

presentation

Workshop Proposal

First steps in the Near Future Design
methodology, imagining and
exploring possible futures

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nefula

Nefula is an international design laboratory focused on the Near Future Design. Adopting this methodology, Nefula investigates the present to individuate possible futures and perform them into reality. Through performances Nefula invites people to reflect and discuss about which futures are preferable and desirable, in order to make the society conscious and able to relate and manage the exponential changes we live in.

The world we live in today is a flow of continuous transformations

In all aspects of our life we have to handle these changes: from technologies to the way we communicate, from consumption to the production of information, from food to sexuality... these processes can achieve huge complexity, as they are related to each other.

In this scenario, it is important not only to have tools, knowledges and know-how, but also to develop different methodologies. Such as life-skills that enable people to deal with exponential change, in order to work and create relationships within contexts of fast innovation and hyper-connection.

In order to take active part in the construction of the future, we have to be able to observe, to understand and to take active part in building meaning and relevance. This happens by learning to do it in inclusive ways, by creating relational networks around shared desires, expectations, visions and imagination.

Through the Near Future Design Workshops participants will learn how to relate to the exponential changes they live in. They will explore them, imagine and perform the possible futures they desire.

Near Future Design

The Near Future Design is a methodology that combines multiple disciplines in order to explore the present. It achieves this by searching for seeds of possible futures and perform the evolution of these seeds in order to rise discussion and reflections of society about what futures are desired and preferable.

Methodology

These observation and framing process are structured in various phases:

- the understanding of Consensual Reality (the common understanding of the observed phenomenon);
- the exploration of Curious Rituals (the strange things that people do in the present of the observed phenomenon, leading to its possible evolutions);
- knowledge about the State of the Arts & Technologies;
- inference of the Strange Now (the trajectories defined by the syncretic interactions between Consensual Reality, Curious Rituals and State of the Arts & Technologies);
- design of the New Normals (the Pre-totypes, which are diegetic and transmedia prototypes of the objects, services and practices which we could find in the described future scenarios);
- the Transmedia Narratives that brings the New Normal scenario into the present, arising the reflection about the future scenarios;
- the collection and analysis of the discussion generated by the Transmedia Narratives.

Workshop pattern

Spanning from a 4 hours crash course to a 1 week intensive formula, every Nefula workshop is a unique, hands-on, theme-based, immersive experience. The workshops are structured to facilitate each participant to enter the Near Future Design mindset and to learn new tools for creating and communicating their vision about the future in the contemporary era.

Near Future

- Bit
- Capsule
- Lab
- Gym

Documentation
modalities

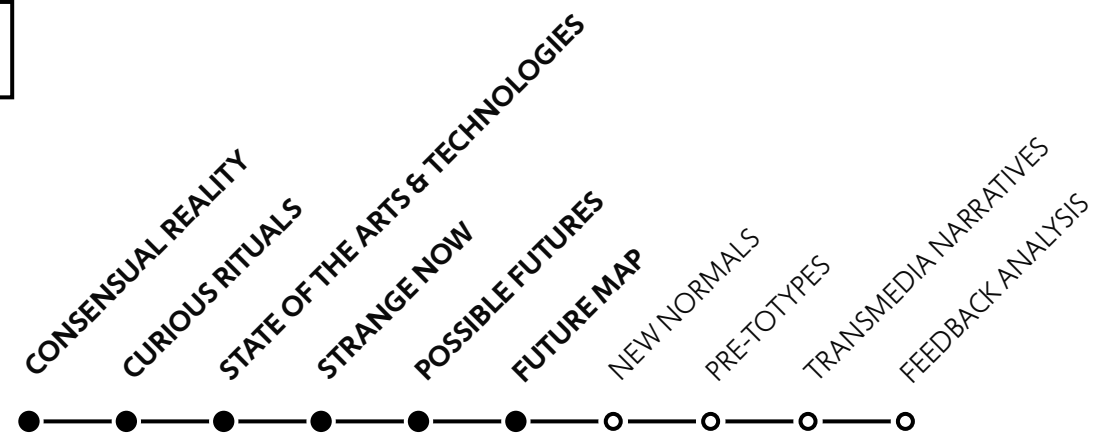
- Set of posters about possible future scenarios, created by the participant with Nefula's contribution
- Final exhibition of the workshop outcomes, open to the public
- Publication or video-documentation of the workshop by the participants and by Nefula

Near Future Bit

Near Future Bit is the most immediate entry point to Near Future Design.

