

Publicly opened mine
site "F60 overburden
conveyor bridge" as light
and sound installation

Návštevnícka baňa „F60
preťažený dopravný
most" ako svetelná a
zvuková inštalácia



Photo Foto: courtesy of Gerhard Kassner, 2003

THE LUSATIAN LAKELAND

An Eastern German project for the transformation of an industrial opencast mining landscape

LUŽICKÁ JAZERNÁ OBLAŠŤ

Východonemecký projekt na transformáciu priemyselnej krajiny povrchových baní

S koncom režimu Nemeckej demokratickej republiky sa vynorila otázka, čo robiť s mesačnou krajinou Lužickej banskej oblasti a povrchovými baňami, ktoré sa zrazu stali nepotrebnými. Rozšírený populárny názor sa staval za odstránenie všetkých stôp priemyselnej minulosti, s výnimkou obrovských povrchových baní, ktoré mali byť konvertované na jazerá určené na kúpanie a člnkovanie. Z ekonomického pohľadu sa vo východnom Nemecku, vrátane Lužíc, preferovalo pokračovať v priemyselnej politike a podpore rozvoja podnikania, ako nástrojov, ktoré prestáli skúšky času niekoľkých desaťročí. Medzinárodná stavebná výstava Internationale Bauausstellung (IBA) Fürst-Pückler-Land (2000 – 2010) však naproti tomu predostrela tridsať inovátnych projektov, ktoré sa vzájomne podporovali a dopĺňali, a vsádzali všetko na veľký počet malých individuálnych projektov, na vnútorný potenciál a na vytvorenie sietí a podporu spolupráce medzi kľúčovými hráčmi v regióne.

Výstava spojila sily kľúčových subjektov Lužíc s cieľom iniciovať workshop pre tvorbu novej krajiny a zabezpečiť zdroje pre nový typ človekom pretvoreného prostredia vychádzajúceho z bývalého banského územia. Zámerom nebolo poprieť priemyselnú minulosť, ale preniesť dlhodobú tradíciu inovácií a strojárstva do modernej doby. Bolo to po prvýkrát, čo sa na svete odohral projekt takého veľkého rozsahu sledujúci jasne definovanú filozofiu a zapájajúci miestnych ľudí v záujme obnovenia zdevastovanej krajiny na obrovské ploche presahujúcej 5 000 kilometrov štvorcových.

Bolo len prirodzené, že sa budú Lužice brániť pokusom, ktoré by redukovali región len na jeho banícku minulosť. IBA uspela v uchovaní starého a prínosu nového, podporila historické jadro a pridala Lužiciam modernú vrstvu vysokej súčasnej kvality. Kľúčom úspechu bola rovnováha medzi ochranou pôvodnej a pridaním novej vrstvy, nakoľko obidva aspekty boli pre ľudí rovnako dôležité.

V súčasnosti vzniká uprostred bývalej banickej krajiny Lužíc najrozsiahlejšie územie umelo vytvorených jazier v Európe. Ale nie je tu žiaden pokus zakryť pred divákom fakt, že ide o umelo vytvorené jazerá, lebo hranice zlomu medzi priemyslom a prírodou sú tým, čo robí toto územie zaujímavým a príťažlivým. „Projekt Lužickej jazernej oblasti“, ktorý iniciovala IBA, nachádzajúci sa v centre oblasti jazier, dnes predstavuje symbol transformácie krajiny. Táto téma bola zvolená, aby pripomenula priemyselnú (vývojovú) históriu jazernej oblasti a ocelové banickej zariadenia, a zároveň jej osobitú architektúru, ktorá sa stala výtvarným výrazom budúcnosti jazernej krajiny.

V srdci rozvíjajúceho sa územia vyše dvadsiatich jazier sa plánuje desať jazier vzájomne prepojených splavnými kanálmi. Pre jednotlivé jazerá je plánovaný široký rozsah veľmi rozdielneho využitia – od vodných športov a rodinných aktivít po chránené prírodné územia – ktoré umožnia čoraz väčšími prevládnúť neskazenej prírode, územia určené na rozdielne aktivity a široký rozsah funkcií, ktoré nemajú v strednej Európe obdobu.

