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APECV – Associação de Professores de Expressão e Comunicação Visual
<http://www.apecv.pt/>
Quinta da Cruz, Estrada de São Salvador, 3510-784 São Salvador, Viseu, Portugal
Email: invisibilidades@apecv.pt

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REVISÃO DE TEXTO

Aldo Passarinho

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Neste número alguns autores de língua Portuguesa não utilizaram o atual Acordo Ortográfico da Língua Portuguesa

CAPA E CONTRACAPA

Capa: *Patterns Collective (Elina Härkönen, Miia Mäkinen, Maria Huhmarniemi and Jari Rinne) Shared Woollen Patterns, 2019. Fotografia: Janne Jakola.*

Contracapa: *I will dye my hair for this - Failure in participatory art or emergent turn in play? by Nina Luostarinen, fotografia Venla Luostarinen,*

AUTORES NESTE NÚMERO

Andrea Kárpáti

Ângela Saldanha

Ángeles Ruiz de Velasco Gálvez

Carlos Escaño

Célia Ferreira

Cia Gustrén

Isabelle Gatt

Javier Abad Molina

Javier Domínguez Muñino

Jenny Johannisson

Maria Huhmarniemi

Marija Griniuk

Melanie Sarantou

Milosh Raykov

Nina Luostarinen

Paul Wilson

Raphael Vella

Raquel Balsa

Roger Blomgren

Sofia Lindström Sol

Tang Tang

Vera Tessmer

Zsófia Somogyi-Rohonczy

inVISIBILIDADES

REVISTA IBERO-AMERICANA DE PESQUISA
EM EDUCAÇÃO, CULTURA E ARTES



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04 | EDITORIAL

- 04 | *Invisibilidades #15*
Ângela Saldanha e Teresa Eça

10 | ARTIGOS

- 12 | *Artistic Means of Social Change: Arts-Based Interventions for Addressing Marginalisation in a European Context*
Cia Gustrén, Sofia Lindström Sol, Jenny Johannisson e Roger Blomgren
- 22 | *Research, relationships and their infrastructuring: the reflexive mattering of dialogical correspondence as social sculpture.*
Paul Wilson, Tang Tang
- 34 | *Lugares de aprendizagem: pedagogias de emancipação através das artes*
Raquel Balsa, Ângela Saldanha e Célia Ferreira
- 46 | *"You'd be in bed, you'd have... lesions and, and fever, and you'd be dying": Challenging stigmatisation and misinformation about HIV through the arts*
Isabelle Gatt, Milosh Raykov e Raphael Vella
- 54 | *Arctic craftivism and revitalisation of crafting*
Maria Huhmarniemi
- 64 | *Making your voice heard: a visual communication project for young Roma women*
Andrea Kárpáti e Zsófia Somogyi-Rohonczy
- 78 | *(Eco)Pedagogía (postdigital) de la esperanza: Cuadraginta, proyecto colaborativo como escultura social en la era COVID-19*
Carlos Escaño
- 84 | *Memory Box: A three-dimensional quilt as an arts-based method for recollective practices and memory work*
Melanie Sarantou e Vera Tessmer
- 96 | *Las instalaciones de juego como Escultura Social: experiencia comunitaria en una visita-taller al museo del Prado de Madrid*
Javier Abad Molina e Ángeles Ruiz de Velasco Gálvez
- 106 | *I will dye my hair for this - Failure in participatory art or emergent turn in play?*
Nina Luostarinen
- 114 | *Performing in an Art Fair: Inviting Strangers into the Artistic Action.*
Marija Griniuk
- 124 | *Construyendo espacios colectivos. Intervención artística y social en la obra de María Ortega Estepa.*
Javier Domínguez Muñino

Editorial

O número 15 da revista InVisibilidades aborda práticas de arte para a transformação social através da investigação e ações artísticas comunitárias que utilizam a arte para superar desafios sociais. A publicação levanta questões de colaboração, interculturalismo, diálogo e participação cívica. O tema da edição foi inspirado no projeto AMASS: Atuando nas margens: As artes como escultura social, onde são integrados cinco artigos que se relacionam diretamente sobre este projeto. Os demais artigos têm em comum a reflexão sobre projetos de arte participativa com comunidades.

Variadas reflexões sobre como as artes podem gerar transformação social e suscitar o diálogo social, como afirmou Joseph Beuys, através das visões dos diferentes autores enredam-se num mapa de possibilidades para enfrentar desafios sociais.

Na revista são usadas, nos resumos, três línguas, Português, Espanhol e Inglês, estando os artigos escritos num desses idiomas. Procurámos criar uma revista que incorporasse o maior número possível de imagens para ajudar a transmitir a pluralidade das reflexões nos artigos de investigadores, educadores artísticos e artistas de diferentes localizações geográficas europeias (Espanha; Finlândia; Hungria; Inglaterra; Malta; Portugal e Suécia).

A primeira seção da edição é dedicada ao projeto AMASS e começa com um estudo de Cia Gustrén, Sofia Lindström Sol, Jenny Johannisson e Roger Blomgren, da Suécia, apresentando a análise de uma revisão do estado da arte feita como parte do projeto AMASS (Acting on the Margins: Arts as Social Sculpture), financiado pela UE através do Horizonte 2020 (acordo de concessão n.º 870621), que visa enfrentar os desafios da marginalização na Europa por meio de intervenções baseadas nas artes.

Paul Wilson e Tang Tang, de Inglaterra, discutem, no seu artigo, ideias e práticas relacionadas com o conceito de Arte como Escultura Social (Art as Social Sculpture - AMASS), integrando um leque variado, extenso, diverso e exploratório de definições.

De Portugal, Raquel Balsa, Célia Ferreira e Ângela Saldanha, da Associação de Professores de Expressão e Comunicação Visual, APECV, descrevem o projeto piloto desenvolvido ao longo de 2020 sublinhando valores de processos participatórios tais como o papel de artistas e educadores enquanto provocadores, ou animadores do diálogo através de ações de arte e design com a comunidade de forma respeitosa e responsável.

De Malta, o artigo de Isabelle Gatt, Milosh Raykov e Raphael Vella foca-se em como uma equipa de investigação académica, uma entidade criativa, uma ONG e um grupo de participantes que vivem com HIV em Malta contribuíram para a criação de uma produção teatral e um estudo destinados a desafiar a estigmatização e desinformação sobre o HIV.





Maria Huhmarniemi, da Lapônia, defende práticas artesanais, como o tricot, para envolver criativamente as pessoas em causas políticas ou sociais nas regiões do norte da Finlândia.

Andrea Kárpáti e Zsófia Somogyi-Rohonczy, da Hungria, descrevem o projeto piloto do Amass em Budapeste realizado com meninas e mulheres ciganas húngaras com o objetivo de desenvolver competências de comunicação verbal, visual e digital.

A segunda seção deste número apresenta outros projetos em diferentes contextos participativos. Carlos Escañó, da Espanha, descreve e reflete sobre questões da ecopedagogia, pós-digitalidade e arte como escultura social na ação artística colaborativa do projeto internacional “Quadráginta” realizado em tempos de pandemia de COVID-19.

Melanie Sarantou e Vera Tessmer, da Austrália, no seu artigo exploram o uso das artes têxteis para combater narrativas dominantes associadas ao estigma da perda de memória e da demência.

Os artistas espanhóis Javier Abad Molina e Ángeles Ruiz de Velasco Gálvez descrevem uma performance didática realizada no Museu do Prado em Madrid através de jogos ou instalação de jogos para encontros intergeracionais após a visualização do tríptico de “O Jardim das Delícias Terrenas” (1500-1505) por H. Bosch.

A terceira seção da InVisibilidades #15 é voltada para artistas. Nina Luostarinen, da Finlândia, relata uma experiência muito interessante onde os participantes tomaram o curso dos eventos nas suas mãos e criaram uma peça de arte ainda mais versátil e divertida do que a pretendida inicialmente pela artista.

Marija Griniuk traz uma análise de uma performance interativa criada como uma escultura social numa feira

de arte para promover a responsividade emergente, interconexões não humanas e transcorporalidade.

