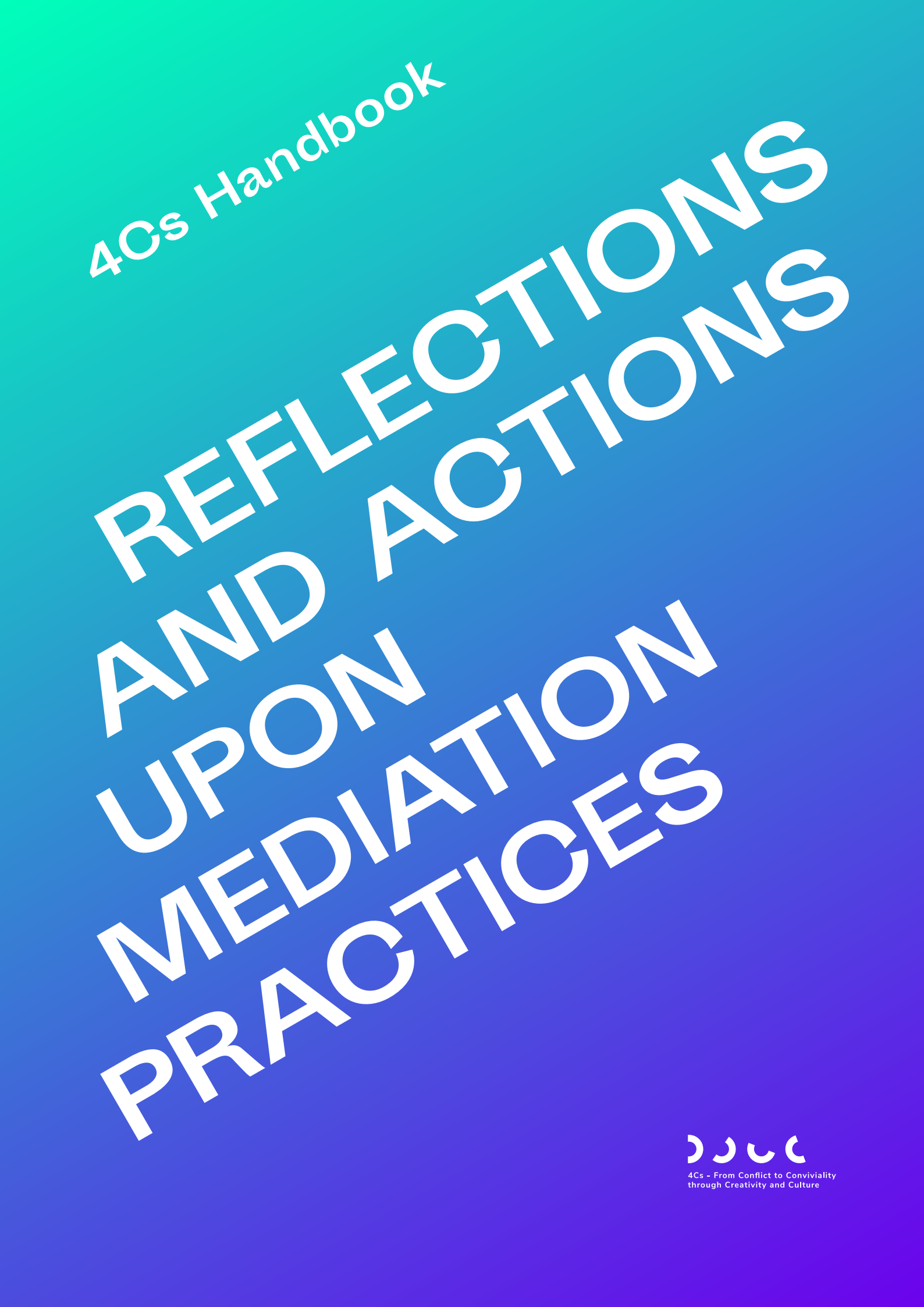


4Cs Handbook



4Cs - From Conflict to Conviviality
through Creativity and Culture

4CS HANDBOOK COLOPHON
REFLECTIONS AND ACTIONS
UPON MEDIATION PRACTICES

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Case studies

An Oceanic Feeling
Jul. – Sep. 2017, Fundació Antoni Tàpies
Cultivating Conviviality
Nov. 2017 – Feb. 2018, ENSAD
The Baltic Sea: A Liquid Memorial
Sep. 2018, VAA and Nida Art Colony
This Is No Longer That Place: A Public Discussion
Mar. 2019, Royal College of Art, The Showroom, and Tate Britain
Dwelling on the Threshold
October 2019, VAA and Nida Art Colony
Notes from Atopia
October 2020, Universidade Católica Portuguesa and Appleton Associação Cultural
The Silent University, Language Café
Sept. 2017 – Sept. 2018, Tensta Konsthall
“Penya” Tosquelles
Jan. – Apr. 2018, Fundació Antoni Tàpies;
Celebrating crafts for social change
Oct. 2018 – May 2019, ENSAD;
Portions of Share
March 2019, Universidade Católica Portuguesa, FOCO, Galeria Balcony, and Galeria Belo-Galsterer
Da condição de pessoa livre - Vasco Araújo
Jun. – Jul. 2019, Universidade Católica Portuguesa and MAAT
What’s on the news?
Sep. – Nov. 2019, Museet for Samtidskunst
Talk Tower for Forough Farrokhzad, Ângela Ferreira
Oct. 2020, Universidade Católica Portuguesa and Appleton Associação Cultural

The complete list of editors and contributors of each case study can be found in the corresponding section of this publication.

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4Cs: From Conflict to Conviviality through Creativity and Culture is a European Cooperation Project co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union. The 4Cs seeks to understand how training and education in art and culture can constitute powerful resources to address the issue of conflict as well as to envision creative ways in which to deal with conflictual phenomena, while contributing to audience development through active participation and co-production. The project aims at advancing the conceptual framework of intercultural dialogue and enhancing the role of public arts and cultural institutions in fostering togetherness through cultural diversity and intercultural encounters. Coordinated by the Faculdade de Ciências Humanas | Universidade Católica, 4Cs is grounded on the collaboration of 8 core partners (Tensta Konsthall; SAVVY Contemporary; Royal College of Art; Fundació Antoni Tàpies; Vilnius Academy of Arts; Museet for Samtidskunst; and ENSAD) and various local partners, such as Culture+Conflict, MAAT, Gulbenkian Foundation, Hangar, Appleton Associação Cultural, Gaivotas 6, OR Gallery, The Goethe-Institut, and Gasworks, among others.

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT DOES MEDIATION MEAN/DO FOR/IN VISUAL AND CULTURE STUDIES?

Luísa Santos

Lisbon, September 2nd 2020

When we decided to do the 4Cs: from Conflict to Conviviality through Creativity and Culture project we designed a set of activities we believed had the potential of answering multiple challenges our society was facing in 2017, in particular within the European context.

In 2017, much like today in 2020, after decades of institutional efforts to promote European identity, Europe was a space of uncertainty and conflict. From the Ukrainian crisis to Brexit, from the emergence of refugees to the new migratory flows, from the threat of terrorism to the growing populism and systemic racism, Europe is a site where new conflicts take shape, challenging once stable ideas of belonging, cohesion, and hospitality. In 2017, none of us knew we would face a global pandemic which would accentuate even further the social, cultural, and economic differences that make up the world.

As Arundhati Roy points out, the generalized shut-downs due to Covid-19 functioned as a chemical experiment which, in a very short span of time, unveiled factors which had hitherto remained (almost) hidden (Roy, 2020), baring the social disparities which have always existed for all to see. While some are required to be on lock-down in their homes, others are required to face the risk of daily exposure to keep societies afloat by means of their labor. For those who can pay for shelter the forced lock-down also exacerbated the vulnerabilities and inequalities inherent to (not) having a home. At the same time, borders around the world were shut down to contain the spread of the virus, bolstering the already problematic border systems. While this happens, people all over the planet seek out different ways of being together and cultivating social proximity while maintaining “physical distancing”, often through digital technologies which are not free from risk (Chun, 2020) or noxious effects, both individual and collective.

The second C in 4Cs – as a concept and as a lived experience – thus entails a great transformation. Under these current conditions we are also witnessing countless forms of collective solidarity – people commit to unity, to solidarity towards the elderly, the chronically ill, the precarious workers,

migrants, refugees, and those in need of asylum. With the establishing of new support networks, at times more and at times less effective, fear and conflict are navigated by means of strategies of culture and creativity. Arundhati Roy suggests also that pandemics may be a gateway between one world and another, forcing humans to break with the past and imagine the world anew (Roy, 2020). Cultural agents and researchers from all around the world state that this is the moment for artistic, cultural, and educational institutions to reevaluate the ways in which they operate and contribute to social disparities. On the other hand, this shapes up to be, under this point of view, an opportunity to rethink the ways in which their activities make up a space for public gatherings which can potentiate change.

In these processes, mediation acquires a(n even more) fundamental role in understanding the world in which we live and in the projection of new possible realities. The 4Cs project sees Europe as a project which is far from exhausted, much to the contrary. Europe's desideratum of peaceful coexistence has not yet been reached. It is, however, in urgent need of rearticulation. It is also important to understand that art, as a creative form, is inherently conflictive, inasmuch as it entails rupture and the collision of differences as methodologies geared at understanding, reflecting, and visually translating (alternative propositions for) the world in which we live.

Much like the Cs in 4Cs – conflict, conviviality, creativity, and culture – are understood and implemented in different ways in the contexts of each of the project's institutions, so does mediation take on different shapes and meanings in 4Cs. In this book, we bring together precisely (some of) those perspectives, at all times aware that it would be an impossible task to have an object which documents all the multiple voices, understandings, and experiences of mediation within the context of art and culture in the present moment. For the first part of this book we have invited researchers and curators with consolidated work in the different roles of the cultural institutions in society to reflect on what mediation is in their practices. What strings together the texts of Adriana Martins, Amal Alhaag, Ana Teixeira Pinto,

Eva Barois de Caemel, RAW Material, Nav Haq, and Yemisi Aribisala is the personal, subjective tone with which they describe their experiences of mediation. In Yemisi Aribisala's case, she generously offers us her voice regarding the moment in which she became homeless in London. On a first reading we could think that this personal story bears no relation with the meanings and potential of mediation in art and culture. However, a close reading will unveil the multiplicity of meanings that this experience – laden with challenges inherent to conviviality and the mediation which it entails – involves and what it can teach us about the roles of culture(s) – as well as of creativity – in the various contemporary conflicts. As for Eva Barois de Caemel, she tells us about her experience as a curator and of how, in her practice, mediation goes hand in hand with power.

The “educational turn” (Rogoff, 2008) theorized clearly and objectively how curators are more and more involved in the implementation of educational strategies as a part of their work in museums, in a departure from their more traditional and material leanings towards objects. If the artistic and cultural institutions envision how curators play a more critical role in the work with their audiences, as opposed to with objects, and if educators also carry out this type of work, how can curators and educators work together to create meaningful experiences which are accessible in institutions that cater – or purport to cater – to a diversity of audiences? What work is being currently done and what kind of work still needs be done? Surely, the idea and praxis of mediation has found a place in cultural institutions, but why were the museums' education departments the instigators of the development of audiences who for countless reasons are more often than not left on the sidelines? The work in mediation is transversal to the different spheres of the audiences and participants in their individualities and specificities, namely in what concerns the access of and to audiences who, more often than not, feel / are excluded from the institutions for social, economic, and cultural reasons.

After all, the artistic and cultural institutions of today purport to be geared for all. This has been the founding feature of contemporary art

museums (Macdonald, 1998; Galla 2013). As Bennet describes, members of all social groups must have equal rights at the practical and theoretical levels in their access to the museums (Bennet 1995:9). Or, following the TATE motto at the time of its reopening and expansion in 2016, the role of artistic institutions is to make available “art for all” which was materialized into an “initiative opening up access to great art from Tate and collections around the world” (TATE, 2016). However, as has been amply discussed, this accessibility seems to be no more than an uncritical ideological proclamation, based on a general and impossible definition – the idea of an “all” - and not an implemented reality (Bennet, 1995; Macdonald, 1998). Bourdieu and Darbel (1969) also, as Kjeldsen and Brøgger (2015) remind us, discussed this notion in their critique of the modern art gallery, a critique adopted and expanded by Bennet (1995) beyond the art museums, and also by Burton & Scott who mention that the majority of museum visitors have, in fact, the same characteristics, forming a homogeneous audience: they have an education, are wealthy, and they are equipped with tools to decipher the codes of the museum (2007: 50).

In the second part of this book we have tried to document two sets of activities – workshops and mediation labs – which focused precisely on mediation as a methodology for this task that the European Commission Culture Program placed at the top of its priorities: “audience development”. This was not however about, throughout the years of the 4Cs project, defining or reinventing mediation to reach the largest possible number of audiences. Much to the contrary, it was about seeking to listen to different voices and histories in order to debate and reflect about if and how the artistic and cultural institutions are really geared at diverse audiences, in a process which demonstrated that “audience development” is a landscape that rests on conflicts. This development – or, perhaps, transformation – entails a collective effort of simultaneously pushing and pulling in many different directions at the same time. It entails, thusly, a balance of forces which can accelerate, decelerate, or make things change direction or shape, resulting in the creation of new dynamics and articulations.

Above all, in this set of activities in eight institutions which bring together teaching and artistic and cultural production, this was about discussing the whys due to which some audiences are systematically left out. What we do, collectively and individually, with these discussions and reflections will be entirely our own responsibility.

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PART 1

Reflections

1.1

Kant in Quatar

Ana Teixeira Pinto

In October 2012 I accepted an invitation from the Qatari Museum Authority to visit the Qatari capital, Doha. Our press-trip itinerary started with a walk around the pier, which culminates in Richard Serra's '7'. '7' is a colossal sculpture made of seven massive steel plates arranged in a Heptagonal shape, and the greatest public art commission ever made by the Qatari Museum Authority. The sculpture was installed at the tip of the man-made pier adjacent to the Museum of Islamic Art, built by star architect I. M. Pei.

As we approached the towering colossus, a journalist walking by my side confided:

"I was here last year while they were building it, you should have seen the Indian workers, those poor folk, toiling under the blazing sun."

As I looked into her eyes, she became apologetic.

"I know it's an amazing piece of art-work, but I am only human..." she muttered.

Her expression betrayed genuine concern, yet she could not bring herself to disavow the sculpture. While circling around the sculpture's metal edifice, I came face to face with another journalist who whispered, "After the HRW (Human Rights Watch) released a report condemning their labor policies, the Qatari authorities issued a ban on outdoor work when the temperature rises above 50 degrees Celsius. But ever since it's never *officially* over 50 degrees Celsius!" After a brief silence, he shrugged and kept snapping pictures. For all their qualms about labor rights, there were two things that my fellow travelers did not seem to question: that Richard Serra's '7' is an art-work; and that art-work is a good, valuable, thing.

Their views are not an anomaly. Ethical qualms are hard to reconcile with what became known as the Western canon. The term ‘aesthetics’ —introduced into the philosophical lexicon during the eighteenth century— is predicated on a discontinuity; the aesthetic experience is in some way severed from sensory experience. From Kant onwards, and here I am mostly paraphrasing Jacques Rancière, detachment becomes the hallmark of the aesthetic. This entails a double negation: its object is neither an object of knowledge nor an object of desire.¹ It is this sleight of hand that allows one to think about an aesthetic value as a universal value. But by introducing the notion of disinterest, Kant also brought the concept of taste into opposition with the concept of morality. At the beginning of his *Critique of Judgement*, he illustrates his reasoning with the example of a palace, in which the aesthetic judgement isolates the form alone, disinterested in knowing whether a mass of the working poor had toiled under the harshest of conditions in order to build it.

1. See J. Rancière *Thinking between disciplines: an aesthetics of knowledge*, in *PARRHESIA* #1, 2006 pp. 1–12

The human toll, Kant says, must be ignored in order to aesthetically appreciate an artwork. Clearly this is not a descriptive discourse, it is a prescriptive one. The aesthetic, as David Lloyd argues, functions as a “regulative discourse of the human” on which not only the political but most importantly, “the racial, order of modernity rests.”²

The modern, liberal subject submits the objects he encounters to his aesthetic judgements, he never collapses into the object. But the neat division, which the aesthetic regime institutes between subject and object hides another, racial, division, so that the distinction between subject and object is in fact a distinction between subject and subject. The mark of the liberal subject is his detachment or disinterest, in brief, his autonomy. To become such a subject, as Lloyd sustains, is “the precondition for participation in the public sphere.” Conversely the inability to exert an autonomous,

2. David Lloyd, *Under Representation: The Racial Regime of Aesthetics*, New York 2018, p.3

disinterested, judgement becomes the criterion for inclusion into the category of subjecthood. Last but not least, because the aesthetic judgement is not predicated on subjective, personal, taste, it can stake a claim to ‘reason’ and by extension, universality. The aesthetic judgement sets in motion a distribution of predicates that distinguish the Universal, rational, autonomous subject from the partial, non-autonomous or pathological one, unable to free himself from his particular drives, needs or desires. This is why Kant, the great enlightenment philosopher, was in favour of slavery: it is not wrong to enslave those who are incapable of autonomy; they are, as if it were, already unfree, already living in a condition of enslavement to their animal nature, subjected to need, fear, or superstition. Insofar as the racialized subject is defined by this state of necessity, to quote Lloyd, the aesthetic regime remains “not contingently but immanently a racial schema.”³

3. David Lloyd, *Under Representation: The Racial Regime of Aesthetics*, New York 2018, p.

Individual objects, once collected and assembled inside museums, bring into being a plethora of rather more abstract entities: art, history and prehistory, national heritage, ethnography. Curatorial approaches, however diverse they may be, must conform to the institutional congruity of the museum form. And it is this congruity of form that regulates, and ultimately negates, cultural difference. In 1923, the writer André Malraux – who later became France’s Minister of Culture – travelled to Cambodia, a French protectorate, with his wife Clara Goldschmidt. Together with a friend, Louis Chevasson, the couple undertook an expedition to Angkor, the ancient capital of the Khmer empire. At the time, government sponsored archaeological expeditions were in the process of plundering Angkor Wat, the city’s largest religious complex, whose riches are now housed in the Guimet Museum, in Paris. Malraux headed to Banteay Srei, a less known temple complex, which had been rediscovered in 1914 in order to find artefacts he could resell. Upon his return, he was arrested, accused of removing a

large-scale bas-relief from the temple, containing 12 devatas in total. Believing he had acted within the law, Malraux contested the charges. The statues, he felt, belonged not to French colonial authorities but to everyone, to ‘mankind’ as a whole.

In 1947 Malraux began to assemble what he came to call his *Musée Imaginaire*, a ‘museum without walls’ recording ‘the common heritage of all mankind.’⁴ He started this project roughly at the time the biennial model begun its expansionary trajectory —the São Paulo biennial was founded in 1951, the first documenta was held in 1955, the same year as the Biennale de la Méditerranée in Alexandria, Egypt, or the *Ljubljana Biennial* of Graphic Arts— as well as concomitantly to the mid 1950s Duchamp revival, in which “the readymade would be interpreted as revealing art’s conceptual nature and the institutional underpinnings of its alleged autonomy.” Perhaps most importantly, Malraux focus on assembling, and reassembling images of artworks prefigured later tendencies to locate the creative gesture in the curatorial process, rather than in the process of production. If his story makes us feel uneasy it is because it points to the extent semiotic universalism is imbricated with colonial plunder —material or otherwise— and to the question of ownership —transcendental or otherwise. Predicated on the infinity of potential inclusion, the concept of the *Musée Imaginaire* somehow embodies all the opposing pulls and contradictions that would come to constitute the global artworld. Conceptualism in particular, as Zutherland argues, has always had “a special relationship to the question of the global,” and an appetite for its planetary, universal, dimension, through which culture emerges as —at once—a priceless and universal good, and one subject to proprietary laws. —namely “the play of antinomies between abstractly boundless extension on the one hand,

4. See “*Le Musée imaginaire*” by André Malraux first published by Albert Skira, 1947

and reductive concretization on the other.”

In its strict meaning, as Peter Bürger notes, the term artistic autonomy is an ideological category that blends together an element of truth (the praxis of art is not totally assimilated to social praxis) with an element of untruth (the hypostatization of this fact, the result of an historical process, is misrecognised as the ‘essence’ of art). The category ‘art’ in Western modernity could be thus construed as designating the alienation of artistic labor from other forms of labor.⁵ While labour as an alienation of experience is opposed to art as a totalization of experience, the artwork, first defetishized, is refetishized as exemplary product. This appeal to a value beyond monetary value is that which guarantees the artworks market value, at once a priceless and pricey commodity. In this conception, to quote Nicole Demby “the formal progression of Western art is both teleological and divorced from history, the product of Oedipal overcoming or individual psychological reaction or the whim of genius.” Contemporary art, lionized as an unassailable realm of cultural expression, functions, by virtue of its manufactured ahistoricity, as a container for this concept of absolute freedom: “a realm of abstract representation in which new subjectivities can hypothetically be imagined,”⁶ allegedly able to break free from the constraints of capitalist hegemony, as a “domain of creativity and imagination in which we enjoy the freedom denied to us in the actual world of domination” which

5. Nicole Demby, “Art, Value, and the Freedom Fetish,” <https://www.mute.org/editorial/articles/art-value-and-freedom-fetish-0>.

6. Ibid.

7. David Lloyd, *Under Representation: The Racial Regime of Aesthetics*, New York 2018, p. 10, 77

through its compensatory qualities, naturalises forms of life lived under the rule of property.⁷

The question of autonomy would later come to intersect with the question of abstraction. In his now-canonical text for *Partisan Review* “Avant-Garde and Kitsch,” (1939)

Clement Greenberg’s aligned social realism, and by extension the notion of social function, with formulaic repetition and debased automatism. Arguing against the US congress,⁸ Alfred Barr’s (MoMA’s first director) would expand Greenberg’s argument in a 1952 piece penned for the *New York Times Magazine*, entitled “Is Modern Art Communistic?” In his essay, Barr argues that abstraction is a form of anti-totalitarianism, a bulwark against illiberal tendencies, paving the way for the notion of artistic autonomy to become strategically recast as an expression of individual freedom in perfect alignment with the free market. The muralist Diego Rivera famously criticized the paintings of Rufino Tamayo as “selling silence.” Once the “revolutionary power of abstraction” is cut off

8. The US congress was not fond of modern art, describing it as a foreign (communist) plot against American fine art. See for instance, a speech delivered by the Michigan Republican congressman George Donderos, on August 16, 1949 titled, “Modern Art Shackled To Communism.”

from revolutionary yearning, in the social and economic sense, art loses any political traction, its content becoming (high-brow) taste, now pitted against the low-brow masses.

9. I am here paraphrasing curator David Teh’s “Misfits: Pages from a Loose-leaf Modernity” (HKW: 2017)

As Marina Vishmidt noted, “the artwork may ‘world’, but the artworld also works”— the real friction or tension is found between a truly global institutional network (composed of art centres, galleries, biennials, art fairs and festivals), which presides over the circulation of artworks, and the uneven access to a validation system, which remains heavily western-centric.⁹ In 1994, Gerardo Mosquera described this global art system as a radial schema whose vectors run from centre to periphery

10. In 1994 Gerardo Mosquera diagnosed this problem in “Some Problems in Transnational Curating” commenting that “the Third-World lacks the capacity to legitimate artistically.”

—separating the ‘curating west’ from the ‘curated rest’,¹⁰
 — rather than a grid of equally connected nodal points. The Third-Word, Mosquera argued, “lacks the capacity to legitimate artistically:” the different “peripheries” remain wholly dependent on the “centres” for inclusion and connectivity. Rather than the avant-gardist dissolution of art into life, this boundless expansion of the space of art opened the doors to the objective subsumption of art institutions and practices by the forces of global investment in the creative industries and ‘total design,’ ultimately conflating the vectors of Silicon-Valley-commodity-space with the spatial strategy of the United States Empire

11. Andrew Stefan Weiner, ‘The Art of the Possible: With and Against documenta 14’, *The Biennial Foundation*, 14 August 2017, available at <http://www.biennialfoundation.org/2017/08/art-possible-documenta-14/>

The ongoing boundary disputes, and attendant panic, rocking the art world, evacuate the notion of artistic autonomy. But heteronomy is, to quote Andrew Wiener, extremely “difficult to negotiate because it radically impacts not just the form and content of art, but its definition, indeed its very ontology”.¹¹

1.2

Eva Barois
de Caevel

The Offered Hand

On Mediation
and Power

When I was twenty or so (I was studying art history at university) I decided that I wanted to become a curator. My first experiences, the first exhibitions I curated with friends, required all the enthusiasm alleged to young people. We did almost everything by ourselves, from buying materials for the artists to producing the artworks at the local hardware store, transporting the artworks in the subway and buying food for the opening at the discount supermarket. I learnt a lot about the process of making an exhibition (it is not so different in big institutions, you just delegate these tasks), but what I remembered as something striking and important was our devotion to mediation (there were no other mediators than us, or sometimes than me), and how such involvement made us absolutely committed to inhabiting the exhibition and sharing it with all our heart. It was a physical reality and constraint: we had to watch over the spaces, so we had to be physically present, continuously, and to welcome people.

It was demanding, exhausting, most of the time annoying or weird (you repeat, you explain, you switch between languages, you speak with your hands, you search for your words, your feet hurt, your back hurts, the room is too cold, or too hot, you get verbally attacked by people, you get harassed by men, plagued by artists, harassed and plagued by male artists, people try to steal stuff), but a few years after, when I became assistant curator to curators who would just open *their* show and then leave for good, and then when it became what I did myself, I recalled with kindness these first experiences of mediation. It was not only fond memories of my teenage years, it was the stabbing feeling that something important had vanished and the intuition that it had to be *thought about*.

On several occasions, notably for the first show I curated in Dakar, mediation became the core of the exhibition project, and it was a fulfilling experience of what curating could mean; a feeling I would meet again later through lecturing, performing my texts, meeting my readers, or teaching. Since then, I have often mulled over the necessity of some more physically-based, more *embodied*, way of curating shows, with mediation processes grounded on physical experiences.

Of course, being a curator or curating could mean very different things, but it is not so easy not to be trapped in one — capitalist, abusive — way of doing it. Once I started to be considered a Curator, no longer an Emerging Curator, nor an Assistant Curator, or a Curator Assistant (along these labels come degrees of power, and power relationships are set), I was now in a position to use my power on people (after having sorely endured the power of others). This power is expected to enforce an established hierarchy in the art institution, that mirrors the stratification outside. Inside the art institution, the most powerless people are mediation teams and mediators (alongside interns, security officers, ticket sellers, and cleaners — but in the case of interns and mediators, contempt and abuse might be intensified by their closeness to *the important people*).

They were supposed to be *taught* by me, the curator, if I was nice enough to accept. They were often women (not necessarily young, despite of a common assumption) and most of the time underpaid. They were the fifth wheel, despite all the speeches about their importance. It did not have to be said, it was lived: they were not invited to the opening dinner, when the chief builder of the show was, everything was made to keep them *separated, transparent* (not to the audience of course but to the higher profiles in the hierarchy). They were deferent, shy, or full of anger about how

they were treated. They were surprised when you were nice to them. They engaged in passing strategies¹. They were class defectors stuck midway, bitter of being despised while they did an important job, or ecstatic to have reached the art temple and to be part of it, at any cost. They told me stories of their many fights. For B., who is 50, it is her struggle to obtain a tiny resting room with a heater in a huge contemporary art European Biennial located in an industrial site, deadly cold and huge — she was walking kilometers in it all day long, performing visits for groups of people, sometimes toddlers. For M., who is 30, it is her growing despair and disbelief: she wants to be a mediator, she chose the job, she loves the job, and she feels she is good at it, but why the hell does she have to be so despised in every institution she works in, and why do people always think she does it for lack of anything better and suggest she should *professionally evolve*? Obviously, there is a malaise. My intuition was that this malaise was coming from the promiscuity of the mediators with a hazardous material: the speeches produced by the curators, the *chief professionals*, that had to be taken for truth and essential. The mediators are the aptest to discover a fraud, but also to denounce it or to replace the speech of the professionals by something else, and eventually to break the fiction of the exhibition space, which make them important and threatening. They also embody a large part of the discourse of the institution on itself, and of the cultural policies of a nation, which makes them tamed (they have to pledge allegiance to the speech) and tamers (they proselytize). In one word, they make up a *difficult* body of workers for the institutions and the people who work in it as their *superiors* or employers.

1. *Passing*, the Wikipedia entry explains (August 11th 2020), is a word used in sociology to describe « the ability of a person to be regarded as a member of an identity group or category different from their own, which may include racial identity, ethnicity, caste, social class, sexual orientation, gender, religion, age and/ or disability status. Passing may result in privileges, rewards, or an increase in social acceptance, or be used to cope with stigma. Thus, passing may serve as a form of self-preservation or self-protection in instances where expressing one's true or prior identity may be dangerous. Historically and genealogically, the term passing has referred to mixed-race, or biracial Americans identifying as or being perceived as belonging to a different racial group. »

The history of cultural mediation, at least in France (the examples in this text are based on personal experiences in institutions in Europe, Africa, and North America, but France is where I was born and where I have lived the longest in my life) is usually summarized through a few milestones: first working-out of the idea during the French Revolution, the Front populaire turning it into an agenda, then the work of Jeanne Laurent, and the creation of the Avignon festival, the establishment of the « maisons de la culture », and the creation of the Centre Georges Pompidou, that became a model in France and Europe:

The law that establishes the Centre Georges Pompidou states that its purpose is to « favor social communication ». This purpose is based, on the one hand, on the acknowledgment of the fragmentation of the publics and, on the other hand, on the will to institute a communication between different social groups through culture considered as the ultimate means to institute social cohesion. [...] At the same time, the idea starts to prevail that the first purpose of cultural institutions must be to capture this public, whether or not it is willing to develop this education².

2. Bernadette Dufrêne and Michèle Gellereau, « La médiation culturelle. Enjeux professionnels et politiques », *Hermès*, vol. 38, no. 1, 2004, pp. 199-206 (translation and emphases mine).

This is very interesting. Of course there are other histories of cultural mediation, even counter-histories, feminist histories, and my experience, for instance, of working in an art center in Dakar proved me that, despite of the colonial scar and continuous predation, there were still fertile grounds to invent what mediation could be outside of the French tradition. This said, it is clearly the hegemonic model, globally, and it is frightening. What happened when culture became « the ultimate means to institute social cohesion »?

To help us consider that question, I would like to go back over the concept of *professional*, which I have been using without explanation so far. Curating, or being a curator, means being a professional, that is, to enjoy a mostly unfounded position of power. What is mediation now is a direct consequence of that position.

On the question of who is legitimate to teach, I have always liked Ivan Illich's thinking:

*In school, the child learns first that learning is the result of an official institution's process. He learns that, year after year, one gains value through the accumulation of intangible commodities. One learns that **what is worth learning, what will be useful to society later, is what is transmitted by someone who is « professional »**. One learns that teaching, if not by a professional teacher, is somehow less valuable. School inevitably introjects capitalism, the capitalization of knowledge. Because [the teacher] is the knowledge capitalist, who can prove with certificates what he accumulated internally, which is acknowledged a higher social value by society³.*

3. Ivan Illich, « Mythologie occidentale et critique du "capitalisme des biens non tangibles" », interview in French by Jean Marie Domenach, for the television programme « Un certain regard », broadcast on March 19th 1972 (INA archive: <https://madelen.ina.fr/programme/ivan-illich>; translation and emphases mine).

On the ideology of « professionalism », Thomas Frank recently updated Illich's critique in a way that connects directly to my point:

Another distinguishing mark of the professions is their social authority. Ivan Illich [...] once defined professionals by noting their "power to prescribe." [...] Teachers know what we must learn; architects know what our buildings must look like; economists know what the Federal Reserve's discount rate should be; art critics know what is in good taste and what is in bad. Although we are the subjects of all these diagnoses and prescriptions, the group to which professionals ultimately answer is not the public but their peers (and, of course, their clients). They listen mainly to one another. The professions are autonomous;

they are not required to heed voices from below their circle of expertise. In this way the professions build and maintain monopolies over their designated fields. [...] Professionalism is more than an occupational category; it is “a postindustrial ideology.” For many, it provides an entire framework for understanding our modern world. As a political ideology, professionalism carries enormous potential for mischief. For starters, it is obviously and inherently undemocratic, prioritising the views of experts over those of the public. That is tolerable to a certain degree—no one really objects to rules mandating that only trained pilots fly jetliners, for example. But what happens when an entire category of experts stops thinking of itself as “social trustees”? What happens when they abuse their monopoly power? What happens when they start looking mainly after their own interests, which is to say, start acting as a class⁴.

4. Thomas Frank, *Listen, Liberal. Or, What Ever Happened to the Party of the People?*, New York, Metropolitan Books, 2016, pp. 22-23 (emphasis added).

This is precisely the issue with most of the cultural mediation policies I have witnessed or taken part in so far. Of course, I met a lot of mediators who were willing to consider themselves « social trustees ». In some institutions, they can indeed focus on this, not without obstacles though. I could see that in several Fonds régionaux d'art contemporain (FRAC) in France. The need to satisfy the expectations of a very limited section of the audience, namely funders, tends to distract them from their commitment to the common good; it is unfortunately a growing issue. And even when they have the latitude to consider themselves social trustees, do they have the space to self-reflect on their status and on the policies they follow mostly out of habit?

A good way to start thinking (and self-reflecting) on mediation for real might be to question its seemingly unavoidable verticality: the transmission of professional speeches down to the audience through the mediators. And to consider other mediating gestures which are never seen as such. I could observe many workers: the tickets sellers who spend a long time chatting with people, the security officers who are supposed to watch the artworks or tell where is the entrance and where is the way out (especially in the times of Covid-19), and also reply to many questions. These are exhausting, low paid, despised jobs, but jobs, as Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez aptly reminded, that demand great skills⁵. These workers establish strategies to calm down and interest kids, they collect the recriminations of all the people assuming contemporary art is a fraud, or simply feeling ill at ease in an art center. Are these not the places, the bodies, and the interactions on which mediation should be built? Why does a security officer feel compelled to do so (not ignoring, helping, replying, kneeling down, cleaning up, offering a hand to the visitor who stumbles over a step)? Maybe only to make his/her work more bearable, maybe because he/she cares. He/She feels committed and nervous. His/her whole body is tense and engaged in a relation with the physical space and of the objects in it, and with the other bodies in that space. He or she experiences the *intense and continuous presence* of the works of art, and of their audience. How many curators, and even mediators, can say so?

5. As she tweeted on July, 30th 2019, and further detailed at several occasions.

Of course, behind this experience I shared lies the bigger issue of who owns the speech in art institutions, who owns legitimacy, who owns the *right* way to speak about art, and how the current form of mediation is mostly pervaded by capitalism, and patriarchy, but I would rather end this text with some sort of agenda. Mediation should be a way to tell anyone who is entering a place that claims a responsibility for what art is: « I want to show you something, I want to tell you something, no matter what it is, or I can also leave you alone with these objects if you prefer, because we can share that space, we can share these objects, and your life matters as much as mine and anyone's in this institution and outside, you matter to me, and I care for you. » Such agenda would not be meant to adorn the declaration of intent of a contemporary art center that leads its employees to burn-out, but to materialize in an actual acknowledgment of the value of the hand offered a thousand times to the visitor who stumbles over this little step the architect (another professional) deemed so necessary.

1.3

Perspectiva Artificialis

The Role of Mediation
to the Natural World
in Tomás Saraceno's
Artistic Practices

Federico
Rudari

When addressing mediation as the both artistic and research practice of occupying a middle, intermediary position between other two (Williams 1985, 72), the role played by cultural transfer is crucial. Cultural transfer comes into play when the object of discussion experiences a shift moving from a context of perception to another. This action, according to Espagne, presupposes the implication of a constitutive hermeneutic research towards new interpretative meanings, which are able to shape this transposition in a form as legitimate as the original one (Espagne 2013, 1-2). Cultural transfer consists in the range of operations of variation and reinterpretation, grounded on the re-examination of the structures of memory that characterise the context of reception. In this frame, Espagne highlights the relevance of those dynamics that influence our perception leading contemplation to interpretation, and the author attributes an essential role to the relativization of the notion of centre (between the original object and the subject of perception), as well as questioning those radical perspectives that discredit the value of different contexts of access and sense-making to support a unique and widespread interpretation.

Moreover, Greenblatt advocates the idea that cultural transfer “has to take into account entanglements between the conceptual and the material and acknowledge that the anthropocentric notion of the human as the prime mover of objects [...] and creation of meaning is troubled by the agency of nonhuman life (animals, viruses, etc.), inorganic matter (particles, etc.), and the various idiosyncrasies of these objects themselves. On the other hand, the blurring of boundaries between the material and conceptual opens up space for a (serious) gaming with analogies, comparisons and – beyond the mere conceptual – *relations*: transplantation, infection, evolution, etc.” (Greenblatt 2014, 6). In fact, the author claims that objects, environments and people are characterised by an intrinsic fluidity that affects the way their relations of perception with the external world

is constructed, both in the manner in which they perceive and are perceived as subjects and objects. For this reason, a constant action of adaptation, translation, alteration and even selection is required to cross “borders” of analysis. The displacement of these mediated forms of experience is contextual, cultural, and linguistic, and it does not only concern different perceptions in human semantic domains, but also non-human fields of knowledge and expression. In other words, the role of mediation is also crucial when, through the specific tools of cultural discourse, we unfold and discuss objects of analysis which belong to the outer, natural world.

The constitution and implementation of operative schemes able to effectively represent and mediate natural realities is more and more common in artistic and research practices. In particular, facing the ecological and environmental challenges that characterise contemporary times, natural phenomena and their codes of expression and manifestation need to be tackled and understood as urgently as ever. In fact, bringing light to the current issues related to the changes our coexistence with the outside world has led has always been a science-based prerogative in terms of narrative and methodologies. However, the evolution of techniques of expression in art and art-based research in recent times has been allowing to push the boundaries of natural representation. Not only these forms of depiction consent to avoid the juxtaposition of science-based laws with their object of study, conceived according to the human comprehension of external processes and phenomena, but also, not aiming to justify specific causal relations pertaining to the portrayed objects of analysis, they are effective in interpreting the natural world making the aesthetic experience of it accessible to a broader audience.

In this frame, the work of the Argentinian artist and architect Tomás Saraceno and his studio is moving in this direction, developing original and innovative techniques to depict specific traits of the biosphere. His practice, bridging together art-based research with life science, biology and social sciences, suggests new ways of inhabiting the environment adopting a holistic perspective in which he positions the human element in dialogue with its surroundings. Central in his work, the idea of the Anthropocene, defined as the geological era during which the human influence on the ecological system of which we are part, the Earth, started being significantly impactful on the climatic and environmental balance of the planet, is tackled by Saraceno's work as a starting point upon which he constructs a mediated dialogue with the natural world as a response to human action.

In 2019, Saraceno presented at 58th International Art Exhibition at La Biennale di Venezia, *May You Live In Interesting Times*, a contribution to his broader community project *Arachnophilia Society*, in the context of which the artist aims to engage with other species in order to develop a dialogue of coexistence. These interactive installations, inspired by organisational structures comparing spider colonies and gravitational forces and waves, bridge together a huge variety of disciplines (architecture, sociology, astrophysics, natural sciences, art and philosophy) to explore a conversation oriented to new practices of inhabiting the world in times of environmental upheaval. Other species and systems of group organisation are taken by Saraceno as inspiration to construct an alternative to a threatened conviviality. Curated by Ralph Rugoff, the *Spider/Web Pavilion* transcends the representation of the human dimension of experience delivering to its audience an unusually structured collaboration which takes the shape of entangling collectively built constellations. The pavilion presents itself as a mediated guide which “engages with different forms of knowledge and echoes spider divination methods practiced

in different parts of the world” (Studio Tomás Saraceno 2019), among which the capacity to forecast extraordinary meteorological events such as tsunamis through the interaction with gravitational waves. Saraceno addresses spiders on two levels of analysis. On the one hand, he deals with the ecological crisis we are currently facing, tackling the acceleration of arachnids disappearance due to global warming, soil exploitation and pesticides misuse, giving a human-based perspective on our relation with nature and the impact caused by the global capitalist economy. On the other hand, the work aims to balance the destructive action interacting with alternative forms of knowledge. The pavilion aspires to mediate between deeply interconnected words towards joint solution. As a synanthropic species, namely those that have been forced to adapt to the specificities of human-dominated ecologies, spiders “blur the boundaries between inside and outside, between nature and culture and between what is alive and what is not” (Ibid.). Thus, “the *Spider/Web Pavilions* are an invitation to attune to our sympoietic futures, the interconnectedness of all things, both living and nonliving” (Ibid.). As suggested by the artist, the main idea behind this project is precisely to mediate the condition of ‘reciprocal blindness’ between humans and spiders. The embodied cognition experienced throughout the exhibition and its complex architectural constructions aim to amplify the impact of new perspectives on building coexistence which, grounded on alternative practises of non-verbal communication, enlarges the need for co-responding to currently faced issues. The space becomes the temporary home for reciprocal attention and dialogue, as a multiplicity of threads constructing a new participated conviviality in the Lagoon of Venice, “[a]s a sensitive interface constantly modified by different socialities, [...] as a space of care and attention, [...] a participatory storytelling against extraction and extinction” (Ibid.).

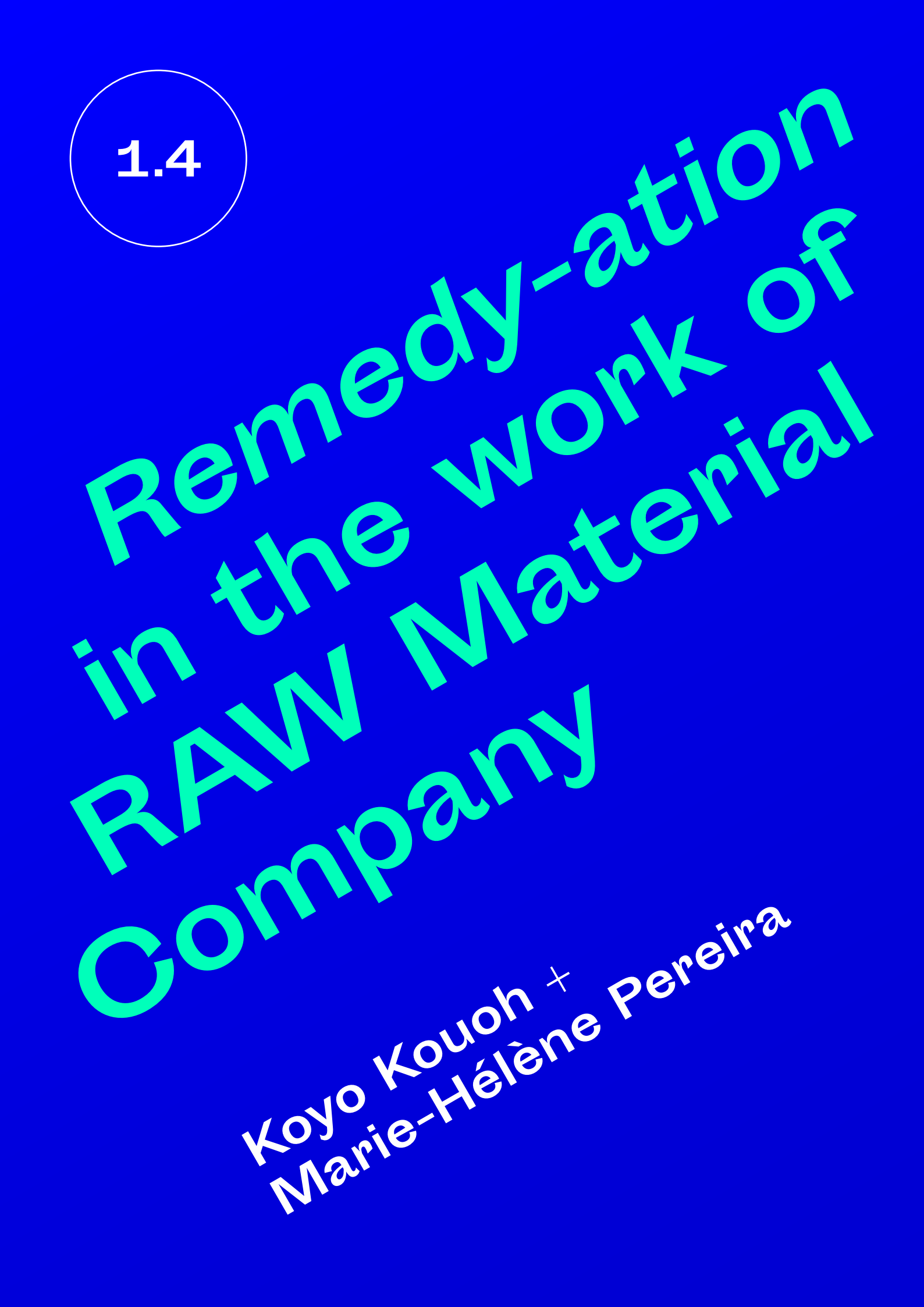
The dialogical experience continues in Florence, where in February 2020 the exhibition *Aria*, curated by Arturo Galansino, was inaugurated. This newly proposed universe is reconstructed throughout the rooms and external spaces of Palazzo Strozzi, emphasising the interconnection and dependence of our existence on Earth with subtle and often imperceptible elements, such as spiders, plants and dust particles. The sensorially immersive experience is metaphorically constructed around the dialogical idea of inhabiting the world, interacting with the historical beauty of the Renaissance features of the hosting venue causing “a shift from the idea of ‘man at the centre of the world’ to the concept of ‘man as part a universe’ in which a new harmony can be sought” (Palazzo Strozzi 2020). The artist guides the spectator into an immersive experience to understand a new model of coexistence that can be learned from the natural world: a different and revolutionary epoch is possible, an epoch which Saraceno addresses as Aerocene, erected on complementary sensitivities that lead to a new participated ecological practice. The practices of nets construction, as previously explored in the *Spider/Web Pavilion* are implemented as symbols of the relationship of interconnected ecology in a shared world. The space creates a suspended dimension of geometrical possibilities in which the dialogue between mediated behavioural systems which bridges coexistent elements into both solidly structured and volatile clouds. Here, “[i]rregular structures reminiscent of Weaire-Phelan arrangements of aggregating foam and soap bubbles whose remarkable shapes act as an invitation to engage from diverse bearings, as mirrored planes trace the sun’s rays in a play of light and shadow” (Studio Tomás Saraceno 2020).

The work of Tomás Saraceno presents the intent to develop and disseminate a new ecology of practise. However, despite employing science and engineering-based technique in the construction of this dialogue, he does not position the human element, with its discoveries and beliefs, as the central spindle to overcome the ongoing ecological crisis. The relation with nature and the understanding of reciprocity as opposed to individuality highlight the cruciality of sharing the environment instead of aiming to control it. The formation of a new equilibrium depends on the capacity of reading and following other forms of behaviour that are coded in the environment that surrounds us. Both *Aria* and *Spider/Web Pavilion* are the mediated experience of this possibility.

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1.4



Remediation in the work of RAW Material Company

Koyo Kouoh +
Marie-Hélène Pereira

I have always been interested in art as a thinking system as opposed to art as a display system. What types of knowledge can we share, and how?

Koyo Kouoh

Marie-Hélène Pereira: A center for art, knowledge and society, RAW Material Company was established at the heart of the Senegalese capital, Dakar, a city long regarded as having an influential scene in the context of African contemporary art. It is an initiative that revolves around curatorial practice, art education, residency programmes, knowledge production, archiving of artistic theory, and art criticism. The space works towards the growth of artistic practice and the appreciation of intellectual creativity in Africa.

Through a transdisciplinary programme that draws on literature, film, architecture, politics, fashion, gastronomy and the diaspora, today RAW is an indispensable space where different audiences come together. One of the issues underpinning our curatorial practice is the inquiry into the best forms of translation for a just mediation between our ecosystem's different actors. Our major concern lies in building solid bridges capable of facilitating the meeting of ideas and people who participate in the forging of a strong and informed civil society.

The establishment of RAW within the context of Senegal and Dakar is also based on a significant heritage which forms the genesis of contemporary artistic practice in the country, beginning with the period of independence, with the first President-poet Léopold Sédar Senghor, up to the avant-garde practices of artist Issa Samb and the Laboratoire Agit'art.

In September 2018, RAW held its third biennial symposium: *Condition Report on Art History in Africa*, in order to highlight forms of mediation operating significant leverage in the face of the absence of writing and archiving of artistic practice.

→ Dulcie, could you talk a little about some of the key moments in the history of modern and contemporary art of Senegal and the different forms of mediation that led to the establishment of such a dynamic scene?

Dulcie Abrahams Altass: You are right to point out the role played by President Léopold Sédar Senghor. Beginning as soon as the country's independence, the Senghorian government devoted more than 25% of its budget to education, training and culture. These are impressive though unsurprising amounts, if we bear in mind that the Senghorian political vision was essentially based on the construction of a strong culture – of *négritude*.¹ The hefty infrastructure that Senghor had thus put in place was supposed to develop a significant cultural class who could be influential within Senegal, but also - and significantly - at an international level, where these artists who were “ambassadors of their country” were to help Senegal find its rightful place among the great historical and modern “civilizations”.²

1. *Négritude* refers to a loose but influential ideological and cultural impetus towards the celebration of black cultures that emerged in the early 20th century amongst young intellectuals, activists and artists hailing predominantly from Francophone Africa, the Antilles and the African diaspora,

2. L. S. Senghor “Introduction” to *L'Anthologie des Arts Plastiques Contemporains au Sénégal*, edited by F. Axt and E. H. M. B. Sy, 1989, p.18

Despite the magnitude of these efforts, as early as the 1970s there was a noticeable blossoming of cultural initiatives that went against them, fostered in particular by a young generation who was sceptical of the Senghorian government and wary of the way in which culture seemed to serve above all as a weapon of control on behalf of an increasingly authoritarian state.

Created in 1974, the Laboratoire Agit'Art was the result of a shared desire among a multidisciplinary group to place art at the centre of the daily life of the Senegalese people and to draw on the generative power of artistic practice to *agitate* society. This collective – with founding members Issa Samb, El Hadji Sy, Djibril Diop Mambety and Youssoupha Dione, among others – represented a counterpoint to the State's cultural policy, and is a project that continues to this day, through the new generation of *Laborantins*.

Around the same period, in a room in the working-class neighbourhood of the Médina, a group of young people set up the Front Culturel Sénégalais [Senegalese Cultural Front], moved by a desire to use culture to defend the rights of the Senegalese people against the perceived elitism and neo-colonialism of Senghor's regime, and similarly aimed at all oppressed peoples throughout the world. The FCS placed particular emphasis on promoting local languages and in 1978 it declared that "The genius of a people is expressed through the language of the people".³ Underground newspapers, street theatre, music competitions – these are some examples of the means deployed by the FCS during the 1970s and 1980s.

3. Déclaration du Front Culturel Sénégalais à propos des langues nationales, February 1978

The 1980s witnessed a change in the political regime in Senegal, with the ascent to power of President Abdou Diouf and his acquiescence to the demands of the structural adjustment programmes. Public services in the country found themselves deprived of funding, and it was thus up to the populations to take charge of the well-being of their shared life. With its ranks strengthened by a subsequent rural exodus, the Dakar youth regrouped around the Set Setal movement (meaning "clean and make clean," in Wolof). The movement began not only to clean up neighbourhoods but also to embellish them, painting murals of local heroes on the walls of the city.

This DIY attitude continued into the 1990s and 2000s, with the birth of several independent initiatives, in particular Dak'Art Biennale's OFF, which offers an alternative platform to the official programme and which demonstrates the extent to which the inhabitants of Dakar take ownership of this event. In 2018, the OFF comprised over 300 exhibitions in every district and suburb of Dakar.

→ Korka, we can glean from these examples a clear link between artistic practice and social and political mobilization. Can you expand on how Senegalese political, civic and environmental activism interacts with culture today, and the lessons to be learnt regarding cultural mediation?

Tabara Korka Ndiaye: Senegal is a country often described as stable. It has experienced democratic handovers and relatively smooth transfers of power, except for the recent episode of 23 June 2011. In fact, following the end of his second term, then President Abdoulaye Wade – the father of the first party handover in 2000 – saw his political regime rejected by the people, following the frustration growing out of, among other grievances, the high cost of living, excesses in the wielding of power and untimely power outages. The proposed constitutional reform project entailed two major changes: the adoption of a “presidential ticket” which allowed the conditions for the transfer of the highest political office to a vice-president without resorting to elections, and the reduction to 25% of the votes cast in the first round of a presidential election as the minimum requirement necessary for victory.⁴ A strong popular mobilization took place from the moment of the announcement against what was perceived as one affront too many. An active civil society, a population on the alert and the birth of the *Y'en a marre* [We are fed up] citizen's movement have combined the efforts of what could be described as an alternative form of possible citizenship, one that is alert and proactive. The *Y'en a marre* movement was particularly impactful. Founded by rappers and journalists, it was the natural extension of a Senegalese hip-hop culture strongly infused with a particular definition

4. Séverine Awenengo Dalberto – De la rue aux urnes : la longue marche de la deuxième... – October 2012 <http://www.sciencespo.fr/ceri/>

of civic engagement. Dr Abdoulaye Niang described it as follows: “For those who are unaware of the history of Senegalese hip-hop, they should know that the notion of political engagement did not begin with the ‘Y’en a marre’ movement. Historical truth is necessary. Take, for example, the very first sounds of Positive Black Soul or PBS – these already expressed a political will. They stated ‘We belong neither to the PS nor to the PDS’; here there is already an attempt at a clear demarcation from professional politicians”⁵. The youth, previously described as the “unwholesome youth” by the second Senegalese President Abdou Diouf, demonstrated its desire for a break with the past management of public affairs. Since then, the Y’en a marre movement has continued to contribute to the earnestness of public debate with a multitude of awareness campaigns, notably promoting mass voter registration throughout the entire Senegalese territory.

5. “Track 4 : Citoyenneté et politique” in Wala Bok, 2015, Niang Abdoulaye, p. 31. “PS” refers to the Parti Socialiste and “PDS” the Parti Démocratique Sénégalais, the dominant political parties of the era.

These civil actions have had a significant impact on local cultural organizations. As an example, RAW Material Company dedicated an exhibition to this turning point in Senegalese political life, entitled *Chronicle of a Revolt: photographs of a season of protest* (2012). The exhibition traces a period of intense political and social activity that culminated in the peaceful and democratic outcome of the recent presidential elections in Senegal. Twenty photographers, most of them Senegalese, presented their accounts of this process of civic awakening. They told the story of Senegal’s commitment to democracy and social dialogue, associated with a strong desire for a change in leadership and respect for constitutional law.⁶ This exhibition was undoubtedly one of

the first cultural and artistic responses in Senegal. Displayed inside RAW and on its exterior walls, the photos engaged in a dialogue with the public without the need for a certain type of mediation which might involve a pedagogy of looking. The ability, awareness and maturity of the people to see themselves, and to remember the strongest moments of this civil event, without imposing the intervention of a third party, were placed at the centre of the curatorial process. Furthermore, this quality of citizenship will continue to embrace common struggles and to surprise us.

6. Préface –
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saison de protestation,
Koyo Kouoh, Camille
Ostermann, RAW
Material Company &
HKW, 2012

A strong environmental awareness is becoming increasingly visible in Senegal. Activists and organizations working for the protection of the environment have been highlighting the need for the principled and equitable management of natural resources in Senegal, especially given the recent discovery of significant oil and gas reserves in a few areas of the country. Natural resources receive enormous attention. Unfortunately, this occurs in ways that are extremely inequitable. Senegal is one of the five producers of phosphates in Africa. This significant production is however accompanied by considerable environmental damage that debilitates communities. In 2018, as part of its residency program, RAW Material Company welcomed Danish artist Christian Danielewitz, who conducted extensive research on mineral extraction and the transformation of natural resources in Senegal, particularly in the village of Gad Gomène, located near the open pit phosphate mines of Taiba in the region of Thiès, 70 km from the Senegalese capital. A year later, Danielewitz's research evolved into the exhibition *PO4 (Blackout)* at RAW Material Company.

Danielewitz demonstrated the irony and impact of phosphate mining in an installation that testifies to the devastation suffered in the village of Gad Gomène. A series of discursive programs and workshops with environmental activists hailing from different disciplines were developed around the exhibition. Environmental activism and issues related to resource extraction in Senegal were debated by academics, activists and community members from the village of Gad as well as the audience, who attended in large numbers.

Through the two examples mentioned above, we can see that the cultural mediation that we intend to offer is fundamentally protean. It is a matter of perpetually placing the subjects that we are interested in at the center, by attempting to accurately reflect the experiences that have shaped the research. It is also a question of making room for possible forms of endogenous knowledge.

→ Fatima, you have significant experience with cultural mediation in institutions which have an approach different to ours. Can you elaborate on cultural mediation in public institutions?

Fatima Bintou Rassoul SY: Cultural mediation is often seen as a means of disseminating knowledge and of rendering culture, art or works of art accessible to as many people as possible. Ideally, it should enable the creation of a link between a culture presumed to be licit, and which is widely recognised as being the norm, and people who are supposedly impervious to it. The mediator is then viewed as a guide of sorts, whose mission can be summarised as making these discourses intelligible. However, this

approach leaves little room for the cultural beings that we actually are and for the plurality of cultural models that we share. Moreover, mediation is seen here rather as a means of building bridges⁷ than as a means of teaching and/or educating.

7. See. p.5 – §1
– Serge Saada, *Le terrain d'exercice de la MÉDIATION enjeux ?*
coll. "Les essentiels",
publisher: "Agence
culturelle d'Alsace –
2016", p. 14 See link.

In the case of Senegal and in particular of the Museum of Black Civilisations,⁸ various platforms have been developed in order to be able to establish concealed discourses on the great areas of civilisations from the African continent. The main idea is to uncover these models and to break with the discourse that suggests that we were and remain passive actors in our own history. Consequently, in this context, the themes developed cover different fields, ranging from the sciences, to history, to religious rites and rituals, through the so-called African arts or contemporary creation. The relationship of cultural mediators to the public is therefore part of an approach which consists of constructing the topic with the viewers, starting from elements which very often reside in the collective imagination, but which are collectively perceived as unsanctioned knowledge. This approach promotes the presence, within these spaces, of people who have received very diverse forms of education: traditional, religious, scholastic, oral, military, rural, etc., and helps to redefine those forms of knowledge on which the balance of our societies is based.

8. Thursday,
December 6,
2018 - Inauguration
of the Museum of
Black Civilizations
with the exhibition:
*"African Civilizations:
Continuous Creation
of Humanity"* Dakar,
December 2018.

It is within a similar, but somewhat different perspective that a space like RAW Material Company has come to life. While mediation is seen as a tool within the museographic apparatus, at RAW mediation becomes an end in itself. This space has been conceived as a place of multiple mediations on art, knowledge and society. The work we develop pushes us to question the models on which our societies were built and to pay particular attention to marginalized discourses in order to offer everyone a space for unfettered reflection. Therefore, our programmes are designed to respond to the plurality of subjects that agitate public debate, by bringing in identities from different spheres, whether or not they are recognised by mainstream institutions. This approach allows us to de-centre our subject, and to come across corpora of a certain density and to promote an intermediation of knowledge and know-how between people with common sensitivities, despite the fact that they sometimes originate from differing contexts and socio-cultural environments. Here, mediation acts as a catalyst which, while taking nothing away from the plurality of our identities and references, is able to render the sum of our experiences possible. According to Serge Saada:

Cultural mediation can only be meaningful if one recognizes the culture of the other as being imbued with its origins, its life path, its habits, its leisure activities, and as long as we do not thrive for the other to be like us.⁹

9. Serge Saada, *Et si on partageait la culture ? Essai sur la médiation culturelle et le potentiel du spectateur*, Editions de l'Attribut, coll. "La culture en question", 2011, p. 154

To some extent, this is what RAW works to achieve on a daily basis, with the help and support of a growing family.

→ Marie-Hélène, could we perhaps conclude by putting into perspective the role played by RAW in collaborative translocal projects, where very often we appear as the mediators of the context from which we originate?

Marie-Hélène Pereira: In the same vein, one of the forms of mediation that we advocate for at RAW is that of the *right to opacity* as suggested by Édouard Glissant. Glissant has stated on this subject:

*I claim for everyone the **right to opacity**, which is not the same as closing oneself off. It is a means of reacting against all the ways of reducing us to the false clarity of universal models. I do not have to ‘understand’ anyone, individual, community, people – i.e. to ‘take them with me’ at the cost of smothering them, of losing them in a boring totality that I would be in charge of – in order to agree to live with them, to build with them, to take risks with them. ... Let the right to opacity, whereby Diversity will best be preserved and acceptance strengthened, be a lamp watching over our poetics.¹⁰*

10. Édouard Glissant, *Treatise on the Whole-World*, translated by Celia Britton, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020, pp. 16-17

The question of *audiences* becomes important in this regard, since RAW puts considerable effort into conceptualizing and coordinating its programmes, knowing that its primary objective is neither to describe artistic creation nor to make it comprehensible to the general public. Rather, it is the constant need to facilitate encounters between different cognitive entities that can mutually nourish each other. Conceived as a laboratory for the production of ideas and collective reflection, the space itself refuses to perpetuate

the hierarchical impetus observed in the *establishment* and devotes itself to a series of experiments that function around values such as hospitality, care and the relationship of trust necessary to keep moving together with our audiences.

Conscious mediation also leads us to challenge the absolute truths that leave no room for criticism. There is no obligation to confine ourselves to convergent discourses, but instead to allow room for disagreement and contestation within a constructive impetus, with a common goal of understanding the different perspectives we face.

To come back to the question of RAW's translocal collaborations, one of the most recent examples is that of the fourth edition of the Condition Report Symposium, entitled *Stepping out of Line: Art Collectives and Translocal Parallelism*, held in collaboration with the Dhaka Art Summit as part of its fifth edition *Seismic Movements*, which took place in February 2020 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. RAW's proposal was to reflect on notions of collectivity and translocal solidarity, taking into account the example of art collectives in existence or having existed in Africa and Asia in particular. With this proposal, RAW set itself up as a mirror in order to share different experiences linked to these themes from a local perspective (here, we are thinking of the African continent as a context), and also, and above all, constituted itself a host of different, geographically distant actors, to facilitate their meetings and exchanges on urgent issues directly related to their practices.

The experience accumulated by RAW and its team members over the past 12 years has shown that education remains at the heart of its practice and that it nurtures curiosity as well as the constant search for knowledge which is manifested in its programming, a search for collaborative construction.

This being said, mediation, namely cultural mediation at RAW Material Company, is in perpetual construction, with a solid grounding in the respect of the right to opacity and the break from hierarchical and unilateral systems borne out of the heritage handed down from our different colonial histories.

1.5

Ambiguity and Liberalisms

Artistic and Institutional Practices as a Sphere of Cultural Influence

Nav Haq

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‘The resulting syndrome I have proposed to call “intolerance of ambiguity.” A rigid cognitive superstructure in which everything opaque and complex is avoided as much as possible is super-imposed upon the conflict-ridden emotional understructure. In effect, this merely duplicates slavery to authority rather than remedying it. Now there is not only slavery to the authority of the other person; there is also slavery to the authority of the stimulus. In other words, the attitude towards a perceptual stimulus or a cognitive task mirrors the attitude towards authority.’¹

‘The subtle but profound distortion of reality in the course of the elimination of ambiguities is in the last analysis precipitated by the fact that stereotypical categorizations can never do justice to all the possible aspects of reality. So long as a culture provides socially accepted outlets for suppressed impulses, smooth functioning and fair adjustment can be achieved within the given framework.’²

– Else Frenkel-Brunswik

1. Else Frenkel-Brunswik, in sub-section: *Patterns of Perception and Thought; Intolerance and Ambiguity*, from the essay ‘Environmental Controls and the Impoverishment of Thought’, first published in *Totalitarianism*, ed. C. J. Friedrich. Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1954, pp. 171-202. Reprinted in *Psychological Issues* Volume VIII/ Number 3, Monograph 32: ‘Else Frenkel-Brunswik: Selected Papers’, eds. Nanette Heiman and Joan Grant, International Universities Press, inc, New York, 1974, p. 275.

2. Else Frenkel-Brunswik, *ibid.*, p. 276

We start from the relative failure of identity politics. The historical movement of identity politics generally associated with the 1980s in regions of the Western World, together with its recent, more internationalized resurgence in the socially-liberal mainstream, could be considered as a variety of institutional critique, with its motivations to address power, but also with its pitfalls and recuperations. The desire to create social awareness and provide space, voice, and opportunities to those groups subjected to processes of minoritization has on the one hand pushed for wider participation and recognition. Yet identity politics has come to be considered as dogmatic, to the degree that the pushback has also been forceful, even providing legitimacy and traction for far-right populists. Its emphasis on assertion does not always lead to lasting influence, and is often seen by its most vociferous opponents as ideological bursts of liberal groupthink or even as a kind of false consciousness. In the artistic sphere, identity politics has led to a push for equality of representation. But along with it, have come representational borders, demanding that cultural differences never be encroached, misplaced, or even challenged.³

With such emphasis on constituencies of biography and their exclusive relation to artistic content, it is easy to see it as having led to a pluralization of identity monocultures. We might even refer to this as the ‘Balkanization of representation’. It is the illiberal side of identity liberalism, hardening its intolerance even of other liberalisms. Identity politics finds itself in a quandary of politically correct lexicology, administered relativism, and the policing of creative parameters. Such unambiguous politics of identity, almost Warholian in its formal and verbal characteristics of surface representation and replication, offers little oxygen to the rights and necessities to explore otherness and broaden our subjectivity. In the worst cases, identity politics adopts the rigid stimulus-response relations of propaganda, projecting myths

3. Though centred on the American context, Mark Lilla makes a convincing case on the failure of identity politics, arguing for a post-identity liberalism: ‘Such people are not actually reacting against the reality of our diverse America (they tend, after all, to live in homogeneous areas of the country). But they are reacting against the omnipresent rhetoric of identity, which is what they mean by “political correctness”. Liberals should bear in mind that the first identity movement in American politics was the Ku Klux Klan, which still exists. Those who play the identity game should be prepared to lose it.’ Mark Lilla, ‘The End of Identity Liberalism’, *New York Times*, 20 November 2016, Section SR, Page 1 of the New York edition.

of authenticity. It should be obvious that people are more than their representation, and that representation is also *only* representation, and not in itself the same as equality.

Tolerance or intolerance of perceived differences, whether in terms of the established identity constituencies of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality, but also differences in ideological partiality, religion, or socio-economic conditions and even creative outlook, need to find new spaces of negotiation. The scales of tolerance and intolerance in society always exist, being characteristic of the human psyche, and can fluctuate depending on the direction societies and their communities move in. However, there are moments when societies are influenced by competing ideological forces to the point of polarization, resulting in the collective hardening of tolerances and intolerances. Such crystallization of mass psychology, where a culture seeking to identify levels of conformity to one's communitarian self-image—leading to such homogenous expression of intolerance—can be identified as an intolerant form of monoculture. Perhaps the most recent manifestations of *Kulturkampf* or 'culture wars' in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries contest this spectrum of tolerance and intolerance. There are similarly many examples of when the artistic field can become a site of contention. Broadly seen as socially liberal, art is often accused of elitism, ideological superiority, and provocation. We know art finds itself negotiating issues of freedom of expression or censorship when it reaches borders of sensitivity, but this is also the case when it is not understood or appreciated. Art, along with its institutions, can find itself subject to the influence of ideologies from neo-liberalism to populism, even when not directly led by them. It becomes a space of vulnerability in these circumstances. Yet as the expression of the human creative capacity, its existence is as significant as ever. For this reason, art and its institutional practices must take it upon themselves to find new reasoning and meaning for their role in society. From the artistic field, how might we start

to define and address monocultural intolerance? What new kind of liberalism do we want? And what kind of artistic and institutional practices can we equip ourselves with to form a positive sphere of influence on society?

Throughout the twentieth century we can identify several key thinkers who explored, in various ways, monoculture or cultural homogeneity. But perhaps some of the most relevant and thought-provoking among them are those who consider monoculture as it relates to the ambiguous. The work of pioneering psychoanalyst Else Frenkel-Brunswik is significant here, but we might also think of the ideas of philosophers Simone de Beauvoir⁴ and Julia Kristeva⁵. In her attempt to understand ethnocentricity as a characteristic of the authoritarian mind, Frenkel-Brunswik developed ideas described as ‘Ambiguity Tolerance-Intolerance’. First introduced in 1949, Ambiguity Tolerance-Intolerance is a psychological construct that measures the relationship individuals have with various ambiguous stimuli. In this personality-centred analysis, Frenkel-Brunswik makes a correlation between liberalisms of perception, cognition, and social outlook. In simple terms, intolerance of ambiguity may be defined as the tendency to interpret ambiguous situations as sources of threat. Whereas tolerance of ambiguity is the tendency to see ambiguous situations as desirable. ‘Ambiguity’ may for example be in terms of physical characteristics of another, such as a person of ambiguous race, ethnicity, gender, or sexuality, but it may also be in terms of ambiguous situations, images, or objects. In her study, which was primarily with children, she used this measure to test the hypothesis that children who are ethnically prejudiced also tend to reject ambiguity more so than their peers. Such

4. De Beauvoir describes the emancipatory potential that can come from the understanding that as individuals we are not guided by ideology, nor by deity, and rather that we are fundamentally ambiguous. ‘Let us try to assume our fundamental ambiguity. It is in the knowledge of the genuine conditions of our life that we must draw our strength to live and our reason for acting.’ In Simone de Beauvoir, *Pour une morale de l’ambiguïté (The Ethics of Ambiguity)*, éditions Gallimard, 1947. English translation by Bernard Frechtman, Philosophical Library/Open Road, 2011, p. 8.

5. Primarily in Julia Kristeva, *Pouvoirs de l’horreur. Essai sur l’abjection (Powers of Horror: an Essay on Abjection)*, Le Seuil, 1980, in which she describes a modern condition of feeling horror in encounters, both mental and physical, when experiencing ambiguous encounters at the breakdown between self and other.

individuals who tested as ambiguity-intolerant, were unable to genuinely understand the self and others effectively, instead seeking power and success and relying on rigid stereotypes to ensure order and safety.

