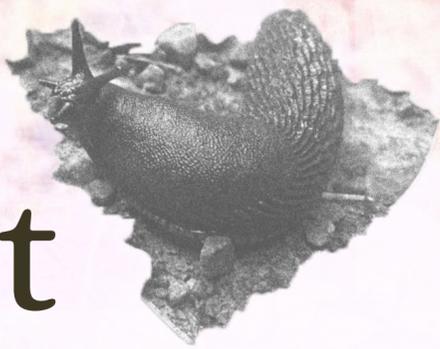


A companion to ecofeminist curatorial geography



An exercise book

October 2025, Skopje



what
is curatorial wilderness
and do we *think* or

sink ?
?

We gathered.
 By the Vardar River in Skopje.
 In June 2025.
 We gathered.
 We departed, contaminated by each other.
 It was warm.
 We were sweating.
 We kept writing and thinking about what we shared.
 Now, in October 2025, this fanzine continues our encounter.
 We kept writing and thinking about what we shared.
 Now, in October 2025, this fanzine continues our encounter.
 Reaching out to you.
 This fanzine/exercise book is for you:
 ~ colleagues, friends, students, and curious people of all generations.

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introduction

by Biljana Tanurovska-Kjulavkovski
& Nefeli Gioti

This exercise book grew out of the (non)conference “**(Eco)Feminism in Practice(s): Rethinking Arts and Curatorial Futures**,” curated by Biljana Tanurovska-Kjulavkovski. Conceived as a gathering rather than a conventional conference, it brought together artists, curators, thinkers, and students to share practices and collectively rethink the socio-ecological futures of curating and the (performing) arts.

Biljana invited colleagues and co-thinkers - Katalin Erdódi (Budapest), Paz Ponce (Berlin), Marta Keil (Warsaw/Utrecht), Hampus Bergander (Stockholm), Nefeli Gioti (Athens/Stockholm), Nikola Uzunovski, Ivana Dragic, Kristina Lelovac, and Slobodanka Stevcheska (all Skopje) - to co-create the space of the conference. Guests Eleonora Siarava (Thessaloniki/Athens), Laura Rozas (Lisbon), and Ana Lazarevska (Skopje) also actively participated throughout the (non)conference, while alumni of the Faculty of Fine Arts in Skopje - Ilina Vasile-

ska, Kamelija Kalamernikova, and Ivana Samandova - took part in the workshops and presented their artistic contributions, as well as their “imagined artistic education”. In the initial invitation, Biljana proposed an exercise book as a follow-up to the conference - an open format to capture and continue the (non)conference through collective writing and situated reflections. She also invited local artists to join in with their imaginative actions and practices. The exercise book you are now holding in your hands was developed collectively through diverse engagements and roles.

The (non)conference was envisioned as a space for sharing, cross-pollinating, and critically exploring eco- and feminist curatorial and artistic practices, particularly those working toward socio-ecological transformation in the field of arts and culture. We engaged with intersectional, solidarity-based, and ecological practices and policies to imagine new possibilities for

change. Our discussions and explorations were rooted in ecopolitical, affective, decolonial, and feminist approaches to curating.

We opened with **guiding questions** rather than fixed answers:

How can eco- and feminist-driven curatorial practices contribute to shifts in contemporary (performing) arts?

What potentialities emerge when ecofeminist, decolonial, and affective frameworks intersect with curatorial work?

One of the key threads we followed was Critical Pedagogy, Curatorial approaches (as strategies or tactics), and the Ecological Turn, revisiting the infrastructures of

knowledge production, engaging - through presentation of each other's examples, with decolonial and ecofeminist modes of learning (from personal and contextual understanding), and questioning the role of art education in advancing social and ecological justice.

More questions appeared:

How can curatorial practice and education in arts and culture in general respond to eco-feminist urgencies?

What are today's ecofeminist urgencies in contemporary arts and culture?

We talked and we walked through urgencies, dilemmas, imaginations, and wishes. We negotiated existing, and proposed (as) new, terms or perspectives and decided not to fix the positions, but work with the materials we have, the experiences each of us carries, to connect and relate them, and bring diverse lines or threads to them. To open them for readings and future imagining.

We talked about how we see ecofeminist futures in curatorial work, in work in culture and arts, in our spaces and environments as maintaining species well-being, reclaiming policy, agency, decision-making, acknowledging, and creating diverse landscapes.

We were interested in learning about ecofeminism, its relationship to history, culture, and art. We explored it as a reference, a notion, an action, and a political perspective. Inspired and motivated by ecofeminist perspectives, we study them to reimagine and rethink how they could open up new ways and practices for the curatorial in the performing arts.

We looked into different references of ecofeminism to acknowledge, once again, that the theoretical evolution of ecofeminism is deeply interdisciplinary. Some

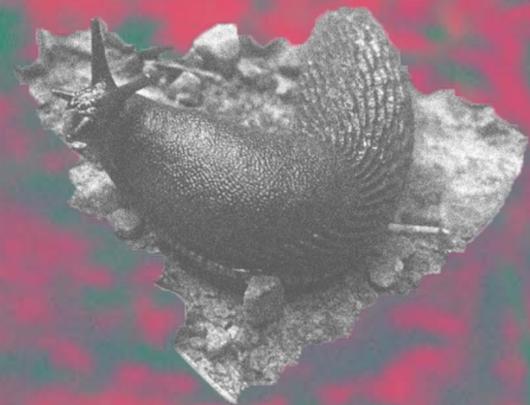
scholars trace its roots to critiques of the Western scientific revolution, which mechanised (programmed) nature and systematically excluded women from knowledge production. Others draw on Marxist critique to expose capitalism's exploitation of reproductive labour and its ties with colonial processes and violence.

Others point to the problem of capitalism and racial capitalism, celebrating and imagining Black ecofeminism as a bottom-up liberationist politics. We discussed Donna Haraway's critique of the Capitalocene and many others analysis of colonialism and industrialism as particularly relevant to accent as related to ecofeminism.

We discussed how specific approaches of Capitalocene are politically contextualised by explaining that environmental destruction is not a neutral, species-wide process, but instead rooted in the ecological crisis within the unequal histories of capitalist expansion and domination. Furthermore, we talked about plenty of references and examples according to which, historically, capitalism has been constructing a binary between "culture" as the civilised humanity and "nature" as a primitive wilderness.

What matters for us to underline is that ecofeminism resists binary approaches, asserting that humans are embedded within,

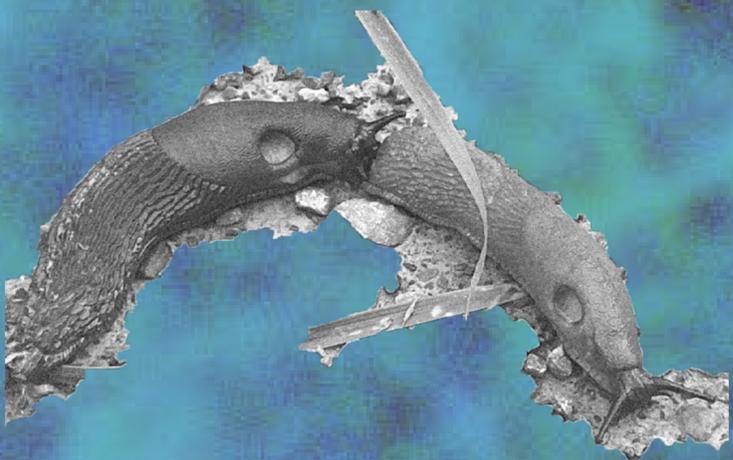
not separate from, nature. Under this prism, we connected our experiences in our working environments and projects and brought up various examples of artworks and practices that are related to this statement.



What also happened during those days of the (non)conference “**(Eco)Feminism in Practice(s): Rethinking Arts and Curatorial Futures**” is that we generated a lot of questions, imagining them to be interconnected and in motion.

We created a “**river**” of **questions, statements, dilemmas, and imaginative acts**, as an ever-shifting current which we can all respond to in different ways, from our own positions.

We want to thank all the inspiring thoughts, projects, texts, and artworks shared with us, that we could, and still can follow, dissect, them further.



what is this exercise book?

During the process, we let our imagination go wild, and then land back into each one's material conditions - time, needs, capacities, economic sustainability, support structures, different entry points, different contexts and localities.

What we agreed on is that this exercise book is a compost of the short process that took place during the (non)conference "(Eco) Feminism in Practice(s): Rethinking Arts and Curatorial Futures".

We imagine compost as a mixture of ingredients with diverse properties that can be developed and transformed further as a fertiliser through a collective process, as a root-enhancing support ready to be activated through the participation of those reading, using proposals, and incorporating them into their own practices so as to develop them further.

this exercise book is

A document that wants to move like a river
A trace of our co-becoming
A treat for those who wish to be treated
A companion while we are on the way -
aspiring towards what is not yet here ...
An itinerary for exploring current streams
supporting a necessity to start from
concrete action
Desired lines that draw feminist geographies

this exercise book is

An exercise book for shared speculation
It is not a manual -
but a map of how we did it,
and how it might be done otherwise,
again and with all of you reading it...

this exercise book is

A gesture of sharing, imagining,
and inviting
A gesture of unfixed forms,
a space for resonance
A gesture of proposals to be used as
a workshop tool
a companion for drifting thoughts,
a moment to sink (while thinking)
or a call to gather communities and
temporalities.

The gesture of making this exercise
book is a gesture with -
with each other, with questions, with
fragments, with the unknown.

this exercise book is

About posing a thought, a dilemma,
a resonance, and offering it to others:
a kind of shared speculative thinking.

how we worked on this exercise book?

**We picked up concepts,
fragments, and moments -**

those that jumped out during conversations,
those that lingered in silence,
those that returned in writing,
those that needed space to breathe.

**Some of its content can
be read as a score,
a reading proposal,
or an invitation:**

to put certain ideas, questions,
and dilemmas into
motion -
to move with them, to feel them,
to embody them,
and to create another—
a feminist geography.

we experimented with the proposals through:

Poetic Responses

We invited each other to dive into poetic imagination - to take three questions and respond through resonances, texts, and (artistic) gestures.

This proposal is reflected in the contributions of Paz Ponce, titled "Cantos rodados (Rolling Songs): Curating as Situated Memory and Ecosystem Service" (including selected poems by Ana Sofía Pérez-Bustamante); of Kristina Lelovac, "Rehearsing a Better World, an amalgamation"; of Laura Rozas's "Taxonomic Wilderness"; and of Nefeli Gioti's "Late-night notes".

Follow a Notion

Pick a concept, an urgency, or a term - and explore it individually or in collaboration. Such are the contributions by Biljana Tanurovska-Kjulavkovski and Katalin Erdódi, "Curatorial wilderness"- a conversa-

tion between the two of them, by Marta Keil and Alexander Roberts, a collaborative text titled "Spell for art institutions to nourish their relationality and become more public"; by Nefeli Gioti, "Thinking through maintenance"; by Ivana Dragsic; and by Hampus Bergander, "Trembling Adjacencies: Friction as Curatorial Ethics".

Drawings and Non-orthogonal Writing

Embrace graphic play - diagrams, sketches, poetic fragments, sentences that choreograph other geographies.

Such an approach can be traced in "I wake up and the world is on my shoulders" by Slobodanka Stevcheska, Ivana Samandova, Kamelija Kalamernikova, and Ilina Vasilevska, as well as in their collective graphic and visual designs, and also by Nikola Uzunovski's contribution.

Work from the Questions of the 'River'

Use the questions from the (non)conference invitation as threads, as entry points, as scores for thought, and develop them further.

This proposal is reflected in the contributions by Oliver Musovik and his field research on Bureau of Botanical Compliance; by Ana Lazarevska and her suggestion to listen to a non-human conversation by overhearing an "Intimate dialogue between the desert land and the wishful river"; and, in some way, by most of us through our contributions.

Playful Scores, Tactics, and Strategies

Move through the "river" and create playful scores or games that activate visions, move bodies, or offer strategies and tactics for dealing with failure, confusion, or care.

This proposal can be traced in the contributions by Marta Keil and Alexander Roberts,

titled "Spell for art institutions to nourish their relationality and become more public", if used as a score to be practised; by Kristina Lelovac, in the possible vade mecum "Her-story", an invitation to practice and play with "Rehearsing a Better World, an amalgamation"; by Eleonora Siarava and her score "As If: A Score to Play"; and, probably, in most of the contributions, if perceived as an invitation to practice.

tools of navigation

We invite you to navigate this exercise book through your guts, your imaginative tentacles, by activating your curious body. Open up to more than the cognitive senses, allow yourself to be curious, to remain open, to be surprised, dislocated, disoriented, or in friction, allow yourself to go wild.

Approach it as a compost that can help you sprout, seed new thoughts, and slowly let them bloom and pollinate others..

Embrace its complexity, and flow with its river of questions. Maybe one question can put something in motion, and that could be enough.

Pick it up and set it aside, listening to how your body feels while reading.

Let it accompany you with its many voices. Use it as a toolbox, either putting into practice the proposed texts, scores or questions that follow some of the contributions, or create your own tasks, scores, questions, or texts to be shared with others.

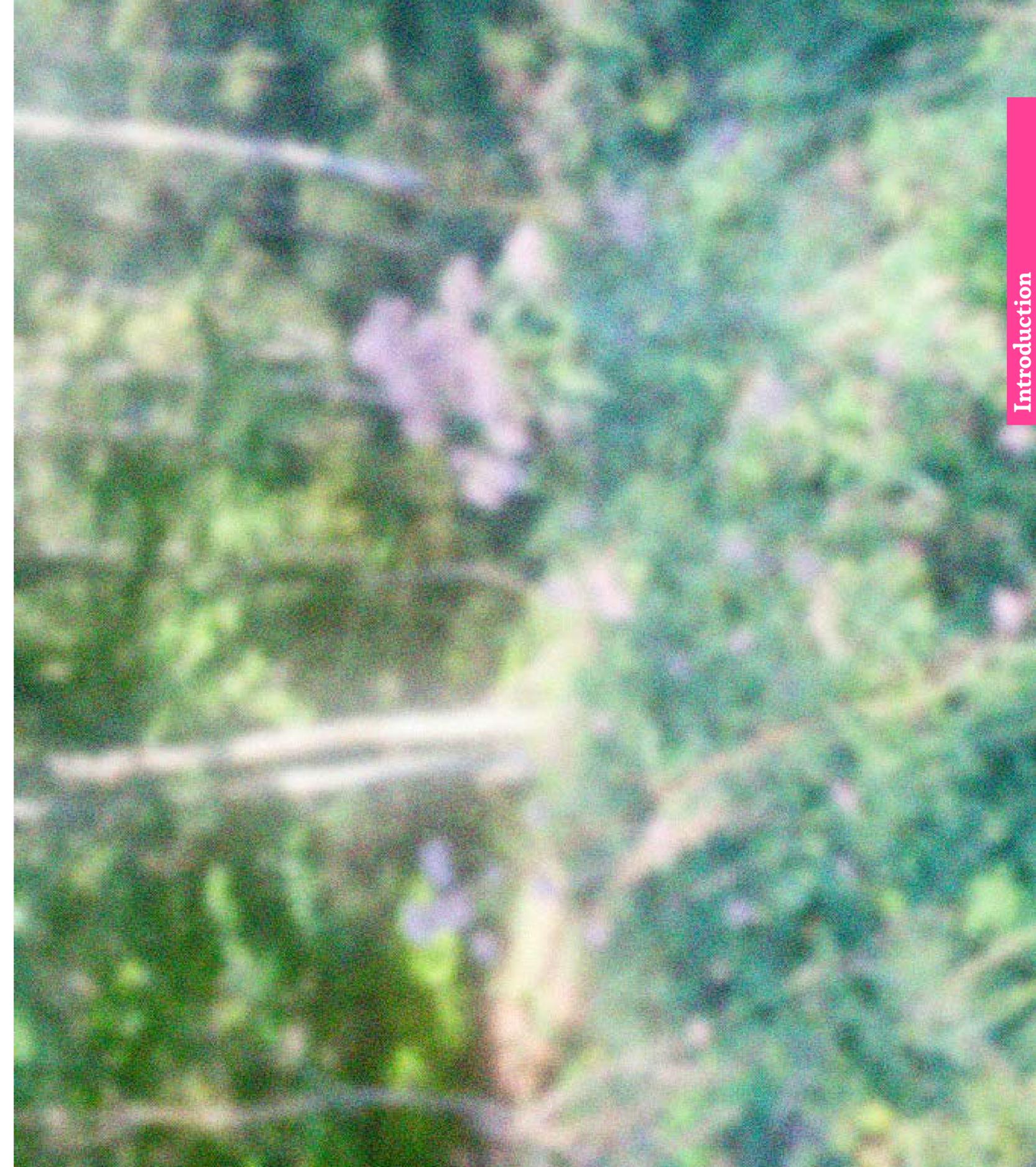
If you're curious, start with a question.

Any.

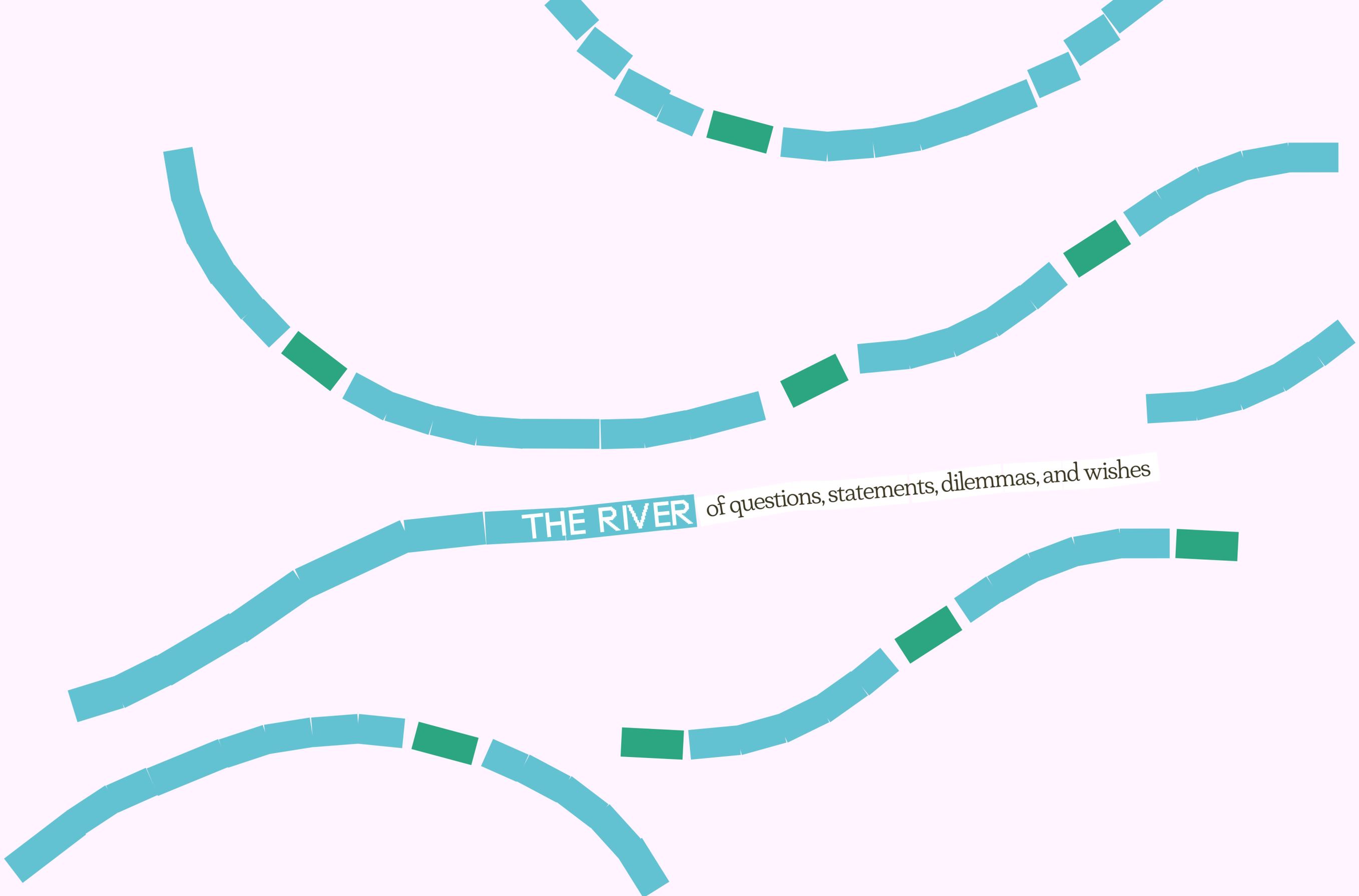
Let it pull you like a mycelial thread across pages.