E para encerrar a seção e o número, Javier Domínguez Muñino reflete sobre os projetos comunitários do artista espanhol Ortega Estepa e as suas possibilidades em rever espaços comuns para novos encontros.

Esperamos que esta publicação traga diferentes caminhos para o leitor entender a diversidade e riqueza deste tema para ir além da arte como escultura social.

Ângela Saldanha e Teresa Eça

apecvisual@gmail.com

Editorial

This issue of the journal *InVisibilidades* #15 approaches social engaged art practices through research and community art actions using arts to overcome societal challenges. The journal raises issues of collaboration, interculturalism, dialogue and civic participation. The topic of the issue was inspired in the project AMASS: Acting on the margins: Arts as social sculpture and five articles are about that project. The other articles are not related to the project, but have in common the reflection about participatory art projects with communities.

Through the lens of the different authors' reflections about how arts can generate social transformation and elicit social dialogue, as Joseph Beuys claimed, are entangled as a map of possibilities for mitigating societal challenges.

Portuguese, Spanish and English languages are used through the abstracts, and articles are written in one of these languages. We tried to create a journal incorporating as many visuals as possible to help to transmit the plurality of the reflections in the nine articles from researchers, art educators and artists from very different European geographical locations (England; Finland; Hungary; Malta; Portugal; Spain and Sweden). The publication disseminates current research about art social engaged projects which have in common participation practices.

The first section of the issue is dedicated to the AMASS project and starts with a study by Cia Gustrén, Sofia Lindström Sol, Jenny Johannisson & Roger Blomgren, from Sweden, presenting the analysis of a state-of-the-art review made as part of the Horizon 2020 EU-funded (grant agreement n.º 870621) project AMASS (Acting on the Margins: Arts as Social Sculpture), which aims to address challenges of marginalisation in Europe through arts-based interventions.

Paul Wilson and Tang Tang, from England, discuss in their article common ideas and practices of Art as Social Sculpture (AaSS), together with the ongoing application and development of the concept itself, invite a varied, extended, diverse and exploratory range of definitions. An aim to define its potential across and through a wide and, potentially unappreciated or unconsidered, range of activities - can also help to identify or define alternatives to the formal production and consumption of arts practices and outcomes.

From Portugal, Raquel Balsa, Célia Ferreira and Ângela Saldanha, from the association of teachers of visual expression and communication, APECV, describe the project pilot developed during 2020 pointing out participation values such as the role of artists and educators as provocateurs, or animators of dialogue through art and design actions with the community in a respectful and responsible manner.

From Malta, Isabelle Gatt, Milosh Raykov, and Raphael Vella's article focus on how an academic research team, a creative entity, an NGO and a group of participants living with HIV in Malta contributed to the creation of a theatrical production and study aimed at challenging stigmatisation and misinformation about HIV.



Maria Huhmarniemi, from Lapland advocates for craftivism as the practice of creatively engaging people in political or social causes through knitting in Northern regions of Finland.

Andrea Kárpáti and Zsófia Somogyi-Rohonczy, from Hungary describe the Amass Pilot project Budapest carried out with Hungarian Roma girls and women intending to develop verbal, visual and digital communication skills.

The second section of the issue presents different projects in different participatory contexts. Carlos Escañó, from Spain, describes and reflects about issues of Ecopedagogy, postdigitality and art as social sculpture on the collaborative artistic action of the international project “Quadráginta” carried out in times of pandemic by COVID-19.

Melanie Sarantou & Vera Tessmer, from Australia, in their article explore the use of textile arts to counter dominant narratives associated with stigmatising memory loss and dementia.

Spanish artists Javier Abad Molina and Ángeles Ruiz de Velasco Gálvez, describe a didactic performance carried out in the Prado Museum in Madrid through play or game installation for intergenerational encounters after viewing the triptych of “The Garden of Earthly Delights” (1500-1505) by H. Bosch.

The third section of InVisibilidades #15 is centred on artists. Nina Luostarinen, from Finland, relates a very interesting experience where participants took the course of events into their own hands and created an even more playfully versatile piece of art than intended in the beginning by the artist.

Marija Griniuk brings up an analysis of an interactive performance created as a social sculpture in an art fair to foster emergent responsivity, inhuman interconnections and transcorporeality.

And to close the section and the issue Javier Domínguez Muñino reflects on the Community projects of Spanish artist Ortega Estepa and its possibilities to revise common spaces for new encounters.

We hope this publication will bring you different paths to understand the richness and to go beyond arts as a social sculpture.

Ângela Saldanha e Teresa Eça
apecvisual@gmail.com

Editorial

Este número de la revista InVisibilidades # 15 aborda prácticas socialmente comprometidas a través de la investigación y las acciones de arte comunitario que utilizan las artes para superar los desafíos sociales. La revista plantea temas de colaboración, interculturalidad, diálogo y participación ciudadana. El tema del número se inspiró en el proyecto AMASS: Actuando en los márgenes: el arte como escultura social y cinco artículos tratan sobre ese proyecto. Los otros artículos no están relacionados con el proyecto, pero tienen en común la reflexión sobre proyectos de arte participativo con las comunidades.

A través de la mirada de los diferentes autores y autoras, las reflexiones sobre cómo las artes pueden generar transformación social y suscitar el diálogo social, como afirmó Joseph Beuys, se entrelazan como un mapa de posibilidades para mitigar los desafíos sociales.

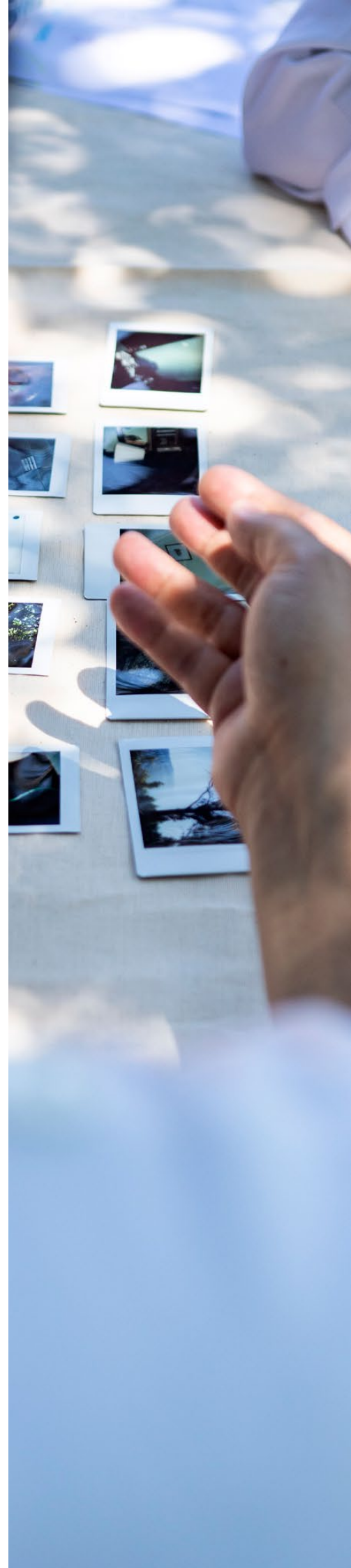
Los idiomas portugués, español e inglés se utilizan en los resúmenes y los artículos están escritos en uno de estos idiomas. Intentamos crear una revista incorporando la mayor cantidad de visuales posibles para ayudar a transmitir la pluralidad de las reflexiones en los artículos de investigadores, educadores de arte y artistas de muy distintas localizaciones geográficas europeas (España; Finlandia; Hungría; Inglaterra; Malta; Portugal y Suecia). La publicación difunde la investigación actual sobre proyectos de arte socialmente comprometidos que tienen prácticas de participación en común.

La primera sección del número está dedicada al proyecto AMASS y comienza con un estudio de Cia Gustrén, Sofia Lindström Sol, Jenny Johannisson & Roger Blomgren, de Suecia, que presenta el análisis de una revisión realizada como parte de el proyecto AMASS (Acting on the Margins: Arts as Social Sculpture), financiado por la Unión Europea Horizonte 2020 (acuerdo n.º 870621), cuyo objetivo es abordar desafíos de las márgenes en Europa a través de intervenciones basadas en las artes.

