Scientific Practices and the Development

of Experimental Machines for Living with Lake Neusiedl



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Lake Neusiedl is affected by multiple overlapping crises. The lake is not only an ecological system, but a collective concern requiring care, awareness, and long-term stewardship. Scientific research responds to its fluidity through continuous observation, measurement, and adaptation rather than control. The project originates at the biological research station in Illmitz and the absence left by its former museum. Rather than reconstructing the building, scientific knowledge is dispersed into the landscape.

Science becomes a commons: A shared process of caring for, understanding, and responding to the lake. Visitors, residents, researchers, seasonal workers, and volunteers become contributors through shared labour, observation, and presence. Four interventions reinterpret local typologies as tools of collective responsibility. A Common Base reinterprets the Streckhof as a collective infrastructure for living, gathering, exchange, and maintaining machines. Harvesting reintroduces the Tscharda-ke for seasonal reed and wine harvesting and drying. Monitoring transforms the lighthouse into a platform for observation, bird monitoring, moth hunting, and water-based research. Observation draws from traditional fishing and reed huts as sheltered points for observing weather, water levels, fish movements, and wildlife.