V pláne je postupne vybudovať infraštruktúru so sieťou cyklotrás pozdĺž brehov jazier a rozličné prvky plávajúcej architektúry (plávajúce lávky, reštaurácie, móla, slnečné terasy, požičovne lodí alebo aj plávajúce kino pod holým nebom). Vodný turizmus, korčuľovanie a cyklistika sú už v prevádzke.

Lužická jazerná oblasť je odlišná od iných turistických území nielen pre svoju priemyselnú minulosť, ale aj pre ústrednú rolu, ktorú tu hrá výnimočný dizajn a uchvacujúca estetika novej, umelo vytvorenej krajiny v priťahovaní turistov z okolitých regiónov. Navyše, napriek mnohým prekážkam, možnosť začať na „novej strane“ pri rozvíjaní vodných turistických atrakcií dáva tiež veľkú príležitosť pre nové prevádzky a kvalitné vybavenie.

prof. Dr. Dr.Sc. ROLF KUHN
 Brandenburgische
 Technische Universität
 Cottbus
 Iba Studienhaus Fürst-
 -Pückler-Land e.V.
 Germany
 kuhn@iba-see.de

The end of the GDR regime raised the question in the federal states of Brandenburg and Saxony in the east of Germany of what to do with the devastated lunar landscapes in the Lusatian mining district and the opencast mines which were suddenly no longer needed. The popular view, which soon became widespread, was to eliminate all traces of the legacy of the industrial and mining past as far as possible, demolishing all the bricketting factories, coking plants and power stations as well as all the chimneys, in an attempt to bury the memories of polluted air, soil and water along with their physical remains. The vast opencast pits were to be reinvented as lakes for swimming and boating, as planned by the proposal of the Mecklenburgische Seenplatte or Mecklenburg Lake District.

From an economic point of view, the long-term focus in the east of Germany, Lusatia naturally included, was on prolonging the industrial policy and the promotion of business development as instruments which had stood the test of decades. Consequently it is no wonder that in the Saxon part of Lusatia, the "Karl-May-Land" project was initiated, a large-scale post-mining landscape development project aimed at creating the illusion of an American Western landscape of Indian reservations and open prairies. However, such projects hang by "30 threads", and if just one of these threads breaks (the investor pulls out, the government funding does not materialise, the water doesn't rise as planned...), the whole project is shelved – as happened in the end.

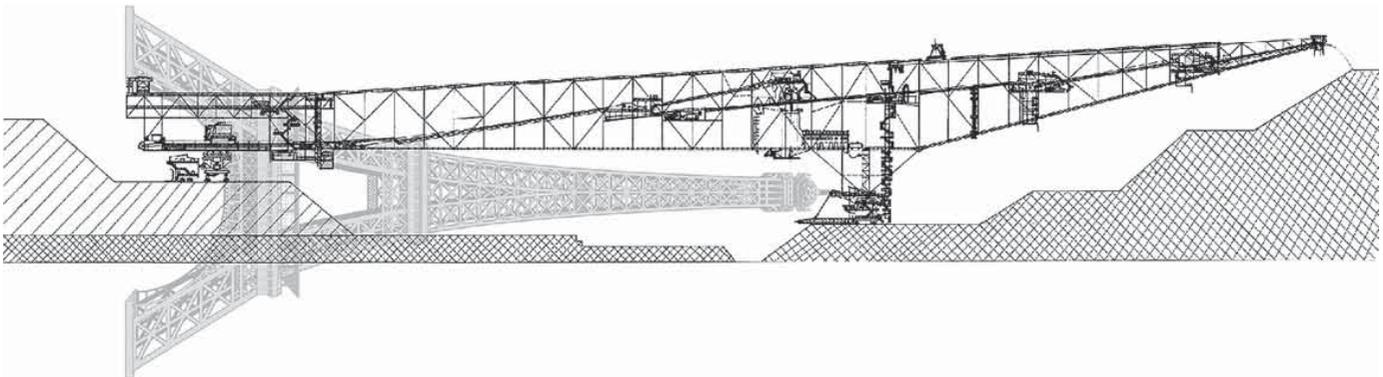
The Internationale Bauausstellung (IBA) Fürst-Pückler-Land (2000 – 2010), by contrast, had 30 projects and therefore 30 feet to stand on, which could support and stabilise each other. The initiators of the IBA Fürst-Pückler-Land staked everything on a large number of smaller individual projects, on endogenous potential, and on networking and cooperation between the key players in the region. The vision was for Lusatia to become a workshop for new landscapes, providing the resources for a new type of man-made environment to emerge from the post-mining landscapes. In short, the aim was an environment that does not disown its industrial past and acts as a vehicle to carry the long tradition of innovations in engineering through to the modern era.

