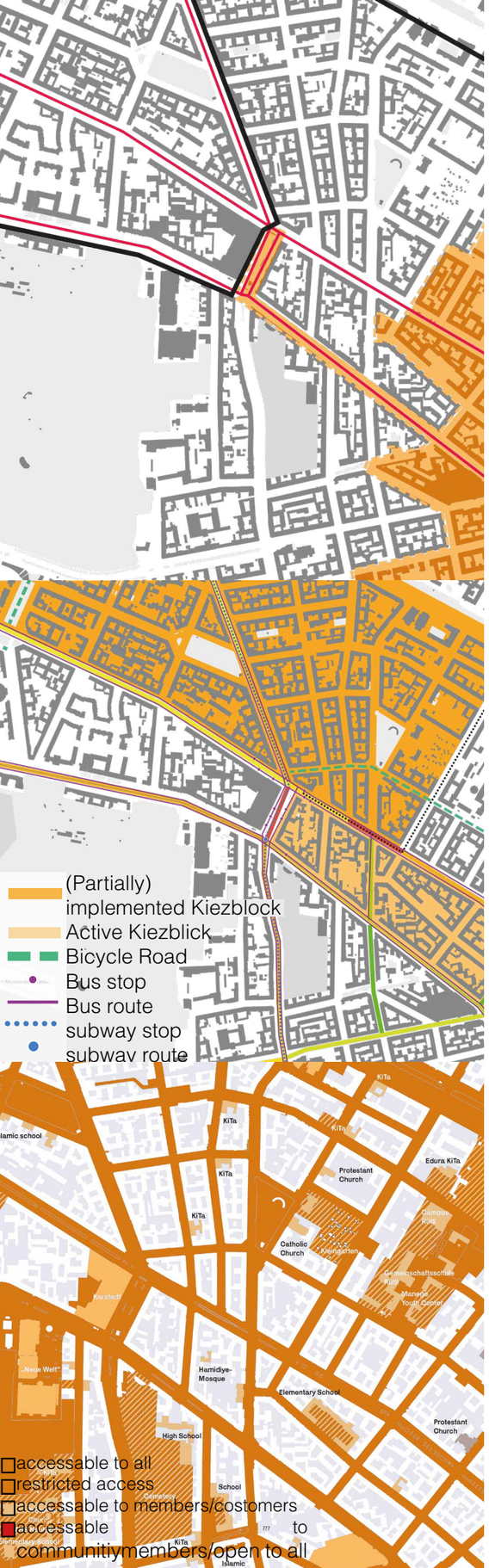
INFRASTRUCTURE IS MORE THAN JUST TECHNOLOGY. IT ORGANIZES MOVEMENT, SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS, AND POWER STRUCTURES WITHIN THE URBAN LANDSCAPE. AT HERMANNPLATZ, IT BECOMES CLEAR HOW TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS, ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES, AND SOCIAL SPACES SHAPE THE AREA, AND HOW INFRASTRUCTURAL SYSTEMS BECOME PARTICULARLY VISIBLE IN TIMES OF CONFLICT OR DISRUPTION.

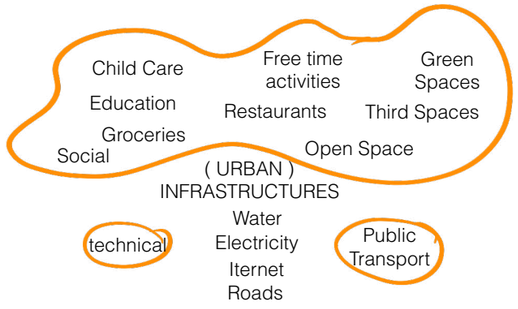
Infrastructures are built networks that facilitate the exchange of goods, people, and ideas, thereby structuring movement in space (Larkin 2013). They not only organize mobility but also shape social relationships, temporal processes, and the vulnerability of urban systems. At the same time, many infrastructures remain invisible in everyday life and are only noticed when disruptions occur and dependencies become apparent (Steele, Legacy 2017).
Infrastructure is never neutral: it can connect or divide communities, solve ecological problems or create new ones, and is closely interwoven with political and social structures. Against this backdrop, Hermannplatz was examined as a site where infrastructural networks, material, social, and institutional, interlock particularly clearly.
The aim of the analysis was to understand how different forms of infrastructure shape the area around Hermannplatz and what challenges this poses for its use and development.

HOW DO YOU GET AROUND HERMANNPLATZ?

by Hannah, Emil, Daniel

CO-PRODUCTION with:
passersby, bezirksamt neukölln, stadtentwicklungsamt, emine from dütti, saad from querstadtein





ALTHOUGH IT IS A PUBLIC SPACE, BUT IT IS ONLY USED FOR CROSSING AND NOT FOR MEETING OR GATHERING.

“Infrastructures are built networks that facilitate the flow of goods, people, or ideas and enable their exchange across space. As physical forms, they shape the nature of a network, the speed and direction of its movement, its temporalities, and its vulnerability to breakdown.” (Larkin 2013: 328). With this understanding of infrastructure as a built, powerful network, it becomes clear that it is not merely a matter of technical systems, but of spatial orders that structure movements, organize temporalities, and produce vulnerabilities. Infrastructure determines how the city is constituted, how exchange takes place, and where points of rupture may arise.

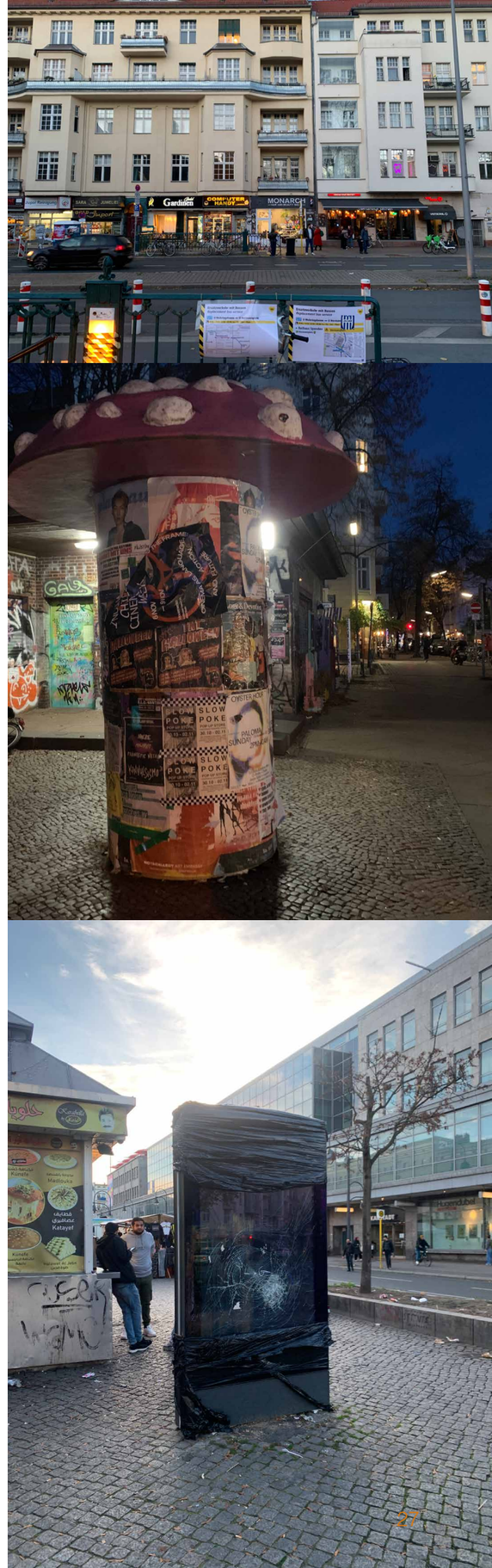
At the same time, research points out that infrastructure often remains invisible in everyday life. It is “the taken-for-granted infrastructure that quietly coexists in the form of digital technology, sewer systems, energy, communications, global financial systems, food systems, housing, nature strips, and urban tree programs, etc., until something goes wrong and human dependencies and vulnerabilities are painfully exposed” (Steele, Legacy 2017: 1). This supposed matter-of-factness ends the moment a disruption occurs, when dependencies become visible and social vulnerabilities become tangible. Infrastructure also possesses an ambivalent quality: “Infrastructure can divide communities and bring communities together; it can address one environmental concern and create a new one; it can be bought, sold, and co-owned” (Steele, Legacy 2017: 1). It is thus not neutral, but socially, ecologically, and politically effective.

Furthermore, it is emphasized that “infrastructure, once established, reappears only at moments of upheaval or breakdown. [...] [it] extends beyond particular spatial or temporal locations [...] [and is] deeply linked with conventions of practice—infrastructure both shapes and is shaped by other forms of routinized social action.” (Star 1999; Steele, Legacy 2017: 3). Infrastructure thus transcends specific places and time periods and is closely interwoven with everyday routines. It shapes social practices and is simultaneously reproduced by them.

Against this theoretical backdrop, Hermannplatz was examined. Through observations, mapping, walks to familiarize participants with the area, and interviews with various groups, such as vendors at the market stalls, representatives from the Neukölln district office, members of the urban development committee, and passersby at the kiosk workshop, key infrastructure issues were identified. Topics such as childcare, recreational activities, green spaces, public spaces, dining, food supply, social gathering places, and water and sewage systems emerged in the discussions. Issues of safety and the handling of homelessness were also addressed. While existing homeless assistance was described as sensible and necessary, it was also pointed out that homeless people are repeatedly pushed out of public spaces. This has led to a desire for a Hermannplatz that is equally safe for all user groups. This breadth of concerns illustrates that infrastructure here must be understood not merely as transportation or technology, but as an interwoven network of social, ecological, and administrative organization.

Based on the research, four hypotheses were formulated. A central hypothesis of the Infrastructure group is that district and administrative boundaries can hinder the development and maintenance of infrastructure when responsibilities are unclear or overlap. Hermannplatz is located precisely at the intersection of the Berlin districts of Neukölln and Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg. This location on an administrative boundary means that different authorities, planning agencies, and political bodies are simultaneously responsible for various aspects of the site. As a result, issues related to traffic planning, the maintenance of public spaces, social infrastructure, or safety are not always addressed from a shared perspective. Instead, different administrative logics, priorities, and budgets collide. This can result in measures being implemented more slowly, responsibilities remaining unclear, or individual problems being passed back and forth between institutions. In this context, infrastructure appears not only as a physical system of streets, utility lines, or buildings, but also as an institutional network strongly shaped by administrative structures.







Another hypothesis suggests that traffic has a particularly strong influence on the area around Hermannplatz and shapes virtually all infrastructure-related issues. As one of the most important transportation hubs in southern downtown Berlin, it is the convergence point for several major roadways, subway lines, bus routes, and heavy pedestrian traffic. On the one hand, this convergence ensures high accessibility and makes the location a central transfer point; on the other hand, however, it leads to noise, air pollution, and spatial barriers that impair the quality of the environment. Traffic thus influences not only mobility but also social interactions, the use of public space, and ecological conditions.

The third hypothesis examines the role of non-commercial spaces, which play a central role in the social infrastructure but are coming under increasing pressure in the Hermannplatz area. Places without the pressure to consume are important for social interaction, exchange, and informal support, but they are limited. Rising rents, economic interests, and increasing commercialization are leading to many spaces becoming consumption-oriented, while the need for freely accessible meeting places, especially for young people, families, and people with low incomes, is growing.

The fourth hypothesis posits that infrastructural development can inadvertently work against informal infrastructures. Formal measures such as redesigns, security concepts, or regulatory policies aim to make spaces more functional but can displace existing uses. Informal infrastructures emerge from everyday appropriations and include, for example, meeting places, neighborhood networks, or migrant trade structures. New regulations or structural changes can restrict these practices or render them invisible.

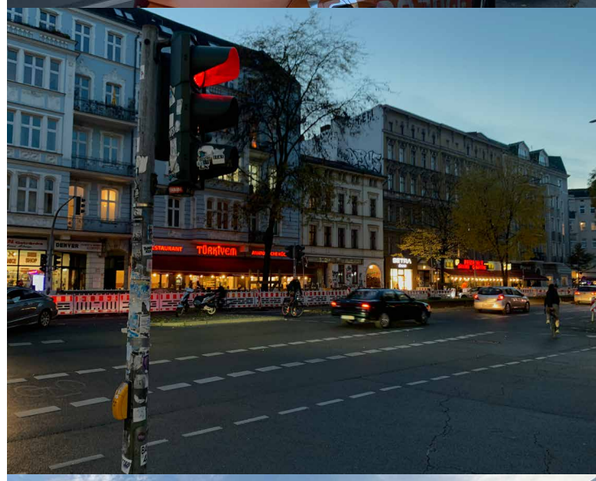
Thus, Hermannplatz emerges as a place where infrastructure is effective both materially and socially, shapes everyday routines, generates conflicts, and becomes particularly visible in moments of negotiation.

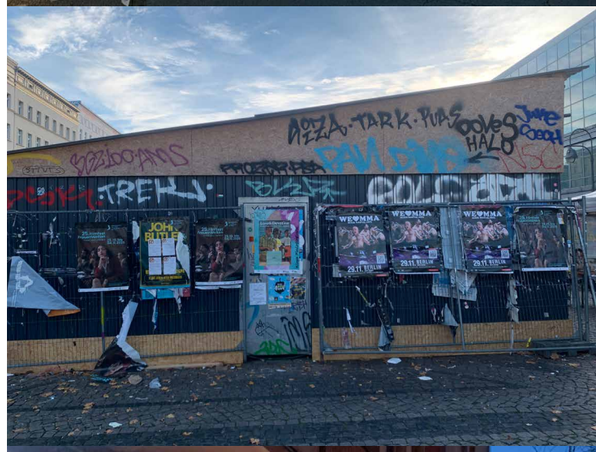
THE STAIRCASE LEADING DIRECTLY TO HERMANNPLATZ HAS BEEN CLOSED FOR SIX YEARS, AND NOT MUCH IS BEING DONE TO REOPEN IT.

ZU VIELE AUTOS !

NUR WEIL IHR JETZT SECURITIES BEI U8 BAHNHÖFEN HABT, NEHMEN LEUTE NICHT WENIGER DROGEN DIGGA HÄ?









LIKE JACOBS' SIDEWALK BALLET, HERMANNPLATZ WORKS NOT BECAUSE IT'S ORDERLY, BUT BECAUSE ITS DENSITY, MIX AND INFORMALITY CREAT SPACE FOR ARRIVAL, VISIBILITY AND BELONGING.

ARRIVAL INFRASTRUCTURE

ARRIVAL IS NOT A SINGLE MOMENT, BUT A COMPLEX PROCESS SHAPED BY INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES, SPATIAL CONDITIONS, AND SOCIAL NETWORKS. USING HERMANNPLATZ AS A CASE STUDY, THE ARRIVAL INFRASTRUCTURE GROUP EXAMINED HOW FORMAL INFRASTRUCTURES AND INFORMAL EVERYDAY PRACTICES TOGETHER SHAPE THE WAY PEOPLE SETTLE INTO THE CITY.

The examination of arrival infrastructure aims to analyze the structural, spatial, and social conditions faced by people newly arriving in Berlin. In this context, arrival is not understood as a singular event, but rather as a multifaceted process shaped in equal measure by institutional systems, physical infrastructure, and informal networks.

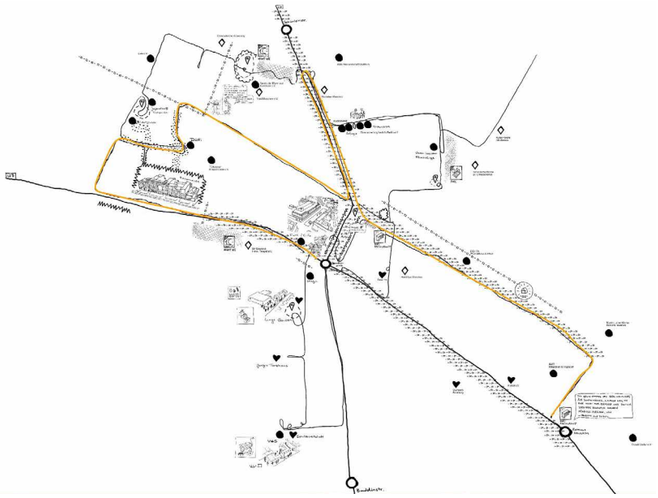
The focus is on how these different levels interlock and what role they play in shaping the possibilities of arrival. In addition to state and administrative structures, the study therefore also examines everyday social relationships, shared spaces, and local initiatives. Hermannplatz serves as an exemplary site of investigation where institutional processes, urban infrastructure, and social dynamics intersect.

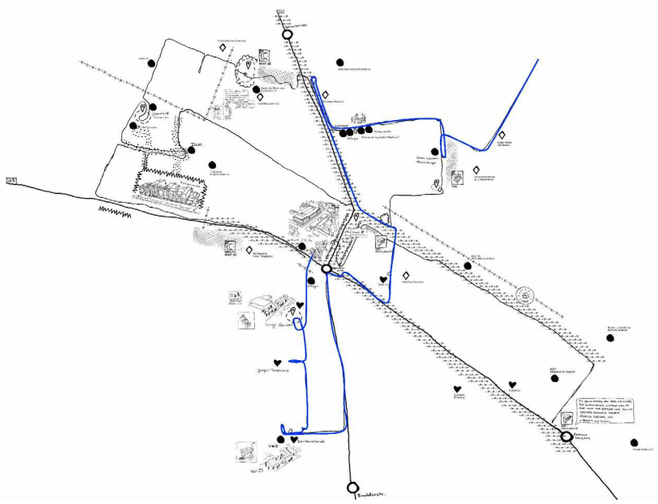
The study began with an analysis of the governmental and administrative structures that form the formal framework for arrival. These include, among others, the State Office for Immigration, the State Office for Refugee Affairs, the district offices of Neukölln and Kreuzberg, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, as well as the Federal Employment Agency and the Job Centers in Berlin. These institutions structure access to residence permits, social benefits, labor market integration, and counseling, and thus significantly shape the conditions under which arrival is institutionally organized.

