

SPONSORED BY THE



Annual conference (hybrid) Käte Hamburger Research Centre

global dis:connect

Dis:connectivity in processes of globalisation: theories, methodologies, explorations

- CONFERENCE PACK -

**20/21
October
2022**

Venue:
IBZ Munich
Amalienstraße 38
80799 Munich

Host:
KHK global dis:connect
globaldisconnect.org
gdc@lrz.uni-muenchen.de

PROGRAMME

All times indicated are CET

THURSDAY, 20 October 2022

- 12:00–12:30 Registration
- 12:30–13:00 Welcome and opening words

PANEL I: ABSENCES

- 13:00–13:45 **Richard M. Kabiito (Makerere University, Kampala)**
Globalising Ugandan art: remixing the contest between tradition and modernity
- 13:45–14:30 **Gabriele Klein (Universität Hamburg / University of Amsterdam / Fellow at *global dis:connect*)**
The dancing body is absent/present. Methodological and theoretical aspects of digitalisation in dance
- 14:30–15:00 Coffee break
- 15:00–15:45 **Aleksandra Domanović (Studio Domanović, Berlin)**
From yu to me to turbo culture: presence and absence in internet technology and culture in the former Yugoslavia
- 15:45–16:30 **Meha Priyadarshini (The University of Edinburgh)**
Fashion and its absent histories: the case of Madras fabric in the Caribbean
- 16:30–17:30 Break
- 17:30–18:45 Artist lecture
Parastou Forouhar (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz)
Cathrine Bublatzky (University of Tübingen / Incoming fellow at *global dis:connect*)
The global dis:connect: embodiment and positionality as symbols of interruptions, detours and absences in Parastou Forouhar's art

FRIDAY, 21 October 2022

09:00–09:30 Warm-up and welcome

PANEL II: DETOURS

09:30–10:15 **Sujit Sivasundaram (University of Cambridge / Fellow at *global dis:connect*)**
Detours in the history of Islam in the Indian Ocean: Muslim Colombo

10:15–11:00 **Kerstin Schankweiler (Technische Universität Dresden)**
Global contexts of art in the GDR

11:00–11:45 **Promona Sengupta (Freie Universität Berlin)**
Time travel for all: decolonising the time-space continuum

11:45–13:00 Lunch

PANEL III: INTERRUPTIONS

13:00–13:45 Zoom
Anupama Kundoo (University of Applied Sciences Potsdam / Anupama Kundoo Architects Pondicherry / Anupama Kundoo Atelier GmbH Berlin)
Rethinking urban materiality: time as a resource

13:45–14:30 **Valeska Huber (University of Vienna / Freie Universität Berlin / Incoming fellow at *global dis:connect*)**
'The Limits of my Language mean the Limits of my World': language barriers and ideas of global communication in the 1920s

14:30–15:00 Coffee break

15:00–15:45 **Peter W. Marx (University of Cologne)**
The elephant in the room: (dis:)connecting encounters in the early modern period

15:45–16:15 Wrap-up

16:15–17:45 Film screening
Atlantiques (2009, Mati Diop)
Commentary by **Fabienne Liptay (University of Zurich / Past fellow at *global dis:connect*)**

ABSTRACTS AND BIOGRAPHIES

PANEL I

Richard M. Kabiito: Globalising Ugandan art: remixing the contest between tradition and modernity

The contest between tradition and modernity has been a key question for the modernisation process of the native in Uganda as stipulated by Indirect Rule and as aligned to theories of adaptation. In art, scholars have conceived of this dichotomy differently as Africanisation, acculturation, and/or the re-invention of local artists in a global context. While Indirect Rule stipulates a dichotomy between tradition and modernity, its functionality depends on a synergy between the two modalities. I posit that artists have re-examined the relationship between tradition and modernity in the globalisation process by exploiting Indirect Rule's dilemma of being non-traditionalist, yet it looks upon tradition for survival. Through remix and intertextuality, I examine the construction of ceremony as artefact in Buganda to show how it has created a space in which artists continue to demonstrate that this dichotomy is superfluous.

Richard M. Kabiito is a lecturer at Makerere University. He is profoundly interested in material culture and meaning in the visual arts. He is also a practicing artist and designer. In his design and art productions, he works with concepts and ideas from indigenous knowledge, especially local motifs, and the incorporation of local artistic forms into his metal works and interiors. Beyond material culture and meaning in the visual arts, his scholarship focuses on the contest between tradition and modernity, indigenous knowledge systems, online technologies, new media, and developing content for local art history and practice.