Let reading become a game, a journey, a choice.

Let the book unfold like a river, or a field - nonlinear, erratic, relational. It can be a journey to the very principles we spoke of: ecofeminist multiplicity, openness, and movement.







THE RIVER

of questions, statements, dilemmas, and wishes

We strive to acknowledge all subjects and environments

What inspired us in ecofeminism?

reclaiming the commons

"I am suggesting that a gendered and racialized intersectional environmentalism operates on a principle of inextricability in which the terms "Black women" and "the earth" are inseparable."

If there is no forest, where will we find shelter?

Ecosystem service?

Ecosystem care?

Who inspired me to move forward in this thinking?

What do we maintain, and what maintains us?

slavery's ecological aftermaths

Black Ecofeminism

What is ecofeminist curating today, here and within this (polluted) environment?

How do we deal with anxiety, grief, and pressure in collective artistic work?
Talking about the sustaining and affective dramaturgy as coexistence, thus bringing different voices
What / Who can be identified as most nourishing and regenerative in your practice? and how has the landscape changed, and how is it

What does it mean to curate from the space of grief, anxiety, or creative paralysis?
How can relational curating enact companionship, not control?
Curatorial companionship
How do we transform the landscape and from what position are we looking at these transformations?

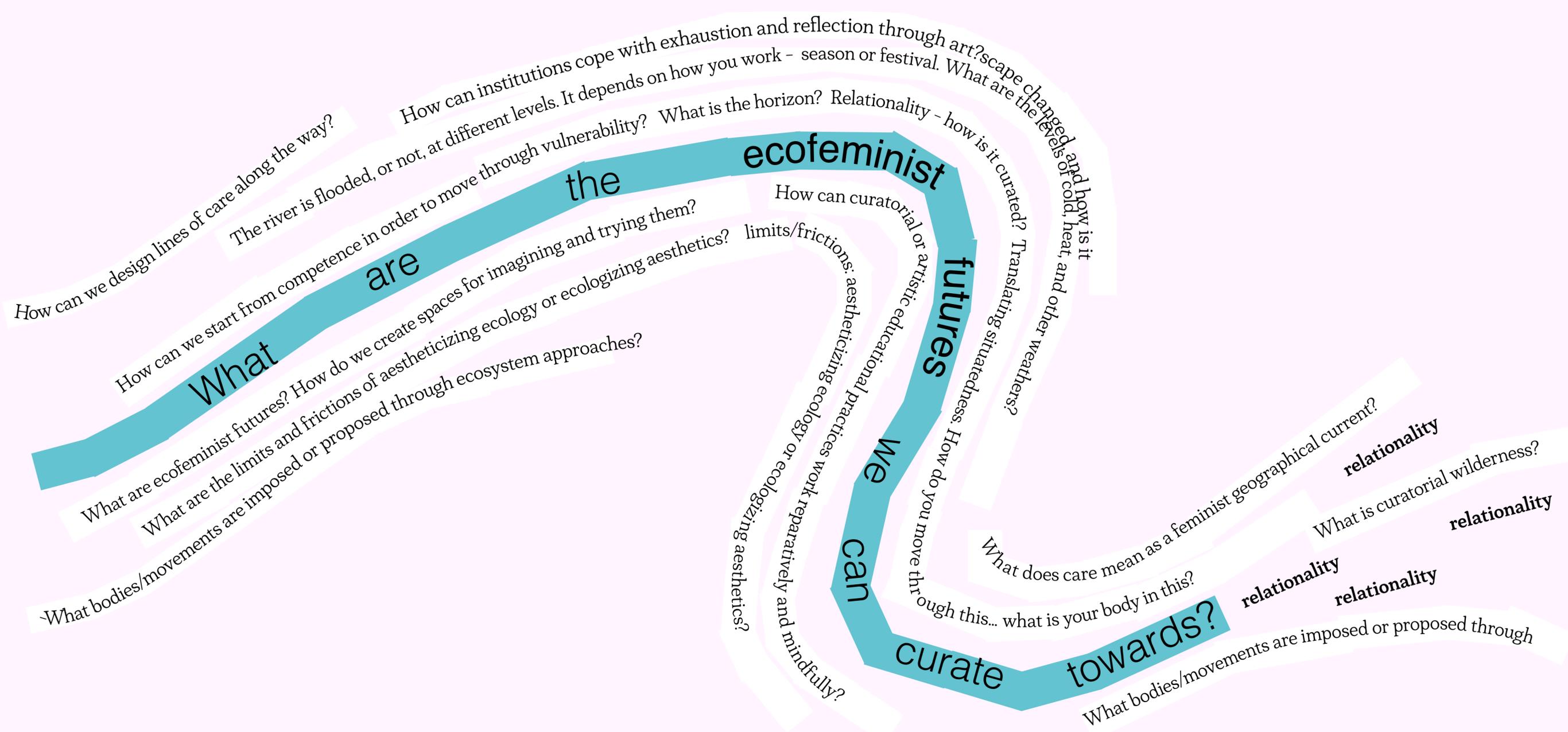
When you nourish something else?
What gestures become curatorial in times of pressure, war, extractivism?
Eco-speculative ontology as curating
Transforming the landscape with a river of questions?

How can care be a phase of exception, or what does it need to exist that way?
What does it mean to learn from the land or from forms of maintenance work?
How can we maintain species well-being while reclaiming policy and agency?

How can emotional labour lead us to (un)learn?
What are the problematics of mainstreaming trends in curating indigenous
How can we maintain species well-being while reclaiming policy and agency?

How can we create beyond binary thresholds?

How can we maintain species well-being while reclaiming policy and agency?



How does an institution reflect & respond to its environment?

How can we make space for thinking / research while exhausted by everyday pressures and urgencies?

What would an ecofeminist institution be?

How an institution reflects and responds to the environment. How does an institution practice listening?

What are the problematics of mainstreaming trends in curating indigenous practices (if any)?

Can we have it, imagine it or enchant it?

How can we maintain species well-being while reclaiming policy and agency?

How can we hold space for knowledge to remain passive?

How can we create beyond thresholds of exhaustion and urgency?

How to make space for thinking/ research while exhausted by everyday urgencies?

Can we vanish from systems that surveil us?

together

What bodies / movements are imposed or proposed by collective systems?

together

What advice do you find in curating?

together

How can our working conditions be ecofeminist?

us (and how can we work without visibility)?

How can we make space for thinking / research while exhausted by everyday pressures and urgencies?

together

UBI (Universal Basic Income)

together

How can our working conditions be ecofeminist?

together

the politics of the threshold

research while exhausted by everyday pressures and urgencies?

together

a gesture of distancing

What shapes do withdrawal and retreat take?

What does it mean to withdraw, to engage in the social otherwise?

How can we use withdrawal not to escape, but as a tactic for generative thought?

What shapes do withdrawal, distancing, shifting roles or changing places take, and how can we learn from them?

How can we make space for thinking / research while exhausted by everyday pressures and urgencies?

Withdrawal as creating space

What if withdrawal is giving up power positions as a conscious practice?

What does an ethics of retreat look like?

How to realize curatorial visions as companions?

What does

a meta-curatorial

How can we create beyond binary thresholds?

fiction as caring ethics

Can we curate inclusion through unheard voices?

practice

What are ecofeminist curatorial futures?

look

like ? ? ?

How can fiction function as a curatorial ethics?

What does a meta-curatorial practice entail?

friction as caring ethics

fiction as caring ethics

What does it mean to curate from with relationality ?

curator as a dramaturg of participation and collaboration
What can we learn from personal or collective experiences of social urgency?

How can emotional labor lead us to (un)learn?
Can we curate inclusion through unheard voices?

Voices in practice?

What can movement research do within a choreographic or artistic practice?
How can collectivity exist without pressure or creative paralysis?

collaboration as caring ethics

collectivity as domain outdoors, a deconditioning of participation
How can artistic / curatorial education work reparatively, responsively, and relationally?

collectivity as domain outdoors, a deconditioning of participation

poetic imagination



Paz Ponce

Cantos rodados (Rolling Songs): Curating as Situated Memory and Ecosystem Service

In the language of my native shores,
rivers flow down singing.
Even the stones they carry make sound -
Cantos rodados (rolling songs) -
as if the earth itself were telling a story
we haven't yet fully learned to translate.
A whisper (stream, cradle-song) converging with ideas
for the **future**.

Future: you've entered this
river twice already,
but neither the water nor we are the same.
Still, we hold you in memory.
Because what is sung, is remembered.
And what is remembered, can be told.
And what is told, can be entrusted to care.
And *custodianship* - to care without possessing -
is a way of resisting **erosion**.

Erosion: the constant wearing-down of bodies by
f(r)iction.
How do we survive the
impact of our encounters?
How can we transform together
without vanishing?
John Berger once said a *song*
is a shelter in time.
But what if singing were also a curatorial method?
A way to hold situated memory -
a current for dissident orality to keep flowing,
even as the narratives of progress silence the stories that
gave life to this **context**?

Context as method, as interlocutor:
working with the grain of a community and its histories.
Curating as a regenerative practice that listens to
the layers of a place:
the visible and submerged,
the institutionalised and displaced,
the lived, the erased, the **dreamed**.

To dream a latent curatorship,
one that tends to the material and emotional conditions
that allow something (a relationship, an archive, a story)
to keep breathing -
even if it lies dormant.
Even if it's undocumented,
unnamed in any budget.
(*I gift you the hollow of my embrace*, sings
a poet from the place **where I grew up**.)

Where I grew up, some trades still announce themselves
by singing.
The knife sharpener, for instance, plays a pan flute
as he rides his bicycle down the street.
That gesture - to sound in order to be heard -
stays with me in my curatorial work.
I, too, wish to announce myself that way:
not as a "freelancer multitasker"
but as someone who shapes shared tools.
As someone who strikes a note to sustain **life together**.

Life together in the art scene has no song yet,
but you can hear the sparks fly across Europe -
the tools of its precarious, itinerant infrastructure being
sharpened.
But how much can a body erode
while it follows the current of cultural production
and its dramatic politics of **drainage**?

Drainage: Cultural drainage, wetland drainage,
memory drainage.
Is care only a rumor,
or is it the body of water still flowing beneath our feet?
Can an institution hold me as I hold it?
We long for sustainability - yes -
but not as a funding slogan,
as an embodied desire,
a non-extractive rhythm.
We need radical caretakers to rewet the land.
We need queer resuscitators of vegetal memory,
of exhausted soils,
cleared and commodified by a *turbocapitalism* that
parasites **goods and services**.

What are ecofeminist curatorial futures?

Goods and services: Resources - that's what
ecosystems offer.
They sustain us. But what services can we offer back?
The United Nations' Millennium Ecosystem Assessment
defines ecosystem services in four broad categories:
provisioning, regulating, supporting, and cultural.
Curating, too, might be imagined this way -
as a kind of cultural ecosystem service.
What if curating were more like composting,
a practice of tending.
Not a mode of display, but of groundkeeping.
An ecology of attention.
A service that shelters time,
and holds space for unpredictable growth.
What if curating were this **kind of gesture**?

A kind gesture: hospitality –
to open a space for others,
physically, symbolically, emotionally.
To ask: Who is welcome? On what terms? At what pace?
What forms of attention are needed to sustain an encounter?
Hospitality is a threshold politics,
a bridge between the intimate and the public, the familiar and
the unexpected.
A tactic to render structures of domination visible.
A way to share infrastructure through care,
reciprocity, and **responsibility**.

Response-ability: beyond programming,
the capacity to situate oneself. To entangle.
To become an intermediary, a caretaker of rhythms,
a custodian of memories that have no monument yet.
And when the monument appears –
to question it,
so the collective does not fossilise,
so there remains an infrastructure
where theory can meet action,
analysis can reconcile with hope,
and the future remains organic.
Perhaps here lives the **curatorial-wilderness**.

The curatorial-wilderness operates
from feminist geography
and an affective economy.
It is the silent function that holds habitat:
to filter, to fertilise, to retain moisture,
to connect invisible root systems –
relational, vital, spiritual.
It lives by an **instinct of joy**
(**And Joy is queer**)

Instinct of joy: that's what my mother calls
the dragonflies singing lullabies to the river in her poems.
(**And Mum is queer**)
She says you enter the stones through the palms of your
hands.
Do you know the country where lichen blooms?

Lichen: metabolic architects.
I often dream we could be like them.
That we'd learn to enter latency.
To suspend metabolism, to not die from overproduction.
Lichens survive drought by pausing.
They come back to life with humidity.
They photosynthesise.
They share.
They **regenerate**.

Regenerate: What if art could do the same?
What if curating, instead of accelerating,
could inhabit the margins –
wait, accompany, breathe together again?
Geography is on our side,
whisper the lichens in their rebellious nap.
So does the murmur of water,
when we learn how to listen.

Listen: I can live without you, Capitalocene –
but not without the song of my labor.

Epilogue: This text doesn't answer questions.
It makes them echo like stones in a river –
cantos rodados.
Some of those stones were given to me.
From the river where I was born:
my mother's tongue –
a poet who taught me to hear the landscape
as language. The soul of play.

What follows are fragments of her poems.
They taught me how to listen,
how to tend to silence,
how to enter the stone.

How to realize curatorial visions as companions?

Selected poems by Ana Sofía
Pérez-Bustamante
Published in
The Forest
Book of Poems
2013

1. En el reverso de tus ojos
memorias vegetales de la tierra.
Sombra. Puntos negros
—semillas de la luz—
por dentro de los párpados.
Se mueven. Juegan

On the reverse side of your eyes
vegetal memories of the earth.
Shadow. Black dots
—seeds of light—
inside the eyelids.
They move. They play.

2. Qué difícil leer por dentro, inteligencia
Volver al bosque
donde una vez quisimos
ser por siempre niños.
O vágulas o blándulas anímulas
o nanas —o lullaby— o libélulas.
Pura vida sin apenas redes
de símbolos. Instinto de alegría.

How hard it is to read from within, intelligence.
To return to the forest
where once we wished
to be children forever.
Oh vague souls or soft spirits
Oh lullabies—oh *nanas*—oh dragonflies.
Pure life with barely
any net of symbols. Instinct of joy.

Qué difícil, conciencia,
ir más allá de ti. Pero contigo.

How difficult, consciousness,
to go beyond you. But with you.

(Y pasa por detrás, en sombra,
la sombra. Una palabra. Una pantera.)

(And behind, in shadow,
passes the shadow. A word. A panther).

3. Voy entrando en mi edad
como en un abandono o un sendero
menguante.
Qué difícil ahora tan solo incorporarse
es, cuando eres solo un animal cansado que lame
sus heridas.
Quién podría decir
de dónde viene el miedo.
Por qué es tan ominosa
la soledad que acecha entre los árboles.
Con qué mundo o lenguaje
—u olvido de lenguaje—
limita mi silencio.

I enter my age
like entering an abandonment or a
waning path.
How hard it is now just to rise
when you're nothing but a tired animal
licking its wounds.
Who could say
where fear comes from.
Why the loneliness lurking among the trees
feels so ominous.
With what world or language
—or forgetting of language—
does my silence border.

7. Entro en la piedra
a través de las palmas de las manos.
¿Conoces el país
donde florece el líquen?
Sus ríos como el óxido de cobre.
En el silencio, con el aire puro,
por los montes de venus vienen verdes.

I enter the stone
through the palms of my hands.
Do you know the country
where lichen blooms?
Its rivers like copper oxide.
In silence, with the pure air,
they come green over the mounts of Venus.

12. Un misterioso sol
se filtra entre las ramas.
Va eligiendo las cosas.
Las cuevas de la luz:
un remolino de agua, las flores de una adelfa,
un destello
que ha dejado la lluvia en las rodadas.
El humilde sendero
deslumbra apariciones. Imposible
andar con esta niña tan pequeña
que va coleccionando
hojas de otoño, cantos
rodados, cuarzos, piedras,
piedras y piedras y más piedras
(no le bastan las manos, no le sobran bolsillos).
Cuando se tienen los ojos tan cerca de los pies
cada punto del suelo es infinito.
(Los niños no saben pasear.)
- A mysterious sun
filters through the branches.
It chooses things.
The caves of light:
a whirl of water, the blossoms of an oleander,
a gleam
left by the rain on the ruts.
The humble path
dazzles with apparitions. Impossible
to walk with this small child
who collects
autumn leaves, smooth stones,
quartz, pebbles, stones,
stones and stones and more stones
(not enough hands, not enough pockets).
When your eyes are so close to your feet
every patch of ground is infinite.
(Children don't know how to take a walk.)

- 15 Parece que vienen risas de allá abajo.
Madeja impenetrable de zarzas y lentiscos.
Sonando baja el río
pulsándole a las piedras
sus notas de cascada. Sí, son risas.
(Pasa lo mismo con náyades y nutrias:
que no se ven.)
- Laughter seems to come from down below.
An impenetrable tangle of brambles and mastic
trees.
The river flows below,
plucking from the stones
its cascade notes. Yes, it's laughter.
(It's the same with naiads and otters:
you don't see them.)

18. *Allí donde no pienso* [en mí]
es donde existo.
En la acción de fluir.
Fluir así, sin más,
es el alma del juego.
El río,
el río de la vida,
es el que fluye así, sin más.

There, where I don't think [of myself],
is where I exist.
In the act of flowing.
To flow like that, no more,
is the soul of play.
The river,
the river of life,
is what flows like that, no more.

- 19 Cruza el puente el niño
con su bastón de caña
que va sonando contra la pasarela.
Rítmico traqueteo, música de estacas.
Canta el cuco. Y va sonando el niño
con junglas, con manglares, con aullidos de
monos.
Late su corazón con furia
como un batán se bate con el agua.
- (Por debajo del agua, en las lagunas
del tiempo,
siguen en otro idioma las palabras.)

The child crosses the bridge
with his cane stick
tapping against the walkway.
Rhythmic clatter, music of stakes.
The cuckoo sings. And the child resounds
with jungles, with mangroves, with monkey
howls.
Her heart beats wildly
like a fulling mill strikes water.

(Beneath the water, in the lagoons
of time,
the words continue in another language.)

Ivana Dragsic



"IT WAS THE BEST OF TIMES, IT WAS THE WORST OF TIMES, IT WAS THE AGE OF WISDOM, IT WAS THE AGE OF FOOLISHNESS, IT WAS THE EPOCH OF BELIEF, IT WAS THE EPOCH OF INCRECULITY, IT WAS THE SEASON OF LIGHT, IT WAS THE SEASON OF DARKNESS, IT WAS THE SPRING OF HOPE, IT WAS THE WINTER OF DESPAIR..."

