REHEARSING

HOSPITALITIES

Rehearsing ~~Hospitalities~~ **Companion 4**
Redistribution and
decentralisation

Preface
Raija Koli

Rehearsing Hospitalities, Frame Contemporary Art Finland's public programme for 2019 to 2023, connects artists, curators and other practitioners in the field of contemporary art, and beyond, to build up and mediate new practices, understandings, and engagements with hospitalities. The programme and framework fosters critical discourse, sharing and collaboration between numerous practitioners. *Rehearsing Hospitalities* takes the form of yearly autumn gatherings, public dialogues, a series of publications, and peer-to-peer learning situations. Through this collaborative process, we hope to support the emergence of new models and methods for cultural hospitality.

  Rehearsing Hospitalities Companion 4 is the fourth in a series of readers published by Frame and Archive Books, which accompany this five-year public programme. The series is a resource for making visible the processes, dialogues, and influences that shape the content and relations within the broader *Rehearsing Hospitalities* programme. Through practising transparency and sharing our influences, the publication series becomes a place to make the knowledges we gather through the programme more open and accessible. Simultaneously, it invites practitioners to contribute to shaping this discourse by responding to and contaminating epistemologies and practices of hospitality.

  The first in the series, **Rehearsing Hospitalities Companion 1,** gave particular attention to providing a wider context for *Gathering for Rehearsing Hospitalities*—a cultural gathering in Helsinki in September 2019—which focused on the potential of art and cultural institutions to facilitate and mediate different knowledges and ways of knowing.

  Whilst attention to diverse forms of knowledge production remained central, the 2020 programme extended attention towards opening up a range of perspectives and understandings of access and accessibility. With physical gatherings impossible in 2020, the second publication **Rehearsing Hospitalities Companion 2,** became a site in itself for hosting and gathering. Following this, with the possibility to gather in

In the settler mind, land was property, real estate, capital, or natural resources. But to our people, it was everything: identity, the connection to our ancestors, the home of our nonhuman kin-folk, our pharmacy, our library, the source of all that sustained us. Our lands were where our responsibility to the world was enacted, sacred ground. It belonged to itself; it was a gift, not a commodity, so it could never be bought or sold.
—Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants*, 2013.

small numbers in 2021, the third edition's function was three-fold: a place to gather and to host different voices and experiences, a companion to and a prompt for the public programme *Gathering for Rehearsing Hospitalities* autumn 2021, which took place in Helsinki, online and within the pages of ***Rehearsing Hospitalities Companion 3.*** This year, the programme linked questions of access to those of security, safety and care.

As we enter the fourth year, our invitation to use the publication as a site to meet with others around our existing lines of enquiry remains central. ***Rehearsing Hospitalities Companion 4*** asks what the possibilities and limitations of hospitality are. How escapable are the imbalances of power instilled in hospitality? Should we instead be turning towards "rehearsing" redistribution? With a focus on *doing* things differently, the publication holds thoughts, insights, tools, provocations, responses on forms and futures of redistribution.

Enacting a practice of decentralised organising, contributors to this companion have been invited by the series editors and programme curators **Yvonne Billimore** and **Jussi Koitela,** as well as several co-curators of the *Gathering for Rehearsing Hospitalities* autumn 2022 programme: **Farbod Fakharzadeh, Iida Nissinen, Kaura Raudaskoski**, and **Steve Maher**. *Rehearsing Hospitalities Companion 4* is composed of contributions from artists, activists, curators and thinkers: **Florian Carl** & **Jenni Laiti**, **Johanna Hedva**, **Isa Hukka** & **Jemina Lindholm**, **K-oh-llective (Nada Elkalaawy, Engy Mohsen, Mohamed Al Bakeri, Soukaina Joual, Rania Atef)**, **Meenakshi Thirukode**, **Sandra Ruiz** & **Hypatia Vourloumis**, **Ailie Rutherford** and **Mike Watson.**

Raija Koli, Director Frame Contemporary Art Finland

Introduction: (re)forms and futures of redistribution
Yvonne Billimore

The *Rehearsing Hospitalities* programme, and by extension this companion series, invites and hosts different approaches for thinking-with and practising diverse forms of hospitality. Engaging with practitioners in a range of fields we have been using the project to "rehearse" hospitality *otherwise*: to think and do hospitality differently.[1] To relate, collaborate, co-exist and inhabit the world differently.

To date, we have sought to complicate matters of hospitality rather than reduce them. Hospitality has been our red thread from which to explore complex relations, interdependencies, and ways of being/becoming "radically hospitable".[2] With its different formations and functions, hospitality has also served as a framework for institutional and cultural critique by revealing some of its more hostile and oppressive dimensions—and how these have been used to establish systems, practices, and ideologies of inequality. Now in our fourth year, we ask what the possibilities and limitations of hospitality are. How escapable are the imbalances of power instilled in hospitality? Should we instead be turning towards "rehearsing" redistribution?

1   *Otherwise* has the potential to be understood in many ways and has several different theoretical lineages. Here I draw from Laura McTighe and Megan Raschig in their introductory essay to the series, *An Otherwise Anthropology*: "the otherwise summons simultaneously the forms of life that have been able to persist despite constant and lethal forms of surveillance, as well as the possibility for, even the necessity of, abolishing the current order and living into radical transformations of worlds." See Laura McTighe and Megan Raschig, "Introduction: An Otherwise Anthropology", in Theorizing the Contemporary, *Fieldsights* (July 31, 2019). Available online: https://culanth.org/fieldsights/introduction-an-otherwise-anthropology (Last accessed. 23.08.2022).
2   In *Rehearing Hospitalities Companion 3*, Karen Barad's essay "After the end of the world: matters of hospitality", concludes with an invitation to "a practice of radical hospitality—an opening up to all that is possible in the thickness of the Now in rejecting practices of a-void-ance, taking responsibility for injustices, activating and aligning with forces of justice, and welcoming the other in an undoing of the colonizing notion of self-hood rather than as a marker of not us, not me." *Rehearsing Hospitalities Companion 3*, Yvonne Billimore and Jussi Koitela (eds.), (Berlin and Helsinki: Archive Books & Frame Contemporary Art Finland, 2020). 64.

The otherwise is not a process of negotiation or a business transaction. Don't try and sell it to me like something you can flog at a flea market; it is not ingenious or entrepreneurial, or even worse, 'innovative'. It is not interested in perfecting humanity using AI, or colonising space, or resplendence for everyone bought with gold stolen from Mars. It does not breathe in line with the stock market or debate the worth of grandaddy's life if he cannot work anymore; it is not like the race to cure cancer or eliminate climate change by planting trees via a search engine. It is not cleaning the seas and beaches by hand while BP watches. It is not an edict or a declaration of independence or a manifesto. It is not a contract to sign or bargaining for better pay or a four-day work week. Even if it looks like a contract, don't sign it. —Lola Olufemi, *Experiments in Imagining Otherwise*, 2021.

As outlined in previous editions, hospitality cannot be understood as simply extending kindness to others. It is bound to hierarchies and binary thinking, which supports the unequal distribution of power and resources. More often than not, the rhetoric of the host/guest is used as a tool not to include but to divide and reinforce social hierarchies and norms, such as those of gender, class, race, ability, and so on.[3] But can this double bind be fractured? Does hospitality have the potential to take a plurality of forms? Could ecologies of hospitalities co-exist? These questions speak to an age-old question, should we reform or revolutionise (hospitality)? Burn it down or make a change from within and reshape (institutions/systems/ideologies) with a practice of care— acknowledging and remembering what has occurred before, for better or worse? Must it be so rigid and divisive? It isn't one form or the other; aren't they porous and interconnected? I am reminded of the words of Jack Halberstam "Revolution will come in a form we cannot yet imagine".[4] In their introduction to *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study* by Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, Halberstam writes:

We cannot say what new structures will replace the ones we live with yet, because once we have torn shit down, we will inevitably see more and see differently and feel a new sense of wanting and being and becoming. What we want after "the break" will be different from what we think

3   Ibid. 23.
4   Jack Halberstam, "The Wild Beyond With and For The Undercommons" in Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study* (Wivenhoe / New York / Port Watson: Minor Compositions, 2013). 11.

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we want before the break and both are necessarily different from the desire that issues from being in the break.[5]

Proposed here is a series of "breaks" and (re)imaginings of more just and equitable futures committed to doing things differently in the present while being responsive to pasts.

Rehearsing Hospitalities Companion 4 is not a complete guide of solutions but a container for holding thoughts, insights, tools, provocations, responses on forms, and futures of redistribution. Highlighting organisational, curatorial, and artistic practices that go beyond offers of hospitality and transgress unbalanced forms of power distribution—such as those instilled in host and guest dynamics—we have chosen to focus on practices of redistribution and decentralising agency, power relations, wealth, resources, and liveable futures.

With this, we must recognise those principles associated with redistribution and, to some extent, hospitality—cooperation, reciprocity, mutuality, relationality, equality, solidarity, sustainability, liveability, etc.—are not new practices. On the contrary, as the contributions featured here articulate, they have been with us all along: in commons, in self-organising, in collaboration, in activism, and vitally in indigenous epistemologies and practices. The list goes on.

The concept of redistribution tends to be most commonly associated with the economy and the dissemination of wealth in the form of money and financial assets. However, as our companions in this edition highlight, it is also connected to land, water, animals, governance, knowledge, education, agency, and the power over our own bodies (which are, of course, also forms of capital), as well as a range of "resources"

5   Ibid. 6.

seemingly reserved for human extraction. And so, redistribution also presents a problem in terms of who has the right to allot, assign, share, or administer resources and between whom. While there is an ever-increasing disparity across livelihoods, it is problematic to presume a centre of wealth and resources, as Sandra Ruiz and Hypatia Vourloumis outline in their contribution. It assumes that there are those peripheral to or can't approach its axis point. To quote Hypatia, "what do we mean by wealth here? Do we understand wealth and resources through a capitalist logic? … Is friendship not wealth?".

This publication points towards the vast ways our lives and worlds could be organised in less hierarchical, extractive, and exploitive ways: with more love afforded to ourselves, one another, and our more-than-human kin. It doesn't provide all the answers, or a blueprint for a new world, but illustrates how people are doing this work now. In this publication, redistribution is treated as a verb: a doing. Only through doing, and breaking, and building, and failing, and doing it all over again, can we vision ecologies and economies that are more liveable.

Our companions

This edition opens with **"A love letter for worlds in the making"**, in which **Florian Carl** and **Jenni Laiti** offer their text as a gift to those invested in nurturing kin relations and collective memory. Their offering grounds us as part of an Earthen community, one in which the planet is not "our" resource from which to exploit, extract, and distribute the takings—primarily amongst an elite of humans—but a place in which any future of multi-species liveability and flourishing "lies in the nourishment of relationships that are reciprocal, accountable, and consensual". While dreaming up more collective futures, Carl and Laiti remind us that past-present-future is interconnected and that (re)imagining (and living) worlds of interdependent ecological livelihoods is not new. This

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knowledge has been with us all along and is all around us. If only we tuned in and listened. It lives in songs, the shape of the land, and the guidance offered by Indigenous community organisers, whose "inter-generational knowledges are a reminder of ancestors whose courage to love nudges our struggles to care for the communities around us: the joy of our queer siblings, the force of untamed rivers, and the radical solidarity of 'others'".

With an emphasis on breathing decolonial worlds to life, Carl and Laiti insist we need to shift who is in "control" and who is making decisions about land, resources, and communities. They write: "Changing how we organise communities is not abstract. It is as concrete as it gets. It is about who we involve, the materials we employ, and the encoded power structures. … People can also scrap institutions, compost structures, and sow the seeds for different futures altogether".

K-oh-llective (Nada Elkalaawy, Engy Mohsen, Mohamed Al Bakeri, Soukaina Joual, Rania Atef) is an artist group whose work centres on pooling resources and sharing knowledge among artists, writers, and curators in Egypt and the Arab world. Their website is a critical platform for this, stating that it operates as "an open-source library with [a] database of essential tools for arts practitioners, as well as a selection of podcasts, texts and discussions".[6] Their contribution, **"K-oh-llective: Squatting the Internet"**, puts collectivity into practice and situates resource-sharing as an act of hospitality.

Invited to contribute to this edition via artist, curator, and storyteller Farbod Fakharzadeh—one of the co-curators of *Gathering for Rehearsing Hospitalities* autumn 2022—K-oh-llective distribute the invitation to "participate" beyond their collective and towards the reader with a series of exercises to be re-enacted. Introducing these activities as resources for others to use, they proclaim that "The actions of one group can be adopted by other circles and spiral into a pattern

that eventually affects larger societal structures, institutions, and the community at large." Putting their practices into context, they reflect on how the collective was established "not due to the lack of support and resources but despite it" and how these somewhat playful exercises have offered a space for critically thinking about their roles, structure, ethos, and sustainability as a collective. Through making their collective's frameworks, knowledge, learning, and post-exercise reflections—all of which are resources—transparent and openly accessible, K-oh-llective's contribution invites us to try these radical acts of hospitality with others.

Turning towards Zoom, live streaming, and video conferencing as free-to-use technologies with the potential to be used for more collective forms of producing and broadcasting, **Mike Watson**'s text **"Live streaming communities: How we regain cooperative behaviour in the Twitch era"** considers the occupation of the internet in another form, from another "network". Watson was invited to contribute by artist Steve Maher—another co-curator of *Gathering for Rehearsing Hospitalities* autumn 2022—who is part of Pixelache Helsinki, a Finland-based creative association running a transdisciplinary platform for emerging art, design, research, and activism.[7] With an emphasis on cultural democracy and a rotating directorial model, Pixelache has been practising forms of decentralised organising for almost twenty years. Both members of Pixelache Helsinki, Watson's text stems from a conversation with Maher discussing the use of streaming services across various projects, and modes of working in the era of Zoom and VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol), "as open technologies that can facilitate horizontal cultural production and reception".

Throughout the text, Watson offers insight into the emergence and potential of these technologies for multi-authorship while also problematising some of their more mainstream uses and how they have

6 See: K-oh-llective. Available online: https://kohllective.com/About (Last accessed. 11.08.2022).

7 See: Pixelache. Available online: https://www.pixelache.ac/pages/about (Last accessed. 14.08.2022).

Livelihood is what unfolds in the space of life's action, the middle-space in which the hegemonic division of Economy/Environment blurs and dissolves into the power-laden specificities of encounter and negotiation. Having not been wholly captured by a particular hegemonic metrology, it indicates a diversity of activity, a variety of skills and knowledges, a plethora of possible sites of action, and multiple configurations of ever-changing relations and processes that cannot be captured by a generality. Livelihood is, in this way, a minor (as opposed to a major) category: it resists unification under a singular standard of measure, image of action, or domain of life. —Ethan Miller and J.K. Gibson-Graham, "Thinking with interdependence: from economy/environment to ecological livelihoods", *Thinking in the World: A Reader*, 2019.

been co-opted within the frames of capitalism and neoliberalism—i.e. by reinforcing productivity, readiness for work, competition, and a desire for celebratory status. Watson reflects that "the trick for Marx was to have the tools of capitalist production placed into the hands of the workers, thereby allowing for an equitable distribution of its benefits". Might (re)forming streaming technologies and platforms, placing value on the benefits of community over competition, produce more diverse and dispersed forms of cultural production and "consumption"?

Continuing in resistance to capitalism's grip on us, namely the ways in which it informs how we understand economies, **Ailie Rutherford**'s contribution **"Love proliferating outwards"** illustrates and (re)shapes the diverse formations of economies that make and support our world. Working with feminist economics and collective research, it was essential that Rutherford's contribution came from a practice of *doing.* Therefore, I invited her to run a series of workshops with ATLAS Arts on the Isle of Skye, where our programme and organisational strategies explore how to *do* economy differently.[8]

Rutherford's artistic mapping process, *Mapping Below the Waterline,* uses feminist economic geographer JK Gibson-Graham's diagram and metaphor of the "Diverse Economies Iceberg" to make talking about different strands of economies—and how they relate to people's lived experiences—tangible and visible. Invited to draw our

8   From November 2021- November 2022, Joss Allen and myself worked as the co-artistic directors (maternity cover) of ATLAS Arts, which organises collective art projects across Skye, Raasay, and Lochalsh—on the North West coast of Scotland. ATLAS is interested in exploring how an organisation, through its financial structure and income generation strategy, can enact ways of working that are more ethical, collective, and ecological. Whereas mainstream representations of the economy often promote growth and GDP, ATLAS is interested in alternative ways of thinking that give greater value to the health of the planet, the wellbeing of people, and the sharing of resources. By making these "diverse economies" more visible, ATLAS wants to better represent and promote the people, places, and activities that allow us to survive, thrive and plan for better futures. See: ATLAS Arts. Available online: https://atlasarts.org.uk/programme/threads/rethinking-economies (Last accessed. 15.08.2022).

"personal" economies with stamps symbolising different transactions (such as doing paid work; doing unpaid work; in between paid/unpaid; exchange [no money]; exchange [with money]; remote exchange; emotional labour; machine or organisation) gave us the tools to "map, chart and visualise the interactions, networks, and systems of exchange that support, influence, and impact [our] lives", as Rutherford explained. During the mapping workshop, I had intended to produce a well-considered aesthetic composition, but the result was chaos. A complex web of interactions and dependencies revealed not an economy of intersectional care but, as noted by Rutherford, an outline of "problematic and controlling power structures".

Rutherford's drawings and accompanying text ruminate on the discussions in these workshops and considers how starting from a place of love might "restructure the ways we live and work together to build a more equitable and just society."

In **"What happens when you collapse into the bog? – An interview with Johanna Hedva by Isa Hukka and Jemina Lindholm"**, **Isa Hukka** and **Jemina Lindholm** hold a discussion with **Johanna Hedva** with questions centring on Hedva's interconnecting essays "Sick Woman Theory" and "Why It's Taking So Long?". Their dialogue traverses a range of topics including: crip subjectivities and understandings; the limits and possibilities of disrupting institutional structures; resisting the labour and productivity of bodies imposed by capitalism; persona building, self-mythologising and myth-making in times of neoliberalism; and the bog as a metaphor for the place where binaries muddle and decompose.

The muddying (and troubling) of the false binary of public/private is a core thread within the two essays and something Hukka and Lindholm prompt Hedva to further expand upon. In part of their response to how they blur the binaries of public and private, Hedva writes: "I don't think it's possible to imagine a different future without also reimagining a different past, which is to say we cannot build something new simply by turning away from what we think has failed—all of it has already been there, on both sides of the binary fence, which is not a fence at all".

Throughout, Hedva speaks of the need for continual resistance in a world where "getting sick and becoming disabled" will inevitably happen to us all should capitalism continue to prevail. Still, they assert that "in order to maintain a capacity for the fight" they have to accept that "activism … will never be a thing that 'succeeds'. … When our opponent is fucking capitalism? *Of course,* we will lose". This is not pessimism nor defeatism but a coping strategy, a way of sustaining themselves for the longevity of the fight. Hence, an insistence from Hedva that we "must try everything, anything, all the time—and also keep close the idea that nothing will ever work". However, not trying is not an option. All around us are alternative ways of doing, being, organising, and resisting. Hedva reflects, "I am constantly reminded that we *are* doing the work, we're out here, persisting and insisting, and that's hugely meaningful".

Meenakshi Thirukode, too, is committed to a life of resistance, to an existence *otherwise*—an existence that renders her "criminal". Feeling her way through the world, through institutions, encounters and experiences, Thirukode's text **"School of IO: It's a feeling, it's criminal"** reflects on how she has channelled feeling "into the building blocks of a study space for the *otherwise* … the School of IO (Instituting Otherwise)". She writes that "the 'otherwise' is a verb—it is a *doing* and *making* of what is being constantly imagined" and that "this active *doing* of imagining includes figuring out methodologies of thinking through how we redistribute, refuse, repatriate, and redo power".

Situating her ability to thrive and build a way of being (and the School of IO) as something that has come from processing feelings and experiences of the body, she articulates that "it's the stuff of life, love, hurt, panic, debilitation, feeding, holding and despair, hope, death … that's allowed me to create, even if momentarily, the space of

post-Western situatedness and study". Throughout, in a radical act of love and transparency, Thirukode narrates her vulnerable self, sharing the heartbreaks, traumas, and lessons she has learnt along the way, such as *letting go, compromise, unlearning, lipsticks as glitch,* and more.

The final contribution stays with this feeling of intimacy as we bear witness to a personal correspondence between **Sandra Ruiz** and **Hypatia Vourloumis** in **"The hospitable letters: Just dropped in (to see what condition my condition was in)".**

As a continuation of and reflection on their book *Formless Formation: Vignettes for the End of this World,* they speak about turning to the "vignette as a formless formation … to abolish the colonial mandates of how ideas are produced and exchanged".

Poetic, playful, and full of questions, their letters use a collaborative writing practice to collectively think-with the forms, formations, and the "formless formation" of hospitality and redistribution. In one letter, Hypatia asks "How does letter writing, and our collaborative writing practice, put pressure on the ways 'hospitality' marks a pre-given separation between host and guest?". Their exchange is vital and questioning—inviting us into their correspondence process as a place to think together through writing and reading, as forms of rehearsing hospitality towards one another. This can be said of all the contributions who use this reader as a place to gift, exchange, and distribute words, lessons, experiences, maps, reading lists, feelings, and questions—all of which are resources—in a radical act of hospitality.

Capitalism must be understood as an economic system. But it is also an apparatus of capture and a regime of signs, a certain kind of compulsion, that is, a certain mode of organization and redistribution of power: the compulsion to put things in order as a precondition for extracting their inner value. It is the compulsion to categorize, to separate, to measure, and to name, to classify and to establish equivalences between things and between things and persons, persons and animals, animals and the so-called natural, mineral, and organic world. —Achille Mbembe, *Necropolitics*, 2019.

As with previous editions, there is no one way to move through this publication. Instead, readers can choose to read cover to cover, back to front, or short sections at a time.