Gabriele Klein: The dancing body is absent/present. Methodological aspects of digitalisation in dance

So far, dance has been considered a bodily medium of sensuous expression. Local presence, physical manifestation, sensual experience, feelings and affects, which arise through movement and touch, are seen as both motivators and effects of dancing. Dancing is common rhythm, silent synchronisation of body movements, communication through impulse, formal language of body and movement figurations. The digitalisation of dance – of popular dance, dance teaching, and dance-artistic practice – challenges this understanding of dance. It reshapes the space-time relationship of dance. This also changes practices, experiences and the cultural understanding of dance. My lecture aims to illustrate these transformations with exemplary cases of popular dance and artistic dance practice, and, on this basis, to present a methodological outline for a praxeological investigation of digital dance practices.

Gabriele Klein is Professor of Sociology with a focus on Dance and Performance Studies at the Universität Hamburg and Special Professor for Ballet and Dance (Hans van Manen Chair) at the University of Amsterdam. She is currently a fellow at *global dis:connect* at LMU Munich and Principal Investigator of the Cluster of Excellence *Understanding Written Artefacts* at the Universität Hamburg. Her last monograph in English was titled *Pina Bausch's Dance Theater. Company, Artistic Practices, and Reception* (2020).

Aleksandra Domanović: From *yu* to *me* to turbo culture: presence and absence in internet technology and culture in the former Yugoslavia

Drawing from her video works *From yu to me* (2013) and *Turbo Sculpture* (2010–2013), Aleksandra will talk about the representation of technological infrastructure in the former Yugoslavia, the position of women in technology and the culture that followed the political and economic turmoil of early 1990s Yugoslavia.

From yu to me tracks the history of the Internet in the former Yugoslavia and specifically the involvement of female Internet pioneers Borka Jerman Blažič and Mirjana Tasić. *Turbo Sculpture* is an epiphenomenon of turbo culture. It refers to the depiction of popular non-national media celebrities in public sculpture projects across the nations of the former Yugoslavia. In recent years turbo-sculpture monuments of Bruce Lee (Mostar, 2005), Rocky Balboa (Žitište, 2007), Johnny Weissmuller / Tarzan (Meda, 2007) and Bob Marley (Banatski Sokolac, 2007) have been unveiled.

Aleksandra Domanović is an artist based in Berlin. Starting with an early interest in the internet, she has been exploring the relations of technology, history and identity in sculptures, video and digital artworks throughout her career. Aleksandra employs an autobiographical approach, often reflecting on the complex history of her native Yugoslavia.

Meha Priyadarshini: Fashion and its absent histories: the case of Madras fabric in the Caribbean

In the eighteenth century, kerchiefs from India were one of the most widely used commodities in the world. Amongst these kerchiefs were ones made of Madras fabric, the checked textile that became associated with elite prep school culture in the US in the twentieth century. However, much before Tommy Hilfiger popularised the ‘classic madras shirt,’ the fabric was made fashionable by the African diasporic community in the Caribbean. This paper will present a Digital Humanities project, connectingthreads.co.uk, that explores the history of this fabric and traces the connection between South India, where it was produced, to the Caribbean, where it was consumed and fashioned in a variety of creative ways. The project aims to uncover how lower caste artisans in India and enslaved and free Black people in the Caribbean created a fashion that influenced the dress of people around the world. These two groups do not feature prominently in fashion history, which as a discipline was slow to acknowledge the existence of fashion in places other than Europe. The project addresses a gap in fashion history, but at the same time has to contend with formidable absences in the history it aims to uncover. For example, we have not (yet) found surviving kerchief samples from the eighteenth century, nor do we have records that can provide a fuller picture of consumer preferences amongst the African diasporic community in the Caribbean. The paper will think through how we aim to deal with these absences in our source base and how the digital aspect of the project changes how we do global history research and communicate it to wider audiences.