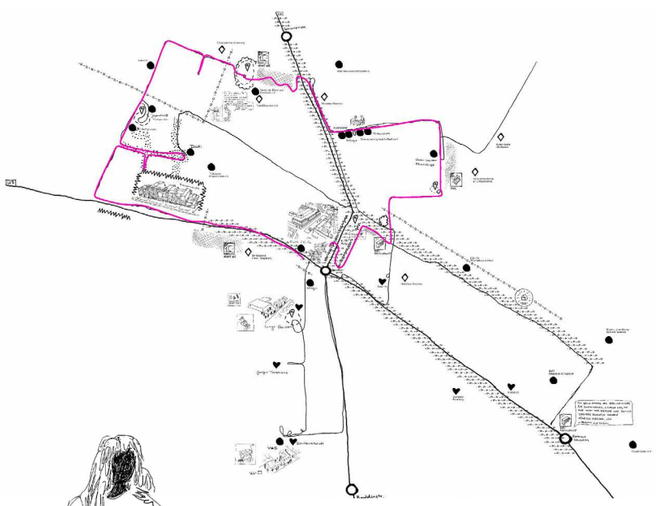
WHEN DID YOU ARRIVE FIRST AT HERMANNPLATZ?

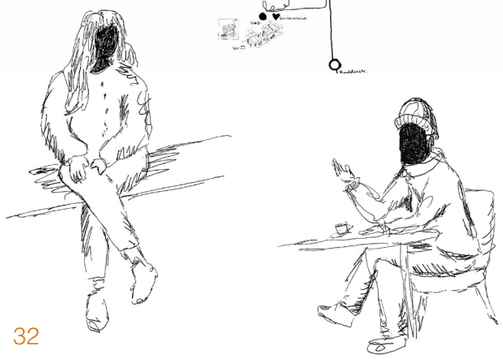
by Lissy, Christina, Simon, Tim

CO-PRODUCTION with:
day care- social worker Tegel, Colabradio, passersby









A central component of the infrastructure is the housing system. Upon arrival in Berlin, individuals are registered at an arrival facility, where personal data is recorded and a needs assessment conducted. Based on this, individual needs are documented, and—unless alternatives exist - people are assigned to general accommodation. During this phase, social service applications are submitted, and personal needs, preferences, and degrees of autonomy are compiled into an accommodation portfolio, which guides further housing decisions. Housing thus appears as an administratively organized allocation process matching individual situations with structural capacities.

From this, a theoretical model of arrival was developed, distinguishing two phases. The first, “entering a place,” is marked by strong dependence on institutions and limited self-empowerment. The focus lies on basic needs, safety, and initial stabilization, with top-down, measurable, and short-term processes.

The second phase, “entering a society,” involves decreasing institutional dependence and growing self-empowerment. The focus shifts to social integration, community-building, and long-term participation. These processes are less visible and harder to quantify, shaped by informal networks and everyday practices. Alternative perspectives frame arrival as an open-ended process in which social relations and communal spaces are as important as formal structures like housing or employment.

This understanding was deepened through qualitative field research using interviews, walk-alongs, and mapping. Initial informal interviews with social workers from Tegel, conducted using the two-person principle, highlighted the influence of interview partners as well as issues of anonymity and visibility.

A more structured interview process followed, involving actors from initiatives and organizations such as Refugio. Participants were informed about their rights regarding recording and visibility, and results were reviewed and verified collaboratively. The data was then translated into maps and audio formats.

The “Walk Along” method linked conversations to urban space, using maps to locate and discuss experiences in real time. In parallel, an Arrival Map - based on the fem*MAP BERLIN - was developed as a countermap focused on experience rather than scale, making diverse perspectives and issues of exclusion visible.

Spatial experiences were further explored through Drift and Map-Guided Drift. While Drift focused on atmospheres and perceptions, Map-Guided Drift examined initiatives and social spaces, enabling the creation of profiles and identification of conflicts. Fieldwork included sites such as the Kiosk of Solidarity and the Protest Kiosk at Hermannplatz.

Findings show that Hermannplatz is strongly shaped by queer and Arab communities and is sometimes referred to as a “refugee square.” Many newcomers perceive it as familiar and identity-forming, with comparisons to a piazza or bazaar highlighting its social function. The market plays a key role in providing otherwise hard-to-find goods.

At the same time, the area is also perceived as overcrowded or unsafe. The refugee shelter at Hasenheide is seen as an infrastructural challenge, particularly for public transport.

Method evaluation is based on an initial trial phase and depends on the balance between mapping and dialogue. Collective reflection showed that results are perspective-dependent and not representative. Nevertheless, a clear trend emerges: Hermannplatz operates less through formal order than through density, diversity, and informality. This overlap of uses and social milieus creates spaces of arrival, visibility, and belonging.

EVERYDAY SOCIAL NETWORKS AND SHARED COMMUNITY SPACES MATTER JUST AS MUCH AS FORMAL INSTITUTIONS, HOUSING, OR WORK
- CANEDO &ELMOUELHI, 2023

ARRIVAL IS DEFINED BY THE MIGRANTS DESIRE FOR A FUTURE WITH NO FIXED ENDPOINT - MEEUS ET AL. 2020

IT IS SO CROWDED . I LOVE AND HATE IT AT THE SAME TIME. SOMETIMES IT STRESSES ME OUT.

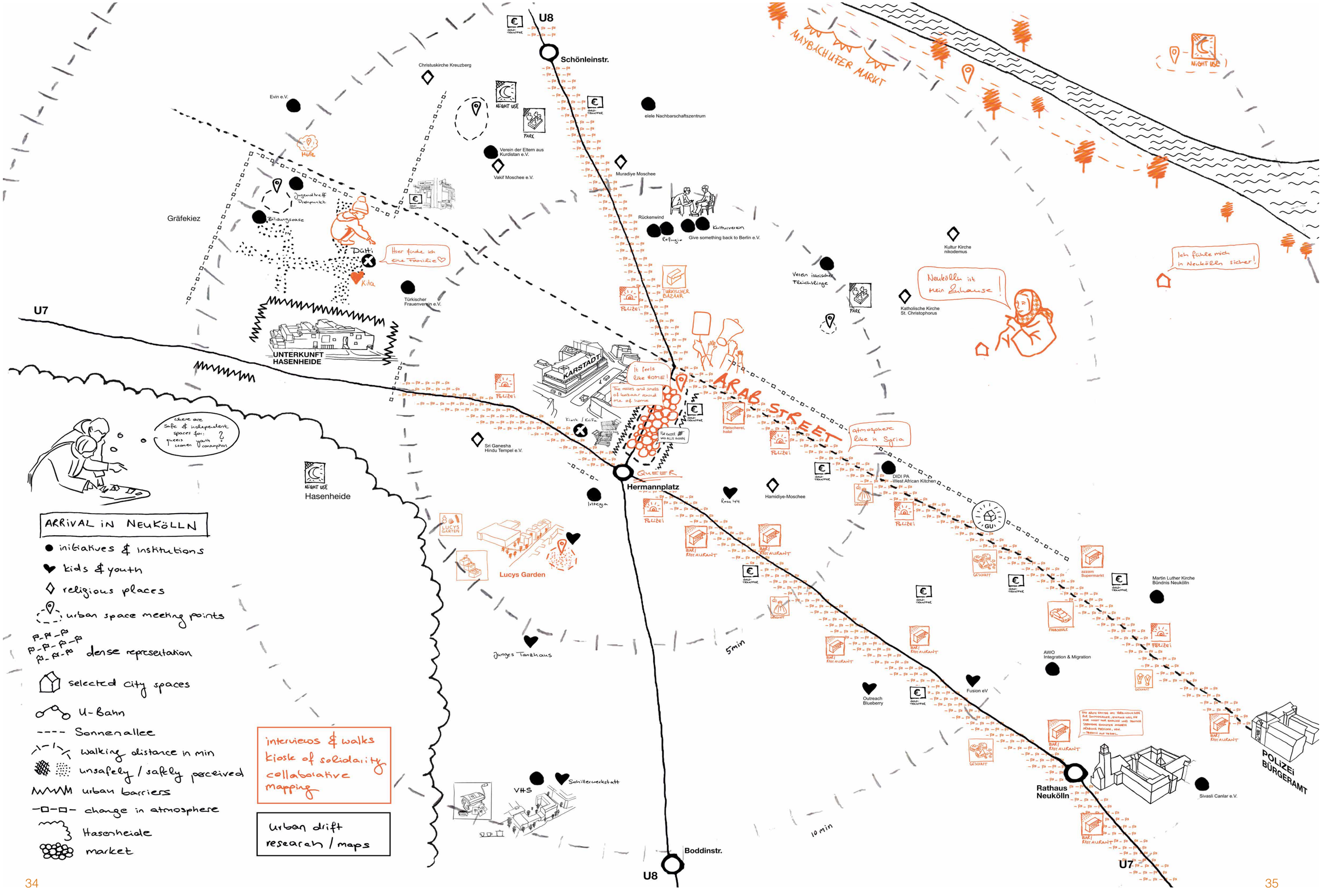
REFUGEE ACCOMMONDATION? THAT IS TOO MUCH - THE ONLY WAY IT WORKS IS IF IS WELL STRUCTUREED AND INCLUDED










U8
Schönleinstr.
Christuskirche Kreuzberg
Evin e.V.
Höfe
Jugendtreff Drehpunkte
Gräfekiez
Bildungsoase
Düthi
Kita
Hier finde ich eine Familie ♡
Türkischer Frauenverein e.V.
U7
UNTERKUNFT HASENHEIDE
Hasenheide
Verein der Eltern aus Kurdistan e.V.
Vakif Moschee e.V.
Muradiye Moschee
elele Nachbarschaftszentrum
Rückenwind
Kulturverein
Refugio
Give something back to Berlin e.V.
TÜRKISCHER BAZAAR
Polizei
KARSTADT
Kiosk / Kofa
Sri Ganesha Hindu Tempel e.V.
It feels like HOME!
The noises and smells of bazaar remind me of home
ARAB STREET
atmosphere like in Syria
Fleischerei, halal
Hermannplatz
QUEER
Intega
Rosa 44
Hamidiye-Moschee
DIDI PA -West African Kitchen
GU
Lucys Garden
Jungs Tanzhaus
5min
10 min
Outreach Blueberry
Fusion eV
AWO Integration & Migration
Martin Luther Kirche Bündnis Neukölln
azzam Supermarkt
Rathaus Neukölln
Sivasli Canlar e.V.
POLIZEI BÜRGERAMT
Boddinstr.
U8
U7
MAYBACHUFER MARKT
NIGHT USE
PARK
Verein iranischer Flüchtlinge
Kultur Kirche nikodemus
Katholische Kirche St. Christophorus
Neukölln ist mein Zuhause!
Ich fühle mich in Neukölln sicher!
Lucys Garten
VHS
Schillerwerkstatt
where are safe & independent spaces for: queers women youth consumption
ARRIVAL IN NEUKÖLLN
initiatives & institutions
kids & youth
religious places
urban space meeting points
dense representation
selected city spaces
U-Bahn
Sonnenallee
walking distance in min
unsafely / safely perceived
urban barriers
change in atmosphere
Hasenheide
market
interviews & walks
kiosk of solidarity
collaborative mapping
Urban drift research / maps

THE MARKET AT HERMANNPLATZ IS AN ACTOR MENTIONED BY MANY PEOPLE

ACTORS

VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS SHAPE THE AREA AROUND HERMANNPLATZ. THROUGH RESEARCH AND INTERVIEWS WITH LOCAL INITIATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONS, THE ACTORS GROUP EXAMINES THEIR ROLES, ACTIVITIES, AND THE CHALLENGES THEY FACE WITHIN THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

The group examined the various stakeholders active in the Hermannplatz area. To this end, they conducted a series of interviews. This was based on comprehensive research, which first identified which initiatives, institutions, and organizations are active in this area, which have a broader structural reach, and which play a significant role in the local fabric. They held discussions with, among others, the Stadtteilmütter, Brotpapa, Gangway Neukölln, Mobile Stadtteilarbeit, and the Manege Children's and Youth Club.

The interviews focused on the respective roles of the actors in the neighborhood and their goals. They discussed the social, cultural, and other supportive functions they fulfill and the concrete changes they aim to achieve. In addition, they examined the initiatives' presence in public spaces: When do they appear, in which activities or formats are they active, how often, and with what offerings?

Another key focus was on the structural problems and obstacles that complicate their work. Among other things, limited resources, lack of space, bureaucratic hurdles, and social tensions were cited.

The results of the analysis have been translated into flyers that introduce the individual actors and how they operate

WHICH ACTORS DO YOU KNOW ?

BY Eileen, Yan, Daniel

CO-PRODUCTION with:
eva from stadtteilmütter, brotpapa, gangway neukölln, mayam from mobile stadtteilarbeit, and the children's and manege, eva from junges tanzhaus

KIDS & YOUTH ACTOR

Kinder- und Jugendclub
DIE MANEGE
Osmann

Roles & Goals
-Low-threshold, free, open access for children and youth
-Educational support and safe spaces outside school
-Social inclusion for disadvantaged families (many facing housing pressure, migration issues, or financial struggles)

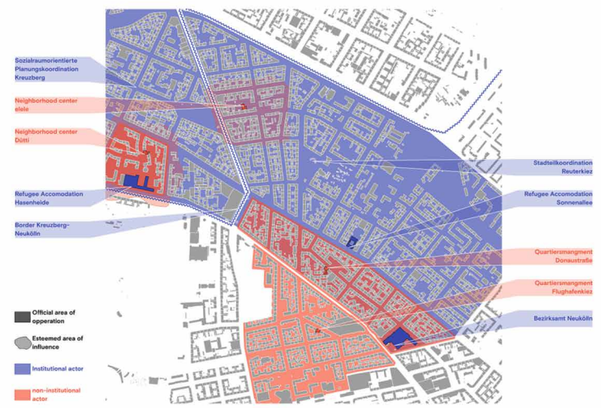
Presence in the neighborhood
-Lernhilfe: homework help, support for exam preparation, help with school projects, quiet learning environment
-Daily Life Support & Social Activities provides: handcraft workshop, creative studio, gymnastic/fitness room (Turnstudio), participation-oriented kitchen (Mitmachküche), cooking together using Tafel donations (food rescue + communal meals)
-Outdoor Activities & Urban Nature: a large garden (described as an "oasis" in summer), raised beds for gardening, grassy open areas for hanging out, a grill area for barbecues a fire pit (Lagerfeuerplatz),a football / sports field

Actual Obstacles
-Severe Financial Constraints and Resource Shortages
-Difficulty in Reaching the Target Group of Disadvantaged Children and Youth
-Displacement of the original target group
-Environmental and Safety Issues on Campus
-Difficulties in Collaborating with Schools-
-Lack of Official After-School Care Support

auf dem Campus Rütli
Rütlistraße 1–3
12045 Berlin
Osmann
o.tekin@tjfbg.de







The group's interviews focused on the social, cultural, and supportive functions that the initiatives fulfill, as well as the specific changes they aim to achieve. Another key focus was their presence in public spaces: When do they make an appearance, in what kinds of activities or formats are they active, how often do they work in the neighborhood, and what services do they offer to reach residents?
They also discussed structural problems and obstacles that hinder their work. These include limited financial and human resources, lack of or difficult access to premises, bureaucratic hurdles, and social tensions in the neighborhood.

The research and interviews made it clear that, in the context of Hermannplatz, the market itself can also be understood as an actor. The site is not only perceived as a transportation hub or shopping destination but also has an identity-forming quality for many people. The square holds special emotional significance, particularly for many migrants. Statements such as "it smells like a bazaar" or "here you can buy things you can't find anywhere else" illustrate that the place evokes associations of familiarity, cultural closeness, and everyday life.
At the same time, the discussions revealed that Hermannplatz is the subject of intense urban policy debates. The future of the Karstadt building, in particular, is a polarizing issue. While some stakeholders advocate for its demolition, seeing it as an opportunity for urban development, others argue for preserving the building. In this context, shopping centers are viewed as a form of infrastructural densification that can improve quality of life by bringing together various services in one location.
Another recurring theme in the interviews was the lack of services for children and youth in the immediate vicinity of Hermannplatz. Several respondents emphasized that there is a shortage of low-threshold recreational and childcare services. Increased youth outreach was described as urgently needed to promote long-term social stability, participation, and opportunities for young people in the neighborhood.

RELIGIOUS ACTOR

Martin-Luther-Geneza-reth-Kirchengemeinde
Felix von Ploetz

Roles & Goals
-plays a strong social role through its café, night café, food distribution, and community projects.
-acting as a cultural center in Neukölln.
-they want people to "join in" in many ways.
-With childcare, outreach, and social programs, they support both families and vulnerable people.

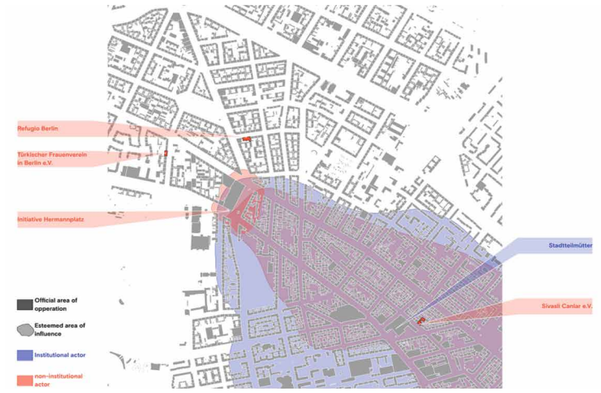
Presence in the neighborhood
-Church Buildings as Community Spaces
- German language class for refugee,
-"Laib und Seele": A food distribution program,
-Obdachlosen-Nachtcafé: In the winter months, they run a homeless night café.
-Küche für alle ("Kitchen for Everyone"): uses the church's kitchen for communal cooking and eating.
-run three Kitas (day-care / kindergartens),
-Luther's Café:
-Vintage Shop "Mein Herr Käthe"
-Concerts, Dancing-Group, Drawing-Group, Pottery-Group

Actual Obstacles
-no connection to arab and/or muslim comunity
-missing connection to the youth
-racist history
-is primarily occupied with retaining its old clientele and therefore has no capacity to reach new communities.