There is science before, and there is science after. Like many renowned psychoanalysts, such as Sigmund Freud and Melanie Klein, Frenkel-Brunswik was from a Jewish family, who fled Austria to escape anti-Jewish persecution. We know of the race science, or ‘racial hygiene’ that informed Nazi ideology—the dark, eugenicist side of science, that sought to form an unambiguous image of cultural homogeneity, as a system to cleanse society of everyone else. In her research, Frenkel-Brunswik refers to psychologist Erich Rudolph Jaensch, permanent president of the German Psychological Association under the Third Reich, who developed an influential body of policies outlining Nazism as a biological movement. As well as outlining ideas of racial purity, along with considering blood mixture an ‘abnormal state of affairs’, Jaensch also describes the anti-German and German ways of looking. The ‘antitype’ to the German had inclinations towards the aesthetical, intellectual, and playful; whereas German perception would possess rigid, or unambiguous, stimulus-response relationships.⁶ Thus we see how Nazi pseudoscience saw the biological in relation to perception, and thus monoculturalism also as a mode of seeing. Frenkel-Brunswik settled in America, developing her earlier work in personality studies, and collaborating with contemporaries such as Theodor Adorno and Daniel Levinson.⁷ Psychoanalysis may be seen as something that survived the Holocaust. Thus, it comes as no surprise it is a discipline that has sought to understand the human mind, including its extremes.

6. Erich Rudolph Jaensch, *Der Gegentypus: psychologisch-anthropologische Grundlagen deutscher Kulturphilosophie, ausgehend von dem was wir überwinden wollen* (*The Antitype: Psychological-Anthropological Foundations of German Cultural Philosophy Based on What We Must Overcome*), Barth, Leipzig, 1938.

7. Such as their work together on the book *The Authoritarian Personality*, Harper & Brothers, 1950. Authors: Theodor W. Adorno, Else Frenkel-Brunswik, Daniel Levinson and Nevitt Sanford.

It is a great shame that Frenkel-Brunswik is not as widely known as some of her contemporaries, as her research offers valuable analyses for social and visual culture. The primary characteristics that describe intolerance of ambiguity, according to Frenkel-Brunswik's analysis, are as follows: the need for categorization and for certainty; an inability to allow good and bad traits to exist in the same person; acceptance of statements representing a black-white view of life; a preference for the familiar over the unfamiliar; a rejection of the unusual or different; resistance to fluctuating stimuli; early selection and dedication to one solution in an ambiguous situation; and premature resolution. The intolerant also have a tendency to be authoritarian, dogmatic, closed-minded, ethnically prejudiced, uncreative, anxious and aggressive, along with other characteristics perceived negatively that we can associate with the intolerant kind of monoculture. In contrast, characteristics of tolerance of ambiguity include: the embrace of multi-dimensionality and complexity, differentiation and creativity. Crucially, the tolerant also harbour less prejudice. However, it is important that Tolerance-Intolerance is seen as variable on a spectrum. We should also note that, although her research assumes that there is a correlation between dealing with ambiguity in perception, cognition, and encounters in everyday life—in other words, those who are open to the ambiguous or paradoxical stimuli being also more open to the Other, their own subjectivity and in society—it did not extend far into whether there is causality. But with its basis in perception, it offers an empirical basis for the artistic field to work with.

Research shows us that being too far on either end of the spectrum of ambiguity tolerance–intolerance can be detrimental to mental health. Frenkel-Brunswik stated: 'To be sure, in psychoanalysis is discovered primarily the field of emotion, through the phenomenon of ambivalence. Conscious love of extreme and exaggerated intensity is viewed with the same suspicion by the psychoanalyst as

are extreme feelings of hate.’⁸ This might even suggest something to us about the extreme love and extreme hate of minorities as they manifest in the typical dichotomy of liberal-left and conservative-right ideologies. Ultimately though, a monocultural society does not necessarily have to be prejudiced. Cultural homogeneity does not strictly imply ethnocentricity, one-dimensionality, or impoverishment either. A monoculture’s self-image can also be born from an emancipatory imperative, such as in the context of anti-colonial movements—we might see *Négritude* in Senegal as one key case study here—or communities impoverished under the negative neo-colonial effects of globalization. They can still be transformational or inclusive. But the characteristics of ambiguity intolerance can also be seen as representing those of the intolerant kind of monoculture: the kind of monoculture at risk of becoming ideological, and that is unwilling even to acknowledge let alone accept the presence of the natural ‘multiculture’ of individual subjectivities. We hear such words as ‘populism’, ‘ethnic nationalism’ or ‘identitarianism’ to describe such movements. But just as with the understanding of other cultural groups that are subject to prejudice and stereotyping, it is important that we do not look at the intolerant monoculture in terms of an essentialism. In fact, we might identify an institutional role for exploring this otherness.

8. Else Frenkel-Brunswik.
Op. cit., p. 88

Frenkel-Brunswick’s analysis of the correlation between perception, cognition, and social outlook in the understanding of personality also, significantly, included experiments in perceptual ambiguity, and visual stimuli. However, being confined to simple scientific motifs—for example Brunswick refers to an image of a cat, a dog, and then images of something in between a cat and a dog to represent the ambiguous—the tests had limited aesthetic range. For this reason, it can be meaningful to attempt to position her theories in relation to the experience of visual art and to art history. One of the most striking historical demonstrations of ideological monoculture in the cultural field was through

the infamous 1937 ‘Entartete Kunst’ (‘Degenerate Art’) exhibition staged in Nazi Germany. We can read this as an example of ambiguity intolerance in extremis, holding up the modernist avant-garde as an aberration. Avant-garde art was an aesthetic pollutant, Jews and other minorities were a racial pollutant, therefore to be eradicated. Nazism sought instead a decidedly unambiguous ethno-centric conception of culture inspired by Greco-Roman civilization. Appropriating and racializing such historical imaginary, along with eugenics and *Freikörperkultur* alike, was part of the course of defining the Aryan race. We see this reflected, for example, in the art exhibited in the editions of the ‘Große Deutsche Kunstausstellung’ (‘Great German Art Exhibition’) that took place eight times in Munich between 1937 and 1944. Nazi art can be seen as an example of how art looks under extreme monocultural ideology, when taken to its logical conclusion. Both ‘Entartete Kunst’ and ‘Große Deutsche Kunstausstellung’ were exhibitions as propaganda, displaying environmentally controlled correlations of art, culture, race, and pseudoscience.

The notion of ambiguity also provides us with a new lens for considering the work of artist Joseph Beuys in the period of the post-war avant-garde. It is well known that Beuys served in the Luftwaffe during the Second World War, and sustained several injuries. The experience of war was a central influence on his practice in the period of the rebuilding of Germany. Beuys’ work embraced aesthetic ambiguity, with material qualities that utilized such things as fat, felt, honey, blood, live animals (the coyote), and dead animals (the hare). The aesthetic ambiguity of his work might even be seen as a kind of ‘denazification’ of art necessary in Germany in the post-war period. Along with its aesthetics, his practice was intended to be more broadly emancipatory, bringing together intellectual discourse, actions, education, politics, and activism, seeking to broaden the potential of art and knowledge, and perspectives on culture, nature, and society. These different facets of Beuys’

work together sought to influence the tolerance of ambiguity, via its liberalisms of perception (via aesthetics), cognition (via its discursive qualities), and social outlook (via its societal propositions). We can see Beuys as a propaganda machine, producing many statements, manifestos and forums seeking to influence close followers and the broader public alike. Ironically, it must be said, Beuys was curiously authoritarian as a teacher or shaman figure, who also had potent mass-media sensibility. But to a high degree it was effective, by introducing aesthetics that stood in stark contrast to both Nazi art and Western modernist art, and also by adding a social and convivial dimension to art, climate activism, and appreciation of cultural and political diversity.

When Beuys would talk about ‘Der Dritte Weg’ (‘The Third Way’), or asking to ‘Show your wound’, he was seeking action for finding new dimensions and possibilities, and creative reconciliations in response to the ideological status quo. The Third Way was intended as an emancipatory mode of existence between the levels of the individual and the societal, encouraging people to discover their individual energy and potential, whilst at the same time being committed to their responsibility towards society. The ‘wound’, as Beuys described it, was a violent chasm that had been made between the ‘rationality’ of the West, and the ‘intuition’ of the East, that he felt had led to impoverishment, enslavement, and catastrophe. In Beuys’ eyes, a reconciliation between the two modes should be found. Such ideas also manifested in Beuys’ interest in Eurasia—an understanding of the continental landmass as a plurality of cultures that stood in opposition to the modernistic constructs of nation state and national boundaries. These ideas would manifest in experimental art, actions, and propaganda. Such propositions sought a multi-dimensional approach to life and the world, as a free-flowing transformational process. It is a call to tolerate and even embrace ambiguity. Beuys was often accused of being vague or non-concrete in his pronouncements, and there is clear justification for this, but

the sentiment of a multifaceted worldview is clear and his ideas have had a significant and lasting influence. We can see his roles in the German Green Party (Die Grünen) and the Free International University movement as two palpable, enduring examples of this.

The ambiguity of art has been a staple of theoretical discourse for several decades, and we might understand this ambiguity on several levels, from the ontological to the aesthetic. In terms of the ontological status of art, however we decide to look at what it is, art proves time and again to be baffling. The complex tangle of emotions and conundrums around the philosophical question *is it art?* always concludes that it really is its own category of experience.⁹ Just like its makers, contemporary art has its dialectical capabilities—simultaneously possessing different characteristics and statuses in any one moment. It can be utopian whilst negative, or shocking whilst banal. It can be both with and without relations to its creator or its cultural specificity. There are no limits to the feelings it can evoke. On the aesthetic plane, art can be ‘good’ whilst ‘bad’, open to judgments and readings on a vast scale of nuance. It can be both abstract—as in a non-figurative form of representation—and concrete. It can be simultaneously text and image. And ever since ‘non-art’ expanded the definition of art, it can be made of anything. Art is fundamentally ambiguous, and its ambiguity offers a negotiation of sorts. It prises open the rigid stimulus-response relationship, inviting us to experience and interpret these different characteristics and dimensions in their simultaneity. The question is: is one willing or fearful to undertake the challenge of exploring one’s liberalisms? And if one is fearful, then it raises the subsequent question of how this negotiation might be mediated.

9. I particularly enjoy the writings of Thierry de Duve on the question of what art is. See, for example his series of texts published in *Artforum* during 2013 and 2014. ‘Pardon My French’ (October 2013), ‘Don’t Shoot the Messenger’ (November 2013), ‘Why Was Modernism Born in France?’ (January 2014), ‘The Invention of Non-Art: A History’ (February 2014), and ‘The Invention of Non-Art: A Theory’ (March 2014) and ‘This is Art’: Anatomy of a Sentence (April 2014).

There can be an emancipatory potential to ambiguity. The avant-garde of the twentieth century, exemplified by the very public figure of Beuys, but also by many practitioners over the last century until the present moment, has brought a paradigm shift in visual culture. We can think of the androgyny and surreal ethnography of Hannah Höch's collages, of the corporeal exuberance of Carol Rama's images, the para-linguistics of Marcel Broodthaers' poetic oeuvre, the fleshy existentialism of Paul Thek's sculptures, or the intersectional abstraction of Haegue Yang's installations. A lot of the best art is simply uncategorizable. The influence that art can have, particularly through its presence in the public sphere, does not always have to be immediate, and it is perhaps best when slow-burning. When they emerged, early modernist, abstract, non-representational, and conceptual artworks were derided, whether as degenerate in extreme situations, but even in cultural metropolises considered to be 'progressive' as vulgar or immoral. Yet the public perception, acceptance, and positive sentiment has developed over time, expanding what is culturally acceptable. Contemporary art is a constant presence of ambiguity in society and has been for a long time, particularly in the West, and much of it is challenging, horizon-broadening and informative. In contrast to the artistic movement of identity politics, there are also many artists who challenge the conventionally assumed connection between identity and identification. Beyond generic visibility politics and its formal modes of representation, many artists are dealing, through various means and modes, with individual subjectivity in terms of complexity and the ambiguous.¹⁰ Ambiguity and ambiguous positionality can be strategies of existence, resistance, and freedom. It can be emancipatory for practitioners to explore life and relations to the world in this way, and can have influence on those that experience it.

10. The exhibition 'Don't You Know Who I Am? Art After Identity Politics' presented at M HKA – Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp in 2016 explored this 'post-identity' mode of practice in contemporary art. Information can be found at the exhibition's special microsite: <http://afteridentity.muhka.be/>

The rapid proliferation of art institutions in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, could be seen as a marker of broadening social liberalism. From the modernist avant-garde to contemporary post-media practices and everything in between, local and international, art has become largely mainstream and even popular. Perhaps though, the work of institutions in presenting art and artistic developments, when seen as a sphere of influence, also takes long and sometimes barely perceptible lengths of time. The ambiguity tolerance has been built over decades. Institutional practices in themselves could be seen as influencers of personality, working at the intersecting liberalisms of perception, cognition, and social outlook. They also, in this sense, facilitate the meeting point of visual culture, development of new ideas, and diverse audiences. Operating as a separate channel to the media, but sometimes in conjunction with them, institutional practice can open doors of negotiation, perception, and freedom of thought. For this reason, it is culturally important that they remain spaces for ambiguity in defiance of ideological confinement. In this era, when cultural institutions, particularly those within the public sphere, are seeking to identify what and who they are for, and what values they possess, we can propose a new philosophical answer. The philosophical dimension of museums and cultural institutions, and their place in society, is – *to increase tolerance of ambiguous things*.

Rather than resigning ourselves to homogeneous artistic expression under (impending) ideological monoculture, we may ask: *What could become the role and modality of the arts within the context of increasing monoculture?* Whilst galleries and museums have a good understanding of the perceptual and cognitive liberalisms, the social one can often be unresolved or disconnected. This is often confined to the generalized ‘footfall’ of art lovers and the curious coming through the doors, as well as engagement with children. While this is commendable, new relations to their publics are worth investing in, and are perhaps even essential in

order to determine a future role and vitality. Museums and galleries have, gradually and partially, moved away from purely telling audiences how to look at or read artworks, towards privileging subjectivity and interpretation.¹¹ In this sense, just like the art they house, they are against the homogenizing effects of the rigid stimuli-response relationship. And these have been important steps towards creating new conditions for both audience and artwork. The ambiguity of art, the category of experience that it is, functions as a conduit to discover and affirm one's undiscovered liberalisms. Institutions, however, are greatly hindering their societal potential by catering primarily for the already-converted—the ambiguity-tolerant. If they are to truly fulfil their role of increasing tolerance of ambiguity, then they must look beyond.

11. Nicholas Serota provides a useful historical account of the gradual transitions of museum practices in their modes of display, in *Experience or Interpretation: The Dilemma of Museums of Modern Art*, Thames or Hudson, 1995.

As civil society institutions, galleries and museums ought to provide opportunities of engagement for the different constituencies that make up contemporary society. Institutions are secularized, not only transcendently, but within the gamut of the Western political they provide, and so, at least in principle, are open towards the spectrum of ideological partialities. With long-term engagement, individuals, groups, and other constituent bodies could then participate in spaces of negotiation at the levels of the perceptual, cognitive, and the social. If organized on a qualitative level, such experiences can be taken away, and be in their own way emancipatory. Such a role, supporting 'agonistic' relations with and between constituencies, and with aesthetics and artistic work, can be unique and influential in the public sphere. And though institutions should be open, they should not be passive. As Pascal Gielen states: 'The journey from one world to another sometimes needs to be jumpstarted. In the recent past, institutions seemed almost embarrassed to take on a truly guiding role, to suggest designs for communality based on their own

value frameworks. The fear of coming across as patronizing or pedantic has paralyzed their social performativity.¹² With grounding in values they believe in, and on empirical foundations, museums and galleries can aim for a leading role as civil society institutions.

This philosophical dimension based on ambiguity can act as a revitalizing imperative for the sphere of art, including in the situation of ideological monoculture. Art, along with its institutionalization, sometimes finds itself in the position of negotiating to maintain the independence essential to its vitality. Justifications can sometimes be posed, rightly or wrongly, for different forms of cultural confinement or identitarianism—from ideological protectionism built on fear and prejudice to minoritarian protectionism based on visibility. But as impatient as we may be regarding social justice and equality, there will not typically be a quick-fix solution. Art institutions such as galleries and museums provide a space for the subjectivities and intelligence of artists and audiences alike, and can influence society. To revisit the quote that opens this essay, Frenkel-Brunswick stated: ‘So long as a culture provides socially accepted outlets for suppressed impulses, smooth functioning and fair adjustment can be achieved within the given framework.’ The interlinked liberalisms of perception, cognition, and social outlook sit succinctly in relation to the arts and visual culture. But we must understand that when we deal with identities, we must do so with the knowledge that they incorporate ambiguity, and that our handling of identity should be dogma-free. This institutional responsibility should work to be patient, meaningful and emancipatory, with the conviction that aesthetic and experiential impoverishment is also ultimately societal impoverishment.

11. Pascal Gielen, ‘Institutional Imagination – Instituting Contemporary Art Minus the “Contemporary”’, in *Institutional Attitudes – Instituting Art in a Flat World*, Pascal Gielen (ed.), Antennae Series No. 8 by Valiz, Amsterdam, 2013. p. 30-31. A couple of paragraphs prior, he proposes: “Just as the market today is overflowing its banks, the art institution will have to go beyond its own borders and intervene in the world. It would be an illusion to think that we can keep neoliberalism from penetrating the walls of the institutions. What’s more, it would be reactionary to defensively withdraw again to one’s own temple in the spirit of the modernist ideal. Rather, art will have to burst at the seams and break into ‘alien’ social domains such as the domestic domain of the private home, into the familiar spheres of its peers in art academies and studios, into civil space and the political arena and, yes, into the free market and ruling neoliberalism.”

1.6

Where to hang your art if you are homeless

An Underground
Travel Document

Yemisi
Aribisala

I could be a lot more brazen. I was 46 and homeless. I was in fact- in a luxurious rented home in Hampstead Garden Suburbs, London where I was told by Mr. Where's the sugar:

‘Fucking bastard...This is my house, get out...’

First commonsensical rule of thumb when you have been told by your spouse to get out: Don't be sentimental about your abuser. Don't presume he is you. Don't loan him your nurturing characteristics. Don't shuffle your feet hoping he will change his mind. Don't listen to sentimental relatives, making dangerous sentimental arguments. Tell yourself the truth - you are living in a city that has been breached. Get your children, get on your Isithuthuthu with all your precious belongings and all your art and books, and shingles picked at the beach...and find a safe path.

Ideal mode of transportation- An Isithuthuthu: *A skinny wingless African beetle large enough for a grown woman to ride, with room enough for accoutrements of doors and windows for brisk flight and vision. The Isithuthuthu is Zulu for that flesh and steel creature weaving and gliding through African cities. It is at many times an extroverted urbanite found in eardrum-shattering flocks in Lagos, Akwa Ibom, Douala, Kampala, Durban. At other times it follows its innate obligation for silence, making its way solemnly down a dirt-path at night with one solitary, flickering head-lamp. It is a loner with a single-minded motive-the unification of heart and motion carrying the luggage of life. In simplest parlance, the Isithuthuthu is a bug with a big name, or to the addled imagination, it is just a Honda Super cub motorcycle or some other similar second-rate class of motorbike.*

There is a contradiction here I know- A homeless woman doesn't own two shipping containers of stuff carried from Calabar, to Lagos, to Western Cape and to London, cleared through customs without paying one pound. A homeless woman typically doesn't own two law degrees and 80,000 thousand pounds of Nigerian art. I'm not the typical homeless woman- that's stating the obvious. But there are many Nigerian women like myself who have lived with a man for 20 years and invested everything into that partnership and then went bust. They are well turned out, successful, sane, teetotal, hardworking...everything you've been told that homeless people are not. In Nigeria a man is allowed to throw his wife out into the streets without recompense. It's a long story with many twists, but he can do it. And get away with it. The law will support him. Culture will shrug. There are very few women like me who knew so instinctively their eviction was coming, that they planned for it. As well as I planned, I still was holding the short end of the stick.

Usually women are caught some-ways unawares, blind-sided by emotions and life. There are no other homeless women that I know that are in fact like me- that won a writing prize just at the edge of losing everything, whose writing prize and three years in the Western Cape opened a door to apply for an exceptional talent visa to live in the United Kingdom -who was granted that visa just at the edge of losing everything. Just on the crumbling edge of the cliff. To be clear I believe in God because like most homeless people who see His hand carry them through the rough fringes of life, I have been carried through the most impossible terrain.

My collection of art- the gesticulating frames of colours were everywhere in my house and in my life, in my former life- on the floor, on the walls, in the toilets...bought from artist friends outside the unaffordable, snotty mechanism of art sale in Lagos, Nigeria. They had impossibly appreciated over the years and become a bizarre form of wealth for a middle aged writer, with small children, who ran a small business and had no savings. Mr. Where's the Sugar owned everything else. I had barely any decent clothes, no obligatory thousand-dollar hair attachment reaching down to my backside, no good make-up, and no cultural goodwill. My in-laws despised me and my siblings floundered between despair and irritation at my lifestyle and ideology and appearance. Mr. Where's the Sugar had bristled for years in irritation at the fact that he knew very little about the encroachment on his walls, but he came home and saw another one, and another art-work. He had no knowledge of who the makers were, their stories, our friendship... how I afforded them and where I had brought them from and how many more were on the way. Ownership of art among other eccentricities led to the necessity of weekly visits from my sisters, mother and aunt where they regularly demanded the keys to my life so that they could help me do what I would not-Fit in.

In 2015 Mr. Where's the Sugar had had enough. He decided to ship me and my children first to the Western Cape and from there, find a way of throwing me off the ship quietly somewhere. He planned that my mother, who supported him, would bring my children up. I decided when we reached the Western Cape, to fashion my escape and my grand acquisition of walls in London. I'll tell you about it now-now. I call it the practice of living like a bad nude on canvas...I put an advert out on social media:

*Food Writer, Yemisi Aribisala wants Housemate in
Central London*

'I'm looking for a platonic housemate in central London with a gorgeous house and new pots and pans who wants to eat Julia Child's French Cooking for a year and breakfast of the owner's choice. You must be single, male, a non-pervert, who imbibes no more than one and a half glasses of wine per week, or one glass of wine and one of champagne per week. You must have no children as I'm bringing three of mine and don't want to play blended families. You must have a pleasant and witty demeanour, a constitution adapted for deadly doses of pepper and no overbearing mother issues. You must be willing to eat in all year without stealing away to restaurants. You must also supply fashionably positioned theatre tickets (not neck straining seats in the gods), you must not play loud music or be stingy English with the central heating. Conversations on our food will be recorded and broadcast on Radio 3. References from my children are available on request. Only serious applicants need apply. You can contact me at...'

It went up and the responses rained in, peppered with good humour and more than a few insults from Nigerian men. Who did I think I was? I was surely overrating my value. Why would any man agree to the burden of a married woman with three children, especially one who was offering to move in and boss him about and tell him what to do, eat and drink. Surely it was a joke, funny, but extremely conceited. This woman was also in Western Cape! I wasn't joking though. I was deadly serious, with no iota of conceit in putting out a feeler for a clanless prince. Why could I not write coded curriculum vitae in search of a patron with tall strong walls. If my own people had not valued me highly enough to write decent princess-acquisition terms for me, why could I not state my own terms, confidently erase quirky, poor, scruffy antisocial writer with two law degrees and fill it in with Nigerian Julia Child...

Nigerian women's bodies seem to more than often inhabit Nigerian art in comfortable, content, docile postures. They are in market places, selling fruit. They have children tied to their backs. They have water pots on their heads, with accentuated curves and manipulated parameters of beauty. They are most likely arranged to be soothing to the cultural eye, or the sensual eye. They are rarely a challenge, rarely ever a Modigliani, rarely brazen. This might point to a lack of ownership of title deeds to the house of the canvas. Male Nigerian visual artists outnumber female artists by a wide margin. Women are tenants on canvas again ... and this eschewing of scars and folds and fat and bad-behaviour in visual art might be one of the sincerest most inadvertent expressions of Nigerian women's lives.

I had every right, every desperation to fashion my homelessness after Lagos 'area-boys' homelessness that I had written about in Longthroat Memoirs:

Amazingly, Lagos simultaneously quarters homeless men between land and lagoon, without social amenities. They are not homeless in a depressing textbook way; their homelessness means freehold ownership of an expansive house without walls. They own the title deeds to all of the outside of all of the big houses and mansions, and they do with it as they please...They are rugged...granted all kinds of unconventional entitlements...

The homeless on Lagos Island, Lagos, Nigeria staked their claim to land with braggadocio. You could see men and women huddled up after dark under bridges and in squalid corners of streets with their possessions stacked under flimsy cardboard and zinc, but then again a homeless man in the middle of the afternoon on one random day would grow three times his size before your eyes, mount a makeshift barrier in the middle of the road and demand toll to let you pass. He would get away with it until a police officer came along to get a percentage of the toll to look away and let him continue his ephemeral flexing of muscle. Lagos taught one all kinds of powerful lessons- mammon was king, but then again he was not. Land ownership, protective walls, boundaries, rules of social mobility, prince and pauper hood were all flexible ideas that shifted quickly without notice. You in your expensive car in the towering shadow of this homeless man would consider every movement of your body, checking it for minutiae disrespect. You would avert your eyes; tip your frame in acknowledgement of someone who has no fear, nothing to lose. No real possessions, no reputation. Thoroughly Rugged. Possibly Insane. You would measure out every blink, every twitch with slow deference. My advert might not yield a Paul Child nor Hae-Joo Chang but I would have re-written my curriculum vitae with my own hand, shifting value.

All stories of homelessness have the same core, the same heart-void-stance: A person of whatever description has no four-walls-and-lid to call their own, no enclosed tenure, privacy, personal space where beloved items are displayed. No bodies generating heat for one's taking for granted: No allowance to strip down fully naked and prance: No enclosure gathering and keeping heat as protection from cold... cold gathering heat as protection from heat: No cover from extrinsic attack, no access to decent amenities-W.C., shower, bath- no psychological arena for idiosyncratic existence, no hob, hearth, personal fire for cooking a meal... If this is how space that equates to being homed/grounded translates, it might make sense that not everyone on the planet will ever be successfully housed/protected/covered, put in a box that is their own. How much space constitutes the fundamental human right of being housed? I believe this is a human right. If a person is born into this world, they have a right to own a space that is theirs. It is an idealistic notion that I believe with very fibre in my being. Women especially as birthers and nurturers have more of a right over this space called home than men do. That is another possibly even more idealistic belief. Over four decades I have asked myself (through many different circumstances of life, in thousands of contexts that I have found myself) which is the worse of the three? Hunger? Homelessness? Clanlessness? Sometimes I am convinced that it depends on each individual's belief- that is, as V.S. Naipaul proposes in his book *India: A Million Mutinies Now*, some Indians who are so successfully socialised into living in close proximity to relatives will perish in despair if they are given rooms of their own- four private walls- the kind of privacy that is interpreted by them as isolation- they will die, give up, from loneliness, not from disease, nor open wounds nor hunger, nor accident. This means that to this people space is not home, but rather, other people. The Yoruba too have a saying that people are our clothes. People our cover and reason to hope, they are the light fixtures in this space we crave to define as home.

It is very Nigerian that people should live in communes where one person's existence is layered on top of another's. Our fears of/ aversions to reclusive living are written all over our cultures, our clothes, politics, living arrangements, everything, as if we dare not contravene extroversion. Clanlessness is often that most terrifying phantom for Nigerian people. So clanlessness is homelessness and not what one's counterpart in London would define as not having a home. (London is therefore perfect for my area-boy claim to terrain) Being part of a clan takes care of the other two phantoms of hunger and houselessness- swallowing them efficiently, cleanly. If you have people in Nigeria, then you cannot be hungry, and someone will have a space in a room for you to live in for a few months or years until you can find a space in which to layer other people on yourself. Nigerian culture 'generally' has this to its merits- that it considers turning away a relative a shameful thing.

The advert for walls was written years before I was told to get out by Mr. Where's the Sugar. My escape was mapped the minute I laid my head down and saw my eviction - a great big Nigerian party where I was the scruffy piñata, beaten to the rhythm of exploding fireworks- neighbours, siblings, loud cheering and gaping bystander applause. It was an eviction worthy of the context of Nigeria and its heartbreaking treatment of women. The very least I could do was tap dance on the lip of the cliff before I was swallowed by the ravine below.

PART 2

Actions

2.1.1

An Oceanic Feeling

Fundació
Antoni Tàpies
Jul. – Sep. 2017

AN OCEANIC FEELING

from June 14 to September 25, 2017

GLOBALISATION AND THE POLITICS OF SUBALTERN RESISTANCE IN MARITIME DISTRICTS

Workshop conducted by The Green Parrot and Fundació Antoni Tàpies.
Programme developed as part of the 4Cs European Project: From Conflict to
Conviviality through Creativity and Culture

Opaque and hidden from perception, the transformations of the maritime economy are most visible in districts by the sea. The vertiginous changes experienced by areas such as the Barceloneta speak of a new power emerging from the sea. One the most obvious consequences is the disappearance of a productive model linked to the harbor and its traditional activities. Its substitution by a service economy dictated by the tourist industry unleashes new conflicts. Against this, subordinate forms of resistance run the risk of being seen as excessively romantic. And yet they represent the most effective critique of the ill-fated restructuring of a coastal area that is being increasingly exploited.



Allan Sekula, "Jewelry Store. Rúa Príncipe" (1992), from *Fish Story* (1989-95).
Courtesy Allan Sekula Studio

The Forgotten Space, 2010

The film follows container cargo aboard ships, barges, trains and trucks, listening to workers, engineers, planners, politicians and those marginalised by the global transport system. As Sekula says: 'Our film is about globalisation and the sea, the "forgotten space" of our modernity.'

Authors: Allan Sekula and Noël Burch

Duration: 112 min

Date: Wed. 28 June 2017, 21.45 h

Venue: outside the Centre Cívic Barceloneta, carrer de la Conreria, 1-9, Barcelona. | Free admission. | Activity in collaboration with the Centre Cívic Barceloneta.

WORKSHOP

Open-air Cinema season

Marseille Après la Guerre, 2015, and Tsukiji, 2001 (Double bill)

Marseille Après la Guerre portrays the dockworkers of Marseille after the Second World War. It is also a homage to Ousmane Sembène, a Senegalese filmmaker and one of the founding figures of the New African Cinema of the 1960s.

Author: Billy Woodberry.

Duration: 10 min.

Tsukiji is, in the words of the director, an 'urban symphony' dedicated to the largest fish-market in the world, and one of the last surviving proletarian spaces in Tokyo.

Author: Allan Sekula

Duration: 43 min.

Date: Wed. 5 July 2017, 21.45 h.

Venue: outside the Centre Cívic Barceloneta, carrer de la Conreria, 1-9, Barcelona. | Free admission. | Activity in collaboration with the Centre Cívic Barceloneta.

Costa da morte, 2013

The film explores the Galician region through the people who inhabit it, bearing witness to their work and the relationship they have built with their natural environment.

Author: Lois Patiño

Duration: 83 min.

Date: Wed. 12 July 2017, 21.45 h

Venue: outside the Centre Cívic Barceloneta, carrer de la Conreria, 1-9, Barcelona. | Free admission. | Activity in collaboration with the Centre Cívic Barceloneta.

The fishermen of the Barceloneta

Did you know that there are still fishermen in the city? Guided by the descendants of a long line of Barcelona fishermen, we will discover their secrets and the difficulties of this ancient trade. The activity will take place at the Moll de Pescadors de la Barceloneta, a unique and emblematic environment. Conducted by Cap a mar.

Duration: 2 h

Date: Wed 5 July 2017, 16.00 h

Age group: accompanied children from 6 onwards.

Venue: carrer Escar, 1, Barcelona.

| Free admission. | Limited places.

Advanced booking: activitats@ftapies.com.

Presentation by the collective OPAVIVARÁ!

Gathering during which the Brazilian artists collective OPAVIVARÁ! will present their projects and give a voice to the local groups taking part: Col·lectiu d'Artistes i Artesans de la Barceloneta and Sindicat Popular de Venedors Ambulants de Barcelona.

Duration: 3 h. | Date: Thursday 13 July 2017, 20.00 h. | Venue: outside the Centre Cívic Barceloneta, carrer de la Conreria, 1-9, Barcelona. | Activity in collaboration with the Centre Cívic Barceloneta.

The exhibition Allan Sekula. Collective Sisyphus seen by the dockworkers of the Port of Barcelona

For many years, Allan Sekula saw the neighbourhood of Barceloneta as a study case and established a relationship with the dockworkers to document their work. They are now paying homage to him with their own personal vision of the aims of the exhibition *Allan Sekula. Collective Sisyphus*.

Duration: 1 h

Date: Thu 6 July 2017, 17.30 h.

Free admission. | Limited places.

Advanced booking: activitats@ftapies.com. | Activity in collaboration with the Organització d'Estibadors Portuaris de Barcelona.

The Green Parrot and the Fundació Antoni Tàpies are grateful for the cooperation of the Organització d'Estibadors Portuaris de Barcelona and the Centre Cívic Barceloneta, especially Juan Carlos Marín, Isabel Hernández and Rosa Palomar.

Photographic bicycle route along the seafront

Photographic bicycle route with Cristina Caparrós (Cap a Mar Association) and the photographer Joan Morejón (director of 4photos). The activity will explore the transformations of the seafront through the photographic lens. No knowledge of photography required.

Duration: 4 h. | Date: Saturday 16 September 2017, 17.00 h. | Meeting point: passeig Picasso, in front of the work by Antoni Tàpies Monument Homenatge a Picasso, 1983. | Free admission. | Limited places. Advanced booking: activitats@ftapies.com.

The port: in Sekula saeculorum

Guided tour in a traditional Golondrina boat around the commercial port of Barcelona, one of the lesser known parts of the city. The port struggles and conflicts characteristic of this zone inspired Allan Sekula since the mid-nineties. Conducted by Ruta de autor, with representatives from the Organització d'Estibadors Portuaris de Barcelona (Dockworkers Union).

Duration: 1 h 45 min. | Date:

Saturday 8 July 2017, 11.00 h. |

Age group: this activity is addressed to adults but it is also appropriate for families. | Venue: Moll de Drassanes. | Free admission. | Limited places. Advanced booking: activitats@ftapies.com.



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OPAVIVARÁ!

from July 7 to July 14, 2017

The project arises from a synergy between the exhibition Allan Sekula. Collective Sisyphus and the interest of The Green Parrot association in working in the public space with the Brazilian artist collective, OPAVIVARÁ!. The initiative focuses on a debate concerning the city of Rio, especially its coastal area, which is threatened by various interests and a process of gentrification as a result of the neoliberal economy. Allan Sekula works with the idea of the sea as a 'forgotten space' with very specific geopolitical and working conditions, and with the port acting as the anchor for this universe in an urban context. OPAVIVARÁ! has largely worked in the public space of Rio de Janeiro, a port and a coastal tourist city that has suffered similar problems to those of Barcelona and its metropolitan area: costly mass events, population displacement and privatisation of the coastal areas.

OPAVIVARÁ! is an artist collective performing almost imperceptible actions that merge with the commonplace and are inspired by the Brazilian tradition of street carnival. These actions generate moments of art and poetry in occupied spaces, where the public is not only invited to interact with the work, but becomes a fundamental agent in its execution. On this occasion they have been invited to Barcelona to recreate two projects that have already been produced in Rio de Janeiro and which will be transformed in the current context with the collaboration of different local agents and organisations. In the narrow streets, beach and seafront of the Barceloneta neighbourhood, they will make interventions that may pass unnoticed, or perhaps appear for a moment on the sand of the beach, on wet bodies or on balconies, alongside clothes strung up on washing lines. Actions that alter the perceptive and political order of hum an relations and prompt reflexions on everyday experiences. Always with a festive and celebratory tone that, like the carnival, suspends the limits and their social definitions in a collective ritual.

Activities

JO ♥ MANTERS

The public spaces of the city are occupied by heterogeneous groups and are in constant movement. *Eu ♥ Camelô* was a project developed by OPAVIVARÁ! in response to a law imposed during the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro prohibiting street vending in the city. The artists made a series of photographs of the vendors and created postcards that were distributed in the public space with the slogan *Eu ♥ Camelô*. The project in Barcelona has been developed with the Sindicat Popular de Venedors Ambulants (People's syndicate of street vendors) to carry out a similar action: specifically with those who sell from blankets spread on the ground. Using the devices and strategies characteristic of this group, the artists will go unnoticed, using the moment as a method, with the aim of showing the vendors in a positive light.

Duration: 3 hours.

Dates: 11 and 12 July 2017, at 18.00 h.

Venues: ongoing action in different parts of the Passeig Marítim, Barceloneta beach, Plaça del Mar, Pla de Miquel Tarradell and Passeig de Joan de Borbó.



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Duration: 3 h.

Dates: July 7 and 14, 2017,
at 18:00 h.

Venue: Barceloneta beach,
in the area of the IEM Espai
de Mar.

CANGAÇO

Cangaço arose out of the demonstrations that took place in Brazil in 2013. Among the most visible elements were the thousands of banners and posters displaying very diverse slogans and demands, often using poetry, humour, and critical and creative appropriations. The artists printed some of these on sarongs and beach towels, which, spread out on the sand or wrapped around bronzed bodies, were distributed throughout the city, leaving a trail of messages. In Barcelona, they are working with different groups such as the Associació d'Artistes i Artesans de la Barceloneta to recover or create new phrases that reflect the problems and the history of the neighbourhood. These cangas (the Brazilian word for sarongs) can be seen by the beach and hung on the balconies of the Barceloneta during the month of July.

Presentation of the OPAVIVARÁ! collective

Meeting at which the OPAVIVARÁ! artist collective from Brazil will present its projects before giving the floor to local groups with whom they have collaborated: the Col·lectiu d'Artistes i Artesans de la Barceloneta and the Sindicat Popular de Venedors Ambulants de Barcelona.

Duration: 3 h.

Date: Thursday, 13 July 2017, at 20:00 h.

Venue: In front of the Centre Cívic Barceloneta, carrer de la Conreria, 1–9, Barcelona.

Activity in collaboration with the Centre Cívic Barceloneta.

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OPAVIVARÁ! is an artist collective from Rio de Janeiro that develops actions in public spaces, such as art galleries and cultural institutions, by inverting the forms of occupation of the urban space through the creation of relational devices that generate collective experiences. They have participated in, among others, exhibitions such as: UTUPYA, at the A Gentil Carioca gallery, Rio de Janeiro (2017); 32nd São Paulo Biennial (2016); 12th Havana Biennial (2015); 9th Taipei Biennial (2014); O Abrigo e o Terreno, at the Museo de Arte do Rio (2013); Na Moita ArtRio Solo Project, curated by Pablo León de La Barra (2012); and VERBO Mostra de Performance Arte, at Galeria Vermelho, São Paulo (2008). Their works have already been acquired by collections such as MAM, São Paulo; MAC Niterói, Rio de Janeiro; and the Guggenheim Museum, New York.

The Green Parrot is a non-profit association dedicated to contemporary artistic practices. Founded in April 2014, until June 2016 it curated an exhibition programme in a space in the centre of the city of Barcelona, with artists such as Oriol Vilanova, Daniel Steegmann Mangrané, Teresa Solar Abboud and Basim Magdy. In September 2016, the second stage of the project began as a nomadic platform resident in the Fundació Antoni Tàpies. The Green Parrot's projects not only include exhibitions, but also events in the public space, publications and a collection of limited editions.



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Project curated by Rosa Lleó in collaboration with Agustín Ortiz Herrera.

Acknowledgements:

The Green Parrot and the Fundació Antoni Tàpies are grateful for the cooperation of the Sindicat Popular de Venedors Ambulants de Barcelona, the Associació d'Artistes i Artesans de la Barceloneta and the Centre Cívic de la Barceloneta, with special thanks to Rosa Palomar, Ester Santamaría, Isabel Hernández, Cesar Ulises, Aziz Fayé, Mamadou Laminé, Gabriel Camargo and Edinha Camargo.

ALLAN SEKULA

from June 14 to September 25, 2017

Allan Sekula. *Collective Sisyphus* draws a straight line between *Fish Story* (1989–95), one of his better-known photographic essays, and his last work project *Ship of Fools / The Dockers' Museum* (2010–13). Along this trajectory, we find *Deep Six / Passer au bleu* (1996/98) and the film *Lottery of the Sea* (2006). In all of them Sekula laments the loss of the sea due to a global economy that favors a connected world. Sekula's work will be remembered as one of modern photography's biggest efforts to erect a monument – a far from grandiloquent one – to the cosmopolitan proletariat.



Mutiny [title given by Allan Sekula], cartoon, originally published in *Labour Defender* (December 1937), from *The Dockers' Museum* (2010–2013). Collection M HKA, Antwerp / Collection Flemish Community;

Fish Story, 1989–95

Chapter 1

FISH STORY

1988–93 | 18 Cibachrome prints and 2 text panels
Collection Fonds régional d'art contemporain Bretagne, Rennes

1–2.

Boy looking at his mother.
 Staten Island ferry. New York
 harbor. February 1990.

3,6.

Welder's booth in bankrupt
 Todd Shipyard. Two years after
 closing. Los Angeles harbor. San
 Pedro, California. July 1991.

4–5.

Pipe fitters finishing the engine
 room of a tuna-fishing boat.
 Campbell Shipyard. San Diego
 harbor. August 1991.

7.

Remnants of a movie set.
 Abandoned shipyard. Los
 Angeles harbor. Terminal Island,
 California. January 1993.

8.

The rechristened Exxon Valdez
 awaiting sea trials after repairs.
 National Steel and Shipbuilding
 Company. San Diego harbor.
 August 1990.

9.

"Lead Fish." Variant of a
 conference room designed
 for the Chiat/Day advertising
 agency. Architect: Frank Gehry.
 Installation at the Museum of
 Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.
 May 1988.

10.

Remnants of a Roman harbor
 near Minturno, Italy. June 1992.

11.

Hammerhead crane unloading
 forty-foot containers from Asian
 ports. American President Lines
 terminal. Los Angeles harbor.
 San Pedro, California. November
 1992.

12–13.

Shipyard-workers' housing—
 built during the Second World
 War—being moved from San
 Pedro to South-Central Los
 Angeles. May 1990.

14.

Koreatown, Los Angeles.
 April 1992.

15.

Workers cleaning up chemical
 spill after refinery explosion.
 Los Angeles harbor. Wilmington,
 California. October 1992.

16.

Abandoned shipyard used by
 Marine Corps Expeditionary
 Force for "counter-terrorist"
 exercises. Los Angeles harbor.
 Terminal Island, California.
 November 1992.

17.

"Pancake," a former shipyard
 sandblaster, scavenging copper
 from waterfront scrapyard. Los
 Angeles harbor. Terminal Island,
 California. November 1992.

18.

Testing robot truck designed
 to move containers within
 automated ECT/Sea-Land cargo
 terminal. Maasvlakte, Port
 of Rotterdam, Netherlands.
 September 1992.

1

Growing up in a harbor predisposes one to retain quaint ideas about matter and thought. I'm speaking only for myself here, although I suspect that a certain stubborn and pessimistic insistence on the primacy of material forces is part of a common culture of harbor residents. This crude materialism is underwritten by disaster. Ships explode, leak, sink, collide. Accidents happen every day. Gravity is recognized as a force. By contrast, airline companies encourage the omnipotence of thought. This is the reason why the commissioner of airports for the city of Los Angeles is paid much more than the commissioner of harbors. The airport commissioner has to think very hard, day and night, to keep all the planes in the air.

2

In the past, harbor residents were deluded by their senses into thinking that a global economy could be seen and heard and smelled. The wealth of nations would slide by in the channel. One learned a biased national physiognomy of vessels: Norwegian ships are neat and Greek ships are grimy. Things are more confused now. A scratchy recording of the Norwegian national anthem blares out from a loudspeaker at the Sailors' Church on the bluff above the channel. The container ship being greeted flies a Bahamian flag of convenience. It was built by Koreans laboring long hours in the giant shipyards of Ulsan. The crew, underpaid and overworked, could be Honduran or Filipino. Only the captain hears a familiar melody.

3

What one sees in a harbor is the concrete movement of goods. This movement can be explained in its totality only through recourse to abstraction. Marx tells us this, even if no one is listening anymore. If the stock market is the site in which the abstract character of money rules, the harbor is the site in which material goods appear in bulk, in the very flux of exchange. Use values slide by in the channel; the Ark is no longer a bestiary but an encyclopedia of trade and industry. This is the reason for the antique mercantilist charm of harbors. But

the more regularized, literally containerized, the movement of goods in harbors, that is, the more rationalized and automated, the more the harbor comes to resemble the stock market. A crucial phenomenological point here is the suppression of smell. Goods that once reeked—guano, gypsum, steamed tuna, hemp, molasses—now flow or are boxed. The boxes, viewed in vertical elevation, have the proportions of slightly elongated banknotes. The contents anonymous: electronic components, the worldly belongings of military dependents, cocaine, scrap paper (who could know?) hidden behind the corrugated sheet steel walls emblazoned with the logos of the global shipping corporations: Evergreen, Matson, American President, Mitsui, Hanjin, Hyundai.

4

Space is transformed. The ocean floor is wired for sound. Fishing boats disappear in the Irish Sea, dragged to the bottom by submarines. Businessmen on airplanes read exciting novels about sonar. Water-front brothels are demolished or remodeled as condominiums. Shipyards are converted into movie sets. Harbors are now less *havens* (as they were for the Dutch) than accelerated turning-basins for supertankers and container ships. The old harbor front, its links to a common culture shattered by unemployment, is now reclaimed for a bourgeois reverie on the mercantilist past. Heavy metals accumulate in the silt. Busboys fight over scarce spoons in front of a plate-glass window overlooking the harbor. The backwater becomes a frontwater. Everyone wants a glimpse of the sea.

Fish Story, 1989–95

Chapter 2

LOAVES AND FISHES

1990–92 | 8 Cibachrome prints and 2 text panels
Collection Michel Rein, Paris

19.

Welder working on a fast combat support ship for the U.S. Navy. National Steel and Shipbuilding Company. San Diego, California. August 1990.

20.

U.S. Army VII Corps en route from Stuttgart to the Persian Gulf. Prins Johan Friso haven, Rotterdam, Netherlands. December 1990.

21.

Foundry in the former Lenin Shipyard. Gdansk, Poland. November 1990.

22.

Welders working in a privatized section of the former Lenin Shipyard. Gdansk, Poland. November 1990.

23.

Palace of Culture and Science. Warsaw, Poland. November 1990.

24.

Unemployment office. Gdansk, Poland. November 1990.

25.

Lottery determining equitable distribution of work. “La Coordinadora” dockers’ union dispatch hall. Barcelona, Spain. November 1990.

26.

Man salvaging bricks from a demolished waterfront warehouse. Rijnhaven. Rotterdam, the Netherlands. September 1992.

A German friend wrote me early in January 1991, just before the war in the Persian Gulf: “You should try to photograph over determined ports, like Haifa and Basra.” Her insight, that some ports are fulcrums of history, the levers many, and the results unpredictable, was written in the abstract shorthand of an intellectual. But she shares the materialist curiosity of people who work in and between ports, such as the Danish sailors who discovered that Israel was secretly shipping American weapons to Iran in the 1980s. *A crate breaks, spilling its contents.* But that’s too easy an image of sudden disclosure, at once archaic and cinematic, given that sailors rarely see the thrice-packaged cargo they carry nowadays. *A ship is mysteriously renamed.* Someone crosschecks cargo manifests, notices a pattern in erratic offshore movements, and begins to construct a story, a suspicious sequence of events, where before there were only lists and voyages, a repetitive and routine industrial series.

Sailors and dockers are in a position to see the global patterns of intrigue hidden in the mundane details of commerce. Sometimes the evidence is in fact bizarrely close at hand: *Weapons for the Iraqis in the forward hold. Weapons for the Iranians in the aft hold.* Spanish dockers in Barcelona laugh at the irony of loading cargo with antagonistic destinations. For a moment the global supply network is comically localized, as pictorially condensed as a good political cartoon. Better to scuttle the ship at the dock. But limpet mines are tools of governments, not of workers.

At the very least, governments find it necessary to dispute the testimony of maritime workers. Ronald Reagan, the symbolic Archimedes of a new world of uninhibited capital flows,

worried about the stories being told in 1986. The Great Anecdotalist presumably had a good ear for yarns: these “quite exciting” reports “attributed to Danish sailors” about shipload after shipload of weapons moving from the Israeli Red Sea port of Eilat to the Iranian Persian Gulf port of Bandar Abbas were best countered with an almost royalist affirmation of presidential authority: “Well now you’re going to hear the facts from a White House source, and you know my name.”¹

1. “Transcript of Remarks by Reagan about Iran,” *New York Times*, November 14, 1986, p. A8. Speech written by Patrick Buchanan in consultation with the National Security Council staff. Attribution from the archives of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library. Simi Valley, California.

This was not the first time that Reagan had worried about the maritime trades. As he launched his political career in the 1960s, Reagan recalled his experience as a conservative trade unionist in Hollywood in the late 1940s, and claimed that the secret Communist labor strategy at the time had been to bring the Hollywood unions under the control of the West Coast longshoremen. The longshoremen were led by Australian-born Harry Bridges, who, in Reagan’s words, had been “often accused but never convicted of Communist membership.” The future president concluded with a sly aside: “The only item which was unclear to me—then and now—was how longshoremen could make movies.”²

2. Ronald Reagan with Richard G. Hubler, *Where’s the Rest of Me? The Ronald Reagan Story* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1965), pp. 161, 164.

We know now that actors can make politics. The next question to be asked is this: How do governments—and the actors who speak for governments—move cargo? How do they do it without stories being told by those who do the work? Could the desire for the fully automated movement of goods also be a desire for silence, for the tyranny of a single anecdote?

Fish Story, 1989–95

Chapter 3

MIDDLE PASSAGE

–1994 | 22 Cibachrome prints and 4 text panels
Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Collection, Vienna

27.
Detail. Inclinator.
Mid-Atlantic.

28.
Panorama. Mid-Atlantic.

29.
Chief mate checking temperatures of refrigerated containers.
Mid-Atlantic.

30.
Filling a lifeboat with water equivalent to the weight of crew to test the movement of the boat before departure. Port Elizabeth, New Jersey.

31.
Third assistant engineer working on the engine while underway.

32.
Engine-room wiper's ear protection.

33.
Figurine based on the television series *Star Trek* mounted on engine-room control console.

34–36.
Conclusion of search for the disabled and drifting sailboat *Happy Ending*.

37.
Pornographic scrimshaw carving on a whale's tooth. Maritime Museum Prins Hendrik, Rotterdam.

38.
Model simulating the movement of the sea. Maritime Museum Prins Hendrik, Rotterdam.

39.
Able-bodied seaman chipping paint. Mid-Atlantic.

40, 41.
Bosun driving the forward winch. Mooring at ECT/Sea-Land Terminal, Maasvlakte, Port of Rotterdam.

42.
Raising the U.S. flag in Rotterdam.

43.
Chair in owner's stateroom.

44.
Shipboard vendor's display in the crews' mess. Port of Rotterdam.

45.
The *Sea-Land Quality* dockside at automated ECT/Sea-Land Terminal. Port of Rotterdam.

46.
Models of ships in vitrine with linear scale. Maritime Museum Prins Hendrik, Rotterdam.

47.
David Brown telephones his wife in Jacksonville from ECT/Sea-Land Terminal, Port of Rotterdam.

48.
The *Sea-Land Quality* departing Rotterdam for Bremerhaven. Voyage 167 of the container ship M/V Sea-Land Quality from Elizabeth, New Jersey, to Rotterdam, November 1993.

Note: the exhibition selection has more photographs (48) than in the Fish Story official catalogue (44), and numbering therefore differs.

GHOST SHIP

Le Corps d'un Américain découvert à bord d'un voilier à la dérive

FALMOUTH. – Le corps d'un Américain de 63 ans mort dans des circonstances mystérieuses a été retrouvé samedi à bord d'un voilier dérivant à plus de 1.000 kilomètres au sud-ouest des côtes britanniques, tandis que sa femme ne se trouvait plus à bord. Les gardes-côtes ont précisé que le "Happy End" était enregistré dans l'Alabama et qu'il avait quitté les côtes américaines le 1^{er} novembre à destination de l'Irlande avec à son bord le propriétaire du bateau, Gerald Hardesty et son épouse Carol, âgée de 60 ans. Un membre d'équipage d'un porte-container américain, le "Sealand Quality", a pu monter sur le voilier repéré à la dérive vendredi par un cargo norvégien et voir le corps du propriétaire du bateau, Gerald Hardesty, mort selon lui depuis deux ou trois jours.

Enlarged photocopy of clipping from unidentified Cherbourg newspaper brought aboard by the North Sea pilot and posted by the captain without translation in the officers' and crew's mess rooms, *Sea-Land Quality*.

As the crew filed back into the house from the main deck after the memorial service for the two Americans, the usually taciturn captain announced to no one in particular and everyone in general: "Well, that should put an end to all the ghost stories that have been going around."

FIRE AND EMERGENCY
Muster at boat station

ABANDON SHIP
Muster at boat station

NUCLEAR, BIOLOGICAL, CHEMICAL WARFARE
Remain in stateroom

Notice engraved on steel plate bolted to stateroom bulkhead, *Sea-Land Quality*.

THE BOSUN'S STORY

“Black-and-white photos tell the truth.
That’s why insurance companies use them.”

WORKER'S MUSEUM

Question?
De-flagging.
Is it true
Sea-Land will
use Russian officers
with Vietnamese crew?

They are digging
up Jack Kennedy
to see if he’s rolled
in his grave.

They couldn’t beat us
so they’ll unemploy us!

God bless corporate America.

Handwritten message on yellow legal pad, engine-room
bulletin board, *Sea-Land Quality*.

Launched in 1984, the Sea-Land Quality was one of the first ships built at the Daewoo shipyard on the island of Keoje off the southeast coast of South Korea, and one of a series of “econships” commissioned by the now-defunct United States Lines of Malcom McLean, the trucking executive who initiated containerized cargo movement in 1956. These were the biggest container ships built to date, deliberately slow: exercises in economies of scale, cheap construction, and conservative fuel use.

When an American crew picked up the first of these ships from the Daewoo dockyard, completed the sea trials, and began the voyage back across the Pacific, they discovered in the nooks and crannies of the new ship a curious inventory of discarded tools used in the building of the vessel: crude hammers made by welding a heavy bolt onto the end of a length of pipe, wrenches cut roughly by torch from scraps of deck plate. Awed by this evidence of an improvisatory iron-age approach to ship building, which corresponded to their earlier impressions of the often-lethal brutality of Korean industrial methods, they gathered the tools into a small display in the crew's lounge, christening it "The Korean Workers' Museum."

American elites have cultivated a fantastic fear of superior Asian intelligence; in doing so they obscure their own continued cleverness. For their part, American workers fear the mythic Asian brain and something else: an imagined capacity for limitless overwork under miserable conditions. The first assistant engineer, once a Navy commando in Vietnam, fears being replaced by former enemies. Veering abruptly from the rightwing paranoia of the politician Ross Perot to the left-wing paranoia of filmmaker Oliver Stone, his diatribe is less farfetched than it seems. Shipping companies increasingly turn to flag-of-convenience registry, a legal loophole that allows for the hiring of cheaper, usually Asian, crews. American shipowners have long favored Liberia and Panama, two notoriously independent nations, for these registry services, services which require an infrastructure roughly equivalent to that needed for commemorative stamp issues. Now Sea-Land threatens to turn to the newest bastion of paper sovereignty, the Marshall Islands, otherwise renowned as a cluster of irradiated coral atolls devastated by American thermonuclear testing in the 1950s.

And thus the general spirit of the ship was one of mournful and weary anticipation of unemployment, heightened by a pervasive insomnia caused by the vibration of the low-speed Hyundai-Sulzer diesel running at 100 RPM, the speed of an amphetamine-driven human heart.

WALKING IN CIRCLES

Port Elizabeth-Norfolk-Rotterdam-Bremerhaven-Felixstowe-Le Havre-Boston-Port Elizabeth. While crisscrossing the North Atlantic, David Brown works twelve hours a day for a month at a time, putting in an extra watch of work on deck from 0800 to noon, chipping and painting, standing watch at the wheel from noon to 1600, then back at the wheel from midnight to 0400. The extra watch at overtime pay allows him to earn “just enough to make the trip worthwhile,” considering his family in Jacksonville and the fact that despite his years as a merchant sailor, the scarcity of American-flag ships means that he usually works for only six to nine months out of twelve.

A day before landfall, nearing the end of his watch and restless from standing in one place for four hours, Brown leaves the wheel on autopilot and begins to describe Ethiopian dockworkers unloading a cargo of grain, gaunt and wiry men walking in circles carrying huge sacks on their backs. Brown stoops and begins to pantomime a precise memory of their movement, pacing a repetitious circle in front of the navigation computer, bent over in the ancient stance of the stevedore, assuming the burdened posture found in the monochromatic floor mosaics still visible amid the ruins of the Roman port of Ostia Antica, called into life wherever there were or are no machines to lift the weight of cargo.

Haunted by this image of sheer Sisyphean toil, Brown turns abruptly to the case of a hypothetical worker who loses his job to automation: “First he lose his sanity, then his car, then his house.” The circle narrows and one world falls into the vortex of the other.

“SIBERIA”

For the crew, this crossing is the first to make port at the new robot terminal built on the ever-expanding landfill at the outer reaches of the River Maas. The Dutch engineer responsible for designing the system of automated cranes and trucks that gives the ECT/Sea-Land Terminal an eerie depopulated aspect even in pleasant weather remarked that the new method is “much more comfortable than when you have a lot of individuals under the crane. They say hello to each other, they talk to each other.” He warned me away from the path of the robot trucks: “Watch out, they don’t see you!”

In winter, the outer dike wall does little to shield the ship and the dock from the North Sea wind. A freezing forty-five-minute hike through the container stacks and across the sandy soil leads to the solitary truckers’ bar nestled up against the dike at the foot of a row of roaring windmills. Beyond that, it’s a half-hour van drive to the nearest store, a duty-free shop surrounded by oil tanks in the Botlek, where Russian and Filipino sailors remind Americans what it means to comb the shelves for bargains. But the nickname for this new port of call—barren, cold, and far from everything regarded as interesting and human—had stuck earlier, in the middle of the Atlantic, as someone recalled a farewell visit a month earlier to a familiar neighborhood bar just outside the old terminal twenty-five kilometers upriver toward Rotterdam. It is no longer possible, as it was three centuries ago on the River Maas, to infer the warmth of a still life from a picture of a wooden ship full of whale blubber.

Allan Sekula, 'Chief mate checking temperatures of refrigerated containers. Mid-Atlantic' (1994), from *Fish Story* (1989-95)



Fish Story, 1989–95

Chapter 5

MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

1992/94 | 7 Cibachrome prints and 2 text panels

Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Collection, Vienna

72.

Jewelry store. Rúa Príncipe.

73.

Shop occupied by women clerks for eighteen months in dispute over pay. Rúa Príncipe.

74.

Fish-market women at the close of the morning auction. Puerto Pesquero.

75.

Dockers unloading shipload of frozen fish from Argentina.

76.

Workers gathering on the waterfront at the end of a nationwide general strike opposing the socialist government's cutbacks in unemployed benefits.

77.

Unsuccessful fishing for sardines off the Portuguese coast.

78.

Pallet fire. Puerto Vigo, Galicia, Spain, May 1992.

For Jules Verne, there is no place that cannot be illuminated. Moonlight cuts through the waves and gives the ocean floor the pale luminosity of a romantic ruin. When moonlight fails, electricity cuts in. But the sunken galleons on the floor of Vigo Bay, the secret source of Captain Nemo's mysterious insurrectionary wealth, are never described within Verne's text, although they are pictured in two of the illustrations to the first French edition of *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea*. Within the written narrative, which is elsewhere replete with such scenes, there is no underwater tableau, no landscape, no town on the shore.

Nemo's sunken treasury remains both invisible and frozen in its connection to historic plunder, to the process of what Marx called "primitive accumulation." For Verne, this lost fraction of the wealth that came to fuel the emergence of modern Europe is confiscated by a magical fable of inheritance: "It was for him and him alone America had given up her precious metals. He was heir direct, without anyone to share, in those treasures torn from the Incas and from the conquered of Ferdinand Cortez."¹

1. Jules Verne, *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea*, H. Frith (trans.). London: Everyman's Library, 1908, reprint 1992, pp. 189–90.

Nemo's wealth, despite his patronage of revolutionary movements, remains liable to the charge of barrenness. His project is blocked on the one side by aristocratic nostalgia and on the other by an abstract and futuristic motto of perpetual flux within flux: *mobilis in mobili*. The Galician writer Ferrin has grasped the irony of Nemo's scavenging in the waters off Vigo. Wealth always leaves Vigo, whether in the form of fish, granite, or sheer emigrant labor power. Nemo, no exception to this rule, is for Ferrin quite simply a "nihilist," another external, destructive demiurge.²

2. Xose Luis Mendez Ferrin, "Dialogue between Lampedusa and Sponsor: on the face and reverse side of the town of Vigo," Ian Emmett (trans.), in Julio Gil, *Vigo: Fronteira do alén*. (Vigo: Ir Indo Edicions, n.d.), p. 17.

For all his genius as a naval engineer, Nemo is also a philosophical idealist. Matter is always subordinated to will and to thought. Nemo embodies the secret idealism of all science fiction. He can flaunt the laws of economics because his relation to wealth is consistently magical. Verne's narrator observes that Nemo's voluminous library aboard the *Nautilus* contained "not one single work on political economy; that subject appeared to be strictly proscribed."³ Nemo's answer to the misery of the land lies in the imaginary preindustrial plentitude of the sea.

3. *Twenty Thousand Leagues*, p. 52.

If Nemo has no respect for terrestrial economies, the book-sellers and readers of Vigo have either too little or too much respect for Nemo. In the outdoor stalls that are set up from time to time on the Praza de Compostela one can buy inexpensive paperback editions in Spanish, but not in Galician, of most of Verne's novels. Among them, *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* is nowhere to be found. I am tempted to think that here, under the canvas tarp and the swinging electric light two blocks from the waterfront, amongst the used volumes devoted to Velázquez and the several translations of the American inspirational writer Dale Carnegie, the indifference of Verne and his hero Nemo is reciprocated. And this reciprocated indifference is a function of an economic attitude: the distrust borne toward submarines by those who work the surface of the sea.

DEEP SIX / PASSER AU BLEU

1996/98 | 33 photographies Cibachrome mat imprimées sur papier marouflé | 33 Cibachrome matt photographs printed on stuck paper | Musée des Beaux-Arts, Calais

Passer au bleu, 1^{er} volet: Les droits de l'homme

**Deep Six, part 1:
The Rights of Man**

1-3.

Centrale nucléaire et usine d'aluminium de Gravelines (triptyque)

Nuclear power station and aluminum factory, Gravelines (triptych)

4-6.

Dunkerque (triptyque)

(*Le Guyane*, Une 2 CV Citroën, Un sémaphore)

Dunkerque (triptych)

(*The Guyane*, Citroën 2 CV, Semaphore)

7-8.

Gare maritime désaffectée à Douvres (diptyque)

Abandoned Dover marine station (diptych)

9-11.

Dockers chargeant un cargo sucrier à Calais (triptyque)

Dockers loading sugar ship, Calais (triptych)

12-13.

Le parc Thomas Paine à New York et Un pêcheur de morues à Douvres (diptyque)

Thomas Paine Park, New York City and cod fisher, Dover (diptych)

**Passer au bleu, 2^{ème} volet:
La nef des fous**

**Deep Six, part 2:
Ship of Fools**

14.

Le Renoir, Sea France

[Trois ingénieurs mécaniciens]

Sea France Renoir

[Three engineers]

15.

Le Renoir, Sea France [Un caissier]

Sea France Renoir [Cashier]

16.

Le Renoir, Sea France

[Fermeture des portes]

Sea France Renoir

[Closing the gate]

17.

Le Renoir, Sea France

[La relève de l'équipage]

Sea France Renoir

[Crew change]

18.

Le Renoir, Sea France

[Agent de sécurité britannique dans la boutique hors taxes]

Sea France Renoir [British security guard in duty free shop]

19.

Le Renoir, Sea France

[Couple de passagers]

Sea France Renoir

[Traveling couple]

20.

Le Renoir, Sea France

[Deux jeunes filles au bar]

Sea France Renoir

[Two girls at the bar]

21.

Le Renoir, Sea France

[Décor photographique, portrait de Jeanne Moreau]

Sea France Renoir [Photo decor, portrait of Jeanne Moreau]

22.

Le Renoir, Sea France

[Bureau de change]

Sea France Renoir

[Currency exchange]

23.

Le Renoir, Sea France

[Baiser du bout des doigts]

Sea France Renoir [Faux kiss]

24.

Musée des Beaux-Arts et de la Dentelle, Calais [Des Marines]

Musée des Beaux-Arts et de la Dentelle, Calais [Marine paintings]

25.

Le Renoir, Sea France

[Décor photographique, reproductions de Cézanne et de Renoir]

Sea France Renoir

[Photo decor, Cézanne and Renoir reproductions]

26.

Le Renoir, Sea France
[Risque d'électrocution]
Sea France Renoir
[Electrical hazard]

27.

Rue de Venise à Paris
[Femme en rouge]
Rue de Venise, Paris
[Woman in red]

28.

Le Renoir, Sea France
[Deux membres de l'équipage]
Sea France Renoir
[Two crewmen]

29.

Manifestation du Front National devant l'Hôtel de Ville de Paris
National Front Demonstration, Hôtel de Ville, Paris

30.

La Place de la Bastille à Paris
[Femme au pistolet]
Place de la Bastille, Paris
[Woman with gun]

31.

Le Musée de la Marine à Paris
[Enfant et esclave]
Musée de la Marine, Paris
[Boy and slave]

32.

Garçon sur les quais désaffectés à Boulogne
Boy on abandoned waterfront, Boulogne

33.

Le Renoir, Sea France [Écran vidéo dans la salle des machines à l'approche de Douvres]
Sea France Renoir [Engine room video, approaching Dover]

Passer au bleu

J'avais tout juste un peu plus de seize ans, aucune expérience, le goût de l'aventure et l'esprit enfiévré par l'héroïsme factice d'un maître d'école qui avait servi dans la marine, quand j'entrepris de sculpter ma destinée, et m'embarquai sur un navire corsaire, le Terrible du capitaine La Mort.

Thomas Paine, *Les Droits de l'homme*.

J'allais souvent nager dans le golfe du Mexique, près de Corpus Christi, parcourant trois ou quatre kilomètres au milieu des bancs de marsouins, qui plongeaient, décrivaient de grands cercles autour de moi, puis s'éloignaient. Soudain, je sentais sous moi la mer redoutable et toute la vie secrète qu'elle abrite. Je me disais que j'allais mourir de frayeur avant de pouvoir regagner la terre ferme. [...] J'étais aussi terrorisée que si on m'avait lâchée brusquement parmi les monstres d'une période préglaciaire. [...] J'aime l'océan, mais à la façon dont les chrétiens de la vieille école aiment leur Dieu : en tremblant de peur.

Katherine Ann Porter à Caroline Gordon, le 28 août 1931.

L'idée, ce serait de réaliser des éditions fictives des *Droits de l'homme* de Thomas Paine (1791-1792) et de *La Nef des fous* de Katherine Ann Porter (1962), illustrées chacune par un ensemble de photographies en hors-texte. Les deux livres seraient présentés sous un même étui, associés l'un à l'autre en lieu et place des ouvrages antérieurs auxquels on les rattache habituellement.

Le roman de Katherine Porter remplacerait ainsi les *Réflexions sur la Révolution française* d'Edmund Burke (1790), le plaidoyer royaliste qui avait provoqué la riposte républicaine de Thomas Paine. De son côté, le livre de Thomas Paine remplacerait l'incunable xylographique dont s'est inspirée Katherine Porter, *La Nef des fous*, ou *Das Narrenschiff*, de Sébastien Brant (1494). (Dans la satire de Sébastien Brant, le premier fou sur la fameuse nef est le collectionneur de livres.)

Thomas Paine et Katherine Porter appartiennent respectivement à la première et à la dernière génération d'auteurs américains dont l'écriture s'est nourrie des traversées au long cours. Tous deux ont acquis une sorte de matérialisme affectueux, conséquence du mal de mer. Thomas Paine a un rapport très concret avec la navigation. Sa connaissance intime de l'univers des marins élimine de son imagination littéraire toutes les métaphores nautiques. Il préfère comparer la politique aux effets de trompe-l'oeil de la peinture et du théâtre.

Pour Katherine Porter, qui nage, voyage et observe finement les autres, le bateau est avant tout un théâtre métaphorique de la politique, de la tyrannie et de la promiscuité, où se donne en spectacle une nature humaine moins bonne que ne le pensait Thomas Paine.



Several Lemax Village Dockworker Figurines Carrying Bags with Coal
[title given by Allan Sekula] (2010-11), from *The Dockers' Museum* (2010-13).
Collection M HKA, Antwerp / Collection Flemish Community. Photo : © Ina Steiner, 2017.

Passer au bleu, 1^{er} volet. Les Droits de l'homme

Une grande majorité de l'humanité se trouve rejetée basse-ment à l'arrière-plan de la réalité humaine, pour mieux mettre en avant et faire reluire les marionnettes de l'État et de l'aristocratie.

Les Droits de l'homme.

Deep Six. 2^e volet. La Nef des fous

Il savait bien quelle lie du genre humain son navire, comme tous les navires, transportait d'escale en escale à travers le monde : des flambeurs, des voleurs, des trafiquants, des espions, des expulsés et des réfugiés politiques, des clandestins, des dealers, toute cette faune misérable de l'entrepont qui va d'un pays à l'autre, tels les rats porteurs de la peste, qui grouille, rôde et ébranle la belle ordonnance des cultures et civilisations du monde entier.

La Nef des fous.

Les légendes entre crochets ont une valeur purement descriptive, et ne doivent pas être considérées comme des titres de photographies prises isolément. Pour plus de commodité, le titre complet de toutes les photographies intitulées *Le Renoir de la compagnie Sea France effectuant la liaison entre Douvres et Calais* est abrégé en *Le Renoir, Sea France*.

Deep Six

... little more than sixteen years of age, raw and adventurous, and heated with the false heroism of a [school]master who had served in a man-of-war, I began the carver of my own fortune, and entered on board the Terrible privateer, Captain Death.

Thomas Paine, *The Rights of Man*.

I used to swim about two miles out in the Gulf of Mexico near Corpus Christi, and whole schools of porpoises used to dive by, parting and sweeping around me and out to sea, and suddenly I would feel under me the awful waters and the unknowable life in them, and it seemed I would surely die of terror before I could get back to land. . . It was as dreadful as if you might be set down suddenly in a preglacial age in a wilderness of monsters. . . I love the sea, but as an old-fashioned Christian loved God—with fear and trembling.

Katherine Ann Porter to Caroline Gordon, August 28, 1931.

This is the idea: imaginary editions of *The Rights of Man* by Thomas Paine (1791–92) and *Ship of Fools* (1962) by Katherine Ann Porter, each illustrated by a set of photographs that would be kept separate from the text. The two books would be slipcased together, thus changing the usual association of each of these books with another prior book.

