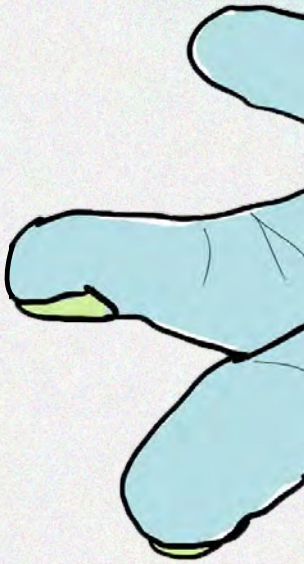
GAME



Online game: https://salonofopensecrets.at/

Title: Salon of Open Secrets
Text and illustrations: Stefanie Wuschitz
Voice-over: Franziska Schindler
Programming: Beatriz Lacerda as NOT BZ Studio
Music: Mario Pillai
Sound technician: L.Sound

This game for children was created for the workshop series described above; it was conceptualised as a story that welcomes participants as collaborators at eye level. The game briefly introduces the issues tackled through our main research project. The interactive game structure is represented through multiple threads in the narration. Depending on the gamer's answers, they get to meet one of eight different avatars.

Would you like to know a secret? Yes? Well, it’s not very secret, my secret, more of an open secret, so to speak.

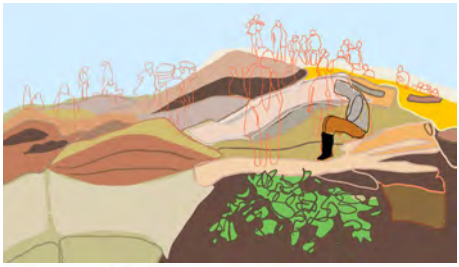
START

The climate crisis is real.

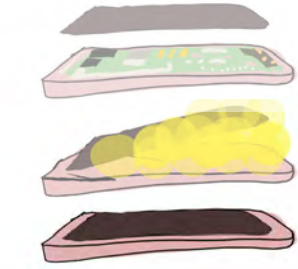
How can you react?

We're about to start doing something about it. Let me just tell you a story first.

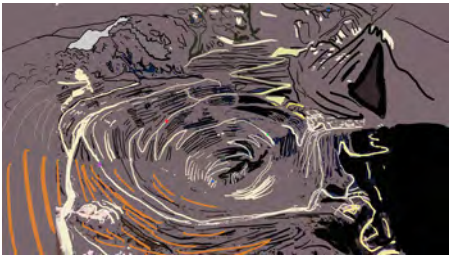
The electrical devices we use are real gold mines.



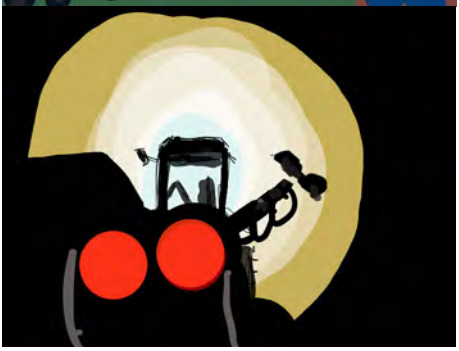
In order to buy and process them as cheaply as possible, no consideration is given to the people who live or work near gold or copper mines.



They contain gold, copper and many rare earths, which are expensive and difficult to find.



The people who assemble the individual parts that make up our laptops and mobile phones also see little of what you have to pay for the device.



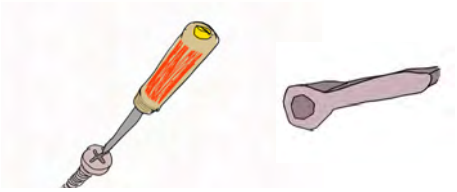
They must fear for their future and the future of their children, often living in regions where they have no say.

As you unpack your new device, you probably don't think about the production conditions and the resources that went into it.

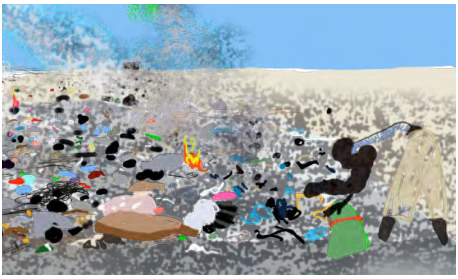
The main thing is that it works well and doesn't cost too much. Only when it stops working might we start to think about which part is no longer working.

Electronic waste – 90% of all our devices – ends up in places where it shouldn't be.

Most devices are not built in such a way that they can be repaired, so they become electronic waste.



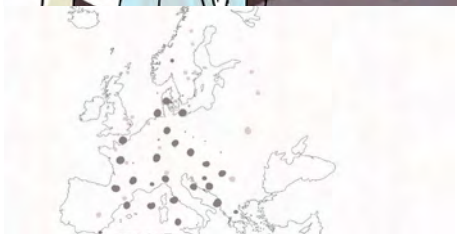
Can it be repaired?



Old computers, scanners and smartphones are thrown into illegal landfill sites.
This releases toxins into the water, into the soil or, if incinerated, into the air.

Your discarded headphones, broken USB stick, old hard drive, games console or printer, but also large pieces of rubble such as fridges, dishwashers and televisions.

Instead of going to school, children often work in these landfills looking for valuable parts in the rubbish.



Although most electronics and electrical appliances are bought here, in countries such as Norway, Germany or Austria, most are shipped to the Global South.

The industry that manufactures electronics is located where people cannot demand much money for their labour, in countries such as Indonesia or China.

