transmediale/

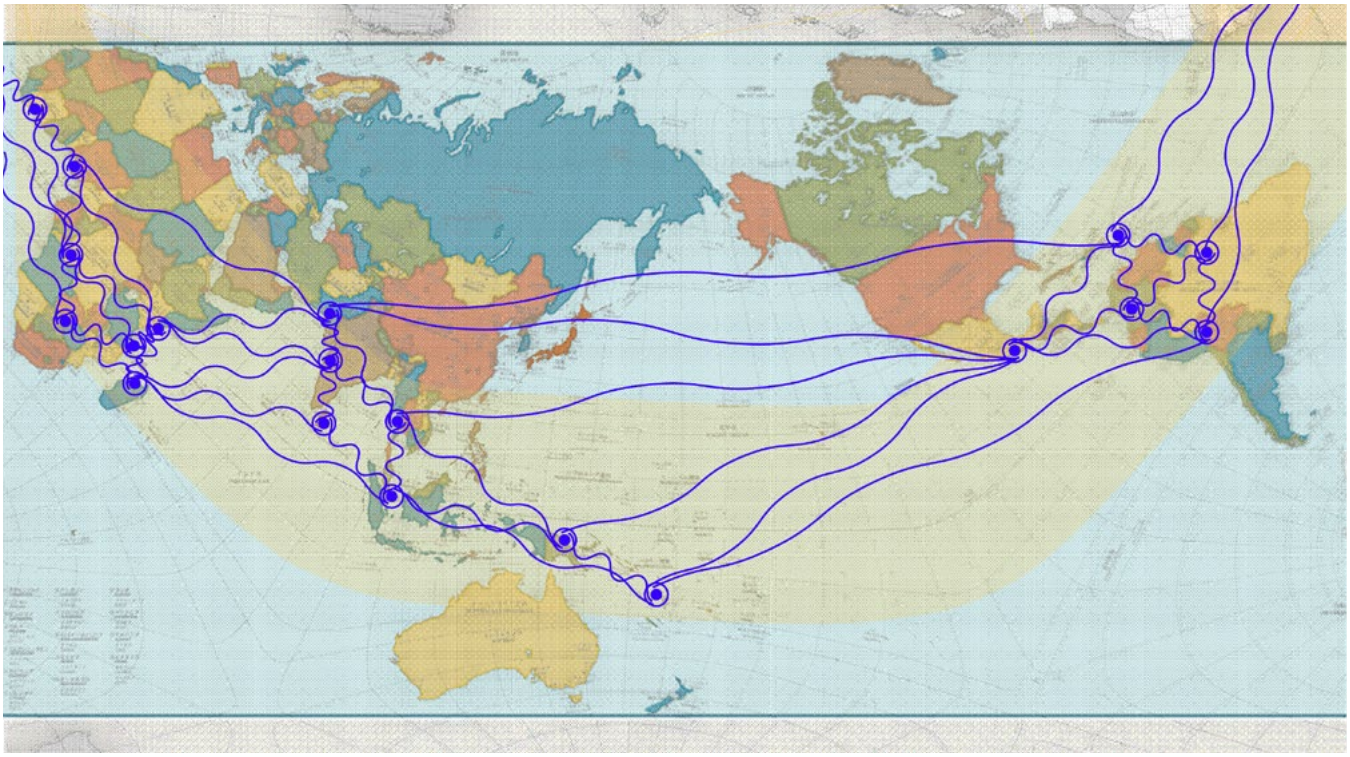
Expanding on transmediale 2026 Theme and Methodology

October 2, 2025

By the Mango Belt & Tamarind Road: Compassing, Protocoling, Metaphoring
transmediale 2026: 28 January – 1 February 2026
silent green Kulturquartier and more venues across Berlin

Under the title *By the Mango Belt & Tamarind Road – Compassing, Protocoling, Metaphoring* the 39th edition of transmediale festival will take place from 29 January to 1 February 2026 in Berlin. The festival's main venue will be silent green Kulturquartier, with additional satellite venues across the city to be announced.