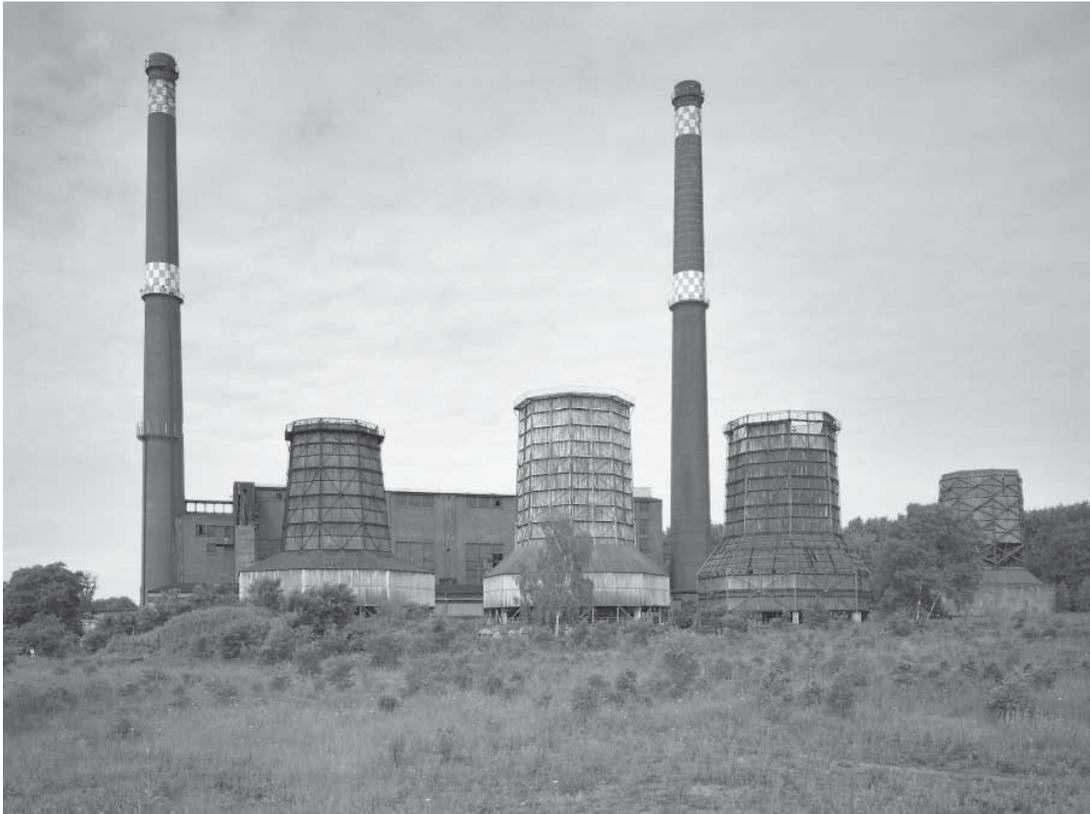
As far back as 2009, the IBA conference "Post-Mining Landscape" confirmed that although there may be more spectacular projects in other places, it was the first time that anything had been undertaken on this scale anywhere in the world, with 30 individual projects involving the local people and following a clearly-defined philosophy of the recreation of a landscape laid waste.