Paul Wilson y Tang Tang, de Inglaterra, discuten en su artículo ideas y prácticas comunes del Arte como Escultura Social (AaSS), junto con la aplicación y desarrollo continuo del concepto en sí, invitan a una gama de definiciones variada, extendida, diversa y exploratoria.. El objetivo de definir su potencial a través de una amplia gama de actividades, potencialmente no apreciadas o no consideradas, también puede ayudar a identificar o definir alternativas a la producción y consumo formal de prácticas y resultados artísticos.

Desde Portugal, Raquel Balsa, Célia Ferreira y Ângela Saldanha, de la Asociación de Profesores de Expresión Visual y Comunicación, APECV, describen el proyecto piloto desarrollado durante 2020 señalando algunos aspectos de participación como el papel de los artistas y educadores como provocadores o animadores, el dialogo a través del arte y el diseño de acciones con la comunidad de manera respetuosa y responsable.

Desde Malta, el artículo de Isabelle Gatt, Milosh Raykov y Raphael Vella se centra en cómo un equipo de investigación académico, una entidad creativa, una ONG y un grupo de participantes que viven con el VIH en Malta contribuyeron a la



creación de una producción teatral en un estudio que desafía la estigmatización y desinformación sobre el VIH.

Maria Huhmarniemi, de Laponia, aboga por el *craftivismo* como la práctica de involucrar creativamente a las personas en causas políticas o sociales a través del tejido en las regiones del norte de Finlandia.

Andrea Kárpáti y Zsófia Somogyi-Rohonczy, de Hungría, describen el proyecto piloto *Amass* en Budapest llevado a cabo con niñas y mujeres gitanas húngaras con la intención de desarrollar habilidades de comunicación verbal, visual y digital.

La segunda sección del número presenta diferentes proyectos en diferentes contextos participativos. Carlos Escañó, de España, describe y reflexiona sobre temas de *Ecopedagogía*, *postdigitalidad* y arte como escultura social a partir de la acción artística colaborativa del proyecto internacional “*Quadráginta*” realizado en tiempos de pandemia COVID-19.

Melanie Sarantou y Vera Tessmer, de Australia, en su artículo exploran el uso de las artes textiles para contrarrestar las narrativas dominantes asociadas con la estigmatización de la pérdida de memoria y la demencia.

Los artistas españoles Javier Abad Molina y Ángeles Ruiz de Velasco Gálvez, describen una performance didáctica realizada en el Museo del Prado de Madrid a través del juego o instalación lúdica para encuentros intergeneracionales tras vislumbrar el tríptico de “*El jardín de las delicias*” (1500-1505) de El Bosco.

La tercera sección de *InVisibilidades* # 15 se centra en los artistas. Nina Luostarinen, de Finlandia, relata una experiencia muy interesante en la que los participantes tomaron el curso de los eventos en sus propias manos y crearon una obra de arte aún más lúdica y versátil de lo que pretendía el artista al principio.

Marija Griniuk presenta un análisis de una performance interactiva creada como una escultura social en una feria de arte para fomentar la responsividad emergente, las interconexiones inhumanas y la transcorporalidad.

Y para cerrar la sección y el número Javier Domínguez Muñino reflexiona sobre los proyectos comunitarios del artista español Ortega Estepa y sus posibilidades de revisar espacios comunes para nuevos encuentros.

Esperamos que esta publicación te abra diferentes caminos para comprender la riqueza del arte como escultura social.y para ir aún más para allá!

Ângela Saldanha e Teresa Eça
apecvisual@gmail.com



ARTIGOS



Imagem Maria Ortega Estepa

Artistic Means of Social Change: Arts-Based Interventions for Addressing Marginalisation in a European Context

Meios artísticos de mudança social: intervenções baseadas nas artes para abordar a marginalização num contexto europeu

Medios artísticos del cambio social: intervenciones basadas en las artes para abordar la marginación en un contexto europeo

Cia Gustrén

Sofia Lindström Sol

Jenny Johannisson

Roger Blomgren

Swedish School of Library and Information Science, University of Borås, Sweden

sofia.lindstrom@hb.se

ABSTRACT

In this article, we present the analysis of a state-of-the-art review made as part of the Horizon 2020 EU-funded project AMASS (Acting on the Margins: Arts as Social Sculpture), which aims to address challenges of marginalisation in Europe through arts-based interventions. This study analyses researched-based materials on the social impact of the arts, theoretically underpinned by an understanding of the role of the arts in conjunction with the problematisation of social marginalisation. We found three ways to understand the social impact of the arts in the material; as a participatory means to agency and empowerment, identity and expression, and learning and development. These categories are related to analytically derived positions of marginalisation as predominantly structural- or more individual-based. Art is conceived of as a way to bridge these positions through an understanding of its educational qualities. These categories offer a fruitful but also potentially limited role of the arts in society.

keywords: literature review, grey literature, socially engaged arts, cultural policy

RESUMO

Neste artigo, apresentamos a análise de uma revisão do estado da arte feita como parte do projeto AMASS do Horizonte 2020 financiado pela UE (Agindo nas Margens: Artes como Escultura Social), que visa enfrentar os desafios da marginalização na Europa através de intervenções baseadas nas artes. Este estudo analisa materiais de pesquisa sobre o impacto social das artes, teoricamente sustentados por uma compreensão do papel das artes em conjugação com a problematização da marginalização social. Encontramos três maneiras de compreender o impacto social das artes no material; como um meio participativo de agência e empoderamento, identidade e expressão, e aprendizagem e desenvolvimento. Essas categorias estão relacionadas a posições analiticamente derivadas de marginalização como predominantemente estruturais ou mais baseadas no indivíduo. A arte é concebida como uma forma de transpor essas

posições por meio da compreensão de suas qualidades educacionais. Essas categorias oferecem um papel frutífero, mas também potencialmente limitado, das artes na sociedade.

Palavras-chave: revisão de literatura, literatura cinzenta, artes para a transformação social, política cultural

RESUMEN

En este artículo, presentamos el análisis de una revisión realizada como parte del proyecto AMASS (Acting on the Margins: Arts as Social Sculpture) financiado por la UE Horizonte 2020, que tiene como objetivo abordar los desafíos de la marginación en Europa a través de intervenciones basadas en las artes. Este estudio analiza materiales basados en investigaciones sobre el impacto social de las artes, teóricamente sustentados por una comprensión del papel de las artes en conjunto con la problematización de la marginación social. Encontramos tres formas de entender el impacto social de las artes en el material; como un medio participativo de agencia y empoderamiento, identidad y expresión, y aprendizaje y desarrollo. Estas categorías están relacionadas con posiciones de marginación derivadas analíticamente como predominantemente estructurales o más basadas en el individuo. El arte se concibe como una forma de tender un puente entre estas posiciones a través de la comprensión de sus cualidades educativas. Estas categorías ofrecen un papel frutífero, pero también potencialmente limitado, de las artes en la sociedad.

Palavras chave: revisão de la literatura, literatura gris, artes socialmente comprometidas, política cultural

Introduction

The notion of the positive effects of art is traced to Aristotle's *Poetics*, where he coined the term catharsis (Belfiore and Bennett 2007). The arts are understood to redefine people's relationship to the world by being an extension of themselves (McLuhan 1964). Today, the understanding that the arts can positively impact individuals and societies is still widespread (Birchall 2015). This article presents the result of a state-of-the-art literature review made within the AMASS (Acting on the Margins: Arts as Social Sculpture) project involving researchers and artists from the Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Sweden, UK, and Portugal. The review aims to survey existing knowledge on the role of the arts in tackling social marginalisation. It accompanies a systematic literature review (Lindström Sol et al., coming) made within the project that evaluated current research on the social impact of the arts. The present article is based on complementary summaries of so-called "grey" literature, research reports, dissertations, government documents, and research in languages other than English. With this article, we analyse the role of the arts as it is understood in our material in relation to the positioning of the problem of marginalisation. We ask the following questions:

-What are the social problems identified in the material, to which the arts can function as a solution or as a way to address the identified problem?

-Where is the cause of the problem localised, i.e., what understandings of the root of the problem arise in the material?