The publication is further populated with a collection of contextual references which have been informing *Rehearsing Hospitalities*. In printing these alongside contributions, we hope to create transparency and pay homage to those doing the visionary work that brings us to where we are now. Amongst others*,* quotations from **Bengi Akbulut, Cynthia Cruz, Silvia Feredici, Mark Fisher, Stefano Harney** and **Fred Moten, Robin Wall Kimmerer, Lola Olufemi, Ethan Miller** and **J.K. Gibson-Graham**, and **Simon Yuill** can be found throughout this publication. These inform an expanded *Rehearsing Hospitalities 2022* reading list at the back of the book.

We welcome the *Rehearsing Hospitalities* volumes to be used as reading lists, insight into practices, reflective spaces, and as notebooks. With space reserved throughout for personal note-taking, drawing, or annotations, please use these pages for holding your own thoughts on these matters.
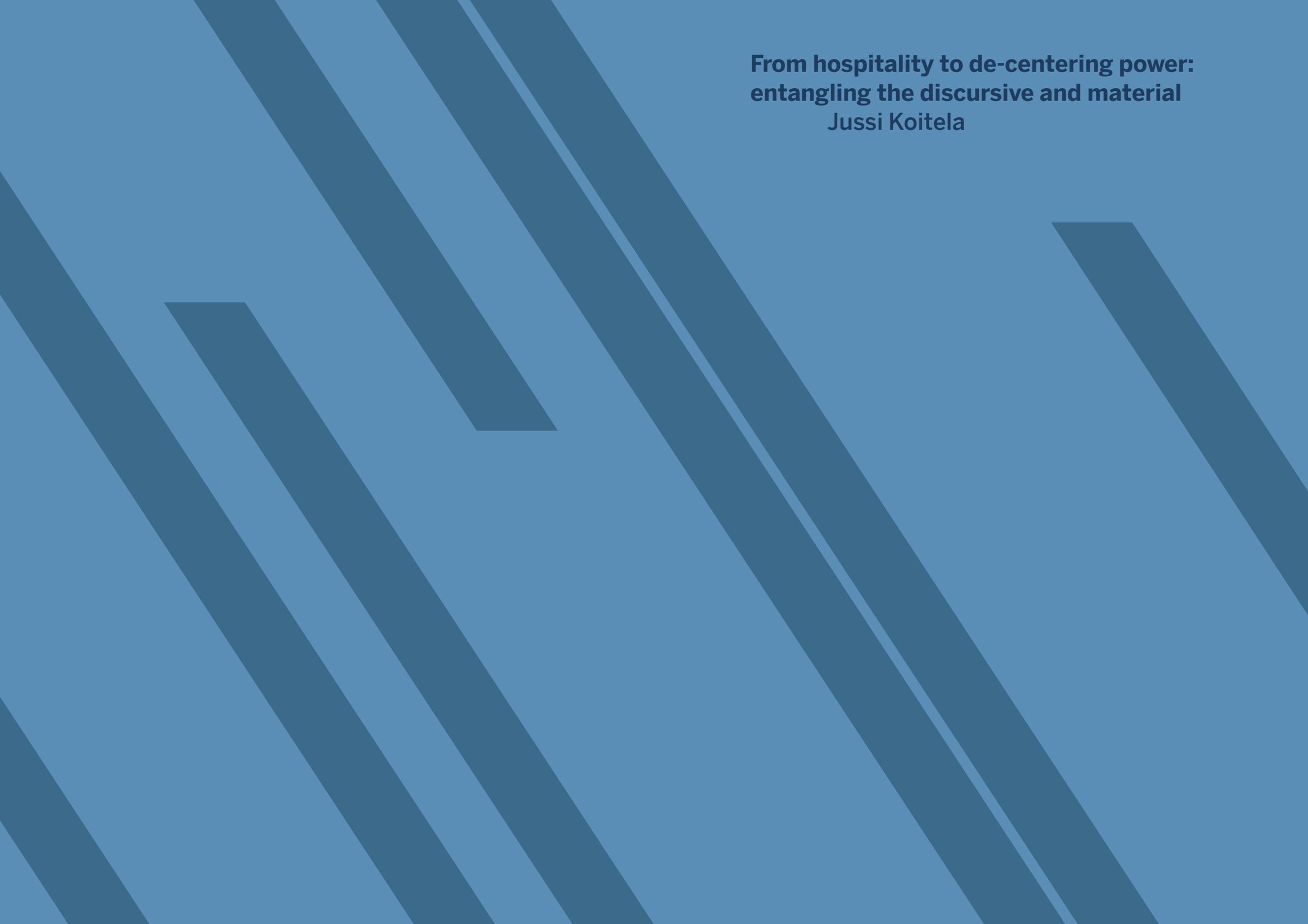
From hospitality to de-centering power: entangling the discursive and material
Jussi Koitela

From the beginning of the *Rehearsing Hospitalities* programme in 2019, power and institutional power structures have been one of the main concerns within curatorial work in Finland and abroad. This programme attempts to open up the (host) institution (Frame) as a problematic structure and challenge, rather than vivify, the positivist cultural production "machine" rhetoric that endeavours to create networks through hospitality. Considering institutional curatorial work as a dilemma has allowed the opening up of conversations and practices to speak to, with, and from varying positions of power. Not only to abstract power structures but to concrete questions of who can make decisions. Who can control, manage, and distribute wealth?

Looking back on earlier *Rehearsing Hospitalities* programming, it is evident that it has already integrated many concerns regarding power structures into other issues connected to ecologies of knowledge, access, safety, and security.[1] Class and wealth gaps cannot be separated from intersections of other forms of oppression and exclusion, even if the ruling capitalist elite benefits when the culture and public life do so—thereby dividing struggles and communities into individualised one-cause factions. For the hegemony to remain, it is easier to "include" or collaborate with different groups of marginalised communities, i.e. within the art scene, than to fundamentally redistribute and attempt power, wealth, and resource equality.

We, too, have gone through this easier step of inclusion and collaboration in the programme by collaborating with institutions, groups,

1   "In the first year, Rehearsing Hospitalities responded to sociologist Boaventura de Sousa Santo's concept of "ecologies of knowledges", asking how contemporary art might become more hospitable towards diverse and interconnected knowledges. In the second year we re-framed this to consider "ecologies of access". As we continue this concept continues to provide a grounding for the programme". See: Yvonne Billimore, "Introduction: matter(s) of security", *Rehearsing Hospitalities Companion 3*, Berlin and Helsinki: Archive Books & Frame Contemporary Art Finland, 2021. 16. For further thought on "ecologies of knowledges" see Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide* (London: Paradigm Publishers, 2014).

Scarcity isn't the problem, it's actually the maintaining of scarcity which is the problem for capitalism. The production of an artificial scarcity in order to conceal abundance, you could say, and a scarcity of time as much as a scarcity of actual goods, services, etc. Marcuse says, once this scarcity is overcome, capitalism has to work extremely hard at avoiding the possibility that people could determine their own lives and behave in a more autonomous way. —Mark Fisher, *Postcapitalist Desire*, 2020.

initiatives, and individuals. We offer a small portion of Frame's funding and the use of any resources or curatorial power to our collaborators; in return, we ask for their time and labour and receive their cultural capital and skills. This form of "inclusion" and hospitality has, to a certain degree, nourished cultural visibility and increased future working possibilities for numerous artists, partners, and collaborators with whom we have worked. Yet the question remains, has it changed the material conditions beyond individualised "success"—that very form of divisive "success" that the machinery of neoliberal capitalism imposes on us.

If the answer is "no"—and it is "no"—what needs to be done? The key is acknowledging that cultural and material exchanges are interdependent and linked. Discursive programming can gradually affect the concrete material conditions by forcing institutions and individuals to change their existing practices. And, vice versa, the material conditions, daily precarity, and survival always impact how individuals and communities represent and conceptualise those conditions in their work. In order to redistribute power and wealth, we need to gradually create and reconstitute over and over again imaginaries and vocabularies that espouse these changes. However, at the same time the changing and situated material conditions continue affecting how new imaginaries and vocabularies are formed.

So far, *Rehearsing Hospitalities* programming has been doing this, inevitably within specific economic and organisational limitations embedded in institutional and funding environments. It has created a discursive imaginary that allows activities and policies to take place that affect concrete material conditions—similarly, by facilitating the critique and discourse arising from the material, economic, and cultural conditions of lived life (within the art scene and beyond), the programming made possible the burgeoning of those discursive imageries and alternatives to new audiences. Driving change through programming is about straddling the entangled discursive and material elements

of cultural, economic, and social conditions—exploring how quotidian material experiences can be affected through creating new versatile ecologies of knowledges, accesses, and safeties.

The *Rehearsing Hospitalities* programme and *Rehearsing Hospitalities Companion 4* attempt to balance and entangle even more the elaborate and concrete forms of hospitalities; to further decentralise Frame as an institution and its power when defining which experiences and conditions matter. In one way, it does so by weaving together forms of critique towards centralised forms of power and wealth and artistic and cultural practices that operate beside these forms of power, often collectively from materially situated and embodied situations. The programme and publication attempt to demonstrate and present the cultural possibilities of redistributing curatorial, artistic, cultural, and economic power.

I am left questioning and examining many problems from various angles and wonder what the consequences are if the commoning and decentralising of power are implemented as serious alternatives for the arts instead of appendages of assimilative inclusion. How can collective work, archival practices, and writing not be a form of staged hospitality? How does one work through artistic practices in penal and care institutions such as hospitals, prisons, and schools? What is required right now to enforce the redistribution and decentralising of access to land and food? The programme and publication supplement each other by asking questions and presenting provocations missing from one another, yet not all queries can be answered, and the work remains always to be done.

Because it is the values and aesthetics of the middle class that pervade all the aspects of the culture, and because it is the middle class who decide what work will be included in this middle-class world, it is nearly impossible for the working class to publish, show or perform their work.
—Cynthia Cruz, *The Melancholia of Class: A Manifesto for the Working Class*, 2021.

Personal thoughts, drawings, or annotations

A love letter for worlds in the making
Florian Carl and Jenni Laiti
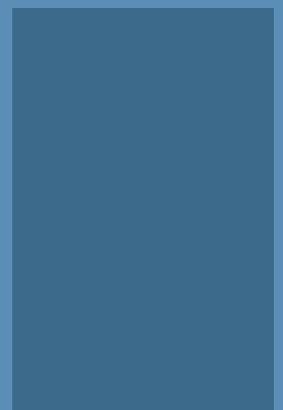
Around the world, Indigenous communities lead efforts to nurture different worlds into being. Grounded trust in the transformative power of making kin is a material and spiritual manifestation of this organising. From the Zapatista's large-scale deliberate decision-making, the regenerative affirmation of the Unist'ot'en's healing centre, to the work of Indigenous women, youth, and Two-Spirit people to develop and strengthen culturally-rooted responses to land/body traumas.[1] Working in contrast to processes informed by business as usual, like the largely obsolete UN climate negotiations, these actions are grounded in the knowledge of land body ecologies, the wisdom of our more-than-human and plant relatives, and deep commitment to the transformative potential of letting different visions of the future guide our actions today.

This text is our offering for everyone who nurtures kin relations and takes care of our collective memory. It is for those of you who, like us, are kept up at night—struggling with memories of all that has been, and fighting for what is left. Every word and every sentence is a gift that reflects our time, energy, and the relations that shape our thinking. This knowledge has been with us all along, nestled deep into our geospatial cortex. It reminds us to rehearse our hospitalities as ancestors who belong to the Earthen community. With this approach, we intend to nourish braver spaces which allow us to gather the courage for bold actions toward radical visions of the future. Songs of different times echo all around us. If only we take a moment to stop and listen.

1   See: Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network, *Violence on the Land, Violence on our Bodies: Building an Indigenous Response to Environmental Violence*, 2016. Available online: http://landbodydefense.org/uploads/files/Violence%20on%20the%20Land%20and%20Body%20 Report%20and%20Toolkit%202016.pdf (Last accessed. 21.06.2022).

*Is the sun brave because she
sends her glimmering beams to light up
even the darkest of places?
After all, she is not resisting the darkness.
She just is.*

It's easy to find that we lack ways to express the often overwhelming sense of loss, anxiety, and resignation. Efforts to express sorrow become struggles to connect with each other, too. By honouring worlds that are being destroyed by colonial forces, we can expose the unacceptable circumstances of our collective conditioning. Guided by ancient wisdom and multi-species ethics, our collective potential lies in the nourishment of relationships that are reciprocal, accountable, and consensual. To tap into this potential requires us to work with the frictions between worlds, in deep commitment to those closest to the hurt.[2] In such moments, injury and damage are not all that define us. Sharing grief turns into an act of love. Who we are links up with our yearnings, desires, and the care we extend to our communities. Consequently, we not only attempt to grapple with the terms of *who* we are but also of *how* we are.

  Through this text, we aspire to shapeshift in ways of being that are more attentive to the many parallel worlds around us. To dwell on the wonder of life, threaded into a tapestry of sacred bodies connected across generations, each in their own right. We tune our life, even briefly, to the rhythm of our expanded relatives. Welcome into this carefully crafted space in-between.

2 See: Suvi West & Petra Laiti, *#StopHatredNow - Working with frictions!*, 2020. Available online: https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=267212524460561 (Last accessed. 01.05.2022).

Sense your body touching the earth.

Taste the air rushing into your lungs.

Decolonisation is not a struggle for the land but a struggle *by* the land. It is not confined by the mere survival of life. Instead, it is rather about gratitude and collective responsibility for the thriving of life. The movement of such relations is guided by the speed required to nurture caring and loving relations. As a result, it is beyond mere resistance to or critique of current systems. It is a moral and ethical commitment which manifests, for us, in efforts toward "unbecoming a site of settler colonialism" (Belcourt 2015, 3). Such practices bring us together in a commitment to creating practically utopic moments of worldmaking. Having yet to birth decolonised worlds into being, such an approach to community organising becomes an act of practising science-fiction (adrienne maree brown 2019). These processes shape collaborative manifestations of futures that are "there, but not yet here", as José Esteban Muñoz writes (2009). To invite radical imagination as the basis of our actions, and to commit to a future that emphasises love, self-determination, and the thriving of life.

  Previous generations are handing down many of the most vital lessons to us. We can find their traces in our cultures—the shape of the lands and waters. A resurgence of their treks cherishes the unpredictable patterns cast by our material interdependence rather than a resignation to mere fate. It is about welcoming a return to the future (Segato 2022), emphasising how communal cosmo-centric relationality shines through every being on the planet. This means embracing the regenerative and transformative potential of making kin by writing ourselves into relation. We are led towards concerns about how bodies gain differences and become similar. Kim TallBear encourages us to consider the transformative

Disparaged in 16th century literature as a source of laziness and disorder, the commons were essential to the reproduction of many small farmers or cottars who survived only because they had access to meadows in which to keep cows, or woods in which to gather timber, wild berries and herbs, or quarries, fish-ponds, and open spaces in which to meet. Beside encouraging collective decision making and work cooperation, the commons were the material foundation upon which peasant solidarity and sociality could thrive. All the festivals, games, and gatherings of the peasant community were held on the commons. The social function of the commons was especially important for women, who, having less title to land and less social power, were more dependent on them for their subsistence, autonomy, and sociality. —Silvia Feredici, *Caliban and the Witch: Women, The Body and Primitive Accumulation*, 2004.

potential of decolonised kin relationships. For example, can such relations help us to engage more intimately with bodies, "whether those are human bodies, bodies of water or land, the bodies of other living beings, and the vitality of our ancestors and other beings no longer or not yet embodied" (Kim TallBear 2018, 161)? If we emphasise actual states of relation as they pertain to these bodies, "might that spur more just interactions" (TallBear, 161)? We can re-connect the dots of our relations through a decolonial practice grounding our work in communal self-determination, for example, with the organisation of basic food, housing, and healthcare provisions.

I can lose my hands, and still live. I can lose my legs and still live. I can lose my eyes and still live. I can lose my hair, eyebrows, nose, arms, and many other things and still live. But if I lose the air I die. If I lose the sun I die. If I lose the earth I die. If I lose the water I die. If I lose the plants and animals I die. All of these things are more a part of me, more essential to my every breath, than is my so-called body. What is my real body? (Forbes 2008, 155)

From this vantage point, we can see multiple layers unfurling alongside the interaction between the many different communities who co-inhabit this planet. One such example is the practice of mutual aid between squirrels and pecan trees (Robin Wall Kimmerer 2013). Squirrels are sustained by the abundance of nuts gifted from trees. They hide nuts under the soil over the winter, many of which are never recovered.

In this way, squirrels help to plant the next generation of trees while the trees nourish generations of squirrels. Another case that highlights the interdependence of communities is what scientists call "trophic cascades". These are ecological processes that can weave entire ecosystems together. Take the movement of ocean-dwelling species, for example. As they swim up and down in the water column, they create a vertical mixture of nutrients to an amount that is roughly the same as all the world's winds, waves, and tides.[3] The number of whales across the oceans impacts the number of nutrients that cycle through different layers of the water. This creates key feeding grounds for plankton which in turn alters the population of fish and krill. But there is more to the story because plankton draws carbon from the air. At the end of their life, they sink to the ocean floor, where the carbon is locked for thousands of years. In other words, the flourishing of whales contributes to factors that can implicate the global climate. A similar effect on land is based on the size of reindeer herds in Arctic regions. By grazing and trampling the vegetation, they contribute to the emergence of ecosystems with specific emission characteristics.[4]

The coasts of Sápmi exemplify this world wide web, too.[5] On the occasion of the herring and salmon runs, whales travel all the way to the Caribbean sea and back each year. Another species that benefit from this abundance is the Arctic Tern. Their yearly migration between Sápmi and Antarctica averages an annual round-trip length of about 70,900 km.[6]

3   See: Joe Roman and James J. McCarthy, *The Whale Pump: Marine Mammals Enhance Primary Productivity in a Coastal Basin*, 2010. Available online: https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0013255 (Last accessed. 21.06.2022).
4   See: Joris P. G. M. Cromsigt, Mariska te Beest, Graham I. H. Kerley, Marietjie Landman, Elizabeth le Roux and Felisa A. Smith, *Trophic rewilding as a climate change mitigation strategy?*, 2018. Available online: http://dx.doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2017.0440 (Last accessed. 01.06.2022).
5   See: Global animal movements based on Movebank data (map). Available online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=nUKh0fr1Od8 (Last accessed. 21.06.2022).
6   See: Carsten Egevang et al, "Tracking of Arctic terns Sterna paradisaea reveals longest animal migration", *PNAS* Vol 107:5, 2009. Available online: https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.0909493107 (Last accessed. 01.06.2022).

However, colonisation is forcibly disassociating these relations and uprooting these pathways. For example, the intensified melting of ice and snow in the Arctic has devastating consequences for the coastal regions and island homes in the Pacific. There are many more feedback loops set into motion by these dynamics. To know and name all these processes and implicated communities misses the point. We have to understand how they take care of one another, so that we may better understand how to take care, too—shapeshifting carefully attends to how our bodies are worked by the teachings provided by lands, waters, and more-than-human relatives.

In their caress of that old hymn I came to know that it wasn't naming the source of wonder that mattered, it was wonder itself. (Kimmerer 2013, 222)

In concert with the expansion of capitalist logic and patriarchy, Europe's aristocracy, clergy, and private elite joined forces to fuel colonial conquest. Over centuries, they experimented with a host of divisive and violent schemes of domination, like the enclosure of the commons, chattel slavery, and genocide.[7] This setup is rigged in favour of a small elite who control the rules. They operate as if called upon by some obscure destiny (Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz 2014, 3), denying the violence and material dispossession entailed in such positions of power. While we are all negatively impacted by these systems, there are substantial differences in our pertinence to violence. The climate crisis is one more symptom of these systems. High-consumption countries in the global North alone

7   See: Silvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation* (Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 2004).

are responsible for 92 per cent of emissions over the planetary boundary.[8] However, the brunt of the consequences and alleged solutions are disproportionately imposed on people of the global majority, primarily Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC)—especially women, transgender people, and precarious workers.

One critical barrier to the decolonisation of our relations is the predominance of colonial-time. This framework dictates a particular perception of the present historical narratives and conceptualisations of the future. As a result, colonial-time could also be described as the imposition of a "common ground" from which we evaluate the conditions of our lives. Based on this, extractive industries deprive age-old ecosystems of their integrity as living organisms, streamlining or damming rivers to generate hydropower, turning forests into cash-crop plantations, biofuel or carbon storage facilities. Similarly, the critical importance of care work is pushed to the fringes of national election cycles while the margins of shareholders and investors get absolute priority. Collective wellbeing is sacrificed for quick profits and technological progress: all to satisfy the relentless growth imperative of capitalist economies. This shows that colonial-time is also ransoming our collective future. As such, we have to be careful about multi-culturalist tropes that impose "a time and space of the post" (King 2015) or stabilise "the settler identity insofar as it seeks reform from within—a 'within' that is both embodied and institutionalised" (Belcourt 2015, 2).

We must slow down to become attentive to what happens with us as we appeal to the very structures that, in many ways, are responsible for our detriment. Decolonising our minds is a continuous process of (un)learning, deeply involved with our positionality regarding the communities around us (Kuokkanen 2010). It amplifies our collective

8   See: Jason Hickel, "Quantifying national responsibility for climate breakdown: an equality-based attribution approach for carbon dioxide emissions in excess of the planetary boundary", *The Lancet Planetary Health* Vol. 4:9, 2020. Available online: https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196(20)30196-0 (Last accessed. 24.07.2022).

