

POSTOPIA

Superficial Surface Observation in a Postdigital Age

JOERG AUZINGER

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is an **interactive video installation** by **Joerg Auzinger**.

Postopia is about people and the human space of action.

Postopia needs a slightly darkened room.

The installation consists of a video projection and a visitor bench in front of it.

POSTOPIA explores the peculiarities of interpersonal communication and the position of the individual human in a technology-driven society. Postopia investigates the role of humans in the post-digital age, in which biological, cultural and digital systems interact.



Postopia shows film material combined with live video footage showing the viewer watching the installation. Through the use of video cameras, the viewers are involved in the projection and thus in the plot of the shown film. The audience becomes the protagonists and main characters and at the same time the narrators of the plot. Both film layers, the shot material and the live video footage merge into a unified video. The footage shows aerial photographs of the undeveloped human space of action, the nature that surrounds us, for example our living environment, our habitat, our residues, such as the cultivation of the landscape, the traces that humans leave in the landscape.

These landscape shots, filmed with a camera drone, show man's "natural" habitat and its effects on the Earth's surface, representing an unbiased and true-to-life picture of the natural environment. These landscape shots are filmed in the form of a slow scanning of the surface as slow camera flights and show a neutral and equivalent image of the world from a sublime and almost superhuman perspective.

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The drone videos consist of vertical aerial shots without camera pans or zooms and show the surface of the earth as highly aesthetic and contemplative imagery. Human interventions in nature and the aesthetics of cultivation are visualized in abstract images. The beauty of geometry of everyday life is made visible through this aerial photography. The urban living space is left out and only the "natural" living space of man is shown. Humans are usually absent in these scenarios.

These aesthetic image worlds are interrupted by "image disturbances" in form of intermediate cuts and the inclusion of live video material. It comes to a short-term change of scene and perspective, which now shows the viewer. The live video footage is "keyed" into the film footage in a way that it merged together and appears as a unified cinematic work. The live material, and the intermediate cuts, which are visualized as short "breaks", are a counterpoint to the vertical landscape shots.



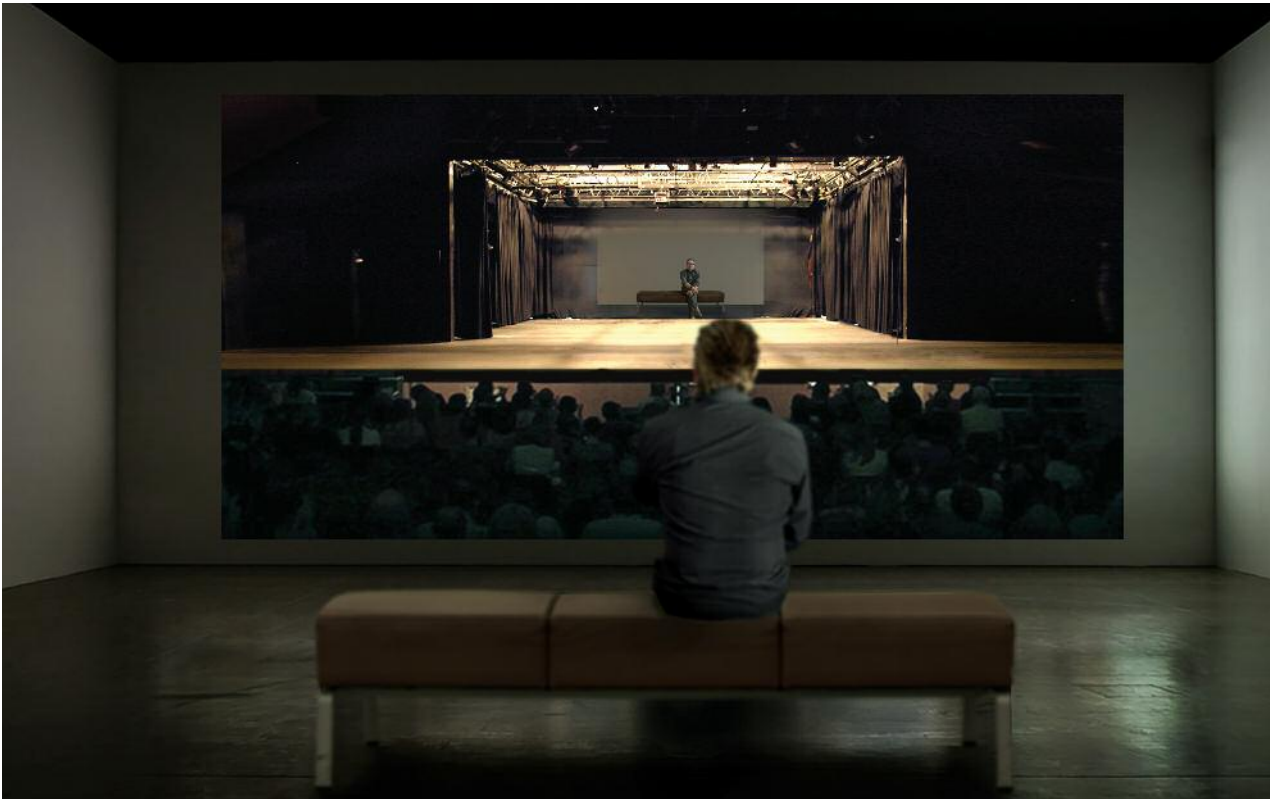
The reverse shots show the viewer embedded in stage-like interior, which can be read as a metaphor for digital living and living spaces. The observers are separated from the outside world by glass fronts, windows or grids. The "disturbing signals" in which the viewer is actively included in the film as an active component lead to observation of the observation in a self-perception and thus in a self-reflection, which seems to allow a temporary view of a system from outside of their own perception. Postopia shows how the relationship between man and his environment.