The analysis is not to be interpreted as actual or given evidence of the effects of arts but rather a reflection of common understandings of the role of arts in relation to social issues of marginalisation.

Data collection and method of approach

When collecting the data, fellow researchers in each country in the AMASS project (excluding Sweden and the UK as they are not part of the AMASS testbed for artistic interventions) collected data through a template for abstracts (see Appendix), searching literature through databases of their own choice, based on their knowledge of where to find relevant literature in their language. However, we asked them to use a model for understanding populations, interventions, and outcomes in the material (c.f. Arguelles

2011). This model, with variations, is used in systematic literature reviews, and was chosen to help our partners generate limited and focused key words for search strings, and relevant hits in databases, in the data collection process.

Populations are those targeted by artistic interventions, which are projects involving art in various contexts. Outcomes are understood as the intended or perceived results of the interventions. The material included peer-reviewed research articles in all languages except English, research-based reports, and monographs in English not included in the systematic literature review to avoid duplicate findings. In total, the review is based upon 234 abstracts of research.

Thus, our interpretations are based on research material interpreted and translated by the members of the AMASS project. Our understanding of marginalisation is not derived from a “reality” independent of the empirical material submitted by project members, who selected research relevant following the predefined criteria. The material analysed is thus chosen to highlight the themes and problematisations targeted in the AMASS project and partially reflects studies made by the members of the AMASS consortium. For example, our partners in the data collection process displayed varying understandings of the categories population, intervention, and outcome, which we “untangled” in the analysis by creating subcategories in several interpretative levels. The material may show a bias towards ideas of the positive impact of the arts and culture on social issues such as marginalisation. The majority of abstracts from Finland and Hungary may also skew the data in the direction of the kinds of research performed in these countries.

According to the previous model of population, intervention, and outcomes, the first step of the analysis was to understand descriptive patterns in the data. We also studied what kinds of art forms were present in the material. This interpretative stage is not displayed in the results of this study as it focuses on an additional stage of analysis; a second step where we engaged in a thematic approach inspired by the works of Carol Bacchi (2009; 2010). In this framework, social issues are problematised or represented as social problems, which in a Foucauldian sense would signify the “unexamined ways of thinking” that guide the practices of governance (Foucault 1994, in Bacchi 2010). Thus, instead of addressing social problems as though given and obvious, we look at the way they are given shape such that certain solutions are desirable to come to terms with a problem. The representation of problems helps us

understand the arts as a means of making a social impact on marginalised communities.

Results

In the analysis, we found a variety of art forms in interventions; design, participatory arts, narrative arts, music, dance, theatre/drama, and visual arts. These were incorporated into interventions that often targeted communities, such as in segregated areas of cities or rural places. Specific target groups were typically children and young people, migrants, minorities, elderly, women, and people with physical or cognitive handicaps. Thus, there are many ways to understand and address social marginalisation problems in the material. Next, we turned our analysis to the understanding of these problems and their localisation. Below, we present the analysis with examples of representative studies to demonstrate the width of research in different national contexts and languages.

The positioning of the problem of social marginalisation

The analysis identified one broad problematisation in the data, social exclusion, which takes different forms of expression. At a general level, social exclusion is understood as the marginalisation of minority communities and vulnerable citizens in society. Social exclusion is perceived as a lack of participation in the arts from parts of the community or parts of the demography. The analysis found two, very typical for social analysis, positions of the problem of social exclusion; as a structural issue, and in the marginalised, on a group/community and individual level. These positionings are not clear-cut; they overlap but are roughly related to different understandings of the role of art in society, as a means to agency and empowerment or as a means to identity and expression. There are attempts in the material to form bridges between structural and individual problematisations, mainly through understanding art as learning and development. In the following, we will elaborate on how these positions are expressed in the material.

Social exclusion positioned as a structural problem

Social exclusion is understood as caused by negative perceptions among the wider community towards minorities and other marginalised social groups, i.e., discrimination, racism, and segregation (Csongor 2017; Molnár, Peták, & Vercseg, 2014). The material critically responds to negative and stereotyped representations of minority residents and other underrepresented populations as outsiders. The notion of marginalisation does not necessarily represent “the marginalised” but may be defined by an unproblematised

majority society and its normative structures. There is a desire to include on the terms of the majority society, which raises questions as to inclusion for what and whom.

Minority cultures are described in terms of considerable disadvantage vis-à-vis the wider community. To this end, arts-based projects aim to understand the realities of marginalised communities, tackle harmful social divisions, act for social justice and diversity, and promote participation and cultural expression (Bodo, de Milano & Mascheroni 2009). However, it is also pointed out with reference to Szontagh (2010) that strengthening social inclusion should not be confused with the fight against segregation. The latter is described as momentary solutions causing tensions in ethnic and cultural division (Szontagh, 2010). Authors such as Buttu (2017) and Molnár, Peták, & Vercseg (2014) problematise the idea of community development as a solution to tackling social problems and claims that support must be continuous and not remain a temporary intervention. Although the structural position of the problem of marginalisation problematises the scope of the arts as a means to address social exclusion, the role of the arts is largely understood as a means to empowerment and participation.

Interventions based on participatory art have been considered an innovative approach that supports change, which requires awareness of the wider context in which social change occurs. An example of a structurally oriented approach is how the school system is problematised as poorly adjusted to disabled pupils and how educational inequality requires efforts to come to terms with parental poverty (Nagyné Árgány, 2015; Rajnai, 2012). Action or practice-based methods are standard in our material (e.g., da Silva, 2017; Hiltunen, 2017; Sarantou, Akimenko, & Escudeiro, 2018; Mason & Buschkuehle, 2013; Sprünker, 2008; Butt 2017; Irwin et al., 2006).

Community interventions are often carried out with an eye to the social and communitarian aspects of art, as indicated by terms like social/community art or theatre. The more these socially engaged aspects of art tend to promote the interests of community members, the more impact they are deemed to have and the more they may give voice to community members creativity, experiences, interests and needs (Ghiglione & Pagliarino, 2007). Also, small grassroots museums in areas labelled as socially deprived may carry out various socio-cultural events that empower the community in close cooperation with local groups (Vella & Cutajar, 2019). For much the same reason, it has been claimed that “a successful museum of the future should be wholly participatory through meaningful collaboration between

curators and communities” (Debono, 2016). In several projects, the purpose is to explore the sense of European citizenship among children and young people (Vella, 2016; Brown & Sammut, 2013; Manninen, 2015; Richardson, 2016; Jokela, 2008; Ahonen et al., 2008). Engaging young people in the development of democracy and exercising their rights as citizens have been put forward to contribute to a higher level of awareness of European priorities such as citizenship, participation, cultural diversity, and inclusion (Brown & Sammut, 2013).

Social exclusion positioned as a problem in the marginalised

Inequality caused by social exclusion is understood to hamper not only opportunities to learn but also to develop critical individual skills and competencies and improve individual quality of life. Weak social and communication skills of people caught in social and economic deprivation is understood, in the material, to be due to lack of educational means, not only in a formal sense but also in the sense of facing barriers to community participation and limitations as regards self-sustainability (Vella & Cutajar, 2017; Szíjártó, 2018). The individualistic perspective can be taken concerning groups of identified common marginalised positions, such as the elderly, migrant, or children, deemed in need of societal support or greater access to societal resources, such as the arts. However, in contrast to the structural positioning of the problem, the problem here lies in the (in)ability of the individuals in the group to enhance their lives.

Contributing to and learning more about how to secure the welfare of children and youth in a vulnerable situation is a concern in many projects. Outreach activities concerning the young have aimed at letting young people express their identities. The opportunity for children to experience the arts is said to “develop a sensibility that projects them towards a future as adults conscious of the importance of dreaming” (Liotta, 2018).

Studies have called continued attention to the need to rethink pedagogical methods to ensure equal opportunities for learning for disadvantaged groups, ensure that no talent is wasted, and reduce early school leaving (Nagyné Árgány, 2015). The process of learning through artistic creation is sometimes thought to be built into the personality of the individual pupil (Ritók, 2008). There is a belief that each pupil may be motivated to learn and develop with the right kind of training tailored to his or her individual needs. Above all, musical activities have been a frequent method of intervention to help the learning and development of young Roma talents (Antal-Lundström, 2008; Dezső, 2010; Kazareczki, 2017; Krenedits & Pásztor 2010; Ritók, 2008; Udvari Katalin, 2011;

Wagner, 2017). The question remains how to secure equal access and eliminate what has used to be a highly segregated character of education (Balogh & Imrei, 1996).

