

22–24 May 2020, ZKM Atrium 1+2, online
Opening Weekend of the CRITICAL ZONES Exhibition 22–24,
May 2020

Virtual Opening on Friday, 22 May, 2020 at 6 pm

On Friday, 22 May 2020 at 6 pm, a weekend commences, which will celebrate the opening of the *Critical Zones* exhibition with a Streaming Festival that has never been done in this form before at the ZKM. On its website and on the ZKM's YouTube channel there will be live broadcasts of lectures, films, theater performances, guided tours, and talks with artists. Workshops and podium discussions with the public will also take place. A telegram channel will offer the ongoing opportunity to ask questions, contribute comments, and discuss. Together, we will think and talk about the state of our Earth, and via all the ZKM's channels look toward the horizon of new Earthly politics.

“Will the ZKM be opening?” No, because the ZKM never closed! It was always open, online. Currently, we are hearing that the museums are open again, which means actually entering the real space of the museums is now possible again. In reality, most museums were open the whole time during the coronavirus crisis; namely, open in virtual space while their real spaces were closed. The coronavirus crisis forced many public facilities to produce new, digital forms of serving the public and to communicate via the telematic media, because the old forms were not operating. Thus, through being obliged to enter the digital sphere it then became clear that today we possess many forms of public spheres.

While the ZKM's real spaces remain closed, the ZKM stay open in the virtual space of the networks. From 6 April to 1 May 2020, Monday to Friday from 6 pm, the ZKM broadcast the *FEMINALE OF MUSIC: FEMALE COMPOSERS*, a digital festival to present female composers, from the 17th century to the present, with a changing live program that included interviews and concerts. The ZKM also “opened” the closed exhibition *bauhaus.film.expanded* in virtual space at least twice a week presenting film screenings, talks with experts, and workshops. The ZKM was “on the air” and thus always open and freely accessible.

One returns to the old, analog world, and acts as though nothing has happened, back to business as usual. However, the coronavirus crisis has revealed the digital weaknesses of public institutions. One of many examples was the amateurish broadcast of the German Film Award 2020 ceremony, *#lola20*, in Berlin, by public service broadcaster ARD. The television people had no idea how to work with teletechnology.

Therefore, the upcoming exhibition *Critical Zones: Observatories for Earthly Politics* on the biggest issue of the present day and what we can do to see that Planet Earth remains habitable for humankind, will not only open on 22 May as a real exhibition, but importantly will also open with a virtual vernissage in digital space. From 22 to 24 May there will be a

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Press Contact
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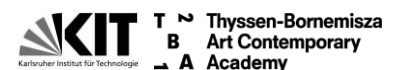
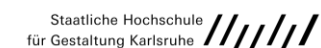
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Streaming Festival, from late afternoon until midnight. At this Festival the ZKM will present the contours of the museum's future, and also the future of tele-vision. With a mix of recorded and live material, lectures and discussions with the audience, original contributions and films, we want to show that it is possible to transform the classic roundtable format of the real world into a virtual roundtable with mosaic-like interconnections. Dialogue between people who are present and others who are distant, between present and distant artworks, will characterize the experience of a new exhibition format and a new form of education. Private television channels claim "We want to entertain you," which is actually a cynical euphemism for "We want to dumb you down." To this the ZKM retaliates with a famous quote by the great German mathematician David Hilbert, who calls to us from beyond the grave: "We must know. We will know." The global shutdown has demonstrated to every one of us that the global system of life and the life of every single human being is in jeopardy. We need to mount an appropriate response to this. Thus artists and scientists will utilize the *Critical Zones* exhibition and its tele-vernissage to show "horizons for a future life lived in freedom, equality, and sisterhood." (Peter Weibel)

On Friday evening at 6 pm PETER WEIBEL and BRUNO LATOUR invite you to join us for the opening of the exhibition. The curators will give a talk introducing the scientific concepts and philosophy of the Critical Zone, the work of the international scientists who shaped them, and the artists who engage with this theme, including Donna Haraway, Lynn Margulis, Joseph Koerner, Adam G. Riess to mention just a few. Based on their work we shall travel through fire, water, air, and soil; the Earth's elements are the program of the Opening Weekend, which seeks to engage critically with the situation of the Earth.

As a center for media and the arts the ZKM explores new forms, not only to translate what is analog and familiar into the now commonplace digital, but also to develop new forms of communication in the virtual sphere. Thus visitors will discover two forms of exhibition in the livestream: a live tour of the real exhibition on show in ZKM's Atria 1+2, and a tour of the virtual exhibition that is currently evolving on a digital platform. It is to this platform we cordially invite you at the opening: as soon as a visitor enters the digital exhibition space, she/he enters into a relationship with it and changes it.

The Open Bar in the streamed channels Zoom and YouTube will invite connected visitors at regular intervals to talk, discuss, and think about the critical state of the Earth in these critical times together with the artists, philosophers, and curators after hearing science lectures, artist talks, receiving video messages, participating in lively panel discussions, and watching films on the situation of the Earth.

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Celebrate, think, listen, and discuss with us during the Livestreaming Weekend for the opening of our exhibition *Critical Zones: Observatories for Earthly Politics*.

Link to the exhibition:

www.zkm.de/en/critical-zones

Link to the virtual opening:

www.zkm.de/en/critical-zones-streamingfestival

Link to the livestream on the website:

<https://zkm.de/en/livestream>

Link to the telegram channel:

https://t.me/zkm_criticalzones

Link to the virtual exhibition:

www.zkm.de/en/critical-zones-digital

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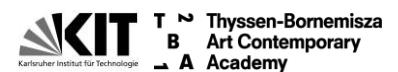
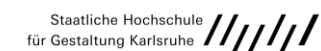
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