

## PRESS RELEASE

### **NORMAL – Direct urbanism x 4**

**Exhibition at HDA – House of Architecture, 28.1.-24.2.2021**

**Opening and panel discussion** 27 January 2021, 7 p.m.

**Exhibition period** 28 January to 24 February 2021

**Opening hours** Tue-Sun, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**Venue** HDA – House of Architecture, Mariahilferstraße 2, 8020 Graz, Austria



© *DancePlantPlan*, Wetzelsdorf, Georg Winter / TanzPflanzPlan AG, 2020

With works by:

orizzontale (Rome, I)

public works (London, GB)

transparadiso (Vienna / Graz, A)

Georg Winter / TanzPflanzPlan AG (Saarbrücken / Stuttgart, D)

**How can you define sustainable and future-oriented urban development?**

**“NORMAL – direct urbanism x 4”, initiated by *transparadiso*, focusses on four districts on the outskirts of Graz. The HDA is accompanying the project with an exhibition held as part of Graz Year of Culture 2020.**

**Responding to current social challenges in urban development, *transparadiso* developed the method of direct urbanism to facilitate socially-engaged urban planning combining direct action and planning. Urban practitioners *orizzontale* (I), *public works* (GB) and *Georg Winter / TanzPflanzPlan AG* (D) were invited to work with *transparadiso* in four Graz districts: Andritz (north), Waltendorf (east), Liebenau (south), and Wetzelsdorf (west).**

**Between spring 2020 and summer 2021, artists and architects will work together with local residents and organisations to realise artistic urban interventions based on *transparadiso*'s research. These will prioritise collective qualities and the appropriation of public spaces free from pressure to consume. The projects aim to provide a starting point for further discussion on socially committed urban development in Graz.**

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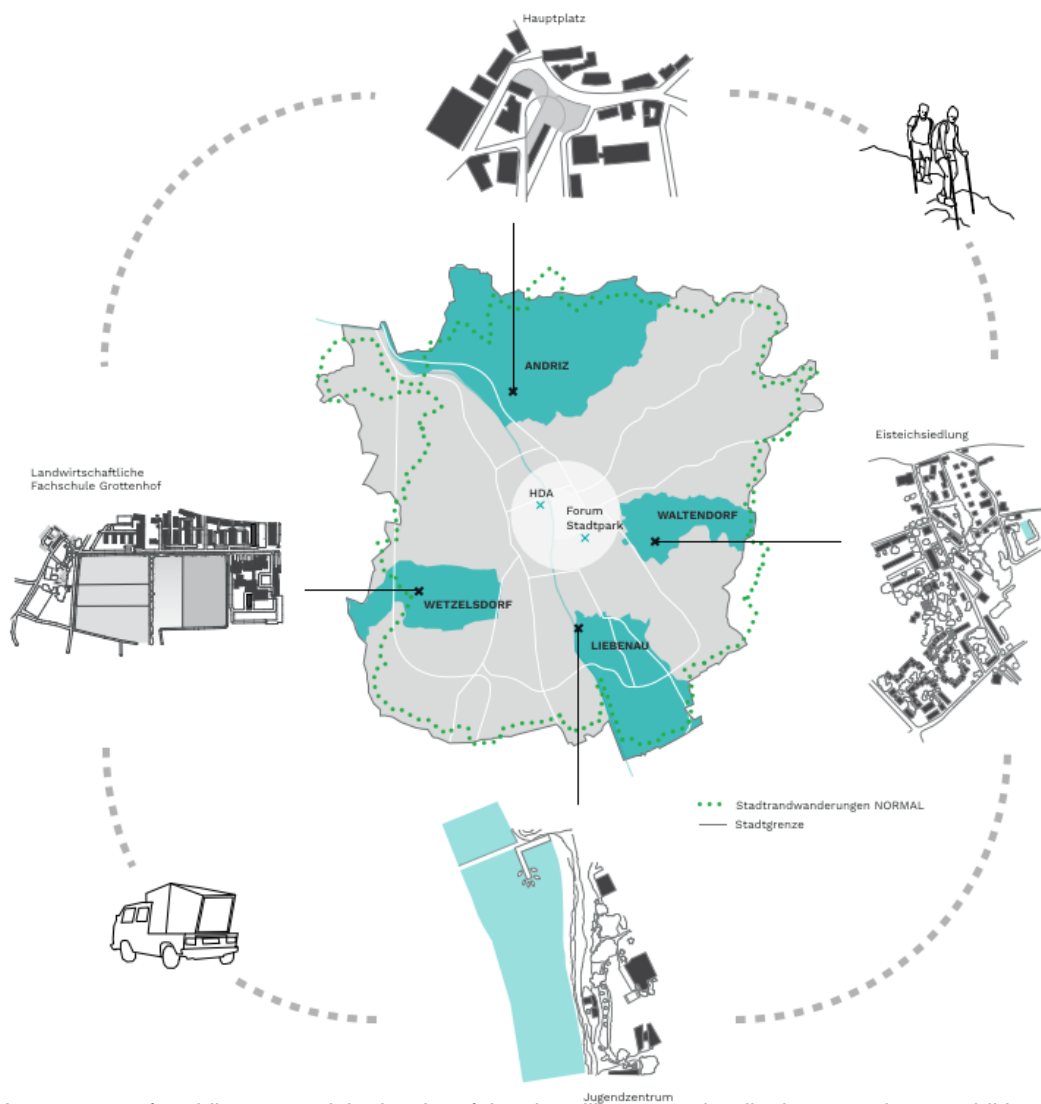
Cities particularly grow at the edges. Agricultural land is being re-zoned, dense housing is being built without integration into an urban development concept, village structures are disappearing and the soil is being permanently sealed – despite known effects on the climate. These developments are accompanied by a lack of collective, public spaces where people can meet without pressure to consume.