Environmental justice to me also means engaging with other forms of knowledge production outside of Euro-Western academia in order to restore the degradation that has been done to the planet. These forms of knowledge must also be community-based and require active listening from those in power in order for reparations (to local communities, environments, health, and economies), alternative economic and environmental practices, and redistribution of resources to occur.
—Karen Bauer, "'Contraband' Practice: Doing Environmental Justice with Water", *Open Rivers: Rethinking Water, Place & Community*, 2019.

power in recognising the need to extend care across generations and species. These connections affirm the dependence of humanity as part of the thriving of the Earthen community. However, it's not enough to be well versed in a language of justice when we continue to disregard the injustices that constitute many organising spaces. Neo-colonial institutions and the ally-industrial complex are quick to create a sense of change.[9] This includes the ignorance about how passing the mic to frontline communities can confuse "fantasies about an exchange rate between the attention economy and the material economy" (Olúfẹ́mi O. Táíwò, 2022, 74). A couple of those risks are, for example, reproducing tokenisation and exotification to fulfil diversity checkboxes, imposing Western-centric political agenda, and giving way to a false charity. We must not fall prey to the liberal politics of inclusion. Instead, we need to dislodge "the work of humanism as the barometer of liberation" (Stanley 2013, 5).

Changing how we organise communities is not abstract. It is as concrete as it gets. It concerns who we involve, the materials we employ, and the encoded power structures. How can we ensure that our organisations share resources fairly, counter dominant-power hierarchies, and help abolish racist institutions? By building reciprocal, accountable, and consensual relations, we will not only significantly change our ways of organising. They allow us to show up for collective liberation alongside those who are closest to the hurt. After all, it is people and their communities that reproduce oppressive institutions, deny structural inequalities, and reproduce colonial violence. Therefore, people can also scrap institutions, compost structures, and sow the seeds for altogether different futures.

Our power is in the shadows cast by the flames of this system burning to the ground, while we light another match. (Indigenous Action, 2021)

Despite the pressures of colonisation, many Indigenous communities continue to follow their own time frames to organise community. These ways of moving teach us to listen for ancestral life-giving relations. But under present systems, these knowledges are under constant threat of erasure. With the intensifying climate crisis, for example, Sámi have already lost the option of orienting themselves to a year with eight seasons; today, there remain only about five to seven characteristic seasons. Other examples of different time-space relations in the context of the Sámi are for communities to follow the reindeer's yearly migration patterns or to share stories of celestial bodies like the Heavenly Hunt— Elmien vijreme.[10] This shows the linking of time and space. They help to reference aspects of society, like when to avoid certain areas and not upset the newborn reindeer calves. To know such lessons means to feel them with our bodies in relation to land and water bodies, plants and more-than-human relatives. The vastness of these ways of being in relation might not be immediately understandable through everyday interactions. But, this does not mean they are irrelevant to us—quite the contrary. The shape of mountains, rivers, and the activity of more-than-human relatives profoundly impact our ways of being. In turn, our movements significantly impact these bodies, too. The thriving and guardianship these bodies provide for each other is key to our collective liberation.

9   See: Indigenous Action, Accomplices Not Allies: *Abolishing the Ally Industrial Complex*, 2014. Available online: https://www.indigenousaction.org/accomplices-not-allies-abolishing-the-ally-industrial-complex/#:~:text=Abolishing%20allyship%20can%20occur%20through,that%20could%20bear%20not%20replicating (Last accessed. 04.07.2022).

10   See: Heavenly Hunt. Available online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A_ZyGtjY30U&t=27s/ and Elmien vijreme. Available online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8CrFg3zD7g (Last accessed. 04.07.2022).

Sharing such knowledge is about reciprocity, learning how to receive and give back. It is an effort filled with a deep recognition of shared responsibility and accountability (Kuokkanen 2004, 6). Instead of imitating Western ideals for which no one is ever enough, we grapple with the immediacy of belonging and place-based solidarity.[11] In this effort, the guidance offered by Indigenous community organisers and knowledge holders is invaluable. Their inter-generational knowledges are a reminder of ancestors whose courage to love nudges our struggles to care for the communities around us: the joy of our queer siblings, the force of untamed rivers, and the radical solidarity with "others". When we tend to their teachings, we transform who we are and what we do. As those with the strongest ancestral practices, Indigenous communities have critical knowledge and practical experiences to inform processes of transformative healing and justice in relation to the Earthen community. Based on sustainability and reciprocity, Indigenous practices "reflect land-based worldviews founded on active recognition of kinship relations that extend beyond the human domain" (Kuokkanen 2011, 219). These bonds are, in many ways, also what bestows us with the responsibility to resist and refuse the colonial doctrine.

Community organising connects deeply to our self-determination over the values and practices that inform how we belong. As Jade Begay exclaimed in response to Western climate action, "we need to shift who is leading and who makes decisions for our communities, lands and resources".[12] Kyle Powys Whyte (2020) notes, based on the research approaches by Anishnaabe, Salish, and Haudenosaunee communities, knowledge production is always necessarily linked to "governance value". He describes that positive governance must be consensual,

transparent, and trusting. Knowledge creation that does not embrace this responsibility should not be considered proper research. In other words, "governance value" can only be derived from responsible actions which are accountable and grounded in belonging.

In our embodiment of the multiple-parallel worlds outlined across this text, we aim to contribute to different visions that could guide our present actions. Because the Earthen community is linked across relations that have always been here, we create restitution for the futures, too. Such an act of resurgence is a small but essential part of intergenerational connectivity. We work from a different starting point when we adjust our perspective and console our consensual reality. Held by these threads of belonging, our presence in this text is a form of sharing presents—to and of each other. *Us* by writing, and *you* by reading, together we embrace a slowing down to create moments of wonder. Many communities have had to face the violence of apocalyptic proportions before. Their ancestors remind us to be cautious about what is important for us now and what we want to shield and bring with us. This also means being attentive to how we take care of those gifts. Which gifts do we need right now? And, which gifts do we trust are essential for coming generations?

Against the totality of colonial pragmatism, a willfully idealistic and utopian practice is an expression of desire for different ways of being. To dissolve the colonial binaries that hold our collective liberation in a stranglehold of antagonisms. This is not about disregarding our differences. Instead, we allow sitting with those differences by inviting moments of vulnerability. Such processes can be painful since they require an acknowledgement of the operationalisation of displacement in and beyond our bodies. However, this fragmentation also embraces a co-animation of our relations, which gestures, even if just for a brief moment, to a different humanity. From the decolonial actions (Belcourt 2015) of our more-than-human relatives and the plant world, we can learn how every step is meaningful, and that life is in constant motion. In the tension of

11   See: Gen Coulthard and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson. "Grounded Normativity / Place-Based Solidarity", *American Quarterly* Vol. 68:2, Project MUSE, 2016.
12   See: Jade Begay, https://www.instagram.com/jadethemighty/ (Last accessed. 04.07.2022).

being between life and death, we nurture braver spaces—moments in time that offer solace and provide deep care and love. Living a good life is essential not because it manifests resistance against existing systems of oppression but because life is what it is, and we are who we are. To return to the beginning of this text:

Is the sun brave because she sends her glimmering beams to light up even the darkest of places?
After all, she is not resisting the darkness.
She just is.

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Squatting the internet
K-oh-llective (Nada Elkalaawy,
Engy Mohsen, Mohamed Al Bakeri,
Soukaina Joual, and Rania Atef)

Amidst an inherent lack of support, our collective body—as a community of artists and practitioners—is fragmented and safely guarded with the little knowledge an individual can bear. How can this lack be compensated for or reconditioned? One way forward is to start from within, with the hope of forming an emergent strategy for shaping change.[1] The actions of one group can be adopted by other circles and spiral into a pattern that eventually affects larger societal structures, institutions, and the community at large. The mere act of coming together can thus be seen as a coping mechanism, or rather the last hope at cutting through the precarity of practising art.

It is therefore essential to explore the collectivized imaginaries and practices—collectivizations, in the plural—that make egalitarian forms of life imaginable and actionable.
—Jonas Staal, *Collectivizations*, 2021.[2]

The widespread uncertainty elicited by the earliest wave of the global pandemic has pushed practitioners everywhere to devise inventive means to deal with isolation, immobility, and the inability to work or produce. This ranged from online meetings and reading groups, to virtual exhibitions and live-streamed performances. Everyone, from individuals who shared their works with institutions, to museums that allowed access to their archives and collections, have all found ways to

1   adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds* (Chico, CA: AK Press, 2017).
2   Jonas Staal, *Collectivizations*, e-flux journal issue #118, 2021. Available online: https://www.e-flux.com/journal/118/394239/collectivizations/ (Last accessed. 08.07.2022).

create and maintain a sense of togetherness even if virtual. Ever since, online happenings have been completely normalised, courtesy of the long periods of globally-imposed home confinement. Thus, this mode of working has become an integral part of what shapes contemporary art practices today as well as the newly adapted modes of meeting, working, and exhibiting. Online spaces turned into accommodating shelters.

Care, on the other hand, turned into a very dominant sentiment which was later mobilised to provide more tangible forms of support for artists. "Care Packages" by The Mohammad and Mahera Abu Ghazaleh Foundation (The MMAG Foundation) was one attempt to provide comfort through frequently published texts, as they state "it brings patience, love, and community during these trying times". Qaaf Laam Collective were also attempting to put together toolkits and develop strategies for cultural workers to practise solidarity on individual, group, and institutional levels that create "critical, self-reflexive, just and thoughtful working conditions". Other initiatives—mostly funding institutions—created one-time grant programmes to support the suspended livelihoods of artists like the Artist Support Grant by the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC), the Project Revival Fund by Warehouse421, Art Lives: Emergency Initiative to Support Arab Arts Practitioners by Ettijahat, Exceptional Grants for Supporting Artists & Writers by Culture Resource, and Research and Practice Platform by Art Jameel, to name a few.

For other institutions, it was the unprecedented act of offering space which demonstrated solidarity with artists in precarious situations. Following the 2020 Beirut explosion, Ashkal Alwan welcomed those who were looking to "rest, socialise, work, or research". A year earlier, The MMAG Foundation offered spaces and facilities across their building for artists, writers, and researchers based in Jordan to support and develop their practices and engage with the greater community of cultural practitioners.

Witnessing all these different attempts of collectivities, extended hospitalities, and the utilisation of offline/online spaces begged the question: How can a virtual space then, serve as an act of hospitality? How can a space allow its visitors to inhabit, interact with, and contribute to it? How can a framework allow the sharing of resources and distribution of knowledge? If communes can be referenced as a model of shared living and working, how can their ethos be translated into the online world? Better yet, how can one squat the internet?

With all that in mind, one must first think of how to define hospitality, and then later, how to exercise it. Hospitality can be seen as an act of providing service with no expected reciprocity. However, the challenge is how to see through and think beyond the hierarchy of the guest/host dynamic. Breaking this dynamic can be almost impossible without compromising efficiency. One way around it can be by breaking down the role, changing the decision-making process into a shared conversation, and hence turning it into co-hosting. In order to make a space more hospitable, guests should be met with an extensive set of guidelines that can help them navigate this space yet leave room for them to rethink and readjust based on their thoughts and needs. Can this unknowingly instigate a sense of shared ownership if stakes are shared and affected equally (whether negatively or positively) amongst all parties involved? Does the hosting body, then, provide a service or support? How can we be hospitable to one another and further extend this hospitality to others outside the group?

Working together under the name K-oh-llective, we are a group of five artists who came together not due to the lack of support and resources but despite it. We found comfort in this togetherness as we frequently engaged in ongoing and critical conversations. We fostered a shared support system through which we nurtured each other's practices. The brainchild of our coming together is the namesake online space created for resource-sharing, and for writing about urgent

topics and discussing them amongst art practitioners—specifically from the Southwest Asian and North African regions. We see it as an opportunity to expand this circle of knowledge to share with the public and extend the collateral support systems beyond our group of five.

To try and think through some of the questions we pose above, we propose a compilation of exercises that will seem familiar to the readers. We think of an exercise not only as a playful tool to facilitate discussions, but also as a demonstrative way of flushing out ideas towards speaking and writing.

The following exercises allowed us to think about our structure, roles, ethos, what drove us to come together, and what is at stake should we come apart someday. Whilst playing, we tried not to stick to the memorised preambles and definitions, but rather chronicle what we experience and continuously confront on a regular basis, and provide a means of resistance, if necessary.

Exercise #1:   **Word Search**

D	B	A	C	A	B	G	O	O	C	T	C	S	C
I	O	C	O	I	C	A	R	E	O	A	O	O	O
R	P	C	M	N	O	T	E	T	L	N	M	X	O
N	P	E	P	R	N	X	V	Y	L	O	M	E	K
E	O	S	E	O	T	E	I	T	A	I	U	E	N
S	R	S	N	E	R	T	T	I	B	T	N	G	O
E	T	I	S	U	I	N	C	L	O	A	I	E	W
R	U	B	A	G	B	O	E	A	R	I	C	C	L
V	N	I	T	O	U	C	L	T	A	D	A	R	E
I	I	L	I	L	T	N	L	I	T	E	T	U	D
C	T	I	O	A	O	E	O	P	I	M	I	O	G
E	Y	T	N	I	R	O	C	S	O	N	O	S	E
T	R	Y	R	D	N	O	G	O	N	O	N	E	T
E	C	N	A	D	I	U	G	H	T	C	U	R	E

collective   exchange   collaboration   contributor
dialogue   guidance   ~~opportunity~~   ~~resource~~
~~compensation~~   communication   hospitality   allocation
participation   service   mediation   discourse
care   ~~accessibility~~   context   ~~knowledge~~

Recreation #1:

To recreate this exercise and play it with your collective/colleagues/co-workers:

1. Compile a list of 20 or more terms that are crucial to the work that you do together.
2. Plug them into: https://thewordsearch.com/maker/
3. With every word circled, ask the player to provide a personal definition for it.
4. Discuss the definition together and see how it relates to your work.

Definitions[3]

Resource: Money, artistry, spaces, facilities and/or materials that help one function effectively.

Accessibility: The ability to be easily found, approached, reached, entered, spoken with, used or understood.

Compensation: Acknowledging the intellectual value and creative labour through tangible or emotional means and mutual bene-fits, often resulting from continuous negotiations rather than set measures and regulations.

Opportunity: Sought by many, granted to a few.

Knowledge: Changing forms of material and immaterial facts, information, and skills which can be produced, acquired, distributed, accumulated, learned, unlearned, or passed down by groups of people, either through experience, education, or publishing.

3   These are our own definitions that we compiled together as a group, while playing this exercise.

```
D  B  A  C  A  B  G  O  O  C  T  C  S  C
I  O  C  O  I  C  A  R  E  O  A  O  O
R  P  C  M  N  O  T  E  T  L  N  M  X  O
N  P  E  P  R  N  X  V  Y  L  O  M  E  K
E  O  S  E  O  T  E  I  T  A  I  U  E  N
S  R  S  N  E  R  T  T  I  B  T  N  G  O
E  T  I  S  U  I  N  C  L  O  A  I  E  W
R  U  B  A  G  B  O  E  A  R  I  C  C  L
V  N  I  T  O  U  C  L  T  A  D  A  R  E
I  I  L  I  L  T  N  L  I  T  E  T  U  D
C  T  I  O  A  O  E  O  P  I  M  I  O  G
E  Y  T  N  I  R  O  C  S  O  N  O  S  E
T  R  Y  R  D  N  O  G  O  N  O  N  E  T
E  C  N  A  D  I  U  G  H  T  C  U  R  E
```

Recreation #2:

To recreate this exercise and play it with your collective/colleagues/co-workers:

1. Compile a list of 20 or more terms that are crucial to the work that you do together.
2. Divide the terms amongst yourselves and everyone creates clues for each other.
3. The clues can be: three-word associations associations, riddles or definitions.
4. Plug them into: https://crosswordlabs.com/
5. With every riddle answered, ask the player how it relates to your work.

CLUES   WORD

1 Narrow at the top, wide at the bottom   ....
2 Literary form transcribing an exchange   ....
3 Bear the weight of something or lift it off of someone ....
4 There for the taking   ....
5 There is no such thing as bad publicity   ....
6 System, Structure, Routine   ....
7 Structured information   ....
8 File, Copy, Download   ....
9 Second finger   ....
10 Welcome, Request, Collaboration   ....
11 Only exists if together   ....

```
    1  H I E R A R C H Y
  2  D I A L O G U E
       3  S U P P O R T
     4  O P E N - S O U R C E
   5  R E V I E W
 6  I N S T I T U T I O N
       7  D A T A B A S E
 8  T E M P L A T E
       9  I N D E X
10  I N V I T A T I O N
11  C O M M U N I T Y
```
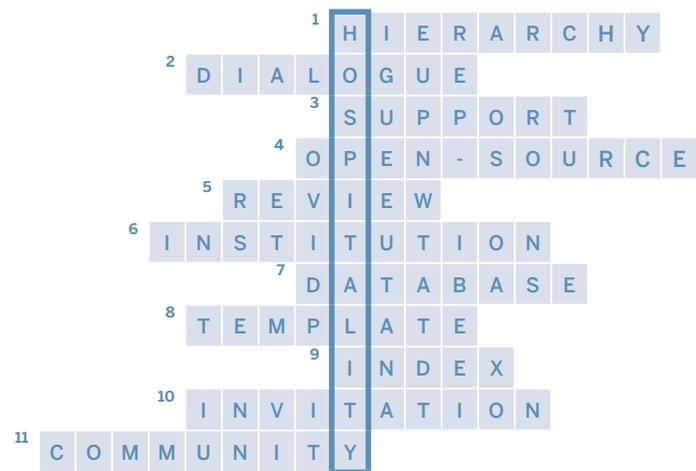
4   Hidden word: Hospitality

The wheel contains the following questions:

- What informs collective structures?
- What are the pros and cons of pooling resources?
- Differentiate between support and service
- How can an online space serve as an act of hospitality?
- Are there ways of dismantling the guest/host hierarchy?
- Explain your understanding of shared ownership
- How can dialogue be used as a tool to create a sense of community?
- How can different contributions be evaluated within a collective?
- Why should the dichotomy of local/global contexts be considered?
- When does the work of a collective become obsolete?
- How can collectives avoid reproducing institutional dynamics?
- Expand on the motives and gains that keep collectives going

Recreation #3:

To recreate this exercise and play it with your collective/colleagues/co-workers:

1. Compile a list of 12 or more questions that are crucial to the work that you do together.
2. Plug the min to: https://spinnerwheel.com/
3. Spin the wheel and answer the question you get.
4. Discuss the answer together and ask how it relates to your work.

Multiple forces are vying for capture and restriction of traditionally available knowledge: corporations versus indigenous peoples, such as Monsanto owning the patent on the genetic structure of the neem; federal and state governments versus citizens regarding balancing encryption and digital surveillance with individual privacy; universities versus professors as to whether institutions or individuals will own intellectual property; and publishers versus libraries in the ephemeralization of library collections through licensing, bundling, and withdrawal of information. —Charlotte Hess and Elinor Ostrom, "Ideas, Artifacts, and Facilities: Information as a Common-pool Resource", *Law and Contemporary Problems*, 2011.

Post-Exercise Reflections

Audio Type:	Zoom recording
Recording Date:	May 24, 2022 02:59 PM Cairo
Duration:	01:17:35
Speakers:	Rania Atef, Engy Mohsen, Nada ElKalaawy, Mohamed Al Bakeri
Transcript by:	Soukaina Joual, Rania Atef, Mohamed Al Bakeri
Date:	30/05/2022
Original Language:	Arabic and English

[00:34:50]

"What are the pros and cons of pooling resources?"

"…We need to think first about what we define as resources. When we think of 'knowledge', it shouldn't be tied to the idea of sharing suitable opportunities and tips for application writing only, it can go beyond that. It can be a shared piece of information, an exchange, an insight into how much you were paid for this or that exhibition, or an insight into which institution pays well and which doesn't. Can hospitality be expanded through the act of pooling resources? Think of it as if you are sharing a living space with someone, will you share your food or keep it for yourself?…"

"…On the other hand, there is an omnipresent sense of entitlement that is at play when there is a giver and a receiver at either end. Since hospitality may prompt a sense of 'giving' and not 'sharing', we would always argue: is K-oh-llective giving or sharing? We expect that 'others' give up secrecy when we start sharing, yet "hospitality" at its core stipulates that there should be no expectations of reception in return. As time passes, we become too conscious of the shared responsibility we have

towards ourselves and others. We feel that our audience is expecting us to keep providing—nonstop. If for any reason we become incapable of providing information, there is a chance we may be criticised for not meeting their expectations. If we stopped functioning the same way we do now, we fear that we will be burdened by this dynamic turning into an obligation …."

[00:41:00]

"When does the work of a collective become obsolete?"
"…The work of the collective can collapse or become obsolete if: the personal/collective purposes become misaligned, the drive is lost, we lack funding or the willingness to work without getting any tangible reward, or we lose the engagement and appreciation from the audience. Another reason can be the lack of relevance or the inability to include a new member in the case one of the founding members is no longer part of the collective. We believe a collective is a group of individuals whose presence is absolutely complementary to one another. Until one of the members decides to walk out, it will be very hard to end K-oh-llective voluntarily. Alternatively, our activities can change, and the collective can adapt and take a different shape. We don't have to retain the same structure and purpose forever…."

Take a moment to sense the spaces, networks, and communities created by artists around you. Sense the art worlds led by Black artists, Indigenous artists, and artists of color, by disabled artists, by trans artists, by queer artists, by nonbinary artists, by neurodivergent artists, by undocumented artists, by immigrant artists, by poor artists, and by so many people who are not only surviving, but flourishing, in art worlds of cooperation and mutual aid. Artist-centric networks, organizations, and initiatives—in short, solidarity art worlds—are not only possible, they already exist. —Caroline Woolard, *Art, Engagement, Economy: The Working Practice of Caroline Woolard*, 2020.

Personal thoughts, drawings, or annotations

"Expanding the collective's limit as a survival strategy."
"...At some point, if the lack of funding or reward becomes a given, we could only alter our frequency of engagement, content or approach to keep going in a manner that accommodates the circumstances...."