Meha Priyadarshini is a lecturer in early modern history at the University of Edinburgh and currently the director of the Edinburgh Centre for Global History. Her research covers the areas of global history, material culture studies, colonial Latin American history, and the emerging new field of global Asian studies. She is particularly interested in how we think about the connections between people, places and things in the early

modern period. Meha's first book *Chinese Porcelain in Colonial Mexico: The Material Worlds of an Early Modern Trade* takes a local approach to a popular export product to explore the broader history of transpacific trade during the early modern period. Her current project is on the use and appropriation of Indian textiles in Mexico, in particular focusing on the influence of the African diaspora in introducing these textiles to coastal communities in Mexico. She is the Principal Investigator of an AHRC-NEH funded project titled *Subaltern Histories of Global Textiles: Connecting Collections, Expanding Engagement*.

Parastou Forouhar / Cathrine Bublatzky: The global dis:connect: embodiment and positionality as symbols of interruptions, detours and absences in Parastou Forouhar's art

Living and working in Germany since the 1990s, artist and activist Parastou Forouhar produces a powerful language in her art to address issues of migration and flight, otherness and notions of belonging. Through her various artistic practices, Parastou explores notions of one's own positionality, processes of embodiment and corporeality and practices of seeing. Through powerful references to diversity and ambivalences, significant cultural challenges in times of globalisation and (dis)connectedness become visible and tangible in her works. In their conversation about selected artworks, Parastou and Cathrine will talk about the ambivalent and multi-layered meanings of interruption, detour and absence, which in their entanglements are co-constitutive phenomena of globalisation processes and their inherent dis:connections. Of particular interest will be how Parastou's artistic practice and works enable intimacy and embodiment as significant (trans)cultural practices and experiences on the micro-levels of the globalised world.

Parastou Forouhar (*1962) was born and raised in Iran. In 1991 she left her native country and settled in Germany, where she received her postgraduate degree in the fine arts. She is currently Professor of Fine Arts at the Art Academy of the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. Her work has been exhibited widely around the globe, and is part of important art collections such as those of the German Parliament, the British Museum, the Museum of Modern Art Brisbane, the MMK Frankfurt, and the Walker Art Center. Parastou's oeuvre has an autobiographical character, and she critically engages with socio-political issues. Her parents, Parwaneh and Dariush Forouhar, prominent activists critical of the Islamic Republic, were brutally murdered in their house in Teheran in 1998 by agents of the secret service. Since then, she has been seeking justice and accountability for these political crimes and has sought to keep the memory of her parents alive.

Cathrine Bublatzky is an anthropologist who most recently worked for more than a decade in the Department of Visual and Media Anthropology at the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies (Heidelberg University). There she coordinated *Entangled Histories of Art and Migration: Forms, Visibilities, Agents*, a network funded by the German Research Foundation (2018–2022), and received a grant from the Elite Postdoc Programme of the Baden-Württemberg Foundation to study photographers from Iran living in the European diaspora and working in the field of photo documentation and art (2017–2022). Cathrine will join the University of Tübingen as a senior lecturer in October 2022. Starting April 2023, she will be a fellow at *global dis:connect*. Cathrine's research interests include visual cultures, contemporary art, photography,

museum and memory studies, migration, diaspora and exile, with a focus on Europe, India and the Middle East. She has published widely, including the monograph *Along the Indian Highway: An Ethnography of an International Travelling Exhibition* (2019), the volume *Entangled Histories of Art and Migration: Forms, Visibilities, Agents*, which she co-edited, and articles such as 'On Resistance and Failure in the Archival Art Installation' (*Journal of Visual Anthropology*, 2021).

PANEL II

Sujit Sivasundaram: Detours in the history of Islam in the Indian Ocean: Muslim Colombo

The history of Islam in the Indian Ocean is a richly textured narrative of migrations, trade, pilgrimage and intellectual exchange across vast distances and centuries. It now occupies a central role in most standard global histories. Rather than enter this field with new historical data or evidence, I aim in this paper to determinedly focus on a piece of watery ground, the site of Colombo, the subject of my fellowship research at *global dis:connect*. This is a strategy of reflecting on the problems, afterlives and narrations of being a migrant community which is repeatedly minoritised in a multiply colonised city. The 'detours' of this paper are as follows: analytically, it seeks to write a history of a city from its most minoritised community; with the history of this community, it argues that claiming ground and belonging necessitated various acts of rootedness. In other words, migrant memory and identity needed to be 'detoured' to the materiality of the city to make other geographies of belonging disappear. Meanwhile, those who stood against Muslims sought to read their bodies for oppositional histories of migration to those told by the community, in turn displacing or 'detouring' Muslim thought and memory in yet other spaces of history. As a whole, this is an experiment in responding to the Centre's commitment to 'detour'. It invites the audience to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the concept especially when placed in the middle of the literature on migration and mobility.