Fuldastraße 48 – 50
12045 Berlin
T 609 77 49 – 0
F 624 68 05
Email: info@mig-neukoelln.de







ADMINISTRATIVE ACTOR

Qutiermanagement Danaustrasse - Nord
Ngoc, Marie

Roles & Goals
-Acts as a bridge between residents, local initiatives, institutions, and public authorities.
-Organizes and aligns neighborhood projects, resources, and stakeholders.
-Assists residents, schools, associations, and local groups in developing and implementing community projects.
-Identifies local needs, challenges, and potentials, and provides professional assessments.

Presence in the neighborhood
-The team works from a dedicated office in the Donaukiez, where residents and stakeholders can visit, ask questions, or seek support.
-Constructing small-scale neighborhood infrastructure, e.g. a small garden/play area realized through QM-funded projects.
-A public clean-up box in front of their office ("Kiezputzbox") where residents can borrow tools to clean the streets.
-Events that Bring People Together, such as Community cooking events, Cleanliness / Müll discussions.
-Funding afternoon AGs, parent cafés, and sports/play programs at schools (e.g., Rixdorfer Schule).

Actual Obstacles
-Program ends 2027 + insecure long-term funding.
-Partner services underfunded / understaffed (Outreach, Gangway, Fixpunkt).
-Businesses difficult to engage; almost no participation from Sonnenallee.
-Events/topics not reaching diverse groups (e.g., climate, sustainability).
-Strict administrative boundaries limit action.
-Structural social issues too big for QM (waste, traffic, drugs, safety).
-Difficulty involving certain resident groups (language/culture barriers).
-Missing infrastructure in the Kiez (no playgrounds).

Donaustraße 7
12043 Berlin
Telefon: (030) 346200 69 / 70
info[at]qm-donaustrasse[.]de


Nesrin Demir


Ngoc Dinh-Le


Marie Köhler


Eileen Stephan

SOCIAL ACTOR

Gangway Nord Neukölln e.V

Roles & Goals
- Provides street-based social work for young people in public spaces. Aims to support socially disadvantaged youth in coping with everyday challenges and life transitions.
- Seeks to empower young people by strengthening their social skills, self-confidence, and participation opportunities.
- Act as an intermediary between young people and public institutions such as schools, youth services, and authorities.

Presence in the neighborhood
- Regularly present in streets, parks, and informal meeting places within Nordneukölln.
- Maintains long-term, trust-based relationships with young people in the neighborhood.
- Provides social counceling for youth and help with documents and burocracy.
- It is recognized by local actors as a key contact point for youth-related issues in public space.
- Collaborates closely with local schools, youth facilities, neighborhood management, and social services.
- Is part of the Kiez AG Reuterkiez.
sources in relation to the complexity of social problems.
- Operates in a context of social inequality, poverty, and limited educational opportunities.

Actual Obstacles
- Limited financial and human resources in relation to the complexity of social problems.
- Operates in a context of social inequality, poverty, and limited educational opportunities.
- Must navigate mistrust toward institutions among some young people.
- Challenged by increasing pressure on public spaces and conflicts around security and regulation.

E-Mail:
neukoelln-nord@gangway.de



CULTURAL ACTOR

Junges Tanzhaus
Eva

Roles & Goals
- Offers dance education and artistic programs for children and young people.
- Aims to promote cultural participation regardless of social or economic background.
- Seeks to foster personal development, creativity, and self-expression through contemporary dance.
- Uses dance as a tool for empowerment and social inclusion.
- Aims to reach people from all over Berlin but mostly kids and youth from their neighborhood.

Presence in the neighborhood
- Just recently moved to Neukölln (in November 2025).
- During their opening week (23-30. Nov) they had a full programm with free activities like dance workshops, dance performances and parties.
- Offering dance workshops for schools and kindergardens.
- Programme of dance performances for kids & youth.
- Space for events (rent is based on a soidary concept).

Actual Obstacles
- New in the neighboood.
- Lack of connectons to other actors and infrastructures yet.
- Potential for a "Kiezkantine" (they have fully equipped kitchen) but no funding/initiative to operate it.

Eva Geiler
geiler@junges-tanzhaus-berlin.de



BUSINESS ACTOR

Kiezakademie
Refat

Roles & Goals
-Providing free, bilingual job advice, supporting residents with career and employment inquiries.
-Acting as a bridge between job seekers, administrative bodies (Bezirksamt, QM), educational institutions (Kiezakademie Neukölln), and local Sonnenallee shopowners, facilitating collaboration across sectors.

Presence in the neighborhood
-He holds open consultation hours every Thursday from 14–16 Uhr, providing a consistent physical space for residents to access his support.
-He offers personalized advice on careers and employment, available in German or Arabic. This service is free and aims to directly support residents navigating job searches or career questions.

Actual Obstacles
It takes a long time to build trust and connections with business owers.

Refat
Telefon: +49 17623186532



THE MARKET AS A CENTRAL ACTOR ON HERMANNPLATZ

THE MARKET IS GREAT

MANY THINGS TO BUY ARE NOT AVAILABLE IN OTHER PLACES IN GERMANY

ICH FINDE DIE OBDACHLOSENHILFE DIE ES HIER SCHON GIBT SINNVOLL UND VOR ALLEM NÖTIG. DOCH SEHE ICH AUCH WIE DIESE IMMER WIEDER VERTRIEBEN WERDEN

SINCE 2015, THE GROUPS OF PEOPLE WHO BUY FRUIT AND VEGETABLES FROM US HAVE REMAINED LARGELY THE SAME.

PEOPLE IN NEED GET HELP AT HERMANNPLATZ

WAR VOR 2 JAHREN OBDACHLOS UND WAR SEHR FROH ÜBER EURE HILFE!! LG MARCO

BROTPAPA IS MY HIGHLIGHT

KARSTADT WAR WENIGER LOS ALS BEIM LIDL JETZT

KARSTADTS INFLUENCE ON HERMANNPLATZ

ICH HABE 30 JAHRE BEI KARSTADT GEARBEITET. EINKAUFSZENTRN SIND WICHTIG FÜR ALTE LEUTE.

ICH FÄNDE ES WICHTIG DEN KARSTADT ABZUREISSEN

DIE SANIERUNG VON KARSTADT IST NICHTZ NOTWENIG.

HERMANNPLATZ IS A BLANK SPOT FOR CHILDREN

WENN DER AUFZUG KAPUTT IST, IST BAHNFAHREN MIT KIND SEHR ANSTRENGEND

JUGENDARBEIT, JUGENDARBEIT, JUGENDARBEIT!

MORE LEISURE ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS. AND MORE JUVENILE CLUBS BECAUSE THE SOCIAL SPACES ARE TOO FOCUSED ON OLD PEOPLE

FAMILY ACTOR

Stadtteilmütter
Lelya

Roles & Goals
-Act as trained community mediators who support families with a migration background in everyday parenting and educational matters.
-Aim to strengthen parents' knowledge about the German education, health, and social systems.
-Promote early childhood development, equal opportunities, and social participation of children.
-Build trust between public institutions (such as schools, kindergartens, and social services) and hard-to-reach families.
-Empower mothers in the neighborhood by sharing knowledge peer-to-peer and fostering self-confidence.

Presence in the neighborhood
-Embed themselves strongly in the neighborhood and usually live in or have close ties to the area they work in.
-Operate through home visits, group meetings, and activities in schools, family centers, and neighborhood facilities.
-Maintain visibility and approachability, often being contacted informally through personal networks.
-Cooperate closely with local schools, day-care centers, health services, and neighborhood management structures.
-Sustain a continuous and relationship-based presence rather than project-based or sporadic engagement.

Actual Obstacles
-Face limited and insecure funding, which affects continuity and long-term planning.
-Experience undervaluation or perception as informal despite requiring high social and intercultural competencies.
-Encounter emotionally demanding situations due to language and cultural mediation responsibilities.
-Confront structural barriers within public administrations that limit the impact of their mediation work.
-Navigate role conflicts between being neighbors, peers, and semi-professional actors.

Emai:
l.celik@diakoniewerk-simeon.de



Community ACTOR

Mobile Stadtteilarbeit
Ando, Maryam

Roles & Goals
- Understanding problems, challenges and wishes from the neighborhood.
- Mediating between the neighbors and the administration.
- Cooperating with different actors like the QM, Stadtteilmütter etc.

Presence in the neighborhood
-Regular walks through the Reuterkiez.
-Co-oganizer of the monthly "Ehrenamtsstammtisch" for the refugees shelter on the Sonnenallee.
- Neighborhood counceling at the Haus der Vielfalt every tuesday (2-3pm) and thursday (11am - 1pm) and the the elele neighborhood center on tuesdays 3-6pm
- occasional events for the neighborhood.

Actual Obstacles
- limited by short-term and project-based funding structures.
- Must address a wide range of social conflicts with limited resources.
- Operates in a dense urban area with high pressure on public space.
- Faces challenges in balancing mediation, support, and expectations from different stakeholders.

Ando Borgers
a.borgers@nbh.de

Maryam Hazzaz
m.hazzaz@nbh.de



THE PLACE IS UNDERNOURISHED AND UNDERDEVELOPED. BUT AT THE SAME TIME IT IS DEVELOPED IN ITS OWN WAY THAT ISN'T SYSTEMATIC BUT REAL AND PRODUCTIVE.

POLITICAL CONTEXT

HERMANNPLATZ IS OF SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL IMPORTANCE. THE "POLITICAL CONTEXT" GROUP EXAMINES THE OVERLAPPING CONFLICTS AND NARRATIVES THAT SHAPE THE SQUARE TODAY. USING AN INTERACTIVE HIDDEN-OBJECT IMAGE, IT HIGHLIGHTS THE COMPLEX DYNAMICS AND TENSIONS THAT COEXIST IN THIS CONTESTED URBAN SPACE.

The study began with the question of what makes Hermannplatz the political site it is so often perceived to be. What historical, social, economic, and symbolic processes have shaped this place beyond its role as a transportation hub and shopping destination?

Building on this, the group sought to identify the political issues that exist at and around Hermannplatz and to understand how they intersect, overlap, or contradict one another. What conflicts, negotiations, and interests converge here? Which narratives dominate public discourse, and which remain invisible?

Another focus was the relationship between the portrayal of Hermannplatz in the media and the perspectives of the people who use and inhabit this place on a daily basis. What images of the square are produced in the media and public debates, and how do they relate to the experiences of residents, users, and local businesses?

Methodologically, the project combines research with on-site engagement, including conversations with people, observations, informal interviews, and spatial analyses. Rather than merely compiling topics, the goal was to understand their various perspectives and interconnections.

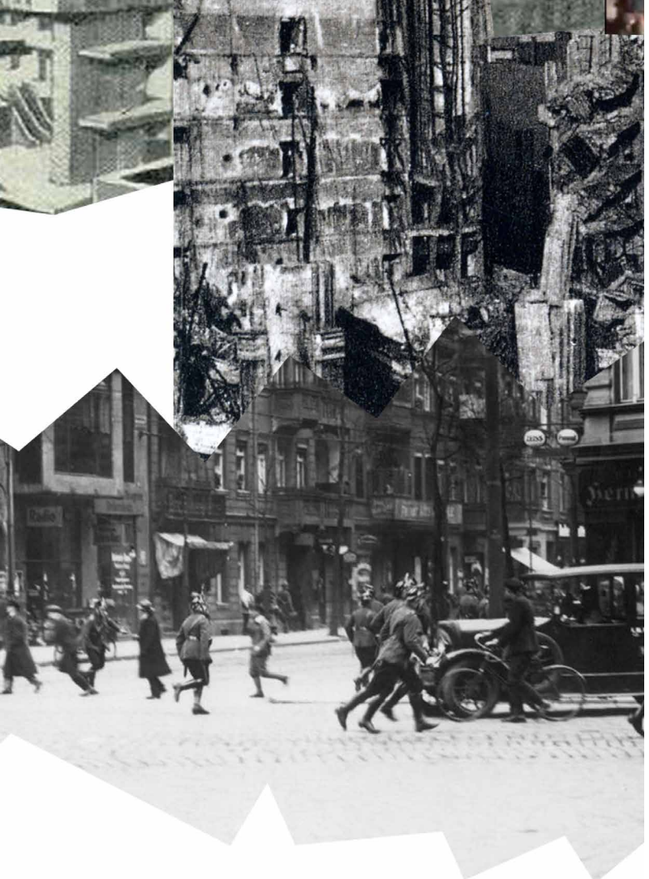
Once key themes had emerged, the focus shifted to making their interconnections visible. The various discourses, actors, and conflicts surrounding Hermannplatz are closely intertwined and influence one another.

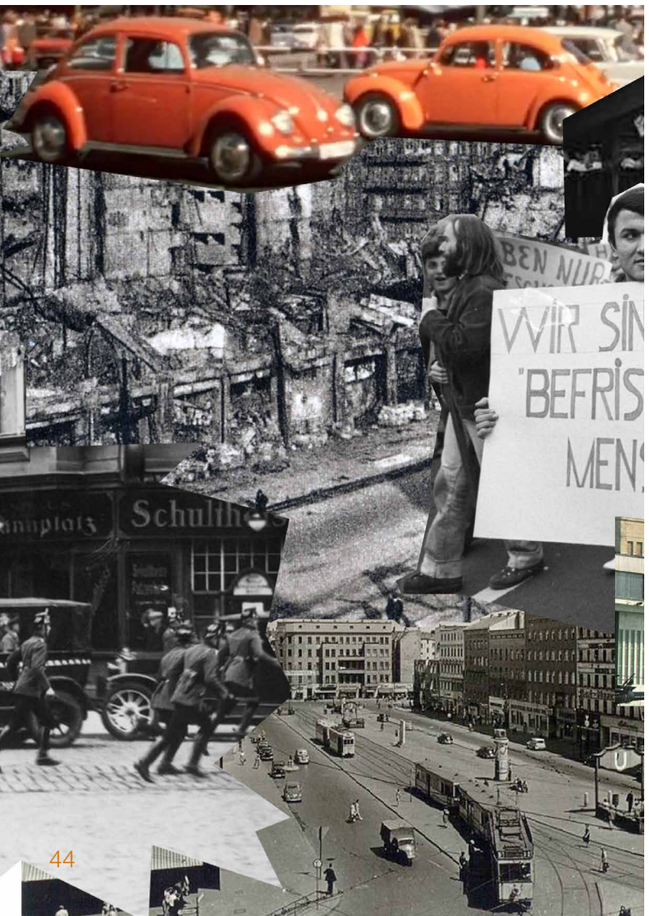
To convey these insights, a hidden-object game was developed as an interactive medium. It allows for the simultaneous presentation of various themes and makes their coexistence perceptible. While the visualization reflects a curated perspective, it offers two levels of interpretation: a first level that makes the themes visible, and a second level that provides more in-depth information, analyses, and contextual connections.

WHAT COMES TO MIND WHEN THINKING ABOUT HERMANNPLATZ?

by Linus, Mona, Ria, Emilie, Jara

CO-PRODUCTION with:
passersby, residents, market workers, brotpapa





The starting point is the question of how Hermannplatz's political identity can be understood historically. The development of Neukölln, and Hermannplatz in particular, is closely linked to the social, political, and economic changes in Berlin. At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, Neukölln developed into a densely built-up working-class neighborhood as a result of industrialization. Heavy migration led to the formation of distinct working-class cultures and close-knit neighborhood structures. After World War II, the district increasingly became an important destination for migrants. The workers recruited during the economic boom created diverse migrant economies, social networks, and cultural infrastructures that continue to shape the area to this day.

Since the 2000s, northern Neukölln in particular has been increasingly associated with gentrification processes. Rising rents, displacement, and social inequalities coexist alongside new cultural scenes and political initiatives. In this context, Hermannplatz serves as a symbolic site where issues of migration, poverty, public space, and urban development become particularly visible.

A central part of the study is therefore an analysis of media coverage of Hermannplatz and the Neukölln district between 2015 and 2025. The analysis is based on publicly available media and district reports and should be understood as an indicative approach rather than a comprehensive database. The results show that media attention often correlates with broader political debates. Hermannplatz repeatedly serves as a projection screen for urban conflicts, while media reports can simultaneously contribute to the stigmatization of the area.

Many of the visible problems can also be understood in the context of structural neglect. Political strategies toward North Neukölln have long been more reactive and control-oriented than investment-driven, leading to a spatial concentration of social inequalities.

This is evident in issues such as litter accumulation, rat infestations, housing, and homelessness. Visible trash is not simply the result of individual behavior, but rather a consequence of structural conditions such as high building density, intensive use of public space, limited municipal resources, and unevenly distributed cleaning services. Similar conditions also shape the presence of rats, which can be understood less as an isolated hygiene problem and more as a symptom of structural inequality.

Housing insecurity and homelessness are closely linked to these developments. In critical urban studies, homelessness is not understood as individual failure, but as the result of capitalist urban development, political neglect, and processes of displacement. At the same time, rising rents and urban renewal continue to transform the district.

In this context, the concept of belonging takes on particular relevance. From a post-migrant perspective, belonging is not a fixed status but a social process shaped by recognition, access to space, and political power. In Neukölln, this process manifests itself in everyday forms of spatial appropriation, social networks, and political expression.

HERMANNPLATZ IS MY HOME, AND I LOVE THE PEOPLE AND THE CULTURE/FOOD HERE.

ALL PROBLEMS COME FROM KOTTI OVER HERE...

ARRIVING AT HERMANNPLATZ ALWAYS MAKES ME FEEL HOME

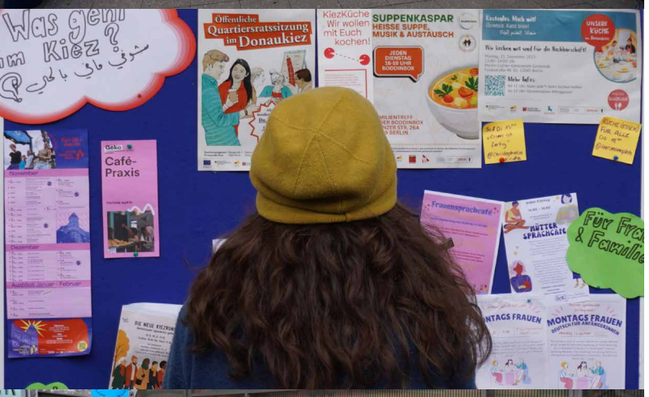
THE POLICE HAVE A VERY AGGRESSIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS HOMELESS PEOPLE, BOTH IN THE SQUARE AND IN THE SUBWAY.

