



Novocene - A Possible Future

Interactive mixed reality installation | Quest 3 headset and tree sculpture | 5 x 5 m interaction space | 8 minutes

[Trailer and video](#) | [Literature](#) | [Research](#) | [AI tools](#)

Novocene unfolds an interactive narrative around the development of humanity in the Anthropocene, the age entirely dominated and shaped by mankind. It also deals with resource consumption and environmental destruction in the present and contrasts this with a utopian vision of the future.

Even the climate crisis becomes tangible in its ultimate consequence when, at a certain point in the narrative, the real environment sinks into a virtually rising sea level. Until then, the story takes an interested and critical look at the role of technology and AI in solving the ultimate challenge of humanity.

At first, a pair of mixed reality glasses lies inconspicuously on a tree stump in the exhibition space. The felled tree is an improvised construction made from temporary materials such as wood, cardboard and plastic. Viewed through the headset, it unexpectedly sprouts young, virtual shoots and branches and grows to new life. As the plot unfolds around this tree sculpture, the viewer can construct a monument for an alternative future from the artefacts and totems of a proverbially lost civilization.



The interactive experience thematizes human impact on nature and inevitably leads to the question: Is it even possible to deal artistically and aesthetically with something as colossal as the climate crisis and its destructive consequences? How can the narrative of the possible end of all narratives succeed? Is it possible to strike a fine balance, hopefully somewhere between instruction and fatalism on the one hand and naïve ignorance and faith in technology on the other? Critical voices from the field of neuroscience tend to deny that humanity, in its subjective constitution, is capable of processing a challenge of such complexity and temporal horizon at all. Another prominent thesis is based on the imprint of the evolutionary pressure to adapt. According to this theory, egoism steered by competition thwarts collective, global action. Consequently, the hope remains that we will develop the ability for this action as soon as possible.

In the beginning the essayistic journey through time takes its recipients back to the untouched natural state of the Holocene, shortly before humans began to exert their global influence. The audiovisual excursion goes on to describe the onset of the soon unbridled exploitation and burning of natural resources. The title Novocene is a homage to the environmental philosopher James Lovelock, who as a scientist was also involved in the discovery of the hole in the ozone layer. He saw the aforementioned human dilemma being solved in a future age of hyperintelligence, which he outlined in his popular science book ‚Novacene‘.

Jens Isensee, 2025

Portfolio | www.jensisensee.de

Instagram | www.instagram.com/jooooooki

Exhibitions and Vita | www.jensisensee.de/vita