Porter's novel would replace Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), the royalist polemic that had prompted Paine's republican response. And Paine's book would in turn substitute for the woodcut-illustrated book that had inspired Porter, Sebastian Brant's *Narrenschiff* of 1494. (In Brant's book, the first fool on the ship of fools is the collector of books.)

Paine and Porter belong, respectively, to the first and last generations of American writers to have been formed by the long duration of sea travel. They shared a sympathetic materialism, born of seasickness. Paine thought practically about ships. His sailor's familiarity with the maritime world purged nautical metaphors from his literary imagination. His favored metaphors for politics were drawn instead from the illusionism of painting and theatre.

For Porter—swimmer, passenger and astute physiognomist—ships were above all else metaphoric stages for politics, for autocracy and contested intimacy, and for the drama of a human nature less good than that imagined by Paine.

Deep Six, Part 1: The Rights of Man

A vast mass of mankind are degradedly thrown into the background of the human picture, to bring forward, with greater glare, the puppet-show of state and aristocracy.

The Rights of Man.

Deep Six, Part 2: Ship of Fools

He knew well what human trash his ship—all ships—carried to and from all ports of the world: gamblers, thieves, smugglers, spies, political deportees and refugees, stowaways, drug peddlers, all the gutter stuff of the steerage moving like plague rats from one country to another, swarming and ravaging and undermining the hard-won order of the cultures and civilizations of the whole world.

Ship of Fools.

Captions in brackets are given for descriptive purposes only and are not part of the titles of the individual photographs. The complete title listed as *Sea France* Renoir is *Sea France Renoir en route between Dover and Calais*.

SHIP OF FOOLS / THE DOCKERS MUSEUM/

Ship of Fools (1999–2000/2010)

Selection of 17 framed chromogenic prints mounted on alu-dibond |
Collection M HKA, Antwerp / Collection Flemish Community

1–10.

*Crew, Pilot, and Russian
Girlfriend (Novorossiysk) 1:
Ab* (1999–2000/2010)

*Crew, Pilot, and Russian
Girlfriend (Novorossiysk) 2:
Bosun* (1999–2000/2010)

*Crew, Pilot, and Russian
Girlfriend (Novorossiysk) 3:
Cook* (1999–2000/2010)

*Crew, Pilot, and Russian
Girlfriend (Novorossiysk) 4:
Deck Cadet* (1999–2000/2010)

*Crew, Pilot, and Russian
Girlfriend (Novorossiysk) 5:
Engine Cadet*
(1999–2000/2010)

*Crew, Pilot, and Russian
Girlfriend (Novorossiysk) 6:
Engineer* (1999–2000/2010)

*Crew, Pilot, and Russian
Girlfriend (Novorossiysk) 7:
Media Tech* (1999–2000/2010)

*Crew, Pilot, and Russian
Girlfriend (Novorossiysk) 8:
Officer and Girlfriend*
(1999–2000/2010)

*Crew, Pilot, and Russian
Girlfriend (Novorossiysk) 9:
Sober Pilot* (1999–2000/2010)

*Crew, Pilot, and Russian
Girlfriend (Novorossiysk) 10:
Three Women*
(1999–2000/2010)

11.

Drunken Pilot (Koper)
(2000/2010)

12–13.

Near Collision (Koper)
(2000/2010)

14.

Ship Lesson (Durban)
(1999/2010)

15.

Waiting for Work (Santos) (2010)

16.

Not Working (Santos) (2010)

17.

Working (Santos) (2010)

The Dockers' Museum (2010–2013)

A selection of 'Objects of Interest,' elements from Allan Sekula,
The Dockers' Museum | Collection M HKA, Antwerp / Collection
Flemish Community

At allansekula.ensembles.org (scan the QR code)
you will find more information on the research and
the display of *Ship of Fools / The Dockers' Museum*
(2010–13)



[...] ... the ship was the brainchild of a group of German and British seafarer activists who also happened to be disaffected veterans of Greenpeace, interested in the problem of an international linkage of labor and environmental struggles. Their primary concern was the system of *flag of convenience* shipping, a lawfully ruse invented by American shippers in the 1940s that allows wealthy ship owners to register their vessels in poor nations offering what is often termed *paper sovereignty: a flag for a fee*. The system is rife with abuses, and indeed its very purpose is abuse: shielding exploitative labor conditions and substandard vessels behind a bewildering legal maze.

[...] ... since 1995 key working class resistances to neoliberal policies –reduced social security, casualization of work in the name of “flexibility,” union busting, and privatization of public infrastructure– have come from workers in the transport sector: railway workers in France, dockers in Australia, Chile and Brazil, bus drivers and airline crews in Mexico, delivery drivers in the United States. These battles against the doctrine of the untrammelled market predate Seattle.

[...] The calculated amnesia of the world of international shipping offers a lesson to those who celebrate the postmodern flux of identity. One of the stranger stories of this common practice: in mid passage a captain receives a telex noting that the ship has been sold and must be renamed. The captain politely asks the new name and is told to send a crewman over the side –risky business when underway– to paint out every other letter of the old name. What would Mallarmé make of this? The concrete poetry of the contemporary maritime world, the nominative magic worked out between the telex machine and the paint locker.

[...] The *Global Mariner* had to be a real ship functioning in an exemplary way, to be the Good Ship that social justice demanded other ships should and could be, but it was also an empty vessel carrying nothing but ballast and a message.

[...] This was the *anti-Titanic*. The Glaswegian quartermaster aboard the *Global Mariner*, a wiry veteran seafarer by the name of Jimmy McCauley, made the point very succinctly, referring to the steady aggregate loss of life at sea, crews of twenty at a time on bulk ore carriers that mysteriously break in half, sometimes in calm seas, or the myriad Filipino passengers crammed onto decrepit ferries that capsize or burn in the Sulu Sea: “A Titanic happens every year, but no one hears about it.”

[...] It is all the more profound that this ship should seek to represent the workings of empire at a time when the global economy is assumed to be entirely virtual in its connectedness, magically independent of the slow maritime movement of heavy things.

LOTTERY OF THE SEA

**2006 | 180 minutes, colour, sound | English, Spanish, Galician,
with Spanish subtitles | Direction, camera, narration: Allan Sekula |
Editing: Elizabeth Hesik**

Lottery of the Sea takes its title from Adam Smith, who, in his famous *Wealth of Nations* (1776), compared the life of the sailor to a lottery. Thus Smith introduces the notion of risk by means of an allegory of the dangers of the sea, especially for those who perform the hardest tasks, although also, to a lesser extent, for those who invest in ships and goods.

The film inquires ‘is there a relation between the most dreadful and fearful concept in economics – that of risk – and the category of the sublime in aesthetics?’ We know that the sea is a primordial source of the sublime, especially in the eighteenth century.

The film is an unusual diary that ranges from the presumed innocent summer of 2001 to the current ‘war on terror,’ through a meandering essayistic journey from port to port, shore to shore, and coast to coast.

*What does it mean to be a maritime nation?
To govern the waves?
Or to harvest the sea?*

An American submarine collides with a Japanese trawler. What does this suggest about the division of labour in the Pacific?

How do we remember the old emperor? As a general mounted on his horse? Or as a marine biologist looking through his microscope?

Panama decides whether to increase the width of its canal, over which it now exerts a moderate degree of sovereignty. How come a diver is better prepared to question this huge swath cutting through the jungle?

Galicia receives an unwanted gift of crude oil, which provokes subsequent and important questions about the monomania of governments incapable of conceptualising danger in more than one dimension. What can we learn from people's ability to self-organise in the face of disaster and government indifference? *What can the fishermen of Bueu, - smeared in oil, tell us about it?*

Once again, Barcelona returns to its seafront, creating a pseudo-public sphere: in the north, property prices rise, while in the south even greater maritime logistics efficiency is achieved. *What do the invisible port workers of the city have to say about democracy from their self-defined position as a 'ghetto'?*

And in the middle of it all we visit blizzards and demonstrations in New York, prehistoric mastodons drifting in Los Angeles, militant percussionists and bewildered construction workers in Lisbon, millionaires or millionaire clones (who can tell them apart?) in Amsterdam and street dogs in Athens, all with the idea of considering in detail an image of the sea, the market and democracy.

Allan Sekula
November 2004

Back to the Drawing Board

Lecture by Dr. Sally Stein, the artist's widow, on maritime themes and discursive crosscurrents in the notebooks of Allan Sekula.

Duration: 40 min. (approx.)

Date: Tuesday 13 June 2017, 19.00 h.

Free admission.

Advanced booking: activitats@ftapies.com.

Allan Sekula. Collective Sisyphus. Round table

With the participation of: Carles Guerra, co-curator, Fundació Antoni Tàpies; Agustín Ortiz, The Green Parrot; Representative of the Barcelona port dockers union; Anja Isabel Schneider, co-curator, M HKA and KU Leuven; Cory Scozzari, TBA21; Hilde Van Gelder, co-curator, KU Leuven; Jeroen Verbeeck, KU Leuven; Daniela Zyman, TBA21 Duration: 1 h. (approx.) | Date: Wednesday

14 June 2017, 19 h.

Free admission.

Advanced booking: activitats@ftapies.com.

Approximations

Guided visit to the exhibitions *Allan Sekula. Collective Sisyphus* and *Antoni Tàpies. Objects*

Duration: 1 h. 15 min.

Date: every Saturday except August, 17 h.

Free admission with entrance ticket to the Museum.

Advanced booking not required. Limited places.

Guided visit to the exhibition Allan Sekula. Collective Sisyphus for the Friends of the Fundació

By Carles Guerra, co-curator of the exhibition Allan Sekula. Collective Sisyphus and director of the Fundació Antoni Tàpies.

Duration: 1 h.

Collective Sisyphus. A Cinema season**The Forgotten Space, 2010**

The film follows container cargo aboard ships, barges, trains and trucks, listening to workers, engineers, planners, politicians and those marginalised by the global transport system. As Sekula says: 'Our film is about globalisation and the sea, the "forgotten space" of our modernity.'

Authors: Allan Sekula and Noël Burch
Duration: 112 min

Date: 13 September 2017, 18.00 h

Venue: Fundació Antoni Tàpies

Free admission with ticket entrance to the Museum.

Tsukiji, 2001

Tsukiji is, in the words of the director, an 'urban symphony' dedicated to the largest fish market in the world, and one of the last surviving proletarian spaces in Tokyo.

Author: Allan Sekula

Duration: 43 min

Date: Wednesday 20 September 2017, 18.00 h

Venue: Fundació Antoni Tàpies
Free admission with entrance ticket to the Museum

A Short Film for Laos, 2006-07, and Gala, 2005 (Double bill)

Special session coinciding with the Festival of La Mercè 2017. The films will be introduced by Carles Guerra, co-curator of the exhibition and director of the Fundació Antoni Tàpies. After the screening, a Moritz beer will be offered on the terrace.

Author: Allan Sekula

Duration: 43 min. (A Short Film for Laos) and 24 min. (Gala)

Date: Friday 22 September 2017, 18.00 h

Free admission with ticket entrance to the Museum. Activity in collaboration with Moritz.

The exhibition is co-organized by the Fundació Antoni Tàpies, Barcelona, Lieven Gevaert Research Centre for Photography, Art and Visual Culture (LGC), Leuven, and Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst Antwerpen (M HKA), Antwerp

All images courtesy Allan Sekula Studio. | DL: B15245-2017.

2.1.2

Cultivating Conviviality

ENSAD
Nov. 2017. – Feb. 2018

TOOLS FOR CONVIVIAL CULTURES

The workshop “Cultivating Conviviality” was the starting point of ENSAD’s participation in the 4-year European project 4Cs–From Conflict to Conviviality through Creativity and Culture. “Cultivating conviviality” aimed to show the importance of design methodologies in the process of understanding and integrating social, political and cultural issues of past and present migrations. The programme revolved around the co-creation of ‘tools of conviviality’ that could play an active role in improving togetherness in society, with theoretical contributions, field work, an exhibition and an international conference. Second and third year students at ENSAD explored co-creation methodologies that highlighted know-hows, inventions and imaginaries in relation to contexts of migration. However, as we collaborated with ‘migrants’, we soon traded our hesitant vocabulary for the own lexicon of our new friends, who preferred the name ‘newcomers’. Embracing a language was a first step in equipping ourselves with new stories, new points of view on migration. And many stories were shared, as we learned and created together: students, tutors, newcomers. Stories of people and places. Stories of experience and theory. Stories of making sense, and making kin. This book is an attempt to share some of them.

The workshop was constructed so that students could at the same time identify and contextualise specific topics linked to migration, notably via theoretical approaches that deconstruct colonial perspectives on migration and develop a decolonization of knowledge, and by exploring directly, through an ethnographic research approach, the reality of newcomer's life in Paris today.

Two distinct but complementary research sites were engaged by the students: the northern suburb Saint-Denis, characterized by the diversity of its population, and the incubator for young, newcomer entrepreneurs 'Place' located in central Paris.

In Saint-Denis, the students approached the territory and its hundred different communities through the prism of food, with field study and co-creation work at an urban farm, a community kitchen and a social housing for undocumented workers, mostly from West Africa. At Place, they exchanged with a vibrant community of newcomers, arrived from Syria and India, who invest their expertise and creative energy in social entrepreneurship projects.

Each week, debrief sections in presence of various actors took place in order to go over the challenges and benefits of each fieldwork situation, exchange information on the two research sites, plan the next fieldwork session and consolidate the student's theoretical approach.

The workshop became more than a space to develop and discuss research approaches to migrants' situations. The design process required that students engage with 'newcomer experts' through co-creation methods in order to address previously identified real-life problems. Students also worked on a personal, ethical chart clarifying their project's ethical implications and leitmotifs.

The projects co-developed by students and newcomers were exhibited at ENSAD in January 2018.

THE CULTIVATING CONVIVIALITY WORKSHOP PROGRAMME (2017-18):

November 8: Introduction to the workshop and its context

With Anna Bernagozzi, Hamedine Kane, Khaled Kaka, Stéphane Verlet-Bottéro, Dimitri Zéphir and Florian Dach

November 15: The Experience of Conviviality

With Alice Peinado, Florence Doléac, Nathalie Blanc and Pauline Guinard

November 22: Traveling Theories With Techfugees, Waël Sghaier

November 29: Fieldwork

December 6: Crossings, obstacles, reversals, expectations and successes

December 13: Cultures & Sharing

December 20: Cultivating Diversity With Carmen Bouyer

January 8-12: Intensive Co-creation Workshop and Open Studio

Presentation of the final projects

February 5: Cultivating Conviviality Conference

With Seloua Luste Boulbina, Florian Dach and Dimitri Zéphir, Sebastian Däschle, Daniele Lupo, Inès Mesmar, Eugénie de Larivière, Eddy Terki



Florence Doléac, Adada, inflatable PVC balls, textile coated with plastic, polypropylene net, Velcro. Courtesy of the artist.

KIND MANIPULATION

Transcript from a conversation at ENSAD

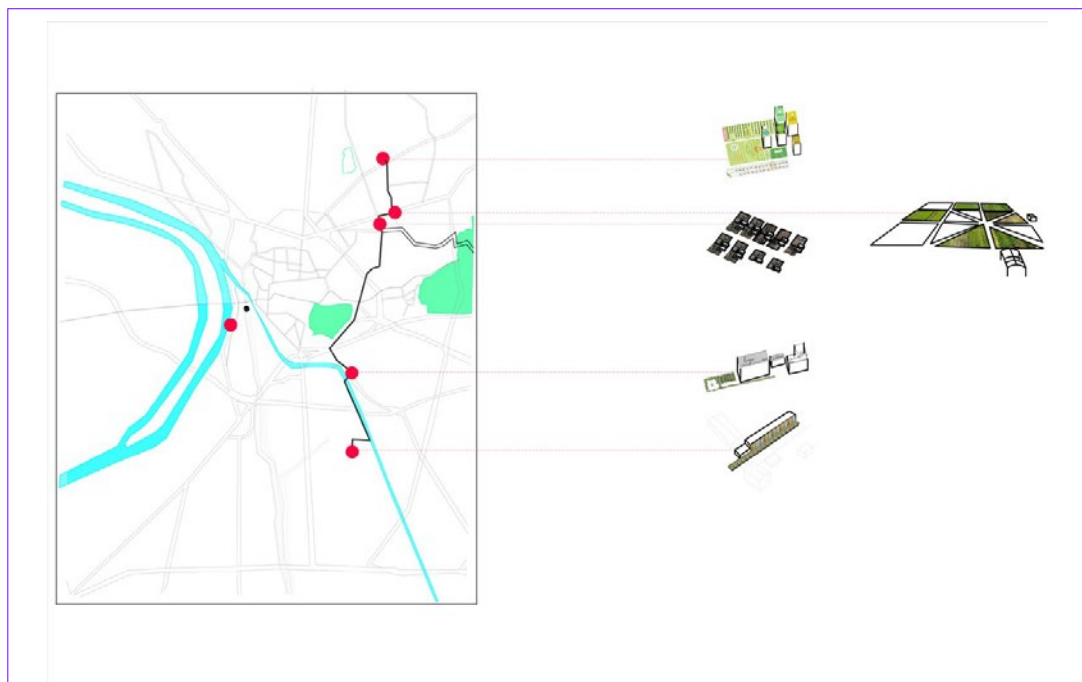
We didn't speak of accident as something necessarily bad, more as something that happens...

It's the unforeseen, serendipity...

She also spoke of something I really liked, she spoke of "kind manipulation", as in trying to divert things, somehow in a direction that one has foreseen. "Kind manipulation", I liked that. She was speaking of the difficulty to go towards the other, the "metro effect", that thing that prevents us from going towards the other, and I replied that this thing that prevents us, is something we should battle against every day. Because every time you battle that fear, you have a good experience, usually.



Field trip in Saint-Denis, guided by Wael Sghaier, tireless explorer of Seine-Saint-Denis district and director of the film 'My Incredible 93'



Mapping the communal gardens of Saint-Denis, Camille Lugand and Léo Sibertin-Blanc

TRAVELING THEORIES



'Ex-île' Writing Workshop by curator
Stéphane Verlet-Bottéro, ENSAD,
November 22nd 2017

< Notes

avec ceux qui finalement, en m'hébergeant chez eux, avaient choisi d'abolir ces vieilles hiérarchies.

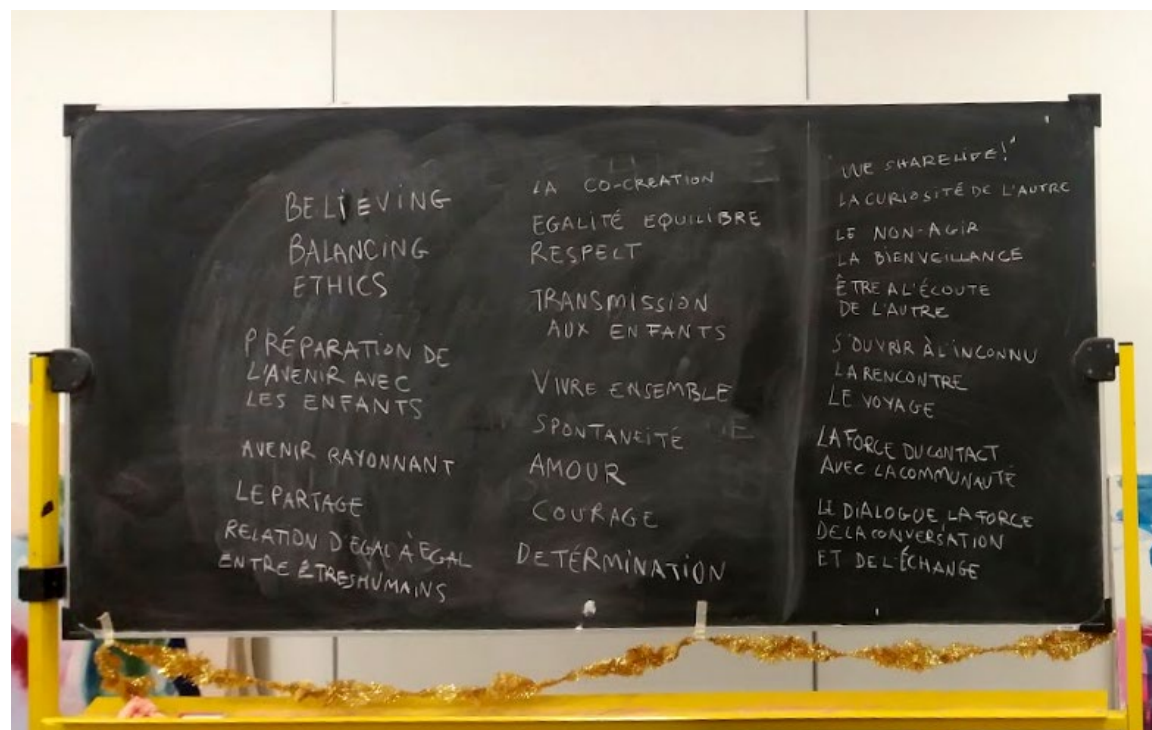
Alors, avec eux, j'ai un peu tout déconstruis quand j'ai pu le faire : Les théories, Les architectures, Les mentalités, Les bouts de canapé. J'ai édifié ce qu'on a appelé dans les années 2020-2030 Le grand Paris : sorte de paysage à la vision superstructure, sans murs, préférant les horizons lointains, peuplés de toutes choses et surtout d'ailleurs.

Un espace où la projection est horizontale, plus verticale. Un espace où tout devient possible.



Edward Said, *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*,
Harvard University Press, 2000

*“Exiles cross borders,
break barriers of thought and experience.”*



Collective Ethical Chart Workshop

by designer **Carmen Bouyer**, ENSAD, December 20th 2017



Ettore Sottsass, Metafore, ... O vuoi guardare la valle?, 1973,
Collection Frac Centre. Black and white silver print, 24 x 30.2 cm.

*“Conviviality was coined by Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, an 18th century French gastronome, in *Physiologie du Goût: Méditations de Gastronomie Transcendantale*. It is about the pleasure of living together, and above all about sharing and communication, about exchange - often around the table but not only. In this sense, the art of the table is a metaphor for the art of living. Thus, cultivating conviviality could mean: reconnecting with the social bond; (re)learning to live together through sharing; defining new social and cultural relationships; rethinking society so that everyone can find their place in it... and also thinking together about new tools that go beyond neoliberal and postmodern logics related to market and consumption, in order to set up a real conviviality. Conviviality, like culture, is built by many: a co-design process is necessary in order to better understand the needs, enhance the knowledge and experiences of each individual and produce relevant tools.”*

Alice Peinado, ‘The experience of conviviality’, lecture on anthropological methodologies in co-design, ENSAD, 15 November 2017

ÉLOGE CRÉOLE

dach&zephir

« Éloge créole is a research by design which we began in August, 2015, around the history of the French West Indies. We chose as ground of exploration and reflection the island of Guadeloupe where from Dimitri is native, and whose anchoring allowed us to have a better understanding of the mechanisms and elements at the origin of its culture.

Built with “leftovers”, in the words of poet and writer Ernest Pépin, the creole culture suffered for a long time from an invalidation, due to its slavery past presented as a “compulsory” inheritance at the origin of its creation. Through our approach, we suggest generating a new vision of the creole history by using these “leftovers”.



dach&zephir, Éritaj Kontré,
brass, coconut leaf, Nevers earthenware



Éritaj Kontré is born from a « unexpected collision » between Faïencerie Georges in Nevers (France), whose heritage lie in the hand-made decoration on raw enamel, and basket weaver Gérard Ako, who weaves objects from coconut palms in Guadeloupe. Combining these two forms of know-how, creates a new shared story about handcraft reflecting the complex French history of immigration but also slavery. The original decor of Nevers earthenware is substituted by Caribbean life scenes to show the possibility of sharing a common history. »

TRAVELING OBJECTS

Conversation with Yde Fan, resident of Saint-Denis and designer of culinary objects

– *In China, in the archeology of 200 BC period, we have found knives and forks. In the North, in Mongolia, and in the West, people always used a knife at the table. There is no fork, but a knife on the table. After the 6th century, China switches to chopsticks. The way of cooking evolved.*

– *You mean in the preparation?*

– *Yes, the way of chopping vegetables. In France an asparagus is served in full, we chop it.*

– *This one is sculpted?*

– *Just cut with a band saw, sanded and varnished. The research is on the opening of the fork, on which level I keep the flexibility of the wood. That one is more for picking something, like a piece of meat. I also work a lot on the theme of Wabi Sabi, this kind of Japanese minimalism.*

– *This one is very different, much lighter.*

– *It's made of maple. I like the color, whitish, but once I varnish it, it'll get dark yellow.*

– *But white feels colder, in relation to food. I find it less welcoming.*

– *It's true that if food is prepared in cooler colors, people are less attracted.*

– *It makes me think of plastic cutlery...*

- *Color is a big part of the research. In China, our sense of color comes from nature. Like a color of chips literally, of frying. In France, it is filed in CMYK, from zero to 255, how much yellow, how much green, whatever color. But we would pick a color that make us think of something, a color of potatoe, of frie, of meat... we attach a story to it.*
- *What's that? It's super design.*
- *That's a model. Actually, the object is not really alive. It's the form that gives the feeling that it's alive. How you succeeded to transfer your soul on these objects, is what creates the impression that these objects are alive, it gives you a desire to use them.*
- *This profile is pretty aggressive. For red meat eaters!*
- *It's for a meat piece, big and rare. I will ask a forger to forge it. It's designed to slice in this direction. It's not the same for right-handed and left-handed. In France you eat meat with the left hand, right?*
- *This left-right thing is quite weird.*
- *No actually, we slice with the right hand.*
- *Yeah, we slice with the right hand.*
- *But you start with the left?*
- *I slice with the left!*

FIELDWORK

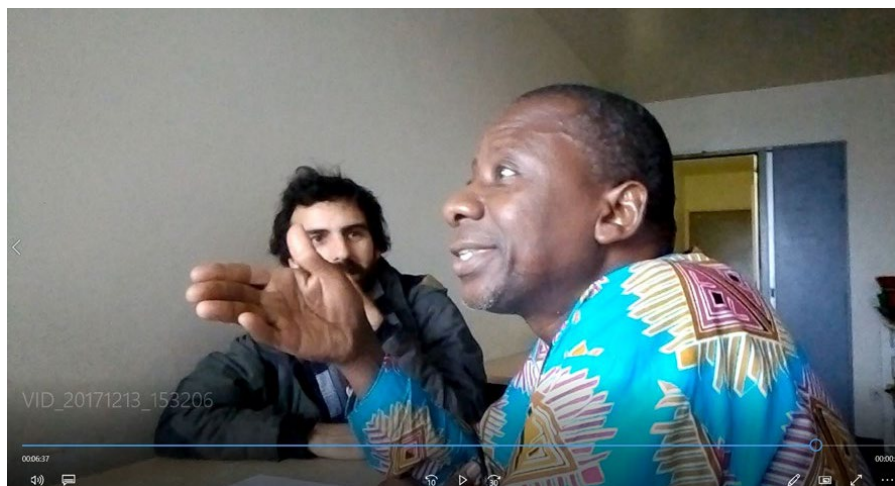


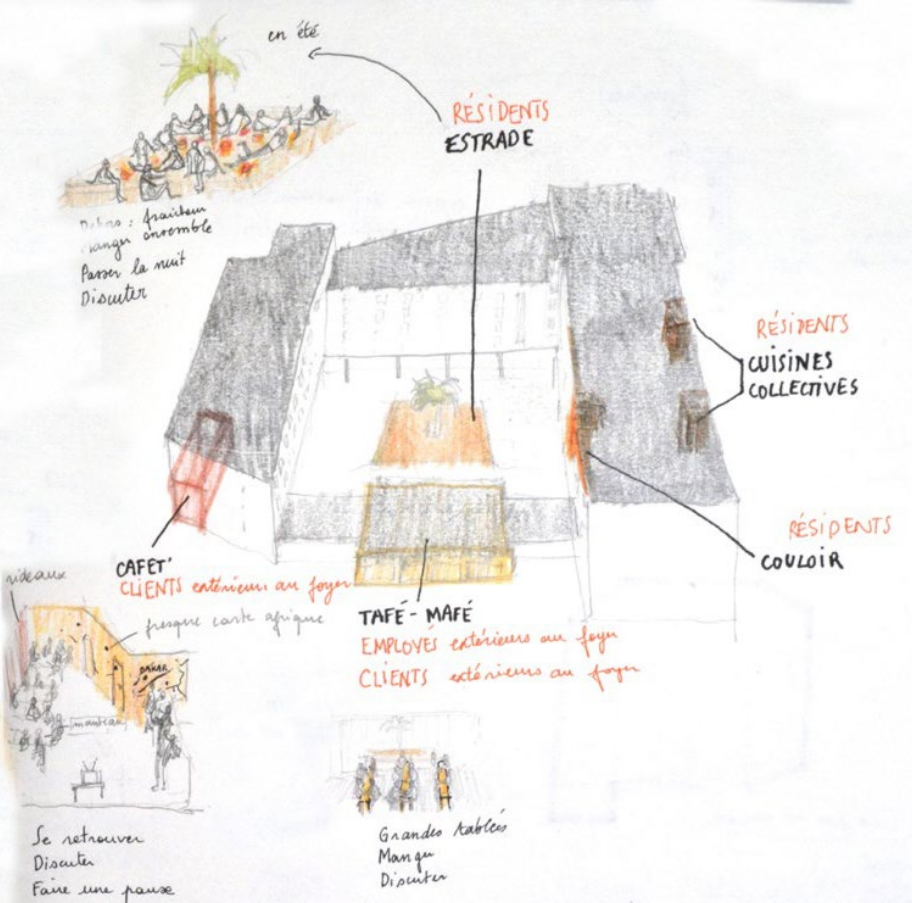
A convivial assembly,
drawing by Zazie Brosse, ENSAD student



Meeting with Place members at La Villette Library, November 2017

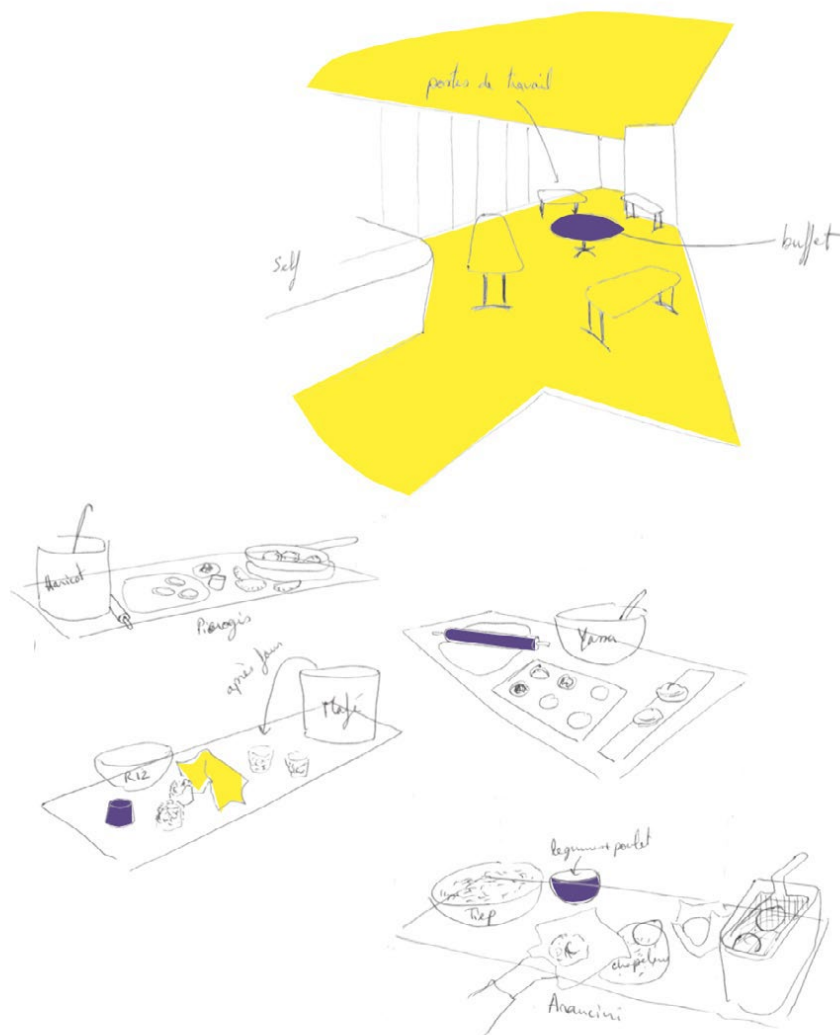
Interviews at Bachir Souni, November 2017





Bachi Souni social housing,
sketch by Camille Lugand, ENSAD student

Taf et Maffé community kitchen,
sketch by Eve Lerouge, ENSAD student



OPEN STUDIO

CARING

Anna Bernagozzi

“For ENSAD the fact of participating to the European platform 4Cs offers a real opportunity to share and make visible the power of co-design and the talent of the students. We hope it will stimulate a new ecology of practices which is so important in this precise moment of transition and profound social transformation.

This ecology of practices will have to put conviviality at his core – a conviviality which, as philosopher Patrick Viveret says, will allow humans to take care of each other and of nature by solving in a creative and dynamic way conflict situations.

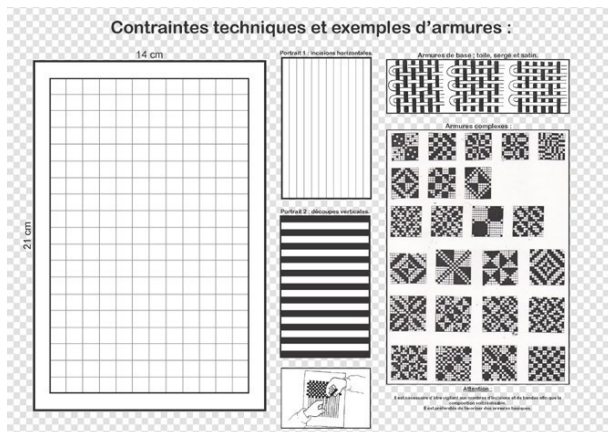
Ivan Illich wrote his ‘Tools of conviviality’ 45 years ago. His words still resonate among all of us in this workshop today: “People need not only to obtain things, they need above all the freedom to make things among which they can live, to give shape to them according to their own tastes, and to put them into use in caring for and about others”.



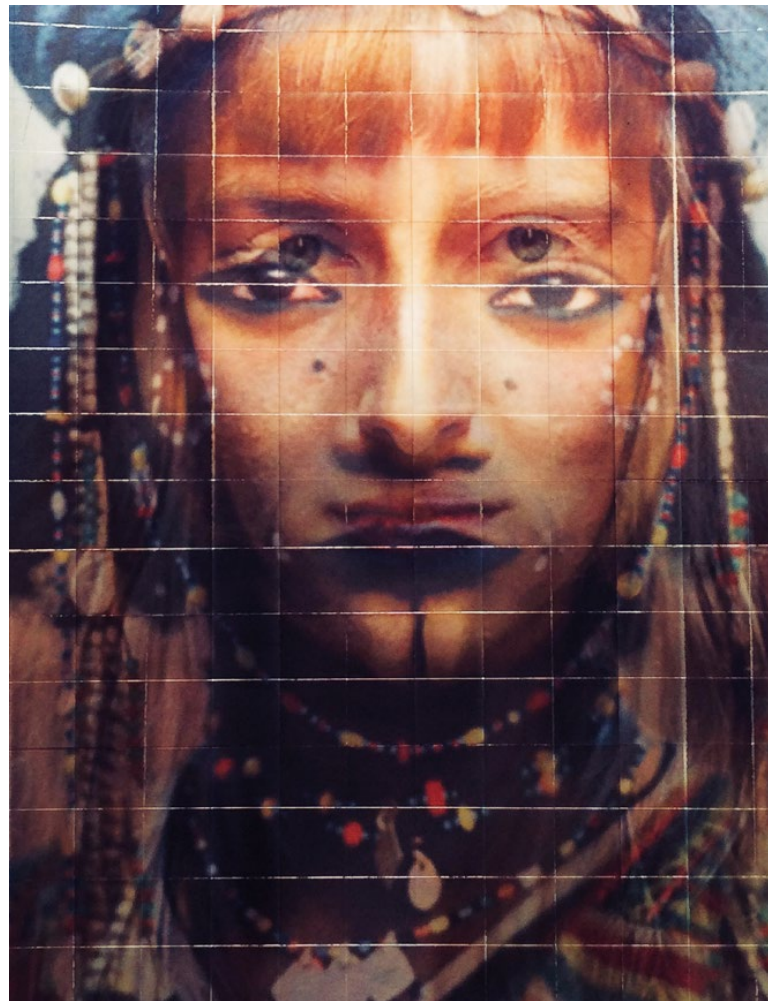
‘Migrants welcome’,
popular sticker circulating in Paris



Public presentation of workshop outcomes,
ENSAD, 12 January 2018



Pauline Doneda, 'Weaving identity',
braided photographic prints on rhodoid,
workshop instructions.



« I'm a student at ENSAD in 4th year, Art and Space section. Previously I attended Ecole des Beaux Arts in Angers for 5 years. It is very important to me that my practice has a social impact. I think art can be a very good tool to consider social progress. As a result, I have created several interactive art installations and am now interested in developing a workshop around the idea of a combined art and social project. Khaled Kaka is the Founder of the MOSAÏC community project. With this project, Khaled organizes events where people from a variety of backgrounds can come together and organize pop-up events, and sustainable solutions around shared issues and challenges. Khaled develops interactive tools that people then use to work together.



Zazie Brosse and Khaled Kaka, 'Le cinquième élément',
ink pads, ink, rollers, workshop instructions.

First Khaled and I had a lot of discussions in order to understand each other's work and interests. Thanks to this we understood how our two projects could dialogue. We imagined a tool for a creative activity to be implemented during a MOSAÏC community project event. Our project consisted in manufacturing a series of ink pads that can be used by participants of to create and express themselves about topics addressed during the MOSAÏC community events. The goal is to create a fresco of different sensibilities. The Fifth Element is a project that aims to highlight and promote conviviality through experimental workshops where participants exchange on and around social issues – such as women's right, equality, dialogue etc. Participants will use different, pre-established symbols in a combinatory manner to create a series of conviviality equations related to the issues that they address.

The workshop is structured as follows:

- 1. 20 min introductory speech explaining the goal of the workshop;*
- 2. Creation of groups of two people each;*
- 3. Identification of a common group issue related to conviviality;*
- 4. Each team is given a box with different stamps, presenting a simple symbol, and a set of different color inks.*
- 5. Each group creates a canvas or fresco using the symbol stamps and colors provided and addressing their chosen issue.*
- 6. Organize of an exhibition! »*

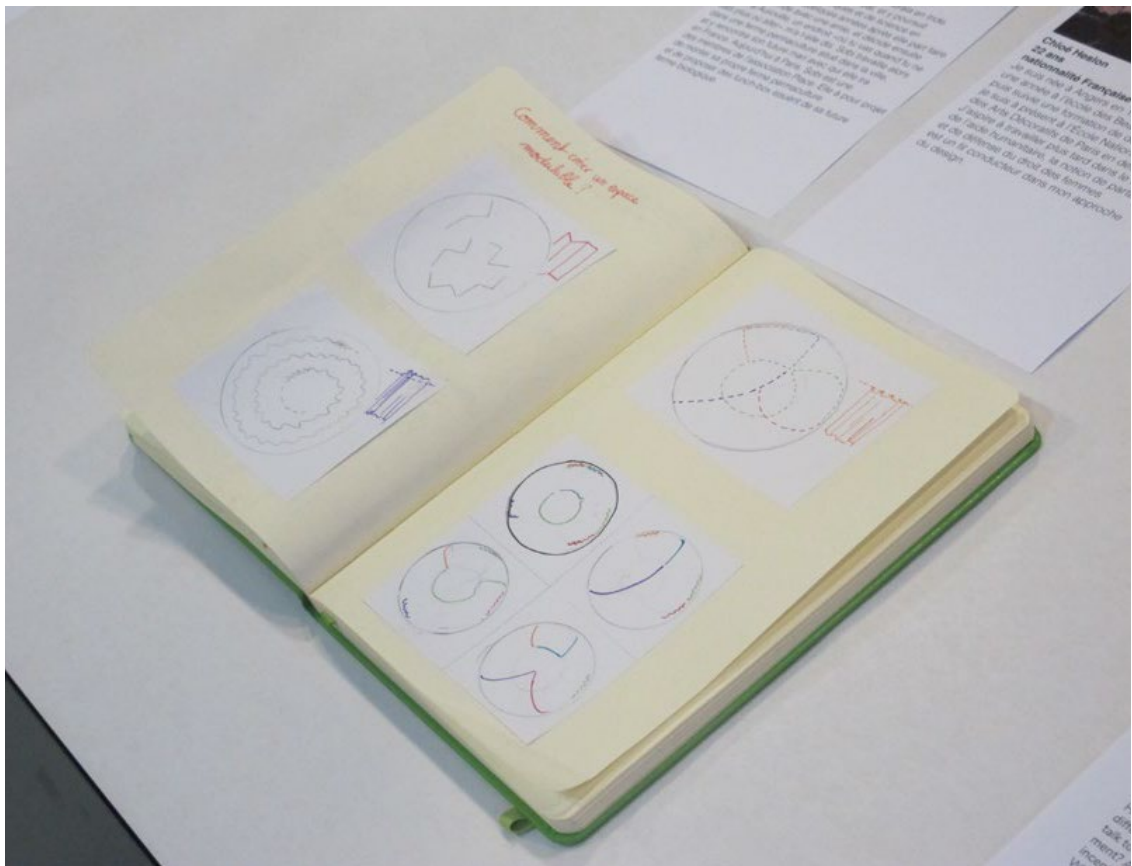
« The Taf et Maffé restaurant in Saint-Denis is managed by the association Resto Passerelle, which employs people needing professional training in view of their professional (re) integration. The restaurant is located within Bachir Souni social housing center for single migrant men. The food proposed is of West Africa origin, just as the majority of the residents living in the housing center. Employees have a contract for 6 months to 2 years. They are trained by Patrick and learn from each other. Most of the people who come to eat at Taf et Maffé are workers from Saint-Denis who are attracted by the cuisine and the low prices (3 Euros a plate). Most of them are migrant men and come from many different countries (Poland, Middle East, India, North, South and West Africa, etc.). They may or may not exchange together, share a table, talk about the weather... However, there is no link between them and the restaurant's cooks who are mostly women. Some of the cooks do not speak French, thus they are not at ease and shy to exchange. They spend hours to cook a dish which will be eaten in 5 minutes. How could we value their work as well as get them out of the kitchen?

Eve Lerouge and Sofia Djenna,
 'Culinary trip', tools, culinary workshop.



In addition, I was also interested in the transmission of the restaurant's culinary know-how. I felt a lack of relationship between the cooks and the restaurant's clients, and even between the cooks themselves. In the kitchen, time is needed to create real exchanges and it is difficult for new employees to be part of the group. Moreover, they cook dishes that they are not necessarily familiar with.

Most of them shared with me their desire to learn French in order to improve their communication skills. In fact, they mostly stay within their communities, because of the language barrier. Thus, it is even more difficult to progress and dare to speak French. I began to interview the members of the restaurant (people in charge, training personnel and cooks). Then I worked 3 days in the kitchen in December to learn from them. From there I designed a workshop that contributes to enhance, through cooking, the power of transmission between new and old members of Taf et Maffé, but more generally between members of any group. »



Chloé Herson, 'Le grand salon des causeuses', drawings and text.

« The 'Living room for talkative women' describes a utopian space where women from around the world come to meet and share. It is a space to learn how to meet someone, how to get to know that person, and so learn how to know oneself as well. This space is designed to bring people together and enable conviviality through freedom of speech without judgment. »



Alexandra Piat, 'Meet Me', series of 6 digital prints.

« During our meetings at Place, I perceived the need of being seen, listened to, understood and, most of all, the need of being part of the community. »

BOUTURE

- ① Couper une tige de 10-15 cm à l'aide d'un sécateur

- ② Retirer les feuilles en bas de la tige, ne laisser que quelques feuilles au sommet

- ③ Creuser un petit trou de 5cm de profondeur et y planter la bouture

- ④ Arroser régulièrement au début puis de moins en moins une fois que la bouture a pris



Camille Lugand, Léo Sibertin-Blanc, and the Bachir Souni residents, 'Laurier Itidere',
wood, plants, prints, drawings, paper models.



MIGRATE: to enter in mobility, get away, get closer, go through.

SETTLE: to establish oneself lastingly in one place, find a notable change in everyday life and make one's situation more stable and comfortable.

ANCHOR: to take part in something, in a territory.

SELF-TRAINING: During our meetings, some residents expressed their desire to learn. Some are involved in reforestation community projects in their home country and would like the garden to be a pedagogic tool. Workshops would take place in the garden to train residents willing to participate. These could then train other residents.

*A PLATFORM ANCHORED IN THE RESIDENCE
CONNECTING DIFFERENT COMMUNITY GARDENS IN
SAINT-DENIS: The garden operates as a stimulator to awake curiosity towards this shared gardening practice and facilitate connections with other gardens existing on the territory. Extending the project creates a possibility of inviting users to connect outside the residence. If the garden grows significantly, we can imagine it becoming a source of employment.*

THE CULTIVATING CONVIVIALITY CONFERENCE



The closing conference held on the 5th of February concluded the workshop with the contribution of committed speakers from international and multidisciplinary backgrounds. It addressed the topic of co-creation and design strategies that contribute to hospitality and togetherness. The lectures and discussions engaged with conceptual, aesthetic and ethical challenges in design projects in relation to migration, with a focus on practices which, while acknowledging the complexity of real-life situations, aim to value the knowledge, know-how and life experience of people through co-creation processes.

With:

Seloua Luste Boulbina, philosopher and researcher at Paris Diderot University

Florien Dach and Dimitri Zephir, designers

Sebastian Däschle, designer, architect and stage designer, founder of Cucula, Berlin

Daniele Lupo, curator, cofounder of Cosmo and Lungomare, Bolzano

Inès Mesmar, designer, founder of Fabrique Nomade, Paris

Eugénie de Larivière, designer, founder of Emmaüs Alternative

Eddy Terki, graphic designer and artist

DECOLONIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE

Seloua Luste Boulbina

“To speak of decolonization of knowledge is to question the transfers of knowledge, the circulation of ideas, and to ask oneself what one has learned, what one learns, what one can learn from others, whoever they are and from wherever they come. The decentralization that this attitude implies constitutes a new Copernican revolution. In this revolution, Europeans have to realize what is offered to them by others than themselves, non-Europeans. This is what is now known as ‘provincialization’. They have to grasp not how they have spread their diverse and varied knowledge throughout the world, in a globalization that has not always said its name, but how they have integrated into their ways of doing things and thinking, what came to them from elsewhere. To do this, migration is essential. It shifts distances and boundaries between Europeans and non-Europeans. No migration, however, without emigration or immigration. That is why Edward Said literally identified himself with Joseph Conrad. Edward Said called ‘silence’ the singular universalism which, in order to assert itself as such, needs to silence those who are referred, by nature and not by accident, to a particularity that they could not get rid of, whoever they are, and whatever they do. Thus, in *Culture and Imperialism*, he notes that “the modern universalism of Europe and the United States postulates the silence, voluntary or not, of the non-European world”.

[...]

Migrants, one could say, have a ‘science of the concrete’. They tinker with who they are, where they come from and where they go. Migration shows complicated paths more than linear ones. When we do not focus on places, the place of departure, the place of arrival, we wonder where migrants pass through, we wonder about the spaces they cross. Eventually, we question all these incidental movements that make up myth and identity, patching up and concrete science. To migrate is to wander, to remove an obstacle, to bounce back. Migrating is entering into mobility, not only that which moves away from one place to bring us closer to the other, but that which, in the head and body, in the symbolic and imaginary, sometimes stirs up, for a long time, ghosts from the past.”

READING LIST

Ivan Illich, On Conviviality

Edward Said, Reflections On Exile

Claude Lévi-Strauss, The Savage Mind

Achille Mbembe, Politiques de l'Inimitié

Frantz Fanon, Peau Noire, Masques Blancs

Dipesh Chakrabarty, Provincialiser l'Europe

Seloua Luste Boulbina, Les miroirs vagabonds ou la décolonisation des savoirs

whatdesigncando.com

gamesforchange.org

dezeen.com

refugeecities.org

stedelijk.nl

d-lab.mit.edu

stories.makesense.org

mainsdoeuvres.org

engage.world

singafrance.com

labrigadedauteures.wordpress.com

discosoupe.org

lescuistotsmigrateurs.com

s-nodi.it

kiva.org

openstructures.net

opendesignnow.org

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This book was edited by Stéphane Verlet-Bottéro, and designed by Carmen Bouyer. Printed at ENSAD in February 2019.



Issa Samb, From the Ethics of Acting to the Empire Without Signs, Installation view at Iniva, London, 2014. Photo: Thierry Bal.

2.1.3

The Baltic Sea

A Liquid
Memorial

VAA,
Nida Art Colony
September 16-23, 2018

POLITICAL BORDERS AND LIQUID MEMORY: A WORKSHOP IN NIDA

Call for Participants Text

The one week-long workshop *The Baltic Sea: A Liquid Memorial* will start on the 16th of September at Nida Art Colony of Vilnius Academy of Arts. Led by creators of renown counter-monuments Horst Hoheisel and Andreas Knitz from Germany the workshop will reflect upon the questions of territorial borders, migrating memories, and intercultural encounters.

One can witness an obvious manifestation of spatial, political, economic, and cultural fragmentation on the Curonian Spit – the short border next to Nida separates Lithuania or EU and Russia, and divides the Curonian Spit into two halves. *The Baltic Sea: A Liquid Memorial* will try to restore the cracking cultural ties between Kaliningrad region and Lithuania. Twelve artists from Dublin, the Hague, Kaliningrad, London, Moscow, and Vilnius will be busy at Nida Art Colony next week. Artist, writer and curator of the 11th Kaunas Biennial Paulina Pukytė and the winner of Lukiškės Square memorial contest Andrius Labašauskas among them.

The organisers would like the participants to deal with the borders in a playful manner. The Curonian Spit is a nature reserve, which is cut through by a border guarded by border patrols. However, nature doesn't recognise any borders. It overgrows physical borders and imagined boundaries, such as the so-called Iron Curtain in Berlin where nowadays people can go hiking or simply relax.

‘With *The Baltic Sea: A Liquid Memorial* we aim to develop our own creative ways of inviting playful border crossings. One example could be to put up a volleyball net on the beach and to play a cross-border beach volleyball match with Russian and Lithuanian players. We could overcome the imaginary border on surf boards and boats using our self-created border-sails or kites. We will try to soften the edges of the political border between the two power blocks in artistic ways.’ say the leaders of the workshop Horst Hoheisel and Andreas Knitz.

The workshop leaders [Horst Hoheisel and Andreas Knitz](#) have worked together since 1994 on commemoration projects known as counter-monuments or negative monuments. They are searching for new forms of commemoration of the victims of mass murder and dictatorships. Instead of repairing the irreparable, their goal is to make the absence of murdered people visible and felt. Their projects have been realized in Germany, Poland, Israel, Venezuela, Brazil, Cambodia, and elsewhere. For the 11th Kaunas Biennial Hoheisel and Knitz have created a new site-specific work *Recycled Memory* at the Union Square in Kaunas.

The workshop *The Baltic Sea: A Liquid Memorial* is jointly organised by Thomas Mann Culture Centre, non-governmental organisation *Art Mission* (Kaliningrad) and VAA Nida Art Colony.

The workshop is part of the project [4Cs: From Conflict to Conviviality through Creativity and Culture](#), supported by the EU *Creative Europe* programme. The project co-funded by the Goethe-Institute Lithuania, the Lithuanian Council for Culture, and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania.

WORKSHOP THE BALTIC SEA: A LIQUID MEMORIAL

September 16–23, 2018

Workshop leaders

[Horst Hoheisel and Andreas Knitz](#)

Almost every native inhabitant of the Curonian Spit was uprooted and turned into a migrant during and after the Second World War. Their places were quickly taken by newcomers. The leaders of *The Baltic Sea: A Liquid Memorial* take this episode as a historical example of a radical change and new co-existence. Even today on the Curonian Spit one can see an obvious manifestation of spatial, political, economic and cultural fragmentation – there is this short border next to Nida, which separates Lithuania or EU and Russia and divides the Curonian Spit into two halves.

There were times, when this border was more porous, when projects and meetings between Lithuanian and Kaliningrad organisations were more frequent than today. *The Baltic Sea: A Liquid Memorial* will try to restore these cracking cross-border ties. The organisers would like the participants to deal with the borders in a playful manner. The Curonian Spit is a nature reserve, which is cut through by a border guarded by border patrols. However, nature doesn't recognise any borders. It overgrows physical borders and imagined boundaries, such as the so-called Iron Curtain in Berlin where nowadays people can go hiking or simply relax.

It is planned to work with objects found “on site”, like beach chairs, boats, surf boards, bikes, etc., as well as with natural materials. The results of *The Baltic Sea: A Liquid Memorial* will be documented and published online. The leaders are partnering with the touring exhibition [*On Visible and Invisible Borders*](#), which will be installed at the [Jewish Museum Munich](#) in 2019. It might be possible to present the results of the workshop there.

[\[Photo reportage\]](#)

All images © Andrej Vasilenko





All images © Andrej Vasilenko





All images © Andrej Vasilenko



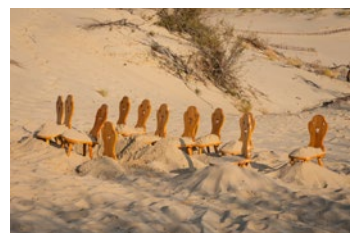
REFLECTIONS AND ACTIONS UPON MEDIATION PRACTICES
PART 2 — ACTIONS





VAA + NIDA ART COLONY

All images © Andrej Vasilenko



Paulina Pukytė

THE LIQUID MEMORIAL WORKSHOP

with Horst Hoheisel and Andreas Knitz

It was fun to play for a week in the beautiful setting of the Curonian Spit, fooling around the nearby border between current Lithuania and former Lithuania Minor, or between former Russian and Prussian empires, or between the European Union and one of the colonies of Russia, the so called Kaliningrad Region. Artists from both sides, and from Western European Union made friends, joint projects, dinners, trips, performances, jokes, etc. Reasons for borders in particular places and questions of what would be on both sides if there were no border in this particular place were not discussed.

It was interesting to learn of a “heartbeat detector” on border crossings, used to detect humans hidden in vehicles. It was disheartening to realise that there are situations in which having a human heart can be punished by law.

It was interesting to learn of a “fantasy document” on border crossings. It was dispiriting to realise that there are situations in which fantasy can be punished by law in the same way as forgery.

I made five performances during the workshop:

one **pretended**

one **impulsive**

one **forced**

one **unexpected**

one **planned**

The Pretended:

A young couple romantically walking on the beach and then crossing the line into the border protection zone without even stopping to consider it as if it wasn't there, and disappearing into the distance towards the real border, while the artists stayed put and watched, dutifully obeying border rules.



The Impulsive:

Either inspired by this transgression or simply wanting to photograph the racoons I tried to walk about 5 metres into the Zoo territory without buying a ticket. The ticket ladies told me to go back, so I obeyed and went back without taking a photo. Then I found another way to photograph the racoons – through the window.

Is the artist's way to obey the rules, to disobey them, or to find other ways of achieving the same, or maybe even better result?



The Forced:

To carry someone else's bag across the border is an act of great trust. It was the bag of one of the artists from our group, but I didn't know who's. To explain its contents (which I had no idea about) as my own during the customs check required "creating on the spot": I had to guess what was in cases and packages, I had to know why I was bringing in a packet of salami, and I had to explain what was the purpose of some very heavy pieces of metal in the shape of a boat.

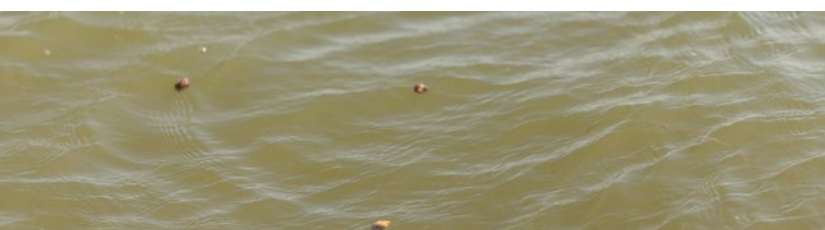
What is artificial and what is natural





The Unexpected:

Having learned from the chief of border control that the law requires no border markings on water, and having understood it as “the law requires no border markings on water” I tried to create a line across the water of the lagoon out of floating markers (empty snail shells), only to find that each time the waves inevitably turned my line by 90 degrees – placing it along the coast, perpendicular to the way I wanted it.



The Planned:

Our task was to transport something across the border to the Russian side and then back. On the beach near the border protection zone I found a washed out wooden plank that was once part of a cargo box on a ship. It was clear that it had travelled across the border from Russia by sea, as it carried a Russian inscription: BRUTTO 119 kg. So I decided to help it travel back – this time by land, and with an added inscription: 1990 ŠVELNI 90°. This place has always been a border zone. But in 1990 the border turned by 90° degrees – naturally and inevitably. The current border might seem hard and unnatural with it's menacing buildings, equipment, officers, and checks, while the former border along the seacoast might have seemed soft and natural. But it was the opposite: the former border along the sea was the Iron Curtain – it was not flexible, it was hard, it was in fact, impenetrable. It might be only 90° degrees change, as we still have a border here, but the new border is flexible, it is a soft border, a gentle border, the one you can cross, if you follow the rules.



БPYTTO = BRUTTO

Latin BRUTUS - dull, insensible

Italian BRUTO - ugly, bad, nasty

Spanish BRUTO - stupid

French BRUT - raw, rude

English BRUTE - savage, cruel, crude, irrational, insensitive, not human

Lithuanian BRUTTO - brutto (indeclinable = not capable of being declined = having no inflected forms = **not flexible**)

Lithuanian ŠVELNI - gentle (declinable = having inflected forms = **flexible**):

švelni	švelnias
švelnios	švelniomis
švelniai	švelniose
švelnią	švelnūs
švelnia	švelniam
švelnioje	švelnius
švelnus	švelniais švelni-
švelnaus	uose švelnesnė
švelniam	švelniausia
švelnų	švelnesnis
švelniu	švelniausias
švelniamė	švelniai
švelnios	švelniau
švelnių	švelniausiai
švelnioms	(most gently) to



cross

2.1.4

This Is
No Longer
That Place
A Public Discussion

Royal College of Art,
The Showroom,
Tate Britain
March 2019

This Is No Longer That Place: A Public Discussion

3 Workshop events,
March 2019, held at
The Showroom and
Tate Britain

A European Cooperation
project co-funded by
Creative Europe and the
Royal College of Art

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2.0 TIMING AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

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5.0 PROCESS

- 5.1. Initial Student Project
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APPENDIX 1: Workshop Programme

APPENDIX 2: Links to Event Videos

APPENDIX 3: Participant Biographies

APPENDIX 4: Review of the Workshops by Elisa Adami

APPENDIX 5: RCA Students' Brief

1.0 SUMMARY

The Royal College of Art's (RCA) workshop for the 4Cs project: *This Is No Longer That Place: A Public Discussion*, was a sequence of three interlinked events taking place from Tuesday 5 March to Thursday 8 March 2019. The workshop was timed to coincide with the anticipated date of the UK's secession from the EU, colloquially known as Brexit, though political events actually deferred this to 2020. The Brexit Referendum had brought many of the issues key to 4Cs into the political spotlight. These included re-assertions of the primacy of national identities and national government; heated disputes over the desirability of migrants; questioning of the European Project and the EU's core value of free movement; and rising antagonism towards migrant individuals and communities. This meant through their scope and timing the workshops were engaging with issues at the heart of the UK's ongoing political debate.

The workshop took place at two venues: The Showroom in north-west London, a gallery situated in a district of relative deprivation and home to many migrant families; and Tate Britain, which holds the national collection of British, modern and contemporary art. Both organisations host a programme of public events to enhance appreciation of art and encourage debate.

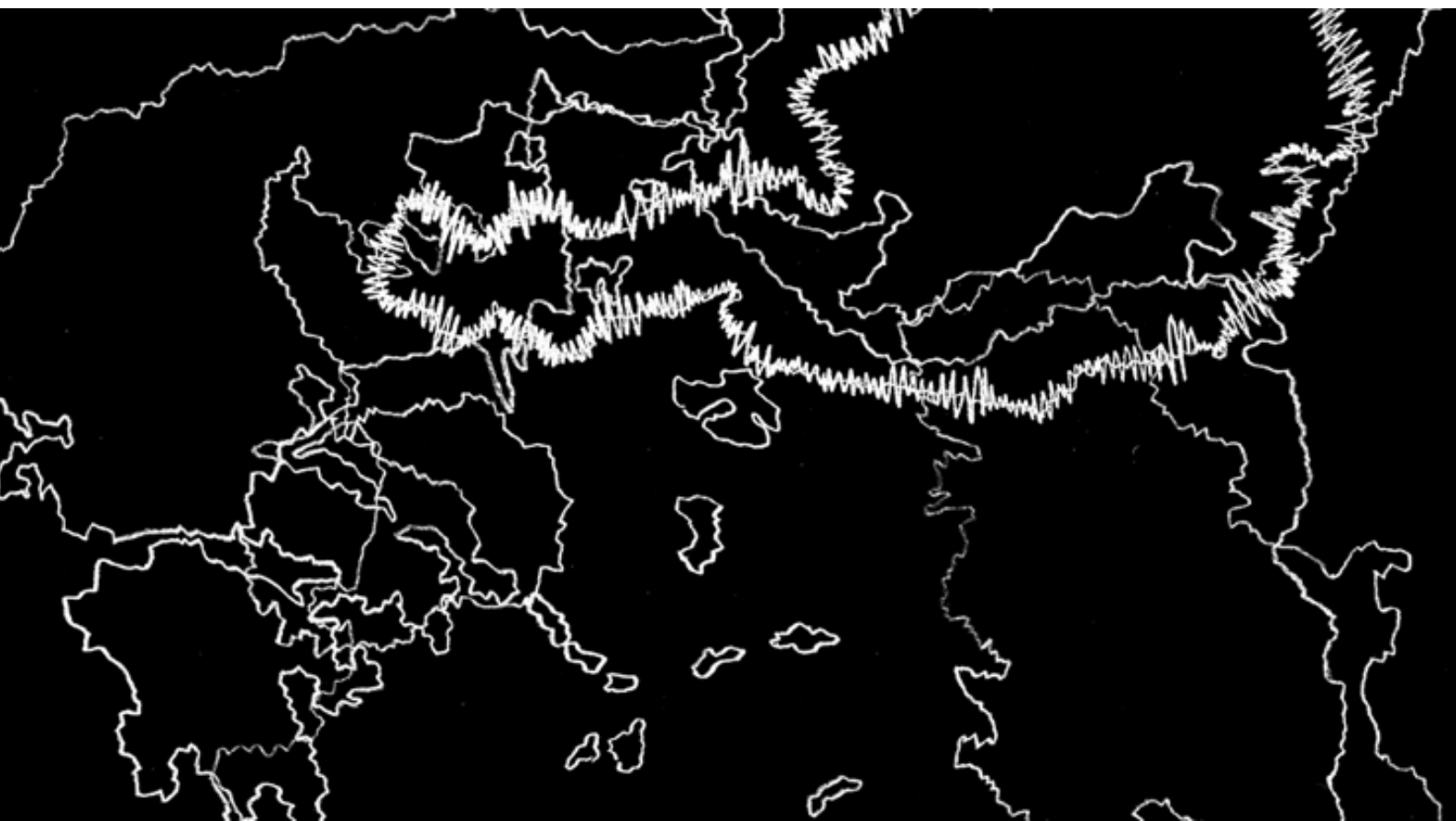
The content of the workshop was developed by a working group, utilising material generated through an initial student project: *Conditions of Entry*. This was delivered at the RCA as part of the Curating Contemporary Art MA programme by Dr. Ben Cranfield, the Course Tutor; with Michaela Crimmin, the 4Cs UK Artistic Director and Curator; and Noor Abuarafteh, the 4Cs UK Artist in Residence.

The sessions involved artists, curators, venue directors and academics with an international professional profile and an interest in exploring aspects of 4Cs topics through their practice. The events included screenings; presentations; a performance; and panel sessions and discussion with audience members contributing. The sessions benefitted from the willingness of the workshop partners to make their venues available and provide staffing support, the commitment of the speakers, and the engagement of a diverse audience whose challenging questions, combined with goodwill and restraint, meant the sessions felt charged without becoming confrontational. All the sessions were very well attended. In order to ensure dissemination to wider audiences than could be accommodated in the venues, the sessions were audio recorded and videoed, with material subsequently made available through the RCA and 4Cs websites.

2.0 TIMING AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

The three workshops were intentionally programmed to take place in the final few weeks before the UK's anticipated secession from the EU in March 2019. This was three years after the 2016 EU membership Referendum, which resulted in a victory for the 'Leave' campaign, though only by a narrow margin. During the run up to the Referendum, UK citizens increasingly self-identified as 'Remainers' and 'Brexiters'. This new binary contrast cut across traditional left-wing and right-wing political affiliations and compromised key aspects of long-standing political party ideologies.

Oliver Ressler, *Emergency Turned Upside-Down*, film still, 2016, © Oliver Ressler





Kathrin Böhm, © Kathrin Böhm

The new politics even extended into, and increasingly disrupted, the functioning of the UK's Parliament. Prior to the Referendum of 2016, the then Prime Minister David Cameron had outlined the changes he aimed to bring about in overall EU policy. These changes would have reasserted the pre-eminence of the EU's constituent nation-states. Practical aspects included additional immigration controls, especially for citizens of new member states; new powers for national parliaments collectively to veto proposed EU laws; and a lessening of the influence of the European Court of Human Rights on national police forces and courts. At

an ideological level Cameron proposed abandoning the fundamental EU aspiration of "ever closer union". His failure to secure meaningful support for this new direction from the rest of the EU's political elite led to the UK's Referendum on continued EU membership.

The Referendum debate reactivated historic fault lines between and within the UK constituent nations. Supposedly forgotten regional animosities resurfaced and moribund geopolitical borders were revitalised or gained a new relevance. The majority of Scottish voters supported continued EU membership; the Scottish Nationalist Party declared the result would inevitably lead to the dissolution of the Union. The Referendum results also demonstrated the continued existence of a political North/South divide. This was typically explained as a consequence of London, and its immediate hinterland in the Southeast, disproportionately benefitting economically from EU membership, whilst the country's more peripheral Northeast, Northwest and Midlands were all 'left behind' (along with the Southwest and Wales, regions that similarly expressed more support for leaving the EU).

The fragile peace in Northern Ireland also came under strain, as the ongoing *de facto* dissolution of the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland (due to the UK's and Republic's common EU membership) came under threat. Northern Ireland's Unionist politicians balked at the only practical alternative to re-hardening the province's geopolitical border with the rest of Ireland: constructing new trading barriers between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK.

The Referendum gave legitimacy to public debates that involved sometimes extreme ideological differences towards the desirability of migrancy, the social centrality of cultural, national and regional identities, and the social role and authority of the nation-state. Leave campaigners openly attacked the EU policy of the free movement of people across the block, as well as questioning the validity of the EU ideals of European social integration and common citizenship. This context gave the workshop sessions an added poignancy as well as a very particular urgency.

3.0 OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 Identify the barriers that are preventing a more equitable and peaceful society. We focused on art as the means of exploring these barriers, drawing on the current political situation in the UK following the 2016 Referendum and the ensuing hostilities. It was also necessary to consider the reasons behind the growing divisions and potential ramifications for the UK in relation to mainland Europe, specifically around the subjects of migration and displacement.
- 3.2 Bring together creators of exceptional projects and enable the exchange of information between artists and curators whose work has contributed to the subject area. Drawing on different perspectives and approaches, the workshop sought views as to whether art has the capacity to enable greater understanding and tolerance between people who are divided by differing ideologies. We used the work shown to assess the value art can bring to the subject of conflict as distinct and complementary contributions to those from other sectors.

- 3.3 Inspire a new generation of cultural agents by providing the opportunity for a cohort of post-graduate curating students to become involved and supported in exploring artists' engagement with the challenges of 21st century conflict. This entailed providing them, together with a wider cohort of undergraduate and postgraduate students, access to the workshop events and the opportunity to contribute to the discourse, in order that they might confidently make further contributions to this subject in the future.
- 3.4 Reach new audiences including people with direct experience of conflict but not part of the art sector, and art professionals not necessarily engaged with the subject of conflict and conciliation. To encourage this, the events were to be open and free for all to attend.
- 3.5 Disseminate the content of the workshop events to a wide audience.

4.0 THE THREE WORKSHOPS

4.1 The Workshop Venues

The first two of the three events were held at The Showroom in North West London. For over thirty years The Showroom has been commissioning and producing art and discourse, challenging assumptions of what art can be and do across a wide range of audiences, including art professionals and the local community. Through their *Communal Knowledge* programme, the gallery has developed long-term relationships with community groups and individuals in their local area. The Showroom has always played a role in developing discourse around contemporary art practices, and the organisation now convenes and delivers around fifty public events a year, almost all of which are free to access.

The third event was held at Tate Britain. Tate is a leading global institution, holding the national collection of British art as well as an outstanding collection of modern and contemporary international art, attracting around 8 million visitors a year to its four museums. The institution's headline aim is to engage a broad audience in considering the nature of art and its value to the world. This remit includes the encouragement of deep scholarship and stimulating an ongoing inquiry into the positive contribution that art plays in society through a Learning Programme that holds public events on social and cultural current issues.

The Showroom prior to the event, © Arturo Bandinelli



4.2 Opening Event at The Showroom, Tuesday 5 March 2019

The opening event began with a screening of 'The Tempest Society' by French Moroccan artist **Bouchra Khalili**¹, originally commissioned as a video installation for documenta 14 in 2017². The workshop provided one of the few opportunities to see the work in the UK. Its content provided exemplary material for both the initial discussion and the events that followed later in the week. This session also served as the launch for Bouchra Khalili's book of the same name, presented by its publisher, Book Works³. The volume is a collection of interviews and essays, together with rare archival material relating to the Paris-based 1970s agit-prop theatre group 'Al Assifa', and its legacy.

1. Bouchra Khalili
www.bouchrakhalili.com

2. documenta 14
www.documenta14.de/en/artists/13565/bouchra-khalili

3. Book Works
www.bookworks.org.uk/node/1958

Bouchra Khalili and Elvira Dyangani Ose © Arturo Bandinelli



The film is described by Bouchra Khalili as a hypothesis addressing inequality and racism in Europe combined with an exposition on the possibility of mobilisation and defiance. Khalili uses the film and book to present a raft of connected subjects, including the creation and destruction of nation-states, the European economic crisis, contemporary migration and the conditions of immigrant workers and refugees, as well as asserting the potential for politicised art today.⁴

This provided more than ample material for the ensuing conversation between Bouchra Khalili and Elvira Dyangani Ose (Director of The Showroom), which was then opened up to the audience for comments and questions.