Sujit Sivasundaram is Professor of World History at the University of Cambridge and Fellow in History at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. His recent book *Waves Across the South: A New History of Revolution and Empire* won the British Academy Book Prize 2021 and was joint-winner of the Bentley Book Prize for World History 2022. His previous books include, *Islanded: Britain, Sri Lanka and the Bounds of an Indian Ocean Colony* and *Nature and the Godly Empire: Science and Evangelical Mission in the Pacific 1795–1850*. He is President of the Pacific Circle. Currently he is a fellow at *global dis:connect*.

Kerstin Schankweiler: Global contexts of art in the GDR

This paper presents case studies from the research project *Art in Networks. The GDR and its Global Relations* (TU Dresden). The project seeks to broaden the view of artistic creation in, with and through the GDR by focusing on international networks and encounters at the intersection of the institutional and the private. Forms of contact between artists, museums and other cultural agents in the GDR and countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America include various kinds of travel, (joint) exhibitions and study stays, to name but a few. This illuminates unknown freedoms beyond Eurocentric nar-

ratives, in addition to contact restrictions artists faced. With a focus on exemplary individual cases, I examine where and how forms of private and institutional artistic dialogue took shape and how these specific contacts intersected with the imagination of socialist communities that were visualised, materialised and produced in works of art.

Kerstin Schankweiler is Professor for Image Studies in a Global Context at the Institute for Art and Music at the Technische Universität Dresden. Her research interests focus on digital image cultures, art history in a global context, post-colonial and affect theory, and contemporary art from Africa. She is the PI of the research projects *Image Protests in Social Media* and *Art in Networks. The GDR and its Global Relations*. Publications include *Bildproteste* (Berlin 2019), a special issue of *Parallax on Affective Witnessing* (2020, ed. with Michael Richardson) and the edited volume *Reading Objects in the Contact Zone* (Heidelberg 2021, ed. with Eva-Maria Troelenberg and Anna Messner).

Promona Sengupta: Time travel for all: decolonising the time-space continuum

In contemporary social justice and political movements, the notion of time travel plays an increasingly central role for envisioning futures worth fighting for. As a concept, time travel carries a politics: the quest for justice is built into it. A common leitmotif in cultural references is that of going back in time to 'right' a 'wrong' or find closure. This talk looks at a few examples of temporality-based speculative turns in political and artistic practice from contemporary social and political movements during the pandemic years.

Despite the tremendous attraction and cultural importance that the concept holds, historians – organisers and meaning-makers of time and temporality – barely touch upon the fruits of time travel as a methodology of temporality, deeming it science fiction and fantasy at best. It is true that mainstream cultural discussions and representations of time travel understand the concept to be an extension of actual material travelling that we undertake – visiting 'other', 'faraway' places for purposes of relaxation, self-fulfillment, spiritual awakening or such individualised transformative experiences. It is actually possible to read this understanding of travel in general as connected to a specifically colonial understanding of time and space as traversable planes that exist for extractive experiences. In truth however, neither of these dimensions are planes, nor pivoted on traversability. They are embodied experiences that are highly complex in their non-linear, tesseract-like properties.

There are many in this world who do not travel but still have the need to move away – refugees, mobility-disabled people, the unhomed, asylum-seekers, people stuck in quarantine and trauma survivors. For them, ideas of time travel and the breakdown of spatio-temporal linearity poses a particularly fecund speculative alternative to their often marginalised, atomised, lonely and disconnected existences that the pandemic exacerbated. By dealing with concrete examples from both the worlds of dissident art practice and dissident activism during the pandemic years, it is possible to argue for time travel as a particular approach to survival that has had its own history and repertoire.

Promona Sengupta is an artist, academic, activist and curator based in Berlin. She is a doctoral associate at the International Research Center: Interweaving Performance Cultures at the Freie Universität Berlin. Her creative practice engages with decolonial speculative imagination as a means for radical politics. She co-created and co-flies

the FLINTAQ+ Spaceship Beben, as its serving Captain and chef. She co-curates Radio Kal, as a part of the transoceanic longform artistic project *kal*, and was the resident artist at District Berlin in 2020. She has shared her multidisciplinary creative practices at the Maxim Gorki Theatre, District Berlin, the English Theatre Berlin and other spaces. She co-founded the Berlin-Delhi based progressive cultural politics pop-up *Mo'Halla*. In her activist work, she fights for dignity alongside her comrades in queer-feminist, antifascist and BIPOC community spaces. She is committed to centring rest and repair in the activist spaces she inhabits, which is a project in progress.