I LOVE TALKING TO PEOPLE AND SPENDING SOME TIME WATCHING THE MOVEMENTS WHENEVER I PASS THERE. ONLY TIMES I FEEL NOT SAFE IS WHEN IT'S SURROUNDED BY POLICE AND I AM WEARING MY KEFFIYEH.




„NEUKÖLLN IS WHERE I LIVE
not where I'm from„
IT REMAINS ME
OF HOME
HANAU IST
ÜBERALL
GEDENKEN IST WIDERSTAND
PLATZ HALTER
KÜFA
KARSTADT
Hermannplatz
POLIZEI
RIND RAUMB
PLATZ
JIN
JIYAN
AZADI
ASHTUBE
KBOI
GRAFFO











KIOSK EVENT

THE STUDIO DEVELOPED AN EXPERIMENTAL, PRACTICE-ORIENTED FORMAT THAT SHIFTED RESEARCH INTO THE PUBLIC SPACE OF THE STUDY AREA. ITS AIM WAS TO ENGAGE DIRECTLY WITH LOCAL RESIDENTS, INCORPORATE OFTEN MARGINALIZED VOICES, AND EXPAND THEORETICAL DISCOURSE THROUGH VARIOUS FORMS OF INTERACTION. AT THE SAME TIME, THE EVENT SERVED TO BOTH REFLECT ON INSURGENT PRACTICE AND MAKE IT TANGIBLE IN EVERYDAY LIFE.

PROTEST KIOSK AT HERMANNPLATZ

The Protest Kiosk was an installation in the public street space on the edge of Hermannplatz. Several stations were set up on-site, each using different methods to facilitate various approaches to conversation. One central station consisted of a map on which passersby could sketch and annotate places and situations to make their spatial perceptions visible.

In addition, a card game was developed featuring provocative statements and contrasting pairings, such as: “Hermannplatz is the worst place I know” compared to “For me, Hermannplatz is a pleasant environment where I can relax.” These statements served as conversation starters and helped participants articulate their individual perspectives and experiences.

In addition, flyers and information from local initiatives and collectives were displayed to facilitate discussion and highlight existing community engagement in the area. Passersby were actively approached to initiate interactions and conduct brief interviews.

Since the event took place in cold and windy weather, tea and lentil soup were offered to participants. This helped create a welcoming atmosphere and lowered the threshold for people to stop and strike up a conversation.

At the same time, the success of the event depended on people being open to engaging in conversation. Many declined to talk or walked by. Nevertheless, we were able to gather numerous opinions, perspectives, and personal experiences that formed a valuable foundation for further research.

KIOSK OF SOLIDARITY AT DÜTTI

Following the event at Hermannplatz, the booth next to the protest kiosk there was dismantled, and the group moved on with the Kiosk of Solidarity to the courtyard in front of the Düttitreff in the Werner-Düttmann-Siedlung. There, they participated in the community center’s weekly family afternoon. Unlike the situation at Hermannplatz, this was not an anonymous public space with random passersby, but rather an existing, neighborhood-oriented setting with familiar structures and regular residents.

This changed context influenced the conversations as well as the perspectives expressed. The statements gathered there must therefore be contextualized differently. In a semi-public, community-oriented setting, it is important to consider that statements may also be shaped by a need for self-protection or social consideration.

In the courtyard, the borrowed “Kiosk of Solidarity” as well as tables and benches were set up to organize the various stations and activities. Similar to the protest kiosk, these served to spark conversations and capture different perspectives. Unlike the first event, however, additional stations were set up here specifically for children. They could draw or engage with questions in a playful way, which also made it easier to capture their perspectives in an accessible manner.

Overall, the setting proved to be more protected. The children could move freely in the courtyard, which fostered an open and informal atmosphere. Parallel to the kiosk, a communal buffet-style dinner took place as part of the family afternoon, which helped lighten the mood and facilitated informal conversations.

At the same time, the police liaison officer for the neighborhood was present to answer questions. This presence altered the situation in ways that differed from what was originally intended, as it helped shape the character of the space as well as the dynamics of individual conversations.







URBAN PRACTICES







KICK-OFF @ KITEV E.V.

AN EXCURSION TO OBERHAUSEN BROUGHT THE STUDIO'S IDEAS OF INSURGENT PRACTICE AND CO-PRODUCTION INTO LIVED EXPERIENCE THROUGH SHARED WORK, DIALOGUE, AND EVERYDAY COLLABORATION. BETWEEN WORKSHOPS, COLLECTIVE COOKING, AND EXCHANGES WITH KITEV E.V., THEORETICAL CONCEPTS WERE TESTED, CHALLENGED, AND GROUNDED IN PRACTICE.

As part of the studio program, the class took a field trip to Oberhausen. The group set off together from Berlin at seven in the morning and arrived at their destination on schedule despite the windy and freezing weather.

The group stayed at the old water reservoir and water tower near the train station in Oberhausen. The group's sleeping quarters were located on one of the upper floors. On another floor, there were rooms available that could be used for cooking and eating together, for group work, and for relaxation. The tower is used by the Kitev e.V. association, which has its offices on the top floor beneath the water tanks and operates additional spaces on the ground floor, including a large kitchen and rooms for collaborative work, presentations, and events.

On Friday, the day began with an on-site workshop. Representatives from Kitev presented their work and various projects undertaken by the organization. Among other things, they showcased a mobile kitchen that can be transported on a trailer to different events to serve as a base for communal cooking and activities. Following this, the research findings from the analysis phase were presented. The individual groups explained their observations, experiences, and conclusions, which were commented on by the Kitev representatives and supplemented with additional food for thought. The evening was organized collaboratively, beginning with grocery shopping and followed by the preparation of a communal dinner.

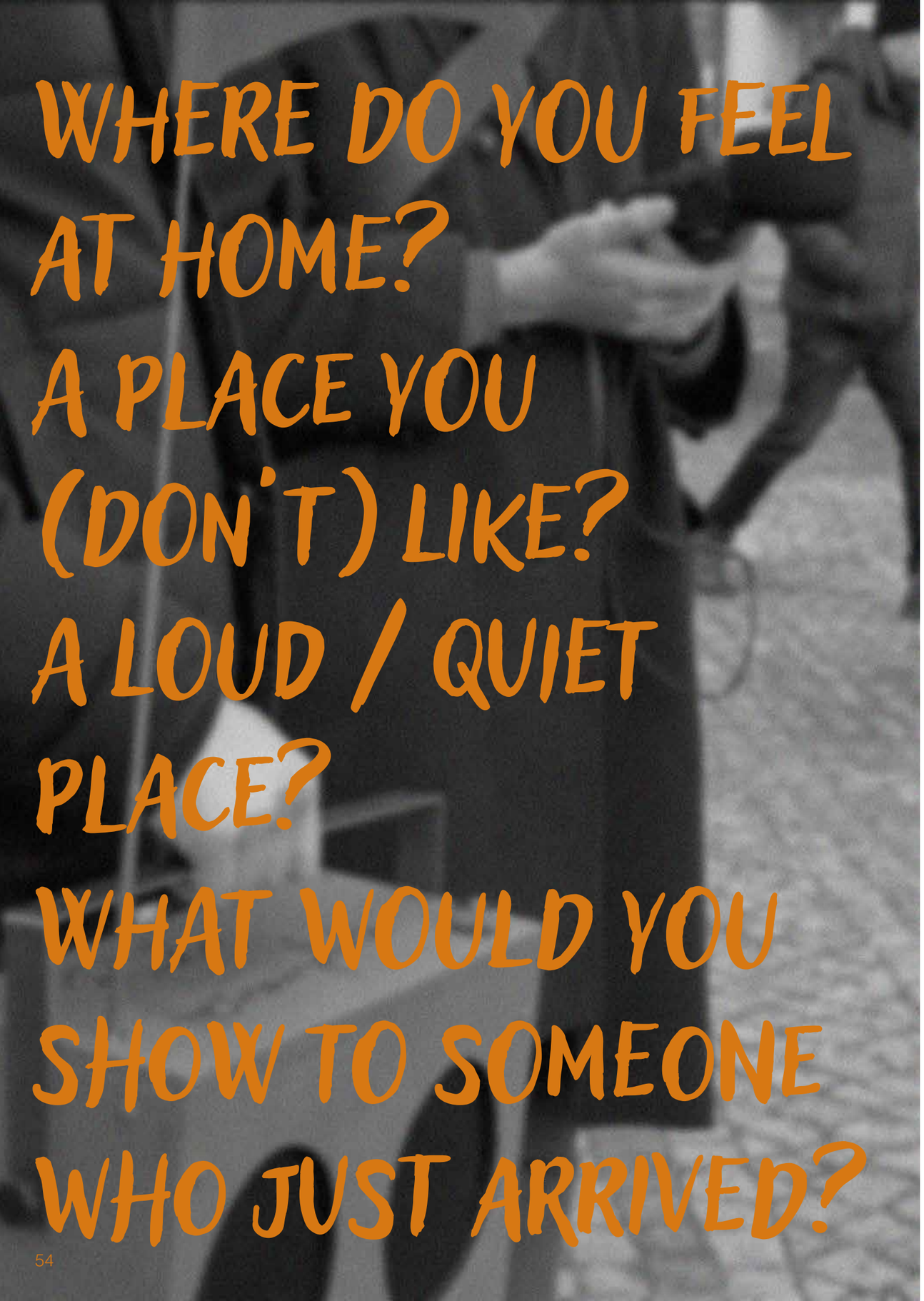
On Saturday morning, participants were divided into the new working groups that had been established before Christmas. Within these groups, initial ideas and concepts for the projects were developed. Juliana and Qusay supported the process by providing substantive input and feedback to the individual groups. This phase marked the start of concrete project work. In the afternoon, the initial proposals were presented to representatives from Kitev. The feedback received proved helpful, as it opened up new perspectives and encouraged the groups to explore further possibilities and learn from the experiences of Kitev as well as Juliana and Qusay.

In the evening, the Refugee Kitchen was also introduced. This initiative is based on the idea that migrants who have already arrived cook for the community, and regular gatherings are held for everyone to eat together. Later that day, the group attended one of these weekly community dinners hosted by the Refugee Kitchen. A varied menu featuring culinary specialties from various countries, such as Syria, Egypt, and Iran, was served.

On Sunday, a guided tour of an old bunker in the city took place. This was followed by the return trip to Berlin. Overall, the excursion proved to be extremely insightful. In addition to the substantive insights, it also provided an opportunity for students and faculty to get to know each other better. As a result, the concepts of Insurgent Planning and Co-Production, which had been discussed in the studio, were not only explored theoretically but also experienced practically through collaborative work and shared living during the excursion.







RADIO HERMANNPLATZ

HOW DO DIFFERENT PEOPLE EXPERIENCE HERMANNPLATZ, AND HOW DOES A PLACE COME TO FEEL LIKE HOME OVER TIME? THE "RADIO HERMANNPLATZ" PROJECT COLLECTS PERSONAL STORIES AND PERSPECTIVES THROUGH INFORMAL CONVERSATIONS, GIVING VOICE TO THE DIVERSE WAYS PEOPLE FIND THEIR PLACE IN THE URBAN LANDSCAPE.

Radio Hermannplatz is a project that gives Hermannplatz a voice. Through informal, lighthearted conversations, the group collected anecdotes, impressions, hopes, and fears from people who use the square every day, avoid it, are rediscovering it, or call it home. The interviews address various topics that describe and shape everyday life around the square—from settling into the neighborhood and the feeling of home, to lived solidarity, to experiences with the police and demonstrations. Questions about local businesses, trash in public spaces, and personal feelings of safety are also addressed.

The radio stands as a symbol for sending signals out into the world. It exists only through exchange: all content is created collectively, through conversations about space and by occupying space. In this way, the perspectives of residents, visitors, social workers, and many others become audible.

Radio Hermannplatz aims to empower people to make their voices heard and share their own concerns publicly, thereby countering the existing narrative of the square by creating new, polyphonic stories.

WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT WITH RADIO HERMANNPLATZ?

by Christina, Lissy, Simon, Tim, Emil

CO-PRODUCTION with:
passersby, residents, hejmo - englisches sprachcafe, helene-nathan-bibliothek - deutsches sprachcafe, initative hermannplatz - küche für alle, kiez begegung - kiezteff am vollguter gemeinschaftsgarten, dütti-treff - familiennachmittag, familienzentrum urbanstrasse - sprachcafe, refugio - deutsches sprachcafe



Hermannplatz is a place where different realities of life, backgrounds, and uses converge and coexist side by side. In such an environment, needs, abilities, and personal feelings of safety or comfort are highly individual and vary from person to person. Consequently, the experience of arriving in the city is not uniform. True arrival occurs where people have room to act, can find their own paths, and develop independence. Strategies for self-empowerment depend heavily on personal experiences as well as individual perceptions of places and encounters with other people.

To make these different perspectives visible, the project deliberately focuses on subjective experiences. Arrival is often best understood through personal stories, impressions, and memories. The conversations surrounding Radio Hermannplatz build on precisely this and create a space where different voices and perspectives can coexist. Step by step, this creates a multifaceted picture of the place, showing how differently people perceive, use, and integrate Hermannplatz into their everyday lives.

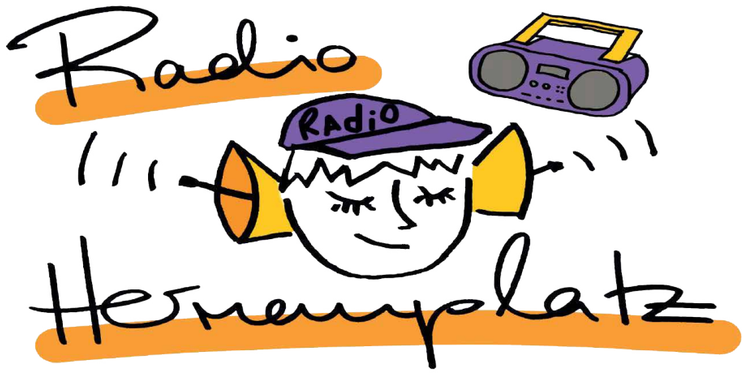
The radio functions not only as a medium, but also as a method and a spatial intervention. As a physical object in public space, it creates a situation in which people can come together and literally occupy space. The interview thus becomes not merely an exchange of words, but an everyday spatial practice. At the same time, the object facilitates playful encounters: it acts as an icebreaker, lowers inhibitions, and can break down existing hierarchies between interviewers and interviewees.

The aim of the conversations was to conduct informal interviews with various people around Hermannplatz, including residents, visitors, and those who work locally in social or community institutions. The focus was on the perspectives of both people who are new to the neighborhood and those who have long been connected to the place. We were particularly interested in how these different individuals perceive the square and how, over time, they have made it a part of their daily lives or even a home.

The conversations were intended to unfold as openly as possible. Rather than following a set list of questions, the aim was to leave room for personal experiences, memories, and individual perspectives. To kick off the discussion, the group came up with a few simple questions: Where do you feel at home at Hermannplatz or in the surrounding area? Are there places you particularly like or perhaps avoid? Which places do you find noisy or quiet? And which places would you show to someone who has just arrived? These conversations yielded a multifaceted picture of the place, composed of people's personal stories and perceptions.

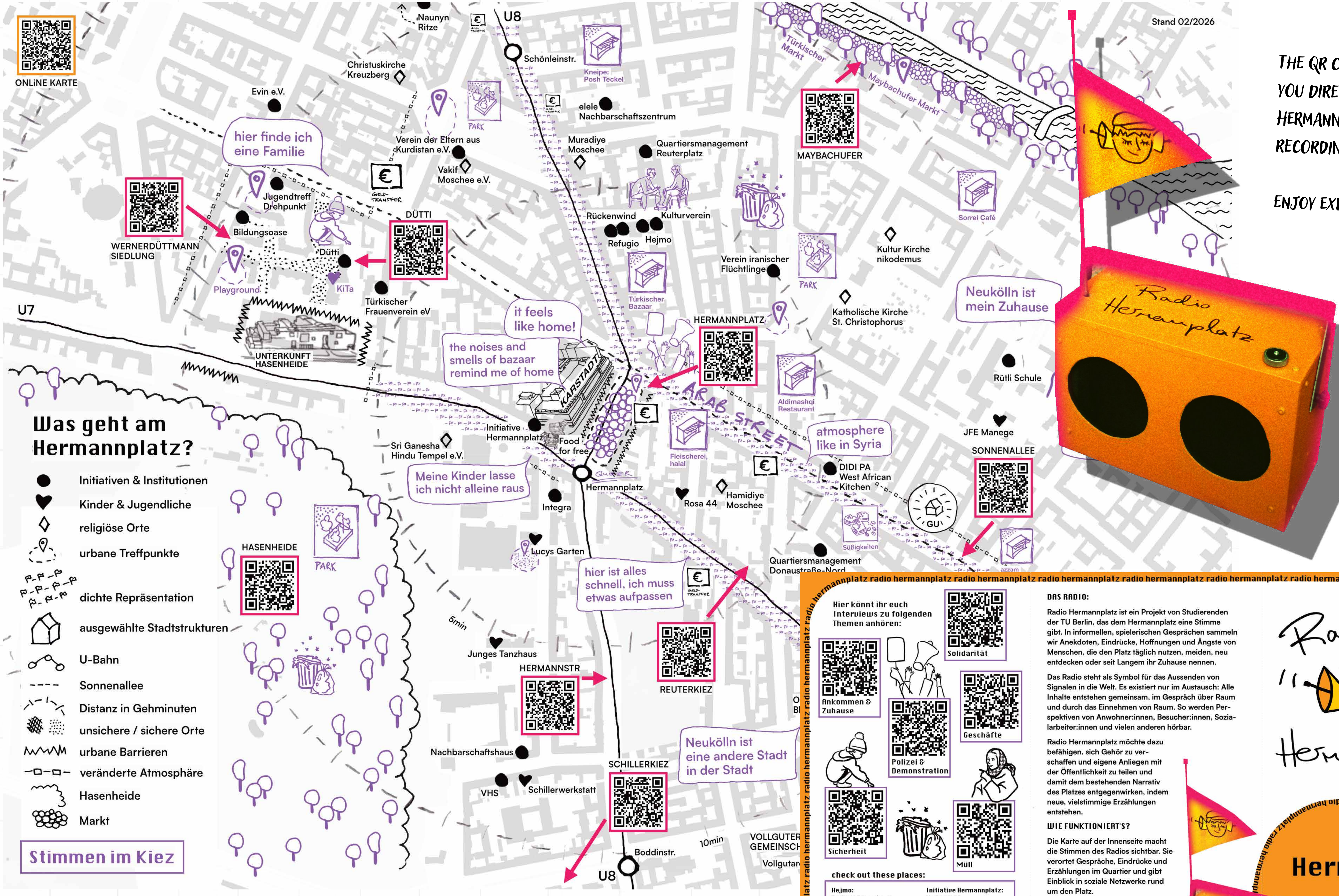
The result of this process is an audio map that visualizes the voices of the radio as a spatial element. The map locates conversations, impressions, and narratives within the neighborhood and offers insight into social networks around Hermannplatz. It primarily highlights initiatives, associations, and places that facilitate exchange and support people who are new to the neighborhood as they settle in. Designed as a flyer, the map also serves as an invitation to discover Hermannplatz through its connections, stories, and voices.