After intensive study of the region, it soon became clear that the most pressing challenges resulted from the devastation of the environment over the past decades and from the loss of the livelihood of tens of thousands of energy industry workers. At the same time, there was more to Lusatia than its mining past. In fact, the towns and cultivated landscapes reflect an extremely varied history. The IBA succeeded in preserving the old

Publicly opened mine F60, the "Eiffel Tower of Lusatia" in comparison with the Paris Eiffel Tower

Návštevnická baňa F60, „Eiffelova veža Lužic“ v porovnaní s parížskou Eiffelovou vežou





Plessa power station
Elektrárna v Plessa

Source Zdroj: courtesy of Frank-Heinrich Müller, 2004

and bringing in the new, enhancing the historic core and adding high-quality contemporary layers in an expression of modernity. The key was to keep the balance between preserving the old and adding the new because both are equally important to the general public.

THE LARGEST AREA OF MAN-MADE LAKES IN EUROPE

What is being developed in the centre of the post-mining landscape of Lusatia is the largest area of man-made lakes in Europe, and also one of the largest lake districts in Germany, larger than Lake Müritz. Nor is there any attempt to hide the fact from the onlooker that these lakes are man-made. The fault lines between industry and nature

are what render this landscape so interesting and appealing. Despite 150 years of mining, despite industrialisation on a massive scale, and despite the presence of housing for tens of thousands of workers, the region has always kept its rural charm. Here the original historic landscape of the Spree Forest meets monotone conifer plantations, and old cultivated landscapes with traditional orchards meet vast deserts of lignite-mining land. Power plants and factories are dotted throughout the expanse, seemingly randomly, like monuments to industry.

This stark contrast between nature and industry is a distinguishing feature of the Lusatian Lakeland. The IBA wanted to emphasise this contrast and ran an architectural competition with the town of

Senftenberg for a “Lusatian Lakeland landmark” in its quest for a tangible symbol. The commission was to design a viewing tower in the heart of the lakes on the Sorno Canal between Lake Sedlitz and Lake Geierswalde, and between the states of Brandenburg and Saxony, which would be a symbol of the transformation of the landscape. Made from rust-coloured Corten steel, the landmark as it stands today is a conscious reminder of the industrial (evolutionary) history of the lake district and of steel mining equipment, while the sculpturally conceived staircase is an artistic expression of new beginnings, of the future of the Lakeland and of Lusatia.

The aim pursued by all the people involved in the process of designing and flooding the Lusatian Lakeland, on both sides of the border separating Brandenburg and Saxony, is to link the 10 lakes at the heart of the developing area of over 20 lakes

in such a way that there is enough water to flow through the 12 navigable waterways and also to allow boats to pass from one lake to the next. A master plan for this core area drawn up jointly by Brandenburg and Saxon planners envisages a wide range of different uses, ranging mainly from water sports and family activities up to nature conservation areas. The resulting area of linked lakes will be a huge expanse of water totalling around 7,000 hectares, with areas of unspoiled nature, designated areas for different activities, and a broad range of uses thought to be unparalleled in Central Europe.

Another advantage of the integrated approach to planning is that there will be paths along the banks for pedestrians and cyclists, yet it will still be possible for houses to be located at the waterside and for boats to be moored at the houses. The way to achieve this layout is to build floating



Lauchhammer bio-towers,
remains of the former
large-scale coking plant
with viewing turrets

Bioveže v Lauchhammeri,
pozostatky bývalej
velkorozmernej koksárne
s výhľadovými vežičkami

Source Zdroj: courtesy of Thomas Kläber, 2009

houses accessed by floating footbridges and to add further infrastructure at a later date in terms of floating restaurants, landing stages, sun decks, boat hire points or even a floating open-air cinema. The aptitude for technical innovation demonstrated in the industrial age can now be directed to the tasks of the present and future and applied to the subject of “floating buildings”.

PUBLIC INTEREST AND ECONOMIC SUCCESS IN THE LUSATIAN LAKELAND

The main potential of the Lusatian Lakeland lies in water-based tourism, although skaters and cyclists have already successfully staked their claim on the landscape. The current disadvantages in terms of lack of infrastructure and publicity in comparison with other areas with water-based attractions call for a clever development concept which changes the apparent disadvantages into

advantages. The Lusatian Lakeland is different from other tourist areas, not only because of its industrial origins but also because of the pivotal role which will also be played by the distinctive design and striking aesthetics of the new man-made landscape in attracting tourists from other regions. Moreover, despite many challenges, the fact of starting with a “blank page” in developing water-based tourist attractions also offers a great opportunity for new facilities and high-quality amenities.