"We always say we're artists, not curators."
"...We believe our work within K-oh-llective has a curatorial aspect to it in terms of choosing the discussed subject, the guest, the work structure, and developing ideas. We always think of everything through a bird's eye view and in relation to each other. We can recall an excerpt from the text Ismail Fayed wrote for K-oh-llective...."

I have intentionally avoided curating as a full-time job, especially during the 2000s as it became more and more a rather pretentious and "fashionable" label. I much prefer the more antiquated notion of a curator, i.e., a keeper of a particular collection, someone who preserves and takes care of an artefact. —Ismail Fayed, *Thinking in Conversation: Writing on Contemporary Art*, 2022.[5]

5 Ismail Fayed, *Thinking in Conversation: Writing on Contemporary Art*, K-oh-llective, 2022. Available online: https://kohllective.com/thinking-in-conversation-writing-on-contemporary-art (Last accessed. 09.07.2022).

"Explain your understanding of shared ownership."
"...We consider our website to have shared ownership between the audience and K-oh-llective. Yet, it depends on where it starts and ends, and the limitations we've put on visitors to personalise and add something to the website. It occurred more than once that our audience initiated a need for information to become available, a specific tool to be added, or a suggestion for a topic they wanted to discuss in a podcast/text. Subsequently, the audience can have a hand in directing the dialogue and choice of topics, but where do we draw the line?"

"...It wouldn't be efficient or realistic to make the website editable by any visitor. The other options would consume a lot of time and require limitations to regulate and filter added content. Yet, at the same time, some of our sections rely heavily on audience participation, such as the library of art publications and the contact sheet of artisans...."

"...I believe with a model like K-oh-llective, shared ownership is a constant dance between maintaining the clear direction and general goal of the initiative while including the audience in as many activations as possible, provided that there is some process of regulating content...."

The practice of commoning involves identifying and supporting practices and articulations that render our interdependencies explicit and open to collective negotiation and transformation, and challenging and dismantling all that seeks to close these spaces down. —Ethan Miller and J.K. Gibson-Graham, "Thinking with interdependence: from economy/environment to ecological livelihoods", *Thinking in the World: A Reader*, 2019.

Anthropology shows that the institution of commons is universal and cross-cultural and that although commons have been endangered throughout history by colonialism, imperialism, and capitalism, they have nonetheless resisted, and not only on the basic logic of survival or sustainability. On the contrary, they have developed powerful ontologies of beauty, excess and luxury in countering the dehumanising and belittling logic of capitalism. —Massimiliano Mollona, *Art/Commons: Anthropology Beyond Capitalism*, 2021.

I think there are several misconceptions in some of the ways people look at the common. One is to think of it in terms of assets rather than labour, and I would argue that the commons should not be a thing that's thought of in terms of common assets but rather in terms of the labour that is used to produce them, what the relation of labour and governance of assets is. Assets themselves are not the issue. This is something that Peter Linebaugh does talk about, the commons of activity: "To speak of the commons as if it were a natural resource is misleading at best and dangerous at worst - the commons is an activity and, if anything, it expresses relationships in society that are inseparable from relations to nature." … It's labour that sustains the commons. It's about the people. It's not about the fact that it's some kind of naturally given gift. —Simon Yuill, *The Uncommonality of the Commons*, 2015.

**Live streaming communities:
How we regain cooperative behaviour
in the Twitch era**
Mike Watson

"Beam me up, Scotty" is a catchphrase familiar to many anglo-speakers over 40, evoking the teleportation system aboard the Star Trek Enterprise. The phrase's popularity (which became a spoken meme) from the late 60s until now was perhaps due to the special status that teleportation holds in the collective human imagination. Despite the phrase never having been said verbatim in Star Trek, the image of Montgomery Scott, "Scotty", beaming Captain Kirk and crew from alien territories back aboard, represented the possibility of overcoming spatiotemporality. It also symbolised the possibility of being the protagonist and master of one's reality, with "Beam me up" being a command Scotty must enact as a subordinate. The dwindling popularity of this phrase in daily usage clearly accords with the time passed since Kirk and Scotty appeared as part of the mainstream US and British media offering, with successive seasons of Star Trek featuring different characters and technologies. Though the diminution in the use of the phrase likely also accords with the regular real-life use of technologies that can beam our likenesses (or that of avatars) to remote locations. Since the mass uptake of Skype, and more recently Zoom, live streaming and video conferencing have become key technologies in our daily lives within our working and entertainment routines. Teleportation, while not in itself possible, is becoming available to us incrementally in the form of these VoIP (voiceover internet protocol) technologies, and 3D printing, as well as Facebook's touted metaverse, which incorporate virtual reality into social media.

Though beyond being able to beam one's visage and voice across the globe, there are also streaming services that make it possible to gain audiences while broadcasting from one's bedroom or basement. The potential of these technologies in terms of cultural horizontalisation seems boundless, at least in theory. The ability for billions of people to broadcast disrupts the top-down model of media messaging. However, the design of VoIP and streaming services too often mingles with the competitive nature of social media and video hosting services, shaped

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by algorithms and ingrained societal attitudes in individualist capitalist societies. Though it needn't be this way. Adversariality could be replaced by cooperative, creative pursuit.[1]

In Walter Benjamin's seminal essay, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (1935), the cultural theorist addresses the potentialities and risks of a population newly accustomed to interacting with artworks. Since the book has become a staple of academic commentary, attention has been focused on the effect that artworks have on the masses as viewers of art, who are enticed by the artistic wealth they see into making materialist demands. Benjamin argued that the more wealth people saw, the more they wanted for themselves, necessitating the deployment of distraction tactics by right-wing policymakers. This came in the form of racist and militaristic rhetoric from the fascist powers that governed European states in the 1920s and 1930s.

What is often overlooked is Benjamin's admittedly fleeting reference to the public's desire to become the protagonists of, and not only the audience for, the booming image-culture of the industrial period. As Benjamin argued:

The newsreel offers everyone the opportunity to rise from passer-by to movie extra. In this way any man [*sic*] might even find himself part of a work of art...[2]

Even though appearing on a newsreel as a passer-by now seems insignificant, it allowed anyone to assume the role of muse and protagonist, previously reserved for the wealthy and mythic figures. This led to enormous expectations, which were only subdued in Benjamin's native Germany by the encouragement of adoration for the Führer and the scapegoating of racialised minorities.

Of course, this desire for exposure resonates with how we all find ourselves as protagonists of moving and still image media such as YouTube, Twitch, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, Twitter and so on now. These platforms offer the possibility of an instant rise to fame and access to seemingly boundless material wealth. However, the potential that anyone might become famous does not guarantee that everyone will, and the stakes leave most disappointed. This cycle of opportunity and disappointment has come to characterise online streaming as an activity fully involved in the competitive ethos of neoliberalism. The promise of anyone and everyone potentially becoming a celebrity has begun to manifest, yet stripped of the positive, motivating aspects that people associate with being a protagonist. These motivating factors include an increased level of agency, together with financial security and class mobility. In short, it is perceived within the collective psyche that doors open for people who regularly broadcast, with the first door (the broadcast itself) allowing for greater visibility and influence, which in turn leads to more contacts and opportunities.

1   As research for this text, I conversed with artist Steve Maher of Pixelache—a transdisciplinary platform for emerging art, design, research and activism in Helsinki. Steve also invited me to produce this work as part of Pixelache's collaboration with the *Rehearsing Hospitalities* 2022 programme. The dialogue focused partly on the early uptake of streaming services within art performance and tech workshops in Finland (where both Maher and I are based). These projects included the provision of a streaming platform by the non-profit organisation T.E.H.D.A.S. (http://www.tehdasry.fi/dada/stream.html?fb-clid=IwAR0I5OkJoJwEq4sF-j25Is5IWsXpuRZLZciHuv8LTfo-2xZ0iagUFA_SIUQ) and a workshop held by Pixelache in 2014 in which participants learned to create, maintain and modify a mobile live streaming setup utilising Raspberry Pi (https://pixelache.ac/events/workshop-a-v-live-streaming-with-raspber-ry-pi?locale=en&fbclid=IwAR2YEXat6TTBr2hvbs4xU9k8iXiCvdM0cRAThPNL7JfPFedi27-0Rzvm00M). These are just two of the many projects Pixelache has been involved in that have envisaged streaming and VoIP as open technologies that can facilitate horizontal cultural production and reception. The conversation with Maher also developed several points in this text relating to modes of working in the era of Zoom and widespread live streaming.

2   Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, Hannah Arendt (ed.) (London: Vintage Books, 2015). 225.

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However, the increased availability of broadcasting technology leads to increased competition as more people aim to gain audiences. This, together with an inevitable averaging out of quality, can lead to the practice of internet personas cancelling other protagonists of the internet by focusing on perceived wrongdoings, on or off the internet, rather than actual competence in their field. While cancel culture has had its place in helping to bring exploitation to light (for example, with the #metoo movement), it often assumes the same character of bullying that it attempts to correct. Even a relatively little-known broadcaster can suffer a torrent of abuse, despite never having been "truly" famous and often for unjustified reasons. As such, the negative impact of broadcasting or of being a social media personality can outweigh the perceived opportunity.

Similarly, the freeing potential of the online meeting service, Zoom, which allows for free-to-use conferencing, thereby making organising international events open to all, is not without its downsides. This technology does indeed allow for a high degree of interaction among colleagues or event participants who are viewed as occupying the same online space, with a significantly reduced level of hierarchy when compared to traditional conference halls or lecture rooms. This horizontalisation is achieved by, for example, the inclusion of a chat room whereby the public can ask questions or make points on a constant basis. However, Zoom (together with other similar platforms) at the same time reinforces the notion of constant readiness for work, as the ability for hybrid or home working requires everyone to be potentially available all the time. Even professionals performing roles that were once seen as by nature remote and solitary (writers, painters, conceivably even spiritual seers) are now required to check in on Zoom calls with commissioners or clients regularly. Equally, podcasting and streaming have become practical requirements of being an author or artist today. In the period of COVID-19 lockdown, the process of reflective thinking, which would appear ideal during moments of isolation, was made more difficult than ever by the demands of ever-present online software and apps, demanding constant productivity. In terms of cultural event production, curators and art directors who are already burdened with an imbalanced work-to-pay ratio are now expected to factor in a live streaming or VoIP element as well as an "in real life" programme.

This is not to say that streaming and video conferencing are all bad; indeed, as tools of the now omnipresent capitalist workplace, these technologies, by nature, possess dual characteristics. As Fredric Jameson argued with respect to the development of capitalism in general in his book, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991):

In a well-known passage, Marx powerfully urges us to do the impossible, namely to think this development positively *and* negatively all at once; to achieve, in other words, a type of thinking that would be capable of grasping the demonstrably baleful features of capitalism along with its extraordinary and liberating dynamism simultaneously, within a single thought, and without attenuating any of the force of either judgement. We are, somehow, to lift our minds to a point at which it is possible to understand that capitalism is at one and the same time the best thing that has ever happened to the human race, and the worst.[3]

3   Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991). 47.

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The trick for Marx was to have the tools of capitalist production placed into the hands of the workers, thereby allowing for an equitable distribution of its benefits. Whilst never achieved on any large scale in the west (and with often questionable results elsewhere), it could be argued that the availability of audiovisual reproduction and broadcasting technologies represents the often unwitting vanguard of the horizontal diffusion of productive resources. While internet coverage is not global, ownership of the means of production is as distant as ever in practically any imaginable industry other than publishing and broadcasting for the working classes of any nation. For example, streamers on the popular streaming platform Twitch are often both producers and stars of their streams. On the flip side, though, they share their revenue with online shopping and media behemoth Amazon, which bought the service in 2014.

It would seem that the co-optation of potentially counter-capitalist social and technological developments, as discussed by Frankfurt School thinkers Adorno, Horkhemer, and Benjamin, and more recently by cultural theorist Mark Fisher, is pervasive. As soon as cultural horizontalism is hinted at, it is evidently entwined with the capitalist drive towards competition and maximum productivity. This leads streamers to compete by maximising their broadcasting time as they shop, cook, eat, and sleep for a live audience. This often leads to the lowest common denominator televisual experience, as several streamers maximise their possible audience by streaming similar content (playing the same videogame or streaming wearing a swimsuit from an inflatable hot tub, etc.). The promise that anyone can broadcast anything at any time is becoming reduced to the reality of everyone doing the same, all the time, while trying to cancel one another.

How far this partial teleportation of ourselves has come from the potential of the time and space defying "Beam me up", of Captain Kirk era Star Trek, can be seen in the lyrics to the title track of Trinidadian American singer and songwriter Nicki Minaj's mixtape *Beam Me Up Scotty*, released in 2009 and re-released in 2021 as a commemorative edition.

The neoliberal attempt to subordinate every form of life and knowledge to the logic of the market has heightened our awareness of the danger of living in a world where we no longer have access to seas, trees, animals, and our fellow beings except through the cash nexus. The "new enclosures" have also made visible a world of communal properties and relations that many had believed to be extinct or had not valued until threatened with privatization. Ironically, the new enclosures have demonstrated not only that the common has not vanished but also that new forms of social cooperation are constantly being produced, including in areas of life where none previously existed, for example, the internet.
—Silvia Federici, *Re-enchanting the World: Feminism and the Politics of the Commons*, 2019.

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Personal thoughts, drawings, or annotations

Its chorus refrain of "Ah, beam me up, Scotty…My wine be too dutty" (a play on the head swinging "Dutty Whine" dance form, which originated in Jamaica) conveys the competitive nature of rap stardom. On the one hand, Minaj puts herself in the position of Kirk, as the captain who commands Scotty, effecting a horizontalisation as a Trinidadian-born woman, taking the place of one of America's best known fictional authority figures. On the other hand, Minaj uses the command "Beam me up" as a statement of rivalry, as she signals readiness to outdo other dancers. This element of competition imposes a familiar capitalist framework of desire onto the communal practice of dance routines rooted in cultural traditions, which has led to the acting out of competitive dance routines by millions of users on TikTok and Instagram who seek maximum likes and follows. This is not to say that traditional dance routines have no competitive element of their own, but rather that only the competitive aspect remains when dance is posted to social media. Nevertheless, the fact that Minaj must compete reveals the vulnerability of her position. Like many contemporary media figures, she calls the shots, only to have to prove her worth simultaneously. This is not to say there is anything inherently bad in the mainstreaming of marginalised cultural practices such as Jamaican dance, or in the phenomenon of young people gaining audiences through streaming while doing what teenagers and adults always did alone or within small friendship groups: i.e. the acting out of scenarios they themselves saw on TV. However, the element of competition involved in live streaming and online video culture—attributable partly to the initial development of platforms such as Twitch for video gaming, and partly to the gamification of social relations via social media—effectively impedes any social desire for togetherness and turns it into a desire of oppositional relations. This can be seen equally in the white, male, US and UK dominated culture of debating politics on YouTube and Twitch, in which it is often the aim to emphasise difference and to wrongfoot one's opponent rather than to find points of cohesion.

This must be achieved with one side in a generally two-sided political or philosophical debate reaching a point of decisive victory within one to two hours. However, there is nobody to say that we cannot hold meandering and reflective symposium-style discussions featuring multiple interlocutors coming from different perspectives sans a knockout style victory. Similarly, ongoing de facto dance-offs held perpetually on social media could become a space for the appraisal of skills and mutual teaching rather than for fleeting conquests.

Undertaking such practices online would require ignoring the trends and currents that tend to produce larger audiences and "likes". It would involve becoming unfashionable and streaming to small audiences. After all, a total horizontalism of broadcasting would, in any case, entail tiny audiences for each and every broadcaster (potentially everyone able to operate a streaming interface). But would that be so bad? Picture us each interviewing or performing for one other, in pairs and small groups, with intimate audiences. It would be like every decade and century before today. It might facilitate conversation, empathy, and non-performative, non-competitive feedback. Above all, it would involve a sense of community. We have nothing to lose but our ~~chains~~ audience.

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Love proliferating outwards
Ailie Rutherford

I have been working on *Mapping Below the Waterline* for the past six years.[1] These workshops mapping intersecting care and community economies form part of a wider body of work that looks at how concepts of feminist economics relate to people's lived experiences.

The process began as part of my work on The People's Bank of Govanhill (Glasgow, Scotland), a long-term collaborative project exploring ways of putting feminist economics into practice at a local level, foregrounding radically different economic models and alternatives to capitalism. What began as a series of ad-hoc exchanges and currency experiments, the Govanhill project is now cooperatively run by Feminist Exchange Network (FEN).[2]
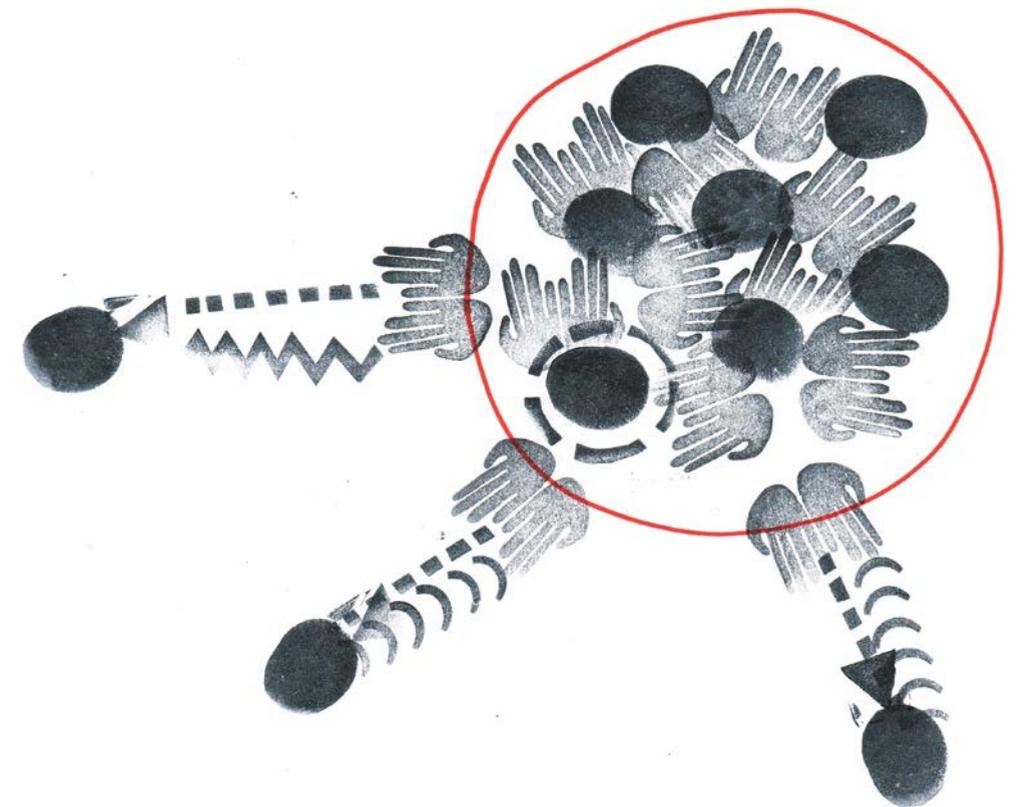
The initial block printing set for *Mapping Below the Waterline* was co-designed with women in Govanhill, Glasgow.[3] This print block mapping process (recently reconceived during the lockdown as an online tool *String Figures*) invites workshop participants to map, chart and visualise the interactions, networks, and systems of exchange that support, influence, and impact their lives.[4] Often the process reveals a lot about power, from collective power through cooperation to more problematic and controlling power structures. Workshops begin by asking what works well and is already functioning in our lives and networks—often coupled with identifying what doesn't work so well, then moving into mapping how we might want to reshape some of these systems collectively. The resulting conversations—between intimate personal relationships to wider power structures—connect the personal to the political as we talk about, and map out how we might restructure the ways we live and work together to build a more equitable and just society. What shapes could a fairer system take?

Ailie Rutherford, *Mapping Below the Waterline*, Glasgow, 2017.
Photograph: Bob Moyler.