PANEL III

Anupama Kundoo: Rethinking urban materiality: time as a resource

Our built environment is the physical stage on which all human stories are lived out. This physical stage is the historical and ongoing manifestation of human imagination operating within real (or, imaginary!) constraints. Anupama Kundoo advances the idea that architectural imagination must transcend design and enter the realms of materials science and economics, where some of the bigger questions reside. She will discuss the thrust of her inquiries: to find practical ways to fulfil the universal human aspiration for refuge, purpose and social engagement through extensive material research and experimentation. She will discuss 'Human time as a resource' in the quest for new materiality and critically examine how the time-value of money has nudged us towards code-based design and the industrialised production of building components and, sometimes, even entire buildings themselves. She will discuss materiality and consumption of finite natural resources alongside their impact on human wellbeing and human resourcefulness.

Anupama Kundoo graduated from the University of Mumbai in 1989 and received her PhD from TU Berlin in 2008. Her research-oriented practice, which started in 1990 in Auroville, has generated people-centric architecture based on spatial and material research that prizes low environmental impacts while being socio-economically beneficial. Her body of work was recently exhibited as the solo show *Taking Time* at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Denmark. She has taught architecture and urban management at various international universities, strengthening her expertise in rapid urbanisation and climate change-related development issues, and she was the Davenport Visiting Professor at Yale University in Spring 2020. She is currently professor at the Potsdam School of Architecture and the Head of Urban Design, Auroville. She received the 2021 RIBA Charles Jencks Award for her contribution to architectural theory, the 2021 Auguste Perret Prize for architectural technology and the 2021 Building Sense Now Global Award of the German Sustainable Building Council. Her studios are in Berlin, Pune and Pondicherry. Kundoo's rigorous research and experimentation in new materiality for architecture is the result of questioning basic assumptions about construction habits that humanity has adopted during the long process of industrialisation. Rather than focussing on shortage, she has sought abundance through investing in human resources and human resourcefulness, ingenuity, time, skills, care and a sense of community. The act of building produces knowledge, just as the resulting knowledge produces buildings.

Valeska Huber: ‘The Limits of my Language mean the Limits of my World’: language barriers and ideas of global communication in the 1920s

This talk sketches the field of language as an ideal site to explore disruptions in global communication and processes of dis:connectivity at large. More specifically, it will highlight the question of language barriers as an understudied topic in the thriving area of ‘global border studies’. For this purpose, the talk will explore a language experiment that moves beyond the written script to potentially overcome the limitations of language. Focusing on the Viennese couple Otto and Marie Neurath and their picture language Isotype, I seek to understand how the limits of written languages were addressed in the 1920s and how, in turn, the potentially ‘global’ language experiment Isotype was limited in its own way.

Valeska Huber is Tenure Track Professor of Contemporary History at the University of Vienna, focusing on migration and mobility and on publics and global communication. Until 2022, she was head of the Emmy Noether Research Group *Reaching the People: Communication and Global Orders in the Twentieth Century* at the Freie Universität Berlin, after serving as Research Fellow in Colonial and Global History at the German Historical Institute London and as Visiting Fellow at Harvard University (2006–2007). She is a recipient of the Heinz-Maier-Leibnitz-Preis of the DFG and a member of the transdisciplinary Junge Akademie at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences. Valeska will be a fellow at *global dis:connect* in 2023-2024.

Peter W. Marx: The elephant in the room: (dis:)connecting encounters in the early modern period

On 10 October 1563, the Cologne magistrate and notorious diarist Hermann von Weinsberg notes: ‘[Today] was an elephant in Cologne, an enormous beast [...]’. While his brief description is interesting, it is also noteworthy that he states: ‘It is said to have been more than 70 years, since the last elephant was here’. The appearance of the elephant is a sensation, yet – according to Weinsberg – not unique. Taking its point of departure from the unusual human-animal performance, the paper looks at sensational performances that challenge (cultural) perceptions, activate various epistemologies and stir discussions and reflections about categories of identity, legitimacy and appropriateness. The elephant – as an actual presence and a metaphor – signals contingency as well as a transgressive presence. It might be read as a symptom of a ‘transformational ecology’ (Ward 2006).