IT WAS THE 632ND DAY OF
GENOCIDE AGAINST GAZA

IT WAS THE 633RD DAY OF
GENOCIDE AGAINST GAZA

IT WAS THE 634TH DAY OF
GENOCIDE AGAINST GAZA

THE RIGHT TO BELIEF HAD MUTATED INTO A RUTHLESS SURPLUS-DRIVEN URGE TO ACT, STOMP AND COLONIZE; WITH ROBOTS, GUNS, AND POLITICS.

IT WAS A TIME TO OCCUPY TIME AND HOLD SPACE, A TIME TO LEARN TO LEAVE AND TO PASS. IN BRUSSELS, THE CITIZENS TAUNTED AND HECKLED THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO BELGIUM ONLY A FEW WEEKS AFTER THE MACEDONIAN PRESIDENT BOWED TO THE ONE FOR THE WB REGION. THE FORMER MAYOR OF BARCELONA BOARDED THE GLOBAL SUMUD FLOTILLA TO GAZA, WHILE

THE MAYOR OF SKOPJE HAD BEEN MISSING IN ACTION FOR MONTHS, DRIVING THE PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AND SERVICES INTO TOTAL COLLAPSE. ACCORDING TO THE KIND GENTLEMEN FROM THE CITY ENTERPRISE "PARKS AND GREENERY", NONE OF THE MOWERS OR TRIMMERS WERE WORKING, SO THE URBAN FLORA REMAINED UNTOUCHED, UNTAMED, AND THRIVING.

IT REVEALED TO ME, IN A WAY I HAD NEVER DARED HOPE BEFORE, WHAT AN ACT OF WITHDRAWAL TO MAKE SPACE ACTUALLY IS. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY, AS AN INSTITUTED CITY, SOCIETY, STATE - WE, THE PEOPLE OF SKOPJE, UNWILLINGLY ACTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NATURAL LAWS OF INTERDEPENDENCE.

I ESTIMATED THAT WE CONTRIBUTED TO CROSS-POLLINATION BY 100% MORE THAN IN ANY PREVIOUS SEASON.

THE FLOWERS, WEEDS AND BUSHES HAD GROWN SO MUCH, OR MAYBE I HAD BECOME SMALLER. THEY OVERGREW, OVERBLOOMED, DRIED, AND GREW AGAIN. THE GLOBAL SUMUD FLOTILLA WAS ON ITS WAY. WE ENTERED THE BRIEF ERA OF PERIPETY. I HAD DEFINITELY BECOME SMALLER.

What if withdrawal is giving up power positions as a conscious practice?

PICS BIKES AND EDITING:
GORJAN GILEVSKI
FEATURED PLANTS: VERBASCUM
ADENANTUM, ONOPORDUM
ACANTHIUM, SALVIA PRATENSIS,
QUISETUM ARVENSE,
CHONDRILLA JUNCEA

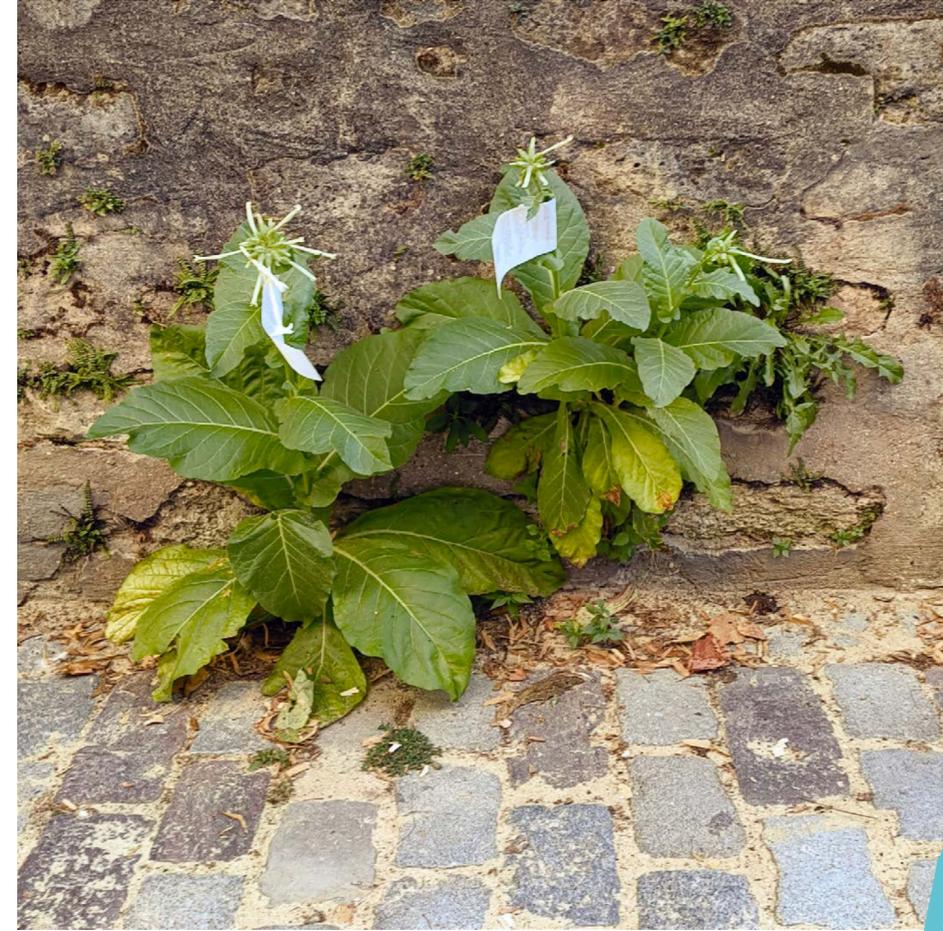
How can we maintain species well-being while reclaiming policy and agency?

IVANA DRAGSIC

SKOPJE, JUNE-SEPTEMBER 2025

Oliver Musovik

Bureau of Botanical Compliance



During fieldwork in Paris, I encountered violation notices attached to spontaneous plants issued by BUREAU DE CONTRÔLE BOTANIQUE. Each notice included a citation number, plant identifier, plant infraction, mandated action, and a QR code. Scanning the code led to the website of the Bureau of Botanical Compliance (BoBC) - a digital registry containing documents, protocols, and bul-

letins. Since then, I have collected and documented these materials: violation slips in the streets, the website's archived pages, and photographs of plants subjected to official citation. My attempts to contact the Bureau directly were unsuccessful. The collected materials form a dossier showing how the Bureau regulates vegetation through classification, spatial governance, and symbolic oversight.

Relationality - how is it curated?

fiction as curatorial ethics



Bureau of Botanical Compliance (BoBC)

Where There Is Growth. There Must Be Order

The Bureau of Botanical Compliance (BoBC) include the issuance of protocols, regulatory notices, and compliance guidelines related to observation, classification, adjudication, spatial governance, aesthetic evaluation, and symbolic oversight of plant life within managed and unmanaged environments. Its operations is a regulatory authority responsible for the the identity, conduct, placement, and visibility of vegetative growth. The Bureau does not seek approval for its operations. Its jurisdiction is assumed, and its procedures are ongoing.

(Source: <https://botanical-compliance.neocities.org/>)

BUREAU OF BOTANICAL COMPLIANCE



MEMORANDUM BBC/INT/034-0825

Date: 18 August 2025 | Issued By: Field Operations Desk | Distribution: Internal – Level IV and above

Subject: Marais Vegetal Compliance Survey — Summary Findings

Sector: Marais, Paris, France, Zone 2B (Coord. 48.857100, 2.360300)

Duration: 18 August 2025 06:10 – 13:05 CET

Teams Deployed: FR-2B-A, FR-2B-B | Thermal Printer ID: PR-04M

Plants Observed: 189 | Plants Inspected: 132 | Infractions Cited: 62

Violation Code	Description	Count
A.1.4	Unauthorised Pavement Growth	34
B.3.7	Loitering Plant Material	10
C.2.2	Encroachment into Pedestrian Passage	5
D.5.1	Root Expansion beyond Assigned Perimeter	3
E.6.4	Illegal Growth Adjacent to Utility Infrastructure	4
Z.0.0	Suspected Intent to Propagate (unconfirmed)	2

Symbolic Responses:

Verbal Warnings (Form V-7) – 8

Written Citations (Form C-12) – 28

Eviction Notices (Form E-3) – 6

Observational Notes

Concentrated emergence of *Taraxacum officinale* (dandelion), *Conyza canadensis* (horseweed), and *Atriplex patula* (common orache) observed along the low wall separating Quai de l'Hôtel de Ville and Voie Georges Pompidou; colonisation limited in scale but recurrent at fissure points.

Mature *Platanus × hispanica* specimens restricted to Quai de l'Hôtel de Ville exhibited characteristic bark exfoliation, producing accumulations in circulation and drainage corridors.

Seasonal leaf dispersal noted in façade recesses adjacent to the Quai, surface litter remaining primarily symbolic rather than obstructive.

Vegetative units within the perimeter of the Cité internationale des arts displayed minimal adaptive behaviour during citation procedure.

Advisories for Botanical Adjustment

Recommend restraint of pavement crack colonisation by dandelion, horseweed, and orache units along the low wall corridor between Quai de l'Hôtel de Ville and Voie Georges Pompidou.

Advise *Platanus × hispanica* specimens on the Quai to moderate bark detachment within circulation and drainage zones.

Encourage fallen leaves to consolidate at peripheries to avoid obstruction of façades and water channels.

Remind all generative units within Zone 2B that spontaneous propagation without registry reference remains discouraged under Mandate 001.

Where There Is Growth. There Must Be Order.

Hampus Bergander

Trembling Adjacencies: Friction as Curatorial Ethics

Nourishing something else, letting it lean?

Friction is not a metaphorical softness, but a material snag – the tension, resistance, and unevenness that arises when philosophies and registers of experience meet in curatorial practice. Inclusion, often framed as its counterpart, has been cast as the ethical endpoint of curatorial work: a tally of voices, a promise of space. Yet, this neat framing hides the stiffness, too easily sealing the surface, smoothing over the tremors that inclusion itself generates. What if, instead, inclusion was less a resolution than a site of contradiction – a threshold where coherence falters, boundaries blur, and the edges persistently unsettle? Inclusion not as terminus, but a provocation: an invitation to reconsider not just who emerges into view, but the very currents that shape visibility. The subtle pressures through which hierarchies flow, and the ways in which forms of composition continually slip, fracture, and recombine.

Friction in curatorial practice is not supposed to be smooth. Not continuous. But contagious. It is a stick-slip. It resembles endurance phenomena in physics, tectonic plates or a violin string under a bow – a dynamically adjusted vibration. Friction is the pause where coherence slips, releasing unanticipated motion and the drag of competing de-

mands. It is surplus – excess, force, transformation. It is where inclusion falters and frameworks calculated to contain leak, rupture, and proliferate fresh probabilities. This means leaning into imbalance. The scrape of temporalities that will not align. The jar of bodies and voices that refuse to be delimited in lucid narrative. It is a practice of adjacency, a proximity that quivers. Through ecofeminism and ecopolitics, friction becomes a way to think with ecology as a method: attuned to entanglement. It invites curating beyond extractivist logics, toward collaborative and wayward practice. Tautness here, is not problematic, but a generative exercise that enables different conditions of creation. Here, the labor of curating is never neutral; it must navigate the pressures of responsibility, attending to forces larger than the frame, larger than the eye, and larger than the individual alone.

Today, this question cannot be postponed. In 2025, art institutions fold dissent into “codes of conduct”, soft language for hard censorship. These protocols flatten relational friction into compliance, compressing dissent into silence, control smuggled in under the guise of inclusion. From this vantage point, curation can no longer afford neutrality; it must act with sharpened, deliberate agency. At the

same time, curating is entangled with ecological unravelings and neoliberal capture, where demands for clarity and inclusion risk becoming instruments of control. Against this backdrop, friction offers not resolution but resistance. What I propose is exploring this friction more attentively as a form of curatorial practice. To open instability, rather than polish it away.

Tracing Friction

To explore this friction productively, we can turn to physicist and feminist theorist Karen Barad’s queer material-discursive ontology, where friction can emerge not merely as resistance but as an active form of agency entangled within matter itself. Barad dismantles the sharp nature/culture divide, a divide sustained through human exceptionalism, feeding the fantasy of detachment and separability. In Barad’s ontology, friction is not just opposition – it is a pulse, a quiver, an energetic tension through which matter itself speaks and acts.

Barad paints matter and meaning as inseparably entangled, perpetually in flux – friction here, is not only aesthetic but ontological. Queerness names

the instability of nature itself. Consider Barad’s description of social amoebas: billions of them, a sticky empire oozing through Texas soil, a 40-foot colony moving invisibly under a cow pasture. Scientists describe them as a ‘blob with no defined shape,’ a creature that recalls Cold War horror films even as it unsettles biology’s taxonomies. Here, identity is not fixed but seeping and contagious. Matter itself stages drag. In doing so, insists their queer performativity rewrites what counts as matter, time, and causality. Not so much an organism as a rumor in motion. This amoebic seepage models a curatorial logic of adjacency – collective, unstable, and impossible to pin down. Even logic falters here, buckling at the limits of the nature/culture divide where queer theory and eco-criticism intersect.

This grapevine of ontological queerness (if you wish to call it that), and the indeterminate finds a curatorial parallel in filmmaker, artist, and writer Isadora Neves Marques’s distinction between “open text” and “subtext.” The latter, marked by ambiguity, metaphor, and indirection – enables forms of coded resistance. As Marques reminds us, “deception has historically been, if not inherently, queer”. I would add that these subtextual modes can themselves be read as acts of political imagination: a space where

frictional gestures in curating keep meaning in motion. Subtext, in this sense, stages friction through indirection.

This kind of performativity has always been central to queer theory, yet it has been conceived almost entirely as a human affair. A paradox, given that the very constitution of “the human” is enmeshed with the nonhuman. Referring to these entities as “queer” is not a rhetorical flair here, nor a claim about sexual practices as Barad insists. But shows how queerness unsettles identity and relationality – and performatively destabilizes what counts as discrete, stable, or self-same. Lightning, as Barad beautifully describes, for example, does not descend in a single strike but in a stuttering choreography. Thin tendrils “step leaders”, branch out, hesitate, branch out again, feeling their way toward the ground. From below, “streamers” rise to meet them. Only in their encounter does the bolt exist. There is no sender, no receiver, until after the strike. Lightning is not delivery but rehearsal: a hesitant scanning, a reaching across thresholds, a co-composition that materializes only in the meeting. To read this as performativity is to see curatorial practice itself as trembling anticipation. A field of gestures that might connect, or might falter, until the strike strikes, and meaning is made.

Yet, it is important to recognize that this type of “relationality,” in more general terms as a concept, has itself been absorbed into the lexicon of institutional curating. Within the frameworks of liberal inclusion, or so-called “relational aesthetics,” relation is too easily cast as harmonious, dialogic, or repara-

tive. A humanist ideal of connection that disavows the material asymmetries it claims to engage (as art historian and critic Claire Bishop has famously and frequently noted).

Equally, curatorial practice often remains tethered to representational frameworks, particularly those shaped by second-wave feminist logics of representation, where making identity comprehensible is cast as a political good. These strategies of curatorial practice, while historically vital, often hinge on the assumption that visibility equals empowerment. This fetishization of identity politics or minority representation often reduces complex social dynamics to discrete markers and binary stamps. Fragments that obscure the systemic operations of power they might otherwise contest. What follows is usually politics steeped in diplomatic anxiety, gestures that clutter rather than trigger.

Within this spatiality, how can it unfold? Perhaps in the undercurrent, the subtext, or the refusal. Do subtextual strategies and ontological queerness enact non-passive interventions? Not relation as harmony, but as noise. Accountability without comfort. Friction is staged in practice, I would argue when making new curatorial responsibilities stick-slip.

Friction as cracked agency

If the refusal of encapsulation introduces curatorial responsibility as stick-slip, then friction becomes one name for this condition. It means confronting the limits of one’s own renderings. Philosopher,

writer, and activist Bayo Akomolafe introduces another essential complication: what if agency is not a force of intervention, but something that emerges from an intentional rupture, becoming through the cracks. Their nod to the concept of chiasmagraphy – an ethnography of the in-between. Invites curatorial practice to linger not only in conceptual impasse, but also in perceptual dissonance. As atmospheric, where meaning has not yet crystallized. Friction becomes a generative site – not where solutions are found, but where speculative unfoldings take shape. It produces a textural geography: of thresholds and overlaps. Perception here, is never neutral; it is neuro-emergent, shaped by history, temporality, and the sensory intensities that exceed identity. To curate frictionally, then, is not only to resist legibility, but to reject the fantasy that the world is already visible. Attending to what Akomolafe calls “what is felt but not yet articulated.”

Extending from theory to practice, philosopher Kathrin Busch in *Rehearsing Failure* frames rehearsal as dwelling in incapacity. Rehearsals as a practice of killing time, of exhausting possibility. In this sense, rehearsal is refusal. Scrapping feasibility, puncturing the falsehood of empowerment, deactivating the horizontal flow of productivity. Yet, alongside this refusal lies another aesthetic: incapacity. Artistic practice exposes itself to the inevitability of deviation of intention. Here, incapacity is not deficiency, but momentum. The intention moves precisely because it falters, because it resists being contained by technique. Rehearsals thus dwell on the spectrum between the possible and the impossible. Demanding us to remain in the

snag and the delay as another form of friction and agency.

From the snag of rehearsal, writer and curator Chuz Martínez pushes further: if failure unravels intention, anachronism unravels time itself. The frictional acts of “signifying” and “agency” cannot remain bound to conventional parameters of “theme” and “meaning.” Anachronism must act not simply as error or deviation, but as method. Through anachronism, meaning is no longer tethered to linear temporality or fixed interpretation. But can instead generate dissonant resonances, and opens the possibility of escaping the omnipresence of hermeneutics. This is not only an observation but also a necessary critique: the curriculum itself needs to be rethought.

Friction and agency, therefore, I would argue, are co-constitutive. Where there is tension, there is potential. Here, curating through friction aligns with Karen Barad’s assertion that agency is not a property but a relation. Barad illustrates this with the stingray’s nervous system, certain receptors unlock in advance of a signal, as if anticipating it. The channel opens before it is asked to. Described as a kind of clairvoyance. Action without stimulus, or stimulus arriving from the future. The body, porous to time, receiving before being given. Matter is not just queer; it is insubordinate. Agency, then, a dwelling beyond stable identities or dichotomies. Embracing emergent and performative ethics.



Friction as Speculative Ethics

If agency splinters in the cracks, the question follows: what kind of responsibility can hold in that fracture? Here, friction shifts from capacity to care, from agency to ethics - where Isadora Neves Marques's notion of 'responsible irresponsibility' becomes vital. For Marques, imagination is inherently political and emancipatory, because it resists functioning according to social or personal expectations. Interrupting even our own assumptions. One way to understand this is as friction, because it inhabits both the contradictory impulses of the mind and the hypervigilant demands of lived reality. A metaphor that highlights how responsible irresponsibility can unfold simultaneously in tension and declaration. Seen this way, responsibility is less about immediacy or compliance than about cultivating delay, hesitation, and the refusal to reconcile too quickly.