**_Mapping Below_ the Waterline with
ATLAS Arts on the Isle of Skye**

ATLAS, an arts organisation on the Isle of Skye in the Scottish Highlands, has recently begun to think about ideas of alternative economies and invited me to run workshops with residents and ATLAS associates to see how this mapping process might instigate conversations around the local economy/ies. After two years of online sessions, this was my first return to a physical workshop, sitting in circles and passing printing blocks from hand to hand. We talked about the concept of alternative economies, describing multiple alternatives to the dominant capitalist narrative. These systems and interrelationships are not new; they have always existed but are perhaps more evident in a rural economy where the connections between economy and ecology are more immediately visible than in a city. Being able to smell and touch the landscape brings an immediate sense of connectedness to the broader world.
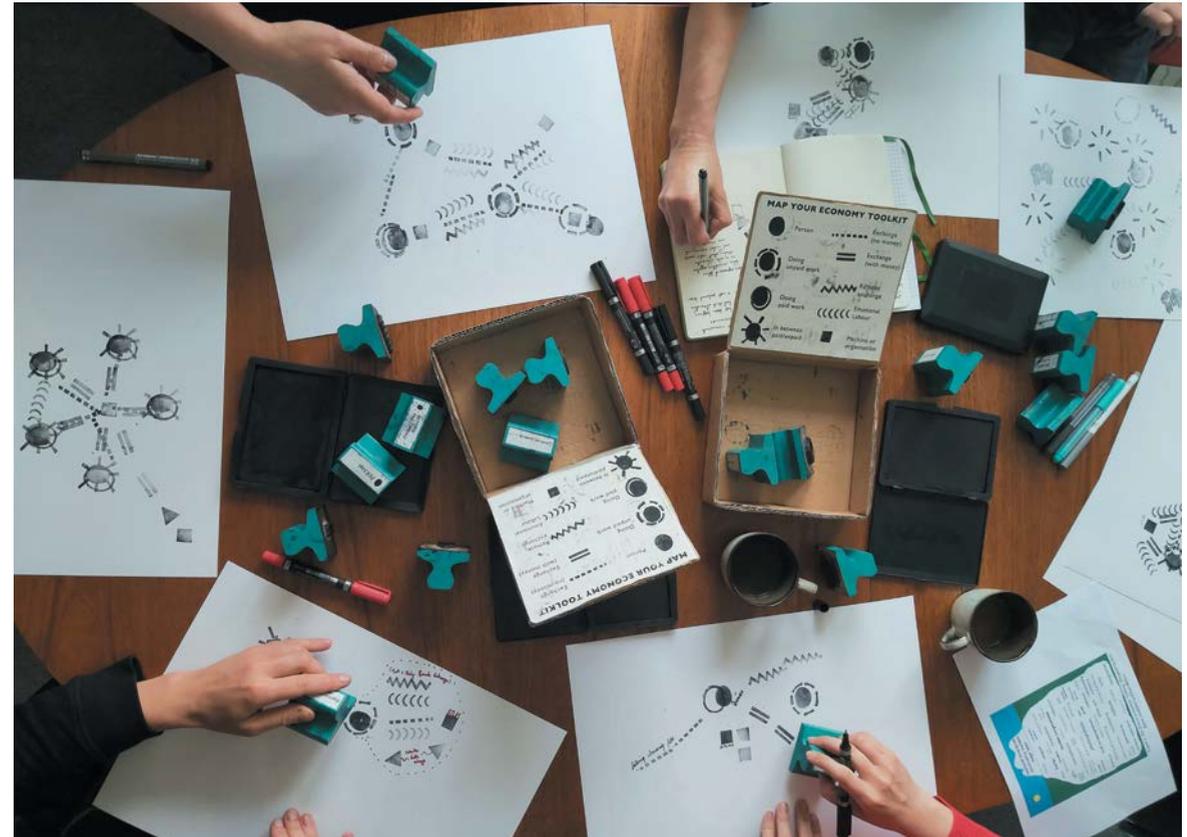
Ailie Rutherford, _Mapping Below the Waterline_, ATLAS Arts, Portree, 2022.
Photograph: Joss Allen

Small groups of mostly women, some with their children, talked about crofting and other sustainable practices, old knowledges, and practices that we need to reconnect with, about making a life rather than earning a living.[5]

We talked about these economies below the waterline, undervalued but essential to collective wellbeing and sustaining life. We discussed the absurd logic of capitalism, a rationale based on the linear notion of the autonomous "Man". This economic and political system manufactures
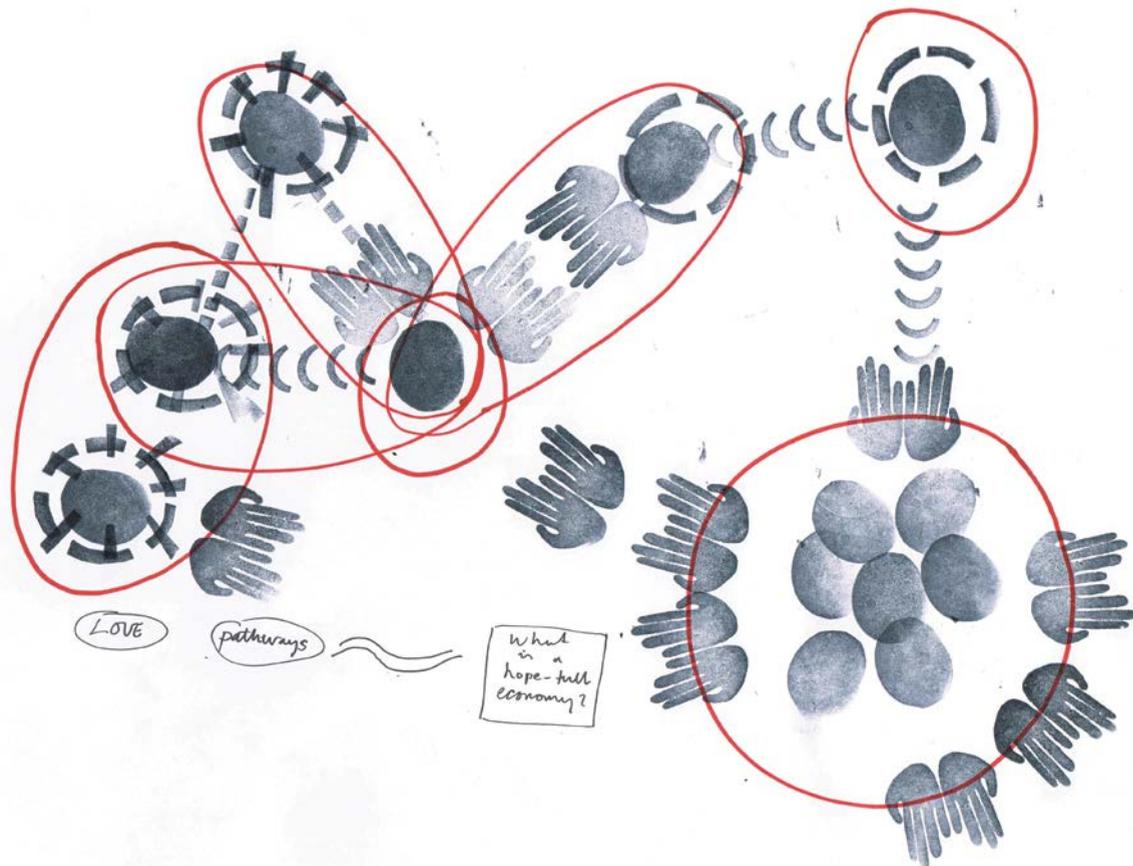
a gendered division of labour and bizarre gender norms, centred on the idea of an individual who has one aim, to maximise profit and who is unhindered by caring—treating all other beings as exploitable and expendable. In a conversation about feminist ideas of care, we talked about when care feels liberating (mutual care) and when care becomes a burden. When does that emotional labour we all feel too familiar with as women become radical love?

The messy maps of our lived economies reflect the messiness of feminist working, the multiple responsibilities and interrelations of the real world. Part of this work is to make them visible again: to value those roles and to think about how we might connect it all up a little more. The maps manifest the multiple economies and ecologies, the interconnectedness of things that make up (and have always made up) our lives. By starting from a place of love, for people and the more-than-human world, a new symbol was created for those "more-than-human" elements to represent a connectedness with the wider communities we are part of and through the land that sustains us.

Looking more closely at ATLAS itself, the maps revealed something about how the arts economy sits within and is interdependent with the wider island economy and ecology. These maps instigated a discussion on what a fairer arts economy might look like, how we realise our politics in practice and how we might go about implementing and prioritising care in an art world so often modelled on exploitation. I found ATLAS to be unusually supportive in this context. Their work exploring different economies feels less about inventing an "alternative" economy for the arts (acknowledging that diverse economies already exist) and more about an alternative type of accounting. A way of conveying the importance of that work below the waterline.[6]

In my work with the Feminist Exchange Network in Glasgow, an organisation working for systemic change through feminist economics, we still rely (like most arts organisations) on mainstream funding for

our work as we continue to find ways to survive and stay afloat under capitalism. So how could we move to a more feminist accounting system, taking the rhythms and cycles of things into account—a more careful consideration of the far-reaching ecology of our transactions—and how can we better implement care for each other, our natural and cultural commons, into every aspect of our work?

Towards the end of our second day of workshops on Skye, the conversation turned to bigger questions on whether we could really see an end to capitalist exploitation. I think it was Silvia Federici I heard asked in an interview about whether we can get beyond capitalism.[7] She replied that we already know the alternatives, and if we can just connect them up on a larger scale to build that growing network, we might stand a chance of getting there. When our dominant economy is centred on treating so many people and the more-than-human world as expendable, the most radical thing we can do is to keep coming back with as much love as we can possibly muster and keep that love proliferating outwards.
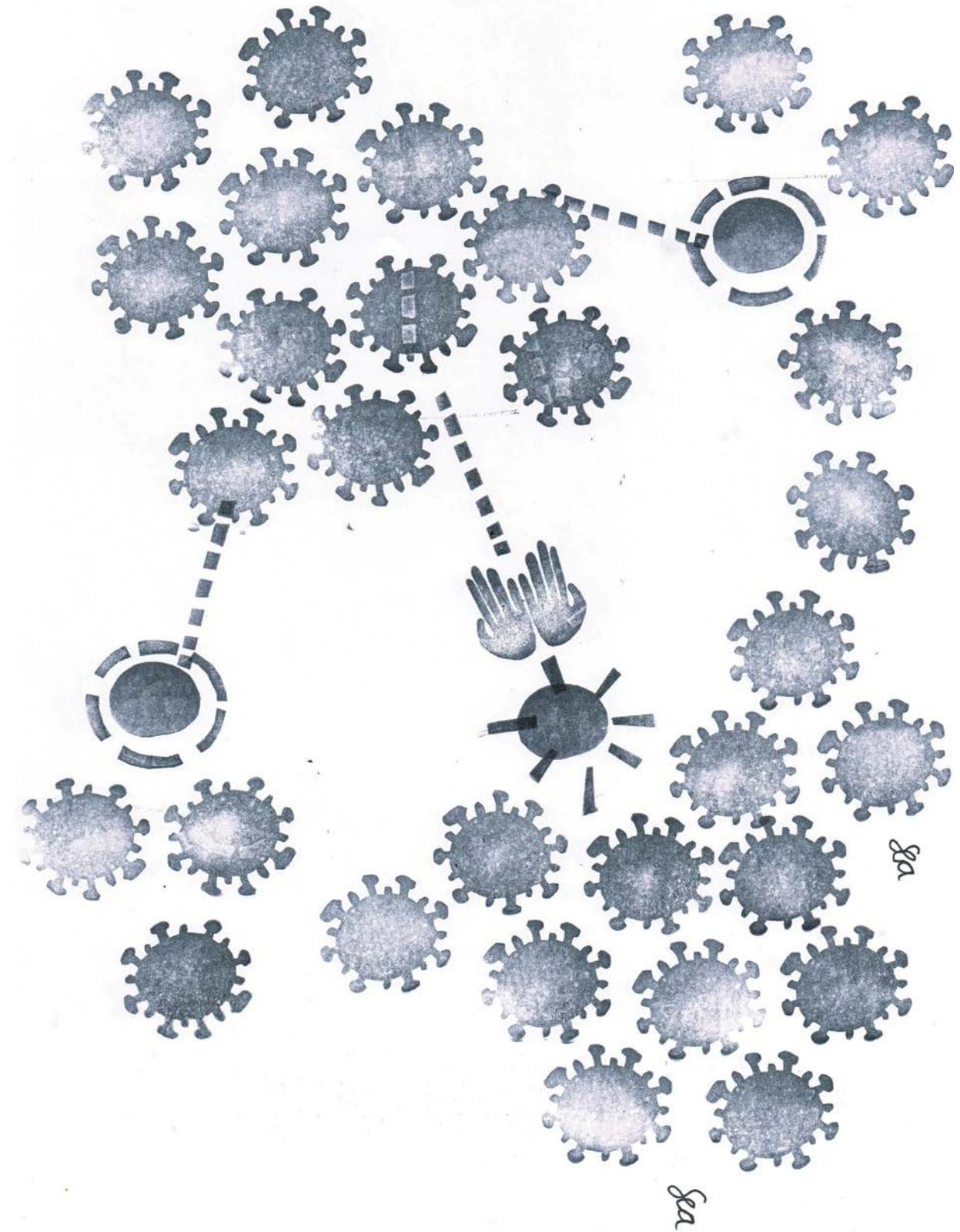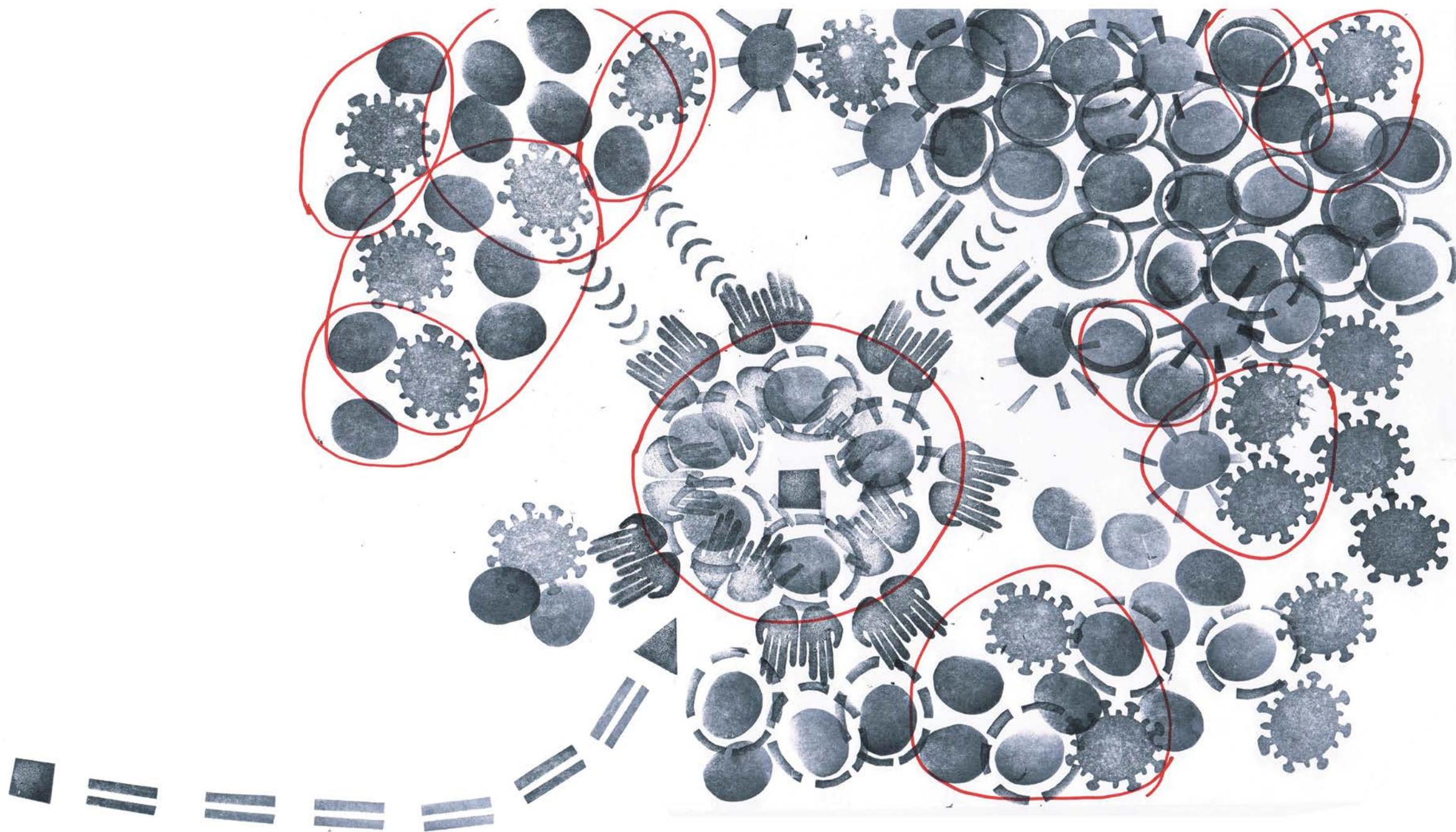
1 *Mapping Below the Waterline* uses feminist economic geographers JK Gibson-Graham's diagram and metaphor of the "Diverse Economies Iceberg" as a way to visualise the vast multiple economies, often working invisibly below the surface, that make up our world. Some examples from below the waterline include: home composting, libraries, open-source, parenting, breastfeeding, theft, gleaning, barter, oral traditions, housing cooperatives, non-profit, amongst many others. See "Diverse Economies Iceberg". Available online: https://www.communityeconomies.org/resources/diverse-economies-iceberg (Last accessed. 07.07.2022).

2 Authors note: FEN is a women*-lead collective community currency art project based in Govanhill, Glasgow. *Inclusive of transgender, intersex, non-binary and gender fluid people who are comfortable in a space that centres the experience of women.

3 Groups involved in co-designing the block printing set included: Romano Lav, a charity organisation challenging discrimination and promoting equality for Roma people in Scotland; Chai and Chat, at The Well Multi-Cultural Resource Centre; Rags to Riches, an upcycling social enterprise project; and Amina MWRC (Muslim Women Resource Centre).

4 *String Figures* is a co-designed collaborative software for collective working centred on a principle of mutual care and cooperation. The prototype demo is at: https://string-figures-v1-0-2.glitch.me/ (Last accessed. 21.08.2020). More info at: https://ailierutherford.com/projects/string-figures/ (Last accessed. 21.08.2020).

5 "Crofting is a land tenure system of small-scale food producers unique to the Scottish Highlands and Islands. It provides tenants with security provided they pay their rent, live on or near their croft and work the land ... Through its mix of arable and common grazing land, it encourages both communal working and individual entrepreneurship". See: Scottish Crofting Federation. Available online: https://www.crofting.org/about-scf/about-crofting/ (Last accessed. 08.07.2022).

6 See: *In Kind* project by Ailie Rutherford and Janie Nicoll in 2018 visualising the arts economy below the waterline. Available online: https://ailierutherford.com/projects/inkind (Last accessed. 21.08.2020).

7 Silvia Federici is a scholar, teacher and activist of the radical autonomist feminist Marxist tradition. Her work has largely critiqued the way capitalist societies fail to value reproductive labour.

Contrary to what we would like to believe, there is no such thing as a structureless group. Any group of people of whatever nature that comes together for any length of time for any purpose will inevitably structure itself in some fashion. The structure may be flexible; it may vary over time; it may evenly or unevenly distribute tasks, power and resources over the members of the group. But it will be formed regardless of the abilities, personalities, or intentions of the people involved. The very fact that we are individuals, with different talents, predispositions, and backgrounds makes this inevitable. Only if we refused to relate or interact on any basis whatsoever could we approximate structurelessness—and that is not the nature of a human group. —Jo Freeman, *The Tyranny of Structurelessness*, 1970.

What happens when you collapse into the bog? – An interview with Johanna Hedva by Isa Hukka and Jemina Lindholm
Johanna Hedva, Isa Hukka
and Jemina Lindholm

ISA & JEMINA: Dear Hedva,

It has been such a pleasure spending time with your texts, images, worlds, and ideas. For us both—as crip artists and cultural workers—they have been central elements in shaping our political crip subjectivities and understandings. In preparing to interview you, we returned to your essay "Sick Woman Theory"[1] and reflected on your article "Why It's Taking So Long?",[2] and going through these texts together has brought us closer. During this process that stretched our imaginations, the following topics surfaced: binary thinking and political subjectivity, capitalism and institutional work, fame, imagination, and agency in neoliberal settings.

To begin this conversation, we would like to ask you to introduce yourself briefly to the readers of this publication.

HEDVA: For the astrologically fluent, I think everything you need to know about me is that the final dispositor of my whole chart is a retrograde Mars in Scorpio, in the

1   As stated by Johanna Hedva, "Sick Woman Theory is an insistence that most modes of political protest are internalised, lived, embodied, suffering, and no doubt invisible. Sick Woman Theory redefines existence in a body as something that is primarily and always vulnerable, following Judith Butler's recent work on precarity and resistance. Because Butler's premise insists that a body is defined by its vulnerability, not temporarily affected by it, the implication is that it is continuously reliant on infrastructures of support in order to endure, and so we need to re-shape the world around this fact. Sick Woman Theory maintains that the body and mind are sensitive and reactive to regimes of oppression—particularly our current regime of neoliberal, white-supremacist, imperial-capitalist, cis-hetero-patriarchy. It is that all of our bodies and minds carry the historical trauma of this, that it is the world itself that is making and keeping us sick." Johanna Hedva, "Sick Woman Theory" *(Mask Magazine*, Mask Media, 2016). 9.
2   First published in Mask Magazine in 2016, a revised version of Johanna Hedva's essay "Sick Woman Theory" was published alongside their newly commissioned essay "Why It's Taking So Long", by *Topical Cream* in 2022. "In "Why It's Taking So Long", Johanna Hedva reflects on the evolution and impact of their epic "Sick Woman Theory", a centrepiece text on disability activism that took on a life of its own since publication in 2016." Nora N. Khan, *Topical Cream* Editor in Residence 2021. Available online: https://www.topicalcream.org/features/why-its-taking-so-long/ (Last accessed. 25.07.2022).

12th House. For the non-astrologically fluent, it means I'm capable of kinky murder—but, lol, since I'm also a Sagittarius rising conjunct the South Node, I try to live ethically. I'm also a bit politically militant, but instead of murdering for an abolitionist cause (at least, not yet), I have turned to a life of gnostic turpitude, which takes the form of writing, music, art, and soothsaying.

ISA & JEMINA: You discuss the binary of private and public in both "Sick Woman Theory" and "Why It's Taking So Long?". We think it can be read in "Sick Woman Theory" that you are tearing down the binary of the public/private (that originates from Hannah Arendt). The Sick Woman declares, *"the personal is political".* The Sick Woman brings the "sick" "women" into the public sphere; it creates political subjectivity for those who have not been granted.

On the other hand, your most recent text, "Why It's Taking So Long?" seems to question the goal of acting in the private sphere at all: do we have the power to create sustainable change there? Your many examples offer more evidence that institutions are failing us. One could interpret that the text suggests turning "inwards", escaping the public towards something private, to something the capitalist, ableist, racist etc., tentacles of the public sphere, cannot reach.

What are your thoughts today? What do you think of the binaries, boundaries, and surfaces regarding political subjectivity and the public/private?

So if this political strategy is not working, and our hopes of change and liberation often seem to slip further, what's next?

Abandoning the public, escaping it?
Building a separatist space?
Building something in private?
Hiding somewhere?
Can we be visible and hiding?
Can we hide in plain sight?
Or something else?

HEDVA: Yes, to all of the above, and I mean that sincerely. Just, like, all of it.