Within a day, the methodology is fully illustrated focusing on research, observation and imaginary.

Topics



Duration

4—8 h

Takeaways

- > How to do a thematic research on the present
- > How to recognize and document a Curious Ritual
- > How to explore possible futures
- > How to describe a future through a scenario

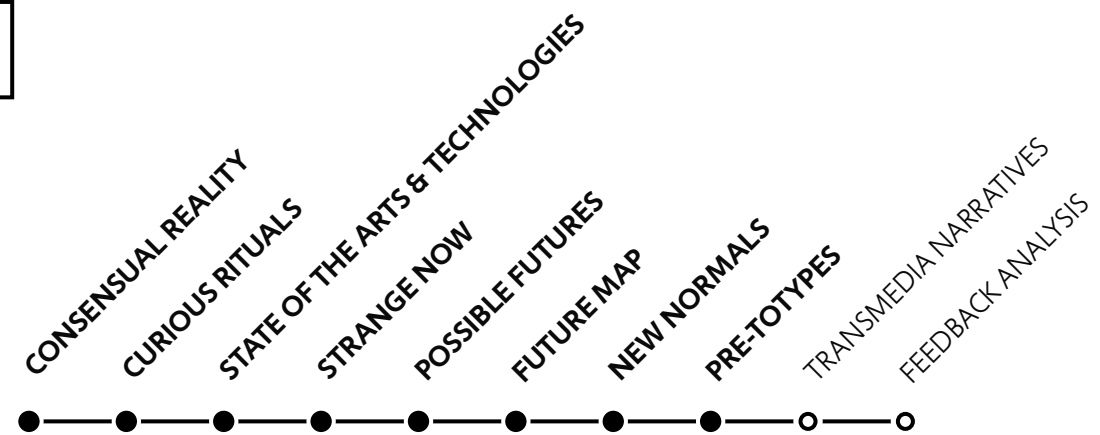
Outputs

- > Research on the preset topic
- > Documentation of the Curious Rituals within Curiouspedia
- > Visualization and Description of the possible futures scenarios
- > Future Map

Near Future Capsule

Near Future Capsule takes place in two days within which it is possible to explore the main aspects of the Near Future Design methodology. Activities are design-oriented, focusing on the definition of possible futures scenarios.

Topics



Duration

2 days

Takeaways

- › How to do a thematic research on the present
- › How to recognize and document a Curious Ritual
- › How to explore possible futures
- › How to describe a future through a scenario
- › What is a Pre-totype and how design it
- › What are Transmedia Narratives

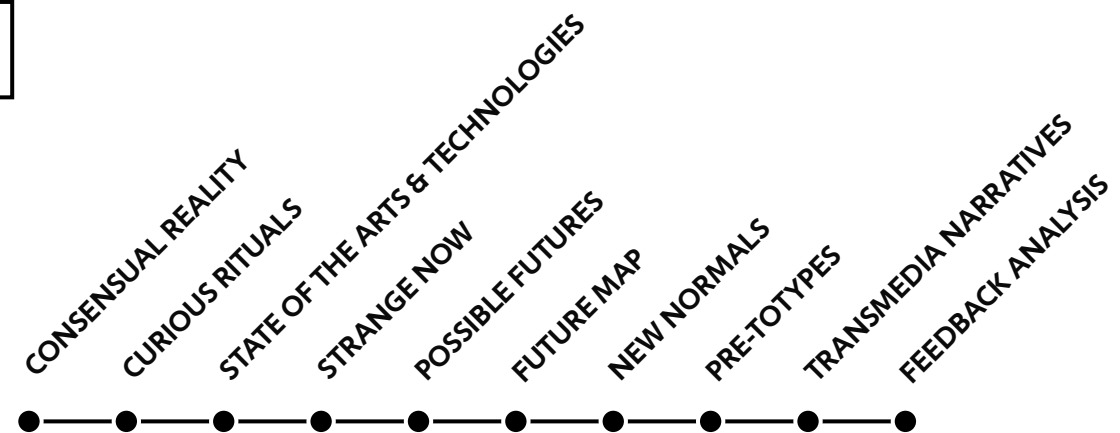
Outputs

- › Research on the preset topic
- › Documentation of the Curious Rituals within Curiouspedia
- › Visualization and Description of the possible futures scenarios
- › Future Map
- › Concept and visualization of the Pre-totypes

Near Future Lab

Within a full week of activities, Near Future Lab illustrates in a practical and extended way each step of the methodology. It focuses on the concretization of the possible futures scenarios through tangible and communicable outcomes.

