

Possible Futures – Futures of Possibilities

Workshop

Hamburg

7-9 October 2026

with:

Davide Brocchi

Kübra Gümüşay

Debbie Lisle

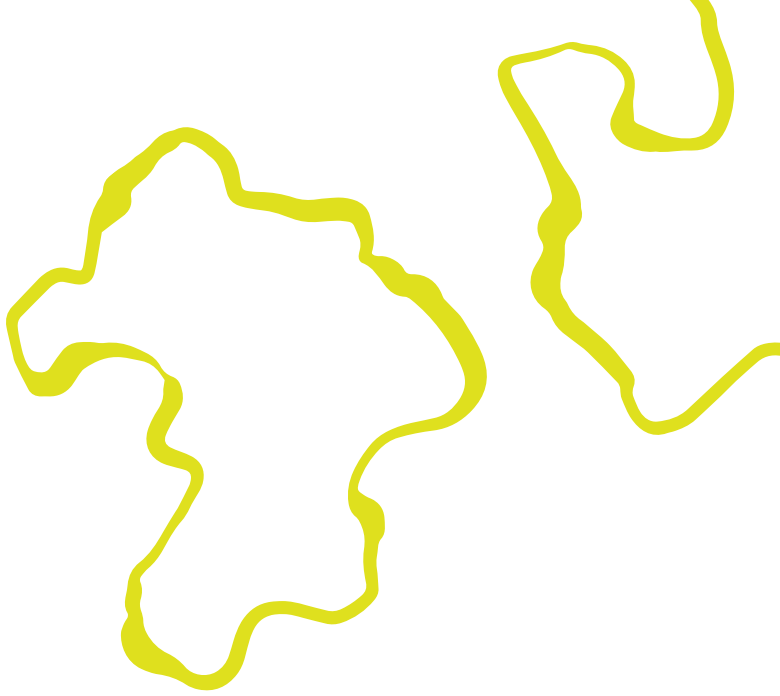
Riel Miller

Matthias Schmelzer

amongst others

hosted by:





Outline

The workshop examines how temporal reasoning and imagination structure collective agency in times of overlapping crises—and how (re-)thinking futurity can be mobilized as a practical ethics for shaping what can become.

We trace the tension between experimental openness and the urgent need for orientation and coordination under conditions of climate disruption, democratic erosion, and technopolitical shocks. Drawing together insights and perspectives from diverse academic fields, as well as artistic perspectives and interventions, the workshop interrogates dominant imaginaries and cultivates pluriversal perspectives.

Across the thematic threads—Making Spaces; Trusting and Relating; Opening and Closing; Pluralising Futures; Preserving and Transforming—we ask how to discipline imagination without colonizing it; how to balance contingency with orientation; how trust and relational infrastructures enable futures to be not merely thinkable but actionable; and how to sustain grounded hope without deferring responsibility to an ever-receding horizon. The design favors breadth over depth, trust-building over parallelism, and an ethos that acknowledges dystopian pressures while sustaining critical optimism and collective agency, translating plural imaginaries into concrete orientations and pathways for action.

The workshop unfolds as a single, continuous slow science strand over 2.5 days, designed to create a shared space of thinking, discourse, and experience among approximately 30 participants from diverse disciplines, sectors, seniorities, and lived experiences. The language is English. Formats combine concise keynotes and impulse talks with moderated dialogues, world café and fishbowl segments, and performative/experiential elements, optionally supported by graphic recording for synthesis. Where feasible, we will engage alternative urban spaces to anchor discussion in practice.