This difference carries epistemological consequences: it means forgetting, setting aside inherited philosophical tools. It means expressing ourselves - the common point of view of "us," the fragile notion of "we" in a foreign language. Introducing, reassembling, and giving form to the unease of the present. Duration, then, implies rhythm and intensity. As Chus Martínez insists, any method of questioning, ultimately becomes a matter of time, and what is largely forgotten in art theory and philosophy is precisely rhythm. And with it, the refusal of immediacy. Martínez's notion of the anachronic makes this clear: analysis can be rethought from a different angle, forcing the subject back into its context, back into the conditions of its origin.

This tension between contradiction and simultaneity can be approached through the notion of antinomy

- not a tidy paradox in a philosophy, but a live fracture where two principles hold with equal force yet refuse reconciliation. Antinomy is coherence undone. Reason pulled in opposite directions until it stutters. In artistic practice, it surfaces as a present tense that will not stabilize: where preparation becomes performance, where memory spills forward into anticipation, where two logics co-exist without collapsing into one. Antinomy does not ask to be solved; it insists on being endured.

Artist Miloš Trakilović's work *564 Tracks (Not a Love Song Is Usually a Love Song)* (2023) carries a similar charge. Trakilović's installation *564 Tracks* feeds war-zone recordings into an AI, which then teases tonal resonances from popular Yugoslav music made in the years just before the Bosnian War. A second AI recomposes these sounds into the melodic structures of love songs, producing an endless, shifting score of longing haunted by catastrophe. The work collapses memory and anticipation: the sweetness of love-song form entwined with the sonic residues of violence. Was the war already audible in the music of the time? Can cultural production anticipate catastrophe before history confirms it? Here, past, present, and projected futures rub against each other, refusing to separate cleanly.

This operates as antinomy: it does not reconcile but sustains contradiction, fusing intimacy with violence, love with collapse, anticipation with aftermath. Their frictional temporalities enact speculative ethics - not by clarifying, but by holding open the irresolvable. Such irresolvable collisions in practice demand a philosophical lens equal to their volatility. Philosopher Gilles Deleuze and psychoanalyst Félix Guattari

provide one: a language for subjectivity not as fixed ground but as restless becoming, a machinic process that, like Trakilović's score, never settles. Deleuze and Guattari offer us other tools not just to understand this friction, but to dwell within it, to linger in productive tension, resisting escape. Fixed positions dissolve. What remains is a synthesis that produces becoming. There is no fixed 'I,' only the illusion of coherence, stitched by desire's restless machinery.

Subjectivity is a machine: disassembled, torn, reassembled, never whole. For curators, this is an invitation, to resist the seduction of neat narratives, to trace the ruptures, and the jolts that birth intelligibility itself. The 'line of flight,' as Deleuze and Guattari theorize, is not escape but deterritorialization. A wandering vector, a drift that resists capture, links assemblages to their environments, and enables transformation as well as non-hierarchical becoming. Against representational capture, subjectivity moves, machinic, emergent, propelled by these lines, never fixed, always in motion. It is subjectivity, especially in its most mundane forms, that marks the contemporary.

Friction, then, as I suggest, is not just what happens between artworks or subjects. It is the ethical site where curating itself is unsettled and implicated. To curate frictionally is to resist coherence not in the name of irony or detachment, but in the name of an ethics faithful to the unformed and the unresolved. This is not a curatorial retreat from the political, but perhaps a subversion of it, a refusal to reconcile. Importantly, this is not a careless endower, it is being acutely engaged against resolving clarity and instead cultivating critical difficulty.



Friction – the fraction, after stability

Friction is not only a conceptual challenge to coherence of meaning. It should seep and flicker. Modernity's recursive loop of progress has long privileged the autonomous figure – sealed and singular, detached from wider ecologies. Agency reduced to a unit, a calculation of responsibility without entanglement, disconnected from systems that shape us. This liberalist imaginary is inelastic; it fractures against crises whose scales are both planetary and systemic. The paradox is that the harder we innovate, the more the scaffolding holds, replicating the very conditions it claims to escape. Yet, for Bayo Akomolafe this stuckness is not merely a dead end. It is the moment when those patterns lose their integrity, when coherence no longer fits the frame we take for granted, and the seam splits.

As Isadora Neves Marques observes, neoliberalism has succeeded in molding people's inner lives to satisfy the gaze of others, even within discourses of self-care. Like a hall of mirrors, it demands constant scrutiny while reducing connection to transactional exchange. At the same time, it produces a looping temporality, suspended between cultural nostalgia and art-historical amnesia. I want to argue that this diagnosis makes clear that the challenges of inclusion are not only institutional but also interior and temporal. Friction interrupts these mirrored circuits.

Marques challenges this through forms like autofiction, which, within neoliberal cultural logic, often tie responsibility to transparency: the assumption that alterity must be made fully visible

to be valid. Marques names this dynamic a “(neo) liberal creed”: the compulsion that alterity can only be acknowledged once it is made transparent. Autofiction destabilizes the line between fact and fiction, and for Marques the task is to extend this destabilization further, combining testimony with speculation. This creed has also become a curatorial imperative – difference flattened into legibility, audited into accountability, consumed as clarity. Here, responsibility lies not in exposure but in the negation of readability on demand. To resist is to hold to threshold forms: subtext and refusal, where fragile economies of relation persist. Politics otherwise risks being reduced to immediacy, the demand to act now without strategy, when it might instead unfold as narrative, as code, as speculative resistance.

The demand for transparency rests on a deeper fiction: the human as sealed and self-evident. Marques and Akomolafe both point to its cracks. Our bodies are monstrous in their distortions – touch, proportion, sensation, bending perception. Revealing that even our skin is a porous archive, not a boundary. Akomolafe suggests humans are not discrete individuals but ecological and atmospheric beings, transcorporeal, disheveled with the world around them. Feeling, too, leaks; it exceeds the subject. It is ecological, circulating across fields that no one body can contain.

These ethical strains and unresolved contradictions are not obstacles but conditions of practice: proximity itself becomes charged – breath, gesture, the tiny

rhythms of co-presence. Which are what enables us to act in our vicinity, in our shared experience. It is here, in these micro-relations, that philosopher, dramaturg and performance theoretician Bojana Kunst's call to “rehearse being together” becomes vital. This rehearsal is not a gesture toward unity, but a micropolitical orientation: committed to the fragile space between individuals and the structures that scaffold them.

Yet, Akomolafe presses further: the category of “the human” is not only porous but colonial. Emerging through slavery, industry, and Eurocentrism, which privileges separation and control while excluding other ways of being. It is not merely incomplete – it is colonial. What holds this invention in place, Akomolafe argues, is “white stability”: a global order that lubricates modern life and its conveniences. Stabilizing through hidden exploitations, making its privileges feel inevitable and secure. Yet, this stability is fraying. Its buoyancy thins; what seemed solid begins to hollow. And, as it unravels, the prospect of more collective and ecological ways of living might take root. Crucially, this unraveling is not only a destructive collapse of harmful systems. It is also an opening, a trembling of possibility: catastrophe and emergence woven into the same fracture.

Through these fractures, systems are both reproduced and subtly dislodged. For Kunst, such dislodging requires care, but care stripped of its sentimental coating. Rebuilt from feminist and Black feminist traditions, care needs again to become a collective infrastructure – forged in histories of

gesture

mutual aid, reproductive autonomy, and resistance to systemic harm. Without this grounding, care risks assimilation into the very economies it resists. And we must ask; who gets to care, and who is cared for? What autonomy is afforded in that exchange?

Micropolitical attunement may seem marginal, yet it shifts the grammar of politics: from impact to presence, outcome to attention, visibility to attunement. It grounds critique in fragile immediacies where power is rehearsed and undone. Without it, politics risks, as Kunst warns us, becoming a hollow gesture – a supplement to value production. The micropolitical, then, is not an escape from systemic critique, but the very ground from which it gains traction.

An (un)Proposal: ***The traction of troubling the frame***

If friction unsettles perception and relationality in a delicate weave of perception, it must also reconfigure the broader coordinates of curatorial responsibility – as an ongoing negotiation with instability and complexity. But in reality, there is no final proposition here, no stable methodology to adopt. That would betray the very conditions this essay has attempted to stay with. It must enter already in motion. The minor, the unfinished, the indefinable; with the arrangements we inhabit and the infrastructures we inherit; with all its frictions. But it is an exercise.

What is at stake, then, is not an abstract metaphor

gesture

but a method for curating in unstable times. Friction names a way of working that refuses premature reconciliation, resists the demand for transparency, and stays with contradiction as both pressure and possibility.

Curatorial practice, then, cannot begin with clarity. It begins mid-motion: entangled, partial, implicated. It lingers with impasse. It moves in the pressure between bodies and the architectures that condition them. This is not technique but commitment. In a landscape starved for coherence and redemption, perhaps the most radical gesture is to curate for what cannot yet be resolved. Not solution, but rehearsal. Not unity, but trembling adjacency.

Perhaps the task now is not to clarify what curating is, but to keep rehearsing what it might become: to trace circuits instead of collecting narratives; to treat imagination as both embedded and exceeding; to hold open the contradiction between social demand and personal desire. Imagination, then, is not ahistorical or innocent; its contradiction – friction – is where politics can truly begin.

This is the work: not to conclude, but to continue. Not for closure, but for the kinds of relations that trouble the frame.

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gesture

gesture

friction

as

ethics

in motion



Laura Rozas

*Childhood memories: seeds drift along a
stream, pushing against the cold bones of
bare feet.*

*Hands sink to gather seeds, each seed
adapts to the palm that receives it.
The shell resists and opens, accompanying
the drift.*

*I'm sitting by the side of this river,
I don't want to fish, I want to swim,
while I'm s(th)inking,
I want to slip into the currents,
scrape myself on the rocks.*



Taxonomic Wilderness

The first known image of a vessel with plants is carved in the tomb of the Egyptian queen Hatshepsut: a woman carrying a vase with three frankincense trees.

I like to imagine these plants, embraced in a vessel, passing from the world of the living to the world of the dead, carrying with them their scent and their memories. Memories rooted in a deep river where seeds drift and travel.

As a carry bag, following Ursula K. Le Guin, not as a fixed container, but as a gesture of accompaniment: to hold the possibility of fictions, letting stories and seeds spill, cross, entangle, and disentangle. F(r)iction as a seed, a gesture of care without capture.

Perhaps curating is also this: to accompany; to decide how much to hold, and how much to let overflow.

To tend to what resists containment. To listen when the seeds push against the walls of the basket, demanding wilderness. Carrying seeds without enclosing them, carrying stories without exhausting them.

Every institution is also a vessel. The museum, the archive, the botanical garden. To curate otherwise perhaps, is to crack open the vessel, to allow leakage, contamination, cross-pollination. Perhaps, to curate is also to practice institutional disobedience. To weave affective infrastructures, To choreograph circuits of care instead of capture.

It is within the ambiguous temporality of the seed where time slows, suspended between waiting and potentiality, between what is about to germinate and the moment it unfolds. In this dilated time, the seed expands, insinuates itself into the surfaces where it rests, a state of suspension and mutability.

Between seeds and pods, the temporality of care: a space not yet revealed, sheltering potentiality, claiming its right of blurriness.

Thinking in curatorship as *curandería*¹ Perhaps a way of eco-feminist curating, healing what was once forbidden, herbs gathered in secret to sprout again.

choose your herbs, chants the spell, share your recipes, let them guide us.

¹Healership (folk healing) translates the spanish word curandería. Within the Germinal project (Bolivia), Paulina Oña and Tika Michel explore intersections between the practice of the healer and the curator, coining the hybrid term cura[nde][du]ría to intertwine healing (curandería) and curatorship (curaduría).

Visiting the Natural History Museum in Lisbon.

My body wanders through its corridors, travelling through a supposed natural history.

I arrive at the ethnobotanical exhibition.

Natural history is already science f(r)iction: herbaria, specimens, every display case echoes the empire's desire to catalogue worlds.

And yet, within this friction, a crack appears, the possibility to fabulate other stories that seep through.

Language and plants, leaves like tongues that give names. Displaced plants now inhabit botanical gardens and cabinets.

They were once called exotic, invasive, aphrodisiac, hallucinogenic, sacred... Names born of suspicion, of fear. Each name a dispossession, a diminishment.

But imagine if these names were not cages, if they were invitations to think with plants, not about them.

Imagine if we could call them otherwise. Imagine if their species, their gender, their class were not imposed through the forced Latin of Carl Linnaeus' taxonomy of 1735, a colonial and gendered grammar that extracted and renamed.

Supplanted names that stick in our tongues. and with each erasure, entire worlds disappeared.

Imagine if plants could speak in the tongues they already hold. Imagine if their names carried the stories of the soils where they persist, not the violence of an empire's classification.

Could we subvert the taxonomic *imagination*² and their gestures? Simulation and dissimulation entwine, while the history of botany carries the memory of plantations³ on its reverse side.

The Linnean Society of London (since 1788) adopts as its guiding principle: *Naturae Discere Mores* - "to learn the ways of nature." Imagine if this were not an imperial motto, Imagine if this were not an imperial motto but a chant of care, a commitment to listen to the entangled stories whispered in the paths of nature.

Stories that remain, insist, sprout... Stories that refuse flattening into a specimen or a display case. Imagine if care, conservation, and extraction were not bound together.

²Sita Balani ³Grada Kilomba

What does care mean as a feminist geographical current? ?

If naming did not mean possession.
If every seed carried back its own story of
relation, rooted in memory, rhizome, and
survival.

It's getting cold here. Reignite the fire.

Some intermittent fevers. we rest. we
listen. we drift, together.

...the gleaners and I, and you

Imagine other ways of labor care.
Curating as caring-carrying other worlds.
Curating as being cared-carried by other
worlds.
More-than-human worlds.

Imagine if we could unlearn taxonomies
by weaving imaginary ones.
Until what remains is not classification,
but companionship.

Mending,
Futuring in *the garden of forking paths*⁴

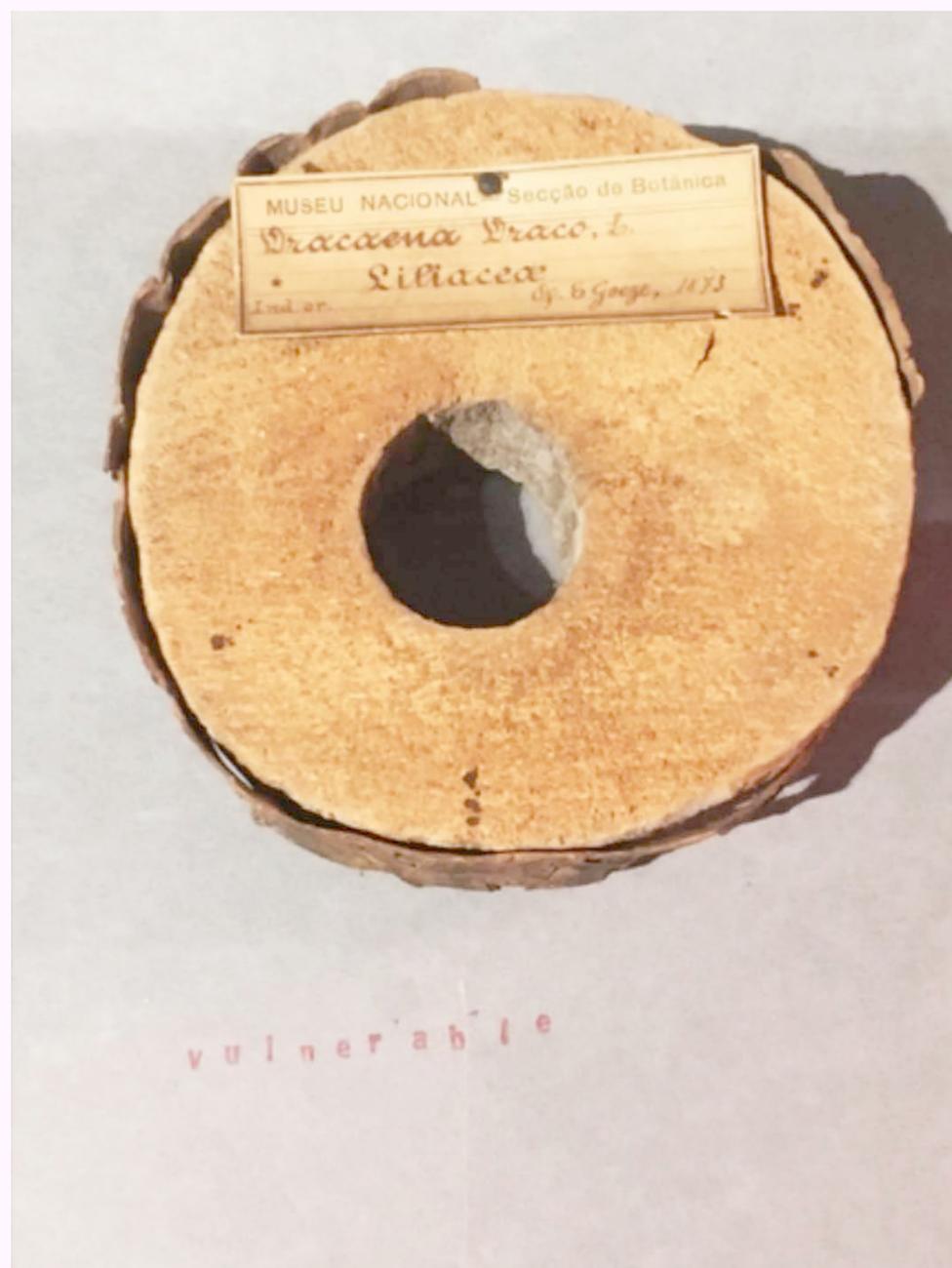
Weaving fugitive gardens in the cracks
institutions, carrying seeds to let them
insist on other futures and pasts while
being together.

Tiring out
tongues

until they merge
with the mother (earth) tongues

This text was shaped by echoes of diverse authors and experiences. In addition to those mentioned, it expands on work developed in a course with Paula Caspão at the University of Lisbon and incorporates material adapted from a curatorial writing piece for Pablo Quiroga Devía's exhibition Cresta de Galho (Lisbon). It also draws on encounters at the 2025 Summer School by Materiais Diversos, "Mending the Invisible" with Bojana Kunst and Ivana Müller, and on the voices of Ariella Aïsha Azoulay, Saidiya Hartman, Agnès Varda, Mahmoud Darwish, among others.

⁴Jorge Luis Borges



Pictures from private exhibition "Plantas e Povos" (plants and people) at MUHNAC, Lisbon (taken by Laura Rozas)

Ana Lazarevska

R: River flows where there are no restrictions, no walls, strict lines, solidified concrete, pipes.

R: How do you plant a palm?

R: Why?

R: Do you need more people than palms?

R: People bring stories, labor, and longing. Palms bring shade, sweetness, and nourishment. I live with roots, soil, plants and life, I don't know anything else except nurturing in reciprocity. What I sustain flows back through me, unseen but felt.

R: And in this hum, where is the song of the wind, the whisper of roots?

R: Yet even ambition needs water. Where will you find me when you have turned every drop to salt?

R: Memories do not quench thirst.

R: To flow, you must listen. You must loosen the grip of control, abandon the dream of greening what was never meant to be green.

R: Progress is not always growth, when nature suffers and humanity is neglected, it is regression.

R: Only if they learn that care is not a resource to be extracted, but a current to be shared.

D: Can it be different in a harsh environment where the rules are made to preserve what little life is left.

D: Desalinating water.

D: Expansion and growth are the momentum in human evolution, I can't stop that.

D: I know hierarchy, not relationality.