Expression of the role of the arts to this more individualised positioning of the problem is a matter of giving marginalised groups and community residents the tools for telling their own stories on their terms – hence to take upon themselves an active role as agents of change (Sarantou, Akimenko, & Escudeiro, 2018; Hyttinen & Taskanen, 2018; Miettinen, Sarantou, & Kuure, 2019; de Oliveira Jayme, Monk & Tremblay, 2016; De Piccoli et al., 2019). As a cornerstone in the preservation of Roma culture and heritage, it is also argued that, through art, the Roma can speak for themselves and create self-images in contrast to mainstream media representations of Roma people (Gunther, 2014). Agency is constructed as a way to provide these groups with better livelihoods, and in general, this positioning of the problem allows for a more positive understanding of the scope of the arts as a means to address social exclusion.

With increasing migration to Europe in 2015 and onwards, migrants have frequently been represented either as victims or invaders (Musarò & Moralli, 2018). Some projects have been claimed to allow migrants to build links to their new community while also remembering their home countries (Pisani, 2017). The preservation of cultural identities as part of the majority society is a central point regarding the social inclusion of people with an immigrant background. Yet, interventions directed towards migrants and minorities have also focused to a great extent on reactions and ideas about the experience of Otherness (Gil-Glazer, 2019) and thus targeting the means to express an identity, rather than structural racism. Furthermore, elderly or retired people are another identifiable target group whose well-being, quality of life and life management are the concerns of several projects aimed at assessing and improving the care and services for seniors – either in sparsely populated areas or in the cities (Almeida et al., 2017; Rossi Ghiglione, 2017; Jumisko, Jänkälä & Piekkari, 2013; Colliander, 2017; Tähti, 2017).

The problem can also be positioned as a problem for the ones trying to reach out through the arts. An issue mentioned in one of the abstracts is how to overcome barriers between social and artistic domains (see Almeida et al., 2017). Thus, the issue is patterns of non-participation in the arts, interpreted as barriers that hinder the marginalised to access the arts as a means of self-expression and self-development, on an individual, group or a community level. For example, one project summary implies that it is difficult for non-Roma people to manage the process of empowering this group. Unless there is a permanent presence in the

community and the community members' trust may be gained, it is said to be difficult to become accepted and be able to influence the Roma (Kállai, 2019). Thus, several projects aim to explore practical tools and artistic methods for reaching out to vulnerable communities since a lack of political action to provide guidelines for tackling these issues in their entirety is pointed out (ECCOM & Compagnia di San Paolo di Torino, 2003).

Connecting the structural and the individual levels

The analytical separation between positionings of the problem does not imply, as earlier stated, that researchers and practitioners cannot imagine social problems as multifaceted and complex. On the contrary, attempts to overcome structural and individual perspectives dominate the material.

The concept of connective art suggests that the social actions of the people who inhabit collective spaces contribute to the construction of the community's collective memory and experience and thus expresses the identity of a community and its members (Chiarelli & Novak, 2019). Connectivity through meetings between community members allows for exchanging such collective experiences (Muñoz, 2017; Regatão et al., 2017). Other activities such as wall painting are described to allow communities to “express their interests and identity creatively, with a critical and interventional eye, and understanding that the society could participate in their development in an equal way” (Brito & Mansos, 2017). Such projects are said to set the ground for future development through the opportunities for collaborative meetings of various kinds that transformed marginalised places (Chiarelli & Novak, 2019). Policy development efforts to achieve diversification of cultural services and removal of barriers to access and inclusion have been exemplified by continuous community consultation, outreach programs, partnerships with local agencies, training courses, et cetera. These interventions have been claimed to have an impact on the individual, community, and institutional levels, resulting not only in increased cultural exchange and participation but also improved well-being, trust and self-esteem, a sense of identity and belonging to a community as well as reduced social isolation (Bodo, Da Milano & Mascheroni, 2009; De Piccoli et al., 2019).

Above all, the artistic interventions summarised in the abstracts attempt to interlink the structural and individual domains through various educational efforts. Art education aimed at learning and development in a community context may provide community members with a self-reflexive awareness that further supports agency, emancipation, empowerment and sense-making (Hiltunen, 2009;

Sarantou, Akimenko & Escudeiro, 2018). The arts are seen as possessing a certain kind of knowledge production apt for understanding complex social issues. Art is primarily described as a means of generating knowledge and enriched learning outcomes in response to major social problems (Muñoz, 2017), as a way to understand the lives of marginalised subjects better and to promote more inclusive environments for them to subsist (Roberts 2018; cf. de Oliveira Jayme, Monk & Tremblay 2016). Securing equal learning opportunities may be interpreted as a precondition for equal access to the arts and vice versa since art and learning are interpreted in the abstracts as interwoven. It is nevertheless argued that a traditional educational structure does not always give much room for arts education: learning opportunities within the arts and culture need to be extended into the community as a whole to be a means to the empowerment of marginalised groups (Takács, 2008; Terra & Medina, 2017).

Targeting particular groups of community members is seen to connect personal narratives with social interaction by focusing on the societal issues that affect personal everyday life (Cf. Calvo, 2017). For instance, seniors may be actively engaged in cultural activities but are considered at risk of marginalisation as experiencing loneliness and isolation. According to one abstract, there is “potential for participatory arts with older people to address loneliness and social isolation” (Dadswell et al., 2017), and by extension, it strengthens ties to the community and facilitates social interaction and cohesion. Likewise, young people and their well-being are tied to structural changes and community needs. In times of increasing urbanisation, there is an urge to keep the remote areas of the North alive, and the young are seen as key to this endeavour (Hiltunen & Huhmarniemi, 2010). In one project, visual art activities involving metal sculpture, photography, and wall art with young people in Lapland were reported to support young rural Finns’ well-being. Finally, another theme in the abstracts is to link the history, traditions, and ways of earning a living for women in particular settings and understanding the appreciation of women in society at large (Härkönen & Vuontisjärvi, 2017; Vasques, Falcão & Gaspar, 2017). Traditional crafts have often been vital not only to the sense of female agency but also to national identity. As these crafts have become obsolete, the abstracts describe a struggle to raise awareness and keep these women’s movements alive (Camilleri, 2016; Ritók & Bodoczky 2012). Thus, there is a link between self-expression and representation that, in turn, affect social participation through education.

Conclusion and discussion

This review has covered collected arts-based research and policy materials concerning social issues of social exclusion and marginalisation. The themes have been distinguished in a spectrum of projects ranging from the ones being described as targeted at specific groups of individuals to those directed towards whole communities and, in extension, structural levels of social problems.

The interventions in the material are often practice-oriented and characterised by the approaches to the contextualisation, analysis, evaluation, and communication of the perceived results of interventions. In relation to these positionings of the problem, two ambitions emerge in the data regarding outcomes; 1. to add to existing knowledge regarding the role of arts concerning societal challenges, or 2. address the social challenge and be part of a solution. These positions broadly reflect a debate in social research, whether science (and the arts) should have a normative agenda or ‘merely’ offer insight.

In the material, the arts are understood to address problems that arise on structural, individual, and, in some ways, practice-based levels. To bridge these levels, art is associated with learning skills, and in turn, learning skills are associated with an agency to change things on multiple levels. We found three ways to understand the social impact of the arts in the material; as a participatory means to agency and empowerment, identity and expression, and learning and development. These all have in common that they represent art’s perceived potential to connect the social and artistic domains and, to some extent, challenge traditional conceptions of art as a matter of purely aesthetic objects (Birchall 2015). The material studies reflect an idea that the performative potential of art to achieve social change lies in its way of expressing and extending ourselves to a diversity of social realities (c.f. McLuhan 1964). Importantly, art is understood as situated and thus a product of a socially and historically specific context in which humans themselves are the agents capable of transforming their lives and reality.