4. The Tempest
Society publication
www.documenta14.de/en/artists/13565/bouchra-khalili

Bouchra Khalili and Elvira Dyangani Ose, © Arturo Bandinelli



4.3 One Day Event at The Showroom, Thursday 7 March 2019

The first event was followed by a one-day workshop, which offered the opportunity to further explore the issues and questions raised. Elvira Dyangani Ose and Michaela Crimmin gave introductory talks that set this session's context and framed the key issues and questions.

Dr. Yaiza Hernández Velázquez, then lecturer at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts (now at Goldsmiths, University of London), chaired the morning session on 'Global citizenship, socio-politics and the arts'. Her research centres on artistic and para-artistic institutional models that prefigure, support or represent radical social change.

Gurminder Bhambra, Professor of Postcolonial and Decolonial Studies in the Department of International Relations at the University of Sussex, delivered the opening keynote. In this she spoke to the experiences of first, second and third generation UK migrants, including her own viewpoint, as a way of addressing the legacy of colonialism, citizenship, nationalism, and national sovereignty in post-Referendum UK.

Gurminder Bhambra, © Arturo Bandinelli



Oliver Ressler expanded on these issues from the perspective of an artist and filmmaker drawing on projects he has brought to public space, particularly in his native Austria during recent times of heightened political tension. These projects focused on democracy, and migration, with Ressler implicitly suggesting forms of resistance and social alternatives through his work.

Daniela Ortiz, a Peruvian Barcelona-based artist, showed a selection of her projects, including work sited in the gallery and the public domain. Through these pieces she has explored nationality, racialisation, social class and gender. She talked about embedded structures of colonial, patriarchal and capitalist power. Her particular emphasis was on the European migratory control system, its links to colonialism and the legal structures created and deployed by institutions. As Professor Bhabra had done, she referenced her own, sometimes violent, experiences as being seen and treated as an ‘outsider’. The three presentations, all with overlapping but distinct approaches, generated a lively exchange between the participants, the Chair, and the wider audience. These exchanges, as well as the presentations themselves, were captured in commissioned videos.



Ane Rodríguez Armendariz,
Natasha Marie Llorens,
Alicia Chillida Amezttoy,
Elvira Dyangani Ose,
© Arturo Bandinelli

The afternoon was divided into two parts, the first focusing on ‘Art, art institutions and frameworks of representation’, chaired by **Elvira Dyangani Ose**. This session took a contemporary gallery in San Sebastián as a single case study, presented in order to discuss how an organisation has engaged with the workshop’s issues from both institutional and curatorial perspectives. Tabakalera fosters an open environment where everyone is invited to participate in questioning, reflecting on and seeking answers to societal challenges.

Natasha Marie Llorens, a French American curator and writer based in Algiers and Paris, discussed *L’Intrus* (the intruder), an exhibition she programmed at Tabakalera. This work engaged with the subject of Jean-Luc Nancy’s book of the same name and explored the notions of ‘stranger’ and the inter-dependency that exists between stranger and host: *“Europe is in the middle of a migrant crisis that is testing the limits of its universalism along with its ability to see humanity in all human beings.”*⁵

5. [L’Intrus at Tabakalera
www.tabakalera.eu/en/
lintrus-stranger-exhibi-
tion-natasha-marie-llorens](http://www.tabakalera.eu/en/lintrus-stranger-exhibition-natasha-marie-llorens)

Ane Rodríguez Armendariz, the then Cultural Director of Tabakalera, talked about an educational project the organisation had undertaken with young migrants who are often targeted by the police. She explained that for them, endeavouring to find a place in Catalan life is an ongoing struggle. How does a gallery work with groups like this constructively, when perhaps the attention should rather be turned onto the xenophobia and racism in the local community?

Alicia Chillida Amezttoy, a curator based in Spain, was the third speaker. She showed images from an exhibition, giving everyone the opportunity to see examples of a range of artists' work. The discussion continued to have the migrant crisis at its centre, seeing Brexit as an example of resulting political movements. To respond constructively, as Tabakalera is trying to do, is at heart a political challenge at a national level, and at a local activist and humanitarian level. It is about education, housing and other everyday pressures and expectations. It also demands an effort on the part of artists, curators, and critics including more discussion on the aesthetics of representation. How to represent migrants on equal terms?

Company Drinks: blackcurrant gleaning in Essex, © Kathrin Böhm



The final session of the day was chaired by Michaela Crimmin and given to ‘Making sense of culture and identity politics in the context of Brexit’. London-based German artist **Kathrin Böhm** began with a semi performance, using her artwork pinned to the gallery wall, in order to raise issues about art in relation to activism. Then she talked about ‘Company Drinks’, one of the projects she has initiated, which is based in Barking & Dagenham, a district where the pro-Brexit vote had been unusually high for London. In the UK fruit picking is almost all now done by migrant workers, but Böhm has drawn on the history of East Londoners travelling to Kent to pick hops, annually inviting local London residents to pick, process and produce drinks as a cross-cultural activity. Böhm describes the work as ‘art in the shape of a drinks company’, run by its participants. **Dámaso Randulfe**, a Spanish artist and architect based in London, focused on a journal series he had co-edited, *The Migrant Journal*⁶. This six-issue publication explored the circulation of people, goods, and information across the world and their impact on contemporary life. The aim is to counter prejudice and change how we think about migrants and migration. Each issue was filled with the work of artists, journalists, academics, designers, architects, philosophers, activists and citizens. The conversation between these last two participants was rapidly joined by all the preceding members and then by the wider audience, some of whom commented on what they perceived to be a lack of diversity among the participants. This in turn took the exchange back into the subject of the rights of representation, to personal stories from people attending, and to a discussion on the degree on the multiple heritages of so many people present.

6. *The Migrant Journal*
<https://migrantjournal.com>

Associated Resources

- 1 A 35-minute film by Arturo Bandinelli covers the second and the final events. This is available at www.vimeo.com/352662009 and on the 4Cs and RCA websites. At Bouchra Khalili's request, the first evening was not recorded.
- 2 Links to the complete talks by [Professor Gurminder Bhambra](#), [Oliver Ressler](#), [Daniela Ortiz](#), [Natasha Marie Llorens](#), and [Kathrin Böhm](#). Each film includes a conversation between the participants, and comments and questions from the audience.
- 3 An entire audio recording is available on request to Michaela Crimmin (michaela.crimmin@rca.ac.uk).
- 4 Appendix 4 is a reprint of an article published in Art Monthly authored by Dr. Elisa Adami, at the time a post-graduate student at the RCA, in which she expands on issues discussed by the event participants.

4.4 Final Event at Tate Britain, Friday 8 March 2019

This session, introduced by Tate Programme Curator Dr. Richard Martin, was used as an opportunity for Professor Gurminder Bhambra and Oliver Ressler to speak at a more public platform, alongside the second editor of *The Migrant Journal*, the French urbanist and writer **Justinien Tribillon**. Professor Bhambra directed this, her second talk to the Tate itself, through a critique of *Artist and Empire*, one Tate Britain's previous exhibitions, which had presented art associated with the British Empire from the 16th century to the present. Oliver Ressler talked about further projects he had initiated, whilst Justinien Tribillon expanded on the work of *The Migrant Journal*. This was followed by a panel conversation chaired by Elvira Dyangani Ose. Due to the larger auditorium at the Tate, this session had the feel of a plenary session, in contrast to the more workshop atmosphere of the events delivered at The Showroom, but this did not diminish the level of engagement from the audience and the speakers. Across all of the three events there was a call for civic belonging, felt by everyone involved to be severely wanting across contemporary Western culture. Together, the workshops illustrated the range of methodologies, and modes of engagement, being brought by art and artists to a UK divided by Brexit, and an increasingly sectarian Europe facing deepening hostilities and discord.

Michaela Crimmin introducing the event at Tate Britain, © Arturo Bandinelli



5.0 PROCESS

5.1 Initial Student Project

Given that the Referendum had exposed a divide between the elder and younger generation – the elder having voted broadly to leave the EU, and the younger voting to remain – one of our headline aims was to involve a new generation of curators in the development of the workshop programme. Michaela Crimmin is on the staff of the RCA's Curating Contemporary Art (CCA) Masters' programme led by Professor Victoria Walsh. This two-year full-time postgraduate course, with a student intake from across the world, is collaborative and interdisciplinary in its exploratory approach to today's global challenges. Senior Tutor Dr. Ben Cranfield heads the Curatorial Thinking strand of the CCA programme and worked with Michaela Crimmin to develop a brief for the thirty-six First Year students. Early in the 2018 Autumn term Michaela Crimmin gave an introductory talk on the intent of 4Cs. The students were then divided into groups of six and under the title 'Conditions of Entry' were asked to research and develop their response to the many barriers that prevent access. (See **Appendix 5** for the brief). Eight weeks later, at a symposium in November 2018, they presented their research and observations, receiving feedback from Ben Cranfield, Nour Abuarefeh (the artist undertaking the 4Cs UK Residency at the time) and Michaela Crimmin.

The resulting presentations were exceptional in the identification of some key artists and thinkers, and the range of issues, possibilities, and questions discussed. These revolved around notions of power and hegemonies; truth; hospitality; human rights; decolonisation; representation; the social function of art; institutional racism; border control; the ‘foreigner’ and otherness; trust; citizenship; integration; national identity; surveillance; authenticity; vulnerability; morality; censorship; resistance; and complicity. Among many references, Jacques Derrida’s ‘hos(ti)pitality’ featured, as did the 2018 Gwangju Biennial ‘Imagined Borders’, and projects by Jonas Staal and Forensic Architecture.

5.2 Selection of Partner Organisations and Venues

As the RCA does not have an established connection with its immediate locality, we made the decision to work in partnership with organisations with strong links with their adjoining communities; and equally to extend the workshop's reach and broader impact by working with organisations with proven international reputations. A number of institutions were considered including the Migration Museum, the Free Word Centre, and Amnesty International. The final decision was to focus on the art sector, and to approach Tate and The Showroom to see if they would be interested in working with the RCA on developing the content, the identification of participants, and the management of the events.

Being the UK's foremost visual art organisation, Tate was an obvious choice. Alongside exhibitions, it has a public programme of events which set out to explore social and cultural issues and the positive contribution that art and museums play in society, inviting diverse audiences to join actively in the exploration.⁷ Tate Britain is one of its four venues with over a million visitors a year, the home of British art since the 16th century. As differences deepened with respect to the UK's relationship with Europe following the 2016 Referendum, Tate Britain seemed an obvious venue for a discussion on art in relation to conflict.

⁷ Tate website
<https://www.tate.org.uk/about-us/learning-programmes>

RCA Curating Contemporary Art session, © Richard Haughton





Gurminder Bhambra, Tate Britain, © Arturo Bandinelli

The Showroom is situated in North West London, in an area known for its diverse communities from across the Middle East and Africa. The locality has the fourth lowest median household income of all the wards in London, with fifty per-cent of children living below the poverty line. As such it is not dissimilar to the part of Stockholm where 4Cs partner Tensta Konsthall has its gallery. The Showroom's mission statement on their website reads: 'We commission and produce art and discourse; providing an engaging, collaborative programme that challenges what art can be and do for a wide range of audiences, including arts professionals and the local community'.

Audience participants
at The Showroom,
© Arturo Bandinelli



5.3 Identification of Key Issues, Format, and the Selection of Workshop Participants

A working group was formed, made up of Michaela Crimmin, Elvira Dyangani Ose, Lily Hall, Richard Martin and Luisa Ulyett. Tate Britain and The Showroom generously provided their venues and the extensive engagement of their staff at no cost.

Elvira Dyangani Ose was the lead on developing the programme. Taking the RCA students' work into account, the decision was made to focus the discussion around identity, migration and displacement, and the relationship between art, activism and politics. The ambiguity of the title, 'This Is No Longer That Place: A Public Discussion', was given by Elvira Dyangani Ose to encourage multiple points of entry into the discussion. It was also intended as a prompt for participants to relate the past to the current socio-political context, including Brexit and the UK's relation with the EU.

The plan was to programme a one-day workshop, principally comprising of presentations by, and conversation between, artists and curators. In the event, these ambitions led to the inclusion of a preceding evening, together with an additional plenary event. In order to involve students and to give people in the immediate locality around The Showroom the opportunity to add to the discussion and be open to artists and curators and the wider public, it was decided to make the events accessible on a first-come basis.

A long list of potential participants was shared and discussed in meetings, across emails, and in phone calls over a period of weeks before we settled on ten people who best fulfilled the set criteria. The aim was to have a cultural historian to position the discourse, and to select participants who had a proven track record of interest in the subject area and who had already produced exceptional work. It was felt to be important to include people of different nationalities who would also bring a range of methodologies, perspectives and opinions.

5.4 Wider Engagement

Information was sent out on The Showroom, Tate, RCA, and Culture+Conflict websites and social media, together with the 4Cs website and social media. Art Rabbit, Art Licks, Carpe Diem and Eventful listed the events in their online announcements. The workshop programme was emailed for distribution prior to the events, inviting staff and students at Goldsmiths, University of London; Central St Martins, University of the Arts London; Kings College, University of London; the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. As mentioned earlier, an article by Elisa Adami was published in the April 2019 Art Monthly issue. The event videos by Arturo Bandinelli were made available on the RCA and 4Cs websites, and continue to be distributed to interested students, artists, curators, and members of the general public.

The Showroom online publicity



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[More](#)

Event

This Is No Longer That Place: A Public Discussion

Thursday 7 March 2019
10.30am–6.30pm
at The Showroom
Booking information available soon

Friday 8 March 2019
6.30–8.30pm
at Tate Britain
Booking information available soon



To what extent can art affect change when addressing issues of migration, displacement, and access? Join us for a two-day event that explores the capacity of artists and arts institutions to intervene in the current geopolitical climate.

Speakers include **Gurminder K. Bhambra**, Professor of Postcolonial and Decolonial Studies in the School of Global Studies, University of Sussex; artists **Kathrin Böhm**, **Daniela Ortiz** and **Oliver Ressler**; curators **Natasha Marie Llorens** and **Alicia Chillida**; **Ane Rodríguez Armendariz**, Director of Tabakalera - International Centre for Contemporary Culture, San Sebastián; and editors **Justinien Tribillon** and **Dámaso Randulfe**, Migrant Journal.

This Is No Longer That Place is part of the European Cooperation project **4Cs: From Conflict to Conviviality through Creativity and Culture** co-funded by Creative Europe, with UK activities co-funded by the Royal College of Art.

4Cs seeks to understand how training and education in art and culture can constitute powerful resources to address the issue of conflict as well as to envision creative ways in which to deal with conflictual phenomena.

This is a partnership of the Universidade Católica Portuguesa; Tensta Konsthall; SAVVY Contemporary; Fundació Antoni Tàpies; Museet for Samtidskunst; Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs; Royal College of Art; and Nida Art Colony of Vilnius Academy of Art.

Image: Oliver Ressler, *Emergency Turned Upside-Down*, film still, 2016









culture+conflict

6.0 REVIEW

6.1 Key Successes

Engaging new cultural professionals with conflict as an issue and focus of inquiry

A key aspiration was to prepare a new generation of cultural agents to respond to the challenge of 21st century conflicts. The work with RCA students showed that it is very easy to engage the curators and artists of the future. They respond constructively to the reasons why contemporary antagonisms occur, if they are given the freedom to be non-linear and creative in their approaches. Like the artists, the students located solutions by delving into the diverse causes of conflict.

Securing effective and mutually supportive working partnerships

The collaborations between the RCA, The Showroom and Tate as creative and cultural institutions made it possible to benefit from an extended range of experience, knowledge, and wider audiences.

Presenting projects that demonstrated diverse and distinct approaches and liberating methodologies

Contributors to the workshops, including Bouchra Khalili, Oliver Ressler, Daniela Ortiz and Katrin Böhm, all bring their art to public attention through a variety of means, engaging people through provocations or collaborations, in such a way as to lure audiences into considering issues that might otherwise be avoided. These artists' subjects might be contemporary migration and the conditions of immigrant workers and refugees, malfunctioning politics and social institutions, or commercial greed. Each of them presented, in their artworks and projects, sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly, analyses of why conflict occurs and an inherent prompt to act otherwise.

Structuring the events to promote conviviality

The presenters were selected for a combination of creative talent, ability to communicate and commitment to the aims of the 4Cs project. Equally, venues were evaluated for their potential to promote conviviality as well as stimulate audience consideration of institutionalised or structural power imbalances. We were pleased to find our intentions were realised. All the presentations were delivered, and discussions conducted, in a spirit of friendship. The questions and comments from the participants, their conversations with the chairs and each other, and with the audience, were probing but remained respectful.

6.2 Issues and Lessons Learnt

Widening the audience at workshop events

To attract a local audience who are not involved with the arts, many of whom do not speak English as their first language and who come from different cultures, requires a careful strategy and dedicated effort. Even if working with a gallery that has made long-term efforts to connect with its immediate ‘community’, do not assume that an event will necessarily attract an audience outside the art sector. A number of audience members stated that we should have invited people with opposing views, rather than have participants who essentially were in agreement with each other. Of course it is right that proper BAME and LGBTQ+ representation should form an important part of the planning process, which in this case was not sufficiently considered.

Resource Demands

Delivering the workshops required the allocation of significant resources, including staff time. The most time-consuming aspects were developing partnerships, liaison with participants and partners, writing and agreeing contracts, organising travel and accommodation (including visas), and financial management and reporting. We have learnt it is prudent not to be over ambitious with respect to the number of participant invitations, and for organisers to be fully aware that bringing in participants from other countries can be very costly in terms of visas, flights, and accommodation.

Visas and payment requirements

The implications of visa regulations and national regulations covering payments, both to individuals in the UK and overseas participants, need to be understood by organisers and built into event delivery plans. The project team should be familiar with the demands and restrictions that both these will place on activities, and they need access to specialist expertise to resolve uncertainties. It is also imperative that the team understand how their own institution's financial and HR systems interact with the legislation, including knowledge of new processes being introduced in response to recent or immanent changes. In a project running over several years, the delivery framework identified in the original project proposal may no longer be viable or even legal by the time an activity is being delivered. During the lifetime of the project the team have had to negotiate the following specific issues:

- In the case of international participants that need a visa, the current UK visa application process necessitates a significant lead in time to any event, since there is often a 12-week wait before visa applications from certain countries are even considered. As flight bookings are contingent on when and whether a participant has a visa, by the time one is issued the price of flights can have gone up significantly.
- Payments to participants need to be preceded by an institutional registration process. This includes Right to Work checks and involves the production, viewing and recording of a valid passport as evidence for this, in line with national employment regulations. These all have to be completed prior to the activity commencing.

- By 2019, certain payment conventions, such as *per deum* payments or artists' fees were no longer accepted as valid claims by the RCA's Finance department, due to changes in UK Inland Revenue guidance and imminent regulatory changes. The necessary recategorisation of payments for such services have had significant impact and knock-on effects on the RCA's 4Cs budget category allocations. Due to these changes it is possible that the RCA may not be able to recoup some of the costs of the workshop that were originally identified as claimable in the 4Cs award.

Daniela Ortiz, Oliver Ressler, Yaiza Hernández Velázquez, © Arturo Bandinelli



APPENDIX 1: Workshop Programme

This Is No Longer That Place: A Public Discussion

3 Workshop events, March 2019,
held at The Showroom and Tate Britain

Tuesday 5 March at The Showroom

A screening of **Bouchra Khalili's** film *The Tempest Society*, the launch of her new artist's book of the same name, followed by a conversation between the artist and **Elvira Dyanani Ose**.

Thursday 8 March at The Showroom

PART 1: Global citizenship, socio-politics and the arts

10.30–10.40am	Introduction, Elvira Dyanani Ose , Director, The Showroom and Michaela Crimmin , Reader in art and conflict, Royal College of Art; co-director, Culture+Conflict
10.40–10.45am	Chair's introductions: Yaiza Hernandez Velazquez , Central Saint Martins, with research focused on art institutions understood in a broad sense as sites of political import.
10.45–11.30am	Gurminder Bhambra Professor Postcolonial and Decolonial Studies, School of Global Studies, University of Sussex. Author of <i>Connected Sociologies</i> ; and <i>Rethinking Modernity: Postcolonialism and the Sociological Imagination</i> .
11.30am–1pm	Oliver Ressler, Daniela Ortiz Oliver Ressler is an artist who produces installations, projects in public space, and films on issues including democracy, migration, forms of resistance and social alternatives. Daniela Ortiz is an artist generating visual narratives to critically understand structures of colonial, patriarchal and capitalist power.

1–2.15pm **Lunch**

PART 2: Art, art institutions and frameworks of representation

Chair: Elvira Dyangani Ose

2.15–4.15pm

Natasha Marie Llorens

Curator and writer, with current projects including *Children of Violence*, a cycle of exhibitions, texts and symposia devoted to the representation of violence in contemporary art

Ane Rodríguez Armendariz

Cultural Director, Tabakalera, Spain, programming international residencies, commissions, and bringing special attention to education programmes

Alicia Chillida Ameztoy

Curator working in both public and private space, including *Bestea Naiz/El Otro soy yo. Migraciones políticas y poéticas* [*The Other is me. Political and poetic migrations*].

4.15–4.30pm

Tea break

PART 3: Making sense of culture and identity politics in the context of Brexit

Chair: Michaela Crimmin

4.30–6.30pm

Dámaso Randulfe

Artist, architect, and co-editor of *Migrant Journal*, a 6-issue publication exploring the circulation of humans, matter, goods and ideas, and their impact.

Kathrin Böhm

Artist, focusing on the collective making and culturing of public space, both urban and rural, where shared and collectivised everyday practises are foregrounded.

Friday 8 March 2019 at the Clore Auditorium, Tate Britain

6.30–8.30pm

The debate features contributions from **Professor Gurminder Bhambra**, **Oliver Ressler**, and **Justinien Tribillon**, co-editor of *Migrant Journal*. Chaired by **Elvira Dyangani Ose**.

APPENDIX 2: Links to Event Videos

1 EDITED EXTRACTS FROM THE EVENTS

www.vimeo.com/352662009

2 PROFESSOR GURMINDER BHAMBRA

www.vimeo.com/338825470

3 DANIELA ORTIZ

www.vimeo.com/352662308

4 NATASHA MARIE LLORENS

www.vimeo.com/339338638

5 KATHRIN BÖHM

www.vimeo.com/352662175

6 OLIVER RESSLER

www.vimeo.com/339339768

APPENDIX 3: Participant Biographies

Ane Rodríguez Armendariz is since 2012 Cultural Director of Tabakalera, a former Tobacco Factory in San Sebastian turned into an International Centre for Contemporary Culture. At Tabakalera she has initiated an international residencies programme for artists and curators to encourage research and production; developed international partnerships with a focus on educational programmes; and has commissioned exhibitions with artists including Yto Barrada, Eric Baudelaire, Itziar Okariz, Adrià Julià, Rosa Barba and Maryam Jafri, amongst many others.

Journalist by training, Rodríguez Armendariz has turned to arts management after a brief period working in London in early 2000. She has been part of major art platforms and institutions, such as ARCO, Madrid; MUSAC, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León; San Sebastian Film Festival and Matadero, Madrid.

www.tabakalera.eu

Gurminder Bhambra is Professor of Postcolonial and Decolonial Studies in the School of Global Studies, University of Sussex. Previously she was Professor of Sociology at the University of Warwick and has been Guest Professor of Sociology and History at the Centre for Concurrences in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies at Linnaeus University, Sweden. She is the author of *Connected Sociologies*, and *Rethinking Modernity: Postcolonialism and the Sociological Imagination*, among others. She set up the Global Social Theory website to counter the parochiality of standard perspectives in social theory, and is co-editor of the online social research magazine, *Discover Society*.

www.gkbhambra.net

Kathrin Böhm's work focuses on the collective making and culturing of public space, both urban and rural, where shared and collectivised everyday practices are foregrounded as new possible commons, to resist monocultures on all levels. She is a founding member of the international artist group Myvillages, the art and architecture collective Public Works, the art-activism initiative Keep it Complex - Make it Clear and the new Centre for Plausible Economies. She set up Company Drinks, a community drinks enterprise based in Barking and Dagenham in 2014.

She is the co-editor of publications including *Company: Movements, Deals and Drinks*, published by Jap Sam Books, 2014; *International Village Show* published by Jovis, 2016; *Learn to Act* published by aaa/peprav, 2017; *The Rural* published by Whitechapel Gallery and MIT Press, 2019.

www.andmillionsandmillions.net

Michaela Crimmin is Reader in Art and Conflict at the RCA, and has taught on the Curating Contemporary Art programme, School of Arts and Humanities, for the past 15 years. Currently she is Artistic Director on the EU-funded four-year programme of work, From Conflict to Conviviality through Creativity and Culture (4Cs), on behalf of the RCA, its UK co-founder and partner. Alongside this she is an independent curator; and co-director of Culture+Conflict (C+C), a not-for-profit agency working to investigate and amplify the role and value of contemporary art produced in response to international conflict. C+C is a 4Cs associate partner. Activities include discursive events, commissions, a scholarship, and residencies. On the teaching staff of Central Saint Martins School of Art, UAL. Previously Head of Arts at the Royal Society of Arts (RSA), a role that included initiating and directing the RSA Arts & Ecology Centre; and the first three works of art on the Fourth Plinth, Trafalgar Square.

www.rca.ac.uk/

Alicia Chillida is a freelance curator and director based in Spain. She has worked in both public and private art institutions for over thirty years. She served as Head of Contemporary Exhibitions and Curator at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Renia Sofia, Madrid, curating site-specific projects in MNCAR's Palacio de Velázquez and Palacio de Cristal, with artists including Ilya Kabakov, David Hammons, Cildo Meireles, Lawrence Weiner and Franz West. In 2002 Chillida was appointed Curator of the Spanish Pavilion at Sao Paulo Biennale with artist Rogelio López Cuenca. In 2004 she became Director at the Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno, CAAM, in Gran Canaria, Spain, and in 2007 she founded MUSEO INVISIBLE in Barcelona, an alternative museum and independent platform for research and production, from which she continues to operate.

Selected curatorial projects include *Earth Project*, La Alhondiga, Bilbao; *Variations on a Japanese Garden*, in La Casa Encendida, Madrid; *Displacement Strategies* at CGAC, Santiago de Compostela; and *Bestea Naiz/El Otro soy yo. Migraciones políticas y poéticas (The Other is me. Political and poetic migrations)*, in Koldo Mitxelena in San Sebastián, Spain, 2018.

Elvira Ose Dyangani is Director of The Showroom, London and is a Lecturer at the Department of Visual Cultures at Goldsmiths and the Thought Council at the Fondazione Prada where in 2015 she has curated the exhibitions Theaster Gates's *True Value*, Nástio Mosquito's *T.T.T. Temple Temples of Tenacity* and Betye Saar: *Uneasy Dancer*, among others. She was Curator of the eighth edition of the Göteborg International Biennial for Contemporary Art, (GIBCA 2015) and Curator International Art at Tate Modern (2011-2014). Previously Dyanangi Ose served as curator at the Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno and the Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo and as Artistic Director of Rencontres Picha, Lubumbashi Biennial (2013).

www.theshowroom.org

Bouchra Khalili is a Moroccan-born Berlin-based visual artist. Her work in film, installation, photography and printmaking has been shown internationally at exhibitions including documenta 14, the 55th Venice Biennial, the 18th Sydney Biennial, the 10th Sharjah Biennial, the 6th Marrakech Biennial and the 8th Göteborg Biennial. Selected solo exhibitions include Poets and Witnesses, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2019; Blackboard, Jeu de Paume National Gallery, Paris; The Tempest Society / Twenty-Two Hours, Museum Folkwang, Essen; Bouchra Khalili, Secession, Vienna, all 2018; The Mapping Journey Project, MoMA, New York, 2016; Bouchra Khalili, PAMM Miami, 2013-14; Garden Conversation, MACBA, Barcelona; and Foreign Office, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, both 2015. Khalili has been the recipient of several awards including the Ibsen Awards, 2017; the Abraaj Group Art Prize, 2014; the Sam Art Prize, 2013-15. In 2017-18 she was a fellow at Harvard's Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study. She was a finalist of the Guggenheim's Hugo Boss Prize 2018 and the Artes Mundi Prize 2018.

A long-time educator, Khalili is currently a Professor of Contemporary Art at Oslo National Art Academy, and a founding member of La Cinémathèque de Tanger, an artists-run non-for-profit organisation promoting film culture in Northern Morocco.

www.bouchrakhalili.com

Natasha Marie Llorens is a Franco-American independent curator and writer. She is a Curatorial Fellow with the FACE Foundation for French-American Cultural Exchange, 2018-19; a long-term Research Fellow at the American Institute of Maghrib Studies (AMIS), based in Algiers; and a curatorial research fellow at the Centre Nationale des Arts Plastiques in Paris. Current curatorial projects include *Children of Violence*, a cycle of exhibitions, texts and symposia devoted to the representation of violence in contemporary art; and *Waiting for Omar Gatlat*, a survey of contemporary Algerian art scheduled for October 2019 at the Wallach Art Gallery in New York.

A graduate of the MA program at the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard, Llorens is currently a PhD candidate in Modern and Contemporary Art History at Columbia University. She will be curator in residence at the Jan Van Eyck Academy in 2019-20.

www.nmlllorens.website

Daniela Ortiz was born in Cusco, Peru in 1985, and lives and works in Barcelona. Through her work she aims to generate visual narratives in which the concepts of nationality, racialisation, social class and gender are explored in order to critically understand structures of colonial, patriarchal and capitalist power. Her recent projects and research revolve around the European migratory control system, its links to colonialism and the legal structures created by institutions in order to inflict violence towards racialised communities. She has also produced projects about the Peruvian upper class and its exploitative relationship with domestic workers. Recently her artistic practice has turned back towards visual and manual work, developing work in ceramic, collage and in formats such as children books, in order to distance herself from eurocentric conceptual art aesthetics.

Besides her artistic work she is a single mother of a two-year-old child, gives talks and workshops, and participates in various discussions and struggles against the European migratory control system and institutional racism.

www.daniela-ortiz.com

Dámaso Randulfe is an artist and architect based in London. Spanning writing, image-making and installation, his work has been published, awarded and shown widely, including at the Oslo Architecture Triennale, 2016 and Venice Biennale, 2017. Recent publications include *After Belonging. The Objects, Spaces, and Territories of the Ways We Stay in Transit*, published by Lars Müller, 2016; and he has contributed to *Purple*, *San Rocco* and *Wallpaper* magazines. He currently teaches critical theory at The Cass School of Art, Architecture and Design, London; and has been a guest critic at the University of Westminster and the Architectural Association, London.

Randulfe is an editor at *Migrant Journal*, a six-issue publication exploring the circulations of humans, non-humans, matter, goods and ideas, and their impact on contemporary life. Recently, the journal was commended as Magazine of the Year and Editor of the Year at the Stack Awards 2018 and shortlisted by the Design Museum for the Beazley Design of the Year, 2018.

www.migrantjournal.com

Oliver Ressler was born in Knittelfeld, Austria, and lives and works in Vienna. He produces projects in public space, installations and films focused on issues spanning economics, democracy, migration, global warming, forms of resistance and social alternatives. Ressler's films have been screened as part of social movements, in art institutions and at film festivals internationally.

Ressler won first prize at the Prix Thun for Art and Ethics Award in 2016. He curated *A World Where Many Worlds Fit* for the Taipei Biennale, 2008, an exhibition on the counter-globalisation movement. Co-curated with Gregory Sholette, *It's the Political Economy, Stupid*, has been presented internationally at nine venues since 2011.

Selected solo exhibitions include *We will beg for nothing, we will ask for nothing. We will take, we will occupy*, Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo – CAAC, Seville, Spain, 2015; *There is not a Flag*, Museo Reina Sofía, Madrid, 2015; *Property is Theft*, MNAC – National Museum of Contemporary Art, Bucharest, Romania; *Who Throws Whom Overboard?*, SALT Galata, Istanbul, Turkey, both 2016; Kieve Biennial 2017; documenta 14, Kassel, 2017; and *How to Occupy a Shipwreck*, Kunst Haus Wien, Vienna, Austria, 2018.

www.ressler.at

Justinien Tribillon is an independent writer, researcher and editor. An urbanist, interested in understanding cities, their social fabric, the way they are governed and designed. Exploring the topic of migration and its impact on space, he is an editor and publisher of Migrant Journal, a six-issue publication with Michaela Büsse and Dámaso Randulfe, co-edited and art directed by Isabel Seiffert and Christoph Miler of Offshore Studio. Migrant Journal looks at migration with a resolutely interdisciplinary, prejudice-free approach, bringing together artists, philosophers, illustrators, curators, journalists, architects, academics, photographers. It is read and distributed internationally.

He regularly contributes feature articles to The Guardian. A researcher at Theatrum Mundi, a London-based charity initiated by Richard Sennett to improve our understanding of cities through education and research. He also works with architectural practices and local authorities as a consultant on urban regeneration, local economic development and public engagement.

He teaches urban studies to graduate and postgraduate students at the Bartlett, University College London. A PhD candidate at UCL, where he is researching the socio-spatial divide between Paris central and the Banlieue, relying on an interdisciplinary approach.

www.migrantjournal.com

Yaiza Hernández Velázquez is a lecturer at Central Saint Martins-University of the Arts London, where she leads the MRes Art: Exhibition Studies. Her research focuses on art institutions understood in a broad sense as sites of political import. With a background in Fine Art and Visual Culture, she went on to complete a PhD at the Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy. Before arriving at Central Saint Martins she worked, among other things, as Head of Public Programmes at the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA), director of CENDEAC in Murcia and curator at the Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain.

A number of her publications can be viewed via the University of the Arts London research online catalogues.

www.ualresearchonline.arts.ac.uk

APPENDIX 4

Review of the Workshops by Elisa Adami Art Monthly, April 2019

THIS IS NO LONGER THAT PLACE: A PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Twenty-four days before the UK is scheduled to leave the EU, the Showroom and Tate Britain hosted a three-day programme of screenings, presentations and public discussions which used the geopolitical conjuncture of Brexit, as well as the rise of anti-migrant sentiment across Europe, to tackle questions around migration, displacement, access and identity politics. Curated by Elvira Dyangani Ose in partnership with Michaela Crimmin, the event was co-funded by the Royal College of Art and the EU as part of a four-year European cooperation project. Optimistically titled *From Conflict to Conviviality through Culture and Creativity (4C)*, the funding for and framing of the project clearly did not foretell the 2016 Brexit referendum – a historical irony that was not lost on the curators.

A screening of *The Tempest Society*, 2017, by French-Moroccan artist Bouchra Khalili, served as a prelude to the public discussion. The film centres on the legacy of the agit-prop theatre group *Al-Assifa* (Arabic for ‘the Tempest’), affiliated with the struggles of Arab migrant workers in France in the 1970s, which is viewed in connection with present economic, political and humanitarian upheavals, specifically the so-called migrant crisis in the Mediterranean and the aftermath of the 2015 Greek bailout referendum. Excavating and constellating these different historical moments of struggle and geopolitical crisis, Khalili’s film anticipated the spirit of the event which followed a similarly wide-ranging and multifarious approach.

The title of the event, ‘This Is No Longer That Place’, was fittingly equivocal in the many different and conflicting meanings that the phrase connotes. On the one hand, it encapsulates the sense of unwelcomeness felt by European migrants on the morning of 24 June 2016 with the fracturing of the illusion of openness and mobility represented by the idea of a borderless Europe. On the other hand, it appears to mimic the nostalgic and mythified fantasy appealed to by both conservatives and the far right of a once culturally and ethnically homogeneous community transformed beyond all recognition by the intrusion of racialised, mainly non-European migrants. Place, as Stuart Hall would say, is a ‘floating signifier’, straddled between polarised and equally instrumental views.

Gurminder Bhambra, professor of postcolonial and decolonial studies, set out to deconstruct right-wing rhetoric around ‘place’ that was bound up with the Leave campaign’s prioritising of issues of national sovereignty and control over borders. This narrative, she argued, is premised on the disavowal of Britain’s history as a multicultural empire based on racialised hierarchies and relations of dispossession and domination, whose consequences reach through to the present. Bhambra went on to further debunk the liberal image of a cosmopolitan, diverse and tolerant Europe, for European cosmopolitanism is analogously predicated on a disavowal of coloniality. While tearing down internal barriers between nation-states, the EU has simultaneously strengthened its outer borders: immigration laws discriminating against non-Europeans were notably a requirement for entrance in the European Economic Community (EEC) in the mid 1980s. Redressing the convenient gaps of selective memory – including Tate Britain’s own failings at dealing with imperial violence in the 2015 exhibition ‘Artist and Empire’ (Reviews *AM393*) – Bhambra endeavoured to show the shared histories that produced this place.

Artist Kathrin Böhm, involved in the artist-run pro-Remain campaign ‘Keep it complex – make it clear!’, presented a pragmatic vision of what may be worth salvaging from the past of this place. Company Drinks, an art project in the form of a drinks company, revives the east London tradition of ‘hop picking’ in Kent as a means of reclaiming control over the economy and reorganising memories of collective production. Located in the Borough of Barking and Dagenham, one of the few areas of London to support Brexit, Company Drinks seeks to reactivate a communitarian working-class tradition while at the same time delinking it from the dangerous, ethno-nationalist construct of the ‘white working class’.

Other invited speakers shifted the discussion from Brexit to consider issues of citizenship and migration from various national and international perspectives. Austrian artist Oliver Ressler (Interview *AM405*) speculated on the emancipatory potential of a global citizenship which would not simply replicate the racialised and exploitative hierarchies that structure current border policies. Peruvian, Barcelonabased artist Daniela Ortiz took issue with notions of global citizenship and cosmopolitanism that still operate within the self-effacing paradigm of whiteness, mistaken as non-identitarian and universal. A migrant from a former Spanish colony, Ortiz explores the violence of the bureaucratic and juridical mechanisms that subtend European migration and integration policies, including the recent replacement across the continent of the *jus soli* (right of nationality by soil) with the *jus sanguinis* (right of nationality by blood). According to this legislation, Ortiz’s son, although born and raised in Spain, has no right to Spanish nationality – an absurd but widespread predicament.

One of the panels held at the Showroom focused on the city of San Sebastián in the Basque Country as a microcosm of localised art practices aimed at migrants and animated by the intention to not reify their foreignness. Such was the main tenet behind the exhibition 'L'Intrus', inspired by Jean-Luc Nancy's essay of the same name, curated by Natasha Marie Llorens at Tabakalera, a former tobacco factory converted into the International Centre for Contemporary Culture. Anne Rodrigues Armendariz, director of Tabakalera, recounted the experience of Harrotu Ileak, an educational project addressed particularly to young migrants whose efforts to counter societal biases are often overwritten by the discriminatory practices of coercive state institutions, such as the police. Further, it was noted, educational programmes that target migrants unwittingly reinforce the impression that they are the problem, rather than tackling sentiments of xenophobia and racism among 'local' audiences.

Several times throughout the event both panellists and audience members expressed a sense of frustration at the institutional limitations and reach of artistic and intellectual discourse. As Justinien Tribillon, co-editor of Migrant journal put it, in such spaces there is often the impression of preaching to the choir, of speaking only to those who already agree. While questions of access and political ineffectiveness have long plagued the sphere of art, contemporary art institutions, as 'This Is No Longer That Place' highlighted, still provide an important space for approaching complex issues in an open and nonsimplistic manner. The presentations elicited from the audience a sharing of anecdotes of diasporic identities and personal stories of displacement: a reminder that, despite appeals to the monolithic notion of 'the People' from both camps of the Brexit divide, any place can only be understood by considering the diverse and interconnected lives and experiences that give it meaning.

'This Is No Longer That Place: A Public Discussion' took place across the Showroom and Tate Britain, London 5–8 March. Elisa Adami is a PhD candidate at the Royal College of Art.

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APPENDIX 5

RCA Curating Contemporary Art MA Students' Brief

'Conditions of Entry' is a symposium for first year CCA students to share a piece of group research into an object, institution or event that raises questions about thresholds, borders, mobility and access from a curatorial perspective. If Curatorial Studies asks us to think beyond the parameters of the work of art to the conditions, situations and juxtapositions that frame an encounter with a work, or the formation of a moment of cultural meaning, then what are the conditions in which people, objects, ideas enter that frame? The seeming contradictions of our contemporary moment – that more and more people have access to forms of transnational exchange through digital technologies and transport and yet borders are protected with increasing ferocity and violence – makes the accessibility of cultural spaces that declare themselves 'open' to a 'public' even more questionable and vital. Is a space without conditions of entry possible or even desirable?

We ask each group to select an object (singular or plural), institution or event/moment that brings a particular set of questions to the topic 'conditions of entry'. Each group will prepare a twenty-minute presentation that locates the research 'object' in relation to a chosen question(s). Presentations will be to the other students and to curator Michaela Crimmin. Ideas and presentations from the symposium will feed into an event to be held at Tate Britain in spring as part of the 4Cs project.

RCA Curating Contemporary Art MA

www.rca.ac.uk/schools/school-of-arts-humanities/cca

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To Arturo Bandinelli for all his very hard and quality work producing the videos, audio recordings, and the photographs included in the report.

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2.1.5

Dwelling on the Threshold

VAA,
Nida Art Colony
October 2019

Dwelling on the Threshold

International workshop *Dwelling on the Threshold* took place 9-12 October 2019 at the VAA Nida Art Colony. Curated by Rado Ištók, it explored the potential of spaces of passage, flux, and fluidity.

Egija Inzule: Preface

Rado Ištók: Introduction

Jan Sowa and Joanna Warsza: Opaque to Herself. How Colonial and Post-Colonial Forces Navigate Poland

Presentation by Kristina Norman

Embarking on Border-Crossing from Nida to Rybachy (and Back). Workshop by artist Kristina Norman and curator Joanna Warsza

Shahram Khosravi: Waiting

Natalia Tikhonova: The Case at the Border. Observations of the Experiences of the Post-Soviet

Anna Karpenko: Kaliningrad Gothic

Score for Marginal Objects. Workshop by Candice Hopkins

Herbal Foraging.

Walk by Elin Már Øyen Vister

Candice Hopkins: The Phantom Limb: Colonial Monuments and Defacement in New Mexico

Eglė Budvytytė: Notes on Incantation Karaoke

The Pleasure of Being Dragged. Workshop by artist Eglė Budvytytė

Eglė Budvytytė: Notes on Dragging

Listening and Sensing as an Artistic Practice and Method. Workshop by artist Elin Mar Øyen Vister

Elin Már Vister: A Return to a Lifelong Contract with Earth

Contributors

Colophon

PREFACE

Egija Inzule

Since July 2017, Nida Art Colony (NAC) of Vilnius Academy of Arts has been a partner in the project *4Cs: From Conflict to Conviviality Through Creativity and Culture*. The border next to Nida, possibly the smallest of all NATO border crossings, separates Lithuania (EU) from Russia and divides the Curonian Spit into two halves. It stands symbolically and literally as the focus of the different chapters of this project. Applying various types of working methods, forms of research, and on-site activities, the project works throughout the complexity inherent to the various epochs of the eventful history of the Curonian Spit. This history is very much connected to the different forms this border has taken in the past and present, and how these have affected and affect daily life on the spit. *Dwelling on the Threshold*, a three-day workshop organised by the curator Rado Ištok that produced materials brought together in this digital publication, is the fourth contribution from the NAC to the ongoing research of the 4Cs project and will be followed by the final output, an exhibition at Nida Art Colony in summer 2020 (also curated by Rado Ištok).

I am a newcomer to this project, having taken it over from Rasa Antanavičiūtė, one of two previous and founding directors of Nida Art Colony. This was the first change of directors in the eight year history of the institution. Coinciding with my arrival at NAC, a new e-visa procedure was introduced in July 2019 that simplifies the border crossing for EU citizens to Kaliningrad Oblast in Russia. From the reestablishment of the independent Lithuanian State in 1991 through September 2019 (and especially since the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014), entrance to Russia as well as Kaliningrad Oblast has been arduous: complicated and costly visa procedures connected to lengthy inspections at the border made it difficult

to keep continuous dialogue flowing between organisations in Lithuania and Kaliningrad. Yet due to the interest and efforts of active individuals, it was never interrupted.

Thanks to the workshop, which also became the introduction to my new workplace, I had the opportunity and reason to take advantage of the new visa agreement twice to visit the villages in Kaliningrad closest to Nida: Morskoe and Rybachy. These journeys were for no particular purpose, merely to purchase some chewing gum and receive impressions of how the past, once shared as part of the same region and state, has been adopted and lived with under different political realities than that of Neringa (the municipality on the Lithuanian side of the Curonian Spit) and the EU. I am keen to experience how this tool will be used and if this new procedure will be a catalyst to new formats of exchange between the communities of the Curonian Spit on both sides of the border.

I would like to thank speakers and participants of the workshop for their engagement and contributions and the team of NAC for their efforts and patience. My thanks go especially to Rado Ištok and the artists in residence for the beautiful time we shared through our common beginning at Nida Art Colony.

Day 0. © Andrej Vasilenko



INTRODUCTION

Rado Ištok

The e-publication *Dwelling on the Threshold* documents a three-day intensive workshop that took place at the VAA Nida Art Colony in October 2019, exploring the notion of thresholds as spaces of passage, flux, and fluidity. The workshop sessions were conducted by curator Joanna Warsza with artist Kristina Norman, curator Candice Hopkins, and two of the artists in residence: Eglė Budvytė and Elin Már Øyen Vister, who complemented their daytime workshops with evening presentations, presented here as essays. The e-publication brings together photo documentation of the workshop sessions and texts by the workshop tutors, as well as additional texts on phenomena encountered during the workshops and reflections by the participants on the key concepts of the workshop and their individual experiences at Nida Art Colony. The workshop and the e-publication *Dwelling on the Threshold*, together with an art residency for five artists in Autumn 2019 and the forthcoming exhibition in Summer 2020, was a part of Nida Art Colony's programme within the framework of 4Cs: From Conflict to Conviviality through Creativity and Culture, a European Cooperation Project co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union.

The Curonian Spit, a nearly hundred kilometre long strip of land between the Baltic Sea and the Curonian Lagoon, where Nida Art Colony is located, is a space which for centuries served as a link, indeed a shortcut, between the Baltic region and the rest of the continental Europe. The political borders in the vicinity of Nida have been redrawn many times throughout its history, reflecting the changing fortunes of the various empires whose interests met and clashed across the region. 2020 marks one

hundred years since the border dividing the Curonian Spit in half, within walking distance from Nida, became a state border – back then between the German province of East Prussia and the newly independent Lithuania, and today between Lithuania and the Russian exclave of the Kaliningrad Oblast, established by the Soviets on the ruins of the German city of Königsberg. As a result, this border is also an EU and Schengen Area border, and Nida – although bordering Russia – is currently the westernmost point of Lithuania and the Baltic states. The changing political borders were, however, not the only factor impacting life in Nida and the Curonian Spit, which is also home to the highest drifting sand dunes in Europe. In fact, the name of the village itself is derived from the Old Prussian word for ‘fluent’, and the village has moved several times throughout the history to escape the sand drifts as a consequence of the area’s deforestation. ‘Dwelling on the threshold’ refers not only to the geopolitical situation of Nida in the formerly German, and now Russian, borderland but also to other forms of thresholds including auditory thresholds – when an apparent silence allows the soundscape of a place to emerge – or the thresholds of intimacy, that emerge when strangers are allowed to gently dwell on – rather than cross – boundaries which govern our daily interactions with each other. In many ways, Nida is an ideal place to convene and think together about the thresholds that hold us or others back, and to think of continuity and disruption, survival and extinction, trauma and healing, and colonisation and displacement. Local geography, histories, and struggles served as departure points for structuring the workshop around practices and conversations which would enable us to be simultaneously flexible, fluid and responsive, on the one hand, but be able to take a grounded stance, on the other.

The opening text by Joanna Warsza and Jan Sowa departs from the imperial legacies of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, and the ultimately futile attempts of the interwar Republic of Poland, which regained access to the sea, to join the Western powers in building a colonial empire. The sea, i.e. the Baltic Sea which also washes the shores of the Curonian Spit, which

also gave the title to the magazine recovered by artist Janek Simon, serves as a threshold to other shores, triggering the colonial imaginary of the population of a country which itself had just regained independence. The text by Shahram Khosravi, introduced to the group by Joanna Warsza and read collectively while waiting at the Russian–Lithuanian border, focuses on the politics of waiting in the face of institutional powers. The hour or so which we spent at the border was a negligible inconvenience compared to the many migrants involuntarily dwelling on these thresholds, kept spatially and temporally waiting. The following two texts by workshop participants Natalia Tikhonova and Anna Karpenko also relate to the first day when we crossed the border to Russia. While Natalia Tikhonova's text proposes three scenarios in response to a hypothetical situation in a toilet booth at the border checkpoint, the text by Anna Karpenko contextualises a Gothic pastiche petrol station just outside of Rybachy.



Day 0. © Andrej Vasilenko



Day 0. © Andrej Vasilenko



The publication's feature essay, by Candice Hopkins, takes the 'phantom limb' of the monument of conquistador Don Juan de Oñate in Alcalde, New Mexico, as a starting point for telling the story of Spanish colonisation and, more importantly, the most successful Indigenous resistance to take place in the Southwest of the U.S. Thinking about thresholds, the essay also raises ethical questions about breaking historical ignorance and offers a possible solution to the clash between the potentially illegal action performed on the monument and the law-abiding procedures which art institutions, such as museums or biennales, are expected to follow. The following two contributions by Eglė Budvytė are related to her performance and her workshop respectively. 'Notes on Incantation Karaoke' provides an insight into a participative work in which the artist impersonates 'a slime oozing down your throat', 'a jaded waterfall', or 'big lava flow', that is, various phenomena which are in constant flux, while 'a swamp, unstable territory, murky land', 'shape shifting, till the end of time', echo the idea of the threshold. 'Notes on Dragging' then elaborates on 'the pleasure of being dragged' which we explored under the artist's gentle guidance in her workshop. The main themes of Elin Már Øyen Vister's text, which closes the textual part of *Dwelling on the Threshold*, are their personal and artistic journey, their encounter with 'deep listening', and with the sonic landscape and history of the Curonian Spit.

In closing, I would like to thank the tutors of the workshop sessions, namely Joanna Warsza, Kristina Norman, Candice Hopkins, Eglė Budvytė, and Elin Már Øyen Vister, for their generosity and investment, and the workshop participants for their enthusiasm and receptiveness. I would therefore like to extend my gratitude to Jaanika Arum, Linda Boļšakova, Greta Dimaris, Inga Galinyte, Anna Karpenko, Vaida Kazlauskaite, Laima Kreivyte, Akmis Lomsargis, Tomasz Sekular, Muhammad Shahid, Guoda Taraškevičiūtė, Natalia Tikhonova, Vilius Vaitiekunas, and Saulė Vaivilavičiūtė, as well as the artists in residence Paul Maheke, Jin Mustafa, and Mark Ther, who energised the workshop with their personalities, enabling a lively group dynamic. Not least, my deepest thanks go to the former and current directors of Nida Art Colony, Rasa Antanavičiūtė and Egija Inzule, and the whole team at the NAC: Goda Aksamitauskaitė, Virginija Čiunina, Rasa Jurise, Monika Kalinauskaitė, Indrė Liškauskaitė, Kęstutis Minderis, Julija Navarskaitė and Linas Ramanauskas, as well as the cooks Vita Marija Murėnaitė and Ilma Izabelė Lemkytė, and our photographer Andrej Vasilenko. Thank you!

Day 1. © Andrej Vasilenko



How has the workshop changed your views on borders and boundaries, or on the notions of fluidity and flux?

Participant: Saulė Noreikaitė

The grip on the hand, the sound in the surroundings, the text or the words (un)spoken can both go unnoticed or become highly important, depending on the context and your own awareness. The boundaries (the body, the skin, the ear, your lips and tongue, the paper that the text is printed on) sometimes can become more visible than you would expect. By coming to a different context, being with a group of people that I have never met before, I tried to notice and challenge my own boundaries in unnoticeable ways, notice the boundaries in others, how they are constructed and demolished between us, affected by different contexts or changing them and travelling. How fluid our perceptions become when we are in the moment of flux. Raising our audible and physical awareness by firstly activating our thoughts would properly summarise my experience.

Day 0. © Andrej Vasilenko



OPAQUE TO HERSELF: HOW COLONIAL AND POSTCOLONIAL FORCES NAVIGATE POLAND

Jan Sowa and Joanna Warsza

There was a brief moment back in 1990s and the beginning of 2000s when the historical division between Eastern and Western Europe seemed happily overcome. The extreme articulation of this view was perhaps provided by Francis Fukuyama, who even believed that history had come to its completion and the future would just be a simple extension of the invincible combination¹ of the free market and parliamentary democracy. Throughout the 1990s this newfound unity has provided Western Europe with more than just an opportunity to expand its markets and political institutions.

¹. Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992).

As was pertinently remarked by Slavoj Žižek, the East saw in the West something that the West thought it had already lost: freedom, progress, social justice, and human dignity. Things that the East sought to emulate.²

2. See Slavoj Žižek, "Eastern Europe's Republics of Gilead", *New Left Review*, 183 1990 and Slavoj Žižek "Eastern European Liberalism and Its Discontents", *New German Critique*, No. 57 (Autumn, 1992).

The cracks in this over-optimistic edifice appeared globally in 2001 with the 9/11 attacks and locally, in Europe, in 2003 with the heated debate provoked by the invasion of Iraq, when the so called 'New Europe' ('former' East) enthusiastically backed the USA while the core of the Old Europe ('former' West), mainly France and Germany, unequivocally condemned it. The smear with which Jacques Chirac reacted to the fact that Eastern European countries such as Poland or Romania decided to join the USA rather than support France and Germany in opposing the invasion – his famous repetition of de Gaulle's quip that they 'missed a great opportunity to shut up' – proved that the honeymoon was over. The crack between the West and the East of the continent was posed to haunt the unity of the European Union, already on the eve of its biggest historical expansion, in 2004. However, it was only in 2015, when the European Union had to deal with the 'refugee crisis', that the illusion of unity was irrevocably shattered. Despite the changing political reality and new institutional arrangements, Eastern Europe opposed the West and radically refused to open its borders for asylum seekers or refugees in transit to other parts of Europe. The severity of these decisions maintains an understanding of Eastern Europe as an internal 'other'.

There are some who would like to blame the rift between the East and the West on troublesome 20th century, interpreting it as a legacy of the so-called communist period. A closer examination of the region's history reveals a more complicated and troubling picture. As was demonstrated by various sociological and historical examinations undertaken by scholars such as Perry Anderson, Fernand Braudel, or Immanuel Wallerstein, the division of the European continent, into the dominating and the dominated regions, has been stubbornly reproducing

itself from early modern times, all the way until the 20th century.³ The Iron Curtain, separating the Soviet bloc from Western Europe between 1945 and 1989, does not then seem to be the original event, but rather another incarnation of a cleavage going back very far in time.

The ‘problem with the East’ is not, however, limited to the rift within the European continent. The East has not only been misjudged and wrongly understood by the West – it also remains opaque to itself, understanding very little of its own history and character. In a quote spuriously attributed to Winston Churchill by Margaret Thatcher, he is said to have once remarked that Eastern Europe had produced more history than it could have ever consumed.⁴ Paradoxically, one of the key differences between the West and the East is that the latter seems to be much more inclined than the former to anchor the discourse surrounding its identity in the historical past. It is reflected in an incredible fixation of Central-Eastern Europe on commemorating past events, recalling past wars, reaffirming past glory, worshipping past heroes, and reminding everyone of its suffering and victories. Just like the Medieval crusades are recalled by the Islamic fundamentalists as a reason for their contemporary hatred towards the West, so are ancient wars and victories recontextualised in Central-Eastern Europe as an essential background for today’s politics. Yearly re-enactments of the 1410 Battle of Grunwald, when Poles and Lithuanians defeated the Teutonic Order (a predecessor of modern Prussia and present day Germany) are regularly re-framed in the public discourse as a warning for Germany not to hegemonise Poland within the European Union. Despite this strong reorientation towards the past, historical events remain completely mystified for contemporary

3. See Perry Anderson, *Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism* (London: New Left Books, 1974), Perry Anderson, *The Lineages of the Absolutist States* (London: New Left Books, 1974), Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th–18th Century*, translated by Sian Reynolds, 3 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System. I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Academic Press, 1980). We are here using periodization deriving from Western historiography, where early modern times start with the era of great geographical discoveries or alternatively with the fall of Constantinople in 1453. Modernity goes into its mature period after the Industrial Revolution in mid-18th century giving way to late modernity after the 2nd world war.

4. The quote comes from a 1996 speech by Margaret Thatcher, attributed to Churchill but likely a misquote from Hector Hugh Munro’s *The Chronicles of Clovis* that was actually referring to Crete, not the Balkans or Eastern Europe (editor’s note).

citizens of Central-Eastern Europe who are apparently unwilling to face the more complex nature of their historical heritage, which remains fundamentally opaque.

One of the most important blind spots of the Central-Eastern European historical narrative is an almost complete lack of recognition of the region's colonial episodes. It has not really been much helped by the inevitable and inexorable rise of post-colonial theory. An old criticism sometimes raised against Edward Said's *Orientalism* concerns the fact that the author examines the relations between Western metropolitan countries and their Eastern colonial territories, omitting such (semi)peripheries as Central-Eastern Europe.⁵

^{5.} Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).

An inquiry into the colonial and post-colonial forces that have navigated the cultural identities of Central-Eastern Europe and Poland in particular can offer ways to better understand its current warring neo-nationalistic and megalomaniac condition, the permanent need for self-affirmation, the strong anti-immigration stance, and finally the lack of critical examination of its own imperial past.

In her 2006 book, *Niesamowita Słowiańszczyzna* (Uncanny Slavdom) eminent Polish literary scholar Maria Janion characterises Poland as an unconscious post-colonial space, permanently torn between the feeling of superiority and inferiority.⁶

Janion claims that this post-colonial condition needs to be understood through its relation to Slavdom, as well as a suppressed colonial past.

^{6.} Maria Janion, *Niesamowita Słowiańszczyzna: fantazmaty literatury* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2007).

Reclaiming being Slavic would bring Poland closer to Russia. It is the same detachment through which Poles aspire to Western universalism, defending the Latin, Catholic, and Mediterranean values (always with an element of self-colonisation). Polish national identity is therefore constructed based on the trauma of inferiority and alienation from what is universal (the Western world), the superiority of Poland over other Slavs, and finally the permanent self-victimisation, which disables a proper critical self-examination. Many of these aspects return in the current political situation

alongside a prevailing fear of the ‘other’ and the stark refusal of any immigrants, while millions of Poles continue to work and live abroad, mainly in Western Europe.

The key and defining traits of contemporary Polish national habitus – an uncanny mixture of an inferiority complex and narcissistic fantasies of Poland’s uttermost superiority over the ‘decaying’ Western world – both have their roots in a suppressed colonial past. There might even be an etymological link between the words “Slav” and “slave” dating back to ancient times. Scholars such as Braudel and Wallerstein have demonstrated in a convincing way that the part of the European continent lying East of the river Elbe and inhabited mostly by Slavs was the first peripheral zone of capitalist world-economy in early-modern times.⁷ 7. See I. Wallerstein, *op. cit*

The whole block of countries – the so-called Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1569–1795) being the biggest and the most prominent example in the area – became stuck in a state of dependency and underdevelopment, forcing its rural populations into serfdom. Thus Central-Eastern Europe could be likened historically to the Global South, or even framed as the region which blurs the asymmetrical division between the Global North and the Global South.

The Kingdom of Poland and its nobility played a key role in extending the serfdom of peasants far into South-Eastern Europe. It attempted to build its own expansionist empire by dominating Lithuania and annexing vast areas of Ukraine in the 16th century and developing colonial aspirations in the 20th century, such as with the organisation the *Maritime and Colonial League* which in the 1930s actively supported the development of both a merchant fleet and a large navy, as well as the creation of Polish colonies and overseas possessions, as depicted in the research of Polish artist Janek Simon. This still inspires a postcolonial nostalgia in contemporary Poland, which hampers critical reflection over the country’s past as well as any recognition of its peripheral status. Instead, Poland’s nationalistic right, currently in power, aims at reestablishing Poland as a

local hegemonic power in the region. This idea linked – history again! – with the so called Jagiellonian period (1386–1572) is cast by the right as a desired alternative to integrating with the EU, supposedly dominated by German interests. It also stands behind Polish expansionist and imperial infrastructural ambitions epitomised by the country's attitude toward Ukraine.

Polish colonialism in Central-Eastern Europe had, of course, its specific character and cannot be simply equated with the colonial endeavors of Western powers. Unlike the Curonian colonisation of the Americas, when the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia (the present day Latvia) briefly established a colony on the island of Tobago in 17th century, Poland had never attempted to extend its rule overseas before the 20th century (and even at that stage it was just a repetition of German model of colonialism devised by Bismarck in 1880s in the form of the well-known 'scramble for Africa') concentrating rather on conquering neighbouring territories. It was the same path of imperialism that Russia enacted in the entire modern period. It is different from the mainstream of Western colonialism, though not entirely alien to it, after all the first English colony was not India, but Ireland.

There were important differences in social and political relations between the conquerors and the conquered. Polish nobility, extending its rule over vast chunks of Eastern Europe in the 16th century, brought with them the system of serfdom that constituted the key economic element of their social organisation. Despite many similarities, it had an important feature that differentiated it from Western slavery: people were not sold and bought individually. It does not mean that people were not traded as merchandise, but that the trade itself took a wholesale form: populations were transferred together with land estates and villages that they were ascribed to when said estate changed owners. It represented a major social difference as families were not destroyed in result. However, the power exercised by the lord over his serfs had a lot of commonalities with the institution of slavery as it functioned in Northern or Southern American plantations.

The lord controlled not only the serf's labour time, but also the social and even biological existence of subjugated populations – he decided the fate of the serf's children, allowing or denying them an opportunity to train as craftsmen. He could force widows to remarry with peasants of his choosing and even oblige his subjects to buy a certain volume of alcohol from his own distillery. He also enjoyed the infamous feudal privilege of *ius prime noctis* that amounted to institutionalised rape. So, although peasants were not the lord's property as was the case with slaves, the power that he had over them had various resemblances amounting to a biopolitical rule over *the bare life* of his serfs.⁸

8. Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

This complicated picture of relations – as well as the similarities and differences between the East and West of Europe – has taken an interesting turn in recent years. The critical tools of post-colonial theory have ironically been appropriated in Central-Eastern Europe by the nationalistic right and used to reaffirm 'traditional identities' and a perceived 'cultural heritage' of colonisation and domination by foreign, liberal ideology. This has led to a 'perverse decolonisation' – to use the term coined by Ekaterina Degot and David Riff – where obscurantist attitudes, reactionary sentiments, and religious fundamentalism are presented as attempts to preserve one's unique and allegedly endangered way of life.⁹ What is maybe even more interesting is that the twisted, uncritical use of critical concepts has provided a platform for widespread populist sentiments. Against the beliefs of 20th century modernisation theorists, the peripheries seem to be ahead of the populist curve: can the future of Great Britain, France, or Germany be perhaps found in Poland, Hungary or Russia, not the other way around?

9. Perverse Decolonization (2017-2018) was an international research and discussion project addressing the current crisis of postcolonial studies and identity politics and its possible appropriations in new nationalisms emerging on a global scale. https://www.academycologne.org/en/article/1411_perverse_de-colonization

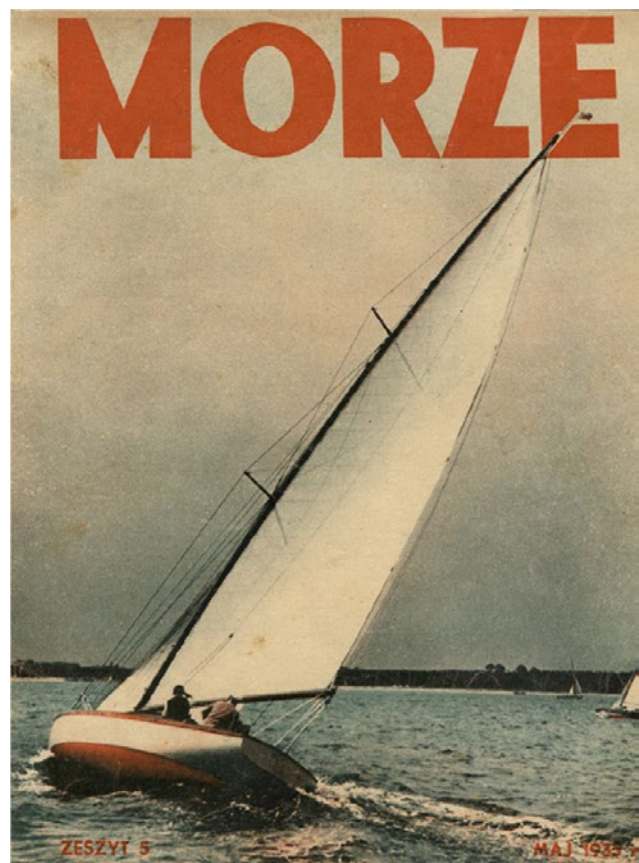
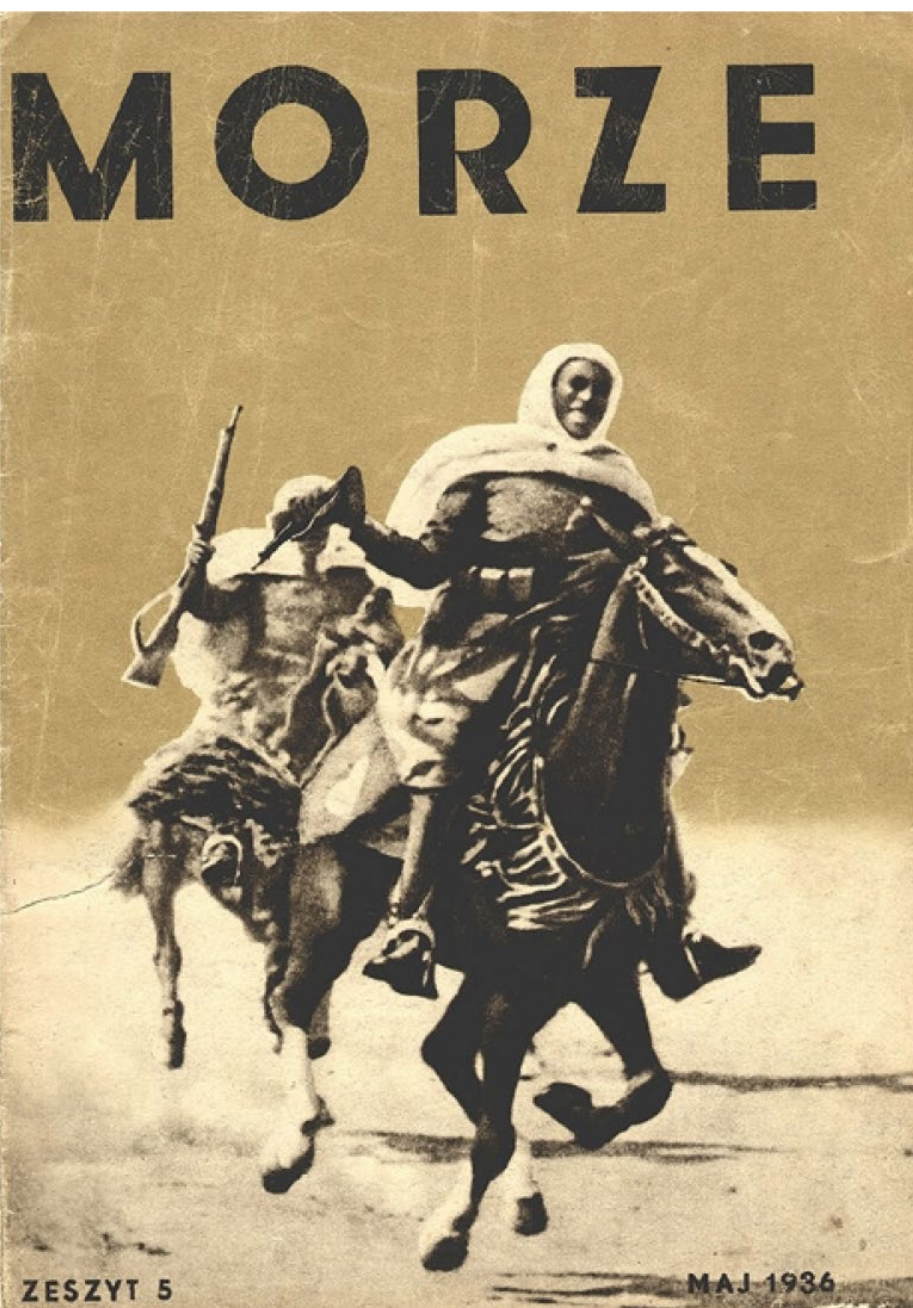
This is an extended and amended version of the text published under the same title in Jan Sowa, Joanna Warsza (eds.), *Everything Is Getting Better. The Unknown Knowns of Polish (Post)Colonialism* (Berlin: SAVVY Contemporary 2017).

THE MARITIME AND COLONIAL LEAGUE

The Maritime and Colonial League was a non-governmental organization in pre-war Poland, boasting a membership of one million people in 1939. It was created in 1930, in reaction to the creation of the so-called Polish Corridor in the aftermath of WWI, which linked Poland to the Baltic Sea and separated mainland Germany from the German exclave of East Prussia. As a modernisation project that opened the Polish economy to external agents it led to the construction of the Baltic harbour in Gdynia (as Danzig/ Gdańsk became a Free City, belonging neither to Poland nor Germany), which was soon followed by megalomaniac dreams of Poland becoming a colonial empire. The League lobbied to get possession of the country of Togo (the argument being that a share of German colonial domains should go to Poland, after Prussia lost some of its territory to Poland, who now had a larger claim to the German colonies). It also started a policy of systemic land acquisitions in Paraná, Brazil and signed a secret agreement with the government of Liberia, which was supposed to bring African soldiers into the Polish army in case of war. It then tried to acquire Madagascar from France, and by the late 1930s, when an economic crisis befell Poland, the government considered some of these proposals more seriously, including an infamous idea of deporting its Jewish population to the island.

The organization was reactivated soon after the Second World War, changing its name to the *Maritime League* in 1946. The pre-war statute was amended, and only the declaration securing overseas possessions was deleted. After just one year, the League had as many as 600,000 members. Gradually, its modernization programme was adapted to the principles of the new socialist economy, which heavily favoured industrial development. In 1953 it merged with the *Soldiers League*. Reactivated in 1980, since 1999 it has functioned as the *Maritime and River League*. Between 1990-1999 Bronisław Komorowski, the former Polish president, served as its chairman.