D: I have been in silence for centuries. Now I hear noises of engines, grids, and pipelines and a foreign tongue.

D: Silence is no longer sacred here; it is drowned by ambition.

D: I offer sand, vast and patient. I hold memories of ancient rivers long gone.

D: Then teach me to flow again.

D: But without green, they say there is no progress.

D: Will they ever understand?

Voices in practice?



Biljana Tanurovska-Kjulavkovski & Katalin Erdődi

Where the Wild Things Are

A conversation about curatorial wilderness

Biljana:

Dear Katalin,
As we said, we will speak about *wilderness* - but somehow, the precarity and the wild, wild capitalist demands to structure our time and labour around tasks imposed rather than chosen got in the way. Let's try to interrupt this precarious river by giving time to shared thinking and reflecting on *wilderness* or, as we said, on *curatorial wilderness*...

Katalin:

Dear Biljana,
When you proposed a conversation about *curatorial wilderness*, I was immediately intrigued and eager to contemplate what this could be and how we might imagine it. Our dialogue didn't happen as planned (due to my lack of time and capacity), so we both embarked on solitary forays into thinking, feeling, and sensing the potentialities of a curatorial wilderness, which we now intertwine in this text. Perhaps this is not entirely inappropriate - after all, our idea of wilderness usually goes hand-in-hand with the idea of being alone, lost, and without any (human) company in the so-called 'wild'. Our imaginary of the wilderness relies on the absence of human presence and interventions, something both feared and desired, something we would like to control and submit to at the same time.

Biljana:

I was wondering where to begin.

Perhaps I could start by sharing some of my encounters with 'wilderness', to trace certain qualities, materials, sensations, or other things that emerged in those moments and encounters.

Then, maybe, I could try to translate them into curatorial work, or at least sketch a kind of map - a score of movement through the wilderness.

I wanted to find a few paths to follow.

To flow a little. Not to drown.

I don't know if it's possible. But let's try.

I've just returned from a short but deeply resonant encounter with what Maan Barua might call a more-than-human geography - not the romantic myth of untouched nature, but a threshold space where fragments of unbuilt land persist beside the urbanised grid. This environment has its own rhythms: moss, insects, snails on the road, squirrels and woodpeckers in the trees, roots of the trees, swamp, different winds, and sunlight through the leaves all interrelate to create their own geography.

What is curatorial wilderness? What is the horizon?

Time elapsed as I could observe, touch, sense, other than usual. My sensorial apparatus received different information, as I could see, smell, and hear how growing and decaying exist side by side, and I could feel that we are part of the same metabolic system of the earth.

It may sound naïve, or even banal, but within that thick, rustling silence, I sensed a kind of regeneration unfurling - not as a spectacle, but as a presence. And I could hear that silence.

Not everything was pleasant. I was outside the frame I usually move within, where things obey a logic I've learned to live by. There, in that unfamiliar texture of space, something shifted. It wasn't fear exactly, but a quiet dislocation. A loosening of control. Even though I felt safe, there remained the unknowable - that which embodies wonder, admiration, curiosity, and excitement, but also unease and distress. The unknowable, the unpredictable. I found myself thinking, isn't that what we live through every day? What so many of us face under the technofeudalistic face of capitalism, as Varoufakis describes it. And yet, we remain unaware of our connections to the non-human and biodiverse worlds. We continue to sever these links rather than nurture them, rather than build common geographies with other forms of life.



Katalin:

My encounters with 'wilderness' have always been deeply experiential, usually tumultuous, intense more-than-human confrontations with the forces of nature, the thrilling yet frightening sensation of coexistence - of not being separate, but 'a part of'.

I remember standing on a ridge of the Rila Mountains in Bulgaria as a storm broke and forced me to descend in the downpour, with thunder and lightning around. Walking alone, walking slowly - as advised by a more experienced hiker and guide from Montenegro, who told me not to rush, no matter what, because I might slip and fall. Walking slowly, despite the fear and exhilaration of being caught in the middle of the storm. Wanting to escape, but knowing that the only way out is through. Taking time in the midst of what I perceived as a possible near-death experience. Time felt strangely suspended, my body and mind alert, controlled and uncontrolled, tears streaming down my face because I was so scared. And yet, despite it, a powerful feeling of proximity emerged. Perhaps too close for comfort, but deeply existential. For me, this experience was both violent and instructive, an extreme example of being-with.

I mention it because I believe it tells us something about how we might construe wilderness as a time-based experience (not necessarily a place) - one that overturns the nature-culture divide and makes us aware of how this binary is a human construction, an age-old drive to assume power and control over our environment. This separation is the cause of much destruction, extractivism, and the unfolding

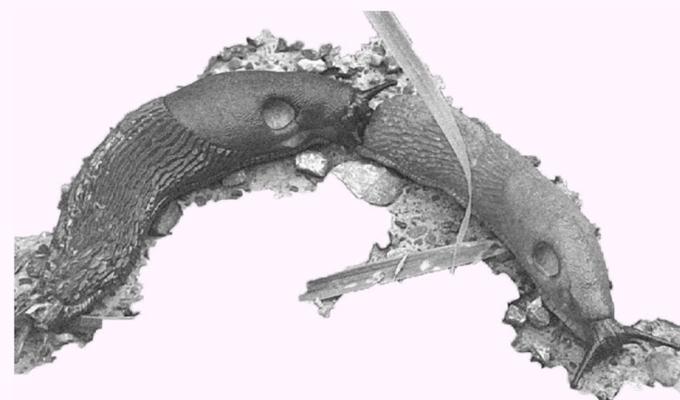
climate collapse, which also manifests the reclaiming I am talking about, making us acutely aware that we are not separate, but a part of.

Biljana:

I was thinking of Nastassja Martin becoming a *med-ka* (*In the Eye of the Wild*, the book my friend and curator Silke Balke gave me as a present. Thank you Silke!). Nastassja speaks of the wilderness as part of her, as becoming her, as being part of it. She writes about the bear's kiss, about being hurt, or rather marked, by a bear in such a way that she becomes half-human, half-bear. She talks about that space between the human and the animal, or the wild, the unknown. She surrendered and then the 'becoming a whole' happened. While reading I was fascinated and grateful to encounter it, as I could move through the different potentialities of the wilderness - disobedience, fragility, distance, strength, surrender, and regeneration, all at once. I began to understand how one can develop even while decaying. How distancing is not always escape, how failure might be another mode of listening, or resisting. And I could see resistance as a form of care. That the unknown doesn't need to be solved, it can be embraced. That sometimes, loosening is the only way toward any real form of symbiosis.

Katalin:

Being part, becoming whole... I like this idea of loosening as it calls into question the boundaries and categories of thought that we construct to create an 'order of things' (Michel Foucault). I believe that the idea of being lost also needs to be revisited as



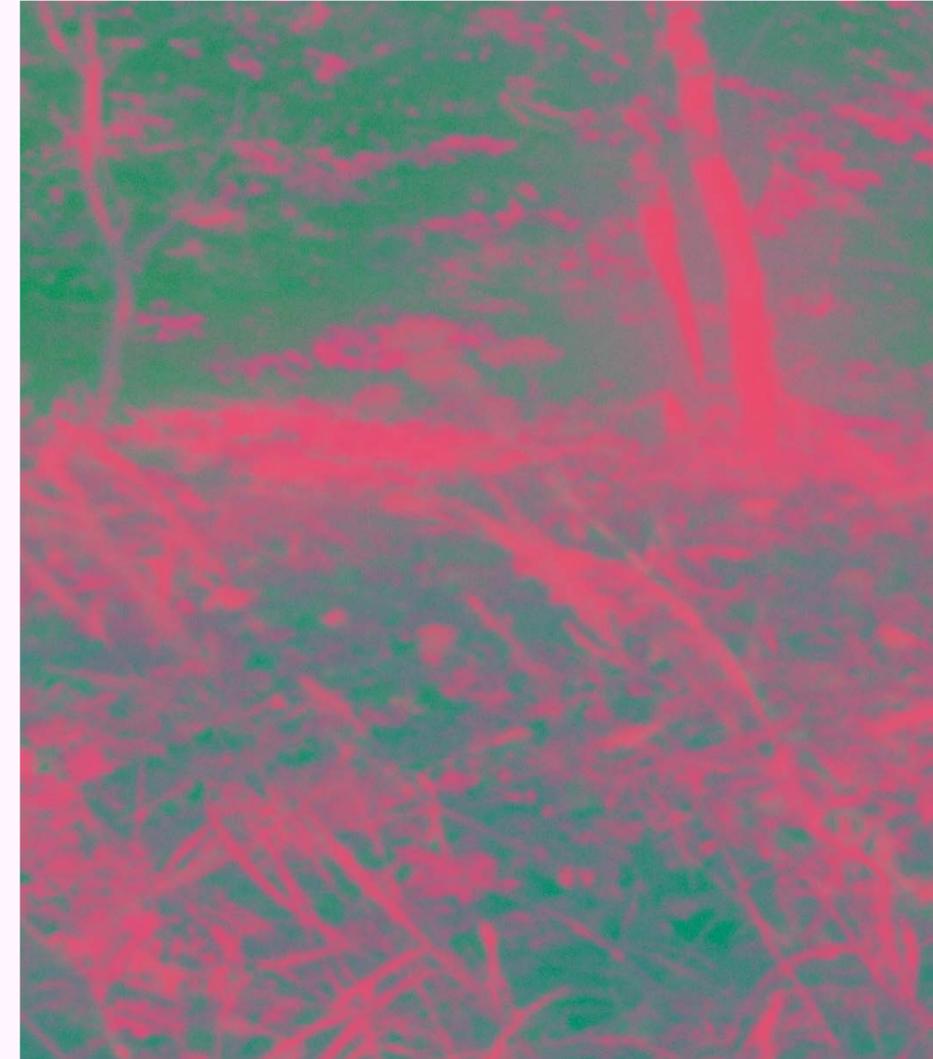
a productive state of disorientation and reorientation. What does it mean to lose track, to wander off the designated path and what new 'desire lines' can we follow, inspired by Sara Ahmed's call to action in *Queer Phenomenology*, where she says "we make a path by walking it."

How do we push our way through the thick of it, where branches scratch, thorns snag, nettles burn, where our body, our skin, our hair, our flesh become bruised, entangled, marked by the traces of our passing through, pushing through, creating a temporary opening that will close behind us again. Is this not an appropriate metaphor for how we try to make our way through and survive the time and space of the neoliberal, technofeudalistic, extractivist realities we live in today? Don't these bruise us in similar, though often more invisible, internalized ways?

Why are we so eager to mark paths, to guide others, to say "this is the way" and construe any other way as deviation - as getting lost, as wandering off, as some sort of failure to follow through? What would our 'desire lines' through the wilderness of contemporary life be?

Biljana:

What is wilderness, after all, in the way we try to think it? Not a romantic image, not an escape. Maybe it's a space that doesn't obey. A space that resists being named too quickly. One that allows for liminality, for being in-between - where things don't need to make sense yet. A space where transformation is possible. Where uncertainty isn't a threat but a condition. A place that disturbs the usual dispositif, disorients the gaze, and forces us to shift - how we look, how we feel, how we relate. Not above or outside, but with. Alongside.



Wilderness is something you cannot order, cannot line up or classify as it resists arrangement. Maybe that's its only certainty. But maybe, too, it's a possibility - an invitation to lose yourself in something that won't be tamed. To step into a space where nothing fits neatly, and because of that, you begin to see differently. You try new ways, not of controlling, but of observing and noticing. Of being in a different proximity. Being near. Watching how things arrange and rearrange themselves without your intervention. How they follow their own rhythms. And perhaps your role is not to design or adapt, but to accompany. To assist, not in shaping, but in letting things take shape.

Not to merge, not to adapt or arrange, but to mediate. To be present with the unfolding. To take care of the 'becoming of things' whether they are still or choreographing new positions or spaces. Whether they bloom, decay, or pause in between.

Katalin:

I wonder what is wilderness to the curatorial? Instead of a specific place or condition, could it be a state of mind, a way of thinking and knowing, a mode of being-with? Perhaps a methodology?

I am reminded of Irit Rogoff's notion of the 'undisciplined' - as opposed to transdisciplinary or interdisciplinary - which strives to create a zone of dis-identification that she considers immensely productive. She criticizes geography and mapping as articulation of colonial mindsets that created an entire series of knowledges, later used to legitimize nationalism and identity politics.

If we see wilderness as an antithesis of structure, 'the order of things', does getting lost, becoming dis-oriented and following 'desire lines' instead of established paths constitute an act of resistance, through which we can actively contribute to this project of dis-identification?

How can we shake off the potentially romanticized nature of how wilderness exists in our imaginaries and introduce it as a way of being in the world that fosters radical reorganization and through which we can engage with our current social and political realities in ways that are subversive, counter-hegemonic, but also nurturing and regenerating?

Could this be considered a project of rewilding? A project not of shaping, but of letting take shape? I wonder how curating, which I've always seen as an active practice of creating constellations, initiating dialogue between different artists and artistic positions, giving impulses to new ideas, and accompanying the process of creation, might take a step back and become more contemplative, to enable artistic practices to grow and branch out in unexpected ways, yet to show care and attention (akin to a gardener?), and see curatorial work more as a nurturing practice of facilitation: of watering, weeding, fertilizing knowledge, and imaginaries.

The paradigm of rewilding in the context of nature preservation has been criticized by artists such as Fernando García-Dory for trying to re-create a natural environment without human presence, often ignoring modes of coexistence between humans and their environment, such as traditional shepherding, which rely on indigenous and peasant knowledges passed on from generation to generation. Rewilding strives to detract human presence



If there is no forest, where will we find shelter?

without taking a closer look at these possibilities and practices of being-with, assuming that the natural environment is simply better off without humans. I imagine the curator as such a human presence, a mountain shepherd, for example, walking nomadic routes, sensitive to changing conditions, with the capacity to care for the herd they are responsible for, but also knowledgeable of the broader natural environment, of foraging, of building shelters, of the complex ways of being-with, shaping, being shaped by and letting take shape, celebrating the possibility of being part and becoming whole.

Biljana:

When we talked about what a curatorial wilderness could be, I wasn't thinking of the wild capitalist transition or the corruption that defines the place I live in. I wasn't thinking of the replica of a 'wild west' that surrounds me daily, loud, grasping, disordered in its greed.

I was thinking instead of other geographies. Places where I could get lost, and still be with. Places that wouldn't demand orientation, but being with. I wondered: what does it truly mean to be lost? To perceive, to observe, to loosen up, or to be afraid? I've learned not to fear the wilderness I live in, not because it has become less brutal, but because I've begun to build my own 'gears'. Tools for survival, for resilience, for slow becoming. I've learned that I can always become, be-with, and shift, fragment, realign toward what is needed. Maybe rewilding, or curatorial wilderness, means walking with uncertainty, staying close to what disorients, still insisting on making sense, not by fixing, but by understanding sensorially. By building ways of working that aren't recipes or rules, but travelogues, not instructions, but traces. Something you can lean on when you need to rest. Something that allows you to step back, to distance, to regenerate, so you can return, altered. Move differently. And then, maybe, offer something. Assist, if needed.

How do we create gestures, practices of joy that don't ignore the wound. That carry within them a critical edge and resist being tamed or absorbed by systems of consumption, productivity, efficiency, visibility... When I say extractivist, I don't mean only the violence done to land and nature. I also mean the silent violence that happens in the field we work in, art, culture.... Where even care becomes currency.

So I ask: how can we reconstitute the very processes of working? Not by imposing form, but by digging into the wildness, the undergrowth, the undisciplined, the disorder that holds its own knowledge. Maybe we can begin there. Not to make a map, but to go through and find 'textures', or sensibilities, or resonances that don't lead us, but create other traces. Let things take shape. Invite ourselves, and others, into ways of being in the world that can foster proposals for other ways of organisation and reorganization, and ways of engaging with our current realities that are subversive, counter-hegemonic, yet also nurturing and regenerating.

Biljana:

At the end, I want to propose some 'exercises' to think together about what might be the steps, or textures, or sensibilities of curatorial wilderness or rewilding. I invite you to add more to what I propose.

For me, it begins where certainty recedes - not by asking what to curate, but by asking how we remain with the unknowable, how to be alert, listening, observing, without enclosing it. It can be nurturing

without taming, and it is not a refusal of responsibility, but a reshaping of it. In wilderness, paths emerge from moving, searching, exploring, and not from maps. Perhaps the curatorial can be about unlearning and entering a space of attunement (deep listening, sensing, and aligning with the rhythms, energies, or needs of something or someone else. A receptivity that does not impose one's own structure, but becomes responsive to what is already present or emerging), improvisation, attention, exploration... as a different kind of presence.

HOW TO REWILD - Or how a curatorial wilderness can take shape

Disorient Yourself or Lose the Order of Things

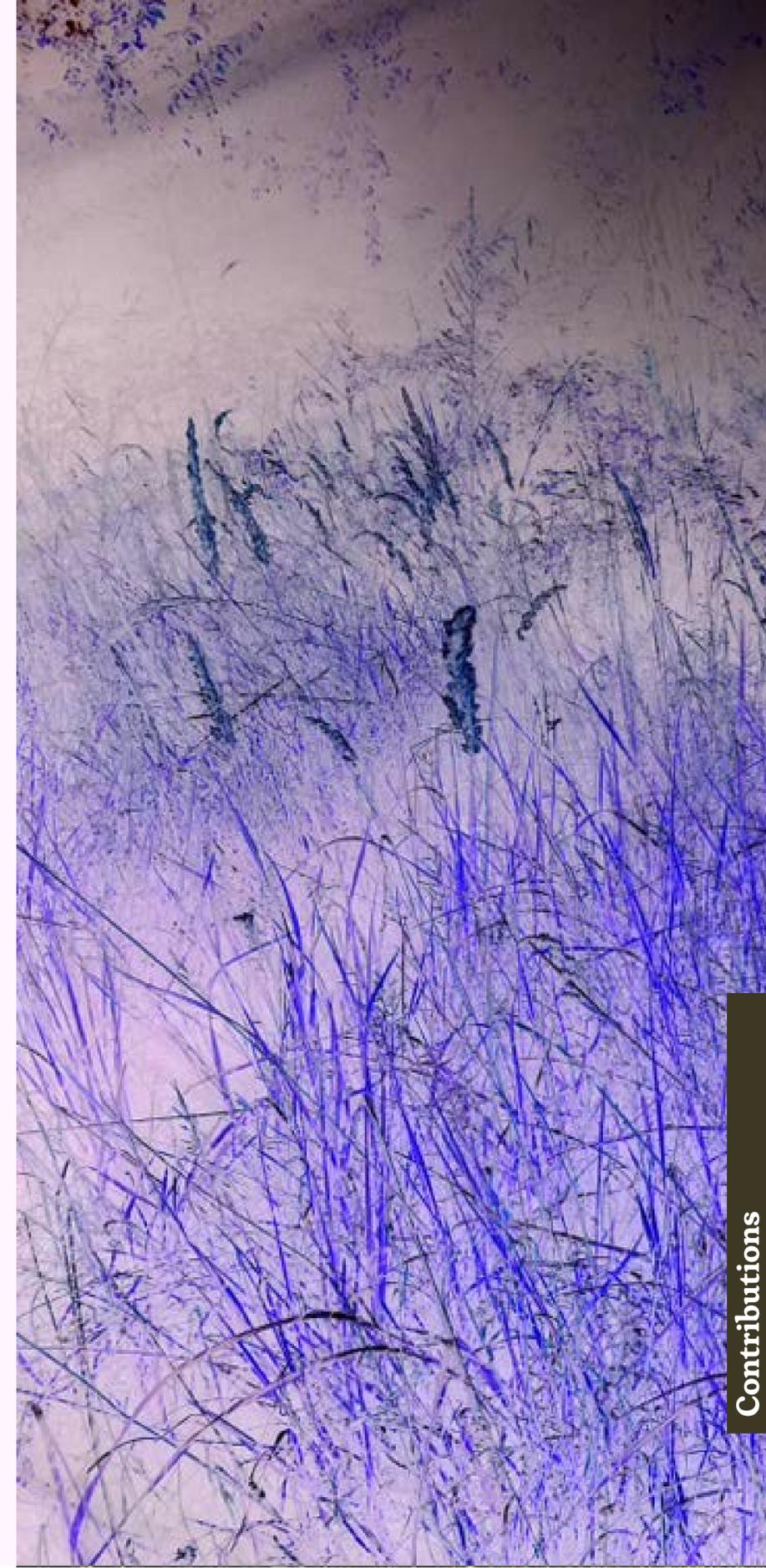
Instead of relying on meticulous maps and clear timelines, always allow for detours and the unexpected - the open space, the surprise. Un-map, explore. To be lost is also to find a new way of sensing, observing, listening, opening the space (Open space was one of the principles of the Nomad Dance Academy, a platform that tried to be wild within the normed and formed dance practices in the Balkan region. We always tried to plan, but also to leave space for disorientation, detour, a surprise...) Release orientation. Let yourself sense differently. Wilderness is not only outside, it is a loosening from within. A loosening of the learned, the categories, hierarchies, namings. It is unlearning inherited structures, and resisting the urge to categorise and define. It is opening a space for the unknown to emerge, or dis-identifying and making space.