That's what I've learned over these years. I've also learned that, at the same time, I don't think we will succeed in our activism toward liberation—like ever. In fact, I think all activism fails. But I think that's how you know it's activism. That this thing we are working toward won't ever be "accomplished" because the idea of accomplishing it—that we'll do it until we get it "right", and then we'll, like, be done—is not what activism is about. So, I think we must try everything, anything, all the time—and also keep close the idea that nothing will ever work.

It doesn't mean I've given up. It's just the way I need to think in order to maintain a capacity for the fight. I've been participating in activism for a long time (two decades?!), and I got burnt out a lot in the earlier years. After the crest of hope, it was that big demoralising crash that kept happening and happening and happening. We'd get some little win after banging our heads against a wall, but it was like a drop down a well—not even one step forward and two steps back, but hundreds of steps back and to the side and in the opposite direction. And that's miserable, it's infuriating and exhausting, and it's why activists burn out so much.

But at some point I realised that activism—the work toward liberation and abolition and a complete restructuring of everything, because that is what we're working toward—will never be a thing that "succeeds". Like, if we just do x and y, this strategy or that, it'll be achieved, and we'll all be good. No. We will always fail. We will always lose. When our opponent is fucking capitalism? *Of course,* we will lose. But what's important is that we don't give up—we keep choosing to get in the ring and fight. We keep trying, try everything, and stay curious, open, and willing to change. The difference between the two things—between giving up and not giving up—is what matters.

ISA & JEMINA: We notice that in "Sick Woman Theory" and "Why It's Taking So Long?" one of your devices is to use binaries; set up oppositions, for example, internal/external, private/public, Sick Woman/"Universal Man", permanent/temporary, one-hit-wonder/entire bodies of work, etc. Tension builds up between the binaries, and in some cases, you deconstruct them; oscillate the elements, like in "Sick Woman Theory" when you argue that the digital space works as an obfuscator that blurs the boundaries of the public and private. Would you like to elaborate on why you have chosen this strategy? Is it for revealing a white supremacist and capitalist logic that works through binary thinking and organising?

HEDVA: What I was trying to point out in both "Sick Woman Theory" and "Why It's Taking So Long?" is that these binaries already collapse into each other. They depend on each other—imbricated, defining each other, yes, but that the places where they overlap are the most structurally integral to the whole system of thought built upon them. Of course, there is the version of them where they stand in opposition, where there is an antipodal territory to each, But I think it's more true that at the place where they meet, what has normatively been conceived as the site of the boundary between the two, is not a cleanly delineated fence or wall or border, but more of something like a bog, a place that accumulates dead material, decomposing and stagnant but also like a kind of archive or graveyard of all the bodies that get stuck at this place but whose very decomposition is essential to life.

What I mean is I don't think it's possible to imagine a different future without also reimagining a different past, which is to say we cannot build something new simply by turning away from what we think has failed—all of it has already been there, on both sides of the binary fence, which is not a fence at all. The Sick Woman has always been public. All of what we have normatively considered to be private has always been public—and vice versa.

I don't think it's enough to choose only one part of a binary—say, the private part, or the public part, the sick part, the healthy part, the normative part, the deviant part, the hidden, the separatist, or the centre—and stake some claim on that as a stable ground, because what's always true is that any idea has within it the thing we'd say is the opposite of that idea.

I like this bog metaphor, this swampy place of rot, because it feels more accurate to me. When I reach into the idea of the public or the institution, I find there are also all the ghosts, absences, and the bodies buried underneath, what became the muck. And isn't the thing about bogs that they are considered nutritionally "dead", but in fact, they are some of the most biodiverse sites on the planet? Their position as a

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place where decomposition happens, seemingly interminably, is also a fundamental component of the biological life cycle of matter. Yeah, to me that sounds like a good metaphor for the borderline that splits the binary.

ISA & JEMINA: In capitalism, crip bodies are deemed as unproductive bodies. According to "Why It's Taking So Long?", interdependency and the need for support are a part of our bodily ontology by default, making capitalism incompatible with our existence. As these structures don't allow any room for our bodies, we wonder where we could then exist, in your opinion? Where and how could our bodies solicit *need* in peace and freedom?

HEDVA: I think that question also has to include "when" and "what"; honestly, I don't know the answer. Do you? Does anyone? At this moment, all I can say is maybe not very helpful but that I don't know *what* the alternative is—but I *do* know that we've still got work to do. Like I said above, we've got to keep trying everything, anything, all the time. Although on the other hand, I am constantly reminded that we *are* doing the work, we're out here, persisting and insisting, and that's hugely meaningful. Maybe it will be all we get to in our lifetime—this failure thing, this only ever losing despite all the punches we've thrown—but that's better than nothing; in fact, it's a lot more than nothing.

Something I keep in mind is that the final image of "Sick Woman Theory", a world that is a hospital, doesn't necessarily involve conscious participation or even activist strategy. It's an inevitability if capitalism continues to dominate the globe. Getting sick and becoming disabled and having to confront our inevitable deterioration and decline is what will happen to us all. The way the world is structured is only accelerating it, making it more painful and certain, especially to the fact that it will happen to the sick, poor, and darkest of us first. So if, along the way, we can make that telos a little less brutal for each other, even if it happens in small moments with a small group of people, I think that's something.

When I'm with my crip crew, I do feel, however fleeting it is, that this is what revolution looks like—but it's specifically in the moments that don't feel activist-y, the moments where we're just sitting around and telling stories and laughing, or cooking together, or waiting for the bus, or whatever, that feel the best. Our methods of coping and survival in the meantime can be more than self-preserving rituals or tactical manoeuvres to outwit the enemy; they can be visionary tools, vectors of rage, and incubators of dissidence, but they can also look different than we'd expect. It can be just that we are together, finding ways to be together. Activities that we are told have no political, activist value, that are "not helping the cause"—like, say, reading or writing fiction, watching films and talking about them, sitting outside and spending time with plants, being quiet, dancing with friends, or taking time to be alone—are as important as, I don't know, going to the meeting to spend four hours discussing if it's okay to use a particular word or not.

ISA & JEMINA: Also, in "Why It's Taking So Long?" you discuss your relationship to your illness, saying, "I know that my body cannot be separated from my work". And the "email fights" section is painfully accurate in describing how crip bodies clash with and disrupt the institutional working setting.

So, we are curious; what would an invitation to collaborate from an institution be like, if it acknowledged the body?

HEDVA: I often find that institutions and those running them are trying to force a conceptual framework that is relatively new to them (or ones they are outsiders of) into their existing organisational structures without realising that this is an impossibility if you have a hierarchical system in place. Like, the point about these systems of thought is that they are systems, so engaging them in practice requires a systematic engagement. But it has to be total, and large cultural institutions are never nimble, changeable, or porous enough for this to be possible. This is why museums tend to operate in extractive ways, where they think they can organise a show about care or disability access that won't require them to engage and enact care and access on a systemic level, that they won't have to totally rethink and restructure their internal framework in terms of the ableism embedded within it. So they operate as though this systemic totality is not part of the work. Instead, they work with individual artists in terms of their individualities, which can be scaled down to one person's "practice" and separated from the context, communities, and histories this person works with.

I always try to make it clear to the people I work with at institutions that what I'm asking for is to get into *all* of the shit together, that this totality of systemic restructuring *is* the work as much as, like, this drawing that I made. But then they act sort of baffled when after earnestly trying hard to do care and access, they've failed and don't know why. Again, they scale it down to the individual when it's so clearly a systemic issue. Oblivious, they even use their ableist

The field of care is not only a realm of immense value and production, but it is arguably the largest and the most fundamental commons on which all of us depend ... Relations of mutuality, sharing, and reciprocity that sustain our daily lives and social interactions (as well as economic transactions) all involve an element of care. In that sense carework is a commons: it is the most fundamental basis of social reproduction to which we all contribute and to which we all owe our existence.
—Bengi Akbulut, "Carework as Commons: Towards a Feminist Degrowth Agenda", *resilience*, 2017.

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organisational model as an apologia for the harm they've caused to disabled artists; they say "we didn't have the staff to support this exhibition, our employees are sick, and there is no backup to help them, we've all been working long hours with no rest". These workers are being exploited, some of them disabled, by the institution's desire to save money by only hiring a few staff who work more hours—yet somehow, it's used to *excuse* the ableism that is damaging the health and wellbeing of visiting artists, as much as its own staff.

This is all to say that there is nothing that art spaces can do to acknowledge and support their staff and the artists they work with without also fundamentally restructuring their entire organisation to eliminate hierarchy, racism, gender discrimination, classism, and of course, ableism. The whole thing would have to be rethought and remade—and to do this, it must first be undone, dismantled, and destroyed. Obviously, I am aware of the practical limits of this; I was not born yesterday; I know I am asking for things that will never happen. But I do think part of my role here is to bring this line of inquiry and demand into the institutional space. To ask, why can't we burn this down and start over? Why not try to do better? Really now—why exactly can this not be done? Let's get into the specifics of why it is so impossible.

ISA: What I, as a young writer, recognise in "Why It's Taking So Long?" is that you describe a character, a construction, that is the neoliberal author. It is the public persona, the figure of "Johanna Hedva" instead of the real, material, individual named Johanna Hedva. This neoliberal character contains a narrative that you make visible but at the same time resist. The capitalist system, including the literary industry, has already determined the author's path. As you describe, the neoliberal author is a bundle of narratives, directions, and choices, all imposed on you. For example, in the form of book agents luring you into writing the "Sick Woman" book or asking for an illness memoir that they assume you'd want to write.

Is it possible to publish anything without fighting with the neoliberal author or the ableist narrativisation of our sick/crip experiences? What are the particular consequences of imposing the role of the neoliberal author on a sick or crip writer? Can we prevent losing ourselves in character, and how?

HEDVA: My way of dealing with the things you are outlining is to be a trickster about it, to try to make more personae rather than insist on one that's the most "real". I wouldn't make such a distinction between the "neoliberal author" and the "real, material, individual" of Johanna Hedva because I think that the neoliberal author is always in service to this fantasy of a "real, authentic self." And I don't really believe in either as stable identities that exist at all.

For me, the most enjoyable thing is that many Johanna Hedvas can happen in different forms, contexts, conditions, etc. This is the part of the business of being an artist that is the most fun for me, and as I get older, I really try to make having fun a priority because if I don't, man does life suck. It's my favourite thing to craft the persona for a particular project. It's often my way into the work at the beginning and the thing that keeps me interested to the end. I think of it very much like drag, like, what is the outfit, the body, the face, of this persona, platforms or heels or boots or barefoot, which perfume, what colour palette, what is she wearing to the funeral

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of her third husband, are there a lot of emojis in his Instagram posts, etc. (For "Why It's Taking So Long?", I absolutely crafted a specific persona—my main visual reference was a rage demon; like I literally just googled "rage demon" for inspiration and thought, what would such a creature sound like?). And I love thinking of the myth that this persona will make for its attendant work, the rumours that will get attached to them, the gossip. I love inhabiting this entity for a time, and slipping back into it, as it is specific to each work.

What's fucked up is what you're talking about, when personas that I have not crafted, nor consented to, are attached to me, either in the interest of the neoliberal narrative of the self-contained discrete individual, or in terms of how I can be defined by some identity-politics demographic that sweepingly associates a bunch of traits to one "group" or "community." Obviously, I know this is what happens to everyone all the time, and, in a way, this is precisely how personas and myths work. And I understand that this is how the political space is organised, so to some extent, I surrender to it because I have to. But part of why I am so invested in building a specific persona for each work is because it helps build the story that gets told about it, which has to do with the stories that *get* told about me or the communities to which I belong, versus the stories that *we tell* about ourselves. Self-mythologising and myth-making, and building characters with narratives, are all essential to humans surviving their experience on this earth. We get into the territory of oppression when such stories are leveraged against a person or group in a narrative that polices, pathologises, enforces violence, etc. So, as much as I can be involved in telling a story about myself, in telling the story I *want* to tell, I will be.

Portrait of Johanna Hedva created by Pamila Payne for "Why It's Taking So Long?", 2022.

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Sick Woman Theory is a good micro-example of this. I feel like I spent a lot of that text labouring to explain how the figure of the "Sick Woman" gets co-constructed by ableism and sexism and why that sucks, because it smothers and eclipses all the other identities of a person, regardless of gender or disability. I tried to offer a different version of sickness and woman-ness that felt more accurate to the lived experience I knew was true for myself and my crip friends—a version that was queer, that wasn't normatively weak and fragile, but scary and furious and metal and full of capacity *because* of our disability, it's just a capacity that isn't the kind that ableism values. And the photos that accompanied that text were created by me and Pamila Payne, the photographer, in the process I'm describing above. We thought a lot about the visual persona of that text—the image to pair with the voice of the text, what does the body that houses this voice look like? Just as I had laboured in the text to undo certain stereotypes, I was adamant that I did not want to recreate the visual trope of the frail, sick woman in bed with the photos. So I sent Pamila a lot of references—Onibaba and the girl from *The Ring*, the image of the Justice card in tarot, witches burning at the stake, succubi, the tradition of Ohaguro (teeth blackening) in Japan and the teeth of Bellatrix Lestrange as played by Helena Bonham Carter.

Then what happened was that the persona of the Sick Woman—according to the very terms that I was dissenting against—got put on me by external institutions. My fragility, my weakness, my woman-ness, were foregrounded; I got treated like a child in the name of "access", I was told it was surprising I was so "strong", or that I had a good sense of humour. This sucked and was ableist nonsense, but what

Portrait of Johanna Hedva created by Pamila Payne for "Sick Woman Theory," styled by Rhi Jade, 2016.

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was most frustrating was that all of my work got eclipsed by Sick Woman Theory over the years. That's what "Why It's Taking So Long?" is about. For years, I felt so demoralised that no matter what I put into the world, no matter if it had literally nothing to do with illness or disability, it was relentlessly subsumed under this Sick Woman persona. So again, the story I told about myself and my community did not align with the story being told about me.

At some point, when I was complaining about this, a very wise friend told me that the solution was not to worry about the work I'd already made, but just to make more work. Put more of it into the world and let it speak for itself. So I've tried to expand what "Johanna Hedva" as a persona could contain, to make more of them, to make ones that didn't seem like they would fit with what people thought they knew. Not even intentionally, like as a strategy—it was more that I just tried to make space in my work to do what I wanted, to follow what ignited my curiosity, what felt meaningful to me, and not worry about how it would be received. So, I made a video game; I released a record of hag blues; I wrote a novel with someone shouting their politics at you with a lot of curse words. Sometimes it feels very important to write about my illness and what I think about ableism, but mostly it takes more from me than it gives. It can make sense on a spiritual level that my work on disability activism is not for me but for others. Maybe it can help someone else, even a little bit. But for me, it's more often a place of depletion and fatigue, which is why I can't do it all the time.

For the astrologically fluent, maybe this answer can be encapsulated by the fact that I also have Uranus conjunct my ascendant and south node. This means that the

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place I will always rebel against will be the self that appears in the world. It's pretty basic punk rock shit. Like, the easiest way to get me to do something is to tell me not to do it. So anytime something gets lobbed at me that purports to define or contain or categorise me, even if it's something that I myself originated, I will try to dodge it. Like, nope. It's some part of my ontology, to keep things from feeling restrictive, to insist on one's capacity to shapeshift.

ISA & JEMINA: In "Why It's Taking So Long?", you reflect on the wonderful, loving question your crip comrade posed to you:

"If you didn't have to do all this work about access, all this labour, send all these emails, get into all these fights, what would you do? Like, if you were just—welcomed. Supported. What would you make? What is your actual work?"

Is it possible for the Sick Woman to do whatever the fuck the Sick Woman wants?

HEDVA: Lol, bitch, we're trying! If not this, what?

Here is my method: above all, feeling! I aim, through experiments in feeling, to reveal and destroy what it is that keeps us here, what it is that stops us from deciding to leave even as the cinders mix with our hair, the smoke corrupts our lungs, the flames engulf the people we love. Only when we know this can we activate the bond of the otherwise and turn back to meet it. Some call it the communist horizon (this implies some distance between us and the future), others call it prefiguration (the future in our actions), others "the worlds we seek to build" (desire desire desire)—any name will do. —Lola Olufemi, *Experiments in Imagining Otherwise*, 2021.

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Personal thoughts, drawings, or annotations

Content warning:
This text includes references to suicide.

The clues to how one reaches study are in our own vulnerable stories. —Nora Khan, *Dark Study, Within, Below and Alongside,* 2021.[1]

Often, as women, in writing the vulnerable story of our lives, we are told by the Brahmanical patriarchy that it has too much "feeling", as if "feeling" were a bad place to start when thinking through how we build the worlds we imagine can exist. Many have dared not just to imagine but actively construct what these worlds might look like, despite its many co-options within the techno-capitalist framework within which we function. This active *doing* of imagining includes figuring out methodologies of thinking through how we redistribute, refuse, repatriate, and redo power.

Academia and schooling—to which I've had easy access given my class and caste privileges—have essentially accepted me and trained me, not just to have learnt the language and aesthetics of form and structure (that will see my ways of thinking as credible, acceptable, and legit) but it has also taught me how to co-opt any form of dissent, or the "anti" or even the act of self-awareness itself, of being co-opted so that my every step leads towards self-determination. What an incredible beast to have to get to know in order to fight it, *amirite*?

I graduated from a university that killed a professor who once said, "emancipatory politics must always destroy the appearance of a 'natural order', must reveal what is presented as necessary and inevitable to be a mere contingency, just as it must make what was previously deemed to be impossible seem attainable".[2] Mark Fisher died from suicide in 2017 while I was a student. It is not unfamiliar to me to have lost someone from

1   Nora Khan, Dark Study, Within, *Below and Alongside*, MARCH, 2021. Available online: https://march.international/dark-study-within-below-and-alongside/ (Last accessed. 11.07.2022).
2   Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* (Winchester/Washington, D.C.: Zero Books, 2009). 18.

suicide whose life, love, and/or work stoked something within me, something I knew from intuitive living. My first school crush, Avinash, always flirted with this idea, and at 16, he and another classmate went a little too far into the sea on a day when the currents were too strong, owing to a full moon—if my memory serves me correctly. They drowned, and no one dared go in to rescue them, not even the fishermen who pay close attention to the mood of the mighty ocean; they wouldn't dare disrespect her. If she was to devour them, then it was their fate, and strangely it was Avinash's choice, even if he didn't quite choose the time or way he would exit. Years later, in 2018, my friend Victor threw himself out a window, a couple of days shy of his 29th birthday. He was a poet who I met when he was passing through Delhi. We did an event together, and he gifted me one of his photo books with the words:

Para Meenakshi, com o meu muito obrigado e o prazer do encounter. Un bejos, Victor, New Delhi 12/11/15

Words live on forever, Victor. Jokes on us.

And so, in 2017, inevitably, many of us changed, and I changed, again, having changed in 1997 and then again not knowing I would in 2018. This haunting of an absence that is present seems like an inevitability in my life, and it's taught me the greatest lessons on how to live and love in community, in a together otherwise. Mark's students and his peers—those who had been studying with him for a long time and those who came to this university because he was an integral part of it, including students like me who never sat in his class but anticipated doing so—felt that deeply in the days following his death. We spent the months following Mark's death looking after each other, engaging in collective mourning as we gathered

at the institution; auditoriums built for the transactional exchange of knowledge for debt, but hardly for navigating pain, loss, hopelessness, and that most crucial radical tool—togetherness. Through an accelerated state of mourning, we came together in a way that the university's neo-lib infrastructures—from its physical buildings to its syllabus—were built to refuse. That experience and those feelings profoundly changed me and have never left. As a self-described "Black, lesbian, mother, warrior, and poet", Audre Lorde speaks of the power of the erotics related to *feelings* which I borrow and situate within a "post-capitalist" desire to extend these ideas a bit further. I particularly resonate with her words when she says:

When I speak of the erotic, then, I speak of it as an assertion of the lifeforce of women; of that creative energy empowered, the knowledge and use of which we are now reclaiming in our language, our history, our dancing, our loving, our work, our lives...The erotic is a measure between the beginnings of our sense of self and the chaos of our strongest feelings. It is an internal sense of satisfaction to which, once we have experienced it, we know we can aspire. For having experienced the fullness of this depth of feeling and recognizing its power, in honour and self-respect we can require no less of ourselves.[3]

3   Audre Lorde, "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power", *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches by Audre Lorde* (New York: Crossing Press, 1984). 23.

Those of us who stand outside the circle of this society's definition of acceptable women; those of us who have been forged in the crucibles of difference—those of us who are poor, who are lesbians, who are Black, who are older—know that survival is not an academic skill. It is learning how to take our differences and make them strengths. For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change. —Audre Lorde, *The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House,* 2007.

This intense *feeling* completely rendered my relationship with academia "criminal" in how Fred Moten and Stefano Harney frame this subjecthood:

It cannot be denied that the university is a place of refuge, and it cannot be accepted that the university is a place of enlightenment. In the face of these conditions one can only sneak into the university and steal what one can. To abuse its hospitality, to spite its mission, to join its refugee colony, its gypsy encampment, to be in but not of—this is the path of the subversive intellectual in the modern university.[4]

This criminal-feeling self that came from collectively mourning a professor who died of suicide ended up teaching me how to channel that experience into the building blocks of a study space for the *otherwise*—I call it the School of IO (Instituting Otherwise).

My criminal existence also sits within the title "Instituting Otherwise". I took this title from a project that culminated at BAK (basis voor actuele kunst) in the Netherlands, where I had been given the scholarship to attend a summer programme. I was so blown away by the theories that allowed me to retrospectively frame my life and work that I thought this gesture of taking a name/title and embracing it as my own was a radical gesture of love towards the institution. Naive in retrospect, of course. Needless to say, this act of *radical love,* as I saw

4   Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study* (Wivenhoe / New York / Port Watson: Minor Compositions, 2013). 26.

it, was utterly missed and misrepresented by the powers at BAK. I got a whole lot of slack for it, including being overlooked for opportunities. Sadly I realised, yet again, that an institution built on political radicality and anti-establishment is still an institution, after all. There is an instilled hierarchy and imbalance of power, which weighs on the side of the institution—it can engage in an extractive economy of scholarships for knowledge, where knowledge produced by individuals like myself feeds the cultural capital of the institution, as I face the inevitability of expulsion when my visa expires.