The aim is to develop the Lusatian Lakeland into a single large open-ended, flexible system – in contrast to self-contained systems like the “Karl-May-Land” project or man-made theme parks styled on Disneyland. Open-ended systems have the flexibility to react to changing demand. They aim for a systematic overlap with leisure market segments which complement each other and a well-blended mix of products. An open-ended



Source Zdroj: courtesy of Radke LMBV

Aerial photograph of the
Lusatian Lakeland with
navigable waterways
Letecká snímka na Lužickú
jazernú oblasť so splavnými
vodnými cestami

system can develop slowly and proceed step by step with a diverse network of investors and operators. It is therefore very conducive to the gradual development of the Lakeland, considering the rise in the water level, and it can also react to new findings, thus remaining open to adaptation and capable of development. It is also possible to integrate smaller self-contained systems at certain locations.

The concept behind the development of the tourist industry in the Lakeland was not only meant to respond to the current markets, however, but to identify new niche markets in view of the long development times.

The prerequisites include a commitment to collaboration across state borders and discussion among the local authorities on their strengths and weaknesses, leading to an agreement on the development of the location, including the nec-

essary organisational structures and types of business.

The strength of the area, therefore, lies in the linking of the lakes to form one big network. Individual tourist attractions can complement each other well if local authorities work closely together to coordinate the planning and development processes. The Lakeland must be seen from the outside as a single large whole – as a unique and attractive travel destination.

The identification of the people with their region and the acceptance of the process of transforming the area to a region of tourism are fundamental to the successful development of tourism. Indeed, the host population is an important ambassador for the region. Contented guests, who feel that they are given a warm reception and sense that they are staying in a region which is also seen as attractive by the local inhabitants, are highly



Lusatian Lakeland landmark
Lužická jazerná oblast

Source Zdroj: courtesy of Profifoto Kliche, 2009



Floating houses on
Lake Geierswalde
Plávající domy na
jazere Geierswalde

Source Zdroj: courtesy of Detlef A. Hecht, 2014

influential in the messages that they spread. The qualities of the new "Lusatian Lakeland" holiday destination and the associated opportunities must therefore always be communicated in the region itself. The main aim of internal marketing is to foster the identification of the local people with the Lusatian Lakeland. Local inhabitants must be included in the transformation process, with events being held to keep them informed of the aspirations for the image of the region, backed up by the preservation and creative incorporation of their own history through the existing industrial architecture.

At the same time, the change of image should radiate from the region to the outside world. The Lusatian Lakeland is not yet known as a holiday destination. The name Lusatia is still unlikely to conjure up images of attractive lake scenery. Both

processes, inwards and outwards alike, must be started early and continually managed and developed.

When it comes to conveying an image to the outside world, internal consensus on the key issues to be communicated is of fundamental importance alongside consistent adherence to design guidelines. As regions compete with each other, clear focal points and recognition factors are important in order to be perceived by visitors as a whole.

At the same time, an increasing appeal to tourists is indicative of the attractiveness of a region as a whole, and touristic appeal is itself a soft factor conducive to further economic progress in the region and developments in other industries besides tourism (e.g. in connection with industrial developments and the recruitment of



Floating houses on
Lake Geierswalde
Plávající domy na
jazere Geierswalde

Source Zdroj: courtesy of Detlef A. Hecht, 2014

skilled workers, engineers, doctors, teachers, etc.).

It stands to reason, then, that the key to all these positive developments is for the Lusatian Lakeland not to conceal or deny its “artificiality” but to parade it as its hallmark. This is not to play down the importance of the pre-industrial features, such as the village architecture with buildings, often of a high structural quality, arranged on three or four sides around courtyards. They can take on new functions and contribute to the distinctiveness and the regional identity of the Lusatian Lakeland.

The navigable canals, the industrial heritage and the floating architecture all play an important role in the large expanse of land and water with all its natural and geographical diversity. The focus is on a high quality of service but also on a high level of quality in terms of landscape design, village life, urban planning and architecture.

No expense was to be spared in the search for the best solutions, e.g. through European competitions, because the ideas and plans brought into the discussion through them will be the ones to shape the face of the Lusatian Lakeland for a very long time to come. The new Senftenberg town harbour is one noteworthy example.