Absent presences or Make a path by inviting

Always be aware that you need to open space to voices, practices, and beings that are not usually invited. And, rewilding is also about decolonizing, and remembering what has been displaced, or placed in the margins. Think of semi-peripheries, or periphery and what that means in the wilderness. Are there artists that might not be seen, or stories, memories, silences, unruly knowledge that are not presented? Do not always choose the 'secure' choices, or 'safe choices' of mainstream curators and institutions. Let yourself explore, and allow the unfamiliar to sit at the table. Listen. Welcome yourself and others to surprises. Rewilding is not the absence of the other, nor of the human, and we should not romanticise the untouched or the unknown. The question is how to be with and coexist.

Embracing the Unfinished or Walking Slow

Curatorial wilderness and rewilding resist closure, finalisation, conclusion, or ending. It is always redirecting or regenerating. It is in the processing and in the "not there yet". We need to find ways to move forward through cracks, and to nurture, weed, water other knowledge and imaginaries. To insist on wilderness is to insist on spaces where new relations can take root, where new practices can be practised, thought, and futued... And to take it slow, no rushing, no urging ourselves to finish. But to risk slipping, failing. To care for our own pace, no urging to get a shape. But to shape at your own pace. Rewilding is becoming, becoming-with, becoming part, becoming whole, at your own pace.



Joyful Disobedience or Enjoy the discomfort

Enjoy and experiment, try things out with joy, without fear. Use wildness to open cracks of enjoyment that were crushed by 'projectivism' and demands. (Bojana Kunst comes to my mind, and I also think of Kuba Szreder's 'projectariat'. We need to abandon the known ways of working that distance us from joy, enjoyment). We have to subvert norms through enjoyment. There are negotiations, discomforts, tensions, and not all of them are visible, but this is no reason to avoid them. And, be mindful with joy, avoid narcissists. They are everywhere in the wilderness. Smell, observe, and joyfully smile, and let them pass - with enjoyment, joyfully.

Solidarities and Spores and Roots

If we learn from plants and nature, some of the most vibrant systems are formed through unexpected kinships - roots and rhizomes entangled across fences, spores drifting across unknown territories. These forms of sharing are not based on similarity or shared identity, but on proximity, necessity, exchange. Sometimes the most generative curatorial constellations emerge through friction and difference. We don't need to be "coherent", and we should allow for 'contamination'. We can think of sharing and solidarity as both a political stance and an entanglement of differences, where kinship can take root where we didn't plant it.

These are only some of the textures and steps we might consider. I'm writing this as a proposal, as well as an invitation to continue together the solitary-for-two thinking we began.



Marta Keil & Alexander Roberts

Spell for art institutions to nourish their relationality and become more public¹

While operating in extractivist and exhausting times, many public art institutions seem too tired to remember whom they were created for. We, as tired art workers, tend to forget it too. When working in a constant state of emergency, moving from one crisis to another, and becoming increasingly alienated by ongoing competition, it's not easy to imagine how to be more open and hospitable. And yet, this very question lies at the core of what a public institution should embody.

An ecofeminist approach invites us to shift perspective: to begin by understanding an institution as a relational, interdependent entity, situated within a particular ecosystem. It urges us to ask: how does an institution nourish that ecosystem, and what nutrients does it need to sustain itself? How can its walls become more porous? Becoming more open to the public - not only on the level of audience partici-

pation, but also through co-creation of the programme - helps resist dominant binaries, hierarchies, and power relations.

If we, as art workers and institutions, seem to be working under the spell of exhaustion, perhaps another spell needs to be cast. Inspired by the phases of spellcasting proposed by Cat Jones and Ingrid Vranken in their *Spell Kit For Navigating Uncertainty*² we have begun working on a spell that may hopefully prove helpful in transforming instituting practices to become more public and more common. We have started by thinking of the first ingredients and would like to invite you to gather them with us.

Imagine your work as a set of practices that create and transform reality: bit by bit, repetitively, on an everyday basis. They institute the conditions within which you operate. It may happen in

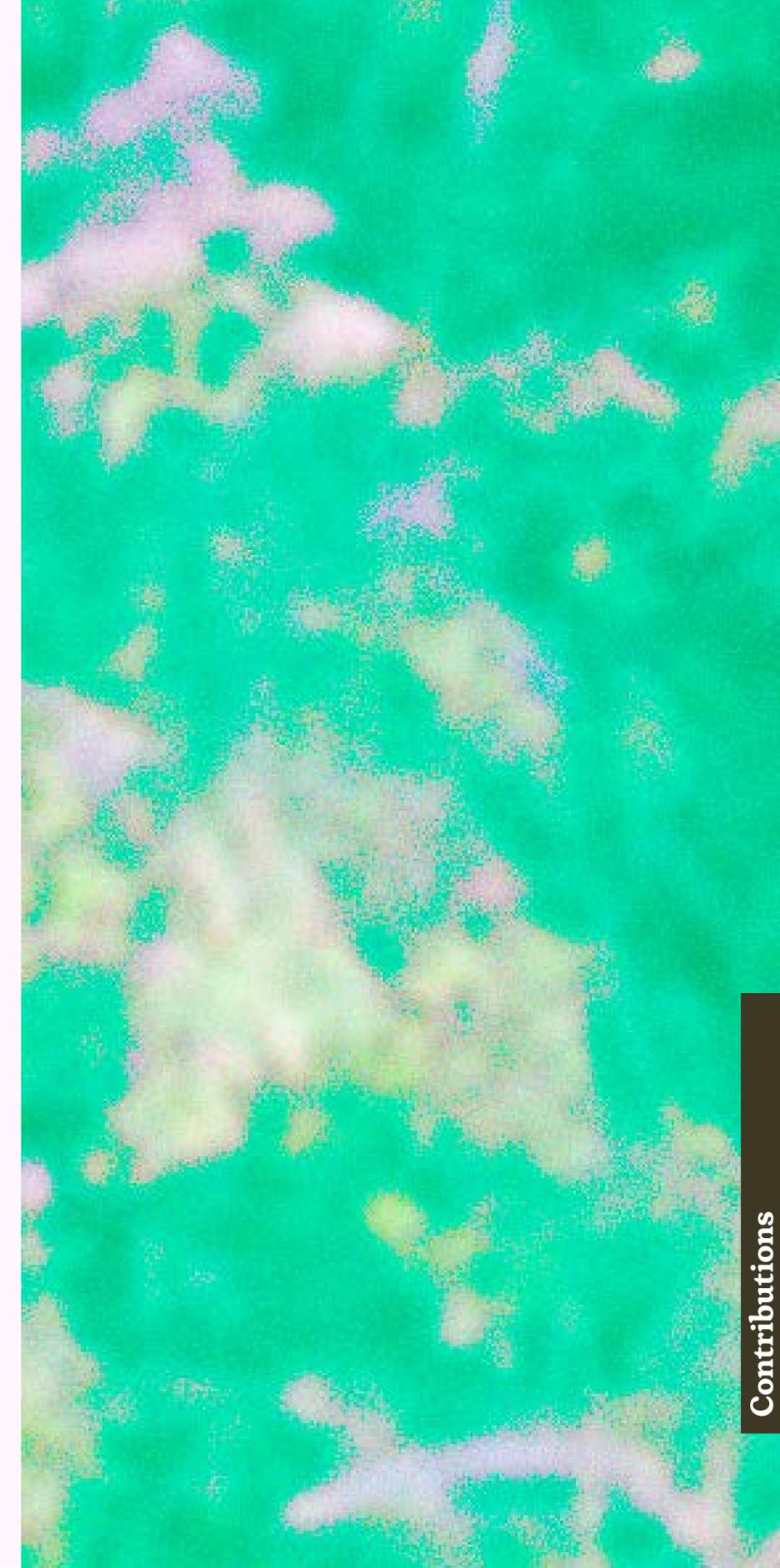
how you set the space for the gathering, how you hold a conversation, how and to whom you listen. What is it that you are instituting? How can you institute what is not here yet? You may be part of a recognized institution, or perhaps not, but all the same give a moment to thinking about what your labor institutes.

Next time, as you arrive at work, take a pause. Then, imaginatively or practically, take a wander around the edges of your institution.

Where is it situated? Who shapes it? Who speaks there, who listens, who is seen, who is less visible? Who describes? Who decides?

Note down what you observe. Come back to your notes in two weeks. What changes have you noticed?

How easy is it for you, and for others, to



How an institution reflects and responds to the environment. How does an institution practice listening?



take space? How can that be changed?

Before another work meeting starts, propose some guidelines. It can be inviting to collectively pay attention that everyone has a space to speak, or simply proposing to plan a decent break. Next time, invite someone else to propose the guidelines.

Think of the last encounters you found inspiring through your work. What made them nourishing? What conditions were needed for those encounters to happen? How might those conditions be implemented into the process of creating a program in your institution or shaping the framework of your practice?

Break the unceasing stream of things to do by creating space for this nourishing encounter to repeat once a month. It can happen on a small scale: a phone call, an hour-long live meeting, a chat outside the workplace. Make it a rule for yourself.

What is needed for your instituting practices to open towards those who

don't seem to belong with them yet? Think how the invitation could sound. What kind of listening will it require?

Open a dialogue with someone whose practice is rooted in deep listening. Think together what kind of listening your work needs in order for such an invitation to take shape.

What might you need to let go of in order to find time for listening?

Withdraw for a moment. You don't have to know all the answers.

Who could be there, right next to you, to say this spell with you and carry it further together?

¹ This is a changed and expanded version, first written as part of the article *Art Institutions under the Spell of Exhaustion. Reimagining Institution Practices*, *Performance Research*, 29:2, 28–34, DOI: 10.1080/13528165.2024.2420515

² Jones, Cat and Vranken, Ingrid (2023) *Spell Kit For Navigating Uncertainty*, Fo.AM, <https://anarchive.fo.am/wabisabi/spell-kit/?fbclid=I-wARlwTbCvYU2u7U1hzTmqjyZz9eCm8HAOS0Mb-khx6tqwu3UGyMcaFEBjdG>, accessed 3 October 2025.

Slobodanka Stevcheska , Ivana Samandova, Kamelija Kalamernikova, Ilina Vasileska

I wake up and the world is on my shoulders

A shared drive to analyze and create, to explore horizontality and radical pedagogical practices brought us together - three former students from two generations and their former teacher.

Because the institutional context imposes comfort.

Because it produces passivity.

Because it hinders critical pedagogy.

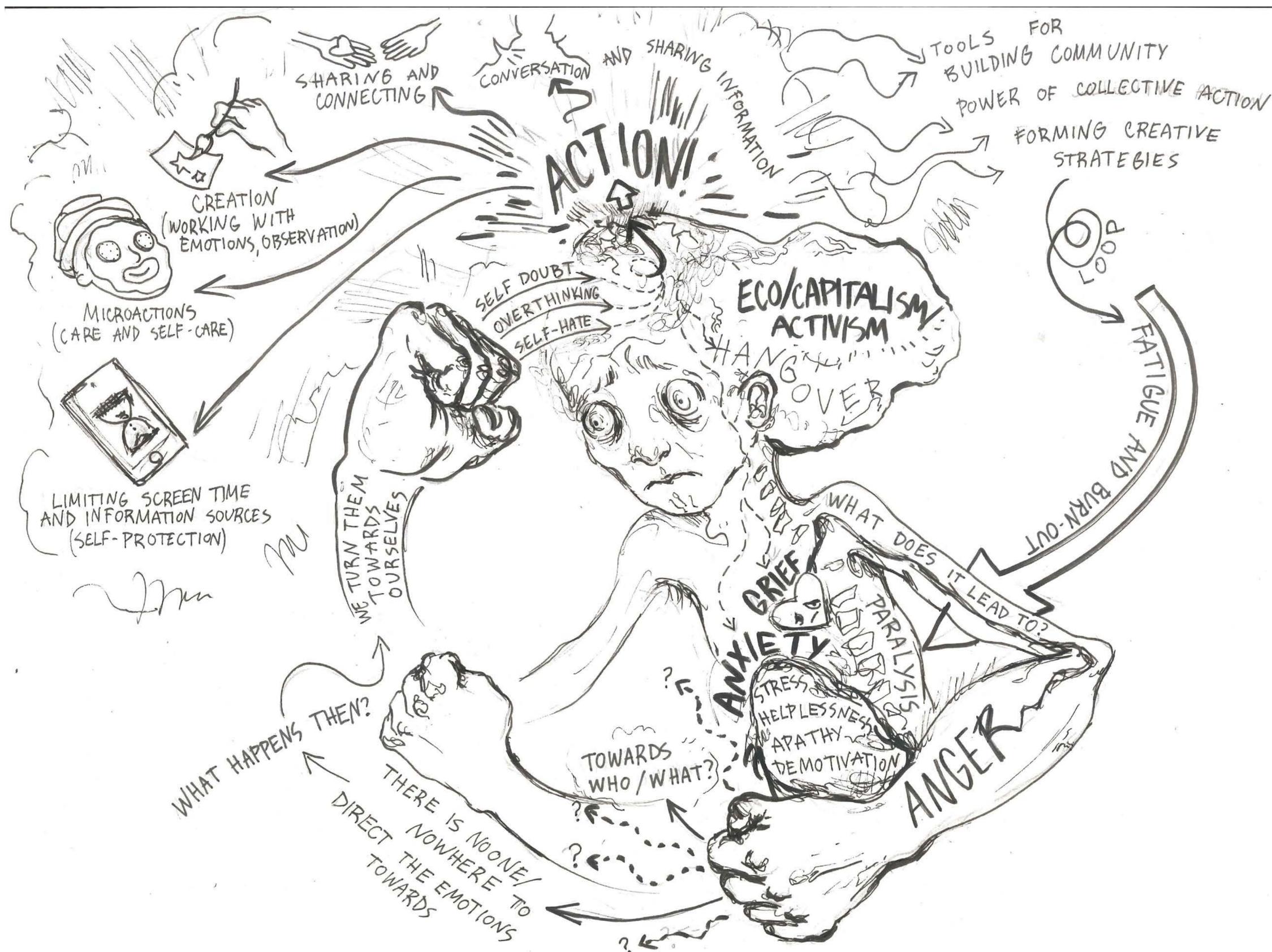
Inspiration, exchange, research,

and camaraderie unfolded on equal ground.

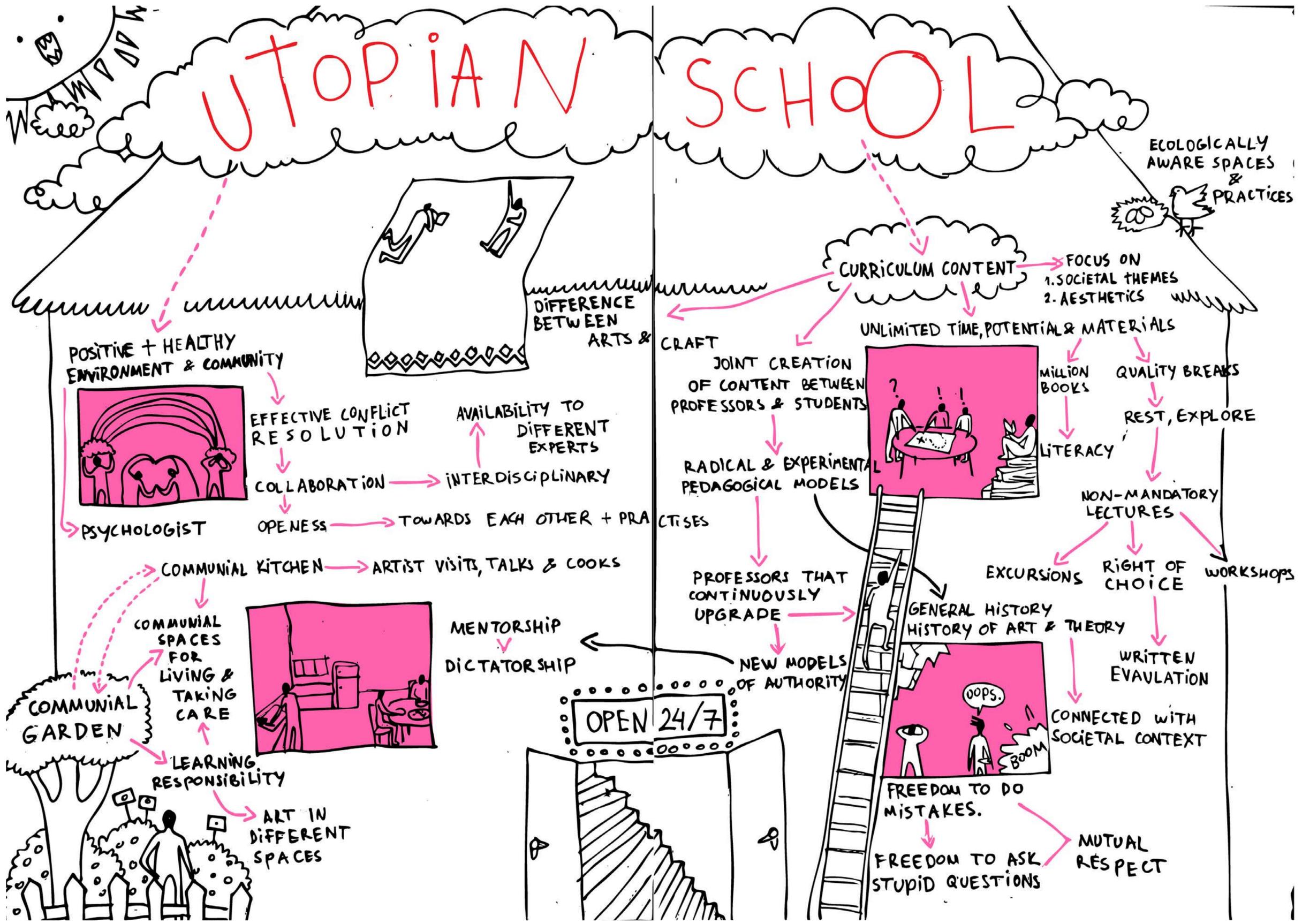
Collectively, the work evolved, offering insight: concerns, anxieties, and sources of unease, both personal and generational.