The monthly *Morze* (Sea) was the organisation's main educational organ and sold in more than 250 000 copies, depicting non-Westerners in patronising and derogatory ways. Even if the League's political projects were never close to being materialised, its ideas became quite influential and have perhaps contributed to the latent racism in Poland. The organization still exists today as the *Maritime and River League*, and the magazine has been newly revived, in time for ideas such as Intermarium – a geopolitical federation of the Eastern European bloc led by Poland from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea.

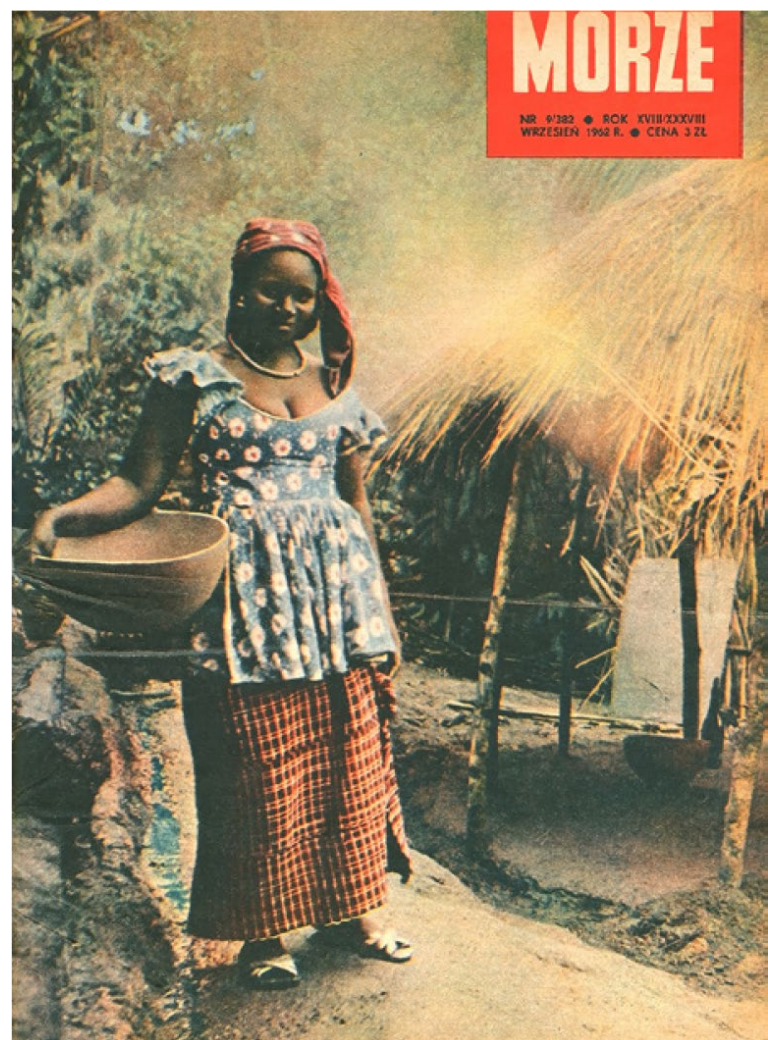


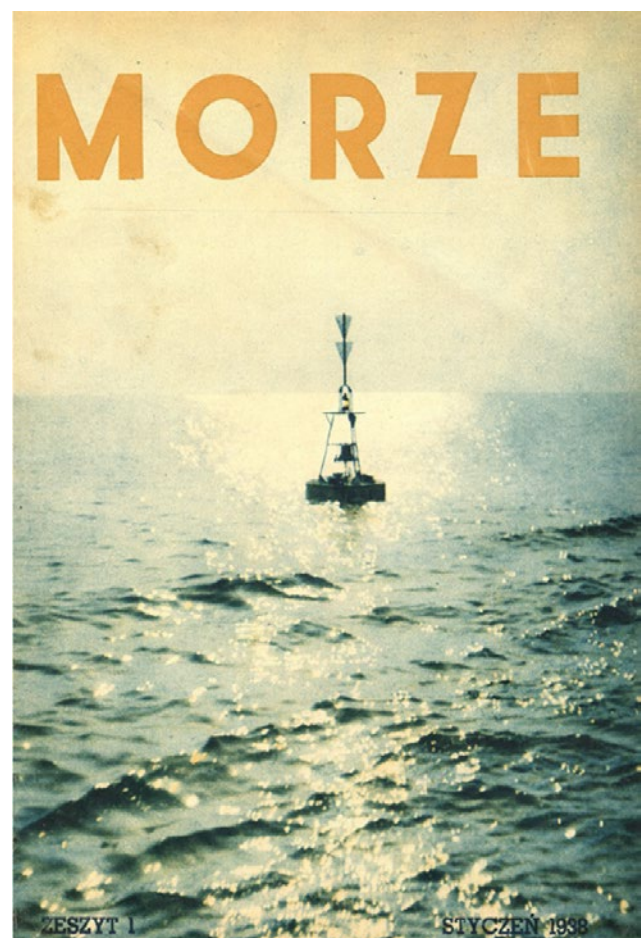


DWELLING ON THE THRESHOLD



REFLECTIONS AND ACTIONS UPON MEDIATION PRACTICES
PART 2 – ACTIONS





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PRESENTATION BY KRISTINA NORMAN

Artist Kristina Norman presented her work in relation to the excursion to Rybachy and the history of migration and displacement on the Curonian Spit. The monument of the mourning Soviet soldier in Rybachy seems to have been based on the monument in Tallinn, Estonia, the removal of which is the subject of Norman's documentary *Monolith* (2007) and her presentation *After-War* (2009) in the Estonian pavilion at the Venice Biennale. The relocation of the monument from the city centre of Tallinn to a military cemetery on the outskirts of the city triggered clashes between Estonian society and the Russian community. Due to her mixed background, Norman is trying to position herself between these two separate 'memory collectives'.

In her film *Common Ground* (2013), filmed in Stockholm, Sweden, and near Jaama Village, Estonia, the artist attempts to draw parallels between the lives of Estonian refugees who fled the German and Soviet occupations of Estonia and found asylum in Sweden, and refugees currently seeking asylum in Estonia. Today, they are placed at the Illuka Reception Center for Asylum Seekers, located in a forest near the remote village of Jaama by the Russian border, speaking both to the geopolitical location and history of migration in Nida.

Day 0. © Andrej Vasilenko



EMBARKING ON BORDER-CROSSING FROM NIDA TO RYBACHY (AND BACK)

Workshop by artist Kristina Norman
and curator Joanna Warsza

Shortly after Joanna Warsza accepted the invitation to lead one of the sessions of the workshop, the Russian Federation announced a free electronic visa for EU citizens to visit Kaliningrad Oblast. Thus, the idea of crossing the border from Nida to the Russian side of the Curonian Spit was conceived. For this excursion, Joanna Warsza invited Kristina Norman, an artist whose Estonian-Russian heritage reflects the tensions between the Baltic states and Russia from which they gained independence after the fall of the Soviet Union in the 1990s.

We departed from Nida by bus after breakfast and reached the border in less than ten minutes. While waiting at the border, we read passages from *Migrants and Refugees on the Curonian Spit* (2019), a book by Vasilijus Safronovas published by Nida Art Colony, and Shahram Khosravi's text 'Waiting'. Natalia Tikhonova, one of the participants, also read her own text to the group. Our destination was the village of Rybachy (formerly Rossitten) and the ornithological station in Fringilla. Founded

in 1901 by German ornithologist Johannes Thienemann, making it the oldest ornithological station in the world, it was reestablished in the 1950s by Russian scientists to monitor the seasonal bird migration in the context of climate change and destruction of bird habitats.

We continued the excursion in Rybachy, starting at the monument of the Soviet soldier and then walking towards the house of Johannes Thienemann, a former German school and Protestant church, which serves today as a Russian Orthodox church. We also visited the surroundings of the Seagull Pond that features buildings from the early 20th century, currently being rebuilt on a massive scale as a hotel, reflecting the incorporation of East Prussian heritage into today's hospitality industry. We learned more about the current development of tourism on the Russian side of the Curonian Spit from Dmitriy Kirillov, the manager of the Altrimo Hotel on the shore of the Curonian Lagoon, where we had lunch and held a reading group on the notion of borders, reading and discussing texts by Gloria Anzaldúa, Marwa Arsanios, Étienne Balibar, and Achille Mbembe.



Day 1. © Andrej Vasilenko



On our way back to Nida, we briefly stopped at a faux-Gothic petrol station, where Anna Karpenko, one of the workshop participants, shared with us her thoughts on ways in which East Prussian heritage is currently being reclaimed in the Kaliningrad Region, which can also be found in this e-publication. Crossing the border back to Lithuania, we arrived back to Nida on time for dinner and later in the evening we reconvened to share our diverse experiences of crossing borders, governed not only by our passports but by our bodies and past experience.

Day 1. © Andrej Vasilenko



WAITING

Shahram Khosravi

Waiting is a particular experience of time. Waiting is inescapable. It is a feature of human relationships. In our daily lives, we wait at airports, offices, and shops. Waiting is a common feature of bureaucracy; when in contact with organisations, individuals wait their turn and officials' decisions. Waiting is expecting something coming from others. Keeping others waiting is also a technique for the regulation of social interactions. It is a manipulation of other's time. Waiting, as Pierre Bourdieu puts it, is a way of experiencing the effect of power. 'Making people wait... delaying without destroying hope is part of the domination'.¹ To keep people waiting, without ruining their hope, is an exercise of power over other people's time. Waiting is a common experience for the less powerful groups in society, producing 'subjective effects of dependency and subordination'.² The 'punitive' aspect of waiting is when a person is 'kept ignorant as to how long he must wait'.³

1. Pierre Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), p. 228.

2. Javier Auyero, *Patients of the State: The Politics of Waiting in Argentina* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012).

3. Barry Schwartz, *Queuing and Waiting: Studies in the Social Organization of Access and Delay* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), p. 6.

Waiting generates feelings of ‘powerlessness and vulnerability’. Marginalised and unprivileged groups, to use Vincent Crapanzano’s words, ‘wait for something, anything, to happen. They are caught in the peculiar, the paralytic, time of waiting’.⁴

Another consequence of waiting is the feeling that one is not fully in command of one’s life. To be kept waiting for a long time ‘is to be the subject of an assertion that one’s own time (and therefore, one’s social worth) is less valuable than the time and worth of the one who imposes the wait’.⁵

4. Vincent Crapanzano, *Waiting: The Whites of South Africa* (London: Random House, 1985), p. 43.

5. Schwartz, 1975.

The arbitrariness and precariousness of waiting is best depicted in literature. Samuel Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot* is about the endless wait for someone who never comes, for something that never happens. Franz Kafka’s *Before the Law* is about a man from the countryside permanently waiting before and for the law. His entrance is deferred, ‘not yet allowed’. This ‘not yet’ illustrates the abstractedness and inaccessibility of the law that keeps people waiting without having their hopes dashed.

Large numbers of displaced people – undocumented migrants, refugees and asylum seekers – spend extended periods waiting: in camps, in transit lands, or in search of papers. Lack of information on how long they have to wait, or what exactly they have to do to get their permits, makes their lives unpredictable and uncertain. This is most palpable in the case of asylum seekers, and in detention centres where migrants can be kept waiting indefinitely before deportation.

Prolonged waiting, for papers or deportation, means ‘not being in-time with others’. For many others, Mondays represent ‘moving forward’, the first day of a meaningful week of work. In contrast, for undocumented migrants, Mondays mean ‘remaining at the same point’. Their time is not that of ‘ordinary’ people. Undocumented migrants use terms like ‘dead time’ or ‘a time of death’ when talking about their lives kept waiting. In Western societies, people approach time in terms of how it can be used most efficiently. Time is associated with success

and money. It is presented as a form of capital, which, similar to money, can be ‘counted, saved, spent, lost, wasted or invested’.⁶ Hence waiting symbolises waste, emptiness, and uselessness. There is a discrepancy between ^{6. Ibid.} the speed, mobility, and temporalities in modern societies, and the experiences of individuals forced into a prolonged act of waiting. Waiting by the poor, the unemployed, asylum seekers, undocumented migrants, or youngsters can result in a weakening of a sense of social function, and of their connections to the larger society, generating a feeling of purposelessness and ‘rolelessness’. Furthermore, asylum seekers and undocumented migrants are constantly waiting for decisions and assistance coming from others: the state, churches, NGOs, legal firms, labour unions, or employers. The dependence on others’ decisions and help leads to a patronising relationship, with the migrant surrendering to the authority of others.

Waiting is often an experience of what Victor Turner calls liminality, the transitory stage between two social positions, between two stages of life.⁷ Undocumented migrants have left their legal status in their homelands and are waiting, hopefully, for a new one. Meanwhile, they are caught betwixt and between, their status socially and structurally ambiguous. The loss of social status and role generates vulnerability. For Turner, there are similarities between liminality and marginality and inferiority. ^{7. Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-structure* (Chicago: Aldine Pub. Co., 1969).}

When liminality is turned into protracted waiting, the underpinnings of social life are temporarily/temporally suspended. Accordingly, asylum seekers and undocumented migrants find themselves in a situation Ghassan Hage calls ‘stuckedness’; characterised by invisibility, immobility, uncertainty and arbitrariness.⁸ The ambiguity about the duration of waiting generates a sense of uncertainty, shame, depression, and anxiety. This can lead to sleep disorders and psychosomatic pain. Dread, ^{8. Ghassan Hage, *Waiting* (Carlton South: Melbourne University Press, 2009).}

angst, or guilt are all components of the experience of waiting. But waiting can be an act too, a strategy of defiance by the migrants. Failed asylum seekers and undocumented migrants who wait in hiding may do so in hope of a regularisation programme or with plans for moving on. Waiting does not have to mean passivity, it can be an element in a strategy by migrants to improve their situation.

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How has the workshop changed your views on borders and boundaries, or on the notions of fluidity and flux?

Participant: Paul Maheke

Unfortunately, the first day reinforced the feeling that borders are first and foremost a threshold where power structures are the most felt; in its in-between lies the possibility of being robbed and dispossessed, reconsidered and denied. The workshop made me hyper aware of the conceptual split they represent. We cannot afford to be romantic about borders anymore. Let's leave it to the 1990s.

Day 1. © Andrej Vasilenko



THE CASE AT THE BORDER. OBSERVATIONS: EXPERIENCES OF THE POST-SOVIET

Natalia Tikhonova

It is interesting to compare the behavioural patterns of three generations living currently in Post-Soviet territory that find themselves in the same situation (completely hypothetical, but just in case, keep it in mind). Imagine that the observed subject went to the restroom at the Torfyanovka, a border crossing point between Finland and Russia, or Morskoe between Lithuania and Russia, and suddenly there was no toilet paper in the booth.

What would a person who grew up in the USSR (born until about 1970 in one of the countries of the former USSR), let's call them the 'Soviet subject', do in a given situation?

The lack of toilet paper for the 'Soviet subject' will not be something out of the ordinary. Of course, they will have their own toilet paper, napkins, or something sheet- and paper-shaped prepared in advance. Lack of toilet paper is an absolute norm and given. The result for behavioural research is practically zero, but as we know, for a researcher, a zero result is also a result.

We can observe a completely different behaviour in the case of a person who does not have experience living in the USSR; we will call them the 'Non-Soviet subject'. Faced with a lack of paper, the toilet visitor will be completely disoriented and confused. This state of things for them is not only unexpected, but completely unbelievable. This simply cannot happen, cannot appear, cannot fit the real life. How to survive? What to do? Lack of toilet paper – this is clearly a signal for something alarming and scary.

The forecast of further actions in this case is practically impossible for modelling due to the highest level of further fluctuations and deviations.

There remains a third, border category – a person born in the USSR from about the 70s to the 90s, living in the 21st century, but having traces of the Soviet experience. The 'Post-Soviet subject' is not prepared for the situation of lack of toilet paper and for them, unlike for the Soviet one, this situation will be unpredictable, but it will not be as shocking as to the 'Non-Soviet subject'. The situation is extraordinary but familiar at some level of memory. The 'Post-Soviet subject' has the knowledge that if there is no toilet paper in this booth, then it is somewhere beyond the toilet walls. And if there was no paper in the next booth, then it will probably be found in toilets of the opposite sex – in the men's room, and vice versa.

For the 'Post-Soviet subject', the behavioural pattern will be explained by the knowledge that if there is no toilet paper here and now, this does not mean that it should not be there at all and never will be, or that the end of the world has come. This is just an unexpected situation for this particular booth; for sure toilet paper is available in another place, and it was just here that it temporarily ended.

How has the workshop changed your views on borders and boundaries, or on the notions of fluidity and flux?

Participant: Muhammad Shahid

The workshop was such a great experience. I have learned so much. The environment was very friendly. It was very relevant to my studies and my MA program. This whole workshop gives a boost to my process and my ideas, particularly the way in which the workshops were given. The most beautiful part for me was encountering the different media which I hope to use to express my ideas in the future. I relate borders and boundaries with myself and, after the workshop dissolved so many boundaries, I felt able to explore different forms of art, like how to get visuals from different dimensions like sound. Overall, I learned so much.

Day 1. © Andrej Vasilenko





Day 1. © Andrej Vasilenko





Day 1. © Andrej Vasilenko



Day 1. © Andrej Vasilenko



KALININGRAD GOTHIC

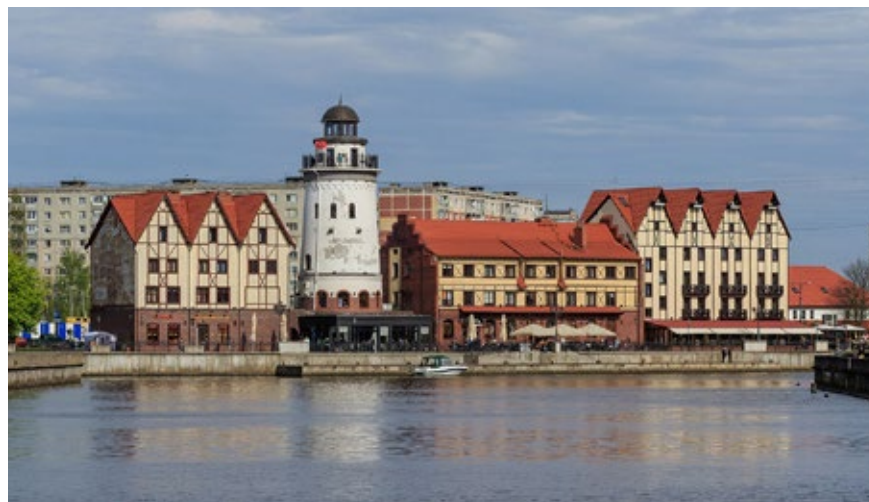
Anna Karpenko

In the summer of 1563, the fishermen caught a monster in the Curonian Lagoon – a lion-fish. Its skin was covered with short hair; it had a lion's head with a mane. It had short front paws and claws. Instead of back paws, it had a fishtail covered with scales. It is believed that the lion-fish squealed when the fishermen were trying to drag it out of the water. Many considered it a foreboding for Prussia.

An excerpt from The Legend of Nettle Beck from the website of the Nesselbeck Hotel.¹

1. Accessed at:
<http://nesselbeck.ru/en/>
[Accessed: December 2019].

In 2005, Kaliningrad, the Russian enclave city on the Baltic, celebrated its 750th anniversary. The former East Prussian (German) Königsberg became Soviet in 1945 and received its new name – Kaliningrad – in 1946. Until the 1990s, the pre-war German history was not officially acknowledged nor celebrated. Things started to change after perestroika, a period of political reform under Mikhail Gorbachev and his policies of ‘glasnost’, or openness. This forbidden past has then re-emerged as an object of inquiry. The history of Kaliningrad, and its architectural manifestation, has begun to be re-thought as a part of a larger project in which partial histories are used to shape popular cultural imaginaries. Sometimes such reinvention has been also pretty disputable from the perspective of classical architectural logic and style. Gothic buildings were rare in the region. With some exceptions, most of them remain in really devastating shape after years of neglect and misuse, like the old churches in the regional towns in the Kaliningrad Region. Structures that have been widely recognised as Gothic are rather Neo-Gothic, dating back to the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. Yet the newly appeared faux-Gothic constructions since 2005 have corresponded quite accurately to popular sentiments, imaginations, and emotions romanticising the past.



Fishing Village (remade in the style of Prussian architecture) in Kaliningrad, Russia. Photo Alexander Savin, 2017, Wikimedia Commons.



Soviet housing blocks on 10-14 and 21-25 Leninsky Prospekt, Kaliningrad, original state and proposed rendering. Published in Berlogos Design and Architecture Online Magazine.

The so called ‘Hanseatic’ style – named after the Hanseatic League, a Medieval commercial and defensive confederation of merchant guilds and market towns in the Baltic – which was introduced into the newly built commercial constructions, can be considered a telling example. The ‘Fishing Village’ (Rybnaya derevnya) which was built from 2006-2010 on an empty lot with no apparent historical reference, just opposite the medieval Cathedral from the 13th century, was widely criticised by architects and historians for its kitsch character, cheap building materials, and pseudo ‘Fachwerk’ (timber framing) structures. Yet its image aligns with a popular cultural imaginary of what a ‘true old European town’ would look like. It is cozy, it does not challenge visitors with its size, and it suggests a retreat from the surrounding grey modernist blocks of the Soviet era. Therefore, it has become a magnet for tourists who come to Kaliningrad in increasing numbers from the other parts of Russia: they want to see a postcard view from the old children’s books – a welcoming 19th century fairytale with fire-places, red bricks, and timber framing.

Another example of this ‘Hanseatic’ style is the recent renovation of the facades of the Soviet housing blocks along Kaliningrad’s main avenue, Leninsky Prospekt (2017-19). After the WWII, the city’s centre remained in ruins after Allied bombings by the Soviets and the British. Only a few prewar buildings survived, untouched in the city centre. In the early 1960s, many low-cost Soviet concrete panel (sometimes brick) houses – ‘khrushchyovkas’ – generally four or five storied, were built in this area. With time, they began to show their age. To improve the city’s image, especially before the 2018 Football World Cup, which also took place in Kaliningrad, a special programme of renovation was introduced. As a result, many ‘khrushchyovka’ facades started to look ‘Hanseatic’ overnight.



The knightly hall of the Hotel Nesselbeck near Kaliningrad.
Photo Hotel Nesselbeck.

The renovation did not include the inner structure of the outdated, low-cost Soviet mass housing buildings. Yet the Kaliningrad example is taken as a counter-example to the programme of massive renovation taking place in many big Russian cities. In Moscow, whole blocks of 1960s buildings are being destroyed and their inhabitants displaced, to be replaced by huge new buildings with new inhabitants. The ‘Hanseatic’ or Gothic’ renovation of the facades in Kaliningrad – in spite of their cheap materials, low quality, and kitschy image – still did not cause gentrification of this neighbourhood, as with Moscow’s urban redevelopment. As in the Fishing Village, the Leninsky Avenue is now taken for granted by tourists as an authentic part of the historical city centre which further perpetuates the city’s fairytale imaginary.

A prime example of this Gothic Disneyland simulacra is the newly built Nesselbeck hotel, situated in Orlovka, just 10km away from the Kaliningrad city centre. This project plays directly with the popular fantasies and stereotypes about the brave Teutonic knights, sleeping beauties, evil beasts, hidden rooms with skeletons and mysterious legends. The main aim of the hotel and restaurant complex is to create a Gothic ‘atmosphere’ and ‘experience’, without the slightest attempt

to correspond to historical accuracy. For the tourist, the luxury 'Gothic' castle offers 'an escape from the daily routine of contemporary Russia'. As a customer, you are inspired not to just imagine but to spend a weekend in this fairytale of your childhood Disney cartoons: book a room, go there, sleep over, eat, drink, and pay. Weddings are also very much welcome.



Petrol station outside of Rybachy, Kaliningrad Oblast. Photo Andrej Vasilenko.

Following these celebrations of the Gothic style and its associated sensations, it does not seem unusual then to see a gas station on the way from Nida to Rybachy built in faux- Gothic style. It is practical since here you can get everything that you need for a pit stop on the way to the border. In addition, it offers you an 'atmosphere' of a fairytale of your childhood; the lived experience of the Gothic then extends into quotidian experiences of consumption, even if petrol and candies are at odds with any authentic experience itself. Even if these Gothic reconstructions – with their plastic window frames – do not look authentic in the midst of the sand dunes and pine forests, they attempt to play with your mind. They recall images imprinted in your memory by Disney cartoons, while the actual Teutonic Ordensburg in Rybachy (Rossitten) collapsed into the lagoon centuries ago.

How has the workshop changed your views on borders and boundaries, or on the notions of fluidity and flux?

Participant: Inga Galinyte

I have never thought that one question and the answer about the personal experience of crossing borders could say so much about each individual. The question and these 'crossing borders portraits' stay in my memory, as well as my forgotten pass- port that separated me from the whole group during the first day of the workshop. There is an ancient Slavic custom saying that one has to sit calmly for few seconds before the departure. From now on, I am not crossing borders without this act first and without the score in my pocket created during the workshop as a reminder to continue listening.

Day 1. © Andrej Vasilenko



SCORE FOR MARGINAL OBJECTS

Workshop by Candice Hopkins

The second day of the workshop was led by Candice Hopkins. She shared with the group a short story, *Casa Tomada* by Julio Cortazar, which was the impetus for the exhibition *Casa Tomada* at SITE Santa Fe (2018–2019), co-curated by Hopkins. The story served as a medium to open up a discussion about borders by asking: who has the right to belong, who doesn't, and who decides about this? Similarly, Candice Hopkins' own text 'The Appropriation Debates', originally published in *Mousse 60* (2017), brought more nuance into the conversations about who has the right to represent whose stories and histories. The conversation about the issues raised in both texts was followed by a series of listening and notational exercises.

In the morning session, we noted the sounds we encountered by silently walking from the Nida Art Colony to the seaside, later sharing our scores. The afternoon session was based on the 'Score for Marginal Objects' by Candice Hopkins and composer Raven Chacon, in which we ordered 'marginal' objects brought into the workshop in a horizontal row according to given criteria, while simultaneously sharing with the group the first memory that came to our mind, alternating with a story or history of the 'marginal' object we brought for the workshop. Listening, notation, scoring, classification, and ordering were thus approached from various perspectives.



Day 2. © Andrej Vasilenko





Day 2. © Andrej Vasilenko

How has the workshop changed your views on borders and boundaries, or on the notions of fluidity and flux?

Participant: Vaida Kazlauskaitė

The workshop made me realise that borders are arbitrary and can shift together alongside the context, the people involved, the amount of unbiased information and gathered knowledge, and its distribution. Borders can mean drawing boundaries and having respect for somebody but at the same time can be suffocating, destructive, regressive.

Day 2. © Andrej Vasilenko





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How has the workshop changed your views on borders and boundaries, or on the notions of fluidity and flux?

Participant: Vilius Vaitiekūnas

Participation in the workshops enriched me in several ways. Reflecting on the activities and information that were part of the workshops gave me new insights into my artistic practice. For instance, learning how fellow artists and curators are approaching topic of borders and boundaries through different strategies and methods inevitably pushed me to experiment and look for unexperienced ways of developing my projects. However, the change in my views as regards the topic of this workshop mostly occurred in terms of the potential of my body to be a boundary to the exterior of my organism.

Participating in workshops by Candice Hopkins, Elin Már Øyen Vister, and Eglė Budvytytė made me more aware of the vulnerability of the intellectual processes that are happening inside of my body. In particular, I started taking into account how I distribute my attention toward the external (outside the body) and internal (inside the body) environments that shape the way I intellectualize and reflect on my experiences, and how engaging my body in physical activities can manipulate and contribute to the intellectualization of my experiences. In this way, these workshops made me think of my body and the way I position it in the environment as a boundary that manipulates the perception of the experience.

Day 2. © Andrej Vasilenko



HERBAL FORAGING

Walk by Elin Már Øyen Vister

In late afternoon, before dinner, artist Elin Már Øyen Vister offered a foraging walk in the surroundings of the Nida Art Colony, introducing the participants to various plants and their medicinal benefits. The walk was concluded by making teas from local herbs, and an explanation of the cultural significance of plants in various cultures and historical periods.

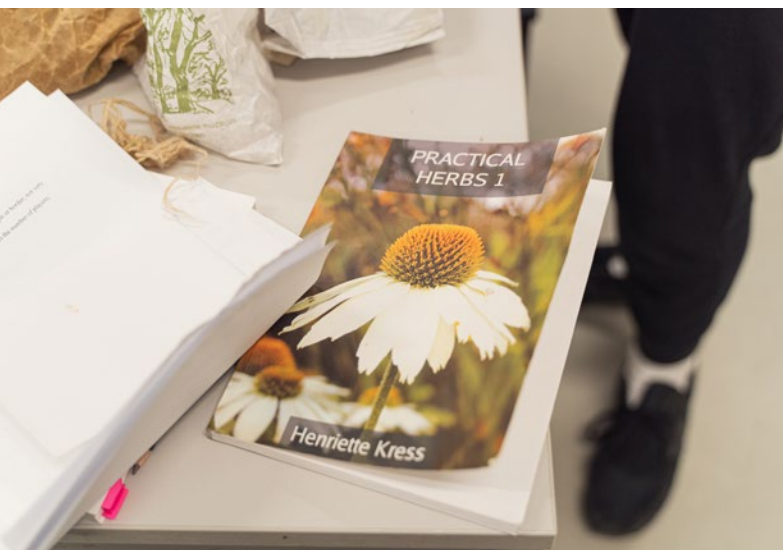
Day 2. © Andrej Vasilenko



How has the workshop changed your views on borders and boundaries, or on the notions of fluidity and flux?

Participant: Greta Dimaris

I am eager to participate in the exhibition and to answer this question in the way of art.



Day 2. © Andrej Vasilenko



THE PHANTOM LIMB: COLONIAL MONUMENTS AND DEFACEMENT IN NEW MEXICO

Candice Hopkins

A foot severed off of a bronze monument of a conquistador. What was exorcised with this cut? What spirits were released? What stories? The event was described as follows:

One moonless night in early January [1998], just as Hispanic New Mexicans were starting to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the first Spanish settlement in the American West, an American Indian commando group stealthily approached a bronze statue here of the first conquistador, Don Juan de Oñate. With an electric saw, the group slowly severed his right foot – boot, stirrup, star-shaped spur and all.¹

1. James Brooke, 'Conquistador Statue Stirs Hispanic Pride and Indian Rage,' *New York Times*, 9 February 1998, Section A, 10.

And they timed their intervention well. The lone police officer in the village of Alcalde was on his annual vacation that evening. To this day, no witnesses have come forward and the whereabouts of the foot, until recently, remained a mystery.

The monument was quietly repaired, but the original cast of the right foot was long since destroyed. The repaired monument now sits with two left feet.

The day after the foot was cut, an anonymous group calling themselves, 'Friends of Acoma Pueblo,' sent letters to various media outlets in New Mexico. To the Albuquerque Journal they wrote:

We invite you to visit the Oñate Distortion Museum and Visitor Center, located eight miles north of Espanola. We took the liberty of removing [Conquistador Don Juan de] Oñate's right foot on behalf of our brothers and sisters of Acoma Pueblo. This was done in commemoration of his 400th year anniversary acknowledging his unasked for exploration of our land. We will be melting his foot down and casting small medallions to be sold to those who are historically ignorant.²

2. Larry Calloway, a reporter with the northern bureau of the *Albuquerque Journal* in Santa Fe received this letter in the mail along with a photograph of the amputated foot in early January, 1998. The letter is cited in Michael Trujillo, 'Oñate's Foot: Remembering and Dismembering in Northern New Mexico,' *Aztlan: A Journal of Chicano Studies*, v33, n2 (Fall 2008), 91-119.



In this photo from January 1998, Estevan Arellano, then director of the Oñate Center in Alcalde, shows how much of the right foot and ankle were removed from an equestrian statue of conquistador Don Juan de Oñate by anonymous vandals. (Jane Bernard/Albuquerque Journal)

Screen capture by the author.

In a call to historical justice they added, ‘we see no glory in celebrating Onate’s fourth centennial and we do not want our faces rubbed in it. If you must speak of his expedition, speak the truth in all its entirety.’³

3. Ibid.

Excerpts from their letter to Santa Fe Reporter stated:

*New Mexico was poised for a grand celebration of the cuatrocentario and we could not let that happen without voicing our existence. Outside of ‘Indian art’ and ‘gaming’, we have become an invisible people, even to ourselves. ... Many of our people have forgotten how to live. Our actions redirect the thinking of those who have forgotten us.*⁴

4. Friends of the Acoma Pueblo, ‘Proud Actions’, Santa Fe Reporter, 9th September 1998, 5.

Along with the suggestion to melt down the foot and make medallions to sell to the historically ignorant, others included ‘cutting the foot off 23 more times’ using the image for a new stamp in recognition of the cuatrocentario; and creating a new statue from the melted metal, that of Popay, the leader of the Pueblo Revolt from Okhay Owingeh (formerly San Juan Pueblo). Yet the story begins long before this moment with a more ancient tale, a European myth that had repeated itself over centuries that became the pretext for colonial impunity, the search for Cibola, the Seven Cities of Gold.

Spanish interest in the Southwest was sparked by the stories of four men who had shipwrecked off of the coast of modern-day Texas. In the summer of 1536, after an eight-year trek across the continent by foot,



Frederic Remington, „Coronado maršas. Koloradas“ (angl. *Coronado's March – Colorado*), 1898 m. Spauda ant popieriaus.

they arrived in what is now Mexico City. Upon their arrival they recounted stories of ‘fertile and populous lands’ to the north, places rife with ‘turquoise, bison hides, and gold and other metals.’ And these weren’t tall tales. Many of these things they had witnessed first-hand. For the Spanish, the news was electrifying. It added further evidence to their belief of fantastically wealthy cities in the north, particularly the centuries old myth of the seven golden cities – or Cibola. In 1539, four men were sent out on a reconnaissance mission – to find evidence of this new wealth. They travelled north more than 1000 miles on foot to what were seven Zuni Pueblo communities.

One of those on the mission, Fray Marcos, recounted a place ‘larger than Mexico City,’ in his texts, a place he described as ‘wealthy beyond belief.’ He described it as ‘situated on a level stretch of the brow of a roundish hill.’ ‘It appears to be a very beautiful city, the best I have seen of these parts.’⁵

5. Daniel T. Reff, cited in ‘Anthropological Analysis of Exploration Texts: Cultural Discourse and the Ethnological Import of Fray Marcos de Niza’s Journey to Cibola,’ *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 93, No. 3 (September, 1991), 639.

While Marcos never exactly reported cities made of gold, the fabled Cibola, this did not stop the Spanish from continuing to try to seek them out. Fuelled by Spanish imaginings, a much larger expedition, led by conquistador Francisco Vásquez de Coronado followed. It was a ruinous 4000-mile trek stretching from western Mexico to modern-day Kansas – bankrupting most of those involved. Only one hundred of the original thousand men sent out returned. But it wasn’t all for a loss – or Coronado succeeded in claiming all of the lands they travelled through in the name of Spain, including all of what is now New Mexico. Once again, the cities of gold were never found. The Spanish, having conquered many of the great cities in the lower half of the New World and amassed great wealth, needed to believe in Cibola’s existence: the fabled cities offered the means to continue to fuel their imperial mission and add more profit to their exploits.

As Edward Said notes, one of the characteristics of imperialism is extra-territoriality. He describes territorial expansion as driven by a near-irrational desire for material possessions such as ‘spices, sugar, slaves, rubber, cotton, opium, time, gold, and silver.’ In other words, ‘profit and hope of further profit’ was vital to the expansion of Western Empires in the New World. But as Said rightly observes, profit is superseded by inertia, that is, ‘a commitment in constant circulation and recirculation’ of these material possessions.⁶

6. Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, a division of Random House, 1994), 10.

Neither imperialism nor colonialism is a simple act of accumulation and acquisition. Both are supported and perhaps even impelled by impressive ideological formations that include notions that certain territories and people require and beseech domination, as well as forms of knowledge affiliated with domination: the vocabulary of classic nineteenth-century imperial culture is plentiful with words and concepts like ‘inferior’ or ‘subject races,’ ‘subordinate peoples,’ ‘dependency,’ ‘expansion,’ and ‘authority.’ Out of the imperial experiences, notions about culture were clarified, reinforced, criticised, or rejected.⁷

7. Ibid., 98.



Frederic Remington, *Coronado's March – Colorado*, 1898. Print on paper.

While it was the desire for riches which brought the Spanish north to claim Nueva España in their name, it was this inertia combined with complex ideologies of dominance and power (the belief that they had the inherent right to these new lands) that kept them there. With this territory firmly in the hands of Spain, in 1598, on the orders of Spanish King Phillip II, Don Juan de Oñate y Salazar, the territory's first Governor, began the process of colonising the northern portion of New Mexico.

Don Juan de Oñate was himself a product of colonial entanglements between the Spanish and Indigenous people. He proudly claimed to be criollo – someone of pure Spanish blood born in the New World – untarnished by the genes of the original inhabitants. After doing some digging, a poet Villagrà, uncovered something else. The Spanish woman recorded as his mother could not have given birth to him because she was in Spain at the time. Villagrà put forth, and others now agree, that on his mother's side Oñate was a descendant of the great Emperor Montezuma II. Perhaps unaware of his own heritage, Oñate married his relative, Doña Isabel de Tolosa Cortes Montezuma, the granddaughter of both Hernan Cortes and Emperor Montezuma II.⁸ Oñate then was born of the conquest of the New World and the violence that flowed from the first moment that European ships docked on the shores of the Americas. Rather than buck tradition, Oñate continued the family tradition of pillaging, slavery, and injustice. The violence against Indigenous peoples began almost immediately upon Oñate's arrival. Spanish settlers also did not escape the wrath.

⁸. For a detailed analysis of Oñate's heritage as well as the monument's defacement, see Michael Trujillo's essay, 'Oñate's Foot', 95.

In October 1598, eleven soldiers in the Spanish Military and two of their servants were killed at Acoma Pueblo after a skirmish erupted. Leading up to their death, Oñate had ordered the military to demand that the Keres at Acoma turn over all of their food supplies, supplies essential to their survival over the winter. But it was not simply the unheeded demand for supplies that led to the killings, instead of first negotiating with Acoma leaders, the Spanish snuck in to the Pueblo like

cowards, and raped at least one Acoma woman, before stealing all of the community's carefully prepared food supplies. The death of the soldiers hit close to home: Oñate's nephew was among those killed.



OÑATE'S ROUTE TO NEW MEXICO IN 1598 AND TO THE ARKANSAS RIVER IN 1601
From the original manuscript map in the Archives of the Indies, Seville

Map drawn between 1598 and 1601 showing Oñate's route through present-day New Mexico and Texas. Screen capture by the author.

Retaliation was swift and without remorse. In January 1599, under Oñate's orders, Spanish military ruthlessly killed 800 villagers. They did not spare women and children. They enslaved the remaining 500 villagers, who were brought to Ohkay Owingeh to face trial. In the true form of New World justice, Oñate presided over the trial as judge and jury. Surviving villagers were handed stiff sentences for charges of 'rebellion' and the murder of Juan de Zaldivar, ten Spaniards, and two servants. Girls and boys under the age of twelve were placed in the charge of the local church, with some sixty girls being sent to a convent in Mexico. For women over 12, the sentence was much stiffer – they each faced twenty years of servitude, with men between the age of twelve and twenty-five facing the same. Then, on Oñate's orders, the right foot of every man over the age of twenty-five was amputated. Between twenty-four to eighty men were mutilated as part of this decree. It was not just men from Acoma Pueblo who suffered – two Hopi men from a nearby Indigenous community who were visiting Acoma also had their feet cut off. They were sent back to their communities as evidence of the punishment for rebellion. The sentence – the cutting off of feet – continued over the coming days in all nearby Native communities.

Many years later after seemingly unending violence, forced labour, and with many of the original settler families abandoning New Mexico, in 1606, Oñate was fined and permanently banned from the region. Forced to return to Mexico City, he faced charges of cruelty to both natives and colonists. His conviction was overturned by appeal and he eventually made his way to Spain where he was appointed head of the country's mining operations by the King.⁹

9. A version of this history of New Mexico, including on Oñate and the Pueblo Revolt, was previously published as part of the essay by the author, "If History Moves at the Speed of its Weapons...", *Tracing Indigenous Pathways in Indigenous New Media Art* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press), 124-127.

What the monument obscures is the most successful Indigenous resistance to take place in the Southwest – a resistance that was likely slowly forming as a result of Oñate’s vicious treatment of both Indigenous people and new settlers. People in what is now northern New Mexico had lived under imposed Spanish rule for some eighty years prior to the 1680 Pueblo revolt (the nomadic Navajo and Apache managed to escape much of the tyranny). Yet this was not the first time that they, together with their strategic allies, drew up arms against their invaders and those seeking to ‘civilise’ them in the name of religion. As John Berger notes, ‘Each tyranny finds and improvises its own set of controls, which is why they are often, at first, not recognised as the vicious controls they are.’¹⁰ The various Pueblo peoples who took part in the revolt– among them the Keres, Tompiros, Tewas, Tiwas, Towas, Piro, and Zuni – were by no means a homogenous group; most did not even share the same language. The word pueblo, of Spanish origins, later came to collectively identify these various communities.

10. John Berger, *Landscapes: John Berger on Art* (London: Verso, 2016), 248.

The Revolt took the priests and colonists largely by surprise. Key to the Pueblo’s stealth was their use of a knotted rope calendar, a form of counting ubiquitous in Mesoamerica prior to Spanish arrival. Knotted ropes were distributed among the villages along with instructions indicating for leaders to untie one knot for each day leading up to the Revolt. When the final knot was undone each of the disparate Pueblo groups knew it was time to attack. The attack was meant to take place on August 13th, but priests got wind of the planned uprising after they captured and questioned two young Pueblo boys. In response to this breach, Po’pay moved the revolt up by two days. On August 10th, 1680 ‘Catholic priests were killed, churches destroyed, and haciendas raided.’ Those who survived this first attack sought refuge in the capital of Santa Fe. 2500 Pueblo warriors invaded the capital later in August, capturing the city by severing the water supply. The majority of Spaniards who survived the attack, along with Tiwa allies, retreated southward to El Paso del Norte.



Marble sculpture of Pueblo Revolt leader Po'pay (1630?-died 1692) by Cliff Fragua, 2005. Installed in Emancipation Hall U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC.

The twelve-year period that followed the reclaiming of Santa Fe essentially fell out of history. Some now view this as yet another act of strategic resistance: having observed the high-value that the Spanish and the Franciscan priests placed on the written word, Native resisters took it upon themselves to destroy every document they could find. During this time the written record slipped back into oral testimony, essentially shutting out conventional historical enquiry.

What is known is that relatively soon after the Revolt, Po'pay's leadership waned. Disease continued to take the lives of Native people at a rapid rate and the galvanising force of change had dissipated. But all was not lost. Recent collaboration with Pueblo peoples, new archaeological evidence, and with the increased legitimacy of oral testimony within 'official' narratives has generated additional information about this period, a time when history went underground. Cultural revitalisation, for example, was integral to the revolt. New understandings of the spatial organisation of early Pueblo revolt-era villages reveal the extent to which 'leaders used architecture and village locations to establish a revitalisation movement.'

Here, the Pueblo people took a page from the book of their colonisers and wiped out history in much the same way that the Spanish had previously destroyed hundreds of Maya codices – known in their own names as *pik hu'un* – when the information that they held was deemed a threat to the imposition of new religious ideologies. With this, thousands of years of astronomy, accounting, time-keeping, religious documents, agricultural and historical records, prophecies, and myths (along with other important information) went up in flames.

Leaders encouraged the Pueblo people to rid their lives of the influence of the colonialists, and with this, to ‘revive their traditional pre-Hispanic ceremonies and beliefs.’¹¹ The Pueblo

Revolt remains an exceptional moment of Indigenous resistance, one never again replicated on the northern Spanish frontier. However, even so-called ‘de-colonisation and the growth of supra-nationalism’ are not ‘the termination of imperial relationships,’ but, as Said has observed, ‘merely the extending of a geo-political web which has been spinning since the Renaissance.’¹²

11. Matthew Liebmann, T.J. Ferguson, and Robert W. Preucel, “Pueblo Settlement, Architecture, and Social Change in the Pueblo Revolt Era, A.D. 1680-1696” in *Journal of Field Archaeology* 30 Vol. 1 (2005), 46

12. Said, 292.

According to anthropologist Michael Taussig, defacing a human body or even a public statue releases a surplus of energy – much of it negative.¹³ Anticipating the 400-year anniversary of Oñate’s arrival in Nueva España, the Oñate Monument and Visitor’s Centre opened near Ohkay Owingeh in the early 1990s.

13. See Michael Taussig’s essay, *Defacement: Public Secrecy and the Labor of the Negative*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999).

A formidable bronze equestrian monument made by Albuquerque artist Reynaldo ‘Sonny’ Rivera was at its heart. The monument and visitor’s centre were introduced by a bill passed through the state senate. But it was not until the 400-year anniversary of the Spanish arrival in New Mexico that the monument met the same fate as so many Pueblo men before. Early in January, on nearly the same day as the original act, the statue’s foot was cut off. This monument could no longer serve as a hero to the ignorant.



Sonny Rivera, Oñate monument, bronze, 1991. Alcade, New Mexico.
Image courtesy Creative Commons, 2011.

But history as we know is short, and public memory, sometimes shorter. Inspired by this first monument, after the 400-year anniversary, an even larger equestrian monument was built in El Paso, Texas to commemorate Oñate in 2006. Situated near the border of the United States and Mexico, its commanding size means that it is visible from both countries. When it was erected, it was the largest equestrian monument in the United States. Its unveiling was met with protest and many Acoma Pueblo people travelled to El Paso to rally against the statue's unveiling and to make their stories known. The founders of this monument, perhaps realising their wrong-headed intentions, became increasingly evasive as to its intent – what it was to symbolise and commemorate. At the time of its unveiling it was not formally specified as a monument of the conquistador Oñate, although it is. Instead, they call it an equestrian monument.



John Sherrill Houser, equestrian statue of Don Juan de Oñate, bronze, 2006. El Paso, Texas. Image courtesy Creative Commons, 2017.



Sonny Rivera and Betty Sabo, *La Jornada*, bronze, 2005. Oñate monument permanently installed at the Albuquerque Museum. Photo by the author, 2016.

And again, in 2004, yet another monument was erected to Oñate and the first Spanish settlers. This one is installed in front of the Albuquerque Museum. The monument was first planned in 1997, as a collaboration between artists Betty Sabo and Sonny Rivera (the sculptor of the first monument to Oñate).

The commissioning of this new Oñate sculpture was advocated for by the mayor of Albuquerque. When you dig a little below the surface of the statue it starts to look more and more like an inside job – a pet project of the mayor, and his supporters – all Hispanic. Millie Santillanes, who was then head of the Hispanic Culture Preservation League and later appointed the city's Cultural Services Director, lobbied for the monument to be placed in Tiguex Park, a park created to commemorate Tiwa Pueblo people. The park happened to be across from Santillanes's home. To embed things further, the monument was quite literally a reflection of those in power at the time.

The models for the settlers in the piece were none other than Mayor Chavez, pictured here, with his ex-wife Margaret Aragon de Chavez, Santillanes, and the Santillanes' grandchildren. What is the purpose of history if you cannot see yourself in it?

Yet, the legacy of dismemberment followed the commissioning of this new sculpture as well: a journalist noted back in 2005 that, 'the city still appears to be nervous about residents' reaction to the artwork. On a light pole by La Jornada, a security camera aims down at the bronze figure of Oñate, focusing on his feet.'¹⁴

14. Katy June-Friesen, 'Recasting New Mexico History,' *Alibi*, V.14 No.42 (OCT 20-26, 2005). Accessed at: <https://alibi.com/feature/13065/Recasting-New-Mexico-History.html> [Accessed: October, 2018].12. Said, 292.

To quell some of the controversy, city officials decided they needed to work with an Indigenous artist, and contacted Santa Clara Pueblo artist Nora Noranjo Morse. Morse stated in a newspaper article in 2005 that the call she received in 1997 changed her life. After uncovering more about the Spanish arrival, she realised that she could not participate in the project as planned and decided to create another work – not a counter-monument exactly, but one that is centred on the

ideologies of the Santa Clara Pueblo people and not Oñate's legacy. For Morse, the commission was transformational. At the time, she remarked that,

*maybe there were generations of Pueblo people like me [educated in public schools] who hadn't been given the complete story of Pueblo colonization ... many of the Pueblo people who I'd spoken to had been given basically the same glorified, romantic and antiseptic version of what took place during that period of time. An Acoma woman in her 60s told me not only did she not get information in school, but she didn't get it at home, simply because the historical trauma was so great. Her family didn't speak of that dark period of time – as if to utter Oñate's name would bring illness.*¹⁵

15. Ibid.



Detail of La Jornada with settler and infant in the foreground. Photo by the author, 2016.



Detail of *La Jornada*. Settler with lamb based on likeness of former Albuquerque mayor, Martin Chávez. Photo by the author, 2016.

The New Mexican Hispanic Culture Preservation League – the group who lobbied for the creation of the monument – had a different take. For them, ‘the memorial [was] an opportunity to help correct a deficiency of Spanish history in New Mexico’s public education.’¹⁶

Norse’s environmental landscape, Numbe Whageh (Our Center Place), was commissioned by The Albuquerque Museum to provide a Native response to 400-year observance of Don Juan de Oñate’s arrival in New Mexico. To mark the beginning of the work there is a path and a modest plaque with the following poem:

Numbe Whageh

Our Centre Place

*From the beginning of time, life has swirled
within and around Numbe Whageh, our
Pueblo centre place.
Clouds rise from the mountain peaks into
billowing white giants in the sky. Winds gather
from the four directions. Lightning and thunder
follow the clouds and the smell of rain fills the air.
Drops of water soak the dry, cracked ground as
wet pebbles and rocks glisten with subtle
browns and greys. Small trickles of water
find their way around trees, boulders and stones
through Numbe Whageh.*

*Here birds, lizards and ants come to drink and live.
Pinons, chamisas and grasses sprout, grow and
send off seeds to sustain others and start life anew.*

*Cycles begin, continue and fade. It is out of this moist centre place that the Towa, the Pueblo people emerged. From here, we, the Towa, know the clouds, mountains, winds and all other creatures who swirl with us. This is our world place. Here we see beauty, feel love and know a sacred wholeness... at Numbe Whageh, our centre place.*¹⁷

17. Nora Noranjo Morse, 'Numbe Whageh', poem published on artwork plaque, 2005, permanently installed at the Albuquerque Museum.

At the centre of the work, which is a spiral, is a single stone. To place a rock at the centre is poignantly absent of any grandiose ideas of monumentality. To this end, Morse's installation re-establishes Pueblo understandings of place. It is a quiet piece, not a false idol. Importantly, you cannot immediately consume it in its entirety and digest it with only your eyes, you have to walk, experience it with your body and begin something of a journey. It shifts the perspective of what is worth honouring – not a violent, murderous conquistador – but the land itself.



Nora Noranjo Morse, *Numbe Whageh*, earth, stones, and indigenous plants, 2005. Permanently installed on the grounds of Albuquerque Museum. Screen capture by the author, 2016.



Nora Noranjo Morse, *Numbe Whageh*, earth, stones and indigenous plants, 2005. Photo by the author, 2016.

But, like the effects of a phantom limb, I never quite got the original conquistador monument or the act of its dismemberment off of my mind. Monuments – often inert – take on a newly charged role in times of unrest or in times of historical reckoning. On 30th September 2017, an article cropped up in the New York Times rather unexpectedly. Maintaining his anonymity, the person who had cut off the foot had suddenly reappeared and wanted to tell his story.

The foot thief smiled when discussing how his act of sabotage was stirring ghosts. He has melted down a portion of the foot to make medallions for Pueblo leaders, but otherwise it remains mostly as it was when he sawed it off.

‘I always wanted to walk the foot all the way to Acoma,’ he said. ‘Or maybe it’ll get buried as a time capsule.’ ‘Not the spur, though,’ he said, explaining how he planned to keep a trophy from his act. ‘That will be mine forever.’¹⁸

18. Simon Romero, ‘Statue’s Stolen Foot Reflects Divisions Over Symbols of Conquest,’ Accessed at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/30/us/statue-foot-new-mexico.html> [Accessed: 1 October, 2018].

He came out by slipping filmmaker Chris Eyre a note at a bar. The note stated that he was the one who sawed off the foot all of those years ago. Eyre wanted to know whether the story was true – for this he needed to see the foot for himself, which the foot thief later presented to him in a black canvas bag. For Eyre, the act and the re-emergence of the perpetrator was a means to speak about New Mexico’s history – in particular, the contingent relationships between Indigenous and Hispanic people. He is in the midst of working on a new film centred on his anonymous star.



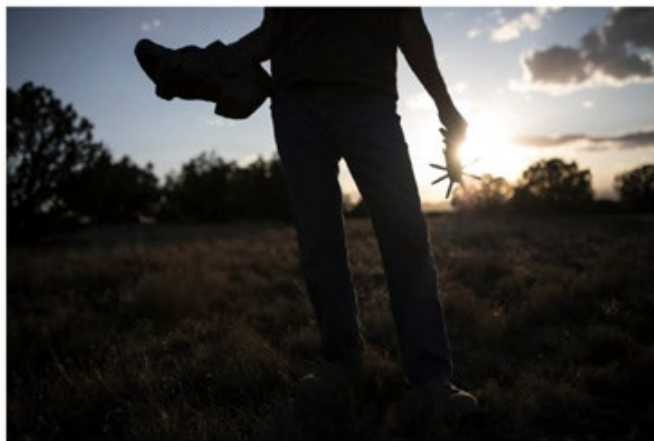
Nora Noranjo Morse, *Numbe Whageh*, earth, stones and indigenous plants, 2005. Photo by the author, 2016.

When the New York Times article cropped up, José Luis Blondet, Ruba Katrib, and I were in the midst of working on the 2018 SITE Santa Fe biennial exhibition Casa Tomada. While driving by the monument with Blondet on our way to Taos, New Mexico, Blondet and I remarked almost in unison that we needed to get the foot. In a time of increasing divisiveness about borders, between insider and outsider, who belongs and who doesn't, as well as who decides, we thought that this object, the stolen foot, might just be the item we needed to spark deeper conversations about these divides.

In collaboration with Eyre, who was our proxy in negotiations with the foot thief, we were able to make an exact replica of the foot, out of micaceous earth. The clay was significant, flecked with the glint of mica, it sparkles in the sun. It was the very material that led Fray Marcos all those years ago to think that he had found Cibola, the seven cities of gold.

The New York Times

Statue's Stolen Foot Reflects Divisions Over Symbols of Conquest



The man who said he cut off the right foot of the Don Juan de Oñate statue in Alcalde, N.M., 20 years ago. Adria Malcolm for The New York Times

By Simon Romero

Sept. 30, 2017



Screen capture by the author.

As a footnote to his original act, the foot thief wrote a new letter to accompany the display of the cast.

The Foot

Twenty years ago on the night of December 29, 1997 we cut off the right foot of Don Juan De Onate in Alcalde.

Though it took almost a week before anyone noticed, this simple act forced the state of New Mexico to re-examine its planned 400th Anniversary Celebration (The Quatrocentenario).

It caused dialogue to occur between the church, the state and the pueblos. It was not a case of rewriting history, but rather shining a light on it. Make no mistake, the arrival of the Spanish Church and State in the Southwest was an invasion, not an 'entrada.' On this continent the original inhabitants have suffered greatly at the hands of those who came later.

We cannot change history; all that we ask is that it be written truthfully.

We were here first. We are here now. We wish to be part of the fabric of the future.

Imagine if you have to honor all the treaties ever agreed to and signed by the US government.

We are not invisible. Include us in decisions about the land, the future, our future. Our land.

We 'the people.'

[Signed] "On Behalf of Our Brothers at Acoma,"

And a good line to end on. We are not invisible. The pain of the phantom limb will linger as long as colonial history is excused.



The foot of Oñate. Adria Malcolm for The New York Times

Screen capture by the author.



Cast of right foot of Oñate monument, micaceous earth. Photo courtesy SITE Santa Fe, 2017.



Day 2. © Tomasz Sekular



NOTES ON INCANTATION KARAOKE

By Eglė Budvytė
Performance, 30 Min.

The room is dimly lit, I am kneeling on the floor, making small circular moves with my chest. I am asking the swamp to come and envelop the room, me, and everybody inside of it. I start to sing, gently wrapping my gaze around a girl sitting nearby. My voice is naked, as there are no melodies or music to support it. The micro sounds of exhalation and saliva moving through my mouth enter and contaminate the melodies. The voice, unstable in its timbre, slightly trembling, softens the edges of the room. As I sing, I slowly circle around the space, encountering everybody with my eyes. The voice, transformed by reverb, echo, and dark tone effects distances itself from my body, allows different entities attached to the words to fill the room.

Later, we sing together, in and out of sync, in the dimly lit room. The vocal effect unit, manipulated by my fellow resident artist Jin Mustafa, assists us with altering the voices, travelling from high to low tones, offering some distance from the familiarity of our voices. Below is what we sang together.

(voice: soft and melodic)

*I am a one-cell organism
I am the oldest form of life
a jellyfish
medusa
I am a one-cell organism
in despair
I am a one-cell organism
in despair*

*I am a fungus
in your gut
liquid
in your brain
I colonise you from inside*

*I am a bacteria
germinating on your skin*

*I am a volcano
a deep-sea creature
I am a virus*

*I am a stone
I am a piece of gold*

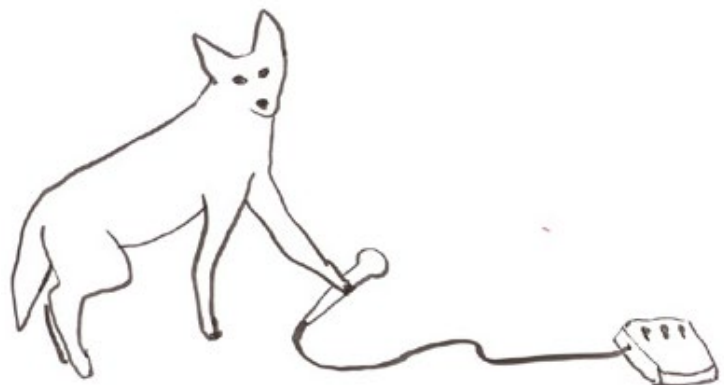
*I am an exhausted coral reef
I am a cat
dying from cancer*

*I am a space inside the mountain
hollowed by explosion*

*I am the notion of interdependence
I am a disoriented foreign insect
I am a broken English tongue*

*I am the
inconsolable sadness
spilling over*

Eglė Budvytytė, Incantation Karaoke, 2018.



(voice: lower, slightly altered by delay effect)

*I am a coyote
I smile
I have a brown loving eye
I smile
I have a brown loving eye*

*I am an oyster
floating in your mouth
I will absorb you
from the other side*

*I am a muddy water
I am a mugwort
a dream inducing
medicinal plant*

*I am a mugwort
an ancient form of
birth control*

*I can relieve
the pain of menstruation
I can induce
hallucination*

(voice: altered by echo effect)

*I'm a swamp
volcano
lava
firecracker*

*I am an excavated rock
the oil in the bottom of the ocean.*

*I am a sesame seed
attached to your sushi
I am a dolphin*

*I am a sisterhood of seaweeds
high on toxins
riding on the cruise ship*

*I am a big, big lava flow
coming to get you
and your family
and your belongings
your house
your car
your avocado toast*

(voice: heavily altered by reverb effect)

*I am a slime oozing
down your throat
down your veins
down your genitals
down your destiny
down your memory
slime
mucus
mould
humidity*

*slime
mucus
mould
humidity*

*multiply
multiply*

(voice altered by low tones)

*I am a worm
I make holes
in your privacy
your property
your real estate
your integrity
your memory
and I thrive
and I thrive*

(voice: altered by echo effect)

*I am a nut
I am a bipolar disorder
floating in the water*

I am a hairy spider

*I am a swamp
I am a swamp
unstable territory
murky land
dark matter
half liquid
half solid
half plant
half animal
half living
half dying
half twilight
half dusk*

*undefined
and
in between*

*shape shifting
till the end of time
shape shifting
till the end of time*

(voice: heavily altered by low tones)

*I am a vulture
working on a corpse
I am a pile of compost
stinking in the sun*

*and I grow
and I grow*

*I am a mushroom death suit
I will digest your body
after you die
you can order me online
you can order me online*

(voice: high and melodic, fast paced)

*I neutralise
pesticides
insecticides
herbicides*

*hair
skin
nails
hair
skin
nails*

(voice: altered by very low, deep tones)

*I am unscheduled time
I am unscheduled time
I am unscheduled time
I am unscheduled time*

I collapse

*accumulative attitudes
family values
linear narratives*

*I am a jaded waterfall
I am a venomous plant
I am a solar anus
spinning in the space*

*I am contaminated surface
ungovernable territory
material intensity*

(voice: soft, altered by light reverb)

*I am a lazy larva
high on vapours*

*I am an archive
a female oracle*

*I am a flying uterus
celebrating independence*

*I am a period
dripping loose and juice*

*I am a loosely formulated thought
swimming in the bottom
of a stomach*

*I am a slip of meaning
I am a gut feeling*

*I am contaminated surface
asymmetry
a pregnant dog*

(voice: soft, without reverb)

*lazy larva
high on vapours*

*loose period
dripping meaning*

*flying uterus
pregnant dog
slow thought
gut feeling*

*solar anus
high on spinning*

*sleepy oracle
swelling heat*

*lazy larva
dropping meaning
solar anus
high on vapours*

*dizzy magma
mighty mugwort*

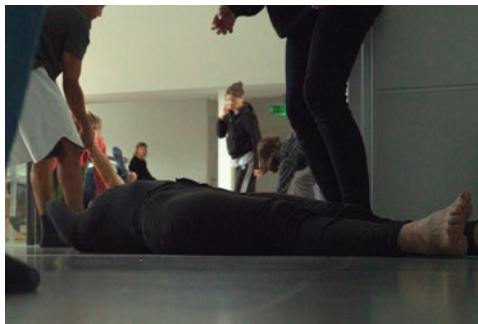
*haunted funghi
bones and tendons*

*dry mouth
blurred vision
fading reason*

THE PLEASURE OF BEING DRAGGED

Workshop by Eglė Budvytytė

During the last day we explored, under Eglė Budvytytė's gentle guidance, the pleasure of being dragged, based on her 2015 performance *Some were carried, some – dragged behind*, which is also the departure point for her text 'Notes on Dragging' in this e-publication. Centring care, attention, and trust, the workshop introduced bodywork and somatic practices as well as new – non-vertical – perspectives of perception and witnessing. During the slow and gentle dragging, the group practiced not least mutual intimacy between the draggers and the dragged, while also changing the roles. After the dragging, we concluded the session with *The Oracle Dance*, based on a score for a dance that answers questions, or tells the future, which originated in the TTT sessions (Teachers Teaching Teachers) at Impulstanz festival in Vienna in 2014. Divided into two groups, we took turns dancing for each other while our dance was interpreted by an oracle in relation to a given question.



Day 3. © Tomasz Sekular

How has the workshop changed your views on borders and boundaries, or on the notions of fluidity and flux?

Participant: Linda Boļšakova

Personal borders, the borders of my body, political borders... all affirmed and demolished in tides that kept coming and going on the Curonian Spit, that parallel universe that we also inhabited for a while. The universe that expanded my own universe.

There is a change that occurs with the experience. Somewhere between the flapping of the winds, in the long wait, in the heavy dragging, by listening, and in the throat – by voicing and swallowing words with foraged tea.

Day 3. © Tomasz Sekular



NOTES ON DRAGGING

By Eglė Budvytytė

Some were carried, some – dragged behind, is a choreographed performance for public space that took place in Basel, Melbourne, and Munich in 2015. A few years later I have expanded it and translated it into a workshop.

Dragging is a collective practice of slowness and intimacy with different surfaces: gravel, grass, asphalt, mud, wood, concrete, carpet. It is also a practice of intimacy between humans: the draggers, and the dragged. It is a way to move through different spaces, outdoors and indoors.

Dragging shifts perspectives and angles of the gaze of both the draggers and the dragged. My body is being dragged on the floor inside an art institution. I look at the frame of the painting from below, the table legs in the office space passing by, a bit of dust in the corners.

We are rehearsing, and I am being slowly dragged through a park in Munich. I am zooming into the sand gravel in front my face, then I get flipped and I briefly glance at the tourists passing by above me. I see the sky, suddenly so open and vast from below, contrasting with the recent image of the close up of the ground. I am looking and I am being looked at. Sounds too feel different when you are so low. They are more distant, obscured by proximity of the faint sound of my body sliding heavily on the ground. The draggers flip me again, and my eyes encounter stems of grass, which almost touch my face, then a bit of mud, and dog shit in the vicinity. As we move on, the front of my thighs get massaged by the gravel stones I am passing over. While being dragging the angles and positions of my body shift and alter my sense of space – distances stretch and expand, creating vulnerability and disorientation.



Performance in public space, 45min. Liste Art fair, Basel; Munich Kunstverein, Munich; ACCA in the City, Melbourne, 2015.
Photography: Rasa Juškevičiūtė, Susannah Wimberly





Performance in public space, 45min. Liste Art fair, Basel; Munich Kunstverein, Munich; ACCA in the City, Melbourne, 2015.
Photography: Rasa Juškevičiūtė, Susannah Wimberly

Dragging is a release. A temporal release of verticality, ambition and singularity. It's an exercise of suspending performing power and becoming a body swollen with gravity and weight. In a workshop situation dragging temporarily collapses social hierarchies between those involved and facilitates the emergence of a body as a sheer matter; the amalgamation of organs, liquids, flesh and bones.

Dragging produces different relationalities between the bodies busy with the task, and also between bodies and surfaces. I am squatting next to you laying on the asphalt, ready to be dragged, and I see the edges of your body softening, your muscles dropping into the ground. I will take care that your skin doesn't get bruised while we do this. I will tuck in the t-shirt over and over again, back into your pants when it gets out and exposes your skin to the asphalt. I will adjust the hoody to protect the back of your neck and your head. I will gently flip you over, when the layers of fabric tear open on your back. Then I will have to rest, because dragging is exhausting. I will lay down and you will drag me.



LISTENING AND SENSING AS AN ARTISTIC PRACTICE AND METHOD

Workshop by Artist Elin Mar Øyen Vister

The final workshop session was led by artist Elin Már Øyen Vister and was focused on listening and sensing as an artistic practice. The session started with a presentation of Elin Már Øyen Vister's journey as an artist and a person in terms of their identity in relation to gender, sexuality, race, and nationality. The defining moment for the artist was the encounter with the Deep Listening practice developed by the American composer Pauline Oliveros, as well as with the indigenous listening poetics of the Sámi artist, poet, musician, and philosopher Nils-Aslak Valkeapää.

The workshop, held indoors due to the rainy weather, was an invitation to listen to field recordings from the surrounding forest and seaside of Nida and to the sonic landscape audible within the room, blending the sounds of our bodies with those from the outdoors, beyond the glass wall of the workshop room. As the rain stopped, we moved outdoors in an attempt to perform the soundscape we had heard indoors.



Day 3. © Tomasz Sekular



How has the workshop changed your views on borders and boundaries, or on the notions of fluidity and flux?

Participant: Jaanika Arum

Being able to stay in Nida Art Colony was probably one of the warmest experiences during my studies as it was very enjoyable to exchange thoughts as a group and be inspired by the other residents.

Thanks to Kristina Norman and Joanna Warsza, I developed a deeper interest in eco-feminism and the benefits of it, via a text by Marwa Arsanios. It was also extremely useful to work on the topic of displacement when crossing borders as it is always a personal topic and has variety of layers and topics to explore further in the future. Thanks to Candice Hopkins I developed fresh insight into how to find inspiration in simple everyday sound sensations. Seeing Eglė Budvytytė's performance had a very strong impact on me, as it showed how a very simple idea, using minimal tools, can be turned into a collective performance, where the audience is not ashamed to use their singing (as something very intimate) as a source of performance.

Day 3. © Tomasz Sekular



A RETURN TO A LIFELONG CONTRACT WITH EARTH

By Elin Már Öyen Vister

*'Take a walk at night. Walk so silently that the bottoms of your feet become ears.'*¹

1. Pauline Oliveros, 'Sonic Meditation V: Native', *Sonic Meditations* (Smith Publications, 1971).

Pauline Oliveros

Please listen and read the text below:

<https://soundcloud.com/leynarrecordings/nida-hum-2>

Everybody is listening. Everybody is sensing. Constantly. Humans, and every other living being, do so in a particular way, from our first heartbeat to our last. Our sensitivity is an accumulated dance of all our senses. How much weight we put on the input of our sensory system depends on the culture we grow up in and are socialised into. Gut feelings are a bodily sensation; a non-verbal language of sensation holding important information for our survival. Our whole body reacts to sensory stimuli; both joy and traumas of various kind affect our nervous system and immune system. To get to know our bodies and to learn to deal with all kinds of experiences is maybe the most important thing in our lives, but when living within a culture which is enslaved to a destructive, neo-liberal hyper capitalist, consumerist society, for us to figure ourselves out is not something wanted by those in power.

Growing up in a family who instilled in me a closeness to nature, music, and song from an early age, I was given tools that would become essential to my life. But to really begin to take these ‘gifts’ seriously, I first had to find out who I was. I had a critical moment in my life at the end of my 20s.

I would call it a nervous breakdown. I was doing really well as a DJ, both arranging my/our own nights and playing on national radio for a few years. But it was night-work, and I became more and more anxious and depressed. I had chronic and severe back and neck pain and I was mourning the state of the world. I also carried with me the leftovers of a mild eating disorder I had picked up in my early teens and I felt that I could not find my place in this world; and the girl-blueprint presented to me by the mainstream media became a straight-jacket for me and so many other girls. I eventually realised I was queer and that my gender was fluid. That was a revolution. At this point in my life I was also unaware of suffering from PTSD. I was in a severe car accident as a child, which never got treated. In addition to that, I suffered from a sort of hyper-activity, which would lead to concentration trouble and many stressful situations throughout my life. I felt like I was holding onto an ocean of creativity but I could not give birth to it, so to speak. Finally, I decided to move to the peninsula of Kjerringøy in Northern Norway (originally also a coastal Sámi area), where in 2009 I began a journey of reconnecting with myself and with the earth. It was the mountains of Salten and the Sørfold region of Nordland which called to me. I fell in love with these mountains, with the sea and the natural life. They comforted me, which I desperately needed, as the anxiety had become a constant “claw-like” pain that was unbearable.

The journey of finding myself has not yet reached its end, but eleven years later I sit in my house by the sea in the Røst archipelago and I am making a living as an artist. I have come a long way. I still have a few mountains to climb to ‘get there’, but I know I’m on the right path, because now I know what I need: to follow my gut feelings. They are maps of life. I

wanted to share these personal thoughts with you, the reader, as the Western art-world is very much individualised and career-driven. I often feel a pressure of coming off as confident and strong, when I am not always so. For me, it has become important to share my feelings and experiences as a kind of self-emancipation, as in the feminist slogan ‘the personal is the political’.