But is this “normal” in the sense of natural or inevitable? How can we counteract this development and become active in our own environment? Which new processes and methods are needed to weigh up self-interest against qualities for collective living? How can we use innovative artistic-urbanistic methods to create new “centrality” (Lefebvre) and an identity informed by the common good in peri-urban areas? Despite showing similar phenomena the selected districts are very different.

In order to address current social challenges of urban planning, *transparadiso* (Barbara Holub / Paul Rajakovics) developed the method of direct urbanism for socially committed urban planning, intertwining direct action (action through artistic interventions) and planning.

Implemented in the context of Graz Year of Culture 2020, the project *NORMAL* explores a new “normal” that also gives space to deviation from the norm and the seemingly impossible. For *NORMAL – direct urbanism x 4*, *transparadiso* invited three other international artists and architects (urban practitioners) to focus on the rapid transformation process at the fringes of Graz – currently the fastest growing city in Austria.

The artists and architects have used *transparadiso's* research as the basis for their work and will present their project concepts as well as objects and materials for the realisation at the HDA:



In August 2021, four hikes around the border of the city will connect the districts, creating new hiking trails.  
© transparadiso

- At the main square in Andritz, **public works** will be holding *PLATZEN – School for Civic Action* in May 2021 together with **Studio Magic**. Following on from the School for Civic Action that public works carried out in Roskilde (DK) in 2018-2020, they will ask what role a district's main square can play in relation to the city's main square. The exhibition presents themes for PLATZEN that public works collected during their first intervention in October 2020.
- On 3 and 4 July 2021, **transparadiso** will focus on the Eisteichsiedlung estate in Waltendorf where they will transform the car park of St. Paul's parish into an informal congress centre for the *Third World Congress of the Missing Things* (in cooperation with St. Paul's parish). The website [www.missingthings.org](http://www.missingthings.org) collects the contributions to Missing Things for this non-hierarchical congress, which in particular also discusses community values and challenges the individual to take up responsibility for society. Visitors are invited to contribute "missing things" which will be added to the exhibits as postcards.

- On the new beach at Grünanger in Liebenau, **orizzontale** will realise *FLUSSFLUSS - Castaway on the Mur* in April / May 2021 (in cooperation with the Grünanger Youth Centre): “Residents are invited to dream together and build a floating system of platforms.” A buoy with the sign FLUSSFLUSS will appear in the water to mark the start of the exhibition, signalling the collective activation of the site. **orizzontale** will then work on the FLUSSFLUSS manifesto, collecting and documenting the values and wishes of local actors.
- In spring 2020, **Georg Winter / TanzPflanzPlan AG** began working on the *DancePlantPlan* in Wetzelsdorf, installing the DancePlantField (<https://tanzpflanzplan.at/>, in cooperation with the Grottenhof Agricultural and Forestry School). This is activated with local residents using performative artistic interventions. *DancePlantPlan* addresses the issue of converting agricultural land on the outskirts of the city into new housing estates, contrasting the recent hype for urban gardening taking place in the city centre.

More dates on NORMAL:

**March–July 2021:** Implementation of the projects in the four districts

See the project website for further information: [LINK](#)

**August 2021:** The four districts are linked in four hikes around the border of the city, which serve as the starting point for a new hiking route which will surround Graz.

**1–15 September 2021:** Exhibition of the project results in the Forum Stadtpark

Project partner of transparadiso: Michael Petrowitsch

Cooperation partners: HDA, Forum Stadtpark

Media partner: *dérive* – Zeitschrift für Stadtforschung

***NORMAL – direct urbanism x 4* is part of Graz Year of Culture 2020.**

The first publication on *NORMAL – direct urbanism x 4*, which presents research on current issues in the districts as well as the artists / architects and their project concepts, was published in 2020.

At the end of 2021, a second publication on *NORMAL – direct urbanism x 4* will be released, showing the project implementations and including text contributions to the discourse.

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Further information on the exhibition, the project and the artists / architects can be found on the HDA website under the following link: <https://hda-graz.at/programm/normal-direkter-urbanismus-x-4>.

In the press section of the HDA website you will find image material that can be used free of charge for reporting purposes, provided that the photo credits are cited: <https://hda-graz.at/pressebereich-hda/pressemappe-normal>