However, in this type of meaning-making of art, the root causes of marginalisation are sometimes left unaddressed. Abstracts discussing the problem of marginalisation on the structural level adds an analysis of causes, yet the interventions are still targeting those affected by the causes, not those forces that cause marginalisation. Artists and arts educators risk partaking in the responsabilisation of marginalisation on the marginalised (c.f. Bacchi 2009). What more, the arts become limited to helping the marginalised cope with their situation rather than problematising taken-for-granted structures in European societies that cause issues of marginalisation.

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Appendix: Template for abstracts

WP1, D1.1. Comprehensive literature collection, template for abstracts

The following template is based on the PIO model for a literature review: identifying Population, Intervention, and Outcome.

Genre: peer-reviewed research articles in all other languages but English, conference proceedings, research-based reports, and monographs in English and all other languages. Please indicate genre.

Languages:

a)Czech, Finnish, Hungarian, Italian, Maltese, Portuguese (peer-reviewed articles, conference proceedings, research-based reports, and monographs).

b)English (non-peer-reviewed research articles, conference proceedings, research-based reports, and monographs).

Please indicate in the abstract from which language you are translating into English!

Database: please indicate.

Period: 1990-2020.

Total amount of words: 500 words (max).

Template for abstracts

- Title:
- Population (aim): 100 words (max)
- Intervention (methodology/approach): 150 words (max)
- Outcome (findings): 150 words (max)
- Originality/value: 100 words (max)
- Key words: 1-6

If you have any questions, please contact Sofia Lindström Sol, sofia.lindstrom@hb.se

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AMASS acting on the margins
arts as social sculpture



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Research, relationships and their infrastructuring: the reflexive mattering of dialogical correspondence as social sculpture.

Pesquisa, relações e as suas infraestruturas: a matéria reflexiva da correspondência dialógica como escultura social.

Investigación, relaciones y su infraestructura: la importancia reflexiva de la correspondencia dialógica como escultura social.

Paul Wilson

School of Design, University of Leeds

texpw@leeds.ac.uk

Tang Tang

School of Design, University of Leeds

t.x.tang@leeds.ac.uk

ABSTRACT

This article presents a theoretical model developed from research which aims to explore how experiences of relationship can be used as a lens through which the complexities of an emerging interdisciplinary, transnational research project can be explored. Partners in the AMASS (Acting on the Margins: Art as Social Sculpture) project work in eight European countries on a range of activities that make use of creative arts-based research as a tool for addressing social need. The network of individuals, institutions and contexts making up the project delivers a unique collection of relationships which seek - through the actions of their project - to achieve concrete impact.

By using a novel participatory method for reflection in action via the materialisation of dialogue, it is possible to identify and discuss moments or instances in the development and formalisation of the AMASS relationships as significant in terms of the ways that a process of 'social infrastructuring' took place as the partners sought to develop the proposal document that would facilitate their project.

Through further reflection on concepts of 'dialogical interaction' (Kester 2000) and 'correspondence' (Ingold 2015), the process from first connections which are central to forming any relationship to its transformation when mutually-agreed goals have been achieved through the success of a funding application is analysed. This offers a set of examples which demonstrate valuable reciprocal connection between partners which are then used as the basis for the development of a model of 'dialogical correspondence'.

With a specific focus on one case study - one partners' reflection on their experiences of the establishment of the AMASS project's critical foundations - the article seeks to develop dialogical correspondence as a tool with potential for defining the key infrastructural characteristics of any such relationship, whose value may also lie in a future-facing application as such work continues to be developed.

keywords: dialogue, correspondence, association, social infrastructuring, complexity, research relationships

RESUMO

Este artigo apresenta um modelo teórico desenvolvido a partir de pesquisas que visa explorar como as experiências de relacionamento podem ser usadas como uma lente através da qual as complexidades de um emergente projeto de pesquisa interdisciplinar e transnacional podem ser exploradas. Os parceiros do projeto AMASS (Agindo nas Margens: Arte como Escultura Social) trabalham em oito países europeus em uma série de atividades que fazem uso da pesquisa baseada em artes criativas como uma ferramenta para atender às necessidades sociais. A rede de indivíduos, instituições e contextos que compõem o projeto oferece um conjunto único de relações que buscam - por meio das ações de seu projeto - atingir impactos concretos.

Utilizando um novo método participativo de reflexão na ação por meio da materialização do diálogo, é possível identificar e discutir momentos ou instâncias no desenvolvimento e formalização das relações AMASS como significativos em termos das formas como um processo de 'infraestrutura social' ocorreu quando os parceiros procuraram desenvolver o documento de proposta que facilitaria seu projeto.

Por meio de uma reflexão mais aprofundada sobre os conceitos de 'interação dialógica' (Kester) e 'correspondência' (Ingold), o processo das primeiras conexões que são centrais para formar qualquer relação para sua transformação quando objetivos mutuamente acordados foram alcançados através do sucesso de um financiamento a aplicação é analisada. Isso oferece um conjunto de exemplos que demonstram uma conexão recíproca valiosa entre os parceiros que são então usados como base para o desenvolvimento de um modelo de "correspondência dialógica".

Com foco específico em um estudo de caso - a reflexão de um parceiro sobre suas experiências de estabelecimento dos fundamentos críticos do projeto AMASS - o artigo busca desenvolver a correspondência dialógica como uma ferramenta com potencial para definir as principais características infraestruturais de qualquer relação, cujo o valor também pode estar em um aplicativo voltado para o futuro, pois esse trabalho continua a ser desenvolvido.

Palavras chave: diálogo, correspondência, associação, infraestrutura social, complexidade, relações de investigação

RESUMEN

Este artículo presenta un modelo teórico desarrollado a partir de una investigación que tiene como objetivo explorar cómo las experiencias de relación pueden usarse como una lente a través de la cual se pueden explorar las complejidades de un proyecto de investigación transnacional interdisciplinario emergente. Los socios del proyecto AMASS (Actuando al margen: arte como escultura social) trabajan en ocho países europeos en una serie de actividades que utilizan la investigación basada en las artes creativas como herramienta para abordar las necesidades sociales. La red de personas, instituciones y contextos que componen el proyecto ofrece una colección única de relaciones que buscan, a través de las acciones de su proyecto, lograr un impacto concreto.

Mediante el uso de un método participativo novedoso para la reflexión en acción a través de la materialización del diálogo, es posible identificar y discutir momentos o instancias en el desarrollo y formalización de las relaciones AMASS como significativos en términos de las formas en que un proceso de 'infraestructura social' se llevó a cabo mientras los socios buscaban desarrollar el documento de propuesta que facilitaría su proyecto.

A través de una mayor reflexión sobre los conceptos de ‘interacción dialógica’ (Kester) y ‘correspondencia’ (Ingold), el proceso desde las primeras conexiones que son fundamentales para formar cualquier relación con su transformación cuando los objetivos mutuamente acordados se han logrado a través del éxito de una financiación. se analiza la aplicación. Esto ofrece un conjunto de ejemplos que demuestran una valiosa conexión recíproca entre socios que luego se utilizan como base para el desarrollo de un modelo de “correspondencia dialógica”.

Con un enfoque específico en un estudio de caso - la reflexión de uno de los socios sobre sus experiencias de establecimiento de los fundamentos críticos del proyecto AMASS - el artículo busca desarrollar la correspondencia dialógica como una herramienta con potencial para definir las características clave de infraestructura de cualquier relación de este tipo, cuyo El valor también puede residir en una aplicación de cara al futuro a medida que dicho trabajo continúa desarrollándose.

Palavras chave: diálogo, correspondencia, asociación, infraestructura social, complejidad, relaciones de investigación

Introduction

Common ideas and practices of Art as Social Sculpture (AaSS), together with the ongoing application and development of the concept itself, invite a varied, extended, diverse and exploratory range of definitions. The aim to define its potential across and through a wide and, potentially unappreciated or unconsidered, range of activities can identify or define ones other than a formal production and consumption of arts practices and their outcomes.