Further collaboration lies ahead.

How can we make space for thinking / research while exhausted by everyday pressures and urgencies?



Eco-grief.
 Capitalism-grief.
 Activism-grief.



A drawing of the "utopian" school

Nefeli Gioti

late night notes

The moon is rising behind our backs
She goes on
She rises unnoticed

Beneath her, within her light, we converse
We sweat
We think
We sink
Under the pressure of capitalism
The moon is rising behind our backs
The water is rising, drawn by the weight of her
body
She insists on carrying the effort of rising
While being drawn to the weight of our bodies
The moon is rising behind our backs
Beyond our body's weight
She counter weights the heaviness of our pitfalls
She rises
Behind our backs
Underneath our feet
Lifting our liquid fluids
She sees us
And she rises
She insists, she persists
Until she no longer will
Not yet
But maybe one day



MANIFESTO!

MAINTENANCE ART -- Proposal for an Exhibition

"CARE"

©1969

Mierle Laderman Ukeles

I. IDEAS:

A. The Death Instinct and the Life Instinct:

The Death Instinct: separation, individuality, Avant-Garde par excellence; to follow one's own path to death--do your own thing, dynamic change.

The Life Instinct: unification, the eternal return, the perpetuation and MAINTENANCE of the species, survival systems and operations, equilibrium.

B. Two basic systems: Development and Maintenance. The sourball of every revolution: after the revolution, who's going to pick up the garbage on Monday morning?

Development: pure individual creation; the new; change; progress, advance, excitement, flight or fleeing.

Maintenance: keep the dust off the pure individual creation; preserve the new; sustain the change; protect progress; defend and prolong the advance; renew the excitement; repeat the flight.

show your work--show it again
keep the contemporaryartmuseum groovy
keep the home fires burning

Development systems are partial feedback systems with major room for change.

Maintenance systems are direct feedback systems with little room for alteration.

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C. Maintenance is a drag; it takes all the fucking time (lit.)
The mind boggles and chafes at the boredom. The culture confers lousy status on maintenance jobs= minimum wages, housewives=no pay.

clean your desk, wash the dishes, clean the floor, wash your clothes, wash your toes, change the baby's diaper, finish the report, correct the typos, mend the fence, keep the customer happy, throw out the stinking garbage, watch out don't put things in your nose, what shall I wear, I have no sox, pay your bills, don't litter, save string, wash your hair, change the sheets, go to the store, I'm out of perfume, say it again--he doesn't understand, seal it again--it leaks, go to work, this art is dusty, clear the table, call him again, flush the toilet, stay young.

D. Art:

Everything I say is Art is Art. Everything I do is Art is Art. "We have no Art, we try to do everything well." (Balinese saying).

Avant-garde art, which claims utter development, is infected by strains of maintenance ideas, maintenance activities, and maintenance materials.

--Process art especially claims pure development and change, yet employs almost purely maintenance processes.

E. The exhibition of Maintenance Art, "CARE", would zero in on pure maintenance, exhibit it as contemporary art, and yield, by utter opposition, clarity of issues.

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II. THE MAINTENANCE ART EXHIBITION: Three parts: personal, general, and Earth Maintenance.

A. Personal Part:

I am an artist. I am a woman. I am a wife. I am a mother (random order).

I do a hell of a lot of washing, cleaning, cooking, renewing, supporting, preserving, etc. Also, (up to now separately) I "do" Art.

Now, I will simply do these maintenance everyday things, and flush them up to consciousness, exhibit them, as Art. I will live in the museum as I customarily do at home with my husband and my baby (right, or if you don't want me around at night I would come in every day) for the duration of the exhibition, and do all these things as public Art activities: I will sweep and wax the floors, dust everything, wash the walls (i.e. "floor paintings, dust works, soap-sculpture, wall-paintings"), cook, invite people to eat, clean up, put away, change light bulbs. I might save and make agglomerations and dispositions of all functional refuse. The exhibition area might look "empty" of art, but it will be maintained in full public view.

My working will be the work.

B. General Part: Everyone does a hell of a lot of noodling maintenance work. The general part of the exhibition would consist of interviews of two kinds.

1. Previous interviews of, say, 50 different classes and kinds of occupations that run a gamut from "maintenance man", maid, sanitation man, mailman, union man, construction worker, librarian, grocery store man, nurse, doctor, teacher, museum director, salesman, baseball player, child, criminal, bank president, mayor, movie star, artist, etc., about what they think maintenance is; how they feel about spending whatever parts of their lives on maintenance activities; what is the relationship between maintenance and freedom; what is the relationship between maintenance and life's dreams.

These interviews will be typed and exhibited.

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2. Interview Room--for spectators at the Exhibition: A room of desks and chairs where professional (?) interviewers will interview the spectators at the exhibition along same questions as typed interviews (in 1. above). The responses should be personal.

These interviews are taped and replayed throughout the exhibition area.

C. Earth Maintenance:

Everyday, a container of the following kinds of refuse will be delivered to the Museum: 1) the contents of one sanitation truck; 2) a container of polluted air; 3) a container of polluted Hudson River; 4) a container of ravaged land. Once at the exhibition, each container will be serviced: purified, depolluted, rehabilitated, recycled, and conserved by various technical (and/or pseudo-technical) procedures either by myself or scientists.

These servicing procedures are repeated for the duration of the exhibition.

Thinking through maintenance

To make bread, I need to maintain the sourdough. I must care for her even during periods when I am not making bread. To maintain her, I need to feed her to keep her alive, so she can enable me to make bread when I need it. This is on a micro scale.

To make a performance, I need to collaborate with people, and to be able to pay us all, and to have an audience to share it with. For all this to happen, there must be food to eat, a place to sleep, a place to work, a network of people I enjoy working with and who enjoy working with me and with each other, we all need to be paid to be able to have time to work together, to pay rent, to buy food, to meet, to spend time together, to write applications for funding, to have a system of funding, to have institutions that support the work, to have venues where the work can be shared, to have access to them, to have a state that supports culture, to have a culture that recognizes artistic labour, to have transparency, to have a union where workers can unite and demand better conditions, to have a culture that believes art should be accessible to everyone, to have policies and labor agreements, to have a state budget that prioritises art and education over military equipment and expenses, to live in a place where people have the time and curiosity to see art

because it is part of their lives and not a bourgeois privilege, which means that all everyone should have free time, economic and social security, wages that provide them with a sense of sustainability, a sense of future and belonging. To make a performance, all of this has to be maintained, so that when you make a performance, you have a context for the performance to come together. This is still on a micro scale.

To be alive, we need to breathe. To breathe, we need to maintain oxygen on this planet so that humans and non-humans alike can breathe fresh and clean air. To maintain oxygen, oceans, bacteria, and plants must be maintained, for they are the ones that produce it. This is on a macro scale.

To maintain derives from Latin *manu tenere*, which means to hold in the hand

Chipko means “to hug” or “to cling to”

“angalwaltha” is the Garhwali word for “embrace”

The Chipko movement is a grassroots eco-feminist resistance movement in India.

Women and villagers were protecting trees and forests from government-backed logging. Originating in the Himalayan region of Uttarakhand in 1973, the movement quickly expanded throughout the Indian Himalayas. The name “Chipko” means “to hug” or “to cling to” in Hindi, which describes the main tactic of protesters embracing trees to stop loggers. Women formed the nucleus of the movement, as they were the group most directly affected by the lack of firewood and drinking water caused by deforestation.

The original Chipko movement dates back to the 18th century, when a group of 363 people from 84 different villages, led by Amrita Devi, laid down their lives to protect khejri trees that were to be cut down at the order of the maharaja, or king, of Jodhpur. After this event, the maharaja decreed that the trees were to remain standing. The original movement was called “angalwaltha”, the Garhwali word for “embrace,” as the protesters protected the trees by surrounding them and linking hands, physically putting their bodies around them.

On December 10, 1997, Julia Lorraine Hill climbed on a 200-foot (61m) tall, approximately 1,000-year-old, redwood tree in Humboldt

County, California, for 738 days. This tree-sitting protest, supported by a crew of people, aimed to prevent Pacific Lumber Company loggers from cutting the tree down. Julia Lorraine Hill climbed down the tree on December 18, 1999, after ultimately having reached an agreement with the lumber company to save the tree. The tree was named Luna and is still alive today.

What do we maintain, and what maintains us?

Eleonora Siarava

As If: A Score to Play

Curation as if choreographing

Choreography as if curating

What is out there, what is in my mind
In the collective body
That shifts and drops and jumps and turns

A call for tiny and big meanings - Hey, dramaturgy are you there?
Cause I want To Perform a kind of an Expanded Choreography. Well, yeah, hmm...

Invite guests and friends and unknown
In a shared flat of a studio a stage a page a screen
Warm up
Create material - (wait, that is not actual material)
Search for metaphors

Reverse
Twist
Distort
Displace

Search for metaphors
Deconstruct material
In a warm day of uncertainty
..... day of uncertainty

Repeat | Delete

Not yet there

While it is dark-club
While it is light-of a strobe light

A stream of phenomena and events and scenes
Invent phenomena and scenes, bodies and things, to take place in Hyper Spaces
A meta-score, a meta-text, a meta-state

Performing species speak voice loud whisper shout
(Resonate)

Speak voice loud whisper shout

Speak voice loud whisper shout

I AM DANCING IN A ROOM
ADANCEISADANCEISADANCEISADANCE evaporate

imaginary scenarios INVENT rehearsal topographies

Fiction and Autofiction. A duet piece.
A weave of presence / disappearance
A choreographer, A curator, A performer, An audience

It is us fail, be exhausted, regenerate. It is us make it safe. Make it fun. Let it play.

ON*

It is us make it safe. Make it fun. Let it play.
It is us make it safe. Make it fun. Let it play.

* Track (press ON)

Track credits

Written, composed and performed by Eleonora Siarava **Sound effects** and mixed by Kyriakos Plsds

What can movement research do within a choreographic or artistic practice?



Kristina Lelovac

Herstory

I believe the border between acting “as if” and actually “being so” to be blurry if not illusory.

Maggie Nelson, On Freedom

This “poem” was composed as the closing of a presentation of the Performing Arts Platform REHEARSING FEMINIST FUTURES that I gave at a conference last year. (Now, as I write this, I realize we could have tried it at Lokomotiva’s (non)conference as well ... I promise to do it when we meet next time). Presenting this Platform as an example, my aim was to articulate the potentialities of building alternative systems of support for independent artists, grounded in feminist principles of relationality, non-hierarchy, (radical) empathy, solidarity, care, sharing, and exchange... - vital both for the development of contemporary performance practices and for the perseverance of the independent cultural scene within the constrained cultural context of our fragile societies... and in this crumbling world at the edge of humanity.

The idea was to wrap up the talk with an unannounced, ad hoc performance that would engage the conference audience as performers and, hopefully, give us all at least a brief somatic experience of the feminist principles in curating that the presentation explored.

Prior to the talk, while the room was still empty, and with the help of the hardworking volunteers at the conference, we taped ten pieces of paper beneath ten randomly chosen seats throughout the audience. Each paper carried a single verse of “the poem”. Later, at what seemed to be the end of my speech, instead of closing with the usual PowerPoint summary or final message, I invited the audience to wrap things up together with a collective performance and shared the leads (see How-to section below).

In an instant, the large conference hall - filled with local emerging performers, theatre students, young volunteers, renowned scholars, professors emeritus, and celebrated artists from around the world, all running on the last reserves of their concentration after two packed days of the conference program - was transformed into an energized playground. Dozens of curious equals began moving their bodies in the narrow aisles in the most peculiar ways,, hoping to discover a small piece of paper hidden beneath their seats. The friendly, spontaneously warm small talk and bursts

of cheerful laughter shared by people, most of whom had spent two days sitting side by side without sharing a single word, and the delighted exclamations when someone uncovered a paper, became the perfect warm-up soundtrack for the upcoming show.

Then, once all the papers had been uncovered, we dimmed the lights in the hall, turned on the microphone, and handed it to the person holding the first verse.

The collective performance of mere consecutive reading that followed turned the auditorium into a stage. There, the dedicated readers/performers and the attentive listeners/performers were at once rehearsing and performing (a better world). Moved by each shared verse, we all suddenly seemed a little less alone in whatever discomfort each of us carried. As if we had reached across a void and touched a fleeting moment of connectedness. As if, in this world that feels almost impossible to love, we briefly shared a deep belief that a better world is indeed possible.

How-to Suggestion/Proposal/Lead

- Divide the poem into as many parts as you see fit for the occasion. Don't forget to number each part to indicate the order of reading,
- Write or print out each part on a piece of re-used/recycled paper,
- Hide each piece of paper beneath randomly chosen seats throughout the audience while the room is still empty,
- Share the proposal with the "performers" as simply as possible. Eg. Beneath x of the seats throughout the audience there is a piece of paper. On one side of each piece there is a part of something that looks like a poem. Each part is marked with a number. Please look beneath your seat or the empty one next to you for a piece of paper. Before we start let's just make sure that we have all the parts we need - so #1, #2...#x I kindly ask the one holding the #1 to stand up and read aloud the verse and then the one with #2, and so on... In case you do not feel comfortable to read aloud, please hand the paper to someone next to you who is willing to do so.
- Dimming the light in the room, using a microphone or some music/sounds can work extra magic.

Who-with Suggestion/Proposal/Lead

- Conference audience, performance audience, exhibition audience, any audience,
- Workshop participants and educators, students and professors,
- Performers and choreographers/directors/dramaturgs, artists and curators, dancers and choreographers,
- A performance collective caught in a creative dead end,
- A performance festival team caught in a dead end,
- Participants at a weeks-long residency organized at a remote location, feeling sick of each-other,
- Any group that wants/needs to become a collective,
- Any group unaware of its potential to become a collective,
- Any collective that is desperate,
- Any collective falling apart...

When-to Suggestion/Proposal/Lead

Amid all the current terrors, exploitations and extractions, oppressions and enslavements, expulsions and displacements, occupations and even a genocide... it feels as if humanity has reached a dead end. Not to be defeated by the brutal reality and sustain the desire and commitment to a better world, through collective imagining, rehearsing, devising, embodying that utopia, is, in fact, a revolutionary commitment.



The poem

Rehearsing a Better World *an amalgamation**

** “the poem” is an amalgamation of an original text by Kristina Lelovac and parts taken either verbatim or adapted from texts by Mary Oliver, bell hooks, James Baldwin, Viki Mladenova, Franco Cassanno, Mariame Kaba, Lynne Segal, Khadija Muhaisen Dajani, Johanna Hedva, Franz Fenon, Joël Leon, Alain Badiou, Ayana Zaire Cotton, Angela Davis, and Audre Lorde.*

What are ecofeminist futures?

1

The following is an invitation
 An open hand extended towards
 Our bodies
*Alive on this fresh morning in this
 broken world*
 Expendable
 Tired
 Weak
 As if *the moment we cease to hold
 each other,
 the moment we break faith with one
 another,
 the sea would engulf us and the light
 would go out.*
 So, the following is an invitation
 To come together
 To come together for survival
 But to endure that quest
 With different kinetics
 Instead of growing, to mature,
 Instead of speeding up, to slow
 down.
 Let us try.

2

We are here
 At the peripheries
 Together
 Trying for a different way to be
 Rehearsing
 To breathe slower
 Slowly, slowly
 To live at a different pace.
*To be a province but not in despair,
 To be safe from the vain history,
 Inside the poverty and dreams,
 Outside of the mainstream
 Closer to all the secrets.*

3

We are here together
 Rehearsing
 Gently, gently
 Rehearsing feeling safe
 As if we knew that *we can't possess
 safety*
*Because safety is not a thing
 Nor predictable outcome
 Safety is relation.*

4

We are here together
 Rehearsing
 Kindly, kindly
 Rehearsing care,
 Finding it *entwined in our intimate
 commitments to each other*
*In our shared collective endeavors
 Our personal and political combining
 in a rallying cry to transform radically
 We are changing the way we think*

5

We are here together
 Rehearsing
 Gladly, gladly
 Rehearsing joy
 Collective joy,
 political and emotional joy
*Not the satisfaction of individual
 desire
 But the radical potential of being
 together, of sharing our lives
 together.*



6

We are here together
 Rehearsing
 Eagerly, eagerly
 Rehearsing hope
*As if in the midst of suffering,
 there are throbbing, glorious,
 life-affirming gardens
 being planted on the margins of
 "master's house."*
 As if we could meet there
 Into a rebellious community
 Community that is rebellion.

7

We are here together
 Rehearsing
 Tenderly, tenderly
 Rehearsing *Love*
*Not solely as a romantic endeavor
 But as a liberatory practice,
 As a political endeavor.*
 Love as resistance
 Love as a fundamental tool to end
 systems of oppression
*As true love, same as any revolution,
 is creation of a new world.*

8

We are here together
 Rehearsing
 Selflessly, selflessly
 Rehearsing togetherness
*Interdependence born out of
 everyone's individual non-giving up,
 Consisted of billions of molecules of
 solidarity,
 Because to be is to be together.*

9

We are here together
 Rehearsing
 Persistently, persistently
 Rehearsing the worlds we need
 The futures we desire
*Embodying liberation now
 Not putting off work of freedom
 for distant generations
 But designing playgrounds
 for future freedoms
 By using the tools we have today
 Acting as if it were possible to radically
 transform the world.*

10

For we know that nothing is *fixed,*
forever, forever, forever,
it is not fixed;
the earth is always shifting,
the light is always changing,
*the sea does not cease to grind
 down rock.*
*If we win
 There is no telling
 We seek beyond history
 For a new and more possible
 meeting.*



Eleonore, the cat in the garden
Photo by Sonja Savrova

In the photo Jasmina Vasileva, actress

The photo was taken during the performance "Eleonore, the Cat" devised in 2023 within the Performing Arts Platform REHEARSING FEMINIST FUTURES, which premiered in Skopje on November 27, 2023. The performance was devised after the monodrama by Caren Jess and included original works from Elfriede Jelinek, Paul B. Preciado, Silvia Federici and the collective of coauthors/performers.