And so, I keep the name IO for myself. Like a criminal. For which I've been duly punished. And this carceral nature of the institution and the powers that be, the powers that "perform" anti-institution, is what I resist, persist, and take for myself.

It is when the world is in a deep crisis, of a particular nature of accelerated decay, death and transformation, like that of a pandemic with its inherent isolation shifting our sociabilities, or the death of a professor by suicide, that I end up thriving and building what might be called an "otherwise". I suppose the "otherwise" is a verb—it is a *doing* and *making* of what is being constantly imagined. And this imagining has often been flattened in a techno-capitalist visual culture regime. So this thriving and building that I speak of is a process of constant improvisation. I've noted that this process starts with my own body and what it's gone through—a genealogy of traumas that rest, rehabilitate, get rejected, and repaired—like the fungal infection in my toenail that I just woke up to one day. The doctor told me that, after treatment to clear myself of toxins, my body went into shock, so this little colony that feeds off of my body made itself visible. So I spend every night feeding my gut as the fungus extracts what it wants, building these simultaneous ecosystems so one can grow and another can be destroyed. The roles of the host and the hostile are constantly interchanging, constantly improvising.

All this might sound morbid, but I think that's where a politics of care *within* finds itself. The Ahmed-ian "snapping of a twig" occurs in "the building of a world in the world we live in"[5] and not in "a room of her own" (as in the title of Virginia Woolf's 1929 essay).[6] A threshold is crossed multiple times because we cannot, as "feminist killjoys", take it any longer—death by suicide, #metoo call-outs, the pandemic.[7] I have come to recognise these as the building blocks of the school of unlearning that is the School of IO. Not brick and mortar, money and capital. This work is of blood, of bones, of pounds of flesh, of fungal infections, of panic attacks, of holding onto the narratives that no one will listen to, and holding on to someone you love because they want to *exit* in the way their professor did. The teacher who gave them the language of *Capitalist Realism* and *Acid Communism* and who made a decision one morning, without giving warning to the day or time but left an entire body of work to tell us why. These gestures, moments, minutes, and hours are what channel the "erotics" of Audre Lorde, or the "libidinal" of the philosopher, sociologist, and literary theorist Jean-François Lyotard. It is a true politics of care, of coming together in an *otherwise*; it's the stuff of life, love, hurt, panic, debilitation, feeding, holding and despair,

5   Sara Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017). 188.
6   In their introductory text "The Wild Beyond: With and For the Undercommons", to Stefano Harney and Fred Moten's book, *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study*, Jack Halberstam writes: "the subversive intellectual enjoys the ride and wants it to be faster and wilder; she does not want a room of his or her own, she wants to be in the world, in the world with others and making the world anew. Moten insists: 'Like Deleuze. I believe in the world and want to be in it. I want to be in it all the way to the end of it because I believe in another world in the world and I want to be in that. And I plan to stay a believer, like Curtis Mayfield. But that's beyond me, and even beyond me and Stefano, and out into the world, the other thing, the other world, the joyful noise of the scattered, scatted eschaton, the undercommon refusal of the academy of misery'." I speak then of the "world" and world building in this context. Jack Halberstam, "The Wild Beyond With and For The Undercommons" in Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study* (Wivenhoe / New York / Port Watson: Minor Compositions, 2013). 10.
7   For more on "feminist killjoys" see: Sara Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017). 188.

hope, and death.[8] And that's allowed me to create, even if momentarily, the space of post-Western situatedness and study. I aim always to reach this space in its various temporal manifestations because they are fleeting, improvised, and intuitive; along with all those who participate within the School of IO. And here's what I am learning, as I desperately try at every step not to drop out, to give myself permission to fuck up. More importantly, how do you create a certain kind of chaotic discipline that would lead to a feminist killjoy life of "feminist snaps"—something that you don't really learn in art school or any school, for that matter.[9]

The School of IO is that kind of schooling where I'd like to collectively think and *act* through the stuff of life in all its mess and contradictions, its risks, and consequences, on the microlevel (chosen and biological, i.e. family, friendship, etc.) and the macrolevel (casteism, classism, fascism, misogyny, patriarchy, transphobia and more). It's not about reading through the syllabus to learn how to become a political curator or artist but instead learning to be a *politicised being* in every sense of the word, at every step of the way—in our everyday lives.

To enter this space is to inhabit the ruptural and enraptured disclosure of the commons that fugitive enlightenment enacts, the criminal, matricidal, queer, in the cistern, on the stroll of the stolen life, the life stolen by enlightenment and stolen back, where the commons give refuge, where the refuge gives commons. What the beyond of teaching is really about is not finishing oneself, not passing, not completing; it's about allowing subjectivity to be unlawfully overcome by others, a radical passion and passivity such that one becomes unfit for subjection, because one does not possess the kind of agency that can hold the regulatory forces of subjecthood, and one cannot initiate the auto-interpellative torque that biopower subjection requires and rewards. —Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study,* 2013.

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8   A post titled, *A Primer on "Libidinal Economy" in Relation to Black Folks*, by blogger chico, on their site *cosmic hoboes*, gives a comprehensive explanation of "Libidinal Economy"—which informs my use of "libidinal'' in this essay. To "highlight the distinction between political economy and libidinal economy", the post quotes black political theorist Frank Wilderson discussing Jared Sexton's use of the term: "Jared Sexton describes libidinal economy as 'the economy or distribution and arrangement, of desire and identification (their condensation and displacement), and the complex relationship between sexuality and the unconscious'. Needless to say, libidinal economy functions variously across scales and is as 'objective' as political economy. Importantly, it is linked not only to forms of attraction, affection, and alliance, but also to aggression, destruction, and the violence of lethal consumption. He emphasizes that it is 'the whole structure of psychic and emotional life', something more than, but inclusive of or traversed by, what Gramsci and other marxists call a 'structure of feeling'; it is 'a dispensation of energies, concerns, points of attention, anxieties, pleasures, appetites, revulsions, and phobias capable of both great mobility and tenacious fixation'". chico, *A Primer on "Libidinal Economy" in Relation to Black Folks*, cosmic hoboes, 2011. Available online: http://cosmichoboes. blogspot.com/2011/08/primer-on-libidinal-economy-in-relation.html (Last accessed. 12.07.2022).
9   For "feminist snaps" see: Sara Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2017). 187.

Personal thoughts, drawings, or annotations

The School of IO speaks to several temporal political spaces that constantly inform how I think about varied situated politics of letting go without choice, being present, taking risks, and giving up. I've lost interest in ideas of solidarity, community, and allyship. Instead, I simply term my efforts as a search for the "otherwise". What I call the School of IO is the space of study where that search may be possible. Here is where it's manifested:

Letting Go

When I was a student and art worker in New York, I started a project called the Project for Empty Space (PES) with a friend, a curator herself, Jasmine Wahi. It ran on a small scale until I had to let it go because I couldn't "run" in America anymore. This wasn't simply about immigration policies but also about how fraught our ideas on "Brownness" were. I couldn't stay because, unlike my fellow brown sister, I didn't come from money and class privilege—therefore, I couldn't financially contribute and subsequently couldn't retain my position in the space I co-founded. At the time, I simply framed this as "letting go", so the institution could grow. I now realise *that* kind of rationalisation glosses over our vulnerabilities and precarities—this prioritising of the institution rendered me in a position that reaffirmed the role of a "fallen woman" within patriarchy. Some of us have to disappear for the larger goal—such as the perseverance of an institution centred on diversity and inclusivity—however, the right question to ask is perhaps on our class differences within brown politics. What does it mean to build our worlds when we refuse to acknowledge how class/caste attache to and incline towards replicating white privilege, even as we all fight against white supremacy? What would it mean to admit the complexity of this intersectional subjectivity rather than looking at everything either within diversity that is homogenous or via a simplistic binary of diaspora and *other*?

Compromise

The world's situation is so dire, and the co-options and contradictions are so real. To actually take a risk, to actually suffer a loss, to actually hurt, and sometimes to be the one causing harm, and then rebuild, be (self)accountable, transform, and put yourself back together is too much for too many. Even when we might "mean well" and show solidarity and community. A funny sinking feeling came to me when a dear friend said that for me to get back to curating, I'd have to "compromise" and that he was sure I'd curate again—if I compromised, that is. Compromise is an institutional demand. After all the speaking of *truth to power*, the breaking of silence during #metoo in the Indian art world in 2018, and the consequent defamation case filed against an account that called out abuse, it seemed that the only *entry* back into the ivory tower was to re-learn the oppressor's tools.[10] And part of this re-learning, apparently, involves re-telling the narrative to yourself in order to "survive" implicit oppression. Some people call this "reform"—that somehow reformist politics must exist alongside abolitionist politics. I beg to differ. Compromise must be abolished.

The art school's offering is still exclusion; its gates, its police, its lawns on which we can cavort while, a few blocks away, the poor are stopped and frisked. Fear injected into their

10   @herdsceneand is an account that actively called out instances of sexual abuse and violence apart from other forms of workplace violence in the Indian art world between 2018–2019. The narrations of survivors are anonymous. Subodh Gupta, an artist who was called out for sexual harassment, filed a defamation court seeking five crore INR in damages to their reputation and the removal of the posts that called him out from the direct experiences of survivors. The posts have since been taken out. The account remains active even though the admin has not posted since the case was filed.

communities so we can exercise our radical imagination. —Nora Khan, *Dark Study, Within, Below and Alongside,* 2021.[11]

Unlearning

"Unlearning" has become a thing, burgeoning around the time of the lockdown due to a pandemic and simultaneous global protests springing from within the Black Lives Matter movement in the US following the murder of George Floyd and thousands more at the hands of police. This invariably led to a renewed fervent call for abolitionist politics. What was particularly interesting to me was a call for these abolitionist politics within the closed echo chambers of the art world's institutions. It was amusing to sit back and watch empty gestures and proclamations towards Black Lives Matter made by casteist institutions—including the institution of the "art school" itself.

I know the art world, amongst other things, is a place of self-righteous and self-serving political agendas that operate within profit margins. I wasn't particularly interested in the critique of galleries going digital in response to a pandemic—that's an easy critique. I was interested in seeing if a "true" abolitionist set of strategies and gestures was possible to sustain, because you can't just wake up one day and decide to abolish an institution in one fell swoop. To be an abolitionist is to lead a life in a particular way, to think in a particular way, to *feel* and *do*—that by nature will brand you a hysterical harlot, a whore, or a criminal.

11   Nora Khan, *Dark Study, Within, Below and Alongside*, MARCH, 2021. Available online: https://march.international/dark-study-within-below-and-alongside/ (Last accessed. 11.07.2022).

Because it means a dismantling of ego, of ideas of toxic individualism, of romanticised notions of solidarity, and instead builds on our ability for self-accountability, for growth—things art institutions and art schools have long abandoned in the training of humans towards a life in the "humanities".

A school will change you, and it teaches you as much about how people will interpret you, misunderstand and dismiss you, as it will teach you about a creative life. —Nora Khan, *Dark Study, Within, Below and Alongside,* 2021.[12]

Lipsticks as Glitch and The Erotics of my Politics

I often feel misunderstood. It's part of what it means to be "doing" the School of IO. During the lockdown in India in March of 2020, I did a series of Instagram live sessions called "Curatorial Masterclass" that looked at curating as a potential radical tool for developing political agency. It was a perfect title, the perfect byline to entice unsuspecting participants. Here I was being a fraud. I was going to do anything but "teach" curating. The aesthetics of our language is a radical tool in and of itself if you shift the POV slightly. I streamlined these sessions on Instagram live and Zoom sessions. Participants, mostly young art workers, who form the majority of a disenfranchised population within the structures of the institution, signed up to learn about curating—but that was just to entice them with

12   Ibid.

the promised land of the neo-liberal art curator. I wanted to attract them, not to dupe them but to generate a "snap". Via this neo-lib promise, I hoped to lead them to that space of an *otherwise*. After all, I believe we should make post-capitalism as enticing as red lipstick.

This led me to literally make lipsticks out of my desire to carve a space for a femme queer existence. The lipsticks melted, and I found something hardier—clay. I embarked then on a journey with a medium that holds memory—clay re-members. It always tries to go back to its original shape/state. I find something rather poetic about that. It comes out of the need to "re-route" and "fail in a society that fails us", as Legacy Russell says when she speaks to glitch feminism.[13] She adds:

If opposing things and entering a different value set that seeks to create sustainable space for Black and Queer life is tantamount to failing under the sun of capitalism, then that's exactly right on and exactly what the glitch is going to do.[14]

In a conversation with a professor, who goes by the anonymous Insta handle @buffalointellectual, they talked to me about an "aesthetic" of a Savarna/UC vocabulary.[15] How the Dalit/Bahujan intellectual/ academic must dress like the Savarna/UC, and hone certain accents—the

most dominant being the British English cadence of Lutyens' Delhi. This cadence grants access into the ivory tower of academia, or anywhere for that matter—even coffee shops and museums. In a city steeped in the largest oppressive social order of casteism, your accent can provide a seat at the table. Delhi holds firm at the centre, many say this stronghold is collapsing, but I have yet to see that. It's us who are collapsing around it, rising, dusting off the grime off of our proverbial shoulders, attempting to build our transformative pods, while still only building neo-lib communities—communities that have the aesthetic but not the *feeling*.[16]

What I actually learnt from my father

And so, we return to when I first started thinking through the School of IO after my return to India. My father, who worked in the world of marketing and advertising, gave me scores of templates and reading material to put together that perfect "pitch". I was being told in many ways (regardless of my intentions for this school, whatever my manifesto, my feelings, or my impetus that stemmed from a death) that if I wanted to set up a school, I'd need capital and resources, and for that, we'd need a structured blueprint in the institution's language. My father shared with love everything he learned that I was unlearning. But really, my biggest lesson in unlearning had actually come from him at the age of 11 when we immigrated to the US in 1992. Circumstances were not too kind to my

13   Sara Black McCulloch, *Activating the Glitch: A Conversation with Legacy Russell*. Available online: https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/activating-the-glitch-a-conversation-with-legacy-russell/ (Last accessed. 13.07.2022).
14   Ibid.
15   The caste system is the largest oppressive social order that exists in the world today. A caste, generally designated by the term jati ("birth"), refers to a strictly regulated social community into which one is born. Brahmins and Savarna's are considered upper caste (UC) while Dalit/Bahujan are of lower caste.

16   Pod mapping as an exercise within transformative justice practices, via Mia Mingus. "During the spring of 2014 the Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective (BATJC) began using the term "pod" to refer to a specific type of relationship within transformative justice (TJ) work. We needed a term to describe the kind of relationship between people who would turn to each other for support around violent, harmful and abusive experiences, whether as survivors, bystanders or people who have been harmed. These would be the people in our lives that we would call on to support us with things such as our immediate and on-going safety, accountability and transformation of behaviours, or individual and collective healing and resiliency." Available online: https://batjc.wordpress.com/resources/pods-and-pod-mapping-worksheet/ (Last accessed. 12.07.2022).

father, so we left the US after living there for two very tumultuous years. However, it was in this country that didn't accept him and his family where he passed me the lessons and a "blueprint" that shaped me in ways I would only understand much later, in retrospect. He had learned that the history books in my predominantly all-white elementary school did not include any histories of enslaved people or colonial projects in the US or elsewhere. Appalled, he stormed into the principal's office— at least this is how I like to imagine it happened—asking why so much of the history of enslaved African Americans was missing from the curriculum. The principal agreed with my father but shrugged off any responsibility by saying there was not much he could do about it. My father was more than just concerned about what his daughter was being taught. I asked him why he cared, because my 11-year-old self hadn't had to confront enslaved histories, let alone the history of anti-caste movements in my birth country.

As an 11-year-old who looked and talked "differently", my main concern was survival, but I didn't know how the history lessons, that the school redacted, would have helped me understand my place and what my fights would be. My father understood it even if he didn't have the theoretical vocabulary. So that day was my first lesson on intersectional politics. That was my profound unlearning. That's what stuck with me, that's what shaped me, but my father won't know it; he's actually hazy when it comes to the memory of what had happened or, at least, the exact timeline of events. I'm surprised this memory didn't stick for him, because it stuck to my very being. Perhaps it's a memory he chose not to hold because, at that moment, he was a victim of the middle-class aspirational immigrant dream. It was in seeing his dreams being shattered that I started my uncomfortable relationship with making money. And somehow, it came full circle, intersecting circles, of having found capitalist realism and "feminist snaps" as I sat and diligently worked out a six-page pitch for potential investors—for my father.

How does a school operate while questioning its own reasons to exist?—KUNCI.[17]

What did I learn from the resistance movements?

Strangely, I have been able to come to this way of thinking and living—intuitively and through improvisation—from the most unexpected of places, that is, the neo-lib capitalist realism of the art world, especially at a time when the idea of "social justice" and movements against white supremacy or brahminical-cis-hetero-patriarchy is reduced to an art project. The same art projects which function as cultural capital builders—attaining ever-larger profit margins and that coveted residency or a place on the walls at documenta. Lately, this has birthed many political artists and thinkers, resulting in an unending rolling out of vacuous "artworks" in Indian galleries on Dalit lives by Upper Caste (UC) artists and even more trite curatorial essays and notes that mistakenly assume that using an "informal" language somehow means it's emancipatory, radical, and anti-establishment. No one has shifted their POV. No one is abolishing anything. It's still the master's tools in the master's castles.[18]

While there's always the presence of the institution archiving our many protests and movements, for me, the School of IO needed to exist when we were out protesting and organising. Not to co-opt the image of the placard-bearing protester on the street, but to operate within the radicality of anonymity, keeping low but resisting, resisting, resisting.

17   Unsourced quote from KUCIS's School of Improper Education. See: https://parsejournal.com/authors/kuncis-school-of-improper-education/ (Last accessed. 04.08.2022).
18   In a feminist conference in 1979, Black lesbian feminist writer and activist Audre Lorde famously stated: "The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house". See page 138 of this publication.

resisting—and introspecting, arguing, fighting, and doing what BLM co-founder Alicia Garza refers to as turning our political desires into actual political action/transformation.[19] It was a time when we had WhatsApp groups before the State came down hard and picked a few who would "pay the price"; when a lot of us fought with each other as friends do, because we realised that the adrenaline of getting out to the street could belie what actual solidarity means and that inevitably being on the same side doesn't mean that we are using the same strategies to fight the beast. It is messy; there are fallouts and exits from group chats in fits of anger and disillusionment—not because of the threat of the State but because our *feelings* were hurt. Those were the spaces of the libidinal. It really hurt. It still hurts.

The idea of "Study" that I started with, in quoting Nora Khan, exists in the world we create, in the world we live, as Moten and Harney also remind us in their thesis on the "undercommons".[20] We did create the worlds we imagined. All the symbols of an alternate pedagogy existed and still exist in particular sites of resistance—as make-shift libraries, as spaces of reading and discussing, and for children to draw and paint, or where a stage is set where musicians come to play and sing—keeping up the spirits of everyone (including the heroic figures of dissenting grandmothers). I'm looking for that somewhere else, that *something else* which teaches me what unlearning means. Now it means we have to be present. We have to listen.

In a post-Western framework, the question is always one of why the School of IO must exist. I often find the answers in how I *feel, respond,* or *do,* in my criminal existence to the institution—in narrating my vulnerable self, and sharing this with others, who like me, are seeking an *otherwise*.

19 Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, A Black Lives Matter Founder on Building Modern Movements, The New Yorker. Available online: https://www.newyorker.com/books/under-review/a-black-lives-matter-founder-on-building-modern-movements (Last accessed. 18.1.2021).
20 For more on the idea of The Undercommons see Wiki article *The Undercommons*. Available online: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Undercommons, (Last accessed. 23.08.2022).