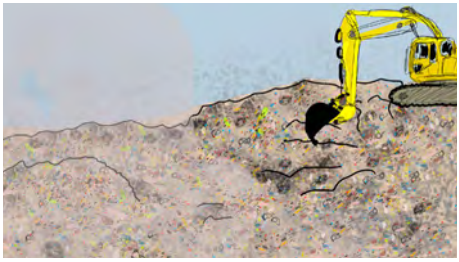
They're trying out new materials and experimenting with electronics, thinking up ways in which we could all repair our devices better and use them for longer.

People all over the world are thinking about how things could be done differently.

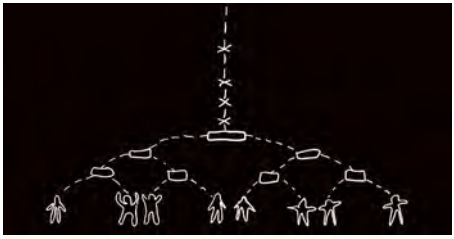
You think that's stupid? You're not alone.

What is really upsetting you at the moment? I'm extremely upset about how resources on our planet are being used.

So, with our natural resources, our clothes, our food, but especially with technology. Out of sheer anger about this, I made up this story and then recorded it.



Look, this is a landfill site in Ghana.



My colleague, Patricia Reis, and I interviewed eight people from all over the world. In the game that was created from the drawings and the interviews, you can now help to decide what happens next.

Almost all broken electronic devices end up in dangerous landfills like this. Many tonnes are shipped to countries such as Ghana, Indonesia or Mexico.

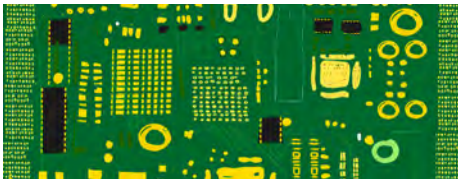
At the e-waste dumps, animals eat parts of it, and other parts are picked up by children or adults and taken apart. But the majority simply decomposes and pollutes the groundwater, drinking water and soil. When the electronic waste is set on fire, toxic gases are produced.

This mountain is not a pile of rubbish but a mountain of goods that are simply no longer cool enough.

Strictly speaking, these electronic devices are not waste at all: many of the items here could still be repaired or even still work.

Nobody knows exactly how many tonnes end up there; 90% of electronic waste is transported there illegally.

They were therefore thrown away by someone, almost certainly someone in Europe, Australia or North America.



Electrical appliances are full of secret treasures such as gold, silver and other rare materials. The people who live near the rubbish tips know this.

However, this is often not particularly good for their health, as they come into contact with toxic substances.

'In Cuba there is no such thing as e-waste, we reuse everything.'

Milton Raggi

'Maybe if they dumped all the garbage in their backyard, they would think twice?'

Seyram Avle

In recent decades they have invented ways to extract valuable parts and save them.

What would you most likely do to solve these problems?

Get active against them?

Have you ever protested against something?

In a democracy, people can publicly say what bothers them, what they are worried about or what offends them. It is often more encouraging to join forces with others. It then becomes easier to find solutions together.

Use sustainable materials?

Go to page 185.

Would you rather go to Germany? Then let us introduce you to Hannah Perner-Wilson.

She has managed to build loudspeakers out of fabric. She has managed to weave fabrics that are also loudspeakers. She makes clothes that have soft, sustainable electronics built into them.

Go to page 192.

Gameli Adzaho lives in Ghana and thinks a lot about how we can involve everyone in the search for solutions.

Go to page 187.

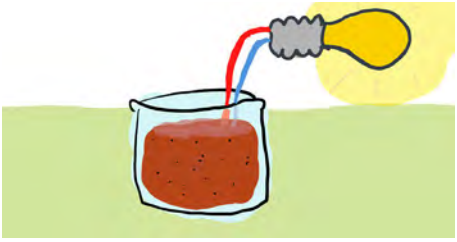
Would you like to talk to the people affected by the problem themselves to hear their point of view?

Go to page 184.

Would you like to meet someone who will try something themselves to improve the situation?

Would you like to talk to the people affected by the problem themselves to hear their point of view?

Saad Chinoy lives in Singapore and knows how you can build a battery out of mud that is completely sustainable.



He has also tried to recreate plastic from natural materials.

Go to page 194.

Our expert in Nepal, Rajina Shresta, works with students [showing them how] to experiment and invent for themselves.

Go to page 196.

Use sustainable materials?

What materials could these be? What would you suggest?

Perhaps materials made from plants or things that we can find everywhere?

Fibres, textiles, liquids, dyes and many other things can be made from plants. The advantage of this is that plants grow back, they are climate-neutral and they become soil again.

We asked an expert in Mexico to tell us more about these advantages. Her name is María Antonia González Valerio.

Go to page 199.

Or again from recycled things?

Go to page 186.

Or would you rather go to Indonesia? We spoke to the expert there, who builds beautiful new things from waste herself. Her name is Irene Agrivina.

Go to page 201.

Or again from recycled things?

Recycling, upcycling, urban mining, reusing – all of this means not declaring goods as 'waste' but seeing them as raw materials for other products. A circular economy is emerging.

Would you like to meet an expert who lives in Cuba? Milton Raggi loves collecting old appliances and turning them into something new.

Go to page 202.

Or would you prefer to talk to Seyram Avle? She's a young professor and wants to tell you something quickly about e-waste in Africa.

Go to page 203.