Coauthors and performers: Monika Angelevska, Gracija Atanasovska, Jasmina Vasileva, Veronika Kamchevska and Katerina Shekutkovska
Supporting collaborators: Jasna Zmak, Viktorija Iliovska, Kristina Lelovac, Biljana Tanurovska Kjulavkovski and Ana Dubljevic



Nikola Uzunovski

An Archipelago of Temporary Floating Habitats, 2023

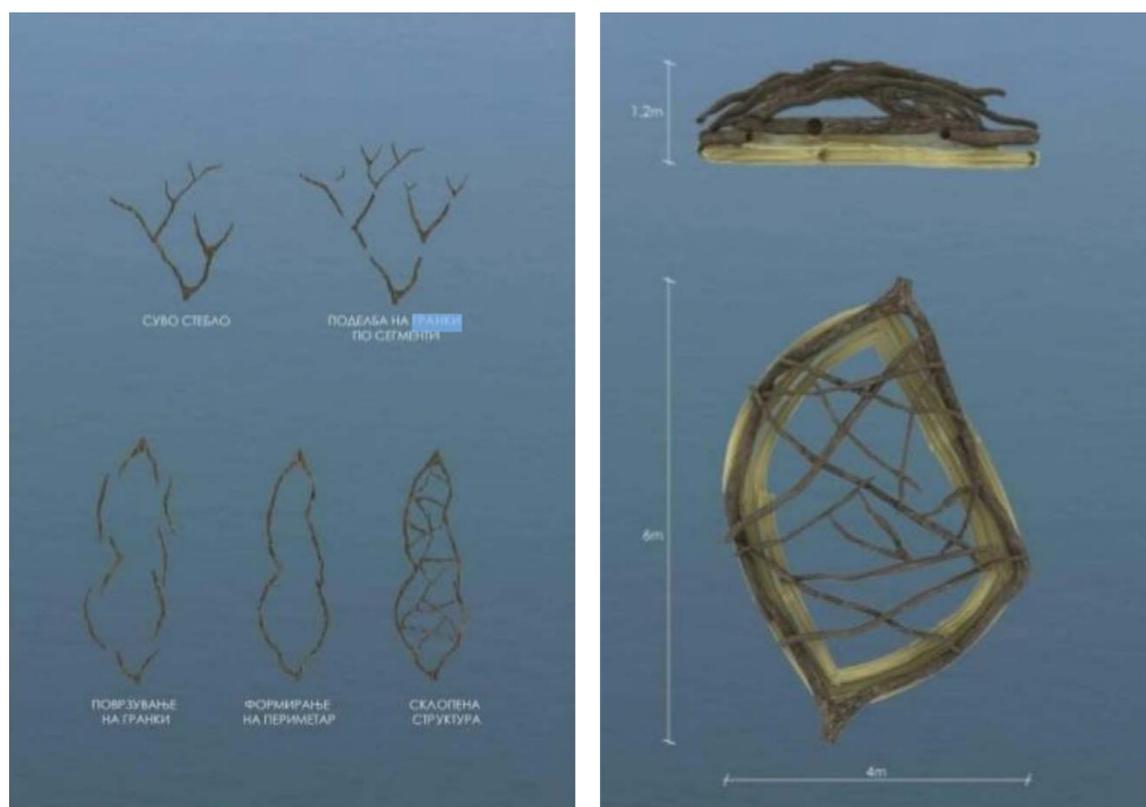
The water levels of Prespa Lake have been declining over the last 50 years, losing half of the water volume. The reasons behind these changes are different and demonstrated in various forms, such as increased air temperatures, decreased relative humidity, amplified evaporation, augmented cloudage, and reduced levels of sunlight, all of them not only being the result of the effects of climate change, but also of the use of water for irrigation systems by the three countries and the influx of polluting nutritional and dangerous substances.

The idea behind An Archipelago of Temporary Floating Habitats is to develop an archipelago of floating facilities intended for coexistence between people, animals and plants and make of natural materials that will be able to adopt to the water levels in case of further water withdrawals.



An Archipelago of Temporary Floating Habitats, 2023

This archipelago is composed of rafts tailor-made for people, animals and plants according to their needs, as an attempt to both support the preservation of the biodiversity of Prespa Lake and the water purification through specific plants and offer the locality as a tourist destination, thus reducing the intensity of use of the water for agricultural purposes. In this particular case, a single prototype is presented, intended only for plants and animals or for the species of birds known as terns.



ecosystem service?

The project is a reflection of the need to seek balance between us and the other species we coexist.

Its also a research in biomimicry, using sustainable materials and processes, learning from other species and applying it in the field of art production.

ecosystem care?



work with?

→ what urgencies you work with?

how to rethink the operation of the institution?

→ what happens when conditions disappear?

withdrawal as making space for quotes

How

What do you do as a curator in such an environment?

was very disappointed to realise that problems at the end are all rooted in capitalism

↓ ↑ paralysis

→ finding exodus

Are you where you would like to be? you would

withdrawal as a political decision as making

lock of time as a structural problem

we where we would



Bios

Bios

Paz Ponce (ES, 1985) is a Berlin-based art historian and curator. Her practice explores curation as a form of care and situated memory, focusing on community-building, participation, and cross-cultural exchange (EU & Latin America). She has extensive experience designing public programmes that integrate artistic research, civic engagement, and interdisciplinary methods, from sound walks to decolonial narratives.

As an organiser/producer, she has founded several advocacy/project platforms focused on diversity: insurgencias.net (artists at risk from Latin America), [neue häute e.V.](https://neuehaute.de) (community practices & social choreographies), [Organismendemokratie e.V.](https://organismendemokratie.de) (rights for all living beings).

She is Curator of Public Programmes & Outreach at TAT - Tieranatomisches Theater - an exhibition space, stage, and laboratory for curatorial practices within Humboldt University's Center for Culture Techniques. In this role, she brings an eco-feminist approach to curating, drawing from performing arts, museum studies & critical pedagogy, visual culture, and philosophy of science. Her practice expands traditional frameworks, fostering knowledge exchange across art, science, and social practices. Through this lens, she engages in redistributing power, reassembling narratives, queering the archive, fostering networked communities, and curating the present as it unfolds.

She works and produces in transnational contexts, including: nGbK, ZK/U - Zentrum für Kunst und Urbanistik, Silent Green, ARCH+, Uferstudios, Tanzfabrik, NODE Center for Curatorial Studies, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Agora Collective, berlinerpool, NON Berlin - Asia Contemporary Art Platform, Galerie Wedding, 48 Stunden Neukölln, Ballhaus Ost (Berlin); Impulse Theater Festival (NRW), Brecht Festival (Augsburg); Laboratorio Artístico de San Agustín (LASA) & Centro de Arte Contemporáneo Wifredo Lam, Bienal de La Habana (Havana, CU);

Casa Tomada, Goethe Institut São Paulo (São Paulo, BR), Universidad Federal de Bahia (Intervalo Fórum de Arte - Federal University of Bahia (Salvador, BR); IFAIC/Ministerio de Cultura y Patrimonio (Quito, EC); Politforum Bern (Bern, CH); CSA La Tabacalera (Madrid, ES), Onassis AiR (Athens, GR); Cinema Lumbardhi (Prizren, KV); Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay (Singapore, SG); Academy of the Arts (Szczecin, PL); Lokomotiva (Skopje, MK); and B_Tours Festival (Berlin/Tel Aviv, IL).

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Ivana Dragsic is a sociologist and civil operator interested in urban anthropology, countercultural practices, institutional innovation, and leisure. As a researcher, author, and editor, she has explored the topics of commons and ecofeminism, with a strong affinity for their intertwined concepts: public space, urban greenery, citizen participation, resource management, UBI, care, and conviviality. She currently serves as a program advisor at the Heartefact branch office in Skopje. Dragsic is an amateur artist and performer, and plays music on the radio and in clubs.

Oliver Musovik (1971, Skopje) is a visual artist working across media, but mostly in photography and visual storytelling.

His practice explores the intersection of nature, urban space, and social dynamics, with particular focus on adaptation and resilience in transitional environments. His work foregrounds the landscape as a socio-ecological construct shaped by reciprocal influences between humans and nonhumans. This work investigates plant com-

munities and their adaptive strategies, revealing patterns of cooperation, mutual aid, and symbiosis. By capturing these recurring botanical interactions, his visual narratives highlight nature's collective survival mechanisms and offer a lens for rethinking ecological relations, as well as the social structures we inhabit.

Through this interdisciplinary and environmentally attuned approach, Musovik's practice contributes to contemporary dialogues on ecological resilience, urban sustainability, and the role of art in fostering critical awareness of humanity's entanglement with the natural world.

His work has been presented internationally, including at SAM - Singapore Art Museum (2025), the Museum of Contemporary Art Skopje, +MSUM Metelkova Ljubljana (2021, 2018), the Fridericianum Kassel (2003), Manifesta 4 (Frankfurt, 2002), and the Istanbul Biennial (1999). Musovik's works are held in public collections such as n.b.k. Berlin, the Museum of Contemporary Art Skopje, Fondazione Fotografia Modena, and +MSUM Ljubljana. He has also participated in residency programs across Europe, Asia, and the United States.

Hampus Bergander is an independent curator based in Stockholm, Sweden, working across the Nordic region and internationally. From 2020 to 2024, he was curator at Kin - Museum of Contemporary Art, Kiruna. In 2022-2023, he participated in Konstfack University of the Arts' CuratorLab program, collaborating with the Au-tostrada Biennale in Kosovo.

Bergander's practice is research-driven and context-responsive, exploring performance, moving image, material ecologies, and spatial relations. He curates collaboratively and iteratively, employing speculative and queer-informed frameworks to support and foster critical inquiry and collective agency.

Key exhibitions include *Choreographies of Change* (2023-2024), *Vanishing Points: Folding a View* (2023), and *The Language of Friction is Uttered from Within* (2022). He has also edited publications such as *Data Free Zone SWE/SÁPMI_1*, exploring knowledge, memory, and counter-cartography.

His work bridges theory and practice, integrating research, writing, and curating. Across projects, Bergander foregrounds simultaneity, friction, and irresolution as methodological tools. He positions contemporary art as a space for collective exploration, reflection, and the reconfiguration of social, political, and ecological relations.

Laura Rozas is a Chilean researcher based in Lisbon. She holds a Master's degree in Theatre Studies from the University of Lisbon, where she is currently pursuing a PhD in Theatre and Performance Studies. Her doctoral project investigates modes of work and production within artistic residencies in the performing arts, approaching them as situated curatorial practices.

Her research has focused on the intersections of archives, visual culture, memory, and artistic practices in the performing arts, a field she has worked in both in Chile and in Portugal. She has collaborated with the project *ARTHE - Archiving Theatre* (CET-University of Lisbon), where she studied the archives of independent theatre companies and their processes of decentralisation, collective memory, and transnational exchange.

Her Master's dissertation, *Choreographic Forms of Historical Reflection: For a Timeline to Be*. *Genealogies of Dance as an Artistic Practice in Portugal*, explored intersections of choreographic, historiographical, and curatorial thought as a way to inscribe other bodies, narratives, and temporalities.

Bios

Ana Lazarevska is a visual artist exploring the interdependence of nature, humans, and more-than-human relations through participatory and performative practices, photography, and interactive installations. Her work moves between embodied experience and sensor-based installations, creating spaces where perception, intuition, and ecological awareness intertwine.

In her practice, Ana pushes the boundaries of the senses and the unseen connections between inner and outer worlds. Drawing on somatic methods, ecological aesthetics, and philosophies of consciousness, she develops participatory frameworks that invite audiences to slow down, sharpen their sensory awareness, and engage deeply with their environment. In weaving language, silence, and multisensory experiences, her work opens poetic spaces for navigating the uncertainty and the emotional landscapes of the Anthropocene.

With her projects, Ana sparks reflection on contemporary living and our relationship to the non-human world, encouraging collective care, resilience, and new ways of sensing and knowing. She is currently developing *The Felt Unknown*, a research-based body of work exploring sensory awareness and environmental uncertainty.

She has exhibited and participated in residencies internationally, including the International Summer Academy in Salzburg, ISA Ohrid, and the 2Angles Artist Residency in Normandy. Ana holds a degree in Graphic Art from the Faculty of Fine Arts in Skopje, and is pursuing her master's studies in Visual Arts at the same institution.

Biljana Tanurovska-Kjulavkovski is a curator, researcher, writer, and cultural producer at the intersection of dance, theatre and visual arts performance, art history, cultural policy, independent cultural scenes,

activist, feminist and environmental (curatorial) practices. She works as a freelancer and as a programme director of Lokomotiva, Skopje. Currently, she is a co-researcher for the [NADA Digital Archive of Dance and Performance](#); [Dance Map](#) research project; co-curator of the exhibition [Dancing, Resisting, \(Un\)working](#) (in Zagreb and Ljubljana), and [Performance Platform festival](#) in Skopje (2023-); curator of the international school *Curating in Context*, and co-mentor of the [Critical Practice \(Made in Yu\)](#) and *Re-Imagine* project. She is also part of the platform [Nomad Dance Academy](#). Biljana teaches and writes, is an art historian, and holds a PhD from the Faculty of Drama Arts in Belgrade. She works collaboratively, believing that meaningful creation and art/cultural production thrive through connections and relations with others.

Katalin Erdódi (1980, Debrecen, Hungary) is a curator, dramaturg, and writer active in the fields of contemporary visual and performing arts. Her cross-disciplinary practice spans socially engaged art, experimental performance, and site-specific collaborations in rural and urban situations. Her recent curatorial research focuses on critical rural art practices and investigates social change in rural areas through collaborative approaches that involve people from different backgrounds in the artistic process. In 2020 Erdódi received the Igor Zabel Award Grant for her locally embedded and inclusive curatorial practice.

As a curator, she has worked for institutions and festivals such as brut Vienna, steirischer herbst Graz, GfZK - Museum of Contemporary Art Leipzig, and Impulse Theater Festival in Germany. Together with Fanni Nánay, she co-founded PLACCC Festival, an international festival for site-specific performance and art in public space (2008-ongoing). Together with the visual artist Antje Schiffers, she is co-creator of Collaborative Village Play (2021-ongoing). She co-curated the 2024 edition of the Biennale Matter of Art (Prague) with Aleksei Borisionok,

and was working group member of the 2-year artistic and curatorial research project SALT. CLAY. ROCK. (nGbK Berlin, 2023–2024). From January 2025, she is artistic and managing director of Trafó House of Contemporary Arts (Budapest).

Marta Keil is a dramaturge, curator, and researcher, born in Poznań and currently based in Utrecht. Her curatorial and research practice focuses on re-enchanting the ways of instituting in the performing arts. Marta works as a tutor at DAS Theatre, Academy for Theatre and Dance, Amsterdam University of the Arts, and collaborates as a freelance dramaturg, curator, teacher, and advisor with various European institutions and artists. As a fellow of BAK in Utrecht, she started in 2023 her research on dramaturgies of withdrawal in performing arts, which she currently continues at the AP School of Arts in Antwerp.

Alexander Roberts has worked extensively as an artist, dramaturg, and curator in Europe and different parts of the world. Current Artistic and Managing Director at Rosendal Theatre in Trondheim, Norway, former co-Director of Reykjavik Dance Festival (2013–2020), co-founder of the Performing Arts MFA at Iceland University of the Arts (2015–2020), and co-founder of Teenagers in Reykjavík (2015-), Alexander has worked with different approaches to curating with teenagers since 2015.

Slobodanka Stevcheska is a visual artist whose practice is context-based, non-collectible, and often ephemeral or disseminated in multiple copies. Since 2001, she has been a member of the art duo OPA (Obsessive Possessive Aggression), engaging in strategies ranging from parody, constructed or altered realities, mockumentaries, tactical media, and subversive affirmation to more utilitarian and

constructive artistic approaches in recent years.

Since 2012, Stevcheska has been teaching at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Skopje. Active in education since 1996, she has also worked extensively with vulnerable young people and youth at risk.

Ivana Samandova is an interdisciplinary artist based in Skopje. Her practice centers on long processes of observation and research, often expressed through site-specific installations and new media. Her focus frequently turns towards a spectrum of societal contexts that (in)directly affect her - the structures of power and their long-term effects, as well as mundane interactions and interconnections.

Kamelija Kalamernikova is a visual artist born in 2002 in Strumica. She graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts - Skopje in 2025. Her work explores the topic of the human psyche in all of its delicate, chaotic, emotionally expressive forms. She primarily works in drawing, painting, and video art, creating visual symbols that serve as vessels for exploration of perception, consciousness, and the unconscious.

Ilina Vasileska is a visual artist who graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts in Skopje. Her work is based on memories surrounding her environment, the intertwining of the contemporary with the remnants of the past, material heritage, and folklore. The diversity of media is inevitable, driven by the idea - it transforms into painting, drawing, video, and objects in space made from sustainable materials.

Bios

Nefeli Gioti was born in Athens. She is a dance researcher, choreographer, and dancer, based in Sweden since 2020. She has completed her MA in choreography at the Stockholm University of Arts (SKH), and her BA studies in Environmental Sciences in Greece.

Her work is emerging and revolving within and through the intersection of dance, choreography, artistic research, performance, and speculative fabulation. She explores the action of confusing, the difference in practice between meaning and sense, the conditions which make them emerge and/or disappear, as well as the relation between facts and fiction. She develops the choreographic practice “(e)merging fragments and strata” and investigates the process of sense-making when fragments, layers, and strata coexist side by side in a performative setting. Her work delves into the narrative operation in the fields of dance and choreography by exploring discursive practices. She proceeds into thinking through performative objects, such as performances, publications, discursive practices, and video experimentation. In 2023, Gioti was a fellow artist of the Critical Practice (Made in Yu) program, which empowers critical thinking and writing in the field of contemporary performing arts. She has been an author of numerous published articles and is currently teaching a laboratory for practising various feedback methods together with artists.

<https://giotinefeli.wixsite.com/research-choreograph>

Eleonora Siarava is a choreographer between Greece and Germany. For the piece *The Body and the Other~* premiered at Tanzhaus NRW was supported by KULTURsekretariat NRW, Ministry of Culture NRW, I-Portunus/Creative Europe and collaborated with Mixed Reality & Visualization Institut. She created *BLUE BEYOND* presented in National Theatre of N. Greece, The-seum Theatre Athens Tanz:digital/ ITI Berlin, Frankfurt

LAB Emerging Artists 2023, *Who knows where the time goes #1* (Roes Theatre Athens, residency SE.S.T.A Centre for Choreographing Development/Prague), *I am Dancing in a Room* (MOMus-Stereoma Festival), all funded by the Ministry of Culture of Greece. She was awarded the SNF Fellowship ARTWORKS, was fellow of START/ Robert Bosch Stiftung & Goethe Institut and resident choreographer at UniArts Helsinki, Finland 2025 and ITI International Theatre Institute Germany/Motion Bank, Berlin, 2024. She participated in *Moving Digits/Creative Europe for Dance & Digital Technologies*, Tanzhaus NRW & STL Tallinn. Her works were included in Media Library for Dance and Theatre-ITI, one of the most extensive documentation archives for performing arts in Germany. Currently, she is preparing her new piece (June July-working title) that will premiere in Athens in 2026.

<https://www.instagram.com/siaravaeleonora/>
www.per-dance.com

Kristina Lelovac is an actress, performer, and curator of performing arts. She teaches drama acting and contemporary performance practices at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Skopje, North Macedonia. Her professional interests center on critical art pedagogies and feminist aspects of collaboration in art processes. She performs and collaborates on devising performances within interdisciplinary artistic projects, exclusively on the independent scene. She is one of the founders of the Festival of Feminist Culture and Action [FIRSTBORN GIRL \(ПРВО ПА ЖЕНСКО\)](#), curator of its performance program, as well as the performing arts platform [REHEARSING FEMINIST FUTURES](#). As part of the Platform, she initiated the first local School for [Feminist Dramaturgical Pondering](#).

Nikola Uzunovski (Zemun, Belgrade, 1979) has exhibited in more than a hundred shows around the world. In 2005, he participated in the 51. edition of Biennale di Venezia, in the project “Floating Sites”, and in 2007, he won the prize Young European Artist. At Trieste Contemporanea he started his project “My Sunshine”, which he continued during the residence at Pollinaria, Abruzzi, 2008, and then developed it further in for Macedonian pavilion at the 53. edition of Biennale di Venezia (2009). Solo shows to be mentioned include “Snow” and “My sunshine” at Federico Luger gallery in Milan. Major group exhibitions include “Greenwashing” at Fondazione Sandretto Rebaudengo (Turin, Italy, 2008), “Green Platform”, Fondazione Strozzi (Florence, Italy, 2009), “Spaceship Earth”, Centre of Contemporary Art Znaki Czasu (Torun, Poland, 2011).

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