Peter W. Marx holds the Chair for Media and Theatre Studies at the University of Cologne. He is also director of the Theaterwissenschaftliche Sammlung Cologne, one of the largest archives for theatre and performance culture in Germany. His focus is theatre history and historiography, Shakespeare in performance and the formation of theatre and media ecology in the early modern period. His publications include: *Hamlets Reise nach Deutschland* (2018), *Macht|Spiele: Politisches Theater seit 1919*; the *Handbook on Theatre and Performance Historiography* (co-edited with Tracy C. Davis, 2020). In 2023, Cambridge University Press will publish his long-essay ‘Early Modern Media Ecology’.

Fabienne Liptay: *Atlantiques* (2009, Mati Diop)

Mati Diop's short film *Atlantiques* (2009) is a visual poem about the 'post-colonial time lag' experienced through migration. Relating to Senegal's *migrations piroguières* in the years 2005 and 2006 when thousands of young Africans left their homes to embark on often deadly boat journeys to Spain, the film tells the stories of these men, interweaving the lived experiences of the protagonists from Dakar with the ghostly returns of the memories of the dead. Speaking about 'the most burning desire to flow into the ocean' – a quote which has been taken from the accounts of survivors of the 1816 shipwreck of the *Medusa* on the way to Senegal (which inspired Théodore Géricault's painting *The Raft of the Medusa*) – these ghost stories blur the lines between documentary and fiction to create an oneiric nocturnal imaginary of migration and exile. Mati Diop returns to these stories ten years later, in her debut feature film *Atlantique* (2019) that looks towards the ocean both as a mythological and political space from the perspective of the women who were left behind in Dakar. In my brief commentary framing the screening of the short film *Atlantiques* together with a longer excerpt from the feature film *Atlantique*, I would like to share some thoughts and observations about how the dissociative relations constructed within and between these films – their manifold doublings and splits – can be seen as a genuine contribution to a political aesthetics of global dis:connection.

Fabienne Liptay is a professor of film studies at the University of Zurich. In her current research, she is particularly interested in moving-image practices that critically engage with the exclusions and inclusions in the institutional frames of global arts and media. Her research project *Exhibiting Film: Challenges of Format*, funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation, examines how formats have contributed to the establishment of global infrastructures of film exhibition, and it addresses what they have disabled and displaced. As a former fellow of *global dis:connect* (February to July 2022), Fabienne Liptay investigated artistic and non-artistic uses of formats that challenge notions of connectivity. Her focus is on contexts, in which formats based on interoperability not only facilitate processes of global networking, but also produce disconnections that are politically and socially effective.

ROUTES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Venue

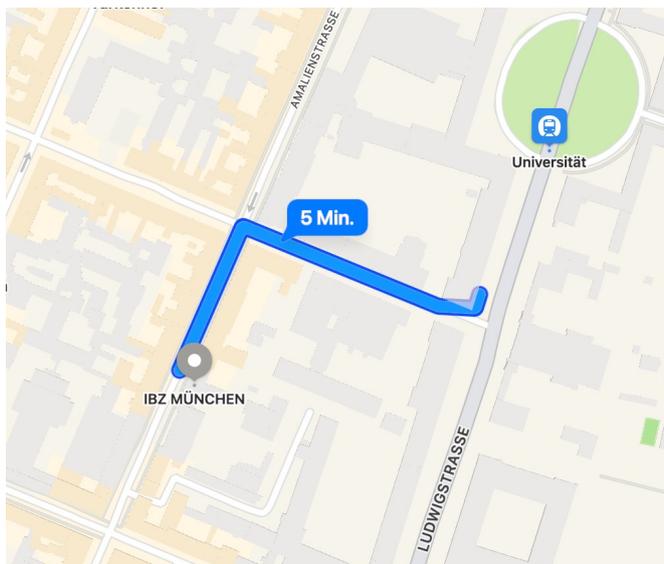
Internationales Begegnungszentrum der Wissenschaften (IBZ), Munich

Amalienstraße 38

80799 Munich

Tel.: +49 89286686-0

<http://www.ibz-muenchen.de/index.php/de/>



U-Bahn (subway) U3/U6, alight at Universität: The IBZ is five minutes away on foot.

Contact details of the organisers

Hanni Geiger

E-mail: Hanni.Geiger@lmu.de

Tom Menger

E-mail: T.Menger@lmu.de