Forming structurally into moving groups like a congregation, shoal, gang, committee, parliament, herd, colony, party, bazaar, a glaring, murmuration, study, and the band, these planetary friends are in danger from, but quintessentially never tarnished by, the mystification of individual human want in a culture of poverty and dispossession. Units defined by gatherings of particular species, swarms are also flocks, schools, murders, assemblies, teaching us that the delineations within the limitless swarm are in all interplanetary quantum matter, collective assemblies, and micro-biological existence. The swarm resonates in all life forms, from the most miniscule entity to how social life is organized among all sentient beings. —Sandra Ruiz and Hypatia Vourloumis, *Formless Formation: Vignettes for the End of this World,* 2021.
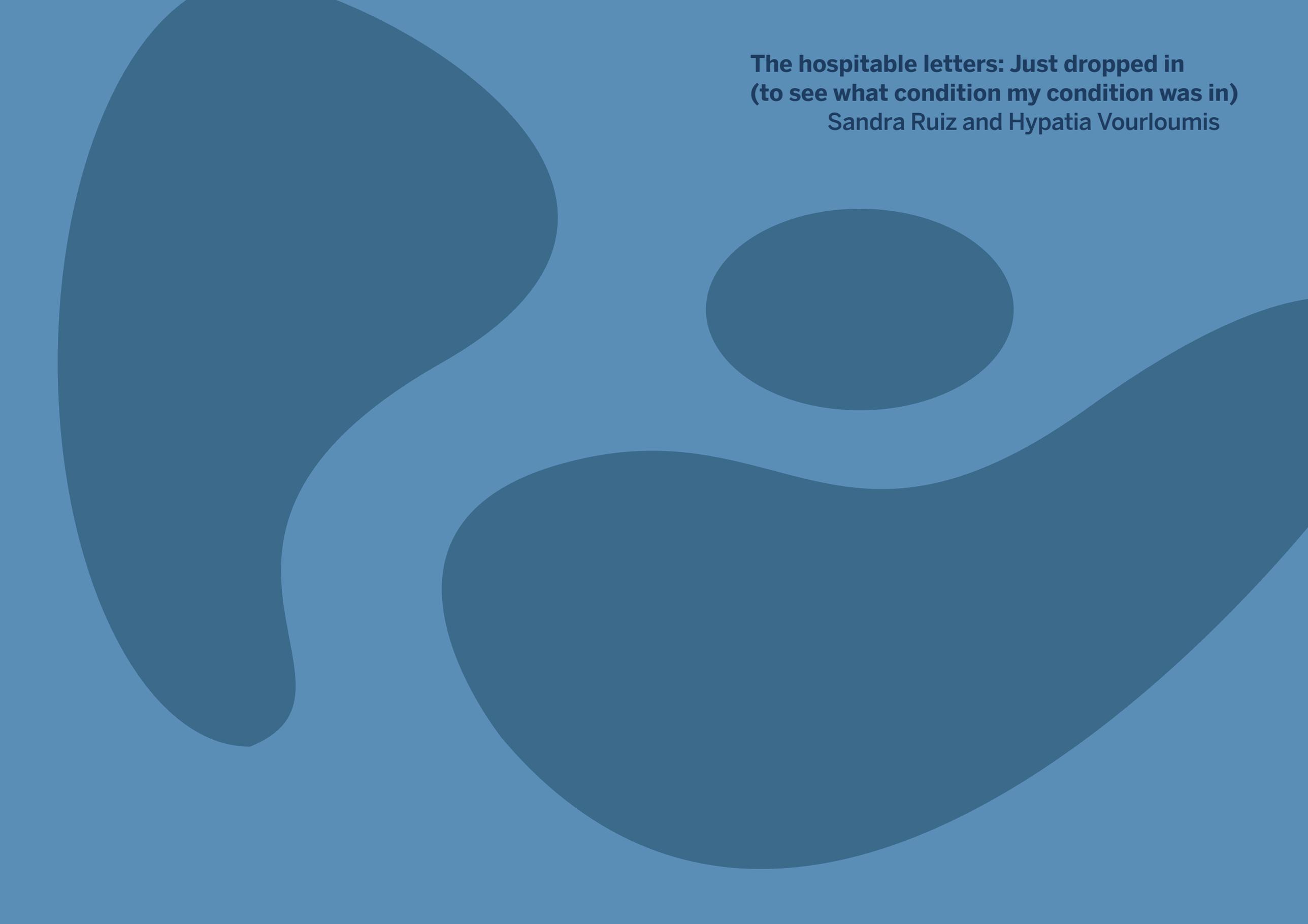
The hospitable letters: Just dropped in (to see what condition my condition was in)
Sandra Ruiz and Hypatia Vourloumis

Dear Hypatia,

I thought I'd use an epistolary form to lead to the essay form, or rather stay (like an obedient dog) where I land in writing, and if the landing lands, honour risk. Who said an essay couldn't be a series of letters? In our book, we write so much about form—about undoing its borders to remain borderless in spirit and formless in mind and body.[1] This is all to say that I wonder how form creates hospitality but also how it actually produces its opposition, and at other times, produces maybe even nothingness. Can the letter free one from the polished, ordered, formulaic conditioning that constrains one's ideas? I've been writing letters with a friend—back and forth—and have learned so much about how friendship (in her purest manifestation) engenders beautiful writing, how what one writes, what one says to the self, then to the page, and then to the other for another, creates a series of relational ensembles that unsettles not only form, but those honest enough to practise and receive it. It unsettles the human. I often think of Audre Lorde and Pat Parker writing to one another, how women of colour unveil themselves in this format as a practice in both theory and survival. I guess I'm also saying that we turned to the vignette as a formless formation, and in our precision to abolish the colonial mandates of how ideas are produced and exchanged, we thought we may have freed ourselves of something binding and big—but what if, in fact, we only freed ourselves from one form to arrive at another.

1 Sandra Ruiz and Hypatia Vourloumis are the authors of *Formless Formation: Vignettes for the End of this World*, (Colchester / New York / Port Watson: Autonomedia Press / Minor Compositions, 2021). *Formless Formation* is an experimental project conceived and co-authored by two performance theorists working in critical aesthetics and political thought. The book is an insurgent revolt, walking side by side with plural and planetary anticolonial forces organising against debt, expropriative extractive capital, environmental catastrophe, and the militarised policing of people and borders. It is in direct conversation with all Indigenous, Black, Brown, ecological, feminist, queer, diasporic movements and struggles countering capitalist predatory formations across time and space. Through shared resonances across differing aesthetic-life-worlds and solidarities that bypass the nation-state, Ruiz and Vourloumis bring to the forefront performative and aesthetic practices and methods that address current and future social organising.

How do we ever write outside of form——the letter, the poem, the essay, the chapter, and the conditions that shape the conditioning of form itself? Can we be honest enough with every word we engage to actually say something about writing, ideas, forms, and ourselves? Now we write about writing as a rehearsal in hospitality, but what if it's not a rehearsal and rather the staged event performed seven times for the same audience every single night; not totally inhospitable but surely a blueprint for how to be careful enough not to reproduce the unfriendliness of hospitality. Don't call it pessimism. One only sees the stars in the sky because…

      Sincerely with love,
      Sandra

Dear Sandra,

It's uncanny to receive your letter as I also had the same thought, and so here we are, once again resonating with one another from afar. There is so much to chew on (like a naughty dog). Yes, to so much you write, to friendship's letters and their revelation of the language of revelation, to flying from form in formation to land on another form and formation. I thought I'd lay out some questions on how the notion of rehearsing hospitalities speaks to our idea of formless formation as a social organising principle and writing practice (by which I mean the actual doing of our writing as a forming of vignettes that remain open to ongoing formation). How does letter writing, and our collaborative writing practice, put pressure on the ways "hospitality" marks a pre-given separation between host and guest? In other words, how was the experience of writing our book (particularly when we wrote into each other sentences), a form of rehearsing hospitality that entails not only an openness towards another, but also a hospitality towards the writing process itself, towards the changing nature of writing, thoughts, ideas; the relinquishing of authorial voice as ongoingly rehearsed.

      I wonder how this may speak to the publication's concerns with redistributing power, wealth, and resources? With forms and futures of redistribution "and the decentralisation of wealth and power in relation to art institutions and their capitalist and colonial starting points?"[2]

      Perhaps the experiential insights gleaned from our collaboration can add to (and complicate) the primarily diagnostic critique of locating capitalist and colonial starting points. Which is to say, how is the formless formation (and our writing) moving away from a mere critical analysis of power structures as mode of complaint? I'm thinking of collaborative writing as a shifting infrastructure, value and resource here. The publication and

2   Quote from editors invitation to the authors to contribute to *Rehearsing Hospitalities Companion 4.*

programme are genuinely committed, it seems to me, to an actual material practice of decentralisation and wealth distribution. This presumes that the centre is locatable and its wealth can be accessed in some way (both cognitively and physically), and also that those peripheral to it lack wealth or resources. Then what do we mean by wealth here? Do we understand wealth and resources through a capitalist logic? Is this a call for the taking over of a means of production? Or the sharing of those means by those in, or close, to power? Is this what "rehearsing hospitality" connotes? Perhaps it's more about rehearsing a constant stealing back of the wealth stolen from the poor.

Is friendship not wealth? Do friends engage in hospitality toward one another? Hospitality is defined as being friendly to a stranger or visitor. Is "being friendly" friendship? (I'm thinking of "friendly" customer service here). Your letter opens up pressing questions about potential tensions and differences between hospitality and friendship, as well as reception and receptiveness.

Love,
Hypatia

So when a group or assembly or orchestrated collectivity calls itself "the people," they wield discourse in a certain way, making presumptions about who is included and who is not, and so unwittingly refer to a population who is not "the people." Indeed, when the struggle over deciding who belongs to "the people" gets intense, one group opposes its own version of "the people" to those who are outside, those considered to threaten "the people," or to oppose the proposed version of "the people".
—Judith Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, 2015.

Dear Hypatia,

I am not surprised that you are not an ounce shaken by the fact that, once again, we thought a version of the same-thing-in-difference simultaneously without sharing the thought with one another in "real-time" but rather through other dimensional adventures. I guess we met in the ninth dimension and shifted back to the fifth in order to catch the seventh. Next time let's meet at the intersection of the eleventh infinity. Another friend recently asked me to meet him in our dreams: we set our location and travelled there through the night. It's incredible how unbusy one is in dreaming. It's incredible how much intimacy is had when not rehearsing the colonial enterprises of staged hospitalities.

These dimensions we access and travel are also other kinds of formless formations, and I am convinced that since we've started thinking and writing together, we've been time travelling with and through one another. Like a gentle spark from Illinois to Greece, we remain open to ongoing formations, as you noted above, and hopefully, these ongoing formations serve as abolition, not reform or reparation.

So to the question of rehearsing hospitality in the material sense of the redistribution of wealth and then rehearsing hospitality in the writing process (which is also always material): I don't know how we ever get the "hospital" out of hospitality or how we see that space as other than a prison, school, museum, university, nation. I'm even thinking of the degrees one can get in Hospitality Studies—I think you learn to manage hotels and maybe make folks with money comfortable enough to keep spending it.

Are my associations formed pessimisms? This is my current fear: that the pandemic made me a pessimist, or rather an inhospitable human. When we say we are moving away from power structures into a different model for the redistribution of wealth under a new model of/for infrastructure, what are we really saying? How do we ever move away from power—either you burn it down, infiltrate it,

be a cog for the machine, or die trying to try to change it? How do we ever understand wealth outside a racial-colonial-capitalist logic? I have as many questions as you do, and I am all right not answering them in a similar vein to Rainer Maria Rilke's Letters to a Young Poet; I am all right with the questions for now because now seems to be all we ever achieve and are granted, and I am not convinced that saying so eliminates any future.

These lingering questions lead me back to what interests me more these days (as I think we offered answers for how to rehearse hospitalities through the aesthetic-life-worlds we describe and engage in our book—turn to the artists, organisers, revolutionaries from the past, from now, and from the yet-to-come): can friendship exist outside of transaction? Can we hold each other close and up, outside the busy scales of capital and infrastructure, even when infrastructure is repurposed? Can we steal from the rich for friendship, in friendship? When we say we are too busy, so overworked making money for another's wealth, what do we really mean about connection and reception? Is this the word—friendship or fellowship—that might bring us away from host versus foreigner? If, as you say, writing performs infrastructure, should we write without any words?

And no, being friendly is not friendship—the latter is an ethical commitment one lives without end. The word ship is in the word—the process and the intimacy sails you somewhere, somewhere braver than here.

Sincerely with love,
Sandra

Dear Sandra,

The word ship in the word friendship implies course and movement, a replacement of form with phase, or, better still, the simultaneity of form and phase. I'm amazed that you and your friend visit each other in your dreams, and how you write of the respite and intimacy such hospitable visitations manifest. I also vibrate with your embracing of a questioning "now". Lately, I find myself moving away from hope and am more inclined to stay with desire. To just experience a desiring now, not from a place of lack, but rather from recognising, and tending to, our shared wealth—that immeasurable wealth that is often misconstrued as lack. We know what we want, right? More of what we already have and less of what we don't want (and I know we don't ever take that shit for granted!)

The thing is, our shared wealth refuses (in fact, cannot exist as and through) the individualisation and privatisation of abundance, relation, and friendship. Seeking enlargement and profusion, their interdependent life forms and formations depend on an entangled sense of gratitude and a spontaneous non-teleological giving over.

Reception, receptivity, recognition. What is it to be seen, heard, recognised? These thoughts came to me in a dream last night. People say, "decolonise this, decolonise that", "include the marginalised, represent". But in my dream, a formulation appeared. Perhaps the problem lies in a lack of recognition of existence, or if and when detected, identified as an existence that is improper, or irrelevant. As if the existence of existence itself is not enough! And can only be recognised if reduced! I recall that in the dream, this "existence" had less to do with ontology and identity (metaphysics) and more to do with matter (physics). This may speak to your questions around nothingness and writing without words, the energy of a shifting infrastructure that moves according to the dynamics of resonances and dissonances receptive to the phases of different material needs and desires.

The word hospitality also shares the same root as the word hostility. In other words, there is always violence implicit in modes of hosting since there must be a preceding sovereign sphere a guest enters into. This is how form creates hospitality, as you wrote in your first letter. In *Of Hospitality* Jacques Derrida spoke of this paradox by setting up the inseparable difference between conditional and unconditional hospitality. If (as he posits) hospitality cannot be hospitable without conditions—because there would be no hospitality without exercising sovereignty over a domain, however welcoming or not—then perhaps to rehearse hospitality is to attend to the violence of possession and its borders.

Can the writing of letters be understood as rehearsing unstaged hospitality, and the undoing of the sovereign, across time and space? As a hospitable practice of dispossession amongst friends in and across intersectional dimensions? You wrote in your letter; writing unsettles the human. Through epistolary hospitality, we see the conditions of the conditions we're in.

Love,
Hypatia

Dear Hypatia,

We do see the conditions of the conditions we are in, and so to listen is to commit to the recognition of never being fully recognised. To only be recognised in reduction, you note, to be something of/in existence by being less than, subtracted; not enough to be enough, to be received. A lacking, in the ongoing movement sense. Does this all begin with the conditions of language and the limitation of writing and listening? In the act of friendship, or as ships sailing to some place, somewhere to reach some sound, does the hospitable enunciate? I can't abandon hope, desire, or the conditions of vulnerability and violence that tag along—all could be said to be the sad stages of hospitable-hospice.

So could it be that every syllable already unsettles the human; every syllable might already be a gentle-ambush-sound, inviting levels of unsolicited violence to get to the sovereign terrain of space and time. Sentences are violent—inherently-made-so, or less so in their trace, to think with Derrida again. I've been rereading and rethinking punctuation as both violent-guest and friendly-assassin (to think of the hospitable in sound, language, discourse, and writing itself), especially through Jennifer Brody's smart work on the hyphen, in In Punctuation: *Art, Politics, and Play*. I've been thinking so much about this that I practice hyphenating everything that shouldn't be hyphenated as a politics of friendship, and doing so leads me to think of root words and prefixes and suffixes and word-approximations like you share above in hospitality and hostility. Hospice lingers in hospitality, leading me to hauntology and lands me off the page of ontology. Is this hospitable thinking? Is this writing, and if so, were words always sound-friends or sound-assassins?

Sincerely with love,
Sandra

The hospitable letters: Just dropped in (to see what condition my condition was in)   **166**

Private property is not the foundation of freedom, justice, and development but just the opposite: an obstacle to economic life, the basis of unjust structures of social control, and the prime factor that creates and maintains social hierarchies and inequalities. The problem with property is not merely that some have it and some don't. Private property itself is the problem. —Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Assembly*, 2017.

Rehearsing Hospitalities Companion 4
Contributors

Yvonne Billimore is an artist-curator who works as the associate curator of *Rehearsing Hospitalities* at Frame Contemporary Art Finland. She has worked as co-artistic director of ATLAS Arts on the Isle of Skye and Programme Manager at Scottish Sculpture Workshop in rural Aberdeenshire. Her work facilities situations for collective learning, exchange and experiences with particular attention given to feminist and ecological matters.

Florian Carl is a community organiser supporting multi-front anti-colonial struggles, decolonization initiatives, and climate justice. He has long worked alongside frontline communities of the climate crisis, for example, as a project coordinator and campaigner for the People's Climate Case. Florian has recently been awarded a four-year PhD scholarship at the Centre on Social Movement Studies, writes debate articles, and is passionate about creating electronic music.

Johanna Hedva (they/them) is a Korean-American writer, artist, and musician, who was raised in Los Angeles by a family of witches, and now lives between LA and Berlin. Hedva is the author of *Minerva the Miscarriage of the Brain*, a collection of poems, performances, and essays; and the novel *On Hell*. Their albums are *Black Moon Lilith in Pisces in the 4th House* and *The Sun and the Moon*. Their essay "Sick Woman Theory," published in 2016 in *Mask*, has been translated into ten languages.

Isa Hukka is an artist, older sibling, and a student whose own bed is a sacred place for them. They are based in Helsinki, although parts of them always live in Pohjois-Pohjanmaa, Copenhagen and Montréal. Currently Hukka studies humanities, focusing on feminist theory. They work as an artist, centering on crip practices. In addition to making performances, they have worked with translating, and published their award-winning poetry in various magazines.

K-oh-llective (or KOH in short) is an artist group of five visual artists who share a desire to facilitate collective conversations around art practices. The platform they put together is used for resource-sharing among artists, writers and curators in Egypt and the Arab world who are in need of this content and critical discourse. It features an open-source library with a database of essential tools for arts practitioners, and a selection of podcasts, texts and discussions. Additionally, it stages online/offline studio visits and acts as a conduit for future art-making and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Nada Elkalaawy (b. 1995, Alexandria) is a visual artist interested in storytelling exploring loss, traces of memories and fictioning.

Engy Mohsen (b. 1995, Cairo) is an interdisciplinary artist and architect interested in the notions of "discursivity", "participation" and "collectivity".

Mohamed Al Bakeri (b. 1991, Cairo) is a visual artist interested in the social politics of how everyday gestures are performed in male-dominated spaces.

Soukaina Joual (b. 1990, Fes) is a multi-disciplinary artist interested in the body's reflection of various tensions, dynamics and differences.

Rania Atef (b. 1988, Cairo) is a multidisciplinary artist interested in maternal, reproductive, and labour discourses on individual and collective levels.

Jussi Koitela currently works as head of programme at Frame Contemporary Art Finland and as an independent curator. Lately his curatorial work has entangled art, embodied research methodologies, feminist philosophy of science and materiality in different exhibitionary forms and modes of knowledge production. His curatorial projects have been presented among others at Pori Art Museum, Konsthall C, Treignac Projet, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia (EKKM), De Appel Arts Centre, SixtyEight Art Institute, Trøndelag Centre for Contemporary Art and Kiasma Theatre. Koitela was a participant of De Appel Curatorial Programme in 2015–2016.

Jenni Laiti is a Sámi artivist, Duojár (Master of Traditional Sámi Crafts), Indigenous Rights activist and Climate Justice advocate. She is engaged in the anti-mining movement in Gállok, Jokkmokk, advocating for climate justice in Sápmi and working with local Sámi communities to strengthen Sámi self-determination and local governance.

Jemina Lindholm is a contemporary artist and a museum worker based in Helsinki. Their works revolve around the themes of intimacy, sickness and health, and collaborative processes, often taking the forms of video, photography or slightly choreographed encounters. They love working collectively as togetherness provides effectiveness, radical safety and immediate feedback. At the moment their main field of interest is the intersection of contemporary art, sickness, and crip theory. They are currently working on a new project on guided tours and their historical trajectories with their colleague Kaura Raudaskoski.

Meenakshi Thirukode is a writer, feminist killjoy and cultural theorist currently based out of New Delhi, where she gardens and lives with her two cats, Ginger and Sundari. You can find her navigating and contaminating the many intersections of her politicised being on Instagram @kanmanponmani.

Sandra Ruiz is the Sue Divan Associate Professor of Performance Studies in the Department of Theatre and a Conrad Humanities Scholar in the Department of English at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Ruiz is the author of *Ricanness: Enduring Time in Anticolonial Performance* (NYU Press, 2019) and co-author with Hypatia Vourloumis of *Formless Formation: Vignettes for the End of this World* (Autonomedia Press/Minor Compositions, 2021). She is a co-series book editor of *Minoritarian Aesthetics* (NYU Press)*,* co-founder of The Brown Theatre Collective, creator of *La Estación* Gallery, and the Mellon funded project the Minor Aesthetics Lab. Her book *Left Turns in Brown Study* is currently out for review.

Ailie Rutherford is a visual artist working at the intersection of community activism and creative practice. Her collaborative artworks bring people together in conversations about our social and economic landscape using print, performance, sci-fi visioning, games and technology as playful means to work through difficult questions and radically re-think our shared futures. Resulting works range from proposed new models for living and working together to the building of new infrastructure.

Hypatia Vourloumis is a performance theorist and received her Ph.D in performance studies at NYU. She is co-author with Sandra Ruiz of *Formless Formation: Vignettes for the End of this World* (Autonomedia Press/Minor Compositions, 2021) and is completing a monograph on the politics of post-colonial Indonesian paralanguage. She teaches at the Dutch Art Institute.

Mike Watson (PhD from Goldsmiths College) is a theorist, critic and curator who is principally focused on the relation between culture, new media and politics. He has written for ArtReview, Artforum, Frieze, Hyperallergic and Radical Philosophy and has curated events at the 55th and 56th Venice Biennale, and Manifesta 12, Palermo. In September 2021 he published his third book with Zer0 Books, *The Memeing of Mark Fisher: How the Frankfurt School Foresaw Capitalist Realism and What to Do About It.*

Collated from a selection of references and quotations which appear throughout *Rehearsing Hospitalities Companion 4.*

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Rehearsing Hospitalities Companion 4 asks what the possibilities and limitations of hospitality are. Should we instead be turning towards "rehearsing" redistribution?

This publication points towards the vast ways our lives and worlds could be organised through less hierarchical, extractive, and exploitative practices: with more love afforded to ourselves, one another, and our more-than-human kin. It doesn't provide all the answers, or a blueprint for a new world, but illustrates how people are doing this work now. Here redistribution is treated as a verb: a doing.

Rehearsing Hospitalities Companion 4 is a site for meeting around practices of redistribution and decentralisation. With contributions from Florian Carl & Jenni Laiti, Johanna Hedva, Isa Hukka & Jemina Lindholm, K-oh-llective (Nada Elkalaawy, Engy Mohsen, Mohamed Al Bakeri, Soukaina Joual, Rania Atef), Meenakshi Thirukode, Sandra Ruiz & Hypatia Vourloumis, Ailie Rutherford, Mike Watson, and the series editors Yvonne Billimore and Jussi Koitela.

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