Topics



Duration

5 days

Takeaways

- > How to do a thematic research on the present
- > How to recognize and document a Curious Ritual
- > How to explore possible futures
- > How to describe a future through a scenario
- > How to design and create a Pre-prototype and Transmedia Narratives
- > How to set up the feedback analysis

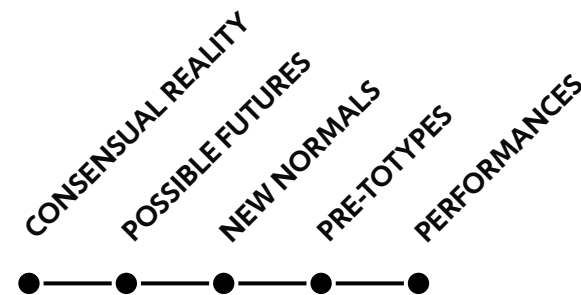
Outputs

- > Research on the preset topic
- > Documentation of the Curious Rituals within Curiouspedia
- > Visualization and Description of the possible futures scenarios
- > Future Map
- > Pre-prototypes mock-ups
- > Design and creation of the Transmedia Narratives

Near Future Gym

The workshop Near Future Gym addresses young people from 10 to 15. Within the 4/8 hours of activity, the methodology is illustrated through a game structured as a playful process that performs the main aspects of Near Future Design.

Topics



Duration

4—8 h

Takeaways

- › How to do a thematic research on the present
- › How to imagine complex scenarios
- › What is exponential change, effects and implications
- › How to imagine near future scenarios
- › Introduction to the creation of a Pre-totype
- › How to narrate a Pre-totype through the performance

Outputs

- › Research on the preset topic
- › Visualization and Description of the possible futures as narrations
- › Pre-totype, concept and mock-up
- › Documentation of the performance
- › Multimedia documentation of the workshop by Nefula

Workshop details

Theme

Every workshop explores the Near Future of a certain theme that is pre-established between Nefula and the hosting party.

Participants

10—30

The workshop pattern is open to every kind of participants, no particular qualifications or prerequisites are needed. Different backgrounds and approaches are welcomed in order to create the best conditions for open and collaborative discussions.

What we need

- › A place where the participants can work comfortably, with chairs, tables, electricity and access to internet and a room that could be reorganized during the different moments of the workshop — by moving chairs and tables
- › A projector and a speaker system that can be connected to a computer
- › Paper, post-its and stationery (pencils, markers, pens) and some larger sheets papers

What you need

- › Computers that the participants can use individually or in groups. Computers need to have internet access and softwares to design 2D and 3D, to work with videos

Glossary

Language is a fundamental aspect of Near Future Design. Nefula's dictionary consists of a series of terms that define specific elements that acquire their full meaning through reciprocal relationships. The Glossary summarizes the words that define the main aspects of the methodology.

- > **Consensual Reality**
everything that is perceived as normal.
- > **Curious Rituals**
things and behaviours outside the normalcy field, feel strange, unusual.
- > **State of the Arts & Technologies**
technologies and techniques that could directly or indirectly influence the observed theme.
- > **Strange Now**
highlighted generative tensions of possible futures in the present scenario.
- > **Possible Futures**
all possibilities generated by the combinations and implications of the elements present in the Strange Now.
- > **Future Map**
an organized scheme of all Possible Futures, highlighting the relations and influences.
- > **New Normal**
exploration of the implications of a possible future, positive and negative.
- > **Pre-totype**
a fiction of a credible, possibly functional prototype from the New Normal.
- > **Transmedia Narrative**
a communication design process that materializes Pre-totypes into the present, by different coordinated media.
- > **Feedback Analysis**
documentation of society's reactions, desires and preferences about a possible future.

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