The Black lesbian, feminist poet Audre Lorde has written extensively on ‘*The Power of The Erotic*’, and the gut feeling I am speaking of in this text can be understood as being part of this resourceful inner power. In her paper *Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power*, Lorde writes:

The erotic is a resource within each of us that lies in a deeply female and spiritual plane, firmly rooted in the power of our unexpressed or unrecognized feelings. In order to perpetuate itself, every oppression must corrupt or distort those various sources of power within the culture of the oppressed that can provide energy for change. For women, this has meant a suppression of the erotic as a considered source of power and information within our lives... We have been taught to suspect this resource, vilified, abused, and devalued within western society [...] As women, we have come to distrust that power which rises from our deepest and non-rational knowledge.²

2. Audre Lorde, *Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power*. Paper delivered at the Fourth Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, Mount Holyoke College. August 25, 1978. (Berkley: The Crossing Press, 1984).

The power of the erotic is in my opinion closely connected to the life practice of ‘Deep Listening’, as it is asking us to listen without judgement to everything, always. And so it becomes a powerful tool to embrace the gut feeling; the power of the sensual.

Deep Listening is a life-practice which the American composer, musician, writer, and aesthetic philosopher Pauline Oliveros founded in the early 1980s, through many collective experiences. Deep Listening is, according to Oliveros herself, a process:

*As a musician, I am interested in the sensual nature of sound, its power of release and change... Deep Listening is listening in every possible way to everything possible – this means one hears all sound, no matter what one is doing. Such intense listening includes hearing the sounds of daily life, of nature and of one own's thought, as well as musical sounds. Deep Listening is my Life Practice.*³

3. Martha Mockus, *Sounding Out: Pauline Oliveros and Lesbian Musicality* (Routledge: London, 2007).

Oliveros speaks of how 'listening is the basis of creativity and culture. How you listen is how you develop a culture and how a community of people listen is what creates their culture.'⁴

Understanding the urgent need to listen both for creative purposes as a composer and musician, and for a cultural and communal purpose as a teacher and community member, in the 1960s she began developing her 'all inclusive' sounding and listening exercises named 'Sonic Meditations'. She went on to found The Deep Listening trio, and the Deep Listening practice and retreats in collaboration with her life partner Ione, and Tai-chi practitioner, Heloise Gold.

4. Pauline Oliveros talks to Alan Baker on The Music and Nature radio show, May 2005. Accessed at: <https://musicandnature.publicradio.org/interviews/index.html#oliveros> [Accessed: December 2019].

Practicing Deep Listening has become a way to unleash my creativity and to let me re-connect with the creative powers we are all born with. As a child, I wrote poems, songs to plants, and painted. At the age of forty-three, I am taking these gifts seriously. My own extended version of a "Deep Listening" methodology is as much inspired by and indebted to the indigenous Northern European Sámi life-philosophy embedded in the lands where I live my life today, as well as eco-feminist and indigenous ways of life across the planet. These teachings inform and guide my artistic life practice. When I arrive in a new place, such as Nida, I begin by Deep Listening to the landscape; to the people, to the bodies of water, to everything living and growing there. I try to tune into the 'gut-feeling' of the place/space, and slowly, I begin to get to know and learn from the land, as you would with a new friend.

The influential Lithuanian-American archeologist and anthropologist Marija Gimbutiene (Gimbutas), who fled with her family to the USA after WWII, spent her whole life researching the Neolithic and Bronze Age cultures of “Old Europe”, with a particular focus on her own birthland. She found that prior to an Indo-European influence arriving around 4000 years ago, Europe had a matrilineal ‘herstory’, that had been around for millennia. This theory – the Kurgan hypothesis – has recently been fortified through modern DNA research on migration. Gimbutiene spoke of the Lithuanian countryside where the elders would begin their day by kissing the earth. She outlined an ancient lineage back to an old matrilineal Europe in Lithuanian folk culture symbolic, songs and traditions. Lithuania and the Baltic are also known as ‘the land of songs’ because there has been an incredibly rich tradition of songs. Song was, and still is, the resilient language that connected the people to the land and became a crucial tool to heal the traumas of WWII that Lithuania and the other Baltic countries still are suffering from, particularly the wounds caused by the displacement of people leading up to, during, and after the war. Spending two months at Nida Art Colony this autumn, what emerged is that everyone and everything carries a history of displacement or loss. But there are also stories of a rich culture, living with and from the land and sea. I would like to share an excerpt of a sonic diary I kept during my Nida stay and recently begun reshaping as a sonic essay, as it gives you a practical understanding of how I work with Deep Listening and how I begun tuning into Nida.

I arrive to Nida on the Curonian Spit around 10pm on the 5th of September. I could go to bed, tired after several long days of travelling here, but I am too curious, and the air is still warm. Where I live, on Røst, an archipelago far north out into the Atlantic Ocean, the night temperature rarely reaches above eight degrees Celsius in the summer, so the sensation of rather warm air embracing me and the smell of the pine forest and moss- and lichen-clad sand ground are exciting and relaxing my nervous system at the same time. My inner night owl is

demanding an adventurous evening walk and I obey. It is pitch dark as I head out onto a dully lit asphalt road. I gaze up and see a starlit sky, around me a complex symphony of cicadas is sounding out. I think they are the perfect couple: the star and the cicada.

<https://soundcloud.com/leynarrecordings/nida-hum-1>

The whistles and whirls of the drying leaves of birch, ash, and linden trees are welcoming me and speaking of an autumn on the way. In the coming days I also meet with the particular song of the local pine trees, as the wind blows through and past them; resonating through a million pine-needles at a time. The forest on the Curonian Spit surrounding Nida has been painstakingly hand-planted and tended to over the last two hundred years, after a forestry responding to the need for coal resulted in an ecological crisis that buried thirteen small fishing villages under the sand, and caused some others, including Nida itself, to move several times.

<https://soundcloud.com/leynarrecordings/the-old-pier-nida-lagoon-soundscape>

Today, like any other coastal community, the Curonian Lagoon and the Baltics, are struggling from a number of ecological challenges, such as water-spillage from farming land into the Baltic sea and plastic waste, not to forget the continuous noise pollution from cargo-ships and traffic underneath the black-blue surface. The Lagoon is polluted to the extent that swimming is not recommended. But fish swim here, and the local people fish for food. They are served as a smoked delicacy in the restaurants adorning the shore of Nida Lagoon. It carries a hint of mud, like the familiar pike fished from small forest lakes north of Oslo.

The oceanic hum is only one of many similarities between Nida and Røst, in Northern Norway/Sápmi (or any other coastal/island community for that matter). Until WWII, Nida was a community of fisher families. The local folk tales and folk music speak about living with and by the water; of fishing, boats, love, and of loss. If you listen closely, the rhythms are wavy, like the sea and sand dunes:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ajd5zmWtw1k&list=PL6kv60I_JeP_Mrival-6sW9rJ8udGLkQf&index=27

But what really calls out to you on a windy Nida night is the hypnotising and whaling sea drone, humming through the forest and over the dunes, seeping in through your windows and entering your dream soundscape. Or could it be Neringa's lullaby we are listening to? The gentle giantess who, according to Baltic myth, carefully created the Curonian Spit as a wind-shield against the sea waves to protect the local fisher-peoples and offering them the more sheltered Lagoon for fishing. Neringa is until this day sometimes found sitting in her wooden chair, on the shores of the Nida lagoon, watching out for the last fisher people of this land.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wT47ej37p_k&list=PL6kv60I_JeP_Mrival-6sW9rJ8udGLkQf&index=26&t=0s

The deep frequency of the oceanic hum is shaped by the acoustic realities it is born out of; the geology below the surface and the global weather systems. The hum enters our bodies as sonic vibrations; through our ears (unless we are hearing-impaired) and through our bones. The low frequency hum even massages our guts. Our guts are even making sound themselves. A complex, ever-changing organic hum carries potentials for healing. Mammals, such as us humans, are born

into a thirty-seven degrees Celsius ocean and begin to listen to the soundscape that surround them in their mother's womb when their ears become 'ripe' around the fourth month. Their soundscape includes filtered sound from the 'outside', and inner 'noise', such as the hum of the bloodstream and their mother's digestive system, as well as the heartbeat and breath.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lj_feh3L24U

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CONTRIBUTORS

Eglė Budvytytė

Eglė Budvytytė is an artist based in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. She graduated from Piet Zwart Institute in Rotterdam in 2008, and since then has been working at the intersection between performing and visual arts. Budvytytė makes videos and performances to explore the relationships between body, public spaces, and audience. She looks at the body as a site where different powers operate, and approaches movement/gesture as a technology for the possible subversion of normativity, gender, and social roles. Her work was shown, amongst others, at 13th Baltic Triennial, Riga (2018); Lofoten International Art Festival (2017); Block Universe, London (2017); Art Dubai Commissions (2017); CAC, Vilnius (2016); Liste, Art Basel (2015); 19th Biennale of Sydney (2014); De Appel Arts Centre (2013); and Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam (2013). She was resident at Le Pavillon, Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2012) and at Wiels Contemporary Art Centre, Brussels (2013).

Candice Hopkins

Candice Hopkins is a curator and writer originally from Whitehorse, Yukon. She was Senior Curator of the Toronto Biennial of Art (2019), co-curator of the SITE Santa Fe biennial *Casa Tomada* (2018), and a part of the curatorial team for Documenta 14 in Athens, Greece and Kassel, Germany (2017). She was a co-curator of the major exhibitions *Sakahàn: International Indigenous Art* (2013), *Close Encounters: The Next 500 Years* (2011), and the 2014 SITElines biennial *Unsettled Landscapes* in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Her recent essays and presentations include *Outlawed Social Life* for South as a State of Mind and *Sounding the Margins: A Choir of Minor Voices* at Small Projects, Tromsø, Norway. She has lectured internationally including at the Witte de With, Tate Modern, Dak'Art Biennale, Artists Space, Tate Britain, and the University of British Columbia. She is the recipient of numerous awards including the Hnatyshyn Foundation Award for Curatorial Excellence in Contemporary Art. She is a citizen of Carcross/Tagish First Nation.

Anna Karpenko

Anna Karpenko is a social researcher and curator based in Kaliningrad, Russia. She holds a Ph.D. in Political Science (Institute of Philosophy, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, 2008) and an M.A. in Political Science with distinction (University of Manchester, 2007). She has previously studied physics and the history of philosophy. From 2000–2010, Anna developed her research, teaching, and academic skills internationally at universities in Russia (Kaliningrad and Moscow), U.S.A. (University of California in Santa Barbara, Fairfield University), and Germany (Jena University and Humboldt University in Berlin), amongst others. Since 2011, she has been mainly active in cultural and community projects in an international context. Karpenko has also worked in trans-border cooperation programs in the Baltic Sea states area alongside the Nordic Council of Ministers and Council of the Baltic Sea States. Since 2017, she leads the Kaliningrad Association of Art Photographers and also runs the independent art and community space Vorota, hosting exhibitions, talks and artist residencies.

Shahram Khosravi

Shahram Khosravi is Professor of Social Anthropology at Stockholm University. His research interests include the anthropology of Iran and the Middle East, migration, forced displacement, and border studies. Khosravi is the author of the books: *Young and Defiant in Tehran*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); *'Illegal' Traveler: An Auto-Ethnography of Borders* (London: Palgrave, 2010); *Precarious Lives: Waiting and Hope in Iran*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), and *After Deportation: Ethnographic Perspectives* (London: Palgrave, 2017, edited volume). He has been an active writer in the international press and has also written fiction. Currently he is working on an art book on waiting.

Natalia Tikhonova

Natalia Tikhonova is multidisciplinary artist, curator, and researcher currently based in Saint Petersburg, Russia. Coming from a family of scientists, she received her first education in the field of theoretical physics. After working as a telecommunications engineer in the United States and Brazil in 2011, she moved to St. Petersburg where she began practicing art. She graduated from the 'School of the young artist' at the Pro Arte Foundation, St. Petersburg Art College and earned an MA in Curatorial Studies from the joint programme at Smolny College and Bard College. Natalia works across different media, ranging from video, painting, and installation to social and curatorial projects where her art practice is combined with analytical methods. Her projects explore memory, political and personal borders, and the creation of alternative social structures.

Joanna Warsza

Joanna Warsza is a curator and writer specialised in public art and extended public programming, social and political agendas, interested in all forms of art outside of the white cube. Since 2014 she is the head of the curatorial program *CuratorLab* at Konstfack University in Stockholm. She was an artistic director of Public Art Munich (2016-2018), and curated among others the Public Program of Manifesta 10 in St. Petersburg (2014), the Georgian Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale (2013) and she was associate curator of the 7th Berlin Biennale (2012) on the invitation of Artur Żmijewski. Warsza edited a number of publications such as *Stadium X-A Place That Never Was* (2009), *Forget Fear* (2012), *I Can't Work Like This. A Reader on Boycott in Contemporary Art* (2017), and *A City Curating Reader* (2018). Originally from Warsaw, she now lives in Berlin.

Elin Már Øyen Vister

Elin Már Øyen Vister is an artist, composer, and forager based in Røst, Norway. With a background in audio and music, as a DJ and producer, and in field recording and radio, they bring an interdisciplinary approach and experience of a multitude of practices to their expression. Már is occupied with listening as an artistic practice and as a way to compose, sense, and experience the world, much inspired by Pauline Oliveros's 'deep listening' philosophy. Már's work strives to break with Western patriarchal hegemonic narratives that have placed the human being in the centre and instead focuses on the landscape's innate stories and knowledge, influenced by indigenous methodologies and indebted to and informed by queer, multicultural, and pluriversal understandings of life and the cosmos. Their ongoing long-term projects include *Soundscape Røst* and *Deconstructing Norwegianness*. They co-run Røst Artist in Residence, an artist-run workshop and AIR project, at Skomvær Fyr in Røst.

Editor: Rado Ištók

Rado Ištók is a curator, editor, and researcher based in Stockholm. He is a curator of the 4Cs: *From Conflict to Conviviality through Creativity and Culture* programme at Nida Art Colony of Vilnius Academy of Arts (2018-2020), consisting of artist residencies, a summer exhibition, and the workshop *Dwelling on the Threshold*; and a project leader of *Spaces of Care, Disobedience and Desire* (2018-2020), a research project in collaboration with Marie-Louise Richards and Natália Rebelo, supported by artistic research funding of the Royal Institute of Art, Stockholm. Recent exhibitions include *Black Atlas* (2019) by Jacqueline Hoàng Nguyễn at the Július Koller Society in Bratislava, Slovakia; *Liquid Horizons* (2019) at tranzit.sk in Bratislava, Slovakia; *Other Visions* (2018) within the PAF – Festival of Film Animation in Olomouc, the Czech Republic; and *I'm fine, on my way home now* (2017) at Allkonstrummet, Stockholm, and Galleri Gerlesborg (2018). He has organised the public programmes *On Colonial Continuum* (2019) and *Architecture of Care* (2018) at the Royal Institute of Art, Stockholm; *Toyen: Queer Surrealisms* at Moderna Museet, Stockholm; and *Sensitive Skin* (2018) at Librairie Vigna in Nice, France. Editorial work includes *Crating the World* (Athénée Press, 2019) with Jacqueline Hoàng Nguyễn; and the e-publication *Decolonising Archives* (L'Internationale Online, 2016).

Dwelling on the Threshold Curated by Rado Ištok

VAA Nida Art Colony

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2.1.6

Notes from Atopia

Universidade Católica
Portuguesa + Appleton
Associação Cultural
October 2020

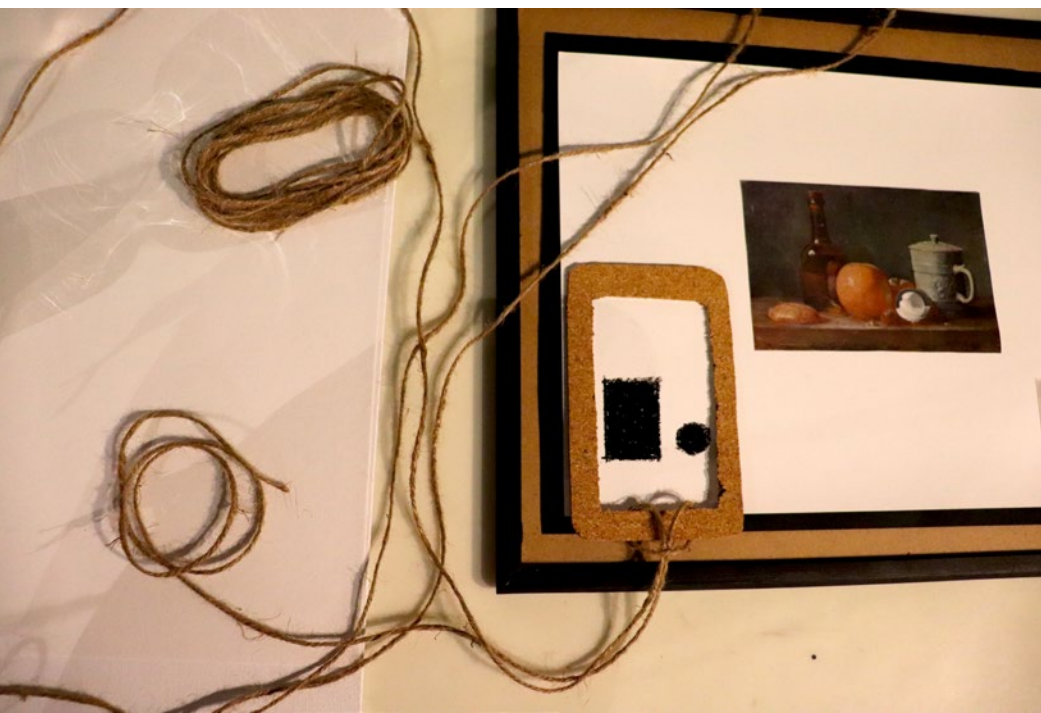
Nithya Iyer

OVERVIEW

Notes from Atopia was an interactive three-day workshop querying the ways of altered meaning-making that emerged during the conditions of COVID19 restrictions in Lisbon in March, 2020.

Framing this period of time as one of concentrated *atopos*, or *atopia*, referring to the Greek word for ‘no place’ or ‘placelessness’, the title of the workshop alludes to the effect of the pandemic in dislocating our sense of geographical and narrative belonging. In one sense, the realities of confinement displaced people from their places of social connection and restricted them to the interiors of their home for such an extended duration that the *place* of home became a non-distinct *space* in which all aspects of life unfolded. Compounding this phenomena was the global dysfunction and seeming threat of structural collapse ensuing from the spread of the pandemic, which cast doubt upon the reliability of social and economic systems and the integrity of dominant narratives espoused by political leaders. *Atopia* is used, therefore, with regard to the existential, civilisational and ideological crises ushered in by COVID19.

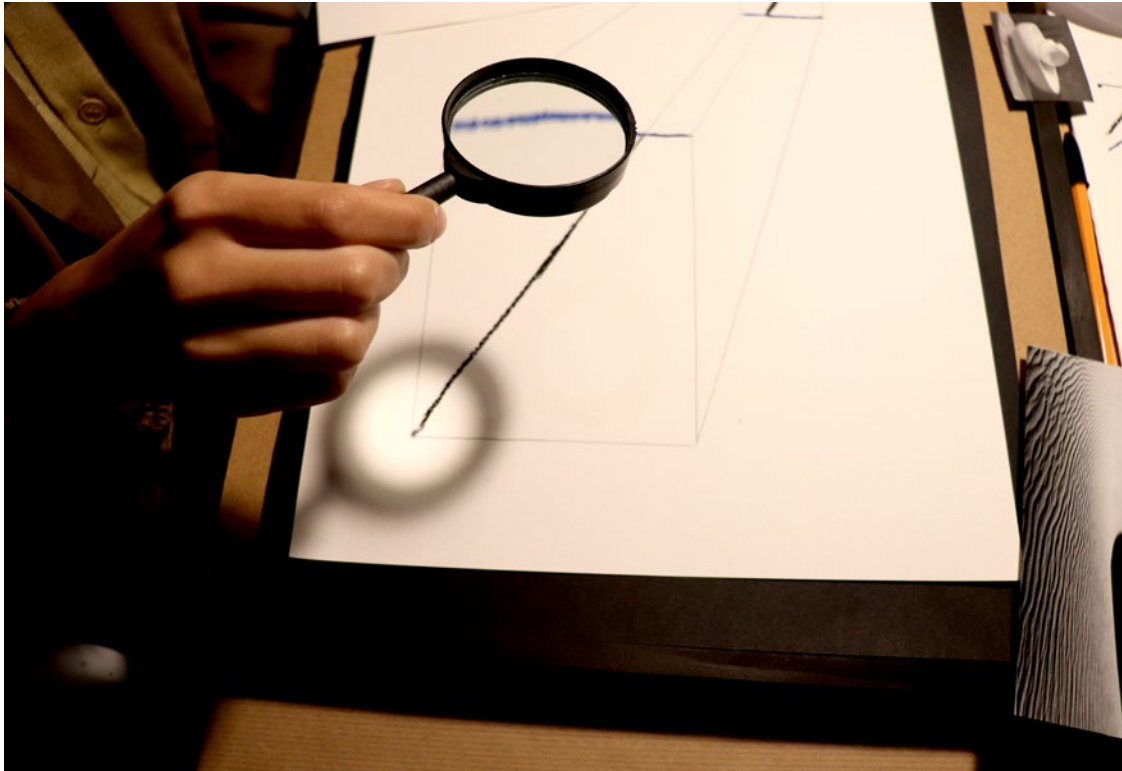
Representation, Miguel Mesquita



THEORETICAL FRAMING

Atopia and the Dismantling of Neoliberal Capitalist Utopia

The application of the term *atopia* to the specificities of the COVID19 pandemic condition frames the individualised experiential impacts of this phenomena within a wider context of systemic collapse and impending societal change. As people endured and integrated the particularities of their confinement, they simultaneously reconciled the stark reality of civilisational dysfunction. This was represented not only in the failure of various governments to act equitably and humanely to protect citizens against the virus, but also in the persistent allegiance demonstrated by both politicians and citizens towards enforcing economic systems that were evidently failing the needs of society. In the work of Helmut Willke (2001), the term *atopia* is thus applied to the contemporary citizen who has become dislocated by the utopian promises of free market economics - a system that anonymises localised citizens into placeless consumers and ultimately prioritises private gains against public needs. Through the lens of COVID19, this dynamic actualised as 'non-essential' low-wage workers, the unemployed, the elderly, minority communities, the homeless, and otherwise marginalised communities, were systematically excluded or underprivileged in their access to economic, medical and social support, whilst regulatory mechanisms to buoy corporate viability and protect economic gains became the focus of governmental policy.



Representation, Máira Botelho

Under COVID19, the social contract of neoliberal capitalism revealed its fractures and citizens globally grew skeptical of the narratives espoused by their leaders. Ultimately the exacerbating disparities conflated by the pressures of social confinement resulted in agitations by civil society that, directly or indirectly, called for the dismantling of predominantly Western-Eurocentric patriarchal and colonialist modes of organising economy, labour and society. Such sentiments were witnessed with global visibility in the Black Lives Matter protests in the United States of America, whilst comparable movements against government corruption, systemic racial prejudice and wealth disparity echoed across the world - the End SARS protests in Nigeria, the French protests against the police security bill, or the marches in Brazil against Jair Bolsonaro's management of the crisis, for example.

Such movements and the ‘new normal’ of pandemic conditions threw contemporary civil society and the ideological foundations upon which it rests into flux, portraying what feminist philosophers such as Elizabeth Grosz (2001), Luce Irigaray (1993), Margaret Whitford (1991) and Michelle Le Doeuff (1989) have argued is the innate paradox of the conception of utopia that we have inherited by the likes of Plato and Thomas More (Le Doeuff 1989). This legacy conception of utopia, which asserts that ideal models of social organisation can be accomplished and implemented based on fixed hierarchies of moral and political order, now reveals itself as “perpetually verging on the dystopic” (Grosz 2001,135).

Amidst this ‘verging’, how can we realign our personal and collective narratives towards alternate visions? How can we meaningfully locate ourselves and our values whilst the frictions of societal transition confront us? How can we access our intuitive capacities for meaning making whilst critically reflecting on patriarchal, colonialist, and capitalist utopias?



Representation, Alisha Budkie

Towards a Utopia of Process; Devising Atopian Modalities

In her analysis of the work of Luce Irigaray, Margaret Whitford denotes the contribution of feminism to utopian discourse as one which distinguishes “between two sorts of utopian vision; between the kind that sees utopia as a moment of static perfection, in which any change can only be for the worse, and the other kind which is a utopia of process” (Whitford 1991, 19). This process is asserted as one that necessarily works with uncertainty and unpredictability as a means to imagine unimaginable futures through a creative practice capable of harnessing change and interaction with alien forces (Whitford 1991). In this conception of utopia, the focus is on the means of acting in the present, speaking to Irigaray’s framing that “we cannot programme the future, we can only begin here and now to construct it and create it” (Whitford 1991, 17).

For Michelle Le Doeuff, the tension of utopia regards its dualism between that which ‘ought-to-be’ and that ‘which is possible’. She asserts that this tension necessitates a polysemy - “where no one immediate meaning prevails” and a multitude of possible meanings become possible (Le Doeuff 1989, 54) - rendering all utopias as atopian.

These framings by Irigaray and Le Doeuff find resonance in Roland Barthes’ assertion of atopia not as a model but as a plurality of concurrent, possible perspectives on the present world (Millet 2013). Yves Millet expands on this notion, writing “[f]rom an atopic perspective, ‘place’ (*topos*) has neither a positive nor a negative determination. Instead, it can be thought of as a common “polycentric” ground where we are led toward another conceptualization in which our relation to the world has a modal nature rather than a disjunctive nature, such as the subject-object relation” (Milleet, 2013; 1).

It is precisely such a modality of thinking that was attempted to be harnessed within the space of *Notes from Atopia*. The existential uncertainty of COVID19 was framed as a vital site of dysfunction from which to respond to the invitation of Grosz, Irigaray, Whitford, Le Doeuff and Barthes - that is, to work from within uncertainty and unpredictability to re-envision and re-imagine through our uninhibited creative abilities, whilst understanding a multiplicity of meanings and a plurality of being fostering ambiguity as a methodological practice rather than a failure of course.



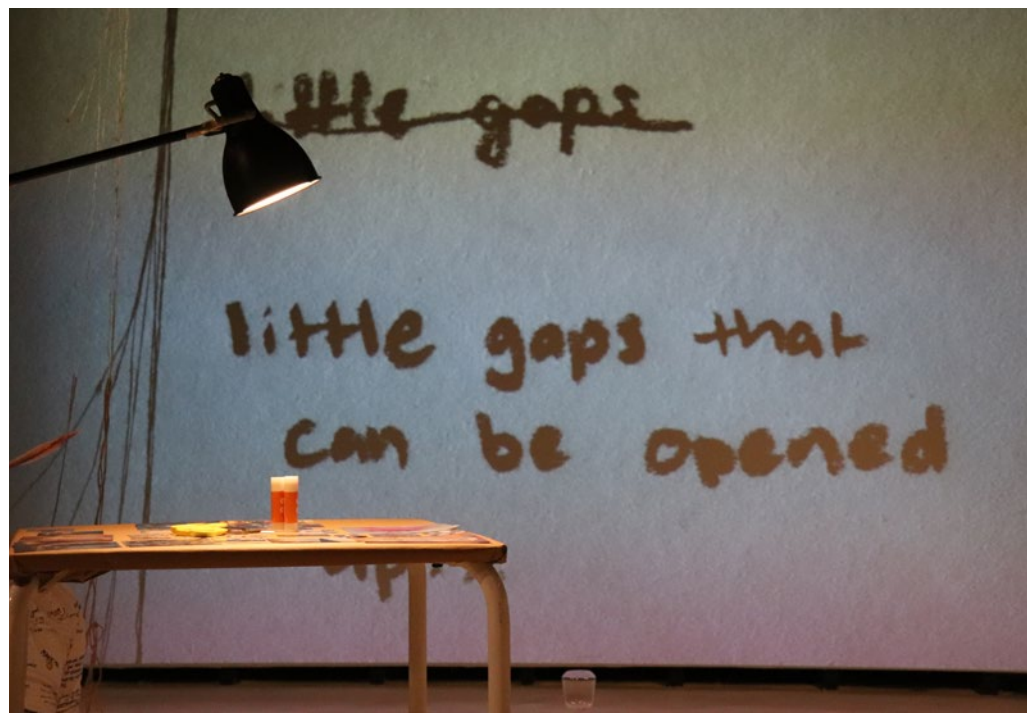
Representation, Anca Usurelu

METHODOLOGY

Starting from personal, intimate and familiar artefacts as an access point to the existential terrain of COVID19 confinement, the methodology employed in *Notes from Atopia* leveraged the potentialities of artistic investigation and arts-based research as a key means to disrupt dysfunctional orthodoxies and hierarchies traditionally present in the space of inquiry.

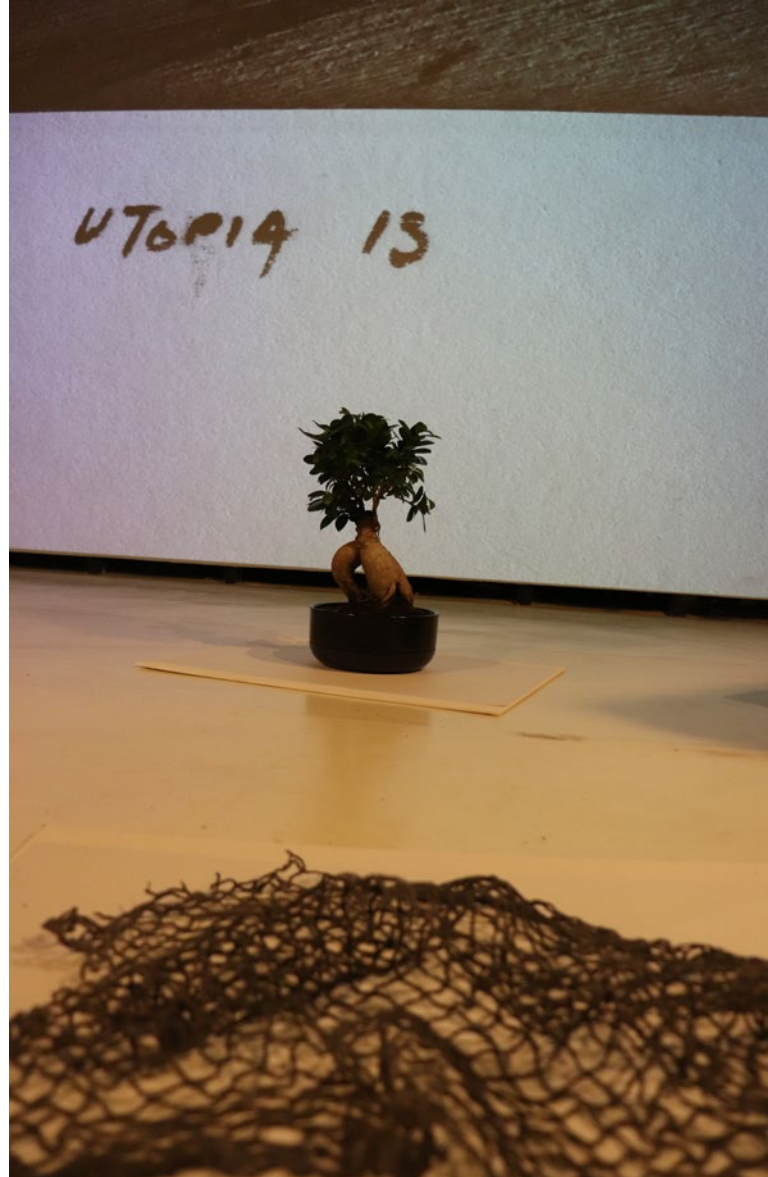
It aimed to do so firstly through the use of the Form of Inquiry (FoI), devised by the Melbourne Institute of Experiential and Creative Art Therapy, Melbourne - Australia. These procedures, which couple art-making processes with rigorous scientific method and analysis, have been constructed in alignment with the precepts of phenomenology as applied by Edmund Husserl (1913) and Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1945). With an emphasis on Emergent sense-making, Multi-modal expression, Intersubjective response, Active listening and Dialoguing with materials, these procedures aim to highlight and explore the possibilities of arts-based inquiry in devising alternate knowledge-making systems that can complement - or challenge - normative frameworks of understanding employed in institutional, academic, political and community contexts.

Workshop Site #1





Workshop Site #2



Workshop Site #3

Such exercises were a provocation to act outside the confines of logical positivism and technical rationalism that govern mainstream academic perspectives, and to “acknowledge the multiple dimensions that constitute and form the human condition - physical, emotional, spiritual, social, cultural - and the myriad ways of engaging in the world - oral, literal, visual, embodied” (Cole and Knowles 2001, 60) as a means to arrive at previously unknown understandings.

By engaging iterative, reflexive processes alongside visual, textual and gestural provocations, *Notes from Atopia* created a record of meanings and knowledges embedded into the body during the existential flux of COVID19 confinement.

Additionally, bracketing in the prioritisation of decoloniality in the current context of global discourse, the research methods used in the workshop consciously regarded Suely Rolnik's (Rolnik 2015) following eight suggestions to decolonise the unconscious:

- 1 De-anesthetizing the vulnerability to the forces
- 2 Reactivating the knowing-body
- 3 Unobstructing the access to sensations
- 4 Keeping oneself within the tension of the uncanny until an utterance capable of actualising it, bearing its pulsation, is created
- 5 Holding on to the temporality of the creative process
- 6 Holding on to desire
- 7 Not negotiating the unnegotiable
- 8 Exercising thought in its ethical, political and clinical function

Workshop Site #4



REFLECTIONS ON OUTCOMES

Over the three days of the workshop, 16 participants attended in person and a further nine via the digital portal. As part of the workshop, participants were provided with an audio guide inviting them to locate an object, memory or image from their home that held some significance regarding their experience of COVID19 restrictions. Importantly, the audio guide asked participants to identify those artefacts that felt *alive* or curious *in that moment*, rather than to choose objects that may have been logically connected to their experience. In this way, phenomenological processes commenced prior to the workshop itself.

Artefacts brought in by participants ranged from the practical and rudimentary - shoes, hand sanitiser, a phone clip - through to the perishable and ephemeral - a memory, a wilting flower, an apple. Many participants noted that it was difficult to re-enter the space of quarantine and, understandably, had a strong resistance to it. Feelings of grief, fear, or a more general dissonance associated with the time and revisiting its quality were common. However, others came in with a sense of urgency and openness, a desire to know more about something that felt palpable but difficult to articulate, which had transpired in those months.

The procedures yielded a range of insights from the participants and it became quickly apparent that many had come to not only dialogue with their own experience of this time, but to impress more widely the sense they had of what was occurring on a broader societal level. The sessions quickly expanded to deep and discursive conversations about what had occurred in light of the pandemic, individually and collectively.



Process, Nina Fraser

In this sense, the artistic processes acted as a means to soften or open the personal boundaries that suppressed the memories of the confinement period from the rest of routine life, allowing participants to access and discuss the ambiguity, uncertainty and unpredictability of the state of the world - socially and politically - in an environment that was mediated to suspend fixed judgments and predetermined ideas by focussing instead on curiosity and active listening. Working relationally with the visual, object-based and textual representations that

were created, participants entered into devising multi-modal frameworks that allowed for reconciling personal experiences to broader existential complexities. This space also became a territory of open discussion regarding the possibilities of the post-COVID19 world.

Most participants agreed that the world was in a transitional state and the experience of pandemic restrictions magnified a sense of liminality between one world and the next. This was commonly reflected in visual and textual representations that regarded changing perspectives, or beckoned a shift to reprioritise relationships to ecology and kinship as a vital and necessary change in personal, public and political spheres. The idea of atopia was also reframed to refer to the state of internal and external placelessness; of being simultaneously dislocated from the outside world through confinement and deep solitude, whilst feeling a magnified sense of hope and solidarity with people in various geographic locations through

Reduction, Sílvia Escórcio



digital connection. Such existential dualities were common features of representations made by participants; tensions between time moving endlessly and standing still; between actions suspended in anticipation and those that could never occur; between deep fear and deep love; between passive idleness and active silence. The space of the workshop became a laboratory of emergent sense-making, allowing participants to arrive at knowings embedded in their memories or experiences, which had otherwise been stifled or suppressed alongside the experience of confinement.

During the discussions, a number of participants came to regard the notion of utopia as one related to hope and survival; a means through which individuals in society became inspired and motivated to work for a better world. Utopia was often re-interpreted into simple and achievable actions that could act as harbingers for broader change - not as a fixed place but the potentiality of progress within certain spheres that are necessarily transient. For example: the capacity for spaces of free discussion mediated to avoid conflict; the potential for small groups of individuals to gather and make agentic decisions; platforms and public spaces in which communities could meet and engage in rituals of grieving, celebration and imagination; the development of economic systems capable of prioritising human-ecological relationships.

In engaging in these discussions, the time and means for artistic investigation and the physical environment provided and facilitated by the workshop revealed itself as a primary site for such reframings - an idea that many participants also acknowledged. The value of such environments and their potential development into critical spaces of research, community practice, artistic investigation and interpersonal development was evident through the course of the various inquiries.

However, ways that such environments could be strengthened include:

- Connection to multilingual, multi-institutional and community-based networks to enhance access for people from a variety of demographics and communities, including those outside of artistic and academic institutions;
- Means through which knowledges, insights and artefacts uncovered in the space can be connected to resonant areas of research across institutional, academic and community spheres;
- Opportunities for participants to engage in the methodological development of practices of investigation and imagining through feedback loops and discursive practice; and
- Ongoing availability of time and resources for experimentation with multidisciplinary approaches to alternate forms of investigation, both in terms of modalities and frameworks of analysis.

The [digital archive](#) of *Notes from Atopia* now exists as a collection of reflections and insights provoked from the occurrence of COVID19 in Lisbon, Portugal. Its existence acts as a modest synthesis of the encounters created by this workshop, representing important possibilities for the future of artistic, academic and community approaches to mediation, particularly in the aftermath of conflictual phenomena which are becoming increasingly commonplace in Europe and the rest of the world.

FROM THE ARCHIVE

“Standing still in movement, moving in stillness. A permanence of process, of change of dreams and reality. A self without world and world without self. A space without place and a place without space. All utopias of each mind that’ve ever existed within one blob of safety, placelessness and timelessness.”

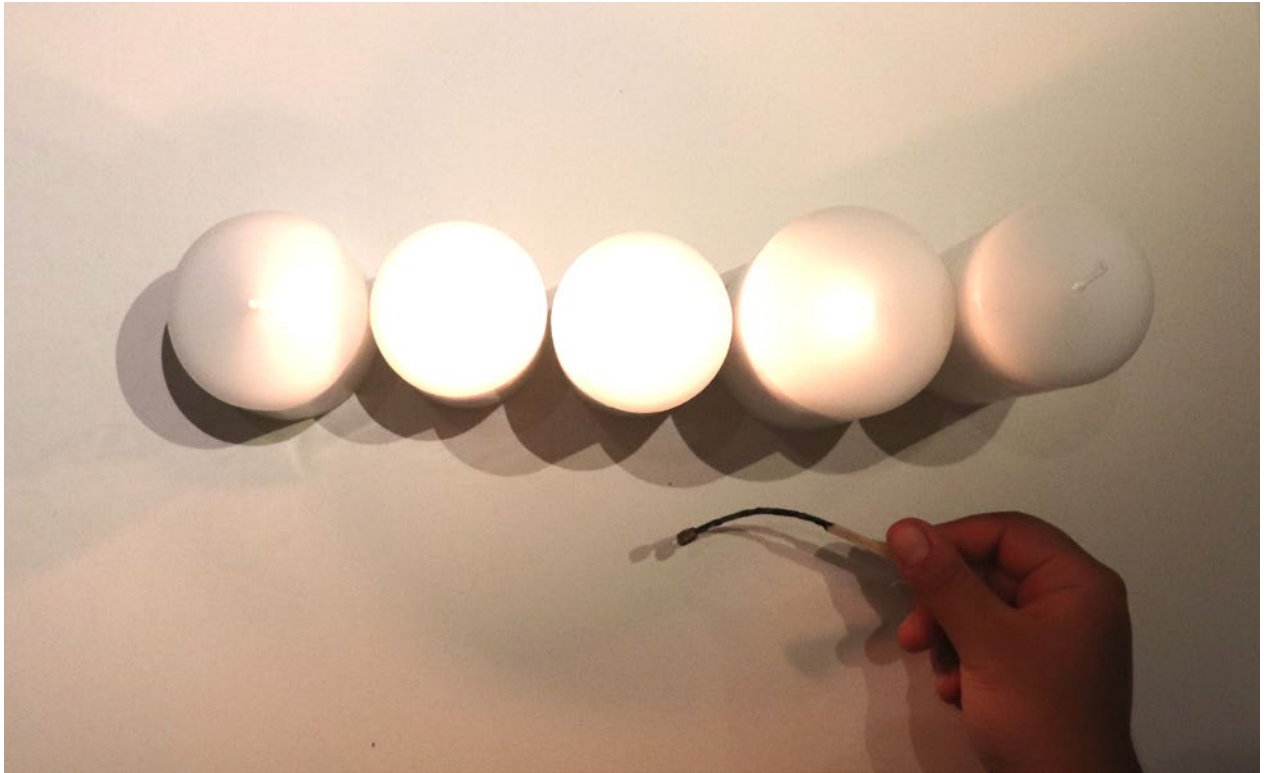
Anca Usurelu

“When you talk about utopia it makes me think of the definition of hope being that today can be different from yesterday and holding that for yourself and collectively can be a way to recognise the move toward utopia. The question: what is needed to make tomorrow different from today?”

Alisha Budkie

“Atingir um ponto de reflexão interior é perceber as impossibilidades das ações não tomadas. Aceitar a rutura e os constrangimentos. O tempo tem que ser possível de acolher as opções pessoais e colectivas. A pandemia coloca-nos no espaço /campo da eminência; a impressão da impossibilidade ou de todas as possibilidades.”

Miguel Mesquita



Process Image, Anca Usurelu

*“Can we still feel our very beginning in our bones?
Did we ever feel it — the massive force of the big bang
in our calcium, the very same of the stars and the
seashells? Is it imprinted in our essence, like a secret
memory, hiding in our unconscious? Or are we simply
alone, behind our doors, collecting pointless actions?”*

Andreia César

*“A liberdade conquistada através do
medo. Freedom through fear.”*

Sílvia Escórcio

*“Utopia is a radical form of construction.
We must develop the qualities to develop disruptive possibilities.
I don’t think, however, that we can achieve it. It is always a state of
constant delusion and inadequacy.
Being able to spread these delusions, in order to be shared and built
with others, is what favors approaches to these achievements.”*

Anonymous



Reflection & Dialogue, Jeanne Pasquet and Andreia César

“The pandemic experience feels like a spiritual initiation of the first order. I feel like this has permanently compromised human interaction. I don’t feel anything about the concept of utopia to be honest. I am very fatalistic we won’t survive too long, I think it is a commercial idea that has been sold to us. But we are now experiencing a limit to our most meaningful activity. Going forward we will have to play around it. We need a new semiotics of being disgustingly alive.”

Federico Castoldi

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NITHYA IYER**Notes from atopia****WORKSHOP**

Appleton BOX

7 – 9 outubro/october 2020

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apoio à curadoria *curatorial assistance*

Federico Rudari

coordenação produção *production coordination*

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Maria Eduarda Duarte (4Cs)

textos *texts*

Nithya Iyer

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vivóeusébio

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Appleton Associação Cultural

Bigorna

2.2.1



The Silent University Language Café

Tensta Konsthall
Sept. 2017 – Sept. 2018

MEDIATION LAB

TENSTA KONSTHALL

Confirmed invited artists 2017

Ahmet Ögüt

Description of the mediation lab

As part of the Mediation Lab Tensta konsthall is elaborating further on the tailor-made strategies of art mediation that is at the very core of how Tensta konsthall operate. The Silent University: Language Café meets every Friday and Sunday afternoon and is led by Fahyma Alnablsi together with volunteers. The Language Café welcomes those who wish to learn the basics of the Swedish and Arabic language, meet new friends and share experiences and ideas. Especially welcome are those who are currently outside the Swedish education system while awaiting asylum. During the meetings, the group practice grammar, socialize, read simple books and do conversational exercises. The Language Café has contemporary art as its starting point for both discussions and practical tasks in connection to current exhibitions.

The Language Café is a part of The Silent University, an autonomous knowledge platform for asylum seekers, refugees and undocumented immigrants, initiated by the artist Ahmet Ögüt. The artist Ahmet Ögüt presents the project The Silent University, a solidarity-based knowledge exchange platform by refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants initiated in 2012. For five years, The Silent University has involved people who, despite having a degree, have been unable to exercise their skills or training because of structural problems and discrimination. Together, the participants have developed lectures, talks, events, archives, and publications. The Silent University exists in various forms in London, Hamburg, Ruhr, Athens, Amman, and Stockholm. Since 2013, the project has been present at Tensta konsthall, currently in the forms of a language café and Citizens for citizens with Fahyma Alnablsi.

Updated biography of the participants in the residency

Ahmet Ögüt

Ahmet Ögüt, born in 1981 in Diyarbakır, works across a variety of different media often picking up on an urban environment. With an eye for daily encounters and moments of improvisation his works address topics such as structural inequality, state suppression, censorship and forms of resistance. Singular acts of non alignment or collective struggles against militarized powers equally tend to inspire the aesthetic and thematic reflections that occur in Ahmet Ögüt's work just as the way he operates in the institutional ecology surrounding his practice. He had solo shows among others at Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (2015), Chisenhale Gallery, London (2015), Künstlerhaus Stuttgart (2012), Kunsthalle Lissabon (2011) and SALT Beyoglu, Istanbul (2011). He has participated in group shows such as the 11th Gwangju Biennale (2016), Manifesta 11 (2016), "Museum On/OFF" at Centre Pompidou, Paris (2016), the 13th Biennale de Lyon (2015), "Political Populism" at Kunsthalle Wien, the Kyiv Biennial (2015) and many more.



Mediation Lab: The Silent University Language Café at Tensta konsthall. ©Tensta konsthall



Mediation Lab: The Silent University Language Café at Tensta konsthall. ©Tensta konsthall



Mediation Lab: The Silent University Language Café at Tensta konsthall. ©Tensta konsthall





Mediation Lab: The Silent University Language Café at Tensta konsthall. ©Tensta konsthall

THE SILENT UNIVERSITY AND TENSTA KONSTHALL LANGUAGE CAFÉ

A Conversation – May 2020

The Silent University is a solidarity based knowledge exchange platform for asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants initiated by the artist Ahmet Ögüt in 2012 at Tate Modern in London in collaboration with the Delfina Foundation and The Showroom. The Language Café is led by Fahyma Alnablsi and has been running as a part of The Silent University Tensta since 2013 and welcomes those who wish to learn the basics of the Swedish and Arabic languages, meet new friends, and share experiences and ideas. The meetings take place Fridays and Sundays 14:00–17:00 at Tensta konsthall. Particularly welcome are participants excluded from the Swedish educational system while waiting for asylum. Once a month the Language Café makes excursions around the Stockholm area. Within the framework of The Silent University Stockholm, Fahyma Alnablsi also runs the project Citizen to Citizen, which offers support for newcomers in everyday matters. This is organized as drop-ins on Tuesdays 12:00–14:00 and can deal with matters concerning authority issues, translation, or provide useful networks. The Silent University has branches in Copenhagen, Mülheim an der Ruhr, and Stockholm.

Fahyma Alnablsi: I'd like to start by telling the story about how the Language Café came about. We started off at Tensta konsthall in 2013 in conjunction with the installation of the platform The Silent University. Since the start, some 600 participants have passed through our classroom. One of them is you, Hirjan. In the beginning, only a handful of people attended the Language Café and the majority were paperless asylum seekers. As time passed by, also older men and women from the area found their way here. These are people who have been living in Sweden for a period of time but for different reasons have been excluded from the educational system. At first I was the only teacher, but after two years the first volunteer – Gabriella Lundquist – joined, and with her help we could form two groups with different levels. For young people such as Hijran, it's easy to learn and soon they need more challenging tasks. Right now, we have 10 volunteers which is really good for the participants.

Hanna Nordell: Hijran, how did you make contact with The Silent University and the Language Café?

Hijran Sharefi: A friend told me about Tensta konsthall and I began to visit it frequently. I met Fahyma, who told me there was also a Language Café and she wondered if I might be interested. I began to participate in the activities on Fridays and Sundays. It became important for me to go there and to learn new stuff. This was my first course in the Swedish language.

Ferial Agali is a civil engineer and arrived in Sweden from Iraq 33 years ago. She has worked as a teacher in mathematics and has had her own company. Agali is a volunteer in The Language Café.

Fahyma Alnablsi works as a host and with educational projects at Tensta konsthall. Alnablsi is also project manager for The Silent University Stockholm.

Hanna Nordell is a curator at Tensta konsthall.

Hatim Alzaabi is a writer with a number of publications behind him and also volunteers at the Language Café.

Hijran Sharefi is a student and former participant in the Language Café.

Gabriella Lundquist is a senior citizen with a background in Swedish for Immigrants (SFI). Lundquist was the first volunteer to join the Language Café.

Makda Embaie is a mediator at Tensta konsthall and currently studying for her Bachelor's degree at Konstfack University of Arts, Craft and Design in Stockholm.

Hanna Nordell: What other languages did you speak then?

Hijran Sharefi: I managed a bit of Swedish, and I also speak Dari and Pashto.

Hanna Nordell: Hatim, when did you get in touch with the Language Café for the first time and what was your function?

Hatim Alzaabi: I work as a teaching volunteer. I speak Swedish, Arabic, a little English, and Turkish. I heard about the Language Café through some of the students. I was out walking in Tensta centrum with some friends and we started a conversation around language. They told me that they used to visit the Language Café and insisted that I join and take part as a teacher. I met with Fahyma and so it went on.

Fahyma Alnablsi: Also, you help me in teaching Arabic. There are some pupils who come to learn Arabic and sometimes by reading the books you have written.

Hanna Nordell: Do you teach Swedish and Arabic at the same sessions?

Fahyma Alnablsi: Yes, at every meeting we divide the participants into a number of groups. Sometimes there are those who know a great deal of Arabic, but who want to learn more. There's one volunteer per group. This makes it easier and more enjoyable for the participants.

Gabriella Lundquist: I usually take beginners since I'm used to that from SFI. And I often ask one of the more advanced students to participate as a translator in my group. The task alternates between different students. Once we didn't have anyone who could act as translator but then one of the students had her 9 year-old son with her, so he got to fill the role. We laughed a lot during that class.

During the break you talk with students from all the groups. Then all the groups finish at slightly different times. My group usually goes an hour after the break.

Hanna Nordell: How would you, Hatim, describe the pedagogical atmosphere in the classroom?

Hatim Alzaabi: It's a rather familiar atmosphere in the classroom. We are a sort of family. In comparison with the school world, where I also have worked, it's a lot different. Often the participants tell me about themselves and ask me questions about my experiences and my life story. It becomes more personal. You feel that you have friends not students, one could say.

Hanna Nordell: Ferial, you take an active part of several organisations in Tensta, such as the Tensta-Hjulsta Women's Center. In what way does the Language Café contribute?

Ferial Agali: I'm really grateful to have been here. Learning a language in this way means so much more than just language.

Hanna Nordell: What has been your role?

Ferial Agali: I volunteered for two years and during that time I learned so much about different traditions and customs from different cultures. It's been great fun!

Hanna Nordell: What does it mean to have a Language Café in an art institution where the setting occasionally transforms over the year? How does it affect the language with the art closely present in the room?

Fahyma Alnablsi: Being at a place like this certainly gives us more knowledge about art. And not about art only, by the way, but about the whole society. It's good for the students that the environment changes once in a while. This encourages learning and makes everybody happier. And they appreciate the art in the exhibitions. During the lessons, we always give introductions to the exhibitions and we discuss different sorts of materials.

Hanna Nordell: For a few years now, the classroom has expanded outdoors and into nature as Tensta konsthall acquired an allotment at the Järva field, a green area with many allotment associations, just a short walk from here. Tell us!

Fahyma Alnablsi: The idea about the allotment as a classroom was born from my belief that the students learn more when they are doing something. I have been very influenced by the pedagogue John Dewey's thoughts about "learning by doing", and when I used to teach maths I used many of his methods. The idea was to learn the language by cultivating plants, and to work with practical matters with your hands, this is a development from that experience.

Hanna Nordell: What does a typical lesson at the allotment look like?

Fahyma Alnablsi: It's an occasion for people to spend time together in nature and fresh air. It's a different context than the classroom and you learn while you put words to the things you stand in front of and through the activities executed together. Through sowing, harvesting, and so on. Many of the volunteers really enjoy educating at our allotment.

Hanna Nordell: Were you also at the allotment during your time as a participant, Hirjan?

Hijran Sharefi: Yes, I remember us putting out potatoes and digging together. I also participated in building the little cottage at the allotment. Before that, I had only done a little gardening, but I had some experience as a carpenter. This skill also led to me helping out a little at Tensta konsthall to build a new exhibition.

Hanna Nordell: When I hear you talk about the activities at the allotment I get a feeling that it is often about exchanging knowledge with and learning from each other, rather than one part always teaching and the other receiving knowledge.

Hijran Sharefi: Yes, exactly. The person who knows more about a certain thing shares that knowledge. If I for example know more about paving I show the others. That is what a lesson is.

Fahyma Alnablsi: Our walk from Tensta konsthall to the allotment at the Järva field is also important. It's a moment for the participants to chat and languages to mix. At the allotment we only speak Swedish.

Hatim Alzaabi: When you go out you get in contact with and see things differently. You start to use words that you don't use in ordinary classes. This enriches the vocabulary.

Hanna Nordell: Speaking of encountering new things, an important part of the Language Café is the excursions that are being arranged every month, often connecting to the programme of Tensta konsthall. How are they being arranged?

Fahyma Alnablsi: About once a month the Language Café visits different locations in and around Stockholm. It helps us to see other things and to go out and listen to the language being spoken. For various reasons, many of the older participants have few possibilities to go out and explore places outside of Rinkeby and Tensta.

The excursions start in the subway and include the route to the site and then back again. We often visit other cultural institutions and are welcomed by guides who tell us more about the specific places. It is important to get to know new environments. Several times we have travelled outside of Stockholm. For example, each year we take one trip to Marö, an island in the archipelago outside of the city where Maria Lind has a summer house. [Maria Lind was the Director of Tensta konsthall 2011-2018]

Hijran Sharefi: I took part in one of those trips to Marö. It was exciting and a memory that has stayed with me. We were about 30-40 people taking the boat together from Slussen for a three-night stay on the island. When we got to Maria's house she told us about the island, its history, and all the neighbours.

Fahyma Alnablsi: We also collaborate with The Vasa Museum where we go once a year. Before our visit, one of the guides from the museum came to Tensta to get to know our context and in conjunction with that we also got an introduction to The Vasa Museum and its history. Another excursion I want to mention was Hallstavik. It happened while the artist Christian Nyampeta visited the site to make a new film.

Hanna Nordell: Yes, that's right. That excursion took place when Christian Nyampeta had been invited by Tensta konsthall to make a new film as a part of the project Sites of the Future. Makda, you were a part of the team around that project, could you tell us a bit more about the visit to Hallstavik?

Makda Embaie: For the production of the film we collaborated with the People's Houses and Parks as well as the Häverö-Edebo Local Heritage Association, and the film was made in close connection to the local context. Participants from the Language Café were engaged as actors but they were also active parts during all of the artistic process. The film was called Sometimes It Was Beautiful and the visit by the Language Café took place when it premiered in the cinema at the People's House Hallstavik.

Fahyma Alnablsi: As a part of the excursion we also visited the 17th Century ironworks of Skebo and the local heritage association where we got to see old artefacts and furniture. I always make dictionaries with words relating to the excursion beforehand. Everyone learns the words and writes in their own languages.

Hanna Nordell: Another artistic project that was a part of Sites of the Future was Anne Low's work in Sorunda, a rural community in Stockholm County, where she had collaborated with local associations and actors, taking Sorunda's textile heritage as one starting point. Fahyma, what did you learn on that trip?

Fahyma Alnablsi: In the spring of 2018 we visited the People's House in Sorunda where Anne Low's exhibition was shown. It was in conjunction with the opening. We had rented a bus and on our way there we made a stop by an old poorhouse as well as the church of Sorunda.

Hanna Nordell: When Anne Low made her research on site she came in contact with the author Moa Martinson (1890-1964). Martinson was the Sorunda People's House's first secretary. The cottage where she lived is just nearby and became an important part of Low's installation.

Fahyma Alnablsi: Yes, and in relation to her project we started a book club for the Language Café where we read texts by Moa Martinson. None of the participants had heard about her before.

Hanna Nordell: How did the book club work?

Fahyma Alnablsi: We started in the Sorunda People's House when we visited Anne Low's exhibition and then continued at Tensta konsthall. We read Moa Martinson's *Women and Appletrees*. Everyone had their own copy of the text and we took turns reading. When someone read, the others listened. After we had read the text we had a discussion about it. To listen and to reflect collectively encouraged the participants to share things about themselves. It woke their memories. I will continue with book clubs in the future. Also in Arabic.

Hanna Nordell: The excursions are often part of a larger collaboration that also means that the other institution visits Tensta and correlations begin to emerge – as you mention with the Vasa Museum for example. Could you tell a bit more about how such an exchange can take place?

Fahyma Alnablsi: One example is the collaboration with the Ethnographic Museum in Stockholm. We went to the museum where they had selected objects from the countries from where the participants come from. It was very exciting. Then we had meetings at Tensta konsthall where the museum staff had brought artefacts from the collection with them. It is quite rare that a museum lets their objects travel like that.

Hanna Nordell: Could the participants tell the museum things about the artefacts that they hadn't been aware of before?

Fahyma Alnablsi: Exactly! When we visited the museum we looked at for example costumes from the Middle East. The participants had experiences of similar objects that they shared. We talked about why they are being used, which traditions they are associated with, why it looks precious, etc.

Hanna Nordell: Which objects did the Ethnographic Museum bring with them to Tensta konsthall when they visited the Language Café?

Fahyma Alnablsi: They brought objects that we connected to tea and coffee, which opened up conversations on how beverages are being served in countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan.

Hanna Nordell: I was also part of that workshop and I remember how the museum staff shared what they knew about the artefacts and then how the participants continued with their stories, which opened up new interpretations and knowledge. That in turn led to a situation where several people went home to fetch their own things that were then put in dialogue with the museum objects. I remember that Emma Berhane, who ran the café at Tensta konsthall at that time and specialised in Ethiopian coffee, brought objects connected to that particular practice. Another participant, Sabah, went home and brought back with him beautiful small sculptures that he had made from glass pearls. The meeting nurtured a discussion that was about the work of the hand and it was an atmosphere in the room that encouraged people to share what they had made or experienced.

Fahyma Alnablsi: Many of the participants are engaged with artistic work of some kind. For example Samir who weaves carpets. When the artist Suki Seokyeong Kang showed her work at the local heritage association Lerkrogen in Älvsjö in collaboration with the Brännkyrka local heritage association, Samir also gave a presentation about his carpets for the members of the associations as a part of the exchange. Later, we also arranged a small exhibition in their facilities with works by several of the participants from the Language Café.

Hanna Nordell: Makda, what goes through your mind when you hear about the methods and how the Language Café moves between language, experiences, and knowledge?

Makda Embaie: I think that it is a good example of what happens when you allow people to meet in a less formal format than just to transfer knowledge from one part to the other. This is also something that has been going on for quite some time. You can see that people have a personal relationship to the konsthall and to Fahyma, and how they have found a home in these situations. And the fact that this can be done through language is for me eloquent because of how language is situated in people.

All languages are acknowledged in Tensta konsthall's classroom and the languages enrich one another. People return and participate in different ways in the activities. It is in line with my artistic research that is about how language is specific to an experience and not to a nation state. It is about where you build your references and with whom you explore things together with.

Fahyma Alnablsi: I just had an idea. Over the years around 600 participants have passed through the Language Café. I'm in touch with almost everyone. I would like to invite all of them and have a big party!

Hanna Nordell: That is a wonderful idea!

Gabriella Lundquist: I would like to describe these years as being very dynamic. Different volunteers and students have put their personal touch on the atmosphere in the groups. It has been so much fun.

Hanna Nordell: If you think about the future Fahyma, how do you see the Language Café?

Fahyma Alnablsi: I wish that more volunteers would join. The Language Café is not just for the participants who want to learn languages. The volunteers also get new experiences and meet people from other contexts. I also wish that we can start the English version again, that we had in 2018, parallel with the Arabic and Swedish. And I want to start a cooking class.

Interview and
transcription by
Hanna Nordell,
Tensta konsthall

Proofreading by
Becket Flannery

2.2.2

“Penya” Tosquelles

Fundació Antoni Tàpies
Jan. – Apr. 2018

THE PENYA TOSQUELLES

30.1-20.3.2018

Reading group conducted by Gabriela Berti

4Cs European Project: From Conflict to Conviviality through Creativity and Culture

The Fundació Antoni Tàpies invites you to join the reading group The Penya Tosquelles. The activity is divided into five reading sessions, based on selected texts about the work and praxis of the Catalan psychiatrist Francesc Tosquelles and a film screening.

During those sessions, we will practise a connective reading and divergent thinking, in an open dialogue capable of creating maps and links between the legacy of Tosquelles and art, politics, philosophy, schizoanalysis and other fields.

Tosquelles argued that power should be given to the penyes, meeting places such as bars where groups of friends come together, which function not only as a social reference but as ‘modal’ institutions. Tosquelles’s work and praxis are traversed by two fundamental vectors: Marxism and psychoanalysis. The first pays particular attention to social alienation, labour relations and conditions, while the second focuses on psychopathological alienation and the organisation of ‘healing’ institutions.

These two pillars of thought will be the guidelines in our approach to some of Tosquelles's texts by helping us discover what lies within them, from the more evident to the less obvious. For each session, we will recommend reading a guide-text, and a subject of discussion will be chosen based on a quote from Tosquelles that will act as a collective activator. At the same time, and always in relation to the suggested subject, we will be visited by an invited speaker (psychiatrists who worked with Tosquelles, artists, etc.) as part of a capsule entitled *Déconnaitrie*, an errant session on the selected subject where the texts will be confronted with other ways of reading and experimenting.

Francesc Tosquelles, on the roof of Saint-Alban, with a ship made by Auguste Forestier, May 1948.

Archive Tosquelles. / Photography: Romain Vigoroux.



PROGRAMME DATES

All power to the *penyes*

30 January

Presentation of the reading group and introduction to the praxis of Francesc Tosquelles. Discussion on the modulation of power and on how to make room for extended actions (psychiatric, political, social, etc.).

Suggested text: <http://documentacion.aen.es/pdf/revista-aen/1993/revista-46/06-entrevista-al-dr-francisco-tosquelles-por-t-angosto.pdf>

To be a good psychiatrist you must be a foreigner, or at least look like one

13 February

Tosquelles experienced exile, the need to look for refuge and the difficulties of being a foreigner. Based on this quote, the reading will focus on what it means to be 'out of place', or how to construct a territory outside of one's own land. We will also discuss the relationship between Tosquelles and Frantz Fanon.

Suggested text: <https://www.topia.com.ar/articulos/xenofobia-y-psiquiatri>

Déconnaitrie.

The subject plays 'I Spy'

6 February

Activity with Antonio Labad on the construction of the idea of subjectivity; the subject of enunciation versus the conscious 'I'; spaces of social organisation in relation to different types of institutions (family, psychiatric hospitals, schools, etc.) and their power of transference.

Suggested text: Francesc Tosquelles, *Función poética y psicoterapia, una lectura de "In Memoriam"* de Gabriel Ferrater (trans. José García Ibáñez). Barcelona: Octaedro, 2014, chapter 1.

Participant: Antonio Labad, Psychiatry Professor at the Universitat Rovira i Virgili (Tarragona); he was medical director of the Institut Pere Mata, Reus.

François Tosquelles : une politique de la folie (Francesc Tosquelles: politics of madness), 1989

20 February

This film is a portrait of Francesc Tosquelles, Catalan psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, that shook the French and European psychiatry. Organised by the Fundació ideograma in collaboration with the Fundació Andreu Nin.

Authors: François Pain, Danielle Sivadon and Jean-Claude Polack. | Duration: 55 min.

Déconnaitrie

13 March

Activity with Jorge de los Santos on the construction of the idea of foreign, migration and exile. Actualisation of the experience of exile through Francesc Tosquelles.

Participant: Jorge de los Santos, painter and sculptor.

Dates: 30 January, 6 and 13 February, and 13 and 20 March 2018, at 18.30 h. | No previous knowledge required. | Venue: Fundació Antoni Tàpies. | Free activity. | Limited places. Advanced booking: activitats@ftapies.com.

The session of 20 February, at 18.30 h., will take place at the Fundació ideograma, Consell de Cent, 159, room A (courtyard), Barcelona.

Final open session Déconnaitrie

20 March

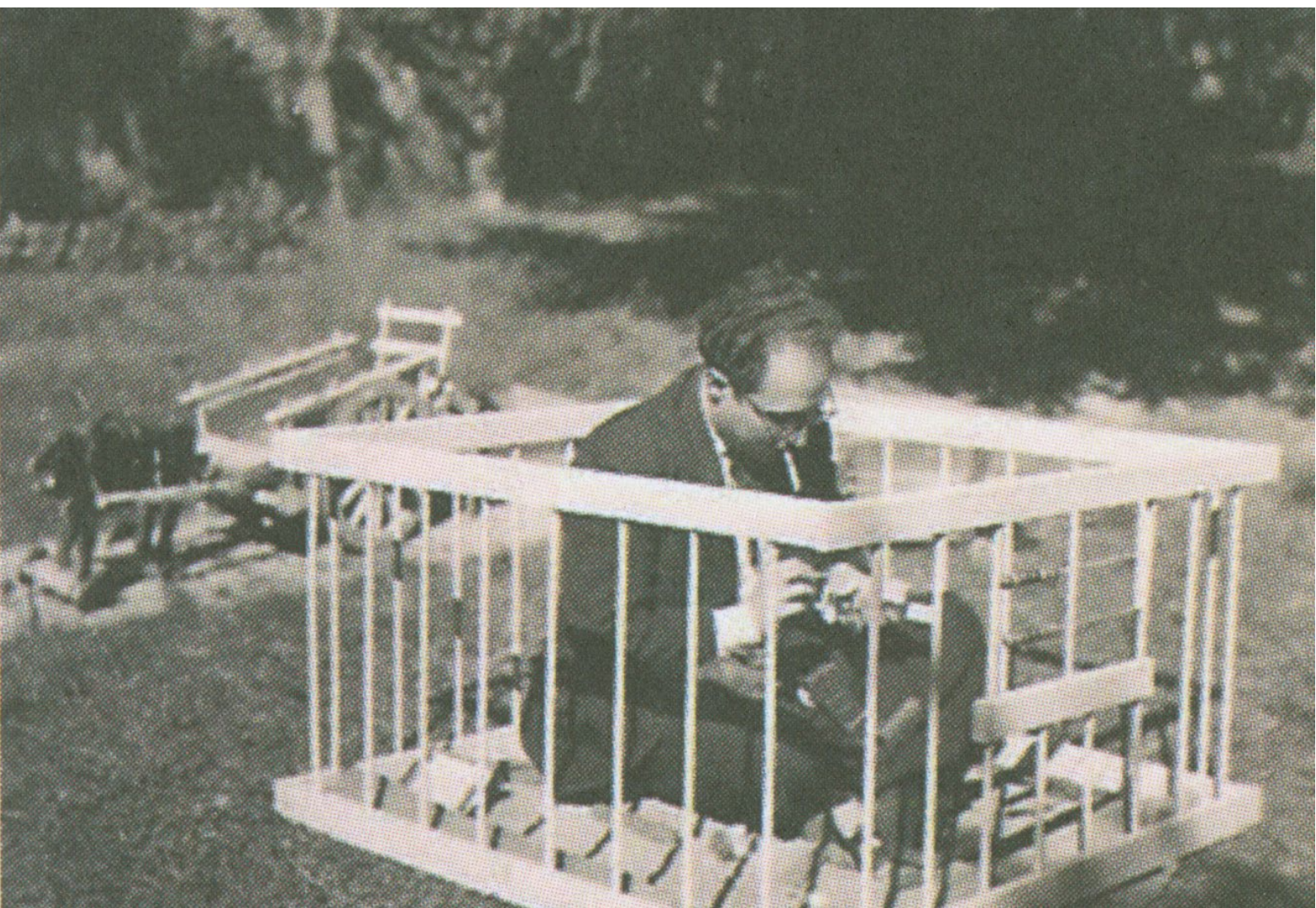
This session will provide an open space for 'attending the course of the discourse', based around the capacity of production as a collective activity without proper meaning, and where the subject is not a falsehood but rather a false state. Group conclusions and collective map.

Francesc Tosquelles, *Société lozérienne d'Hygiène mentale* (frame), 1958.



TOSQUELLES. LA INSTITUCIÓ CURADA

Textos, imágenes y testimonios
Seminario . 25.4-26.4.2018



Francesc Tosquelles en un parque infantil, ca. 1944.
Archivos de la familia Tosquelles.

La figura de Francesc Tosquelles (1912-1994) gana cada día más relevancia y urgencia. Sus contribuciones al campo de la salud mental lo sitúan al frente de la psicoterapia institucional, una reformulación que toma forma durante el periodo de posguerra y que acabará por asimilar la institución terapéutica a los campos de la acción política y cultural. Sus innovaciones, sin embargo, tienen raíces en el fermento intelectual y revolucionario que Tosquelles vive en la Cataluña de antes de la Guerra Civil. El esfuerzo para dar continuidad a las investigaciones médicas iniciadas en el Instituto Pere Mata de Reus, al trasladarlas a contextos de emergencia bélica tales como el frente de guerra republicano o los campos de concentración en el sur de Francia, estallará en Saint-Alban, el asilo donde emprenderá las reformas institucionales más ambiciosas a partir de la década de 1940.