The shared or common ambitions and values which drive the activities of AaSS - artists, individuals and communities actively engaging in work which seeks to transform both society and society’s impacts - also acknowledges and embraces the opportunities for a specific type of change which can become manifest when using the materials which both act very frequently, and work directly, upon society and culture such as language, thought, knowledge, objects, together with the concrete actions of both human and non-humans.

Art as Social Sculpture, therefore, can clearly result in sites or situations of great complexity which are themselves shaped by the intentions of each participant or agent, and which produce diverse consequences of some significance (whether these are intentional or not). Similarly, our human methods, processes and projects of knowledge creation might be themselves considered potential instances for the development of a particular type of social sculpture since their results and impacts often act and achieve the same intentions as those more formally recognised or considered activities.

For this article, a set of institutionally-derived methods and infrastructures (together with their tools and instruments)

form the basis of our reflection upon the potential of an exploration of the funded research project both as a model of knowledge creation and also as a *set of embodied and performative human activities and practices which can be considered an instance or exemplar for a distinct type of social sculpture*. In this review, therefore, we aim to establish a useful theoretical framework and outline a practical tool for assessing and developing shared understandings around expectations and experiences of participation within and through one particularly complex context and instance of AaSS - the externally-funded international, interdisciplinary research project called AMASS.

The AMASS Project (Acting on the Margins: Art as Social Sculpture) seeks to explore the potential of the arts to respond to and engage with contemporary social challenges, and by working across and within a broad disciplinary and geographical context in eight European countries, looks to identify, collate and disseminate best practice with the aim of making a concrete contribution to policy at a level where its impacts might be most significant. As such, AMASS has been designed deliberately as a complex collection and network of institutions, knowledges, experiences, associations and practices. Given the project’s ambition and intention to develop concrete opportunities which create and transform people’s lives, the range of participants, stakeholders and expertise being brought together through its structured programme of activities presents a very complicated and intricately interconnected mesh consisting of the relationships themselves and the opportunities they afford.

This article will describe research that has been undertaken to articulate stories of connection within the particularly complex set of contexts which constitute the AMASS

network. This research seeks to extend the potential for co-produced, reflexive methods of visual or graphic storytelling with an exploration of how the deliberate repetition of otherwise unconsidered or discarded narratives might lead to a recognition of their ongoing value and significance. It also endeavours to explore how those experiences of connection, partnership and the creation of fixed or formal association can be articulated by means of an active and collaborative recall of autobiographical memory with the use of a tool which employs the metaphor of relationship as a visual and spatial framing device.

Making use of participatory methods centred on dialogue to reveal attachment, connection and as a means to draft or conceptualise acts of social *infrastructuring*, our research looks to identify how a critical lens of *correspondence* can help to identify and describe threads or themes which can both serve as a key pillar in the development of any future-facing, sustainable relationships for research partnerships, and also in how they might go on to form the basis of meaningful and impactful communications as the project develops and works through its own processes.

Contexts, complexities and correspondences

The concept of correspondence has been developed by anthropologist Tim Ingold as a means to reframe ideas of social engagement or to view and review interaction in a way that acknowledges the multidimensionality of relationships and that our ways of understanding them and their effects is often limited in terms of what, why and how it chooses to look at them. Ingold (2015) asserts that "... Interaction is between; correspondence in-between" (p.154), and if considered in terms of activities or a type of connection that is made possible "...interaction is about othering, correspondence is about togetherness" (Ingold 2017, p.41).

Ingold's (2015) ideas of correspondence present us with a way to reflect on the types of activities and interactions that are part of a project such as AMASS. He regards correspondence as being an inherently social and socialised activity determined by the entanglements and co-existence of all partners who form any such relationship (p.11). At the core of correspondence is an idea of being-with others (and other things) and, consequently, of a weaving together of the actions, ideas and outcomes that are constituted or result from these acts. Correspondence is, fundamentally, an ongoing process determined by an ongoing coming and being together rather than something which is defined by a need to either arrive at a stable or concrete end, or by it being composed additively from sets of discrete elements (Ingold 2017, p.13).

Within arts, design or creative practices, correspondence acts to generate possibility and opportunities for speculation that themselves are responses-in-process and answers to a discrete situation or context (Ingold 2017b, p.88). Fundamental to correspondence is an idea of openness as critical to any activity (Ingold 2017, p.9) where a life lived with others depends upon engagement with all others - and that such relationships are determined by an idea of meshwork, entanglement and movement, of things travelling back-and-forth between participants and of joining-together (Ingold 2017b, p.118,155). Such connection, Ingold (2017b) explains, need not result in an ordered form for any resulting correspondence (or, in fact, an ordered structure to any situation) but, instead, seeks to call forward a harmony between participants - an attunement that is shaped in that *becoming-with* which essential to any act of correspondence. (p.199)

Wilson et al. (2018) have defined and discussed a 'correspondence' model (taking inspiration from Ingold) for design research as a means to explore the range of complexities that occur within scenarios such as international research projects. They outline a range of contexts within which correspondence takes place as an activity that is distinguished by particular types of relationship likely created or experienced in projects such as AMASS. Their model for correspondence begins at an institutional level (the academy, a funding agency, or non-governmental organisation) before moving to the individual (most likely, but not always, a researcher and also including such figures as stakeholders, participants or administrative workers) before focusing upon the activity as their final scenario (encompassing the research as it occurs and including the contexts of infrastructural or administrative 'events' such as meetings).

Such project-specific correspondences are often situated by, or make use of, a series of 'place events' which act as markers through which significant moments or instances of correspondence might be identified and, consequently, where their categories or characteristics might be mapped. From this research, Wilson et al. (2018) identify and develop the POM (People, Objectives, Methods) framework as a tool that helps to understand and discuss particular forms that correspondence might take within the context of a formally-constituted research project.

Correspondence, therefore, has value as a useful method for understanding the relationships which both underpin and emerge the complexities of such projects, which are often rich with opportunities for correspondence (and the exchanges that can be fostered as a consequence). The

development of such concepts applied to these contexts also recognises that, as the challenges we face grow more complex so must our responses and the methods we use to understand them - with the consequence that these tools also become equally multifaceted, intricate and (potentially) elaborate.

As mentioned, Wilson et al (2018) make use of a set of scenarios to help define or identify situations through or within which complexity is experienced when working in the context of multicultural, multidisciplinary research projects. Such situations are also the basis for the types, forms or experiences that make manifest or demonstrate Ingold's concept of correspondence. This article, therefore, looks to make use of an EU-funded research project within which the authors are currently working and, which itself may be regarded as a rich instance where such complexities (and their consequent correspondences) are likely to occur. The AMASS project is founded on the model of a mobilised, research-led response which is deliberately interdisciplinary and pan-European in its scope and expertise, and has been constituted in such a way as to address the ever-wicked problems that are emerging, crystallising and becoming more deeply ingrained in twenty-first century societies. For AMASS, ideas and experiences of cultures, contexts and connections become key tools in combating the inequalities faced by marginalised communities across the European Union, and arts-based approaches allow for experiments, interventions and impacts which hope to achieve social change or transformation beyond that faced by one community in any individual country.

The approach of AMASS, therefore, both recognises and explores a reality where the best likelihood of achieving meaningful impact can be reached through interconnected processes of evidence-based accretion, and where a carefully-choreographed series of studies, trials, operations or procedures establishes broad concepts of value that can go on to underpin social innovation which looks to impact upon individuals and their communities while, ultimately, aiming to have effects on policy and policy-makers.

Three characteristics of dialogical aesthetics

In 'Dialogical Aesthetics: A Critical Framework For Littoral Art', Grant Kester (2000) outlines a model for an immersive, participatory and community-led art practice within which relationships, aesthetics and ideas of exchange are (re) defined in terms of their being dialogical. For Kester, an arts-based practice which is established upon ideals of dialogue or discourse stands out for its sense of having coherent values, its utilisation of opportunities for bi-directional

communication and the potential for contribution to a strategy or approach which allows for opportunities to remake not only the artist but also their collaborators - which he regards as the *object* for any arts practice and the knowledge that might be created around and within any dialogical interaction.