QR codes on the map provide direct access to Radio Hermannplatz's audio clips on SoundCloud. In addition, Instagram serves as a communication platform and visual companion to the project. There, impressions from the process, excerpts from conversations, and other materials are shared and made available.









THE QR CODES WILL TAKE YOU DIRECTLY TO RADIO HERMANNPLATZ'S AUDIO RECORDINGS ON SOUNDCLOUD.

ENJOY EXPLORING!

radio hermannplatz radio hermannplatz radio hermannplatz radio hermannplatz radio hermannplatz radio hermannplatz radio hermannplatz radio hermannplatz radio hermannplatz

Hier könnt ihr euch Interviews zu folgenden Themen anhören:

Solidarität

Ankommen & Zuhause

Geschäfte

Polizei & Demonstration

Sicherheit

Müll

check out these places:

Hejmo: Englisches Sprachcafé, Dienstags 18:00 - 20:00 Uhr	**Initiative Hermannplatz:** Küche für Alle, Sonntags ab 16:30 Uhr
Helene-Nathan-Bibliothek: Deutsches Sprachcafé, Dienstags 17:00 - 18:30 Uhr	**Kiez Begegnung:** Kieztreff am Vollguter Gemeinschaftsgarten, Donnerstags 17:45 - 19:00 Uhr
Dütti-Treff: Familiennachmittag, Donnerstags 15:00 - 17:00 Uhr	**Familienzentrum Urbanstraße:** Sprachcafé, Dienstags 13:30 - 14:30 Uhr
Refugio: Deutsches Sprachcafé, Mittwochs 17:30 - 19:30 Uhr	*Weitere Angebote findet Ihr auf den Websites der Initiativen.*

mail

radio.hermannplatz@gmail.com

DAS RADIO:

Radio Hermannplatz ist ein Projekt von Studierenden der TU Berlin, das dem Hermannplatz eine Stimme gibt. In informellen, spielerischen Gesprächen sammeln wir Anekdoten, Eindrücke, Hoffnungen und Ängste von Menschen, die den Platz täglich nutzen, meiden, neu entdecken oder seit Langem ihr Zuhause nennen.

Das Radio steht als Symbol für das Aussenden von Signalen in die Welt. Es existiert nur im Austausch: Alle Inhalte entstehen gemeinsam, im Gespräch über Raum und durch das Einnehmen von Raum. So werden Perspektiven von Anwohner:innen, Besucher:innen, Sozialarbeiter:innen und vielen anderen hörbar.

Radio Hermannplatz möchte dazu befähigen, sich Gehör zu verschaffen und eigene Anliegen mit der Öffentlichkeit zu teilen und damit dem bestehenden Narrativ des Platzes entgegenwirken, indem neue, vielstimmige Erzählungen entstehen.

WIE FUNKTIONIERT'S?

Die Karte auf der Innenseite macht die Stimmen des Radios sichtbar. Sie verortet Gespräche, Eindrücke und Erzählungen im Quartier und gibt Einblick in soziale Netzwerke rund um den Platz.

Gezeigt werden vor allem Initiativen, Vereine und Orte, die Austausch ermöglichen und Personen, die neu im Kiez sind, beim Ankommen helfen. Die Karte versteht sich als Einladung, den Hermannplatz über seine Beziehungen, Geschichten und Stimmen zu entdecken.

Über die QR-Codes gelangst Du direkt zu den Beiträgen von Radio Hermannplatz auf SoundCloud.

Viel Spaß beim Erkunden!





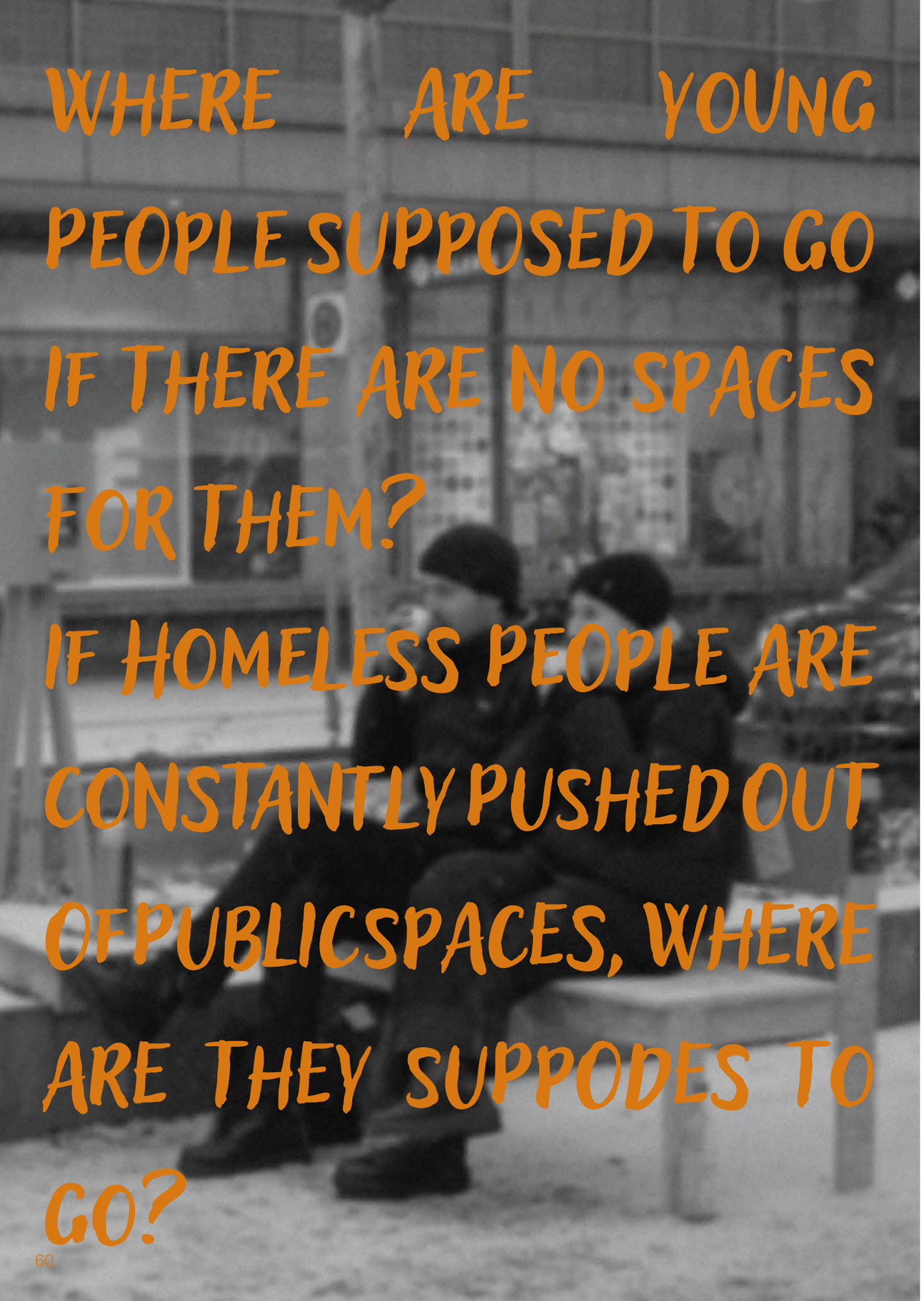
giving Hermannplatz a voice

soundcloud

instagram

@radio.hermannplatz

radio.hermannplatz



PROVOCATIVE FURNITURE

HERMANNPLATZ IS A CONTESTED URBAN SPACE WHERE ISSUES OF HOUSING SHORTAGES, SOCIAL INEQUALITY, AND ACCESS TO PUBLIC SPACE COME TO THE FORE. THROUGH THE “PROVOCATIVE FURNITURE” INSTALLATION, ALONG WITH ACCOMPANYING FLYERS AND STICKERS, A SPATIAL DISRUPTION IS CREATED THAT ENCOURAGES REFLECTION ON THE USE OF SPACE, EXCLUSION, AND THE RIGHT TO THE CITY.

Hermannplatz is a place where different realities of life converge. As a major transportation hub and everyday gathering spot, it is used by many people for passing through, working, waiting, or lingering. At the same time, it is here that the intense pressure on urban spaces becomes particularly evident. A growing housing shortage, social inequality, and increasing demands for space clash with limited physical space.
The group provocative furniture explores these tensions and asks what role public space plays under such conditions. Who can use it, who finds a place here, and who is increasingly excluded? The starting point consists of conversations with local stakeholders, research on the situation surrounding Hermannplatz, and on-site observations. Building on this, we developed a spatial intervention and accompanying communication formats designed to make existing conflicts visible and spark a discussion about the right to public space.

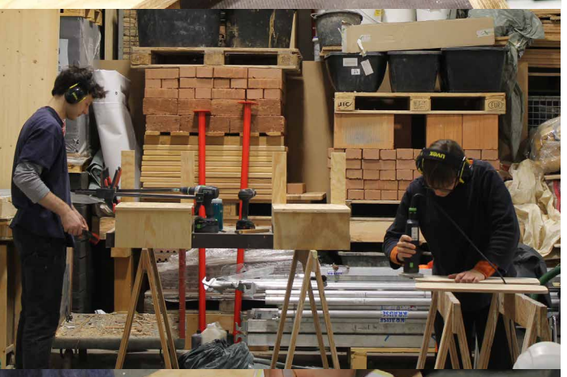
DO YOU WANNA HAVE A SEAT?

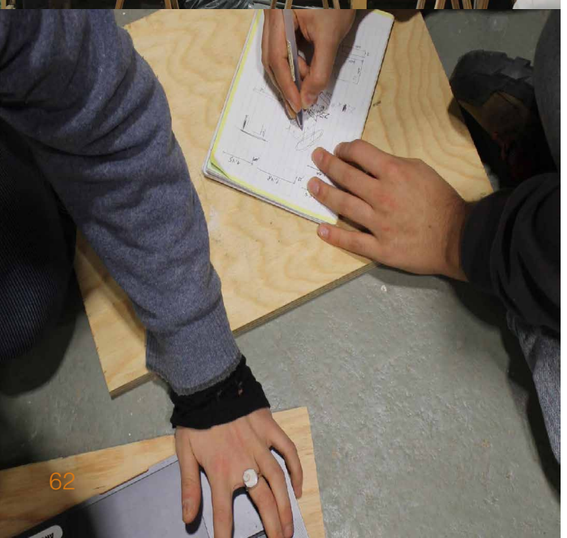
by António, Daniel, Emilie, Hannah, Ria

CO-PRODUCTION with:
passersby, jester + ron-alexander from gangway nord-neukölln, cengiz + moritz + aga from gangway nord-neukölln, workshop tu-ackerstraße









Amid the tensions of a housing shortage, social inequality, and growing demands on public space, Hermannplatz clearly illustrates how closely housing and public space are intertwined. Housing is scarce, many shelters offer only limited space, and the number of homeless people is rising. As a result, public space is becoming increasingly important as a place to spend time, meet others, and go about daily life.

At the same time, these spaces are becoming increasingly restricted. Freely accessible places are rare, and seating options such as benches have been partially removed. New shelters, such as those in Hasenheide, further increase the pressure on these spaces. Nevertheless, Hermannplatz remains an important social infrastructure: people meet there, organize their daily lives, or find their bearings. Solidarity initiatives such as food distributions and social work are also present.

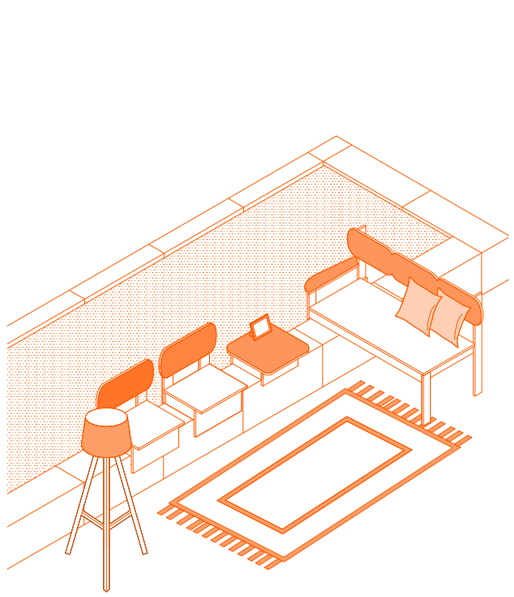
Conversations with social workers from Gangway Neukölln and the “urgent appeal” from the AG Hermannplatz highlight the complex situation: poverty, drug use, and homelessness are becoming visible, while control and surveillance—such as through police presence or discriminatory checks—are on the rise. At the same time, needs are rising due to existing shelters on Sonnenallee and the planned arrival center, while resources remain limited.

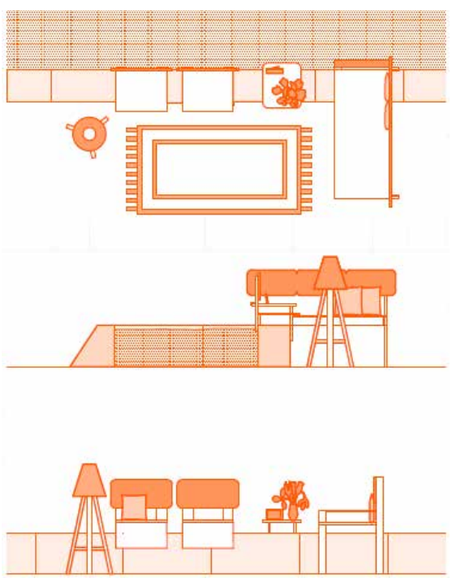
Young people in particular tend to gather around Hermannplatz and Sonnenallee, yet they struggle to find suitable places to spend time. There is a need for safe spaces and venues that tolerate substance use. At the same time, the risk of displacement is growing. This raises key questions: Where can homeless people go? And where can young people find space to gather and socialize?

These observations gave rise to the idea of an urban intervention in the form of “provocative furniture.” The intervention addresses existing tensions in public space and translates them into a deliberately exaggerated spatial situation. The starting point is the visible lack of seating. By symbolically transforming public space into a living room, an image emerges that is directly associated with spending time, everyday life, and social interaction. Based on this idea, the group developed a concrete design for a provocative arrangement of furniture in the square, which they translated into a buildable object. The actual furniture was then installed on site to test the intervention in the real urban space as a spatial situation that can be used, perceived, and discussed. Through this staging, private practices are deliberately shifted into public space. The intervention employs exaggeration and provocation to attract attention and challenge the familiar boundaries between private and public space. In this way, it aims to spark a discussion about who owns public space, who is allowed to use it, and what forms of exclusion or displacement occur there.

The goal is to highlight even less visible forms of structural and spatial violence—such as control, a lack of places to gather, or defensive urban design. To complement the spatial intervention, they created flyers and stickers that bring key questions and background information to light in the urban landscape. They address issues that emerged in conversations with local stakeholders and during research: the pressure on housing, the situation of people without housing and the homeless, the lack of gathering places for young people, as well as questions regarding access to and use of public spaces. The messages deliberately employ short, pointed questions such as “Where are the benches?”, “Who is allowed to sit here?” or “Public space – for whom?”, supplemented by references to the housing crisis or concepts such as “hostile architecture.”

In conjunction with the installation, flyers and stickers form the communicative layer of the project: While the furniture intervention creates a spatial disruption, the texts open up additional spaces for thought and discussion regarding social inequality, displacement, and the right to public space.













menschenfeindliche Architektur

bezeichnet Gestaltungsmaßnahmen im öffentlichen Raum, die gezielt bestimmte Verhaltensweisen oder Personengruppen – etwa Obdachlose oder Jugendliche – ausschließen oder verdrängen, anstatt soziale Probleme zu lösen.

Hostile architecture refers to design features in public spaces that intentionally discourage certain behaviors or exclude specific groups of people—such as homeless individuals—rather than addressing underlying social issues.

ca. 1,9 Mio

people in Germany live without stable housing. About 1,029,000 of them are accommodated in permanent shelters (1.2 % of the population). Including temporary accommodations such as emergency shelters or refugee accommodations, the number rises to approximately 1,869,000 people (2.2 % of the population).

where are the benches?

who is allowed to sit here?

HOW

do we live when the housing market collapses?

Public space — for whom?

6 SQ

of private space in accommodations for refugees.

When private space disappears, public space matters.

Where are young people allowed to hang out and be loud?

Public space is a living room for those without one

Where do we live collectively?