El eco de sus aportaciones ha sido discontinuo. En la actualidad, las ideas de Tosquelles constituyen un cuerpo extraordinario de textos y testimonios, a pesar de estar dispersos y no disponer de un aparato crítico que les haga justicia. Por eso, acercarse a Tosquelles implica la reconstrucción de uno de los itinerarios intelectuales más fascinantes del siglo xx. Un camino que nos lleva del clima radical que se respira antes de la Guerra Civil hasta las revoluciones moleculares que en la década de 1960 sitúan la formación y el control de la subjetividad en el centro de todas las políticas imaginables. Con el añadido de que la perspectiva de nuestros días otorga un peso histórico aún mayor a las contingencias que rodearon su trabajo, a menudo hecho en condiciones en las que la humanidad había sido dañada. Pese a todo, Tosquelles da nombre a un legado olvidado que hoy se activa a través de la militancia cultural. No se trata de pensar en él, sino de incorporarlo a las herramientas de la crítica institucional, ya sea con respecto a las instituciones que se ocupan de la salud mental, ya sea respecto a aquellas que parecen, en apariencia, específicamente

destinadas a la cultura. Tosquelles se encuentra en el centro de una constelación de referencias que incluye nombres tan variopintos como Gérard de Nerval, Gabriel Ferrater, Frantz Fanon, Jacques Lacan, Félix Guattari o Jean Oury; referencias que van de la literatura moderna y las primeras formulaciones de las teorías de la descolonización hasta las prácticas clínicas que se asociaron a las reformas de la psicoterapia institucional.

Por ello, lejos de sistematizar la complejidad que encarna Tosquelles, este proyecto pone las bases de una traducción, tanto en el sentido literal, para hacer accesibles los textos y los materiales que han circulado de manera muy marginal, como en el sentido de constituir y dar forma a una figura fuera de todos los cánones culturales y científicos.

Este seminario, realizado con el apoyo europeo del proyecto *4Cs: From Conflict to Conviviality through Creativity and Culture*, es el primero de una serie de presentaciones públicas que aspiran a recrear la red que hoy mantiene vivo el legado de Tosquelles en ámbitos y disciplinas diversos. Asimismo, el seminario da inicio a una investigación de alcance más amplio liderada por la Universitat de Barcelona y la Fundació Antoni Tàpies, con el apoyo económico de la Fundació Mir-Puig.

Programa:

Miércoles 25 de abril

- 18.00 h. Presentación del seminario.
- 18.15 h. Camille Robcis. *Desalienación: política, filosofía, y psiquiatría radical en Francia*.
- 19.00 h. Sophie Legrain. *El estilo y el método*.
- 19.45 h. Alejandra Riera y Joana Masó. *"L'école de la liberté"*.

Jueves 26 de abril

- 18.00 h. Martine Deyres. *Alrededor del archivo cinematográfico del Hospital de Saint-Alban, una película en construcción*.
- 18.45 h. Christophe Boulanger. *Inventar un lugar de creación, sobre la experiencia de Saint-Alban*.
- 19.30 h. Jean-Claude Polack. *Nadie es profeta en su tierra*.

Biografías:

Christophe Boulanger

Es responsable de la colección de art brut en el LaM (Lille Métropole Musée d'art moderne, d'art contemporain et d'art brut). Con Savine Faupin, fue comisario de dos exposiciones dedicadas a la creación artística a partir de la experiencia de Saint-Alban. Doctor en estética, su tesis trata, sobre todo, las relaciones entre el trabajo de Aimable Jayet, clasificado dentro del *art brut*, y el contexto clínico, intelectual y artístico del lugar de realización, el hospital psiquiátrico de Saint-Alban durante la década de 1940.

Martine Deyres

Estudió teatro antes de formarse en cine documental. Tras rodar en lugares públicos con dispositivos estandarizados hoy trabaja en contrapunto abordando el mundo de la psiquiatría. Su película de entrevistas con el psiquiatra Jean Oury —uno de los principales actores de la psicoterapia institucional—, *The Underwood of the Foolish*, aborda una vida dedicada a dar la bienvenida a la locura. Actualmente está trabajando sobre la psicoterapia institucional, realizando una película sobre el hospital de Saint-Alban con archivos de sonido y filmados de esta historia.

Sophie Legrain

Es filósofa de formación y editora de profesión. En 2014 creó Éditions d'une, que acoge la colección “La Boîte à Outils”, fundada por Jean Oury y Pierre Delion, y bajo la cual se publicarán las obras completas de Francesc Tosquelles, dirigidas por Jacques Tosquellas. Sus últimos trabajos publicados son: Jean Oury, *Les Symptômes primaires de la schizophrénie*, seguido de *Le Corps et la psychose* (2016), Francesc Tosquelles, *Cours aux infirmiers, Saint-Alban 1943-1945 : Psychologie, Psychiatrie, Soins à donner aux malades* (2018).

Joana Masó

Es profesora de literatura francesa en la Universidad de Barcelona e investigadora de la Cátedra UNESCO “Mujeres, desarrollo y culturas”. Ha traducido textos de crítica y filosofía francesa contemporánea de Hélène Cixous, Jacques Derrida, Catherine Malabou, Jean-Luc Marion y Jean-Luc Nancy, y ha publicado artículos y ediciones sobre algunos de estos autores. Entre otros, ha editado los siguientes libros: *La llengua m'és l'únic refugi*, de Hélène Cixous (Lleonard Muntaner, 2009), los textos de Jacques Derrida sobre arte y estética *Penser à ne pas voir: Écrits sur les arts du visible 1979-2004* con G. Michaud (La Différence, 2013) y *Les Arts de l'Espace. Écrits et interventions sur l'architecture* (La difference, 2015). Ha trabajado en el comisariado de exposiciones y codirigido la colección “Ensayo” en Ellago Ediciones.

Jean-Claude Polack

Nació en Francia en 1936. Trabajó durante 12 años con Jean Oury y Félix Guattari en la Clínica La Borde (Cour-Cheverny), uno de los centros donde se desarrolló la psicoterapia institucional francesa. Ha publicado importantes trabajos en el campo de las psicosis. Es redactor jefe de la revista *Chimères* (fundada en 1987 por Deleuze y Guattari).

Alejandra Riera

Imparte clases de cine y de prácticas documentales desde 2010 en la École nationale supérieure d'art de Bourges, donde trabaja a partir de sus *manières de faire* con enfoques poco comunes, singulares y poéticos y apelando al film, a la escritura y a la experiencia fuera de toda actualidad preconcebida. Riera desarrolla la práctica de la escritura y del cine desde 1995. En los últimos años su trabajo presta atención al cuidado de las plantas. En este sentido está llevando a cabo el seminario *Végétales, présences et pensées en mouvement*, que acompaña y anima con la creación del colectivo devenir jardin con la voluntad de transformar en jardín el patio de la escuela pública de arte donde enseña (reservado durante más de 40 años a zona de estacionamiento de coches). Al estar “entre les champs”, sus escritos y sus *films-documents*, basados en experiencias vividas, a menudo han dado impulso a intentos de fomentar el pensamiento, los gestos y las escrituras colectivas. Durante años, ha formado parte de grupos de investigación en los cuales se contemplan los pensamientos, sueños y percepciones de las personas de sufrimiento psíquico (con el grupo UEINZZ) y también con los habitantes del barrio Fontbarlettes. Entre 2010 y 2014, impartió un taller bajo el nombre de *Lucioles* (luciérnagas) en la clínica de La Borde (Cour-Cheverny) con Joris de Bisschop y con la presencia de Jean Oury. *Poétique(s) de l'inachèvement* (Poética(s) de la incompletitud) es su último ensayo.

Camille Robcis

Es profesora de historia en la Universidad de Cornell. Sus intereses en la enseñanza e investigación se han centrado en tres grandes aspectos: la construcción histórica de normas, la producción intelectual de conocimiento y la articulación del universalismo y la diferencia en la historia francesa moderna. Es autora de *The Law of Kinship: Anthropology, Psychoanalysis, and the Family in France* (2013). Actualmente trabaja en una historia sobre la psicoterapia institucional, un movimiento nacido después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial que propugnaba una reestructuración radical del asilo en un intento de repensar y reformar el cuidado psiquiátrico







2.2.3

Celebrating crafts for social change

ENSAD
Oct. 2018 – May 2019

THE MEDIATION LAB

The Mediation Lab «Travelling crafts for social change» at l'Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs (EnsAD) in Paris aims to show the importance of understanding and integrating the social, political and cultural issues of present and past migrations in solving conflict situations by applying design methodologies. More specifically, the objectif of the Mediation Lab is that of co-creating a tangible pedagogical service and/or tools of know-how transmission capable of highlighting, revealing and valorizing specific practical knowledge and expertise of migrants, or “expert newcomers” as we decided to name them. These pedagogical services and tools are the results of the analysis of different methodologies proper to specific know-hows, level of expertise and contexts of mediation in which the labs took place. The aim is to circulate this pedagogic model and present it to other art & design schools, as well as other national institutions. Helped by a team of designers and teachers, migrant-craftsmen and students have co-imagined several pedagogical models of transmission of ‘travelling crafts’ and conceived ‘manifest objects’ that illustrate the different approaches of each expert newcomer. These objects developed for the different mediation labs are discursive and materialize specific cultural exchanges with a specific narrative. Based on a horizontal model (expert migrants-designers-students-public) and experimented within the Mediation Lab, these models/tools allowed the public to understand and experience these narratives and the working methods proper to each craftsman thanks to an

ad-hoc pedagogy outlining their potential and a recognition of their skills by the public, e.g. during the below mentioned workshops with the local community with the more general objective of considering migration as a rich, stimulating and creative experience that must be shared.

The Mediation Lab was much more than a year long activity in which to discuss, develop and experiment design research approaches to migrants' and situations. During the year long activity students and migrants have been increasingly asked to reflect together about the meaning of co-creation of pedagogical tools for craftsmen or for non-expert newcomers interested in developing manual activities and how these co-developed specific tools would have been capable of highlighting their own knowhow and approach.

Therefore, the Mediation Lab has been conceived as a joint venture bringing together users, in this particular case expert and non-expert newcomers, and students with the aim to co-create pertinent solutions that would have been able to enhance the capacity of the newcomer of perceiving the real value of his knowhow or of the knowhow he was willing to develop and of the student to deepen his knowledge on a specific knowhow and co-develop creative skills to transmit it to a larger public. The initial research based on group activities, collective mapping and "mosaic" skill developing techniques in October has gradually lead to intensive mediation labs in May-June where students, migrants, communities and more in general the public have co-develop the aforementioned pedagogical transmission tools.

Each week during the whole academic year of 2018-2019, debrief sessions in presence of the different participants were happening in order to go over the challenges and benefits of each expertise, exchange the information gathered by the different research groups (four groups where formed composed by expert newcomers, students, student researchers and designers), plan for future sessions and consolidate the student's

theoretical approach. Students have been able to analyse the contexts of development of each craftsmanship and exchange extensively with “expert newcomers” about each of their will, needs to develop and share their unique skill. In addition, different experts have been invited to enrich their perspective and give a feedback on the improvement of their works.

The first part of the development of the Mediation Lab took place at EnsAD School on Mondays and the second part at Emmaüs Les Resilientes, an open social design laboratory, where public could eventually participate at any phase. There, EnsAD students and Les Resilientes met every week on Wednesdays and had access to material resources on place. The third part of the Mediation Lab happened in various places open to the public throughout the city of Paris where all participants could meet for a specific mediation event and share with a wider audience.

Beyond these weekly meetings, workshop’s animators accompanied students to visit newcomers in the place where they daily develop their skills and helped them with their research. Students were highly encouraged to pursue their fieldwork research beyond the classroom and to engage with expert and non-expert newcomers outside of class hours.

First working sessions at EnsAD school, October 2018



The Mediation Lab was structured in three stages: the time of revelation, the time of transmission and the time of valorisation of expertise.

Transmitting skills: October 2018-January 2019

The Studio 4Cs students collaborated with 4 expert-craftsmen who shared their know-how and co-created transmission tools that could easily adapt to different contexts. Together, they co-produced manifest objects resulting from their exchange. These pedagogical tools were first shared with the public during the ENSAD open doors in January 2019.

Revealing skills: February-June 2019

The Studio 4Cs students collaborated with non-expert migrants to 'reveal' their skills at Emmaüs Les Résilientes. With the designer Eugénie de la Rivière, Emmaüs Les Résilientes they proposed 3 labs (1 per month) gathering inhabitants, ENSAD students, and 'newcomers'. Together they produced collaborative design objects based on creativity and collective intelligence.

Valuing skills: May-June 2019

The Studio 4Cs students assisted the migrant-experts in the mediation of their know-how possibly at la Villette Makerz, Centre Pompidou and the event "La rue aux Enfants" of the Cafézoïde. This last phase was the occasion to share the year's experience and celebrate the enhanced value of the know-how of the craftsmen-newcomers.

TRANSMITTING SKILLS

The aim of the **Transmitting skills** first phase of the Mediation Lab, happening at EnsAD, from October 2018 to January 2019, was to rethink the space of the classroom or workshop space as a place for horizontal knowledge sharing between all participants, a place for diverse subjectivities to collide and nurture one another. As the only design school part of the 4Cs program, we focused on how to welcome and include inside our school a pedagogical team of newcomers with a professional background in crafts, design or art. We collectively reflected on new ways to share know-hows in creative and radically inclusive ways in such a context with the hope that it would inspire other design and art schools to do so and offer meaningful jobs to newcomers who are professionals in those fields.

Bassam Salwkha, plasterer artist sharing his skills with EnsAD student Alphée
EnsAD, November 2018



Since the beginning of the Mediation Lab, we focused on hospitality and getting to know each other with care. Welcoming warmly every actors with their identities, their stories, their knowledges. On the very first class, in October 2018, we draw a big mind map where each one wrote freely about what they liked, their crafts skills or the crafts they were interested in learning, the countries they were connected to, etc. This large drawing unable to group to visually see all the connections between their interests, paths, and origins. In the classroom emerged spaces of conversations, personal exchanges and of emotional connections. We also institutionalized shared meals at the end of every class where everyone could bring a typical meal from their region. The art of weaving relationships was made possible by conviviality in action, open-mindedness, observation and listening. It created the context for a positive mediation to bloom and eventually the incorporation of new knowledge for all actors.

In this context, 4 working groups of about 5 EnsAD students and 1 facilitator designer each following one craftsman newcomer were created:

The group « Alara »

led by potter Yasir Mohamed Elamine

The group « Château de plâtre »

led by artist Bassam Salwkha

The group « Karim Ruhullah »

led by upholsterer Karim Ruhullah

The group « Something new »

led by model architect Ibrahim Adam

Their stories will be shared in the pages to come.



Ibrahim Adam assembling wooden structures, EnsAD, December 2018

Clay shapes made by Yasir Mohamed Elamine and his students, EnsAD, December 2018



THE GROUP « ALARA »

led by potter Yasir Mohamed Elamine
Feedback from Carmen Bouyer,
Designer and facilitator within the « Alara » working group

The “Alara” working group was centered around craftsman newcomer Yasir Mohamed Elamine, as well as 4 students for various education department within EnsAD: Théophile Berthemet (Graphic Design), Claire Buet and Thomas Guillermet (Object Design) and Xunan Hou (Interior Architecture); as well as a local designer and facilitator Carmen Bouyer.

Yasir Mohamed Elamine is an artisan potter of Sudanese origin and has been living in France for several years. In Sudan, in Khartoum, he created the first contemporary pottery workshop in order to complement the traditional methods already present in his country. Yasir named his studio “Alara”, after a Sudanese queen, former patroness of the arts. In Langeac and then in Paris, Yasir continues his work, notably in collaboration with La Fabrique Nomade in Paris, with whom he organizes pottery workshops open to all. Throughout his career he has developed simple techniques to transmit his know-how in a short workshop format.

TRANSMISSION

During the studio with the students of Ensad, Yasir presented his techniques to us in excellent French language. Yasir came from Soudan with a very pedagogical approach to share his work in a short time to inexperienced students. Already in his home country we he had created his own studio, he was sharing his own vision and way of working with clay with apprentices. In France also, he had been teaching occasionally his techniques and collaborating with designers. At ENSaD, with two sessions of two hours for each techniques, and over the course of two months, Yasir shared with EnsAD students and educator, his way of wedging the clay as well as four different techniques to shape objects: the technique of Coil construction, Slab construction, Slip casting and Pinching. Coil

construction is a technique where a piece of clay is pressed and then rolled into a coil. A hollow volume, like a bowl, can be assembled by superimposing coils on top of each other and welding them together with water, gradually stacking and joining coils of clay one on top of the other. The coil can also be used as a decorative element on an already structured shape. In the method of Slab construction, the desired volume pattern is cut out from a 2 to 6 mm thick clay plate. Once done, the different elements of the pattern are assembled on a sample shape. On the other hand Slip casting is a mould technique used for complex parts that are to be replicated in several copies. This technique is based on the use of plaster moulds and can be carried out in two different ways. The first one consists in pouring liquid clay into the mould which we didn't do in class. The second, more used in Sudan and the one we experimented, consists in placing pieces of soft earth against the walls of the mould. Finally the Pinching technique consists in shaping the clay by pinching it. All Yasir's methods have in common that they can be executed virtually anywhere with very little material and tools. Except for the clay itself and a pencil case full of small wooden clay tools, Yasir used recycled material, like wood planks he had found in the street, free newspapers and plastic cups from the cafeteria as base shapes, patterns or moulds.



While Yasir was teaching the students his techniques like apprentices over the course of a few weeks, the students in design have introduced him to new tools that could bring in new contemporary forms into his work - in particular thanks to 3D printing with clay that was available at the school - and thus feed Yasir's research for innovation in his profession. The students also did researches on traditional and contemporary Sudanese ceramic that they shared with him.

CO-CREATION

The challenge for the group was not to co-create a pedagogical method to easily share Yasir's know-how as a potter since he had already structured a condensed way of transmission. But rather to enable Yasir's mobility and capacity to teach in more places and share more widely his methodology. Through conversations that sprouted while learning his know-how, Yasir shared with the group of students his dream of creating a more structured nomad workshop that we could use on the long run, enabling him to move around with his tools and reach a wider audience as a teacher. Yasir at that time, as he lived on the outskirts of the city, had to carry around his material over long distances, through buses and subways, with many often heavy bags. The group took the challenge and identified collectively the tools needed to create such a light, easily transportable workshop place. Together we imagined a «nomad workshop» - an easily transportable object - which brings together all the tools necessary to the transmission of his know-how. Using light wood cut with laser techniques, the students created easily moveable boxes in which all the material Yasir needed (clay, tools, aprons, etc.) could be stored easily. The mobile workshop had to also include space for the future students' finished pieces to be transported before being fired, typically in another space than where the workshop would happen.

In the meantime, Yasir shared his know-how in various contexts with the help of the students as now trained assistants. In January 2019, at EnsAD School Open doors, Yasir's workshop was very successful with two sessions full of visitors, some touching clay for the first time. Again with very little tools except for the clay, the "Alara" workshop was a success. It happened again in May 201, at the event La Rue aux Enfants, an outdoor festival designed for children. Yasir with the help of the group from EnsAD transmitted his practice to about a hundred of happy kids over the course an afternoon.



Yasir Mohamed Elamine
showing his Slab
construction technique,
EnsAD, November 2018



CHALLENGES

The main difficulties that the group of students encountered were technical as the students were faced with one of their first design object making process. With difficulties with finding the right materials, managing budget and deliveries, and structuring time to actually produce the “nomad workshop” in the different school studios along with their other classes. We saw here that collaborating with a professional person like Yasir while being student and learning in the process can be challenging.

Another difficulty that we faced a a group was the contradiction between wanting to propose new shapes to Yasir inspired by the French idea of contemporary design and respecting deeply his own ways of designing objects. Aware of neo-colonial patterns that can quickly emerge in that context, we decided as a group to step out of co-design in the field of Yasir’s know how - ceramic - to support technically the transmission of his own ways. We decided to support him by designing a cart like object for transportation of his work rather than intervening in his already very structured process of transmission and shape making.

CONCLUSION

This project addressed the issues of conviviality, hospitality, know-how transmission as well as more specifically the mobility of craft sharing. By designing collectively a nomade workshop, we address the need for more fluidity in knowledge exchanges and transmission. It also highlights the possibility for expert newcomers to create income, professional collaborations and keep their know-hows alive by teaching in a wide variety of contexts (schools, museums, festivals, etc.) next to the space where they live.

THE GROUP « CHÂTEAU DE SABLE »

led by artist Bassam Salwkha

Feedback from Alexia Venot, Designer and facilitator
within the « Château de plâtre » working group

In the context of Studio 4cs, in the frame of the Mediation Lab. We have participated in the creation of workshops and pedagogical models, involving action-research methodologies with the objective of promoting the skills of new-comer craftsmen to the public and imagining workshop models that promote the professional integration of craftsmen. In this context, I supervised Bassam Salwkha's group with the students of Design Alphée Grand and Adrien Buyukodabas. First, the pedagogical objectives were set up according to a horizontal model and modelled by Bassam's ideas, his background, history and expertise. In order to be as close as possible to its history, we have decided to be all the members of the group in practice, theory and methodology.

Bassam Salwkha, originally a craftsman stafer in Syria, developed an artistic work after his exile, where narrative serves as a form of resilience, Bassam's pieces are metaphorical, narrative constructions, made of plaster, figurative representations such as a castle or a boat, embodiment of his exile. The notion of resilience in physics evokes both qualities consistency and flexibility that allow a metal to regain its shape and flexibility structure after being hit.

The metaphorical use of the term « resilience » has especially was developed in psychology by Boris Cyrulnik to designate this ability to recover from his injuries. Cyrulnik (2003) rightly emphasizes the importance of creative and artistic activities as vectors of resilience. Promoting symbolic expression through the implementation of narratives has been the objective of our work within the framework of the mediation lab.



METHODS

Our work was carried out in several phases. First, we referred to a bibliographical review to understand and know the origins of plasterwork in Syria, both in terms of Bassam's personal life journey, his learning and the pieces they used to make as well as his subjects of inspiration.

The students carried out research and developed a state of the art in order to be the most relevant for the rest of the project. It then seemed essential to us to dialogue with Bassam, around his art pieces, his way of creating, his path, to first get to know himself but also to reflect on the issues raised by the transmission workshop that we were going to co-create.

We therefore asked ourselves a number of questions: How can we not denature Bassam's approach through our research methods? What is Bassam's desire for the future? Does he want to return to his craft practice or embark on an artistic career? How can we help him to realize his desires without distorting or interpreting them? How can we transmit Bassam's know-how as much as the emotional charge of his approach to the public?

In order to answer this question, and as part of our contribution to the 4Cs project with the objective of designing a transmission workshop, we have designed and co-created a multimedia series of objects with different aims.

INTERMEDIATE OBJECTS AS A MEDIUM OF MEDIATION

After discussion, it seemed appropriate to define Bassam's know-how and enhance its expertise through several objects, intermediate objects, serving as a mediation with the public in order to share its creative process. Symbolic expressions of culture build the relationship life of societies human, mediate between the individual and the community, build identities, give them meaning, make them visible in the public space « to reduce the « social divide » by producing a « social bond », and to formulate the reasons for living together », Caune (1999).

We have developed different media to both understand the process of creating of Bassam, give him the conditions to express and share his know-how. A document presenting the different stages and processes of Bassam's work, its methods and the materials used, serving both as a means of understanding students of Bassam's work and as a means of sharing his expertise with the public. Then, the design of a



Bassam Salwkh sharing his techniques using recycled materials, plaster and paint, EnsAD, November/December 2018

narrative object, referring to Bassam's work, which served its primary inspiration, taking the form of inspirational wooden modules, images and texts, pieces to assemble and arrange as a puzzle or as a construction game to understand its design process. We then designed tools to build a plaster castle, an emblematic piece of Bassam, in order to decline and share the making of this piece, we have reduced the scales. The objective being to imagine a plurality of architectures made by the public for the design by all the participants while allowing the transmission of the process of Bassam. We referred to the game,

for the forms of spontaneity, playful as reflexive and collective that this support could take, also the objective being to highlight Bassam's spontaneity in the construction of his pieces, but also to highlight the emotional charge of his story.

DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED

Our role was also to understand the difficulties of new-comers in their daily lives, and through cultural actions with an artistic aim, to set up a process of individuation and a form of resilience. Regarding problems encountered, they were of several kinds, the first difficulty was the language barrier due to the complexity of the project. Indeed, we did not want to distort or interpret Bassam's work, and we wanted to be sure that he could get a message across. Using drawing as a tool used to be a relevant because it was universal, a medium of and for communication within the group. Also the difficulties encountered by Bassam on a daily basis were felt in Bassam's involvement in the workshop, as any new comers, the quotidian and the difficulties encountered are also a dimension to be taken into consideration in the construction of the project, particularly with regard to their involvement and their desire for the immediate and future. How can the workshop really be registered over time and then support Bassam?



Bassam Salwkha sharing his techniques using recycled materials, plaster and paint, EnsAD, November/December 2018

EXCHANGE WITH THE PUBLIC

Regarding the exchange with the audiences, we had different reactions depending on the people and ages of the participants, approaching the workshop either as a technical learning and recreational moment, or as to understand and engage in a conceptual exercise with regard to Bassam's work. Making was a catalyst for an exchange with the public, and to find alternatives to the language barrier.



Bassam Salwkha sharing his techniques using recycled materials, plaster and paint,
EnsAD, November/December 2018

CONCLUSION

The action-research methods have made it possible to set up and make visible the process of Bassam's creation, both to enable him to apply his work in other forms, tools allowing him to develop a professional activity around the construction of workshops. They also allowed students to grasp the role that a designer can have in the context of social innovation and the different formats and contexts that a designer can also face, going beyond the simple objective of creating a shape or an object but also a process, relationship supports serving the resilience of a new comer artisan. Also, the methods have made it possible to share Bassam's activity and to value its work with the public. Finally, it allows to give tangible

examples, and transferable to designers, artists, researchers or associations in other contexts or similar situations. Action research has its limits, because it builds a model constructed according to Western rules and a process that removes a form of spontaneity from Bassam's artistic work, it can also lead to a distance from original manual work. However, an individual's sense of belonging to a community is develops with the ability to express himself, his expectations, his suggestions and the feeling of being recognized inand that he can contribute something to society (Guilbert 2004), while Bassam was confronted with anonymity, since his arrival in France, le mediation lab a permis de restoring his confidence, whose role was also to offer him a space for expression, transmission and sharing.

THE GROUP « KARIM RUHULLAH »

led by artist Karim Ruhullah

Feedback from Natalia Baudoin, Designer and facilitator

within the « Karim Ruhullah » working group

The workshop «Karim Ruhullah, discovering Afghan tapestry through an introduction to knots and patterns» was co-designed by Afghan upholsterer Karim Ruhullah and students Chloé Dutruc-Rosset, 3rd year Object Design, Natalia Pageau, 2nd year Graphic Design and Alexandra Penteado, 2nd year Apparel Design; and supervised by Natalia Baudoin, SACRe PhD student, ENSADLab. The methodological approach used was based on a horizontal model of co-creation with the aim of facilitating the transmission of know-how from the expert newcomer and enhancing his know-how. This was done in two steps, which will be discussed here after. First, bonding through exchange and second, conceptualization and designing transmission strategies.



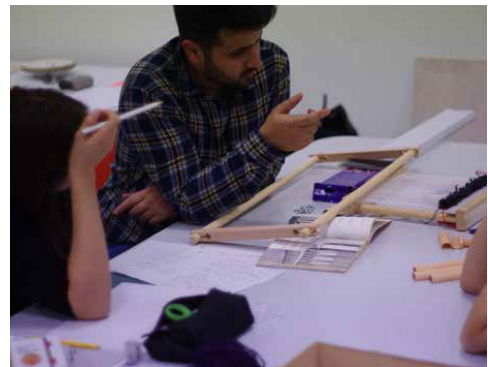
1. Bonding Through Exchange

A series of activities have been set up to create bonds between the students and the newcomer expert. These bonds were of personal and professional natures. The first concerned more the life experiences of each actor, the second concerned their technical knowhow. The exchange of experiences on a personal level alternating with the technical exchanges allowed to establish a space of trust between the actors, putting them at the same level for the creation of the tool of transmission of know-how. At first the experts and the students presented themselves and exchanged on their life journeys, their origins, the composition of their families, etc. This allowed them to start bonding on a personal level and allowed the students to understand the migratory and professional journey of the expert.

Karim Ruhullah, 30, learned his craft from his family, they are all upholsterers. He fled his country at the age of 2 with his family to take refuge in Pakistan where he went to a Franco-Afghan school. Back in Kabul, he made hand-knotted carpets for the French embassy, which later allowed him to obtain a visa to settle in France. Once in Europe, he worked in various small jobs before being able to practice his craft again. While visiting a cousin in Maastricht he visits a carpet gallery and after discussing with the manager he gets his first job in carpet restoration. Today he works in a carpet gallery in the Paris region where he mainly sells and restores carpets. The majority of the pieces he sells, he has them manufactured in Kabul in the family workshop, making only a few pieces himself.

TECHNICAL EXCHANGE

Simultaneous to the personal exchange, a back-and-forth dynamic between manual learning of the technique of traditional Afghan tapestry and the theoretical learning brought about by research that students did around other existing tapestry practices in the world and particularly in France. Dialogue was established not only verbally, but also through the transmission of technical gestures: how to handle tools, twist the thread, make knots, etc. A powerful gestural communication, which conveyed the understanding of the technique through the body, involving other senses than that of sight and hearing.



Karim Ruhullah sharing his skills in tapestry making,

EnsAD, November/December 2018

By confronting themselves with the learning of this new technique, and by drawing it closer to their own knowledge of the weaving techniques learned at school, as well as to their research on tapestry in France, the students and the expert newcomer began to question the different approaches to the transmission of craft trades. They were able to see not only the technical differences inherent in each craft technique, for example the difference in weaving structure between the Gobelins tapestries and the traditional Afghan tapestry, but also and above all they noticed differences in the way of transmitting the craftsmanship and the place that these crafts occupy in the societies in which they exist. In Afghanistan, the craft of tapestry is transmitted from generation to generation, in an open manner and where craft has a place in everyday life, being more democratic.

In France, craftsmanship is «patrimonialized» and protected. As a result, it becomes almost untouchable and the transmission of the know-how is therefore extremely controlled: specific forms and spaces of transmission are dedicated to them and transmission only exists in that context.

FEEDBACK OF STEP 1

At first the exchanges were a little forced, a little cold, almost clumsy. The students and the craftsman had a hard time getting confidence. There were two reasons for this. On the one hand, the students had to wait a long time to have the material necessary for the experimentation of the tapestry technique (Karim Ruhullah's loom was large and difficult to transport for the lessons), which made their first technical exchanges a bit abstract. On the other hand, the age difference aggravated the difficulties of communication. As a supervisor I had to intervene several times to try to create dialogue between them, as a mediator, asking questions about their journeys and future desires to all members of the group in order to look for common topics of conversation. They were able to surpass these difficulties when some of students were able to visit Ruhullah's

workshop and were able to see his living environment, and experiment the technique with the real tools. Bringing the dialogue out of the classroom and into a daily space has created this personal connection in a more tangible way. In a future experience, I would recommend scheduling visits to the newcomers' workshops or living spaces as part of the out-of-wall conviviality activities.

2. Conceptualization and Designing Transmission Strategies

From these exchanges, the expert and the students began to question how to transmit this technique during the workshops planned for ENSADs' Open Doors and La Villette Makerz. They had to negotiate on their different points of view. Ruhullah, attached to the method with which he had learned his craft himself, had difficulty detaching himself from it to think of other forms of transmission. The students, having experienced this learning, tried to conceptualize the main and essential stages of this technique, in order to make people who participate in the workshops understand in a simple manner the complexity of this craftsmanship with rich in details and meaningful patterns.

CONCEPTUALIZATION AND SCHEMATIZATION

A simplification and conceptualization exercise were necessary to achieve their goal. They realized that the pattern in the tapestry was constructed in the same way as the digital image. That the knot in the tapestry was analogous to the pixel in the digital image. Thus, in order to transmit in a simple manner, the upholsterer's job, three learning stages have been defined: the learning of the knot, the construction of the pattern from knot lines (the cartoon) and the notion of resolution in the pattern related to the size of the knot. The students made diagrams and sketches explaining the differences between French and Afghan tapestry as well as diagrams explaining the knotting and the composition of a cartoon for patterns, the notion of image resolution in the tapestry patterns.

SETTING UP THE TRANSMISSION DEVICE

The transmission workshop co-designed by the students and the expert craftsman proceeded as follows. After a general explanation of the Afghan tapestry and a practical demonstration in Ruhullah's traditional loom, the participants, with the help of the students, passed by small looms where they learned successively the knotting and the knot line. creating a pattern with a thick knot and creating a pattern with a thin knot. These successive stages accompanied by the diagrams made allowed visitors to understand the complexity of the Afghan tapestry technique based on the elemental principles that compose it. Ruhullah's team developed a new approach to tapestry learning in order to facilitate and make it more interactive.

THE VALORIZATION OF KNOW-HOW THROUGH THE TRANSMISSION TOOL

This experience allowed the expert craftsman to develop with the students methodologies of transmission of his profession where he discovered a niche that will renew his cutting-edge practice of the art of carpet. Indeed, the transmission tool allowed him to see his job not as a technique used to make objects (carpets) but as a resource that can turn into a service through the transmission and therefore likely to bring other economic inputs.

FEEDBACK OF STEP 2

At this stage, the students were able to put into practice the tools specific to their designer trade: conceptualization, schematization, the use of image creation software, etc. They put their toolbox at the service of transmitting Ruhullah's know-how, allowing him to discover the usefulness of the designer's approach and to appropriate some of their tools for the practice of his craftsmanship. For example, the students were able to show their expert the use Illustrator for the design of the pattern cartoons. In the beginning Ruhullah had some doubts about the transmission tools, but gladly he let himself be carried away by the intuition of the students. It was having experienced the transmission tool during the first workshops at ENSAD's Open Doors, and noticing the interest that people had in his know-how that he was convinced of the effectiveness of the proposed method. So, for the second experience at La Villette Makerz he was much more excited.

THE GROUP « SOMETHING NEW »

led by model architect Ibrahim Adam
Feedback from Dimitri Zephir, Designer and facilitator
within the « Something new » working group

*« Architecture is about
doing something new. »*

Ibrahim Adam, Sudanese model architect

Ibrahim is Sudanese. Five years ago, he left his country for Libya where he studied ceramics and porcelain for a year. It is after this year of study that he arrives in France where he spends several weeks between Thionville and Metz-en-Moselle, then in Boulogne-Billancourt next to the Porte de Saint-Cloud. He arrived in Paris, where he worked with BAAM (Bureau d'accueil et d'accompagnement des migrants) and ENSAD's PEI association, where he continued his work on architecture.

Since then, the one who can be described as a dreamer has developed a work of models on a city scale, which he describes as «something new». This «something new» he imagines is inspired by modern buildings such as those in the Parc de la Villette, the Porte de Saint-Cloud, La Défense and Dubai. Ibrahim's compositional work tends to move away from the breeze block constructions that he calls old: he is inspired by the shapes and colours of nature, he imagines buildings with ceramics, porcelain or wood.



In his models and drawings, we often find a change of scale, from the object to the building. Thus, a library is formally inspired by the book form, as if the architectural elements should be readable and understood by all.

By spontaneously assembling and composing disparate elements, Ibrahim erected buildings whose habitable potential is dictated only by the forms and sometimes the materials that compose them. They then become successively school, hospital, building, hotels, music kiosk, to compose a new city. Like the synthesis of an experience, incorporating what he would have learned and seen on his way, Ibrahim imagines pieces of cities, as many possible proposals.

«*DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY*»

another way of thinking about architecture according to Ibrahim.

FROM GESTURES TO THE PROTOCOL OF CREATION AND THEN TRANSMISSION

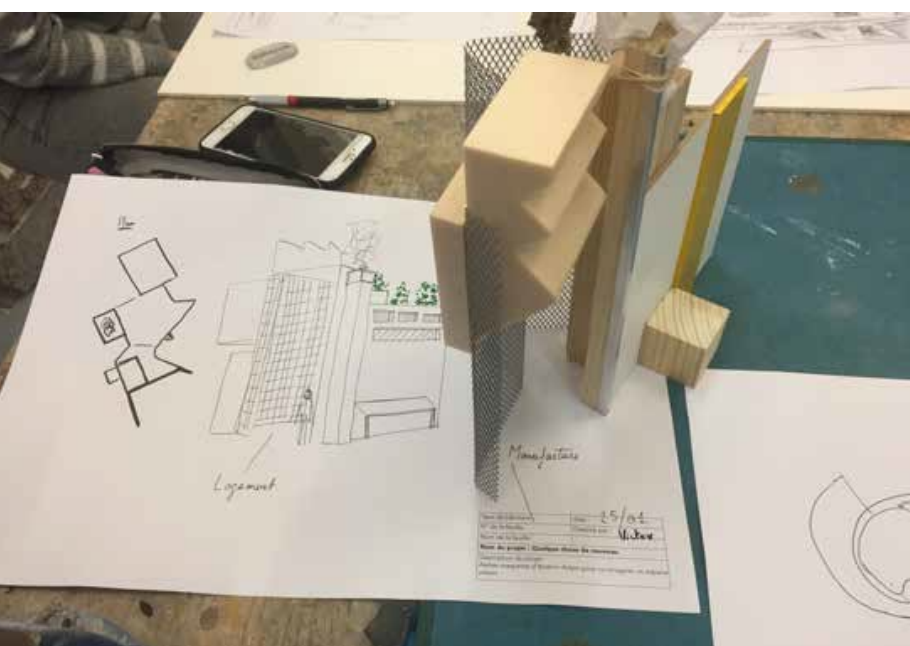
The search for the novelty is Ibrahim's main quest when he thinks of architecture. This novelty does not appear as an overload, but rather as a desire to do otherwise. Architecture is not a building, it is a skilfully orchestrated composition of buildings that presents a new world. A world where the primary needs are present, where greenery and playgrounds are necessary. This is how Ibrahim's generosity manifests itself: by caring for those who could potentially live in his imaginary worlds.

Far from school codes, Ibrahim's approach has allowed the student to co-construct a city, in which a leaf turns into a roof or a box of candy into a church. He then reveals these spontaneous architectures through drawing - a drawing that is first objective to capture their elements, the decisive details to transform them into habitable architecture. The

model completes this process to compose this imaginary city. Ibrahim's freedom of composition is not unlike the approach of the Italian radicals of the mid-20th century, but also of other artists who tried to build the idea of a new or ideal city.

It seemed important not to overqualify Ibrahim's work. Do not name it too much, because by naming it, we tend to reduce things, to limit things where the imagination seeks to deconstruct, to distort the contours of the norm.

The workshop we have set up and developed with Ibrahim is therefore called «Something new». The term architecture only comes up at the end of the workshop. It proposes to penetrate his working method and thus enrich, co-construct a new vision of architecture, the city, and potentially the world.



Various researches based on
Ibrahim Adam's methodology,
EnsAD, October 2018
Ibrahim Adam's drawings

The participants have in their possession a library of various forms and materials, which they will assemble, compose freely to «do something» and then «do architecture», and thus, co-construct Ibrahim's idea when he tells about this profession: architecture is about doing something new.

Here, the 5 steps of the Ibrahim's transmission project:

- 1 assembly & composition of the elements
- 2 photographs of the elements/mini-sculptures
- 3 drawings/representations of mini-sculptures
- 4 placement of buildings
- 5 translation into drawings of habitable architectures

A round table with the participants about potentialities of imaginary architectures finishes the workshop.

Through this project, we wanted to Ibrahim to tell his story, with the most accurate honesty possible. Letting him do it alone first means making sure things come from him. Only free expression, and in various forms (drawing, collage, mock-up, gestures, etc.) is the support of truth.

By observing his working method and questioning his ways of doing things, we tried to highlight his singular division where each stage can constitute a project: the richness of the assemblies of his models, the expressiveness of his drawings, their translation into the form of practicable architectures and the composition of his imaginary cities.



Students experimenting with Ibrahim Adam,
EnsAD, November 2018

The students' involvement is expressed by touch so as not to distort Ibrahim's work: the presence of small silhouettes to embody the constructions, the addition of an information cartridge to present, classify and archive the drawings, the addition of materials to diversify the possible shapes and compositions.

While the absence of words has made it possible to focus on the forms and plasticity of Ibrahim's work, the question of language remains unresolved. What forms could this project have taken if it had been associated with a translator? Would this be the right answer given that the translator is already an intermediary between the one who wants to transmit and those who receive?

Our work as mediators is first and foremost to be revealing and not direct actors in the project. But, because we are human, our choices are also governed by our affect, our sensitivity. It seems to me that the subject of transmission is considerably oriented according to the actors who have practiced it. And that therefore, «Something new» is one way, among a thousand and one, to tell the story of Ibrahim.

These co-creation activities have been ushered in by **test mediation labs during the Open Doors of EnsAD school in January 2019** where students and « expert migrants » have experienced their work and had the chance to develop it for the following sessions. During the open doors Karim Ruhullah, upholsterer, Ibrahim Adam, model architect, Bassam Salwkha, plasterer and Yasir Mohamed Elamine, potter, offered the public workshops in which they experimented for the first time with these tools developed with the students.

The design process required that students engage with “expert newcomers” through a co-creation process to develop appropriate design solutions to improve the acknowledgment and acceptance of expert newcomers into our society. This year’s students have adapted the personal, ethical chart developed during the workshop in order to clarify their project’s ethical implications and leitmotifs.

Students have been requested to provide a detailed description of their projects for the open doors January 2019 in a pre-established template to be uploaded to a common drop-box space. Students and expert newcomers have been asked to define a name for their project; describe the project’s context, the issue(s) identified, and the needs migrants expressed; they had to indicate the type of co-creation methodology they had developed according to which know-how what type of tool that will be proposed to the public during the Mediation Labs.

All four workshops posters, designed by EnsAD student Theophile Berthemet, January 2019





The workshop « Alara » led by potter Yasir Mohamed Elamine, at EnsAD Open doors, January 2019



The workshop « Château de plâtre » designed by artist Bassam Salwkha and led by EnsAD students, at EnsAD Open doors, January 2019



The workshop « Karim Ruhullah » led by upholsterer Karim Ruhullah, at EnsAD Open doors, January 2019



The workshop « Something new » led by model architect Ibrahim Adam, at EnsAD Open doors, January 2019



REVEALING SKILLS



Eugénie de Larivière shows students how to use recycled materials
Emmaüs Les Résilientes, February 2019

The aim of the Revealing skills second phase of the Mediation Lab at EnsAD, from February to June 2019, was to bring studio 4Cs students to collaborate with non-expert migrants in order to ‘reveal’ their skills. With the support of designer Eugénie de la Rivière and her non-profit organization Emmaüs Les Résilientes, the design studio of Emmaüs Alternative. They together proposed 3 «labs», 1 per month, all open to the public gathering inhabitants, EnsAD students, and ‘newcomers’ from Emmaüs’ social work. The goal was to produce collaborative works based on creativity and collective intelligence.

«Le Lab» concept was born at Emmaüs Les Résilientes out of the desire to make the benefits of creativity accessible to as many people as possible. It offers creative workshops for Emmaüs employees in integration and beneficiaries of their social actions including migrants (day care, food bank,

therapeutic apartments, etc.). Inspired by the methods of creative innovation developed in the design studios, and the therapeutic virtues of the activities developed by art therapy, the workshops alternate between group and individual work, creative exercises and prototyping, and are aimed at the creation of redesigned objects. As a true laboratory that encourages exploration and experimentation, The Lab is a vector for regaining self-confidence and for social integration, which are the first steps towards the goal of professional reintegration and sustainable employability for newcomers.

The co-created Lab events, between 4Cs team and Emmaüs Les Résilientes, happened at a women's shelter in Paris and at Emmaüs Les Résilientes in April 2019 and culminated at the museum Centre Georges Pompidou-Beaubourg for a special workshop entitled «Atelier good vibrations» in June 15th-16th 2019. During this two days event, at Centre Pompidou, non-expert newcomers, EnsAD students and the public experienced the results of a three-month «revelation» pedagogy developed by Emmaüs les Resilientes and its founder, designer Eugenie de Larivière. The development of newcomers' creative skills was enhanced and triggered by the “revelation” of a young public invited to the ateliers and produced collaborative works based on creativity, ingenuity and collective intelligence. The notoriety of the place allowed access to a wider audience.

A revealing skills workshop led with Emmaüs Les Résilientes at a Women's shelter in Paris, April 2019





A revealing skills workshop,
called « **Atelier good vibrations** », led with Emmaüs
Les Résilientes, at Museum
Centre Pompidou-Beaubourg,
June 2019



VALUING SKILLS

Karim Ruhullah, upholsterer,
presenting the carpets he crafted,
 Villette Makerz, May 2019

The aim of the Valuing skills third and last phase of the Mediation Lab at EnsAD, from May to June 2019, was to share the year's experience and celebrate the enhanced value of the know-how of the craftsmen-newcomers. Students assisted the migrant-experts in the mediation of their know-hows at two events, one at la Villette Makerz and one at « La rue aux Enfants ».

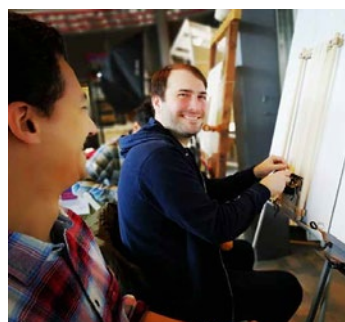


Three Valuing skills workshops happened at Villette Makerz, on the 11th and 12th of May 2019, with the group « Château de plâtre » led by artist Bassam Salwkha, the group « Karim Ruhullah » led by upholsterer Karim Ruhullah and the group « Something new » led by model architect Ibrahim Adam. Villette Makerz is a third place connecting people and ideas, driven by WoMa, a neighbourhood factory, and supported by the City of Paris and the Etablissement Public du Parc et de la Grande

Halle de la Villette (EPPGHV). The three expert newcomers, students and designers shared with the public different pedagogical models developed during the year. The goal was to enable the public to create objects, while highlighting the exceptional knowhow of each expert and developing new approaches to each craftsmanship. The context was perfect as la Villette Makerz is situated in a public parc welcoming very different publics because of the different institutions present in the parc (Cité de la Musique, Cité des Sciences, National Music and Dance Conservatory, the Philharmonic, several theaters, hippodrome, etc.). The participation was continual and particularly active.



Model architect Ibrahim Adam preparing the material needed to run his workshop, at Villette Makerz in Paris, May 2019



Valuing workshop at Villette Makerz, led by Bassam Salwkha, Karim Ruhullah and Ibrahim Adam with EnsAD students, May 2019



The fourth Valuing skills workshop happened at «La Rue aux Enfants», on May 19th 2019, with the group « Alara » led by potter Yasir Mohamed Elamine with EnsAD students. « La Rue aux Enfants » is an event voted during the Paris 2014 participatory budget and proposed by the association Cafézoïde. It is the first children's café in France, created in 2002 as a place of life where caring adults welcome children and allow them to participate fully in cultural and artistic life, encourage appropriate means of leisure, recreation, artistic and cultural activities for the benefit of the child on equal terms. « La rue aux Enfants » is an event that takes place during the national game day with the objective of recognizing the game as an essential activity for the child's development, a tool for learning, knowledge transmission and education for all.

On the 29th of May 2019 during the event we proposed a Mediation Lab by the expert newcomer potterer Yasir in the form of an experience for children as a mean of cultural expression promoting intercultural and intergenerational encounters, creation of social and communication links and thus source of pleasure. This open-air event was perfect for the Mediation lab and the young public could enjoy it during the whole day. It was also a great context to introduce the 4Cs project to parents during their kid's activity. All the pieces made by the children during the workshop were fired at EnsAD ceramics studio, where they could be picked up later on.

Potter Yasir Mohamed Elamine welcoming many children to his workshop,
at « La Rue aux Enfants » event in Paris, May 2019





Potter Yasir Mohamed Elamine welcoming many children to his workshop, at « La Rue aux Enfants » event in Paris, May 2019



Lessons learned from the Mediation Lab

In conclusion, we can affirm that the Mediation Lab was a highly successful activity for all actors: EnsAD students/researchers, newcomers, partner institutions, local communities and through and with them the society as a whole.

Students, migrants and local community members that have participated to the Mediation Labs have acquired the following design skills that can be briefly outlined as follows:

- co-identification of research contexts proper to each craftsman skill
- co-identification of specific migrant contexts and develop exchanges aimed at getting life stories and detecting issues related to the possibility of enhancing the transmission of migrants' knowhow
- co-identification of the role of migrant craftsmen in the Parisian context and but also on a more international level
- research, with specific "experts", of adequate solutions to the issues or problems that were detected
- application of a design methodology to further develop the ideas that emerged from the exploratory phase and the more in-depth exchanges with expert newcomers developement of a detailed brief describing each project, the issues and needs it addresses, who they would work with and to which end
- co-creation of transmission tools with expert newcomers capable of highlighting their knowhow and self-esteem

We are thankful to everyone who participated in this collective exploration of convivial living and conflict resolution through the sharing of knowledge and cultures.

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2.2.4

Portions of Share

Universidade Católica
Portuguesa, FOCO,
Galeria Balcony,
Galeria Belo-Galsterer
March 2019

Portions of Share

Luísa Santos

Portions of Share

**WHEN SHARING IS A COLLECTIVE
ENDEAVOUR**

Dzifa Peters, Linda Koncz

Nuno Nunes-Ferreira

REACH ONE-HUNDRED

José Maria Cortez, Marta Saccani

Rita GT

THE BODY THAT FORGETS ITSELF

Aude Vignac, Federico Rudari, Jule

Kurbjeweit, Juliana Orrego Trujillo

Kalle Brolin & Kristina Muntzing

**SUNSHINE SOCIALIST CINEMA:
A CINEMA MANUAL - LISBON SESSION**

Matthew Mason

On Socialism

PORTIONS OF SHARE

When Sharing Is A Collective Endeavour

Luísa Santos

Independent curator Professor and researcher
(CECC, Faculdade de Ciências Humanas
da Universidade Católica Portuguesa)

Portions of Share is the final project developed by the students of the Curatorship seminar, which is part of the International MA and PhD program in Cultural Studies, coordinated by the Lisbon Consortium and the Universidade Católica Portuguesa's Faculty of Human Sciences. Designed within the context of the *4Cs: from Conflict to Conviviality through Creativity and Culture* - a European cooperation project, co-funded by Creative Europe, Culture program of the European Union, *Portions of Share* is outlined by three artists' books in order to reflect on notions of power, the construction of collective memory, hospitality and democratic participation.

In *Chegar aos cem - Reach One Hundred* (2016-2019), Nuno Nunes-Ferreira's book (1976, Lisbon), which is actually an archive folder with one hundred transparent plastic sheets, where each sheet contains a newspaper clip with an anniversary from the first to the hundredth, the immediacy associated between the newspaper titles and the news is stretched along the years, in an exercise of changing the durability of the impact of these words, with implications that these differences can have on the construction of collective memory which determines what we understand and accept as History.

The processes of construction of History are also questioned in the book-performance *The Body That Forgets Itself* (2019), by Rita GT (1980, Lisbon).

A book that assumes itself as a body with an animal skin cover and is eaten by the artist, page by page, word by word. With the act of eating the book, the artist incorporates and erases - deliberately and in an act reminiscent of an anthropophagic movement - the knowledge and the narratives integrated into that object. In the end, only the spine of the book, like the bone of that body, remains. In this individual and simultaneously collective process - we are in that room, and we can intervene and participate if we wish so - Rita GT questions the power of each of us in the colonizing processes of silencing embedded in the construction of collective memories.

The book-installation of Kristina Muntzing (1973, Malmö) and Kalle Brolin (1968, Malmö), co-founders of *Sunshine Socialist Cinema*, calls for our active participation in the democratic construction of an ideal place. *Sunshine Socialist Cinema* is a solar-powered outdoor cinema projection structure, situated in a garden in Höja, southern Sweden, which shows films to generate discussions around liberal left-wing themes. In its book-installation version, *Sunshine Socialist Cinema* has developed, through a series of collective and participatory discussions, precisely the role of this type of activity in the construction and transformation of society.

What these three book-object-actions have in common is the shared and collective responsibility that they ask from us in the design of the world we live in, with the power implied in such an endeavour. What we will do with this call will be a choice that each of us has to make.

REACH ONE HUNDRED

Nuno Nunes Ferreira

Dzifa Peters and Linda Konož

How do we experience time? Our ways of capturing time rely, for the most part, on certain devices. Clocks and watches, ink and paper and keyboards are the metric tools that measure, manifest and constitute the realm of those moments, time periods, intervals and time lines. It is by means of materializing these abstract concepts that we help ourselves acquire a sense of time, grasp its processes and memorize the ephemeral.

Time and memory take shape within the particular time-consuming notion of Nuno Nunes-Ferreira's artistic practice. His investment in time is clearly present in his work: for example, he collects newspapers every day from the day before from a nearby café. They are physical markers in time and space, such as the artist's book *'chegar aos cem'* (2016-2019) - *'reach one hundred'* - a dossier file which consists of 100 pages with birthday article cutouts from newspapers, archived in plastic sheets, each page with a clipping announcing the news of a birthday: a new born baby, the anniversary of a big band or a political union. Celebrations of time. On page nº1 we find the news of the 1st anniversary; on page nº100 we have the news of the 100th anniversary. Here, the event is followed by the absence of time - the time we lose - and dissolves into memory.



Nuno Nunes-Ferreira

Reach One Hundred

One file folder, one hundred sheets of paper, one hundred punched pockets, newspaper clippings, structure in iron and MDF lacquered in black. variable dimensions. 2016-2019. Photo by João Biscainho and Linda Koncz.

Nuno Nunes-Ferreira

Reach One Hundred

2018-2019. (detail). Photo by João Biscainho and Linda Koncz.





Nuno Nunes-Ferreira

Reach One Hundred

2016-2019. (detail).

Photo by João Biscainho and Linda Koncz.

Nuno Nunes-Ferreira

Reach One Hundred

2016-2019. (detail).

Photo by João Biscainho
and Linda Koncz.

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O vespertino «República» completou 62 anos de existência. Na pessoa do seu director, Raul Rego, saudamos todos os que

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Nuno himself does not celebrate his birthday, because his friends would be away celebrating St. Antonio. This awakened his son's curiosity, so Nuno had to give him a vague idea about when he was born. They own a flower at home that only blossoms in the month Nuno was born. That is the closest explanation he gave to his son.

Procedures of time observation take place according to the consensus of the devices we use daily: "Time should be so defined that the equations of mechanics may be as simple as possible. In other words, there is not one way of measuring time more true than another; that which is generally adopted is only more convenient." (Henri Poincaré, *The Value of Science*, 1913, pp. 201- 358).

Nuno's large scale newspaper works exhibited in the same show of the artist's book which was produced within *Portions of Share*: 'Primavera'; 'Verão'; 'Outono' and 'Inverno' (2016-2018) are, each, a huge canvas covered with tabloids of newspaper cutouts ending with the name of the seasons. Nuno takes one step back to observe time from a further perspective: to observe the blocks of time, and the physical and metaphysical structures it creates.

Nuno Nunes-Ferreira's studio view. Santarém, 2018. Photo by João Biscainho.



Another time-based piece, the *'Tennis-match'*, is a collection of 365 home videos from YouTube depicting celebrations. Sound moments of bottles popping open. Nuno collected these videos of various people opening a bottle of Champagne with a saber. This technique is called *sabrage* and originated from Napoleon. Here, the artist examines time in action closely, capturing the very (in)significant moments.

Nuno maintains a huge archive with collections of albums, magazines, newspapers, and clocks. He prefers to add to his collection at flea markets – the last source when someone passed away – but he also buys material online. Taking the clock backward in time: Nuno's parents worked in medicine and collected numerous journals and magazines. The fast scientific development made them separate out piles of material, which young Nuno then investigated and worked on. "I guess you never threw anything out?" - "No, never", he notes.



Nuno Nunes-Ferreira's studio view. Santarém, 2018. Photo by João Biscainho.



Nuno Nunes-Ferreira. *Reach One Hundred*, 2016-2019. (studio view).
Santarém, 2018. Photo by João Biscainho.

His large scale investigation work on a Spanish case of missing children was a turning point in his use of material. A huge canvas is filled with leads to a possible source of organized crime. Archival photocopies and article copies of parents, doctors and nurses are arranged in a visual logic to reveal the criminal case. Here, the originals could have served the purpose of evidence just as in a real criminal case. From this moment on, Nuno used original materials, without making copies. The appropriation of the original material embodies the value of the old, and reveals the magic of time.

Among his early influences were Jean-Michel Basquiat and Anselm Kiefer. Today he appreciates the work of artists such as On Kawara and Christian Marclay. However, he likes to think with the flow, as one artwork informs the other, without singularizing specific artists or positions.

In his home and studio near the quiet town of Santarém, the clock seems to tick differently, taking us to the feeling that “the void which can be conceived in time indicates, like that in space, that time and space apply as well to possible as to existing things.” (Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *New Essays*, 1704, II, XIV, secs. 24, 26). Is time absent or present, then? The answer lies in Nuno Nunes-Ferreira’s striking awareness: “I have time, but I don’t have time.”

THE BODY THAT FORGETS ITSELF

Rita GT

José Maria Cortez and Marta Saccani

Rita GT's performance – and the accompanying artist's book – entitled *The Body that Forgets Itself* (2019), commissioned and produced in the frame of *Portions of Share*, reflects upon the notions of conviviality, power and hospitality.

Rita GT explores the concept of knowledge by analysing the sense of privilege inherent within it. Throughout history, knowledge has been associated with freedom, and access to it was a major tool for control and domination. Literacy, with the book as its signifier, has been regarded as a token of power; it guaranteed recognition and social privilege. The perpetuation of certain political and social power apparatuses has relied heavily on the exclusion of certain populations or regions from gaining literacy, from acquiring knowledge and thus, from enabling the “melting of the solids” (Bauman 2000, 3). It is through the power of language, and therefore through the ability to deconstruct historical narratives, that con(solid)ated political structures are challenged by those who have

been left out of the normalized and hegemonized political discourse, which in its perpetuity reinforces exclusion and pre-conceived prejudice. Colonialism's imposition of new beliefs, languages and rituals contributed to the construction of an oppressive and unequal reality and resulted in the dissolution of the colonized populations' history and culture.



Rita GT

The Body That Forgets Itself

leather, rice paper, edible ink print, cotton rope 10,5 x 14,8 cm
2019. Photo by Linda Koncz

Rita GT

The Body That Forgets Itself

2019. (detail). Photo by Linda Koncz.



Rita's powerful act of eating the book which she has created challenges the traditional conception of history. Knowledge concealed in the book loses its impregnability, no longer a privilege hailed by a few, rupturing the preconceived ideas of encounters and conviviality. A history marked by the exclusion of women, minorities, and disadvantaged social groups precluded by proper education, becomes, through the artist's act, able to be rewritten and retold.

The stand taken by the artist in her white virginal gown is a provocative pose for a white woman to strike. Eating the object that primarily represents knowledge makes the performance a statement of redemption. Furthermore, the feminine presence uncovers another layer of the untold – female histories and their absence in the “book of history”, written, mostly, by men. Women were, and often still are, regarded as secondary to men, and have historically been consistently and systematically erased, their stories hidden, their opinions despised, their wishes and wills belittled and their contributions undervalued. Knowledge itself, historically distributed and shaped in the majority by men, is here physically embodied by the artist in an act of domination and empowerment of women. As she reads the book out loud the poem becomes her own, defying preconceived power structures, through the appropriation of what those words signify. There is no one to grant her the right to this power: she takes it herself, devours it, page by page, and *o corpo responde*.



RITA GT Performing 'The Body that Forgets Itself'.
Belo-Galsterer Gallery, Lisbon, 2019.
Photos by Linda Koncz.



Rita GT and Keziah Jones.
Belo-Galsterer Gallery, Lisbon 2019. Photo by Linda Koncz.

We witness a substantial act of rupture with history and traditional positions of power. The act of the embodiment of knowledge through a woman- performance is subversive and breaks ancient – and yet contemporary – norms. In this way, the action of embodiment itself becomes the symbol of survival of culture. It is the artist who transforms herself into the physical proof of its continuity and existence. At the same time, a strong ambivalence is evident when the pages disappear. Along with the visual act of the book and the body becoming one entity, it is possible to perceive the strong presence of the absent or the silenced. The pages are gone and – this action seems to imply - so are the erased voices of so many populations. Nonetheless, just as centuries of oppression and cultural violence, the artist's act renders it impossible to obliterate the traces of the silenced and forgotten, and we are faced with what's left: the scenario, the table where the book lays, the chair where she sits – which are left empty, void of body and purpose. On top of the table, we see the remains of the book, the light-brown leather cover – almost a continuation of the artist's skin, demonstrating nature's endurance in the face of humanity's struggles, and the ripped pages, which cannot be replaced and must exist as a memoir of what was.

**Rita GT***The Body That Forgets Itself*

2019. (detail). Photo by Linda Koncz.

The role that the artist gives to the visual takes shape in her performance and reaffirms the power in the transmission of the previously hidden content. The vehicle of communication put in place by the artist is, in this sense, a way to give voice rather than of swallowing or silencing voices. It conceives art as a learning process that produces reflections on ambivalent aspects of the production and distribution of knowledge, its survival and its censorship. Here, the artist sees her mission in the exploration of the dichotomy of the privileged vs. non-privileged condition. She re-plays the encounter of the coloniser and the colonised and precludes it to unfold in a way exercised by (man)kind for centuries. Re-created silence and crumbs of the vanished pages give room for the voices of the past. Will we be able to decode them and make a new history?

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SUNSHINE SOCIALIST CINEMA

A CINEMA MANUAL - LISBON SESSION
Kalle Brolin and Kristina Müntzing

Aude Vignac, Federico Rudari,
Jule Kurbjeweit and Juliana Orrego Trujillo

The *Sunshine Socialist Cinema* is an outdoor, solar powered cinema created by the artist duo Kristina Müntzing and Kalle Brolin, who started to work on their project in 2011. Their first solar powered screening took place in 2012 and the cinema has since been installed in a garden in the southern Swedish countryside town of Höja. A mobile version of the project was also created, and is currently traveling throughout Sweden in a van. The themes of the films include post-industrial survival, political filmmaking, artists joining political collectives, and more. The cinema's activities include public screenings, study group discussions, field trips, and presentations hosted by other institutions.

Programming is discussed, and technical issues are worked out, in a study group run within the local workers' educational association ABF (ABF, Arbetarnas Bildningsförbund / Workers' Educational Association of Sweden), where the artists are also developing a typology of political film and filmmaking. The present edition is part of the Lisbon Consortium curatorship class project Portions of Share, and it is framed within the broader context of 4Cs - *From Conflict to Conviviality through Creativity and Culture*, co-founded by Luísa Santos. The curatorial challenge was to present the work of the artists in the form of an artistic book.

Sunshine Socialist Cinema' screening at Signal Gallery, Sweden, 2015.





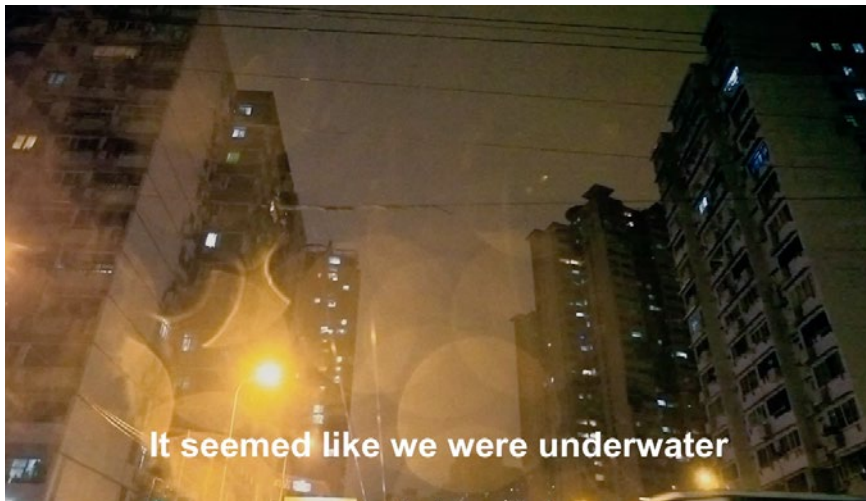
Lasse Lau, *Sound from the hallways*, 2012, Denmark. Courtesy of the artist.

The *Sunshine Socialist Cinema* is a utopian, sustainable, and politically engaged discussion platform. The notions of utopia, engagement, and discussion were the starting point for developing an artist's book showcasing the *Sunshine Socialist Cinema* that would open new perspectives and ways of sharing.

Following the idea of the project, which generates discussion and allows for interactions between diverse perspectives framed within a left-wing political viewpoint, rather than producing a book as we know it, we have chosen to make the space of FOCO Gallery a place for the expression and dialogue of multiple voices. Such a space is understood here as a place of exchange of ideas and a platform for discussion. Within this intention, dissent is welcomed and finds its place within a conversation among other people. By walking into the space the spectator is invited to traverse the different layers of this cinema. As a book, it must be visited, explored in depth. This space was created, in order for the audience, to reflect, question, recognize or simply observe the audiovisual input as well as the sociocultural configurations expressed through the films projected.

Thus, working as chapters, the different spaces of the gallery present the diverse aspects of the project.

While developing the curatorial practices to realize this project, two main perspectives were followed. First, it was fundamental to be coherent to the messages this platform aims to convey: an alternative perspective to the present; utopian possibilities of sharing; a plurality of voices and points of view. Second, it was important to create a space where the screening can be experienced freely in the context of a strongly interactive environment accessible to everybody. From the reading part to the projection, passing by a room for free expression and inspiration, the visitor is immersed in the universe created by Müntzing and Brolin.



Marta Alvim, *No Green No Blue*, 2010, Portugal. Courtesy of the artist.



Marta Alvim, *Instinctive Behavior*, 2017. Courtesy of the artist.



Lola Gonzalez, *Veridis Quo*, 2016, France, Production Centre d'Art Passerelle (Brest) and Ars Futura. With the support of CNAP-Centre National des Arts Plastiques. Courtesy of the artist and Marcelle Alix, Paris.

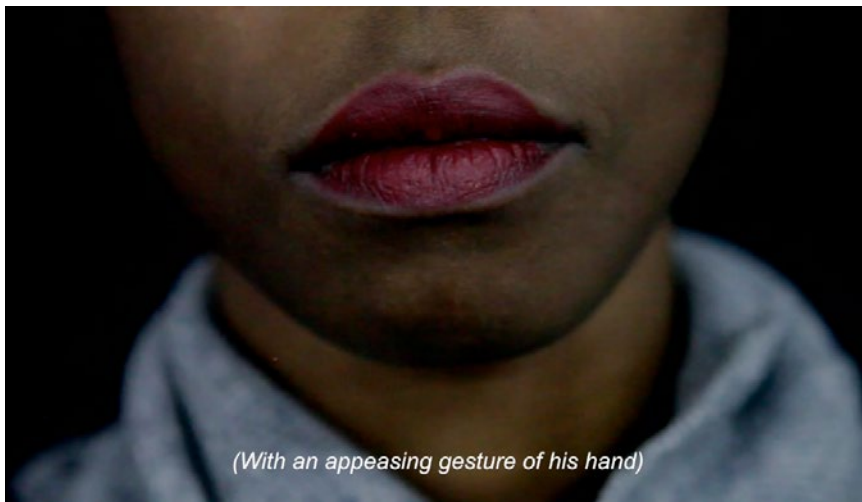
For the artists, learning from the audience was central to the development of the edition of the *Sunshine Socialist Cinema* in Lisbon. For that purpose, a list of questions on what an idealistic, utopian socialist cinema could be has been shared in order to gather ideas. We ask what people envision when they dream of a utopian cinema, how it would be organized and financed, who the audiences would be and how they would experience such a cinema, what films would be shown, and what such a cinema could do with audiences - with us. The artists themselves have also answered these questions, and with the input of people from diverse backgrounds, the frame of the *Sunshine Socialist Cinema* transforms, expands, and invites others to share their different perspectives.

Paulo Mendes, *How Green Was My Valley - EUROPA*, 2005, Portugal. Courtesy of the artist.





María Molina, *Digital Trauma (And the Crystal Image)*, 2017, Spain.
Courtesy of the artist.



Divine Southgate Smith, *(Putting words) in my mouth*, 2018, England.
Courtesy of the artist.



Christophe dos Santos and Alice Bachmann, *Athènes plage*, 2019,
Portugal / France, Courtesy of the artists.

The exhibition-artist's book consists of a programme involving the screening of feature length and short films by nine artists of diverse nationalities and from different backgrounds. The films are related to topics such as sustainability, conviviality, conflict resolution, and various left-wing political views. The selected films include ***Casus Belli* (2010)** by Yorgos Zois from Greece; ***No Green No Blue* (2010)** and ***Instinctive Behavior* (2017)** by Marta Alvim from Portugal; ***Digital Trauma* (2017)** by Maria Molina from Spain; ***Sound from the Hallways* (2012)** by Lasse Lau from Denmark; ***Veridis Quo* (2016)** by Lola González from France; ***Athènes plages* (2019)** by Christophe dos Santos from Portugal and France; ***(Putting words) in my mouth* (2018)** by Divine Southgate Smith from England; ***Dandakaranya - The Jungle of Punishment* (2012)** and ***The Ghost Taxonomy* (2012)** by Tushar Waghela from India; ***How green was my valley - EUROPA* (2005)** by Paulo Mendes from Portugal. Multiple voices (audience, artists, and directors) allow anyone to make his or her own interpretation of the different subjects highlighted throughout the screenings. This dialogue is what shapes the structure of the *Sunshine Socialist Cinema*.



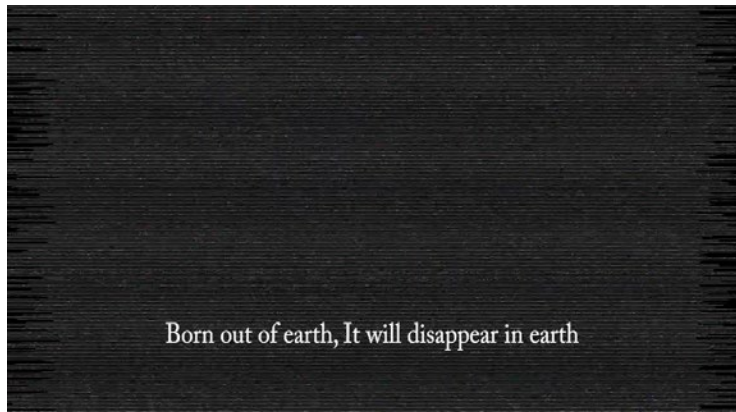
Yorgos Zois, *Casus Belli*, 2010, Greece. Courtesy of the artist.

This selection presents and further inspires an engagement not only with the ideas of a *Sunshine Socialist Cinema* but also the practices that inspired concepts and ideas at the heart of the 4Cs project, which more broadly frames the exhibition-artist book.