Curated by Neema Githere and Juan Pablo García Sossa, transmediale 2026 engages with different ways of understanding systems, cosmologies, and technologies. The festival reimagines itself as a living, recursive carrier net — a hammock of relational technologies in practice, stretching across latitudes, rhythms, and root systems. It offers both a geographical and theoretical shift in the prevalent discourse on technology, media, and our understanding of the internet as a world wide web. Expanding beyond a conference framework and the showcasing of completed works, the festival days in Berlin will invite audiences into a communal space where the protocols cultivated across the intertropical convergence zones become tangible, shareable, and recursive.



The imaginative coordinates *By the Mango Belt & Tamarind Road* are situated within the tropical belt. Alluding to China's *One Belt One Road* Initiative that often presents itself as an alternative to developing and infrastructuring but keeps perpetuating similar dependency models and verticalities, the festival examines the underlying structures that shape both the material and imagined aspects of our systems. What are ways of netting otherwise? How can we re•wire the root codes of our systems and condition ourselves differently? What forms of infra•structuring can emerge when we step outside extractive paradigms?

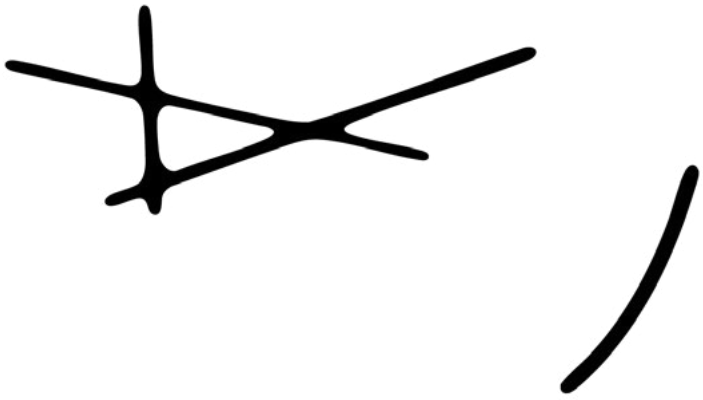
> *"We forget that thousands of years ago people were in touch with a different kind of technology — non-Cartesian, non-Newtonian technologies that could get us from point A to point B without environmental side effects. Somehow we are not imaginative enough in the West to consider the possibility of a parallel technological pathway that does not cause illness, pollution, or the extinction of species."*
> *— Malidoma Somé*

The methodology of transmediale 2026 is guided by the principles of *Compassing, Metaphoring,* and *Protocoling*. Through its undercurrents is a process-oriented exchange that extends across distinct periods of time: an understanding of technology as a connective element and an intergenerational network, as a continuous transformation that encompasses and links pasts and futures. Accordingly, the festival is conceived as an elastic, multilayered ecosystem in which participants can collectively envision, navigate, and experiment with infrastructures. The guiding axes of the festival are the Research Netting Groups, which inform the curatorial process and will shape the gathering in Berlin in the form of installations, sonic experiments, and temporary architectures. These groups operate through distributed IRL and URL gatherings, designed in collaboration with local hosts, bringing together artists, technologists, collectives, and cultural spaces across the Mango Belt & Tamarind Road. The Research Netting Groups situate themselves in Pasifika, the Swahili Coast, Southeast Asia, and Abya Yala, as well as online, creating distributed nodes for collaboration and exchange that will extend beyond the 2026 festival.

The new visual identity for transmediale 2026 is now live. The full curatorial statement can be found on the theme page of the festival website.

Further programme announcements, including festival venues and collaborations, will follow in November.

L. Goodman, *'Between Two Worlds: Malidoma Somé on Rites of Passage', The Sun Magazine*, July 2010



About transmediale

transmediale is an annual festival and a critical space for the development of new experimental approaches in art and digital culture. Beyond the yearly event, transmediale is a transversal, dynamic platform that facilitates year-round activities including a residency programme and journal. Each festival edition focuses on a specific theme in the spectrum of art and digital culture that is reflected through a great variety of programmes like exhibitions, discourse formats, performances, screenings, and workshops.

https://transmediale.de/en

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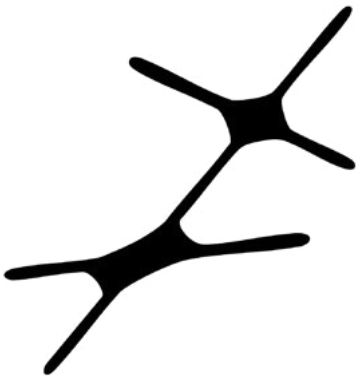
Der Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Kultur und Medien