53.600

people in Berlin have no home,
that´s 1.5% of the population.
By 2029, 85,000 are expected.
Including city-run refugee centres: 115,000 (3%)

where is the difference?

Houseless:
People without a permanent home, who may live in shelters, temporary accommodations, or with friends and family. Their living situation is unstable, but they have some form of shelter.

Homeless:
People with no shelter at all, living permanently on the street, in parks, stations, or other public spaces. They have no private or safe place to sleep.





RETHINK HERMANNPLATZ

THE FUTURE OF THE KARSTADT BUILDING ON HERMANNPLATZ HAS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF PUBLIC DEBATE FOR YEARS. THE RETHINK HERMANNPLATZ GROUP IS TACKLING THIS ISSUE WITH A PARTICIPATORY APPROACH: A SPECIALLY DEVELOPED GAME INVITES PARTICIPANTS TO COLLABORATIVELY DEVELOP IDEAS FOR THE SQUARE AND THE BUILDING AND TO TEST THEM OUT IN A PHYSICAL SPACE.

The ReThink Hermannplatz group is exploring the future development of the Karstadt building and its role in the urban landscape. The starting point was the open question of what significance the building might have for Hermannplatz in the future. While the department store has historically been a defining feature of the site, its future use is now the subject of political, economic, and social debate. At the same time, the question arises as to how different perspectives—particularly those of residents and users of the square—can be more strongly incorporated into such development processes.

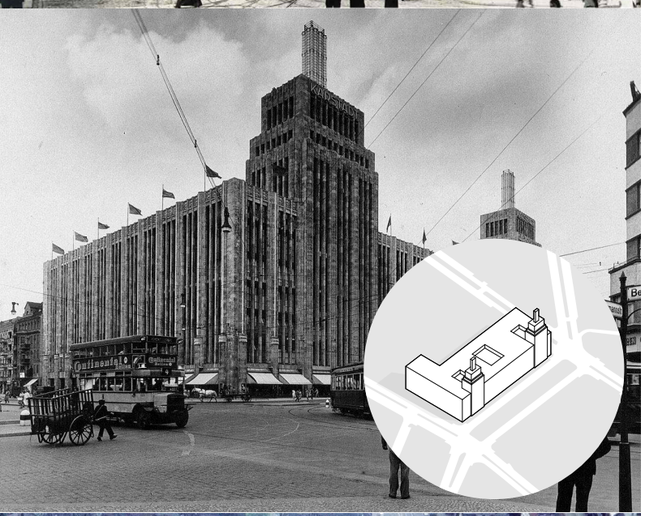
Against this backdrop, the group pursued an experimental approach. Instead of working exclusively through analytical means on possible future scenarios, a participatory tool was developed to stimulate conversations about the site and make ideas visible. In the form of a game, participants can contribute their perceptions, memories, and wishes and test out possible changes directly on a model of Hermannplatz. The game is not intended as a finished planning proposal, but rather as an open-ended tool that structures discussions, broadens perspectives, and can generate new ideas about the future use of the building and the square.

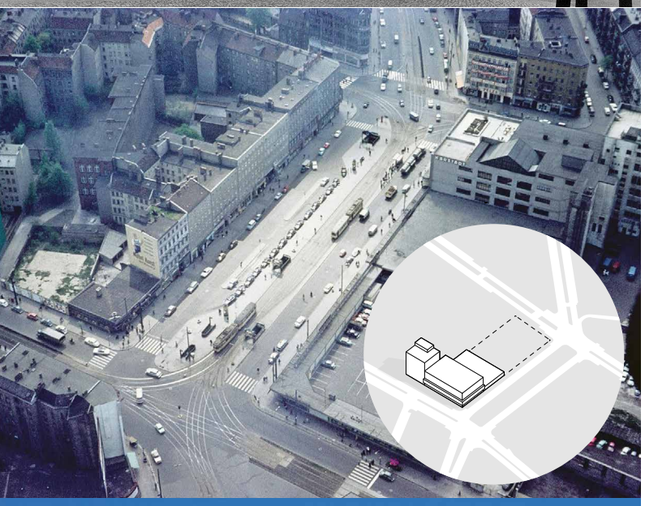
WHAT'S YOUR IDEA FOR HERMANNPLATZ?

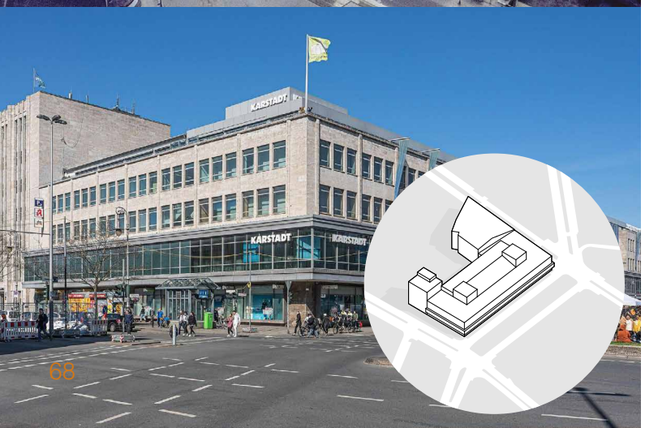
by Adrian & Max

CO-PRODUCTION with:
dütti nachbarschaftstreff - familiennachmittag, martha gemeinde - go game gathering









The starting point for this project was an in-depth exploration of the history of the Karstadt building. The department store was built between 1927 and 1929 by Philipp Schaefer in the Expressionist style and was considered a significant example of early modern architecture. With approximately 72,000 square meters of retail space, it was one of the largest and most modern department stores in Europe. Technical innovations such as escalators, elevators, and a direct subway connection made it a cutting-edge retail destination. Particularly distinctive was the rooftop garden with a viewing platform at a height of about 32 meters, which also made the building a popular tourist attraction.

In April 1945, the department store was blown up by SS troops to prevent the Red Army from accessing food supplies. Only a small section on Hasenheide remained intact. The building was rebuilt in a simplified form and only up to the third floor, causing it to lose much of its architectural presence. In 2019, the owner announced plans to reconstruct the building's original height and façade structure. This sparked a public debate in which both opportunities and criticisms were voiced. The district offices of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg and Neukölln emphasized that further development would be welcomed, but only if public interests and local stakeholders were taken into account.

Historically, the Karstadt building was not only a shopping destination but also a social gathering place. The café and rooftop terrace provided space for interaction and relaxation. Today, access is severely restricted, and the building is increasingly perceived as functionally and economically problematic. Accordingly, the scenarios under discussion range from renovation and repurposing to demolition.

This raised some key questions: How can the building contribute to life at Hermannplatz in the future? What types of uses are missing in the surrounding area? And how can the perspectives of users be better incorporated?

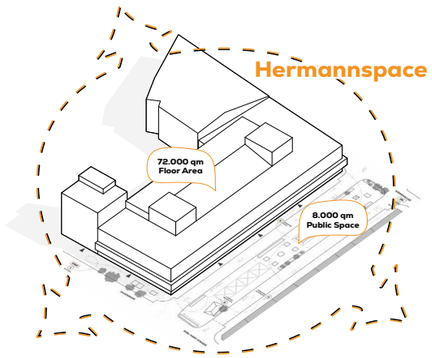
Against this backdrop, the group developed a game that addresses both the approximately 8,000-square-meter square and the building. The basis was an evaluation of the analysis, from which four usage categories were derived. Voices from the kiosk event were integrated as action cards, supplemented by materials such as pens, sticky notes, and building blocks to visualize ideas.

The game begins at Hasenheide next to the "Neue Welt." One person moves to a space, reads an action card aloud, and everyone shares spontaneous thoughts or memories, which are noted down. Possible changes are then discussed and depicted directly on the model. The next person follows in a clockwise direction.

The game was tested in various settings, such as at a neighborhood gathering in the Werner-Düttmann housing complex. Participants emphasized that Neukölln's cultural diversity should also be reflected in future uses of the space. Among other ideas, a concept similar to the Anoha Children's Museum was proposed, leading to a visualization featuring a green, open rooftop terrace, a looping path, and recreational areas.

A second visualization emerged from a game session with the Martha congregation. Here, too, a publicly accessible rooftop terrace was proposed, while the square itself took on greater prominence. Discussions focused on traffic calming measures, partial roofing, and a larger BVG station in the backyard that could accommodate bus traffic and be connected to the building.

The exercise demonstrated that the game is effective for sparking conversations and gathering a wide range of ideas. At the same time, it became clear that some participants were hesitant to actively engage with the model, and the action cards were used less frequently than expected. This provides starting points for further development, such as enhanced visual design or a greater focus on the dynamics of the conversation.

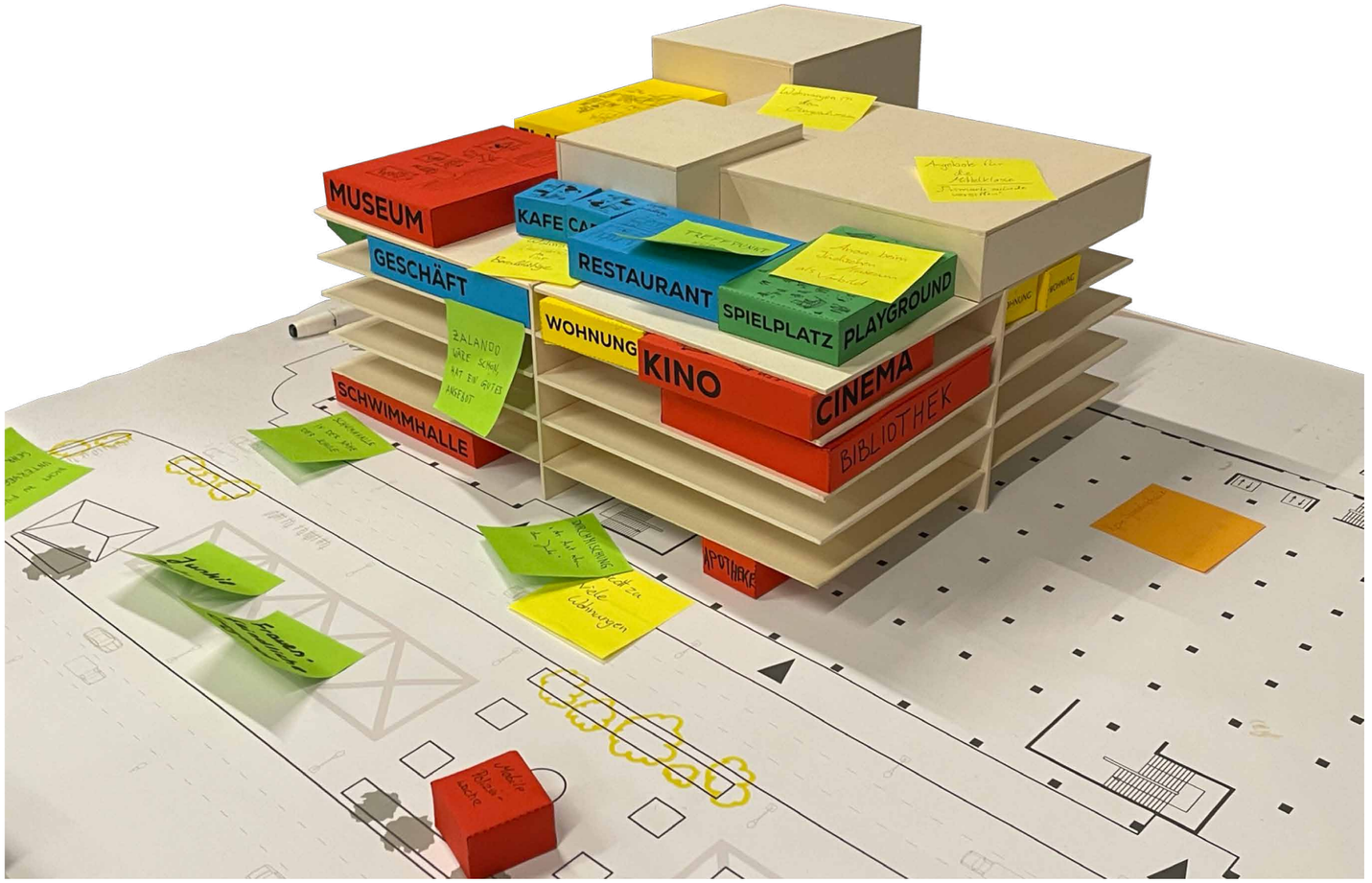


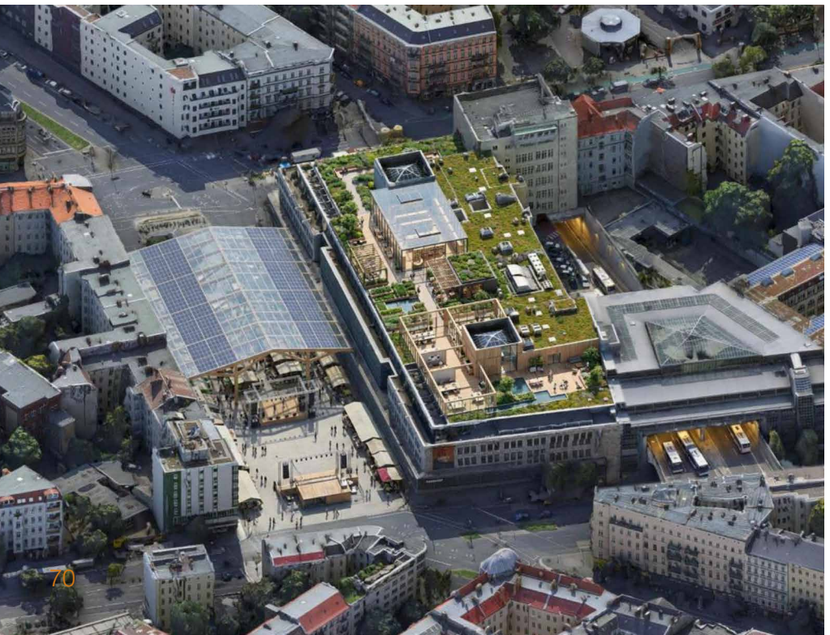


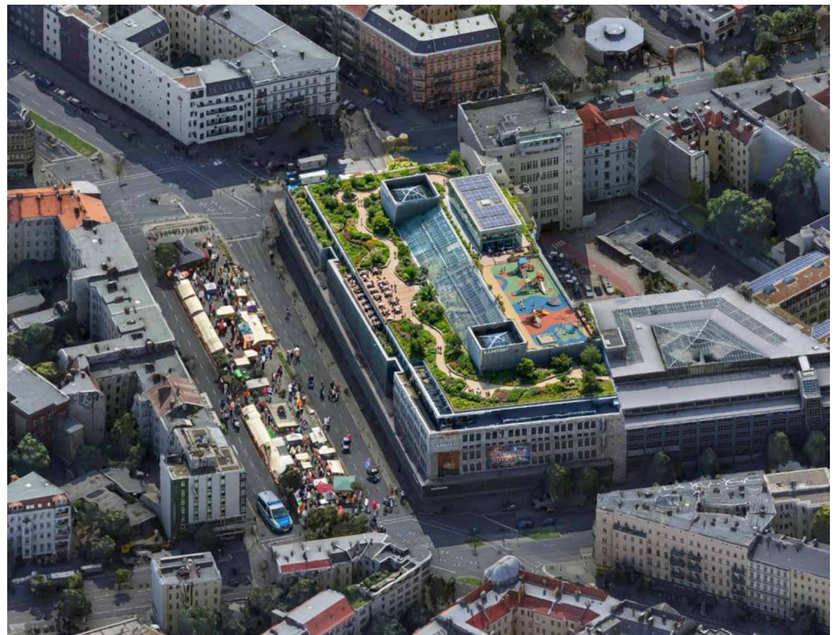












Rethink Hermannplatz

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this game is to broaden the players perspective on what Hermann-Space is and which potential it holds. By moving the player through a physical model of the space, emotions and memories are collected, transformative uses are formulated and situated in space.
After finishing all the steps, the player may gain a new appreciation for the scale and diverse potentials dormant in the square, the adjacent department store building and beyond. The game is intended to grow by new potential use ideas that can be reused every time the game is used to inspire future players.

MATERIAL

20+ Spaces in four colours:

- Open Recreational Space
- Commercial Space
- Residential Space
- Social/Cultural Space
- Blank Use- Spaces for new ideas
- Action Cards

PLAYING THE GAME

The figure is placed next to the first field situated on Hasenheide next to „Neue Welt“. Players may determine the starting player by discussing who has known Hermannplatz for the most years or months. This starting player may start by moving the figure and reading the first action card out loud. In the following rounds, this responsibility rotates clockwise among the participants.

1. The acting player moves the figure to the next field. All players are invited to share their most immediate thoughts and feelings about this paritcular space on the square and to write it either directly on the paper or on a sticky-note.

2. The acting player draws an Action-Card and reads it alloud. All players are now invited to reflect upon the statement posed by the Card.

3. The players are invited to reconfigure parts of Hermann-Space by using new cubes, a sticky-note, a pencil or any other method that seems appropriate. The changes made may or may not be related to the theme established by the Action-Card previously drawn.

4. The next round is initiated by the subsequent player from the acting players view in clockwise direction, who may become the new acting player. The actions are repeated from step number one.

ENDING THE GAME

After the finishing field is reached, players are welcome to add all remaining thoughts and ideas to the game by using the cubes, by drawing on the board or by any other means appropriate.



KIDS-KIEZ-RALLY

CHILDREN ARE RARELY TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN THE PUBLIC SPACES AROUND HERMANNPLATZ. THE KIDS' NEIGHBORHOOD RALLY ADDRESSES THIS ISSUE WITH A PLAYFUL FORMAT THAT INVITES CHILDREN TO ACTIVELY EXPLORE THEIR NEIGHBORHOOD, DISCOVER PLACES THAT MATTER TO THEM, AND SHARE THEIR OWN PERSPECTIVES ON THE AREA.

The group developed the Kids-Kiez-Rally based on the observation that there are few activities and places in the Hermannplatz area that are explicitly geared toward children. While public spaces do exist, they are not always perceived as safe or suitable places for children. At the same time, youth and social services are often overburdened and underfunded. This results in a situation where, although children are part of everyday urban life, their perspectives and needs are only taken into account to a limited extent in the urban space.