INITIATIVE NEEDED

The IBA was set up with a fixed-term brief. Since the end of its term there has been a demand for initiative – among the local authorities and the bodies responsible for projects, but also among the individuals who have come onto the scene with the dawning of the new era and are taking their fortune into their own hands. One such instance is the initiative shown by the family-run enterprise from Altdöbern, which has conducted the established IBA tours from the IBA Terraces



Senftenberg town harbour
Pristav mesta Senftenberg

Source Zdroj: courtesy of Profifoto Kliche, 2013

in Großräschen since 2011 and is constantly developing new ideas. The founder of the company used to work in the mining industry as a tinsmith but has since retrained. He became an entrepreneur in the tourist industry, opened a bicycle hire outlet and today offers a wide and diverse range of tours. His son also came back after completing his degree studies and joined the company. He is developing the IBA tours with a view to including the industrial heritage aspect and the Lakeland.

Lusatia needs such initiatives, and it is also pleasing to observe that it is increasingly the Lusatians who see the business opportunities offered by the Lusatian Lakeland with its industrial heritage and are starting up companies to cater for tourists – some on a large scale and some on a small scale, such as the four-star “Seehotel” lake-side hotel in Großräschen, the jeep tour operator, the jet ski hire company on Lake Gellerswalde or

simply the “Kuchenmobil” mobile snack bar on Lake Sedlitz. Today, scores of small and medium-sized enterprises have emerged. These are not IBA projects but drew upon its activities when the IBA raised public awareness through starting tours through the opencast mining landscape and preparing the ground for the tourism demand with its projects and public relations work. Or, metaphorically speaking, the IBA threw some pebbles in the water and the ripples are radiating outwards.

It would be nice to know that the spirit of the IBA and its “new way of thinking” will live on, because there is still so much to do to develop the post-mining landscapes and to transform promising ideas into realities. The special IBA commitment, as described above, would still be good for the region.

Mining in the Lusatian district will not be abandoned for the time being. There will be more post-



IBA Terraces by the future
Großbräschen Lake

IBA terasy budúceho
jazera Großbräschen

Source Zdroj: courtesy of Profifoto Kliche, 2009.

mining landscapes and they will bring challenges for the regional planners, which they will hopefully tackle with great determination and creativity, always keeping the bigger picture in mind.

A cross-border presentation in 2019 or 2020 would be an important culminating event for communicating the technical completion of the lakes in Brandenburg and Saxony, and would focus all the efforts towards this time horizon. Network projects, such as the Fürst-Pückler cycle path, the ENERGY Route through Lusatia's Industrial Heritage and the "Kompetenzzentrum Schwimmende Bauten" centre of expertise in floating buildings, should be further developed by this date. Floating architecture offers a unique opportunity in Germany to put Lusatia at the leading edge of innovation in engineering and architecture.

Although the IBA no longer exists as an institution, the processes which it initiated are irreversible. The projects will stay with the region and - hopefully - so will the networks, the experience and the know-how. In the two-year wind-up phase

of IBA GmbH, everything was put in place in conjunction with the Großbräschen town council for the former business premises to be used as the "IBA-Studierhaus" study centre with resource archive and media library. Overnight accommodation can even be provided for students and field trips. The first group of students from the respected department of planning in Kaiserslautern arrived in the spring of 2011. Other groups followed, including international groups. Hence the former IBA business premises will nonetheless remain a place where practitioners from all over the world can learn about landscape transformation processes, especially after major human encroachment on the landscape, understanding and relating to what has happened here and sharing their own experiences. There can be no more appropriate atmosphere for this than the genius loci of the IBA Fürst-Pückler-Land. In this way, the resource archive will continue to be filled with ideas and analyses in the future and can be used by the region and for further planning with professors and

students from different universities and institutes of higher education. Indeed, a definite institutional framework is even emerging, as work has already begun, in cooperation with the BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg and the FIB Research Institute for Post-Mining Landscapes in Finsterwalde, on setting up the international masters' degree course in "Post-Mining Development", which will be held in English.

NOTES POZNÁMKY

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