Organisational matters

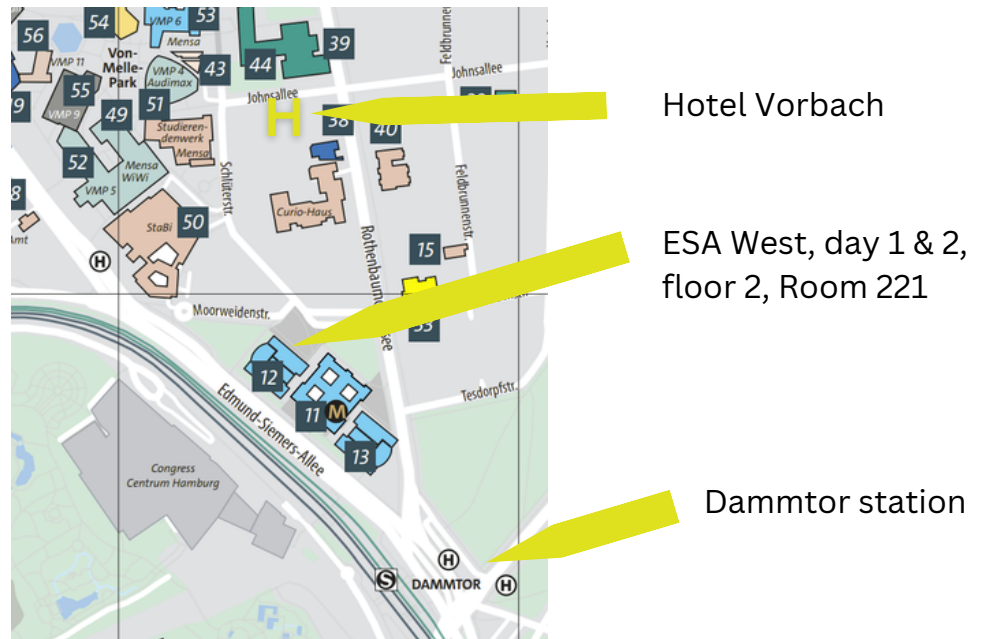
Hosts

The workshop is hosted by the Project Group “Futures, Utopias, and Dystopias” within the Academy of the Sciences and Humanities in Hamburg. Running for a period of overall three years, the Project Group aims at unpacking interdisciplinary perspectives on futurity, combining them with other-than-academic discourses and practices against the backdrop of a heightened societal interest in possible and (non-)desirable futures.

Organising committee: Nina Perkowski, Lukas Bäuerle, Giovanna Caruso, Alasdair Grant, Silja Klepp, Andrés López Rivera, Alica Repenning, Pierre Sfindules.

Venue

The workshop will take place at Hamburg University, right next to Dammtor station.



Programme

Wednesday, 7 October

room: ESA W 221

until 2:00 p.m.	Arrival at venue
2 - 2:45 p.m.	Welcome and introduction Nina Perkowski & Lukas Bäuerle
2:45 - 3:15 p.m.	Coffee Break
3:15 - 5:15 p.m.	Opening and Closing with: Kübra Gümüşay (Freelance Writer, Hamburg) Matthias Schmelzer (Europa-Universität Flensburg) Azucena Maria Castro (Rice University Houston, Texas) Jeroen Oomen (University of Utrecht) Chair: Lukas Bäuerle (Johannes Kepler University, Linz)
5:45 p.m.	Dinner Venue: TBC
7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.	Preserving and Transforming Joint Evening Event with Research Group “The promise of security in catastrophic times” Keynote: Debbie Lisle (Queen’s University Belfast) Chair: Nina Perkowski (University of Hamburg) Commentary: Susanne Krasmann (University of Hamburg)

Thursday, 8 October

room: ESA W 221

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 a.m.	Trusting and Relating with: Saskia Eisenhardt (Christian-Albrechts-University Kiel) André Munzinger (Christian-Albrechts-University Kiel) Philipp Rhein (University of Magdeburg) Flaviana Palmisano (Sapienza University of Rome) Chair: Alasdair Grant (University of Mainz)
12:00 p.m.- 2 p.m.	Lunch break Catering on site
2 p.m. - 6 p.m.	Making Spaces with: Rebekka Diestelkamp (Christian-Albrechts-University Kiel) Davide Brocchi (Freelancer, Cologne) Chair: Silja Klepp (Christian-Albrechts-University Kiel)
6:30 p.m.	Dinner Venue: TBC

Friday, 9 October

room: TBC

9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Pluralising Futures with: Cristina Yumie Aoki Inoue (Rotterdam University) Riel Miller (University of New Brunswick) Barbara Dombrowski (Photographer, Hamburg) Chair: Andrés López Rivera (University of Hamburg)
12:00 p.m.- 1 p.m.	Summary, Future Threads, Goodbye

Contact

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Supported by

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