The observers in Postopia become both first-person narrators and seemingly passive observers in the mirror images of digital screens, which in Postopia point to the pictorial universes of their own memory of the audience.

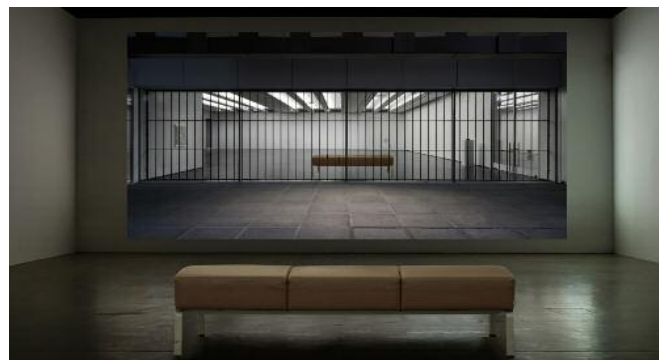
Postopia is an interactive installation about our earth, the ground under our feet. But it is also about the increasing complexity of visual media and visual digital communication. A distinction between digital and physical world becomes obsolete.

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In developing interactive installations which integrate the viewers into the work by using live video technology, I explore constructions of reality and possible changes of our concepts of reality. A reflection of a (post-)digital mirror produces a confrontation with your own observation. The generated visual worlds lead to changed possibilities of self-description and self-expression and ultimately to a change of self-perception.



Beyond technical devices, the digital as an idea alters our manner of thinking and acting. It is therefore no longer a simply technical cause anymore, rather it is a way of life which affects the whole human race. Therefore my work is focused on the role humanity in a postdigital era, in which biological, cultural and digital systems collude. It broaches the influence of digital technologies onto the cultural transformations and the resultant self-perception of the human being.

The installation should be recognised as a thought-provoking impulse to win a new form of self-awareness, and also find a new insight about the context of humanity in its habitat, in which we are embedded. By constantly using and observing data and images on our omnipresent screens, the imaginary becomes more and more important to us and modifies our view of ourselves and on our self-awareness and the world around us. We begin to perceive ourselves through others and experience others over (social) media.