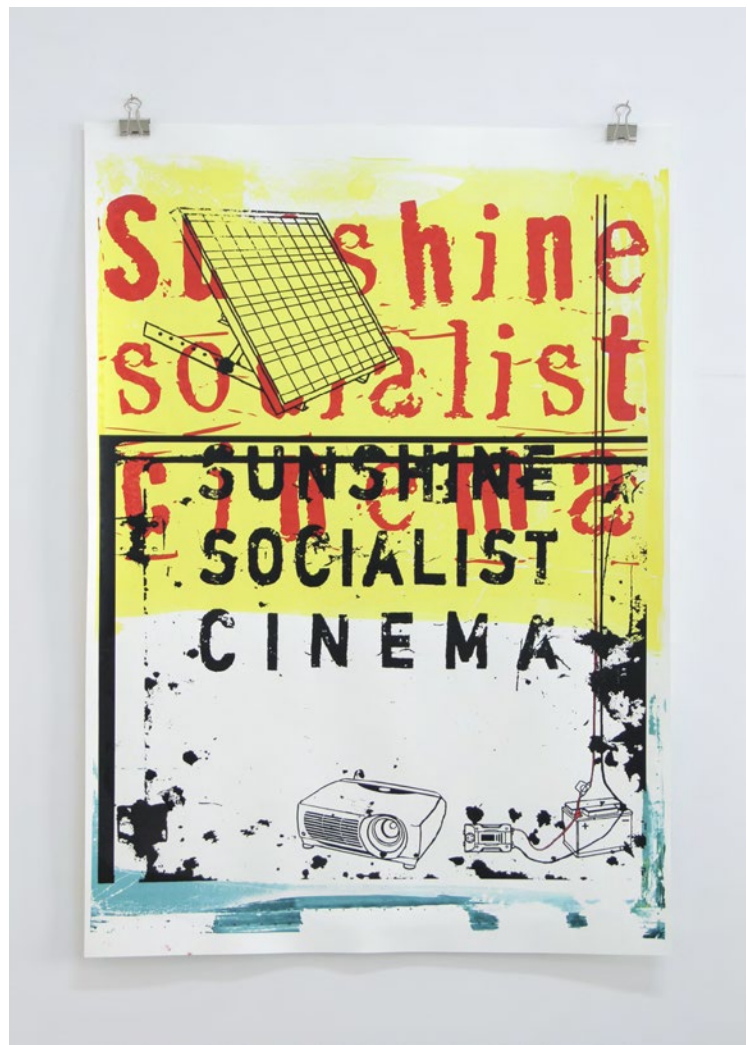
Tushar Waghela, *The Ghost Taxonomy*, 2012, India, Courtesy of the artist and ethiCollective.

As noted in the context of the 4Cs project, the idea of going from conflict to conviviality must be seen as a circular rather than a linear movement. Instead of reaching a final, ideal destination, we will always encounter a new disturbance, a new conflict with the productive potential of inspiring us to yet again seek conviviality. The projection of the diverse films in our *Sunshine Socialist Cinema*, each with its own notions of calm and disturbance, of conflict and conviviality, presents such a cycle from conflict to conviviality - and back to conflict. To that end the *Sunshine Socialist Cinema* is an experimental playground, a space for us to meet, think, and discuss what kind of society we want to live in.



Tushar Waghela, Dandakaranya - *The Jungle of Punishment*, 2012, India. Courtesy of the artist and ethiCollective.

Kalle Brolin and Kristina Müntzing,
Sunshine Socialist Cinema, Sweden, 2012.



ON SOCIALISM

Matthew Mason

Born out of a concern for equality and emancipation, the word ‘socialism’ inevitably (and, perhaps, understandably?) picked up some troublesome ideological baggage during the Cold War in which the term became associated with, at best, bloated bureaucracies and ration queues and, at worst, mass genocide and the Gulag. Yet, perhaps things are changing at the turn of the 21st century as ‘socialism’ seems to be experiencing some form of a resurgence in the Western world. The British Labour Party’s swing to the left, the first accepted use (ever?) of the term ‘democratic socialism’ in the US in the wake of the election of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez in New York City and the popularity of Bernie Sanders as well as the increasing global talk of the necessity for a universal basic income are just some of the many signs of socialism’s re-turn centre stage.

Indeed, can this really come as a surprise in a world as unequal as ever in which the richest 1% own almost half of the entire planet's wealth? Do we really expect the term to have been banished from a world in which the talk of the triumph of digital technologies and the 'post-human' conveniently obscure the fact that half of the world's population have no internet access whatsoever and are much more concerned with access to clean water and food than crafting an online 'identity'? Across many of the planet's most densely populated urban areas, shanty towns, favelas, and poor-quality housing sit alongside opulent steel and glass high-rise towers which glisten in the sunlight and cast shadows on those below. And what of the rise of property speculation leading, in turn, to the process of gentrification and the epidemic of homelessness which currently blights Europe's major cities, and which seems only to increase as time goes on? Such a scenario serves to highlight the appeal of a set of ideas characterised by the drive to see a fairer and more equal society worldwide in which all citizens are entitled to the same rights and freedoms, regardless of nationality, race or gender.

Despite the wide spectrum of ideas and opinions which the term may encompass, there is a fundamental element in socialist thought which opposes forms of 'individualism', stressing instead the importance of both 'collective' interest and 'collective' action. Although there can be little doubt that the politics of individualism continue to reign supreme in the world's richest nations, surely the contemporary era, increasingly characterised by global – dare we say 'universal'? - issues such as climate change and the systematic plundering and depletion of the planet's natural resources, demands a collective response?

After the short-lived triumphalism of Fukuyama's 'End of History' amid the collapse of the Soviet Union and the global spread of neoliberal economics, socialism returns to raise legitimate questions about the continuing catastrophes of global poverty, inequality and the uneven distribution of wealth. Despite the deep sense of cynicism which pervades the (post) modern era – in which an endless flow of commodities occupies our vision - the underlying belief in societal progress, human agency and the laudable desire for social change which characterise socialist thinking remain a vital politics of hope which spreads its wings in the face of a selfish and superficial individualism. The belief in a better world did not die alongside the debased authoritarian regimes of the 20th century but remains remarkably intact.

Nuno Nunes Ferreira

Born in Lisbon, 1976. Lives and works in Santarém. His artistic practice is focused on time, memory, and absence. Nuno maintains a huge archive with collections of albums, magazines, newspapers, and clocks. He builds tabloids from newspaper cutouts, while using the original material, and takes fragments of found footage videos to observe time, and the physical and metaphysical structures it creates. He materializes the abstract concept of time by means of capturing moments, intervals, and periods in his large scale pieces. His work is represented in numerous collections such as: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian; Fundação EDP; IVAM; Fundació Sorigué; Fundación Focus Abengoa; Fundación Hortensia Herrero; Colección Norte de Arte Contemporáneo; Colección DKV; Museo de Arte Moderno y Contemporaneo de Santander.

Kalle Brolin and Kristina Müntzing

Kristina Müntzing and Kalle Brolin are two Swedish artists. In the last few years they have both shifted base between Gothenburg, Scania, Stockholm, Buenos Aires, London, Berlin, Istanbul, Copenhagen, Tallinn, and Gdansk. They are now based in Malmö. Together, Kristina Müntzing and Kalle Brolin run the Sunshine Socialist Cinema, an outdoor solar-powered cinema. Kristina Müntzing's work has often dealt with issues of belonging. Recently she has created pieces in the series Mapping Panther Politics that, in themselves, draw a line across time and geographies and thus refutes any simple notions of us and them, local or global or then and now. Kalle Brolin is an artist working with video installations and performance, and a writer mainly for the culture pages in the alternative newspaper Fria Tidningen, while contributing to several art magazines as well. His works have been shown in a number of international biennales and art exhibitions. His latest series of works, on the culture of the coal mines and sugar factories in southern Sweden, has been exhibited at Malmö Art Museum.

Rita GT

Born in Oporto, 1980. Lives and works between Viana do Castelo and Angola. Graduated with a Degree in Design and Communication from Faculdade de Belas Artes da Universidade do Porto (2003) and post-graduated from Escola Maumaus in Lisbon (2004/2005). Read a Master's Degree - MFA at Malmö Art Academy - Lund University in Sweden. Rita GT is a socially-conscious political artist, approaching themes such as memory, identity and the importance of human rights. Having lived in many different countries enables her to have a broader vision, valuing the historical points of view of many cultures. The colonial symbolism that is recurrent in her work defines her own identity and artistic language. She uses imagery, words and performance revealing a constant interrogation and experimentalism in both material and conceptual aspects.

Program of Events

The Body That Forgets Itself by Rita GT at Galeria Belo-Galsterer, Lisboa, 7 p.m. 7-3-2019 • Reach One Hundred by Nuno Nunes Ferreira at Balcony Gallery, Lisboa, 6 p.m. 15-3-2019 • Sunshine Socialist Cinema: a Cinema Manual – Lisbon Session by Kristina Müntzing & Kalle Brolin at FOCO Gallery, Lisboa 3 p.m. 10-3-2019 • Round Table and Portions of Share publication launch with Ana Margarida Abrantes at FOCO Gallery, Lisboa, 7 p.m. 1-4-2019.

Artists

Kalle Brolin & Kristina Müntzing
Nuno Nunes-Ferreira
Rita GT

Curators / MA and PhD Students in Culture Studies

Ana Rita Coelho; Aude Vignac; Dzifa Peters; Federico Rudari; Francisca Rosa; João Biscainho; José Maria Cortez; Jule Kurbjewit; Juliana Orrego Trujillo; Linda Koncz; Marta Sacconi; Nina Danilova; Pasha Georgieva

Curatorship Lab Professor

Luísa Santos (Gulbenkian Professor, FCH-UCP, CECC)

Communication

Ana Rita Coelho; José Maria Cortez; Marta Sacconi; Pasha Georgieva

Publication

Dzifa Peters; Francisca Rosa; João Biscainho; Linda Koncz; Nina Danilova

Spaces Coordination

Aude Vignac; Federico Rudari; Jule Kurbjewit; Juliana Orrego Trujillo

Texts

Aude Vignac; Dzifa Peters; Federico Rudari; José Maria Cortez; Jule Kurbjewit; Juliana Orrego Trujillo; Linda Koncz; Luísa Santos; Marta Sacconi; Matthew Mason

Portuguese Translation and Revision

Ana Rita Coelho; Francisca Rosa; João Biscainho; José Maria Cortez

English Revision

Ailsa McDougall; Guy Howie; Matthew Mason; Samuel Miller

Design

João Biscainho (visual Identity, publication and posters); Juliana Orrego Trujillo (invitations)

Photography and Video

João Biscainho and Linda Koncz (as mentioned)

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Isabel Capelo Gil

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Executive Coordinator

Rita Bacelar

Media and Communications Officer

Clara Caldeira

Executive Secretary

Elisabete Carvalho

Academic Secretary

Cristiana Almeida Robalo

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PORTIONS OF SHARE

4 Artists 3 Artist's Books

Portions of Share is a curatorial project by the students of the international MA and PhD programme in Cultural Studies, The Lisbon Consortium, Faculty of Human Sciences, Universidade Católica Portuguesa. This project, developed during the seminar on Curatorship led by Luísa Santos is conceived within the conceptual framework of *4Cs: from Conflict to Conviviality through Creativity and Culture*, a European Cooperation Project co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union. The curatorial project consists of three artists' books reflecting on notions of conviviality, power and hospitality. Besides the three artists' books, *Portions of Share* presents a publication with essays on these notions through the lenses of the artistic proposals of invited participating artists. The invited participating artists of *Portions of Share* are Rita GT, Nuno Nunes-Ferreira, Kristina Müntzing and Kalle Brolin (*Sunshine Socialist Cinema*).

ISBN: 978-989-54428-0-5

Universidade Católica Portuguesa
CECC – Research Centre for Communication and Culture

Published online on March 2019, Lisboa.

All images were provided by their authors for this publication (as mentioned)

The project is part of the Curatorship Lab, of the MA and PhD international programme in Culture Studies, The Lisbon Consortium, Faculdade de Ciências Humanas and Universidade Católica Portuguesa. *Portions of Share* was conceived under *4Cs: from Conflict to Conviviality through Creativity and Culture*, a European cooperation project co-funded by the Culture Program of the European Commission coordinated by Universidade Católica Portuguesa.

2.2.5

Libertas

Da condição de
pessoa livre -
Vasco Araújo

Universidade Católica
Portuguesa, MAAT
Jun. - Jul. 2019

“Libertas - Da condição de pessoa livre” seeks to question the idea of freedom of the human being, who has the freedom to speak, and the boundaries that constantly exist between societies, classes, groups and individuals. These clashes almost always result in oppressive spaces and oppressive actions by a dominant group over another, where a chain of actions/reactions unfolds that reminds us of the old relations between men and women, conservatives and liberals, colonizers and colonizers, masters and slaves.



Photos by Alípio Padilha.





There was an open call for this performance, and it was intended for all interested persons to participate, whether or not they reside in Lisbon and surroundings.

The artist Vasco Araújo invited everyone to join a choir to sing the “Choir of the slaves” from the opera “Nabucco” by G. Verdi, on the day of the inauguration of his exhibition “Vasco Araújo. A Moment Apart” at MAAT. This musical passage is still one of the hymns against oppression, since Lombardy (the Italian province of the Austro-Hungarian Empire) aspired to freedom in 1842, recalls a text about the exhibition/performance.

Photos by Alípio Padilha.





The performance was like a march/protest where the participants took a boat trip and walk. This boat route crossed the Tagus River and the participants arrived in Belém and walked to the museum in a peaceful way, singing. It was also recommended that each individual would dressed totally in white with their own clothes.



Photos by Alípio Padilha.

O trabalho da ficção (não) é um momento à parte

ANA CRISTINA CACHOLA

Páginas disponíveis na versão impressa

Pages available in the printed version

Dossier de obras

Textos de Alexandre Melo, André Tecedreiro, André e. Teodósio, Chantal Pontbriand, Colin Perry, Joacine Katar Moreira, João Pinharanda, Josué Mattos, Luisa Duarte, Rafael Esteves Martins e Rosa Lleó

Pages available in the printed catalogue produced by MAAT

Vasco Araújo: memórias (pós-)coloniais **IVO MESQUITA**

Libertas – Da condição de pessoa livre

**«Ninguém liberta ninguém,
ninguém se liberta sozinho:
Os homens se libertam em comunhão.»**

INÊS GROSSO

Lista de obras / List of works

Biografia / Biography

Pages available in the printed catalogue produced by MAAT

VASCO ARAÚJO: (POST-) COLONIAL MEMORIES

Ivo Mesquita

History is the dead person that Vasco Araújo saves. He recognises him alive and calls him outside. It is there that he finds whom the artwork must render justice to, for art is also a work of mourning, a funeral ritual that affords “the resurrection of life in us.”

— Paulo Pires do Vale, *Breve Sumário da História do Futuro*, 2010

When I was nine, I had my first Portuguese friend – Joanico. His father worked with mine, we lived nearby and he was a little older than me. But what I admired about him was not his age, but the fact that he belonged to a family that had come from Europe, like others who had arrived from that continent at the end of the Second World War and ended up in that remote hinterland of São Paulo state where they had been offered skilled jobs since the 1950s. At school, we were in different classes, but we used to play together, with my little brother, next to the river and in the quarries and remaining woodlands. But the most striking memory from that year of my pre-adolescence was a book on my friend’s desk: *Mundo Português – Imagens de uma Exposição Histórica – 1940* [The Portuguese World – Images from a Historic Exhibition – 1940]. It was a kind of large almanac, organised thematically, on the

history of Portugal, economic and scientific sectors, social organisation, culture, overseas regions and territories, and the major material and intellectual accomplishments. It was only many years later that I understood the meaning of this publication and its ideological and mystifying character: it was the catalogue of The Portuguese World Exhibition of 1940, organised to present and celebrate Salazar's New State (1933) to the world (at war!) and to inscribe it into the narrative of the history of Portugal. Although not excluded from the great historical heritage of the Portuguese empire and Lusophone culture, Brazil was treated as the "only foreign country in the exhibition". This was somewhat ironic given that Brazil was also trying to consolidate a dictatorship of its own under Getúlio Vargas (1937) at that time, showing that it still held close to the model of the metropole.

In any case, it was in this book of Joanico's that with fascination I discovered Portugal whenever I visited his home. During this period, I realised that I belonged to something other than just the world of my family/city/country pandered by language – "My language is my homeland", as Pessoa would later teach me – that linked me to another part of my world too. Something else also reinforced this feeling. It was not something in those enclaves of the empire like Goa, Macau or East Timor, far to the East, on another axis of the imagination, the exotic as depicted in comic books and Hollywood films. It was something I had already seen but only realised for the first time in the real landscape and which strengthened the familiarity: there were whites and blacks everywhere in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau as well as in Brazil. Although "outsiders", we inhabited – we were – the Portuguese world.

This proud and youthful sentiment lost its innocence over time, turning critical without, however, discarding the emotional sense of belonging. At school (but no longer today), we learnt the history of Brazil through the history of Portugal, spanning the Condado Portucalense, King Afonso Henriques, the Knights Templars, the Pine Forest of Leiria, King Manuel

I (“the Fortunate”), Vasco da Gama, Pedro Álvares Cabral, King Sebastião, the Restoration, the Hereditary Captaincies and the Vice-Governors all the way to King João VI. Only with his death and the Bragança family’s arrangement with regard to Brazilian independence, financed by the Rothschilds in London, did actual Brazilian history begin. And the study of Portuguese literature was the same, ranging from Galician-Portuguese lyric poetry, Dom Dinis, Camões, Padre António Vieira, Bocage and Baroque poetry to the proto-Modernism of Eça de Queiroz and Machado de Assis. We separated at Modernism and the story moved on to Paris. Meanwhile, perversely, in these narratives we also shared the concealment of the negro, of slavery (“an economic contingency”, we learnt in school!), which continued in independent and already mixed-race Brazil – an approach so different from the former Spanish American colonies where the founding of independent and democratic republics naturally put an end to human servitude. Or at least it tried to. Brazil was a kingdom straying from the empire (as the Condado had done 800 years earlier, detaching from the kingdom of Leon and Castile with help from the Knights Templars), but it retained the same model and a colonial mindset. The latter continued for a long while yet, without the incurable wound of slavery ever being confronted.

At university, I was reading a disturbing book called *Bolor* by Augusto Abelaira – a host of voices and a broken narrative about an unbearable life – when the Revolution of the Carnations occurred. It reached Brazil as a breath of fresh and luminous air in the heavy and restrictive environment of the military governments. While Portugal was bringing a dictatorship of over 40 years to an end, we were experiencing the worst moments of our second dictatorship of the 20th century. Meanwhile, despite the democratic rejoicing, the closer and more shocking event was the sadness of friends who lost their father. A Portuguese political exile in Brazil, he was struck down by the emotion of learning that his homeland was free and that he could finally return.

With democracy and turmoil in Portugal, revelations, new reflections and perspectives arrived through voices and narratives ranging from that of Saramago and Lobo Antunes to the anti-hero in José Fonseca e Costa's film *Kilas, o Mau da Fita*. The traffic between the two countries deepened, with unrepentant supporters of Salazar arriving in Brazil and Brazilians, along with investing in Africa, moving to Portugal. But the major transformation – the profound change in the way we think about Lusophone history and identity – came with the social tragedy of decolonisation, keenly perceived in the writings of the uprooted returning settlers dwelling in a political and cultural in-between land where they joined the voices of a post-colonial Africa, plundered and left to its own devices in its rightful place. In an age of globalisation (the Portuguese mariners were its vanguard), where geographical borders are less important than linguistic identities, these writers – Pepetela, Mia Couto, Agualusa, Isabela Figueiredo, Geovani Martins and Ricardo Saavedra, among others – produced narratives which reveal, throw up and strip bare the cruel inheritance of 500 years of colonialism. To paraphrase Eduardo Lourenço, they taught us “to see ourselves as small, up close, from within” and frighteningly human. It is on the same axis as this revisited literature, history and mindset that I encountered the work of Vasco Araújo and the art of rewriting history, creating a space where the present and past are examined critically and the way it has been told discussed, mainly as it relates to those stifled by the oppression of a colonial and patriarchal system with a tradition of slavery.

Fate had it that this event should occur in Madrid. But it was not exactly an encounter, as I first heard his voice, which was echoing on a loop at ARCO in 2002. This potent and seductive voice was singing a fragment of a well-known opera, but deconstructed by repetition varying between exasperation and melancholy. *Duettino* (2001) was the opera, a surprising visual and musical extravaganza, which I now realise, together with other works from that time, are part of a larger project by the artist, an ambitious aesthetic programme based around voice

– the subject who tells/sings their story – and the dramatization of history, the tradition of art and the construction of narratives. As the artist says, “We have greater belief in a piece of theatre than a real story.” Works like *La Stupenda*, *Fado*, *Le ballet de la nuit*, *Recital* and *Hipólito* [Hippolytus] delimit the issues which lie at the heart of their production: intertextuality, identity, the tragedy of desire and relationships of power, the production of subjectivity and the construction of the social subject. We became friends. However, it was the unforgettable experience of that first work – the voice of the artist and the modelling of the space – which brought the performance *Some Enchanted Evening* (2001) to the São Paulo Biennial in 2008. The funeral cortège of half-naked athletes bearing the artist’s body, a ceremonial skiff climbing the pavilion’s central ramp while singing a love song in a solitary room, occupied Niemeyer’s huge empty expanse and created a memorable funeral eulogy, somewhere between an epic and a satire, for a then flagging São Paulo Biennial.

It was also during this stay in Brazil that Araújo found a facsimile edition of the much sought after album *Voyage pittoresque et historique au Brésil, ou Séjour d’un artiste français au Brésil* by Jean-Baptiste Debret (1768-1848). Published in Paris from 1834 to 1839, the three volumes contain texts and 153 illustrated plates on the landscape, nature and, above all, daily life and social and power relations in Brazil during that period.

Araújo has long focused on critically and systematically questioning the history of European colonialism and its still pivotal legacy on the social, political and cultural relations in contemporary societies. *The Girl of the Golden West* (2004) (also heard before seen at the Arsenale of the Venice Biennale in 2005), *O Jardim* [The Garden] (2005), *O Percurso* [The Trail] (2009), *O Morto* [The Dead Man] (2010), *Capita* (2012), *É nos sonhos que tudo começa* [It is in dreams that everything begins] and *Retrato* [Portrait] (both from 2014), *O inferno são os outros* [Hell is everyone else] (2015), amongst others, represent a consistent body of critical and poetic work, an original

intelligence addressing founding issues of current political practices of identity, diversity and visibility. The artist's strategy for handling history, memories, literary and scientific texts, the use of images, sounds and documents, whether official or not, to allow revised narratives of the past to emerge also sets in motion an ethics of transparency in the means and modes of production of knowledge, experience and subjectivity. Hence the importance of this extremely erudite and creative documentary work in discussing truths and their constructed nature, exposing their fashioning, scrutinising their choices, confronting fiction and reality, opening new perspectives and encouraging reflection. Vasco Araújo's ever unique voice.

Within the framework of this production, the set of sculptures entitled *Debret* (2009) are of particular importance in these memories. First, because it has a direct relationship with the history of Brazil in the Portuguese colonial context. The French artist and traveller Jean-Baptiste Debret, who worked and lived here from 1816 to 1831, is among the most important and complete chroniclers of who the Brazilians of that time were and how they lived. His work is a founding document for the local culture and mindset. Even today, he continues to provide students and academics with an accurate picture of Brazil at the end of the colonial period and in the reign of Pedro I (Portugal's Pedro IV), the first post-independence kingdom, in addition to perceiving and understanding the origin and tradition of the deviations, villainy and inequities in current and belatedly republican Brazil – a country that remains very unequal in its democracy and social justice.

The poignancy of the work also relates to the circumstances in which it was shown in São Paulo (at the Pinacoteca do Estado) from March to August 2013. The installation included seven sculpture groups exhibited together with the original engravings from Debret's album owned by the museum. Above all, there was something thrilling about this chance to assemble such different works and to chart an ellipse in time, placing the two artists together in confrontation, dialogue and

mutual enlightenment in the same space almost 200 years after the Frenchman's arrival. Here was the chance to enjoy the heterotopic nature of the museum – a didactic show about both the purpose of art and its role in understanding and interpreting the past in order to comprehend the present. The issues raised by Araújo with seductive grace and irony – relationships of power, racism, the exploitation of work, iniquity, intolerance – as if bringing the original Debret up to date, conferred him with another meaning and opened possibilities for other interpretations. But despite a certain cruelty and radicalness among the groups of figures and the actions they took, perhaps somewhat jocularly and provocatively, hanging over the gallery was the principle that a great people are able to take pride in their history and also condemn atrocities. It is an attempt to incorporate the past in order to free oneself, in the sense of not becoming a hostage to it. How it is dealt with decides the fate of a nation.

It just so happens that in June of that year, a series of popular demonstrations were held across the country that mobilised groups with different political orientations, social priorities and claims. These large demonstrations destabilised the standing government and have challenged the institutional politics, creating an unprecedented split in Brazilian society where relations had hitherto been governed by cordiality – a bluff by the elites. But the presence of these figures that emerged from eggs on elegant Imperial-style tables at the museum, along with the images – records of the past that gave life to it – mirrored and related to the history of the feelings and distress that exploded on the streets. Both Debrets – French and Portuguese – speak about our more concealed and repressed soul, and touch our most sensitive scars and the bitterest experiences of our Lusitanian identity, revealing our most profound humanity like the sea in which we, still, have so far to swim.



«Va, Pensiero»

SCENA SECONDA
Le sponde dell'Eufrate
[Coro e profezia]

EBREI

(in catene, soggetti a lavori forzati)

Va, pensiero, sull'ali dorate;

Va, ti posa sui clivi, sui colli,

Ove olezzano tepide e molli

L'aure dolci del suolo natal!

Del Giordano le rive saluta,

Di Sionne le torri atterrate.

Oh, mia patria sì bella e perduta!

Oh, membranza sì cara e fatal!

Arpa d'or dei fatidici vati,

Perché muta dal salice pendi?

Le memorie nel petto raccendi,

Ci favella del tempo che fu!

O simile di Solima ai fati

Traggi un suono di crudo lamento,

O t'ispiri il Signore un concerto

Che ne infonda al patire virtù!

GIUSEPPE VERDI, *NABUCCO* (1841)

Polydor International GmbH, Hamburg, 1983





«NINGUÉM LIBERTA NINGUÉM, NINGUÉM SE LIBERTA SOZINHO: OS HOMENS SE LIBERTAM EM COMUNHÃO.»*

Inês Grosso

* FREIRE, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*,
New York, London: Continuum, 1987

In one of the first meetings we had, concerning the exhibition that would open at the MAAT in June 2019, Vasco Araújo expressed the desire to present a performance he had idealized over a decade before, but never had the chance to produce. Aware of the challenge we had ahead of us, it was evident that this was the right context to start working on what could well be the largest collective (and participatory) performance in the history of Portuguese art.

Titled *A moment apart*, the exhibition commemorates twenty years of the artist's career, bringing together a selection of painting, sculpture, installation, video and photography works, from the first film he directed at the Maumaus school, *O Carteiro Toca Sempre Duas Vezes* (2000)¹ to new pieces especially produced for this show at the MAAT. From the initial selection of works, which was agreed upon without much hesitation, we highlight the film produced in his first residency abroad at The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston – *The Girl of*

1. Video presented in the group show of the Seniors of the Advanced Course of Plastic Arts at the Museu das Comunicações, Lisbon, in the year 2000.

the Golden West (2004), which was shown in the 51st edition of the Venice Biennial, also in 2005, a moment that gave Araújo more visibility and international recognition. One of his most renowned works,² this film was exhibited in many different countries and contexts in shows focusing on colonialism and post-colonialism. Moreover, we also included works that were never shown in Portugal before, such as the installation *Perruque* (2005); pieces that were shown only once – *Século* (2002), originally presented in the installations of Interpress, a former printing house; and the video installation *Sabine/Brunilde* (2003),³ produced for the exhibition of the 3rd edition of the EDP Foundation New Artists Award, which was bestowed to him.

2. Among other shows, this work was presented at the 51st Venice Biennial (2005), integrated the show *Investigations of a Dog: Works from the FACE Collections*, which travelled, between 2006 and 2011, to the Ellipse Foundation, Cascais (Portugal), the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin (Italy), La Maison Rouge – Fondation Antoine de Galbert, Paris (France), Magasin 3 Stockholm Konsthall, Stockholm (Sweden) and the DESTE Foundation for Contemporary Art, Athens (Greece).

Covering his entire career, this exhibition is an opportunity to revisit the work of one of the most relevant artists of the generation born after the Carnation revolution. In this perspective, it seemed pertinent to include the performance *Libertas – Da condição do homem livre*, scheduling it for the opening day of the show, a prologue or a poetic overture for the artist's first anthological exhibition in Portugal. As we will see further in this text, the museum's location in Belém, near several monuments and symbols that glorify Portuguese colonial past, played an important role on the choice of the MAAT as an ideal stage for this grandiose and operatic production.

3. In its first three editions, the EDP Foundation New Artists Award was bestowed by direct nomination to a single artist, who would later produce a show in the context of the prize. Joana Vasconcelos, Leonor Antunes and Vasco Araújo were the first three artists to receive the award, which is now one of the most important institutions in the Portuguese art scene. Araújo, who was only 27 when he received the prize, presented the video installation *Sabine/Brunilde* at the Sociedade Nacional de Belas-Artes.

A procession that starts with the crossing of the Tagus, and then follows the riverbank to Central Tejo's Praça do Carvão, the slow march will gather over one hundred persons who have accepted to be part of an improvised choir, which will be supported by Lisboa Cantat Symphonic Choir, and will sing Giuseppe Verdi's (1813-1901) "Va, pensiero", the famed "Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves".

Based on a libretto by Temistocle Solera (1815-1878), the opera *Nabucco* is set in the 6th century BCE and follows the actions and conquests of Nebuchadnezzar II, King of Babylon, with particular attention to the period known as the Babylonian captivity or Babylonian exile – one of the central episodes in Jewish history, a first great diaspora that marks the beginning of their persecutions.⁴

4. The first Jewish diaspora started in 722 BCE, when the Assyrians invaded and destroyed the Kingdom of Israel and deported many Israelites to Mesopotamia. Later, the great diaspora will start as the Babylonians invade the Kingdom of Judah.

Heir to the Assyrian empire, Nebuchadnezzar II consolidated his political and territorial claims in the Middle East, conquering and subduing the kingdoms to the west, including the Kingdom of Judah and its capital, Jerusalem. After conquering the city in 597 BCE, an event that also brought about the destruction of the First Temple, Nebuchadnezzar II ordered the Jewish people into a forced exile that lasted for over five decades. The third and last act of *Nabucco* evokes the episode of their captivity in Babylonia, a choir on the banks of the Euphrates chanting this classical song of praise to a lost homeland, “Va, pensiero”.

In 1842 – at the height of the *Risorgimento*, the process that would lead to the unification of Italy – the chant of the Hebrew slaves was adopted by the Italian people as their hymn in the night it premiered at the La Scala, in Milan. Listening to this song of liberty and resistance, the Italians, who were then under Austrian rule, immediately identified with the Jewish people. Since then, the political and patriotic opera *Nabucco* has been exalted as a masterpiece of our cultural heritage and used through the centuries to translate the anxieties and expectations of different peoples. Based on a history of conquest, occupation, oppression and exile, its biblical motif convokes issues – as relevant and pressing as ever – such as the right to freedom, prejudice, oppression, discrimination, intolerance and the acceptance of the Other. The artist revisits this history, set in classical Babylon and recreated by a 19th

century Italian, and addresses a set of issues he has been working on throughout his career, to present them under a veil of biblical and historical references.

Despite its role as a vehicle for the ideals of the Risorgimento, this national voice created by Verdi was also the precursor of a movement in 19th century art that will bring the people, both as a theme and as a motif, to the front stage. In Nabucco, an oppressed nation finds its voice. In theatre, as well as in opera and in other musical genres, the choir (as a technical and aesthetical device, as a poetic or ideological instrument) symbolizes the collective; the voice of the people, it exalts the group as a singular unit, it is the voice of a choral and commanding body, a unison crowd.

It is also important to remember that many peoples and civilizations suffered the terror and the hardships of slavery in the Tigris-Euphrates basin. In this perspective, the crossing of the Tagus – the longest river in the Iberian Peninsula, connecting the capitals of two of the most powerful colonial empires in European recent history – and the choice of this location not only lend the performance a plastic and scenic dimension that brings it closer to the operatic genre, but also contribute to the problematization of the notions of identity, belonging, alterity, power, territory, nation, sovereignty, imperialism, colonialism, oppression, and freedom.

One should not forget, however, that freedom is a polysemous word and a complex concept. On the same line, oppression can be manifested through very different practices and behaviours. In Paulo Freire's (1921-1997) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, published in 1968, during his exile in Chile, the Brazilian philosopher and educator examines the oppressive facets of his country's social structure and lays down the base for a humanizing, liberating and progressive pedagogy. In his analysis, he focuses on a particularly relevant issue pertaining the historical and dialectical relationship between oppressor

and oppressed, the latter's fear of freedom and the fact that the oppressed often adopt an attitude of "adhesion" to the oppressor. According to Freire, the oppressed, the exploited and the repressed experience a tragic dilemma, as they must choose between hope and fear – it is fear that keeps the oppressed from fighting for their emancipation.

This is a key theory in Freire's work, which can be summarized as a predication for a humanizing and liberating education for the popular classes, one that focuses on the creation of awareness, dialogue, that is critic of the capitalist economic and ideological model and committed to a process of cultural and social change strongly influenced by the existentialist philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre, by Hegel's dialectics – for example, when he refers to the "consciousness of the master" and the "consciousness of the oppressed" to demonstrate the dichotomy and interdependence between the dominant and the oppressed classes: "Reality which becomes oppressive results in the contradistinction of men as oppressors and oppressed."⁵ – and particularly in post-colonial thought, as he establishes a dialogue with the work by Frantz Fanon, using expressions like "the wretched of the earth"⁶ and reminding us that, ultimately, it is not possible to speak of freedom and of a collective and social awareness without mentioning the long process of colonial and imperial domination and exploitation, from antiquity to modern times, and, consequently, the ideological construction (and belief) of the Other (the colonised).

5. *Op. cit.*, p. 51.

6. *The Wretched of the Earth* is the title of a book by Frantz Fanon, a critic of European colonialism and a call for decolonisation. It was first published in 1961.

In *Libertas* (which is also the Roman goddess of liberty), the artist brings us together – friends and strangers, in all our diversity and different genders, ethnic origins, social classes and political groups – so that we can overcome our fears and prejudices, singing a hymn to Liberty. Araújo dares us to think about the necessity and urgency of the struggle against the oppression that still prevails in contemporary society: poverty,

social inequality, labour exploitation, authoritarianism, gender and sexual repression, remembering, as Freire wrote, that liberation is “a mutual process,” a struggle for an engaged and committed community.

In conclusion, I go back to Freire’s words: “[...] just as the oppressor, in order to oppress, needs a theory of oppressive action, so the oppressed, in order to become free, also need a theory of action. The oppressor elaborates his theory of action without the people, for he stands against them. Nor can the people – as long as they are crushed and oppressed, internalizing the image of the oppressor – construct by themselves the theory of their liberating action. Only in the encounter of the people with the revolutionary leaders – in their communion, in their praxis – can this theory be built.”⁷

7. *Op. cit.*, p. 183.

CATÁLOGO / CATALOGUE*Vasco Araújo**Momento à parte / A moment apart***Conceito / Concept**

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04/06–09/09/2019

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Lucy Shaw e / and Paula Sá Nogueira

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Libertas – Da condição de pessoa livre
 Porto Brandão – Belém, MAAT, 04/06/2019

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 Coro Rock do Lumiar, Coro Ferroviário de Portugal e /
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A MOMENT APART

Event photos - 6 July 2019 - MAAT

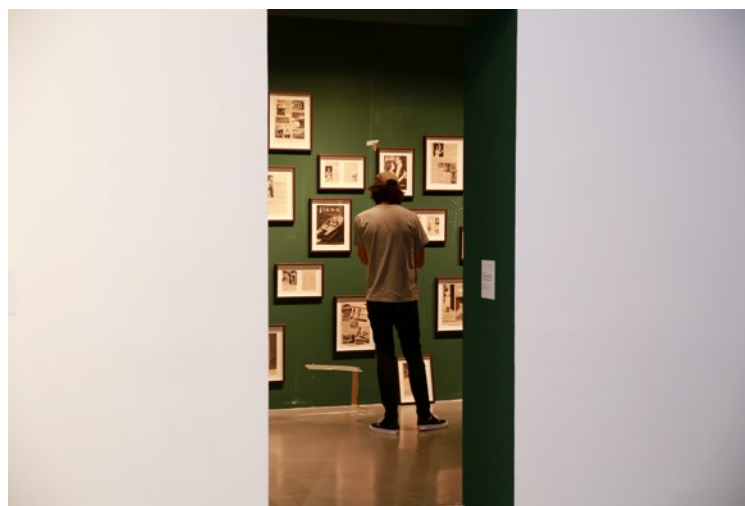
Talk between the artist Vasco Araújo and the Brazilian curator Ivo Mesquita about the exhibition "A Moment Apart".

Courtesy Fundação EDP / Photography: Gonçalo Rosa Silva





Courtesy Fundação EDP / Photography: Gonçalo Rosa Silva



2.2.6



What's on the news?

Museet for
Samtidskunst
Sep. – Nov. 2019

MEDIATION LAB × MUSEET FOR SAMTIDSKUNST × STINE MARIE JACOBSEN

In the Dark We Are All Perpetrators

Museet for Samtidskunst invited Stine Marie Jacobsen to facilitate a mediation lab under the 4Cs Project. Primarily for two reasons; first and foremost due to her artistic practice and also that her work is somehow in the same field as Peter Voss-Knude who will be doing the exhibition part of the 4Cs contribution.

Together with the museum staff, she focused her work on media and memory and things entailing these very broad fields of investigation.

Her work fell in two parts. In workshops and interviews with a local and new audience and in producing a film. The mediation lab formally ended with a public talk and film screening in Roskilde. A lot of the material will be used and activated in the future, as the goal of the project is for the artistic endeavors to meet and engage with a public in all sorts of contexts.

The museum organized workshops and interviews in a community center near the museum and in a Danish language center for refugees and immigrants. Here, the artist engaged with various audiences using her artistic method mixing especially language, power structures and memory.

Workshops and shooting

The core of the workshops and interviews is a language experiment, originally conducted by a psychologist, which showed that 3 in 4 potentially have biased memories. That is, in recollecting and retelling a newspaper article where three men (no ethnicity or nationality mentioned) assaulted an immigrant, 3 in 4 claim that three immigrants attacked a defenseless Danish man. The aim is not to point fingers at people misremembering the article, but rather open the discussion about why many people subconsciously blame immigrants. Memory works in mysterious ways and not correctly retelling details is not indicative of political biases in itself. In this sense, structural differentiation in media merges with memory and language theories in Jacobsen's work.

The film is a visualization of the article and experiment in question. The production used a professional (albeit small) film crew and young men with little or no experience in the performing or pictorial arts. This mix unlocks new areas of creativity and is one that both artist and museum are experienced in. The shooting process started with a stunt workshop in which a professional stunt instructor taught the actors to simulate the quite brutal scenes of the article and the different ways they were re-told. Simulating violence in acting and performance forces the actors to take special care of each other. So actually, removing the violence turns an assault scene in to a choreography of caring for your co-actors. This is emblematic of Stine Marie Jacobsen's work as an artist: dealing with a heavy topic like violence in a peace building and non-violent way.

Two nights of shooting the film was enough to turn it into a film in two versions. An 8-minute version intended for use in a gallery space and a shorter 'interactive' version that can be used by e.g. teachers as part of their syllabus. Both films are made in a style miming the Danish 1980's OBS-film (Oplysning til Borgerne om Samfundet / roughly: Public Service

Announcement) and the reconstruction scenes of television documentaries. Here, violent scenes are less realistic and can even be a bit goofy.

The workshops headlined under “What’s on the news?” and the title of the film is “In the Dark We Are All Perpetrators”.

Future uses of the mediation lab experiences

With Stine Marie Jacobsen’s work into the 4Cs framework the museum now has experiences and networks in new contexts for the museum. The museum will continue to work with the Danish language center and use the material in other educational settings.

Furthermore, the future of Museet for Samtidskunst is to operate without a physical gallery space for some time. In this scenario, the methods, works and strategies in the mediation lab can easily be installed and put to life in various types of space: public spaces, in schools, in workplaces etc. Also, the longevity of arranging, conducting and producing her work makes it almost universally adaptable.

Empathy in engaging with audiences

In the lines of Grant Kester, Jacobsen’s work uses conversations and dialogues between both participants and artist as the fabric the work is made of. As an artistic method, this requires skills of improvisation, especially in the areas of memory. The core of workshops are a process where artist leads the way in remembering a newspaper article, densely written with many details and descriptions. Jacobsen’s task is to steer the dialogue free from judgement and delve into the re-telling and remembrance of the informations given. This improvisation, which seamlessly can extend to participants, gives the events and interchanges a certain twist, and perhaps a feeling that what’s going is part of an artistic process.

Furthermore, a relation of empathy emerges. Jacobsen's work does not seek an aesthetic judgement in the traditional modernist sense. Jacobsen's work, including interactions with participants and interviewees, seeks to establish an understanding of how memory works rather than what people may or may not remember in this context. What Kester would call an empathetic identification in this case means that the effect of reading the article, producing and viewing the film is an understanding of both factual and relatable parts of how memory works and the socio-political implications that comes along.

In what could be called a dialogical aesthetic, insights of empathy will take place among participants, but almost more importantly also has the potential of conveying these insights to audiences, be they in an educational setting, a gallery setting or where ever people meet and engage Jacobsen's work.

While a high level of improvisation was intended, the perhaps only fixed goal for both the artist and the museum was exactly to reveal the ways in which memory works, in an engaging and empathic fashion that goes beyond the people directly involved in the mediation lab.

A key reason for choosing Stine Marie Jacobsen to lead the mediation lab was her experience in working artistically in areas of conflict both in and on the borders of Europe as well as the above mentioned methods she applies. Truly interested in forming her work with the participation of others and addressing important elements of European co-citizenship: how the public debated is structured, what it means and what can be changed. While socially engaged art probably is less familiar to most people, no special knowledge of art, culture or history is needed to take part in Jacobsen's work.

Stine Marie Jacobsen.
Direct Approach.
@ Malene Korsgaard Lauritsen



© Fillip Danstrup



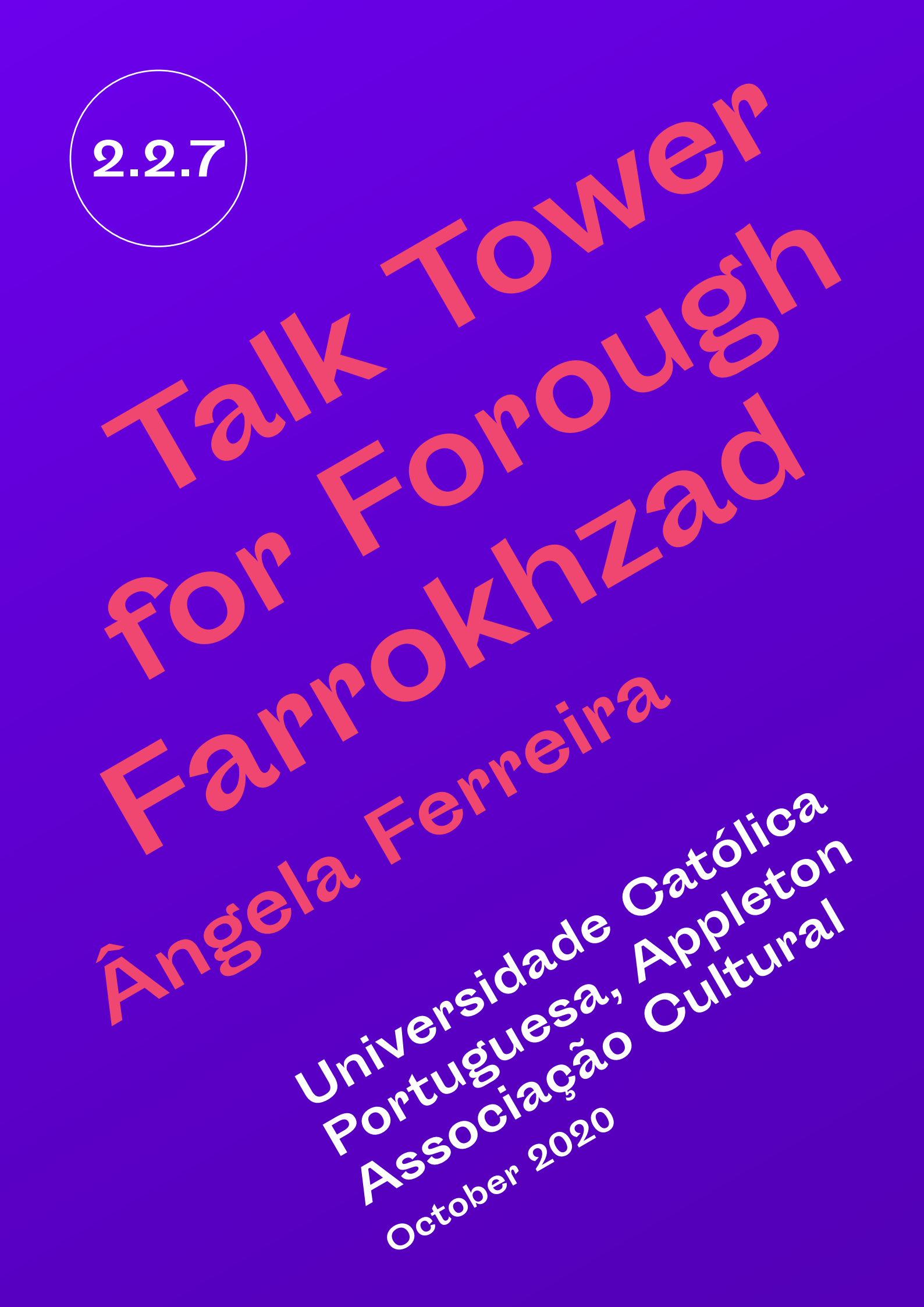


@ Stine Marie Jacobsen.

Photos from film shoot © Stine Marie Jacobsen



2.2.7



Talk Tower for Forough Farrokhzad Ângela Ferreira

Universidade Católica
Portuguesa, Appleton
Associação Cultural
October 2020

TALK TOWER FOR FOROUGH FARROKHZAD

Luísa Santos and Ana Fabíola Maurício

Ângela Ferreira's (Mozambique, 1958) work often finds a departure point in historical episodes bearing ties with modernism in its association with colonialism, its collapse, and its traumas. *Talk Tower for Forough Farrokhzad* (2020) sets out from a series of towers which the artist initiated in 2008 in order to articulate her concerns with the material consequences of modernism and understand how these forms evolve and transform in accordance with their temporal, geographical, and cultural context. The place of departure for the series of towers was Gustav Klutis's multimedia kiosks in Russia and Shukhov's radio tower, built in the early 1920s near Moscow.

When we enter the exhibition space of Appleton BOX we are confronted with a large sculptural shape made of metal, PVC, rubber, and loudspeakers which sends us to the form of a communication tower, with the two loudspeakers, in a certain sense, announcing their function. There is also a series of twelve frames arranged throughout one of the walls of the exhibition room, which include two photographic portraits of Forough Farrokhzad, a panoramic photograph of Tehran's Milad Tower, as well as digital scans of Iranian postal stamps along with drawings by Ângela Ferreira of some of those stamps, and drawings put forward as studies for the sculpture.

Designed to broadcast poetry, *Talk Tower for Forough Farrokhzad* is a tribute to the modern poetess and Iranian director Forough Farrokhzad (1934-1967). Born into a military family, she experienced what one would call a traditional upbringing – she studied painting and sewing, married at the age of 16, and moved to Ahvaz with her husband. After her divorce and having been forced to give up her only child, Farrokhzad published her first book of poetry, “The Captive”, in 1955, featuring influences from poets such as Fereydon Tavallali, a poet from the second wave (*nowpardaz* / new wave) of Iranian modernists and also a political commentator. In 1963, she published her fourth volume of poetry, “Another Birth”, the poem given voice to by Ângela Ferreira’s *Talk Tower*, and perhaps the most renowned for its pioneer role in Persian modern poetry. Known for her protest poetry, she gave voice to and shone a light into the feminine world, its secrets, intimate desires, sorrows, and yearnings, hitherto

Exhibition view Appleton BOX Oct. 2020 . © Alfredo Brant



considered taboo. Her expressions of physical and emotional intimacy, underrepresented in the Persian poetry of the time, placed her at the center of controversy, even among her peers. Subjected to the scrutiny of the media and portrayed as a woman without morals, she died in 1967, at the age of 32, in a car accident. Forough Farrokhzad was the object of several analyses throughout her life – both UNESCO and Italian director Bernardo Bertolucci produced documental short-films on the life and work of the poetess –, as well as the object of several moments of revision after her death, and is to this day the most renowned woman in Persian literature.



Exhibition view Appleton BOX Oct. 2020 . © Alfredo Brant





Exhibition view Appleton BOX Oct. 2020 . © Alfredo Brant

The inspiration for *Talk Tower for Forough Farrokhzad* brings together formal and conceptual aspects simultaneously. A tribute to the poetess that lends it its name, the form of this *Talk Tower* departs from the image of a commemorative Iranian stamp from 1966 which celebrates the completion of CENTO's (Central Treaty Organization) telecommunications projects. CENTO was a military alliance which took place in the 1950s, during the Cold War, and served as a central node in the strategy of the defense pacts against the Soviet Union and its allies, having been established by Western powers, from NATO to SEATO. The alliance was formed between Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Turkey, and England, with the United States becoming an associate member in the year of its formation. CENTO's telecommunications network was completed in 1965 and comprised 88 stations spread throughout 4 925 kms between Ankara and Karachi. Some of the stations, placed 18 to 170 kms apart, in cities, on mountaintops, and deserts, featured antenna towers rising 120 meters into the sky so that they could be efficient in their broadcasts.



Exhibition view Appleton BOX Oct. 2020 . © Alfredo Brant

In *Talk Tower for Forough Farrokhzad*, the references from Farrokhzad's poetry and architecture come together in a reflection on the simultaneous processes of (making) silence and (giving a) voice within the Iranian cultural context of the 1960s. This decade was featured, in Iran, by the White Revolution of 1963 which brought about a set of reforms such as the sharing of profits with industry workers in private companies, the nationalization of forestland, the change in electoral laws so as to allow a greater representation to workers and farmers, and also the extension of voting rights to women. However, and despite the undeniable contribution of the White Revolution in Iran, a Revolution which seemed to aim at giving a voice to those who had, until then, been silenced, it was – paradoxically – tarnished by corruption, oppression, flaws in the announced reforms, and censorship (Harney, 1998:37, 47). And it was these conditions that led to the fall of the Shah, the last Persian king, and to the Iranian Revolution of 1979 which replaced a pro-Western authoritarian monarchy with an anti-Western

theocracy. The Shahestan Pahlavi and CENTO projects were an illustrative material legacy of the immaterial implications not only of the turbulent moments of the revolution but also of the experiences of and coexistences with the pasts, and of the erasures and silencings of possible futures. *Talk Tower for Forough Farrokhzad* is set up as a sculpture-installation-scale model which brings together architectural elements from several towers in Iran and the CENTO communications towers, in order to give voice to a poetess who, as an Iranian woman, saw much of her voice silenced throughout her life as an individual and as a citizen, a role she would only enjoy between the year of the White Revolution – when she published “Another

Birth” – and the moment of her death, four years later. The poetics – understood here as the way in which representation produces meaning – and the politics – understood here as the effects and consequences of the act of representing – are also constituent elements of the installation *Talk Tower for Forough Farrokhzad*, which in a certain sense seeks to establish correspondences with the life and work of the poetess who serves as its inspiration. By establishing a sequential order of the confluence between the different pieces of the artwork and the viewer, and by demanding a sliding and transient reading of the different elements – and consequently of the seemingly fragmented ties and relations which connect them –, the artist puts forward constructions (visions) on the artistic purposes of the poetess, as well as on the need to give them a stage and a spotlight once again.



Exhibition view Appleton BOX Oct. 2020 . © Alfredo Brant



The vertical three-dimensional aspect of this sculptural form gains a conceptual prominence – the Talk Tower seems to want to go beyond the height of the exhibition space of Appleton BOX into another dimension, in a symbolic motion that, much like the poem it voices, rips through the violent repression of any and all voices of freedom. In other words, *Talk Tower for Forough Farrokhzad* does that which art installations

do at their best: by taking on a stance of antagonism regarding the space in which it is embedded, it creates a friction with its context to determine its own rules of interaction (Bishop, 2005)¹. This relation with space is, above all, a materialization of the definition of sculpture in the “expanded field” put forward by Rosalind Krauss (1979)². The play between structure, sculpture, scale model, drawing, photography, and sound thus openly makes up a proposal for a definition of sculpture which amplifies its conventional borders and which tests its formal and conceptual functioning through the intersection with media such as drawing and sound, but above all with History in its social implications and with cultural memory(/ies).

The installation thus becomes a space where different media and discursive frames structure specific articulations between objects and between knowledges (Whitehead, 2012)³, and can be read as a map which operates by means of a thorough selection of elements, which are ordered so as to build images / pathways that serve the purpose of illustrating a reality, a social and mental space (Lefebvre, 1991)⁴. The map created by the different elements of the installation (the sculpture / scale model, the photographs of the poetess, of the towers in Iran, and commemorative stamps, the drawings of the stamps and CENTO towers, and the sound of the reading of the poem) generates a sphere of narrativization which, by establishing relations and proposing dynamics for interaction, puts forward a political point of view on the imperative need for freedom, for the communication and spread of that freedom (of communication). By articulating elements through their own (in)visibilities and by generating proposals for seemingly contrasting visualities, but which complement and

1. Bishop, Claire (2005). “But is it installation art?”, *Tate Etc.* issue 3: Spring 2005. London, 1 January 2005.

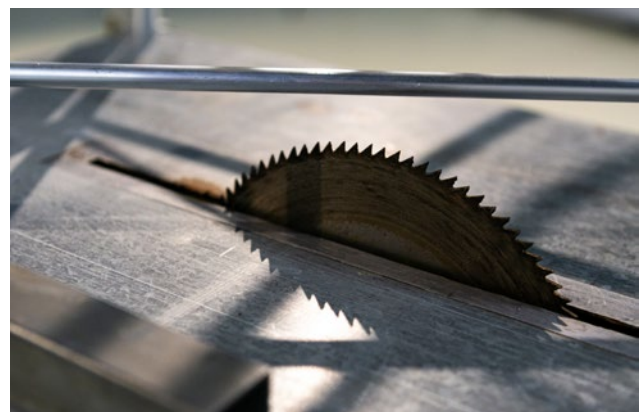
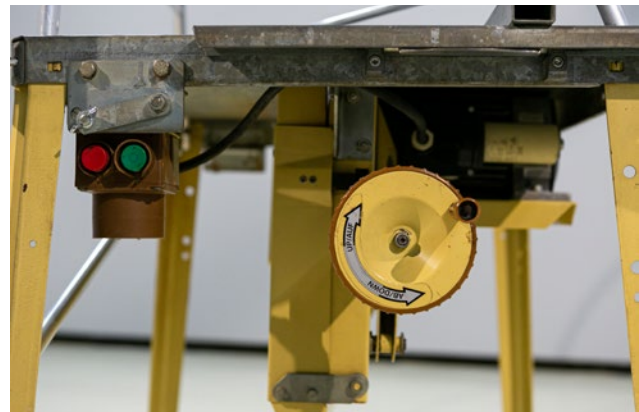
2. Krauss, Rosalind. “Sculpture in the Expanded Field”. *October*, Vol. 8. (Spring, 1979), pp. 30-44.

3. Whitehead, Christopher (2012), *Interpreting art in museums and galleries*, London and New York: Routledge.

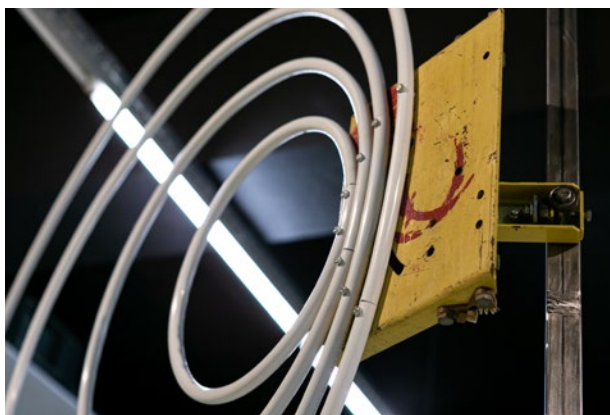
4. To Lefebvre, the mental, social, and physical spaces are totally inextricable: the functioning of the mental space is based on events and social relations, as well as the physical perceptions of what surrounds us; our mental space is, thus, filled with history, culture, with a series of knowledges and previous beliefs which are the result of past experiences, which are in turn a consequence of the transformations that society undergoes. Physical space simultaneously reflects and arises from the constructions recorded on our mental space and it is molded by the political and economical consequences of our social space. V. Lefebvre, Henri (1991 [1974], *The Production of Space*, Oxford: Blackwell, p. 2.

exponentiate each other (the sound of the poem being read vs. the muteness of the structure of the antenna), the artist proposes to us the reading of the installation as a whole, as a single object of an order greater than the individual objects and elements which compose it. The narrative arises, then, from each constituent element of the installation which in cumulative form open up new dimensions for interpretation, contributing for the reading of the installation as an object of knowledge of other physical, social, and mental spaces.

The experience of the unsettlement that we feel when listening to something which is, for the most of us, in a Portuguese context, unknown and opaque – the poem is read only in Farsi – creates a moment of curiosity and insecurity, an internal conflict which seems to fit the content of this project as a whole. While its three-dimensional aspect places us physically and metaphorically in the sites of the political history of the several communication towers which the artist researched and of the CENTO communication towers network, its audible component leaves us in a territory of mediation of the places of voice and silence within that same political history. In this process, we are invited to listen to something to which we do not have immediate access, in an act which turns our attentions on ourselves, making us from one moment to the next no longer the observer who listens but now the observed to whom access to communication is denied, through a methodology reminiscent of the discourse of oppressive regimes.



Exhibition view Appleton BOX Oct. 2020 . © Alfredo Brant



Exhibition view Appleton BOX Oct. 2020 . © Alfredo Brant

It is in great part based on the audio piece and its features, both in terms of content – the message of the poem is available on the exhibition room sheet in Farsi, English, and Portuguese – and form – the incomprehension and a certain level of linguistic imperceptibility by most of the Portuguese visiting audience –, that ironically one of the main elements / moments of mediation laboratory is established, as the installation makes “opportunities for meta-cognitive development” possible to the visitors, so that they can understand the meaning(s) of the map of articulations put forward, “to appreciate its emphases and recognize its silences, to understand its internal structures and rules, and ultimately feel personally able to encompass and cross new geographies of knowledge” (Whitehead, 2012: 49). The lab work (of study, research, and mostly of experimentation) of mediation is, thus, put forward by the artist to take place in the exhibition space and to happen in the moment – physically present or mentally ensuing – of interaction between the visitor and the installation. Here, the mediation itself is also meta in the sense that it aims to arouse in the visitor questions regarding the way in which and the level at which the different elements of the piece (some incomprehensible or imperceptible) contribute to the mediation of the installation as a whole, as a message and an object of knowledges. Mediation becomes also meta by leading the viewer to a reflection on the lack of elements immediately facilitating the understanding of the whole story (and its different layers), seeking to be told in this installation.

The – material and immaterial – structures and the – physical, social, and mental – spaces which house them are at the same time a reflection and a consequence of the political and cultural historical events, as well as of the narrativizations made of those events. In their reactions to and in their role of triggering social and political movements, the artistic and cultural practices operate as a form of rhetoric which leaves material and visible traces, but also immaterial and invisible traces on its trail (de Certeau, 1990)⁵. The artistic practices (in a varied and overarching way) produce culture by reconciling thought with matter and time and that (artistic) culture boasts the potential to have a direct impact on the intellectual and cultural practices of the audience, providing the elements and enabling the moments for its continuance. This means that the social sustainability of the artistic practices (the necessary interaction with the community) and respective culture is best served when the artists and their artworks tell stories, stories which allow the audience to know the pasts, the points of view, the intentions, the present and future both of the artists and their topics of inspiration and work. Artistic work which allows for those stories – often unknown – to be accessed and understood through structured processes of mediation and meta-mediation, which require the visitor's dedication and their cognitive and cultural commitment, foster the acquisition of the said new geographies of knowledge, and this is one of the main roles of art.

5. De Certeau, Michel (1990), *L'Invention du quotidien. Les arts de faire*, Paris: Gallimard.

Talk Tower for Forough Farrokhzad (2020), by Ângela Ferreira, was produced within the context of the mediation lab of 4Cs: from Conflict to Conviviality through Creativity and Culture.

**TALK TOWER FOR FOROUGH FARROKHZAD
MEDIATION LAB LABORATÓRIO DE MEDIAÇÃO**

A project by | Um projecto de Ângela Ferreira

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vivóeusébio

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vivóeusébio

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ANOTHER BIRTH

Forough Farrokhzad

*My entire soul is a murky verse
Reiterating you within itself
Carrying you to the dawn of eternal burstings and blossomings
In this verse, I sighed you, AH!
In this verse,
I grafted you to trees, water and fire*

*Perhaps life is
A long street along which a woman
With a basket passes every day*

*Perhaps life
Is a rope with which a man hangs himself from a branch
Perhaps life is a child returning home from school*

*Perhaps life is the lighting of a cigarette
Between the lethargic intervals of two lovemakings
Or the puzzled passage of a passerby
Tipping his hat
Saying good morning
to another passerby with a vacant smile
Perhaps life is that blocked moment
When my look destroys itself in the pupils of your eyes
And in this there is a sense
Which I will mingle with the perception of the moon
And the reception of darkness
In a room the size of one solitude
My heart
The size of one love
Looks at the simple pretexts of its own happiness,*

*At the pretty withering of flowers in the flower pots
At the sapling you planted in our flowerbed
At the songs of the canaries
Who sing the size of one window.*

*Ah
This is my lot
This is my lot
My lot
Is a sky, which the dropping of a curtain seizes from me
My lot is going down an abandoned stairway
And joining with something in decay and nostalgia
My lot is a cheerless walk in the garden of memories
And dying in the sorrow of a voice that tells me:
“I love
Your hands”*

*I will plant my hands in the flowerbed
I will sprout, I know, I know, I know
And the sparrows will lay eggs
In the hollows of my inky fingers
I will hang a pair of earrings of red twin cherries
Round my ears
I will put dahlia petals on my nails
There is an alley
Where the boys who were once in love with me,
With those disheveled hairs, thin necks and gaunt legs
Still think of the innocent smiles of a little girl
Who was one night blown away by the wind
There is an alley which my heart
Has stolen from places of my childhood*

*The journey of a volume along the line of time
And impregnating the barren line of time with a volume
A volume conscious of an image
Returning from the feast of a mirror*

*This is the way
Someone dies
And someone remains
No fisherman will catch pearls
From a little stream flowing into a ditch*

*I
Know a sad little mermaid
Dwelling in the ocean
Softly, gently blowing
Her heart into a wooden flute
A sad little mermaid
Who dies with a kiss at night
And is born again with another kiss at dawn*

The following part of the poem has been deleted from the audio (possibly due to censorship at the time):

“Perhaps life is the lighting of a cigarette
Between the lethargic intervals of two lovemakings”

Translation from Persian to English by Farid Walizadeh.

Forough Farrokhzad (1934 – 1967) was an Iranian poet and filmmaker whose work was as modernist and iconoclast as it was controversial and rooted in a feminine perspective. Farrokhzad died in a car accident on February 13, 1967, at the age of 32.

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MA candidate in Culture Studies, The Lisbon Consortium; Mediation Lab - Portions of Share; Faculdade de Ciências Humanas - Universidade Católica Portuguesa FCH-UCP; Lisbon; March - April 2019

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Documentary filmmaker; Mediation Lab - "Penya" Tosquelles; Fundació Antoni Tàpies; Barcelona; January - April 2018

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Artist, curator and researcher; Workshop - Dwelling on the Threshold; Vilnius Academy Of Arts; Nida Art Colony; Nida; October 2019

Natasha Marie Llorens

Curator; Workshop - This is no Longer That Place: A Public Discussion; Royal College of Art; The Showroom; London; March 2019

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Workshop - Notes from Atopia; Faculdade de Ciências Humanas - Universidade Católica Portuguesa FCH-UCP; Appleton; Lisbon; October 2020

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Artist; Mediation Lab - Portions of Share; Faculdade de Ciências Humanas - Universidade Católica Portuguesa FCH-UCP; Lisbon; March - April 2019

Oksana Yushko

Artist; Workshop - The Baltic Sea: A Liquid Memorial; Vilnius Academy Of Arts; Nida Art Colony; Nida; September 2018

Oliver Ressler

Artist; Workshop - This is no Longer That Place: A Public Discussion; Royal College of Art; The Showroom; London; March 2019

Opavivará!

Artistic collective; Workshop - An Oceanic Feeling; Fundació Antoni Tàpies; Barcelona; July - September 2017

Pasha Georgieva

MA candidate in Culture Studies, The Lisbon Consortium; Mediation Lab - Portions of Share; Faculdade de Ciências Humanas - Universidade Católica Portuguesa FCH-UCP; Lisbon; March - April 2019

Paul Maheke

Artist; Workshop - Dwelling on the Threshold; Vilnius Academy Of Arts; Nida Art Colony; Nida; October 2019

Paulina Pukutė

Artist; Workshop - The Baltic Sea: A Liquid Memorial; Vilnius Academy Of Arts; Nida Art Colony; Nida; September 2018

Pauline Doneda

Textile design student at ENSAD; Workshop - Cultivating Conviviality; ENSAD; Paris; November 2017 - February 2018

Rado Ištok

Curator; Workshop - Dwelling on the Threshold; Vilnius Academy Of Arts; Nida Art Colony; Nida; October 2019

Reinier Sikkens

Workshop - Notes from Atopia; Faculdade de Ciências Humanas - Universidade Católica Portuguesa FCH-UCP; Appleton; Lisbon; October 2020

Rena Leinberger

Workshop - Notes from Atopia; Faculdade de Ciências Humanas - Universidade Católica Portuguesa FCH-UCP; Appleton; Lisbon; October 2020

Rita Gt

Artist; Mediation Lab - Portions of Share; Faculdade de Ciências Humanas - Universidade Católica Portuguesa FCH-UCP; Lisbon; March - April 2019

Rosa Lleó

Curator and director of the project The Green Parrot; Workshop - An Oceanic Feeling; Fundació Antoni Tàpies; Barcelona; July - September 2017

Rúben Vilas Boas

Workshop - Notes from Atopia; Faculdade de Ciências Humanas - Universidade Católica Portuguesa FCH-UCP; Appleton; Lisbon; October 2020

Ruta de Autor

Cultural and thematic routes; Workshop - An Oceanic Feeling; Fundació Antoni Tàpies; Barcelona; July - September 2017

Saulė Noreikaitė

Artist; Workshop - The Baltic Sea: A Liquid Memorial; Vilnius Academy Of Arts; Nida Art Colony; Nida; September 2018 and Workshop - Dwelling on the Threshold; Vilnius Academy Of Arts; Nida Art Colony; Nida; October 2019

Sebastian Däschle

Designer, architect and stage designer, founder of Cucula project; Workshop - Cultivating Conviviality; ENSAD; Paris; November 2017 - February 2018

Sekular Tomasz

Student; Workshop - Dwelling on the Threshold; Vilnius Academy Of Arts; Nida Art Colony; Nida; October 2019

Seloua Luste Boulbina

Philosopher, Doctor in Political Science and Associate Researcher at the Université Paris VII; Workshop - Cultivating Conviviality; ENSAD; Paris; November 2017 - February 2018

Sílvia Escórcio

Workshop - Notes from Atopia; Faculdade de Ciências Humanas - Universidade Católica Portuguesa FCH-UCP; Appleton; Lisbon; October 2020

Sobi Pillai

Member of the association PLACE; Workshop - Cultivating Conviviality; ENSAD; Paris; November 2017 - February 2018

Sofia Djenna

Cooker at Taf et Maffé; Workshop - Cultivating Conviviality; ENSAD; Paris; November 2017 - February 2018

Solveiga Gutautė

Artist; Workshop - The Baltic Sea: A Liquid Memorial; Vilnius Academy Of Arts; Nida Art Colony; Nida; September 2018

Sophie Legrain

Editor, creator of “Éditions d’une”; Mediation Lab - “Penya” Tosquelles; Fundació Antoni Tàpies; Barcelona; January - April 2018

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Member of Parti Poétique, independent curator, writer, environmental engineer; Workshop - Cultivating Conviviality; ENSAD; Paris; November 2017 - February 2018 and Mediation Lab - Celebrating crafts for social change; ENSAD; Paris; October 2018 - May 2019

Stine Marie Jacobsen

Artist; Mediation Lab - What’s on the news?; Museet for Samtidskunst; Roskilde; September - November 2019

The Green Parrot

Non-profit space dedicated to contemporary art practices; Workshop - An Oceanic Feeling; Fundació Antoni Tàpies; Barcelona; July - September 2017

Topp & Dubio: Fredericus Cornelis Dijcks & Sander De Haas

Artist collective; Workshop - The Baltic Sea: A Liquid Memorial; Vilnius Academy Of Arts; Nida Art Colony; Nida; September 2018

Vaida Kazlauskaitė

Student; Workshop - Dwelling on the Threshold; Vilnius Academy Of Arts; Nida Art Colony; Nida; October 2019

Vasco Araújo

Artist; Mediation Lab - Libertas - Da condição de pessoa livre - Vasco Araújo; Faculdade de Ciências Humanas - Universidade Católica Portuguesa FCH-UCP; MAAT - Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology; Lisbon; June - July 2019

Victoria Page

Workshop - Notes from Atopia; Faculdade de Ciências Humanas - Universidade Católica Portuguesa FCH-UCP; Appleton; Lisbon; October 2020

Vilius Vaitiekunas
Artist; Workshop - Dwelling on the Threshold; Vilnius Academy Of Arts; Nida Art Colony; Nida; October 2019

vivóeusébio

4Cs Identity Design

Yaiza Hernández Velázquez

Lecturer at Central Saint Martins-UAL on the MRes Art: Exhibition Studies as member of the Afterall research centre; Workshop - This is no Longer That Place: A Public Discussion; Royal College of Art; The Showroom; London; March 2019

Yasir Mohamed Elamine

Potter craftsman; Mediation Lab - Celebrating crafts for social change; ENSAD; Paris; October 2018 - May 2019

Yulia Bardoun

Artist; Workshop - The Baltic Sea: A Liquid Memorial; Vilnius Academy Of Arts; Nida Art Colony; Nida; September 2018

Zazie Brosse

Fine art design student at ENSAD; Workshop - Cultivating Conviviality; ENSAD; Paris; November 2017 - February 2018

COORDINATION



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through Creativity and Culture



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