Against this backdrop, the group aimed to involve children not only as a target group but as active producers of knowledge. The starting point was the question of how children perceive their surroundings, which places are relevant to them, and how they navigate the neighborhood. The scavenger hunt was therefore developed as a participatory format that combines play, spatial exploration, and collaborative learning. It also serves as a tool to highlight existing resources, facilitate navigation within the neighborhood, and foster social interactions among children.

WANNA PLAY A GAME?

by Eileen, Leo, Laurenz

CO-PRODUCTION with:
dütti nachbarschaftstreff - familiennachmittag

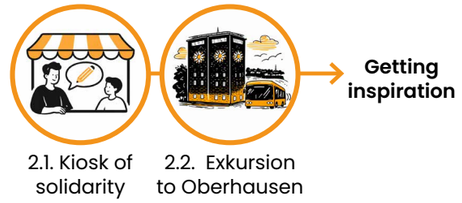












The initial analysis showed that children in the Hermannplatz area constitute a particularly vulnerable group. There is a lack of suitable places for them to spend time, and existing open spaces are sometimes deliberately avoided. In interviews, for example, it was mentioned several times that Hasenheide is not perceived as a suitable place for children due to drug use and dealing. This makes it clear that formally designated open spaces are not automatically considered accessible or safe. At the same time, institutions such as the Düttitreff serve as important local actors that function as social hubs in the neighborhood.

Theoretically, the project is situated within the context of collective knowledge production. Knowledge is not understood here as a fixed resource, but as something that emerges through exchange, interaction, and collective action. Children were therefore viewed not merely as participants, but as actors whose experiences and perspectives were to be actively incorporated into the development of the rally. The goal was to connect different forms of knowledge and to facilitate a process of collective knowledge generation.

In preparation for the rally, two workshops were held as part of the family afternoon at Düttitreff. Children and teenagers from the Werner-Düttmann-Siedlung participated. The first workshop aimed to identify which places are actually relevant to the children and how they perceive their social environment. Three methods were used for this purpose: a memory game, a mapping exercise, and a drawing activity.

The memory game provided a playful way to access place-based memories and experiences. The children were able to quickly recognize depicted places and symbols and connect them to their own stories or observations. At the same time, the game served as a low-barrier entry point for conversations and helped build trust.

In the subsequent mapping exercise, the children worked with maps to identify important places in their surroundings. It became apparent that children aged nine and older, in particular, were able to read maps well and correctly locate specific places. Their keen curiosity in searching for familiar places and understanding spatial relationships was striking.

Drawing opened up another avenue for self-expression, especially for children who tend to participate less in conversations. In a sketched, axonometric representation of the courtyard, they were able to draw elements they found interesting, wished for, or associated with memories. The drawing activity was received with great enthusiasm and led to conversations about their wishes, needs, and perceptions of their own surroundings.

The second workshop was designed as a trial run for the later rally and was implemented as a scavenger hunt through the Werner-Düttmann-Siedlung. This tested how children handle maps, how group processes function, and how tasks are solved as a team. At the same time, drawings and materials were created that could later be integrated into the final rally.

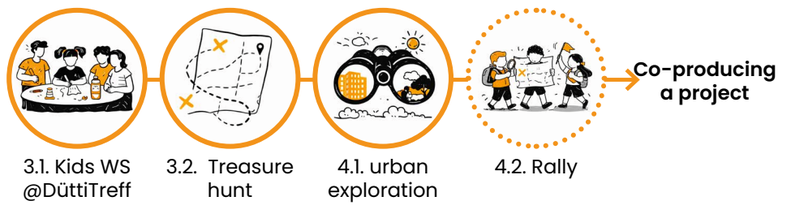
The scavenger hunt revealed several key dynamics. Children develop a strong competitive spirit and tackle tasks with great energy. At the same time, cooperative structures form within the groups, allowing tasks to be completed together. It also became clear that not every child needs their own map, as group members share information and support one another.

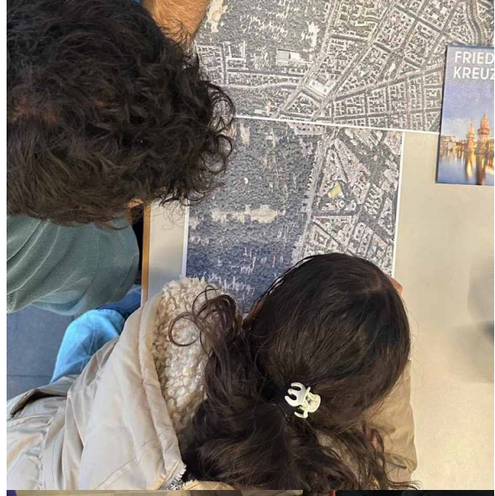
The group then reviewed the potential rally route by conducting their own walkthrough around Hermannplatz. During this walkthrough, they examined and re-evaluated distances, path connections, crossings, and landmarks in order to develop a realistic and safe route.

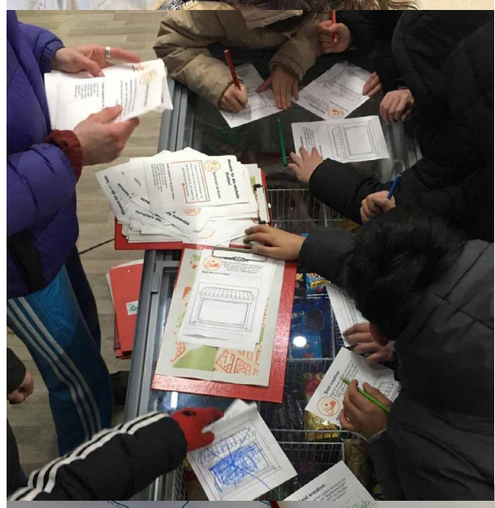
The final rally takes participants from station to station, where they must solve a task at each one. Additionally, smaller observation or search tasks are integrated along the route to sharpen their awareness of the surroundings. By solving the tasks, the children collect letters that are eventually put together to form a shared solution word.

The route was deliberately designed to connect different locations in the vicinity of Hermannplatz. In addition to the square itself, the route includes playgrounds, monuments, and shops that children visit with their families. Furthermore, the rally incorporates locations with specific offerings for children, such as GraefeKids, the Kieztreff in the Graefekiez, or the Junge Tanzhaus. The new Ankommens im Quartier facility is also included in the route to make it spatially and symbolically tangible as part of the neighborhood.

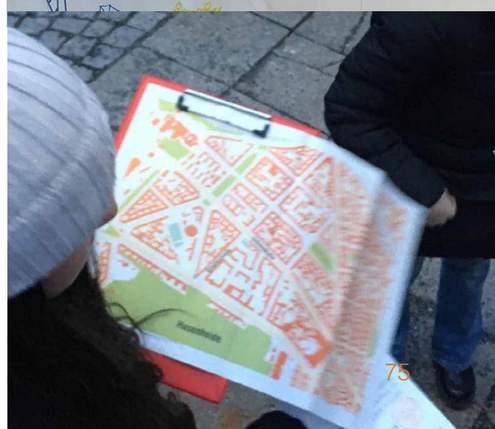
The Kids' Neighborhood Rally thus serves not only as a game but also as a tool for orientation and for actively engaging with the urban environment. Through movement, interaction, and shared discovery, children can experience the neighborhood from their own perspective, and existing resources are brought to light.



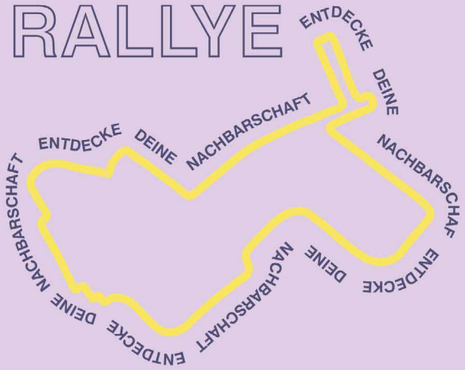








KIDS-KIEZ-RALLYE



KIDS-KIEZ-RALLYE

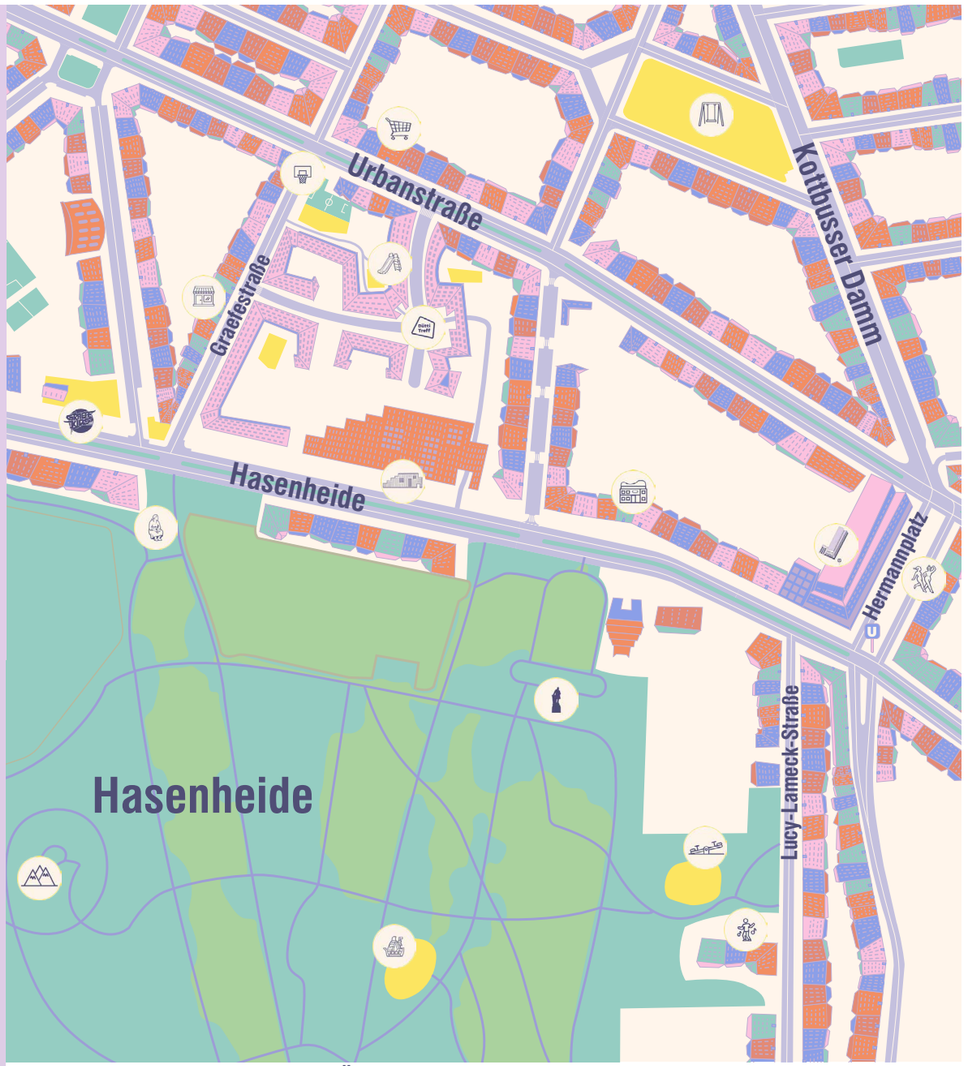
GLÜCKWUNSCH, IHR HABT ALLE AUFGABEN GESCHAFFT! TRAGT HIER DIE BUCHSTABEN EIN, DIE IHR GESAMMELT HABT.

1	2	3	4	5	6

7	8	9	10	11

LÖSUNGEN -
SCHAUT DIE WIRKLICH NUR DANN AN, WENN IHR NICHT MEHR WEITER WISST.

(1 BÜRO
(2 ACTION
(3 e
(4 JEDE 20. STRASSE\PLATZ
(5 LUCY-LAMECK-STRASSE
(6 JUNGES TANZHAUS
(8 LIEBE ES ZU LEBEN
(10 ALTE MUSCHELN
(12 ALABABA



SPIEL- & SPORTPLÄTZE

GELBER SPIELPLATZ

SPORTPLATZ

SKULPTUREN

TRÜMMERFRAUEN

JAHN-DENKMAL

TANZENDES PAAR

SEID IHR BEREIT FÜR EIN ABENTEUER IN EUREM KIEZ? EGAL, OB IHR HIER SCHON LANGE WOHNT ODER NEU SEID – DIESE RALLYE HILFT EUCH, DIE NACHBARSCHAFT SPIELERISCH ZU ENTDECKEN. DIE AUFGABEN WURDEN GEMEINSAM MIT KINDERN AUS DEM KIEZ ENTWICKELT UND ZEIGEN EUCH EINIGE IHRER LIEBSTEN ORTE.

ALLES WAS IHR DAFÜR BRAUCHST:

- CA. 60 MIN ZEIT.
- GUTE KLEIDUNG.
- EINEN STIFT.
- HANDY.
- DIE AUFGABEN.
- DIE KIEZKARTE.

DAS IST DIE LEGENDE.

HIER FINDEST DU DIE NAMEN VON WICHTIGEN ORTEN. MANCHMAL MUSST DU DIE NAMEN ERST RAUSFINDEN!

ANKOMMENSHAUS

3

KARSTADT

JUNGES TANZHAUS

GRAEFEKIDS

2

DÜTTI-TREFF

1 SUCHE IN DEINER KARTE NACH DIESEM HAUS.

DAS IST DAS **NEUE ANKOMMENSHAUS**. HIER WERDEN MENSCHEN WOHNEN, DIE NEU NACH DEUTSCHLAND UND BERLIN GEKOMMEN SIND. IN DEM HAUS WOHNEN DANN MENSCHEN ALLEN ALTERS - AUCH KINDER.
DAS HAUS WAR NICHT IMMER EIN WOHNHAUS. WAS WAR ES FRÜHER?

2 GEHE DIE GROSSE STRASSE ENTLANG BIS ZUM HERMANN-PLATZ. HALT NACH EINEM **BLAUEN HAUS** AUSSCHAU. ERGÄNZE IN DER LEGENDE DEN NAMEN VON DEM LADEN, DER IN DEM HAUS IST. ES IST EIN LADEN, ZU DEM VIELE KINDER AUS DER WERNER-DÜTTMANN-SIEDLUNG GERNE MIT IHREN ELTERN HINGEHEN.

3 WENN DU AM HERMANNPLATZ ANGEKOMMEN BIST, SIEHST DU LINKS VON DIR EIN GROSSES HAUS. DAS IST DAS KARSTADTGEBÄUDE. ES IST EIN SEHR WICHTIGES HAUS FÜR DEN HERMANNPLATZ UND IST SCHON FAST 100 JAHRE ALT. FINDE HERAUS, WIE VIELE STOCKWERKE DAS HAUS HAT. VERGISS DEN KELLER NICHT.

○ 5 L⁴ ○ 7 M⁴ ○ 9 K⁴

4 HABT IHR EUCH AUCH SCHON MAL GEFRAGT WARUM DER HERRMANNPLATZ SO HEISST? WAUM DENN NICHT FRAUDAMENPLATZ? IN BERLIN IST JEDER VIERTE PLATZ ODER STRASSE NACH EINEM MANN BENANNT. WAS GLAUBT IHR WIE VIELE STRASSEN ODER PLÄTZE NACH FRAUEN BENANNT SIND?

○ JEDE 5. STRASSE/PLATZ N⁷
○ JEDE 10 STRASSE/PLATZ O⁷
○ JEDE 20. STRASSE/PLATZ P⁷

5 SUCHE AUF DEINER KARTE EINE STRASSE, DIE NACH EINER FRAU BENANNT IST. DER VOR- UND NACHNAME BEGINNEN MIT DEM SELBEN BUCHSTABEN. WELCHER BUCHSTABE IST DAS? ⁸

6 GEHE ZU DER STRASSE UND GEHE UNGEFÄHR 20 SCHRITTE IN DIESE STRASSE HINEIN. ACHTE DABEI AUF DEN BODEN UNTER DEINEN FÜSSEN. DIE STEINE ÄNDERN IHR MUSTER, VON GROSSEN STEINEN ZU VIELEN KLEINEN STEINEN. GEHE JETZT WEITER DIE STRASSE HINAUF. DORT SIEHST DU EIN GROSSES, GELBES HAUS, DAS FAST WIE EINE SCHULE AUSSIEHT. WIE HEISST DER ORT?

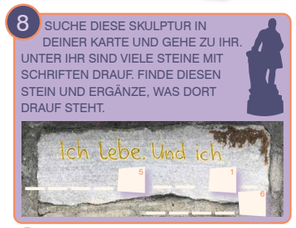
¹⁰ ⁹

HIER KÖNNEN KINDER UND JUGENDLICHE TANZWORKSHOPS BESUCHEN ODER ZU TANZAUFFÜHRUNGEN GEHEN.

7 GEH IN DIE **HASENHEIDE**. DORT GIBT ES VIELE **SPIELPLÄTZE, TIERE** UND EINEN **HÜGEL ZUM SCHLITTENFAHREN**. UNTERWEGS KOMMST DU AN EINEM SPIELPLATZ VORBEI.

KANNST DU ERKENNEN WAS FÜR SPIELGERÄTE HIER VON ANDEREN KINDER GEMALT WURDEN? MALE DEIN LIEBLINGSSPIELGERÄTE DAZU!

8 SUCHE DIESE SKULPTUR IN DEINER KARTE UND GEHE ZU IHR. UNTER IHR SIND VIELE STEINE MIT SCHRIFTEN DRAUF. FINDE DIESEN STEIN UND ERGÄNZE, WAS DORT DRAUF STEHT.



9 MACH DICH VON HIER AUF DEN WEG ZU EINEM ANDEREN DENKMAL IN DER HASENHEIDE - DEM DENKMAL DER TRÜMMERFRAUEN. AM WEG KOMMST DU BEI DEM **TIERPARK** VORBEI. HIER LEBEN VIELE TIERE. WELCHE TIERE KANNST DU VOM WEG AUS ALLES SEHEN?

10 SUPER, DU HAST ES ZU DER **TRÜMMERFRAU** GESCHAFFT. SIE WURDE 1955 AUFGESTELLT, UM FRAUEN DANKE ZU SAGEN, DIE NACH DEM ZWEITEN WELTKRIEG GEHOLFEN HABEN, ZERSTÖRTE HÄUSER AUFZURÄUMEN UND DIE STÄDTE WIEDER AUFZUBAUEN.

WAS GLAUBST DU, AUS WELCHEM MATERIAL IST DAS DENKMAL GEMACHT?

ALTER SCHROTT X¹
ALTE STRASSEN Y¹
ALTE MUSCHELN Z¹

11 GEH ZUM NÄCHSTEN AUSGANG DER HASENHEIDE UND AUF DIE ANDERE STRASSENSEITE. DORT TREFFEN SICH DIE **GRAEFEKIDS**. GEMEINSAM LASSEN SIE IHRER KREATIVITÄT FREIEN LAUF,BASTELN UND BAUEN DINGE UND SIND IM SOMMER VIEL DRAUSSEN. WO TRIFFST DU DICH MIT DEINEN FRIENDS?

12 GEHE DIE GRAEFESTRASSE ENTLANG, BIS DU ZU DEM SPORTPLATZ KOMMST. AUF DEM WEG KOMMST DU AN EINEM KIOSK VORBEI, DER „**DMX SHOP**“ HEISST. VIELE KINDER NENNEN DEN KIOSK ABER NOCH MIT SEINEM ALTEN NAMEN. WIE HIESS ER FRÜHER?
FRAGE ANDERE KINDER ODER DIREKT IM LADEN NACH UND SCHREIBE DEN NAMEN IN DIE LEGENDE NEBEN DAS SYMBOL

13 IN DER WERNER-DÜTTMANN-SIEDLUNG GIBT ES VIELE **SPIEL- UND SPORTPLÄTZE**. DIE KINDER, DIE HIER WOHNEN, GEBEN DEN PLÄTZEN OFT NAMEN NACH IHREN FARBEN.
SCHAU DIR DIESEN SPORTPLATZ GENAU AN. WELCHEN NAMEN WÜRDEST DU IHM GEBEN? SCHREIB DEN NAMEN IN DIE LEGENDE.
WEISST DU WARUM DER GELBE SPIELPLATZ SO GENANNT WIRD?

14 ERKENNST DU DIE SKULPTUR, DIE EIN KIND AUS DER SIEDLUNG HIER GEMALT HAT? FINDE DEINEN WEG ZU DER SKULPTUR. VERSUCHE ES SELBST, DIE SKULTPUR ZU MALEN.





ARCHIVE OF REPRESSION & RESISTANCE

HERMANNPLATZ IS A HIGHLY POLITICIZED URBAN SPACE WHERE ISSUES OF REPRESSION, CONTROL, AND POLITICAL EXPRESSION COME TO THE FORE. A DIGITAL COUNTER-MAP IS CREATING A GROWING ARCHIVE THAT DOCUMENTS THE EXPERIENCES OF MARGINALIZED VOICES AND HIGHLIGHTS ALTERNATIVE PERSPECTIVES ON THE SITE.

Hermannplatz is one of Berlin's most hotly debated urban spaces. As a central transportation hub and everyday gathering place, it is a convergence point for diverse social, cultural, and political dynamics. At the same time, the site has been the subject of public and media debates for years, in which it is often reduced to problem-oriented narratives. Terms such as "hotspot" shape the perception of the square, often obscuring the complex realities and diverse experiences of the people who use this space every day.
The project addresses this discrepancy between public representation and lived reality. It examines how power relations, forms of political expression, and forms of control become visible in urban space and how they are simultaneously rendered invisible. The focus is on the question of how alternative perspectives on Hermannplatz can be documented and made spatially visible.
Against this backdrop, the project uses counter-mapping as a method to map experiences, observations, and political practices from the perspective of those who shape the space. Through a digital, interactive map, a growing archive is created that documents forms of repression as well as sites of expression, resistance, and solidarity.

WHAT'S YOUR EXPERIENCE AROUND HERMANNPLATZ?

by Yan, Linus, Mona, Jara & jUiCy

CO-PRODUCTION with:
mohammad von generalverdacht, passersby



■ Spatial Control before and during 1st May protest: police positioned barriers (Hamburger Gitter) at Sonnenallee and Hermannplatz, restriction of movement, using police cars to block off streets during protests

01.05.2025



⚠ police banned the Demo "Palestine resists - it started long before October 7" from going through Hermannplatz and Sonnenallee and ended the protest at Lenaustraße - incidents of police brutality, violence, use of teargas and arrests; reports of injured protesters - police kettled the people (stopping people from leaving in the direction of Hermannplatz/Sonnenallee)

06.10.2024

unmute the streets

archive of repression and resistance | archiv von repression und widerstand | أرشيف القمع والمقاومة

The starting point of this study is the observation that Hermannplatz is often portrayed in public debates through a simplified and problem-oriented lens. Media reports, and right-wing populist voices in particular, frequently depict the square as a “hotspot.” However, there is a clear discrepancy between this portrayal and the reality experienced on the ground. At the same time, many people identify strongly with the square. Hermannplatz is shaped by diverse social, cultural, and political dynamics and has a long history as a site of political conflict, particularly in the context of labor movements as well as left-wing and anti-colonial initiatives.

The study centers on political issues and the analysis of power relations in urban space. The focus is on increasing repression, the criminalization of political forms of expression, and the restriction and invisibilization of marginalized groups in public space.

These dynamics are particularly concentrated at Hermannplatz. The site is politically charged, has a high proportion of migrants, including one of Berlin’s largest Palestinian diaspora communities and is simultaneously marked by stigmatization and racist stereotypes. A tension arises between state repression and the right of marginalized groups to visibility, political expression, and participation. Political positions become visible not only discursively but also spatially in public space.

The project uses counter-mapping as a method of analysis. Maps are not understood as neutral representations but as political tools that either reproduce or challenge power relations. The goal is to make visible perspectives that are often missing from official representations and to connect individual experiences into a shared spatial narrative.

This gave rise to the idea of a digital archive of repression and resistance. The goal is to document and preserve marginalized voices for the long term by transferring them from contested physical spaces into a digital space where destruction or interference have less immediate impact. The archive is conceived as a place for collecting, making visible, and offering counter-narratives.

To this end, an interactive digital map format was developed. A website serves as a platform where research, observations, and personal experiences are geolocated. By marking specific locations, events can be visualized individually and in terms of their spatial concentration. Areas particularly affected can be identified, and patterns of repression can be traced. At the same time, the platform enables ongoing user participation.

The map’s content is divided into four categories that highlight different forms of power, control, and political expression.

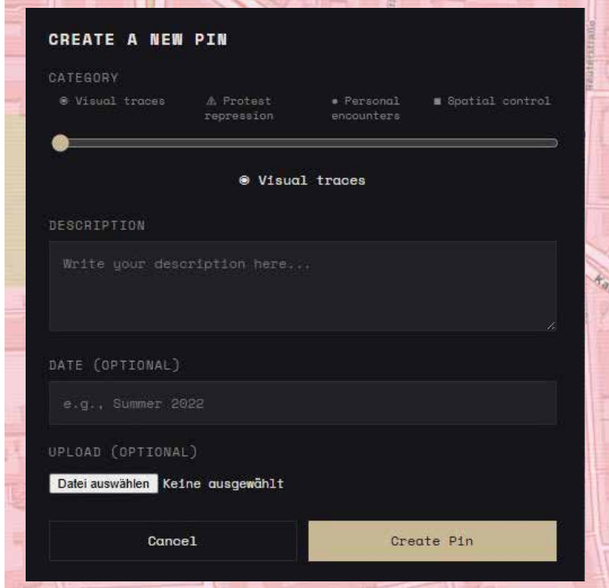
The first category documents visual traces of political expression in public spaces, such as graffiti, stickers, or posters, particularly those that have been removed or painted over. These serve as low-threshold forms of political protest while simultaneously making their own erasure visible.

The second category focuses on repression in the context of protests, such as bans on demonstrations, rerouted marches, police violence, arrests, or restrictions on freedom of assembly and expression.

The third category collects personal experiences of repression in everyday life, including racial profiling, unwarranted arrests, police violence, and large-scale checks and raids. It shows that such events often form structural patterns, particularly in stigmatized areas such as around Hermannplatz and Sonnenallee.

The fourth category examines forms of spatial control, such as increased police presence, surveillance technologies, or structural measures to regulate movement in public spaces, which shape the perception and use of the place.

Counter-mapping redefines urban space. The map serves not only as a tool for documentation but also as an active act of reinterpretation: it develops an alternative narrative based on the perspectives, experiences, and acts of resistance of the people who use this place every day.





◉ Pictures of Hind Rajab and candles in memorial of the second anniversary of her killing

29.01.2026



● police inquiry on TU student group: group of 15 was approached by police when meeting in front of statue at Hind-Rajab-Platz for a walk on Sonnenallee, three people wearing a kuffiyeh; 3 police officers asked if we wanted to register an event (Versammlung) and questioned on background of the event, number of participants etc.

16.01.2026

unmute the streets

https://www.unmutethestreets.com

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CRITICAL REFLECTION

STUDIO REFLECTION

THIS REFLECTION EXAMINES THE STUDIO WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF INSURGENT PRACTICE AND EXPLORES HOW COLLECTIVE WORKING METHODS, COLLABORATIONS, AND CRITICAL SELF-POSITIONING WERE IMPLEMENTED. IN DOING SO, IT HIGHLIGHTS BOTH THE POTENTIAL AND THE CHALLENGES THAT ARISE FROM WORKING AT THE INTERSECTION OF THE UNIVERSITY FRAMEWORK AND THE DEMANDS OF INSURGENT PRACTICE.

Within the framework of insurgent practice, the studio was conceived as a collective space for learning and co-production, focused on collaboration, shared responsibility, and the collective generation of knowledge. Working methods, roles, and thematic priorities were developed collaboratively and continuously renegotiated throughout the semester.

Since critical reflection is a central component of insurgent practice, the studio also sought to provide space for this. In informal discussions within the groups, both topics and encounters as well as one's own position were critically discussed. At the same time, joint exchanges took place repeatedly throughout the studio, facilitating collective reflection and shifts in perspective. The evaluation is based on various forms of feedback, including informal conversations, a voluntary anonymous questionnaire, and collective moments of reflection. It should be noted that not all voices were captured equally. The evaluation can therefore be understood as neither complete nor conclusive. Furthermore, it is written by us as authors, which introduces an additional subjective perspective. The aim is to convey a nuanced picture of how the studio functioned and where potential and challenges became apparent.

At the same time, it must be taken into account that the project's framework entailed certain limitations and compromises, particularly due to the semester's limited timeframe. The university context, too, offers only limited opportunities to fundamentally question or overcome existing institutional structures. The implementation of insurgent working methods thus navigated the tension between institutional requirements and the demand for alternative forms of collaboration and knowledge production.

For the evaluation, three areas are distinguished: studio structure, project work and collaborations, and personal positioning.

In retrospect, many aspects of the studio's organization were evaluated positively. A central component was the attempt to establish flat hierarchies. Although these cannot be completely eliminated within the university framework, the exchange between faculty and students was predominantly open, respectful, and conducted on an equal footing. This fostered a collective working atmosphere in which diverse perspectives could be incorporated into discussions and decision-making processes.

The jointly developed "Care Practice," which was prepared on a rotating basis during the weekly colloquia, was also highlighted. It promoted a mindful approach to time, workload, and resources and contributed to a supportive collaborative environment. The overall sense of well-being in the studio was also emphasized on several occasions.

Furthermore, the studio structure provided space for individual interests and questions. Thematic areas were developed collaboratively, and project work was largely self-organized. The open format allowed participants to set their own priorities and experiment with various methods. This was complemented by continuous exchange between the groups as well as interdisciplinary dialogue, which many found enriching.

Collaborative work and cooperation formed a central component of the studio. Both cross-group collaborations—some of which were initiated in advance—and self-organized forms of cooperation emerged. These were complemented by spontaneous encounters with local people, whose perspectives could often only be grasped in the moment.

The organized collaborations with local initiatives and stakeholders were generally viewed positively, as they provided direct access to local perspectives. At the same time, it was noted critically that not all collaborations were decided upon collectively, and that greater consultation would have been beneficial in this regard.

A key component was a jointly organized event in collaboration with three local stakeholders, which played a central role in the studio process. While some aspects were decided collectively, other parameters were predetermined. Additionally, the event took place in two different physical settings, which influenced the dynamics of the discussions and interactions and must be taken into account in the evaluation.

Overall, the event was described as very enriching. Particular emphasis was placed on the open atmosphere, the collaboration with local initiatives, and the direct exchange with local people, which brought diverse perspectives to light. However, due to the limited timeframe, a more detailed reflection did not take place until toward the end of the semester. In retrospect, an earlier evaluation would have been beneficial.

A central component of our reflection was examining our own position. As students at TU Berlin, we occupy a privileged position and enter existing urban contexts as academic actors, albeit only temporarily. This allows us to generate new ideas and bring perspectives to light, while the authority to interpret these contexts often remains with





us. This raises questions about the impact and responsibility of such interventions.

The composition of the studio group was also reflected upon. Although the studio addressed post-migrant themes, the majority of participants do not have a migration background themselves. Perspectives, questions, and preconceptions therefore shape which themes become visible and which receive less attention. In retrospect, this tension may not have been sufficiently addressed.

At the same time, it became clear that planning and design cannot be understood as purely technical practices, but are always linked to social, political, and institutional issues. They operate within existing power structures and possess a clear political dimension.

It is not possible to arrive at a definitive reflection on one's own position in this process. Rather, it is an ongoing process of questioning and learning. The studio provided spaces for this, for example through discussions and shared moments of reflection. At the same time, the question remains as to how such processes can be more firmly established in the future and what possibilities and limitations an "insurgent practice" has in a university context.

UN-| LEARNINGS

LEARNING AND UNLEARNING EMERGED AS CENTRAL PRACTICES WITHIN THE STUDIO, OPENING SPACE TO QUESTION ESTABLISHED WAYS OF THINKING, WORKING, AND KNOWING. THROUGH COLLECTIVE EXPERIENCES AND REFLECTION, URBAN SPACE WAS RE-UNDERSTOOD AS A COMPLEX, CONTESTED, AND SOCIALLY NEGOTIATED SYSTEM. RATHER THAN FIXED CONCLUSIONS, THE PROCESS REVEALED A MULTIPLICITY OF PERSPECTIVES THAT CONTINUE TO CHALLENGE AND EXPAND CONVENTIONAL APPROACHES TO PLANNING AND DESIGN.



Continuous learning, as well as the conscious unlearning of certain assumptions, routines, or ways of thinking - is a central component of insurgent practice. In this context, learning means not only acquiring new knowledge or methods, but also questioning existing perspectives and ways of working. Insights often arise not through linear planning, but through experiences, encounters, and shared reflection.

Equally important is the concept of unlearning. This refers to the conscious questioning and discarding of patterns of thought and action that have been adopted from other contexts, such as traditional university practices or disciplinary routines. This allows for the exploration of alternative forms of working, decision-making, and knowledge production.

Within the framework of the studio, these processes could be experienced in various ways. These are not fixed insights or conclusions that apply equally to everyone, but rather potential experiences that emerged during the course of our collaborative work. Since the participants brought diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and prior experiences to the table, the lessons learned and unlearned cannot be reduced to uniform statements. Rather, the studio opens up a spectrum of possible insights and reflections that can coexist and, in some cases, complement, contradict, or further develop one another.

Overall, these learnings and unlearnings should not be understood as definitive conclusions, but rather as an open field of experiences arising from individual approaches, collective processes, and situational encounters, opening up different possibilities for rethinking the city, planning, and one's own role within it.





UNDERSTANDING THE CITY AS A COMPLEX SYSTEM

Through this process, a broader understanding of the city emerged, in which urban spaces are viewed not merely as physical structures, but as complex systems composed of social relationships, political negotiations, and infrastructural networks. Infrastructure no longer appeared merely as a technical foundation, but as a powerful system that organizes movements, regulates access, and helps shape social inequalities, while many of these structures remain invisible in everyday life and only become visible in moments of disruption or conflict.

RETHINKING POST-MIGRANT PERSPECTIVES AND BELONGING

At the same time, the studio opened up post-migrant perspectives in which migration is understood as a constitutive part of urban reality and belonging appears not as a fixed state but as a dynamic, socially negotiated process. In this context, planning and design could also be understood more strongly as political practices embedded in social negotiations. Public space emerged as a contested field in which questions of access, use, and exclusion are continuously negotiated.

KNOWLEDGE AS A COLLECTIVE AND SITUATIONAL PROCESS

In parallel, an expanded understanding of knowledge emerged. Insights developed not only through analysis but also through exchange, encounters, and situational experiences in urban space. Subjective perspectives, everyday knowledge, and local experiences became visible as equally valid forms of knowledge, bringing the significance of collective knowledge production to the forefront.

QUESTIONING HIERARCHIES AND LINEAR PROCESSES

These experiences were accompanied by a potential unlearning of established ways of working. Hierarchical structures, fixed role models, and linear planning logics were challenged and replaced by open, iterative, and collective processes. While these opened up new possibilities, they also brought with them uncertainties regarding orientation, decision-making, and collaboration.

CRITICALLY EXAMINING DOMINANT NARRATIVES

Furthermore, the studio encouraged participants to critically question dominant narratives about urban space and to focus more closely on structural interconnections. In engaging with local voices, it became clear that simplified media representations often fail to capture the complexity of a place.

REFLECTING ON ONE'S OWN POSITION AND ROLE

Another central aspect was the reflection on one's own position. The role as students and temporary actors could be critically examined in terms of perspectives, privileges, and influence, revealing that research and design always take place from a specific position.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF INFORMAL STRUCTURES

Finally, attention also turned to the importance of informal structures and everyday practices. Many processes that shape the functioning of a city arise through use, appropriation, and social interaction, and can be displaced or rendered invisible by formal interventions.

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