He goes on to outline three characteristics of such 'a discursive or dialogical art practice':

1. Interdisciplinarity

Chiefly, of being 'between' (institutions, established discourses), at - or as - an interface between *people* and between established or emerging *knowledges*, to actively trace new disciplinary trajectories or routes between, through and around those that currently exist or have been developed.

2. Operating with/on multiple registers of meaning

Any meaning, here, is not held within an object or determined by a viewer but 'dispersed through multiple registers', both of space *and* time, where meaning can and should be determined by particular contexts of reception and the range of 'discursive systems' at play in any context. For Kester's notion of dialogical practice 'the work is constituted as an ensemble of effects and forces, which operate in numerous registers of signification and discursive interaction'.

3. Indeterminacy that is both dialogical and informal

Where meaning, however messy or difficult to ascertain, is still something that can be agreed upon or defined - this is a given in any process of dialogical engagement for knowledge production which aims towards any degree of novelty or innovation.

There are clear overlaps between Kester's notions of dialogical interaction and in the ways in which Ingold determines the characteristics of correspondence. Certainly, Ingold's emphasis on correspondence taking place between and within any relationship is echoed by Kester. Likewise, Kester's assertion that dialogical practices are determined by their 'ensemble of effects and forces' reflects Ingold's discussion of correspondence as being defined as an entanglement and a 'meshwork' of participants and their relationships, their activities and contributions.

Storytelling, connecting knowledge and facilitating interaction

Previously, Wilson (2020) has outlined the development and application of a novel method for participation which makes use of a series of bespoke, auto-ethnographic tools

as a means to encourage intra-community communications. These graphic tools are deliberately designed to create experiences of participation which, through a reliance on textual production and an ambition for dialogical interaction, are embodied, performative and encourage a use of memory or recall to identify significant moments or events in a community's life and in the lives of its members. Such activities also have the potential as opportunities for reinforcing the value and potential power of storytelling as a means to articulate experiences in such a way that being recalled in this way helps to identify, clarify and reinforce their value. Such stories, therefore, become a means for communities to co-design (*designing-together*) a common sense of identity.

For Kestler (2013), such tools can be used as a locus for 'connected knowledges' and to facilitate (and mediate) a range of 'dialogical interactions' (pp.14-15) - where a community's structures or situations can be acknowledged and formalised through the visual appearance and in the bespoke design of tools such as those used in this research. With these knowledges becoming a basis for the tools' design they also have the potential to activate or reveal people's reflexivity in their own community with such revelations also helping determine a future for how they might then be used or further developed.

The four assumptions or hypotheses that underpin research making use of such a participatory approach within the specific context of the AMASS project are summarised as follows:

1. Interpersonal relationships are works-in-progress: making, growing, giving and taking etc. which can be caught or described at certain moment in their development.
2. Active reflection on recent experiences (of how relationships are formed, for example) by way of them recalled as memory lets us interrogate the interactions and dialogues that constitute how and why these relationships might persist and sustain (since these scenarios might be described as being moments of meaningful correspondence).
3. Reflecting on experiences prior to the formalisation of a relationship (a moment such as the successful submission of a funding application, for example) often reveals much which can further inform or reveal a relationships' critical foundations, shared objectives and intentions for achieving impact - such social *infrastructuring* can clarify a vision that may be useful to help develop any future activities.
4. Visualising, spatialising and materialising dialogue (or ways that dialogue can take place) and, in particular, the use of writing as a particular method for knowledge-making

offer us opportunities to articulate memory, narrative and experiences in novel ways.

Dialogue as exchange, as correspondence

As a way to explore the very foundations of the relationships upon which the AMASS project was built, a series of participatory activities were developed so that each project partner might be given an opportunity to partake in an experience of design-led dialogue around the values, needs and motivations which helped to establish their being part of the project's network.

Making use of a graphic tool which was structured around a visualisation of the stages or lifecycle of human relationships (Levinger 1976, 1980) participants from each of the eight institutional project partners were encouraged to take part in conversations which made use of the processes of a relationship as a way to encourage autobiographical storytelling and describe three dimensions of their relationships within and with AMASS.

Firstly, using the concept of *relationship-as-process*, participants were asked to recall how and why their own connection to both the project (regarded as having its own sense of presence and agency as one member of the relationship) took place. Participants were also encouraged both to respond as individuals together with those experiences defined by of their roles of and for the institution that they represented in the project..

Given the complex needs of AMASS relating to ideas of partnership, relationship and connection, the same model of *relationship-as-process* was also used to facilitate a discussion of the relationships that had been established and developed between each project partner (and their academic institution) and the external organisations or agencies which they are also working with, since AMASS requires each internal project partner to develop these external partnerships so that a range of experiments can take place to reflect, extend and evaluate arts-based approaches in the field.

Lastly, and as a consequence of the first two phases, participants were asked to consider questions relating to their own and their partners' needs in terms of communication and how, what and why they might wish to disseminate their work both in or as process and when the project is completed.

Relationship as process, as correspondences

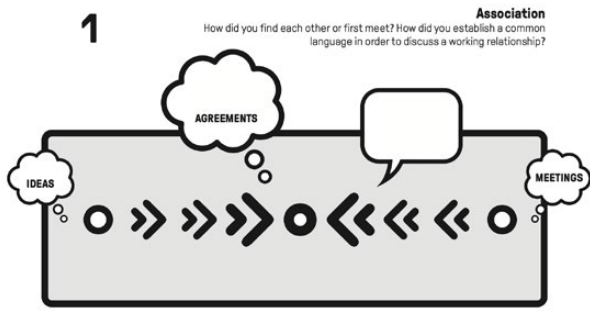


Figure 1. Association tool for AMASS workshop

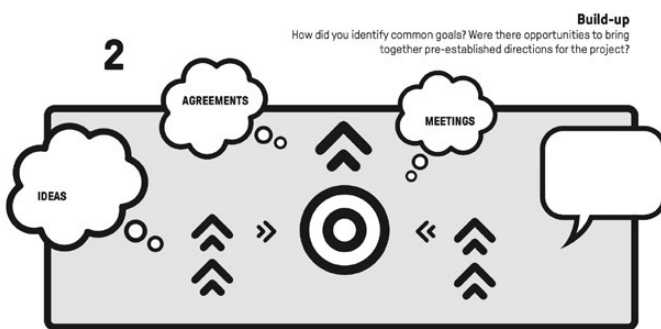


Figure 2. Build-up tool for AMASS workshop

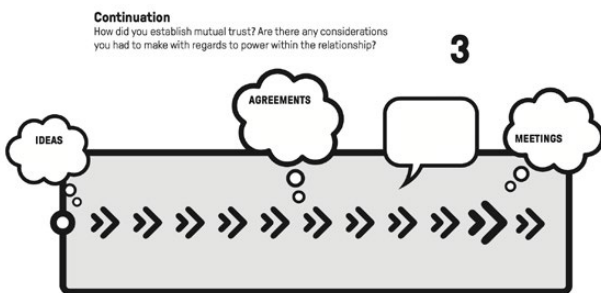


Figure 3. Continuation tool for AMASS workshop

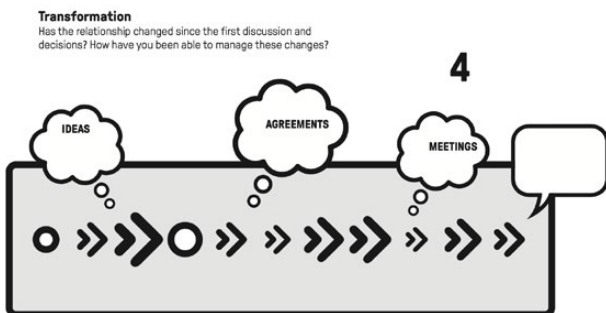


Figure 4. Transformation tool for AMASS workshop

Figures 1-4 show the bespoke graphic tools which were designed to be the basis of the participatory storytelling sessions that took place with each AMASS partner. These workshops took place using the MIRO online platform which allowed for a digital experience of remote participation that usefully replicated that which would otherwise have been possible if we had been able to meet face to face (but which was made impossible due to travel restrictions necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic). Each tool formed the locus for a semi-structured conversation between members of each AMASS partner team, which was prompted and facilitated by the researchers.

The relationship-as-process tool employed in this research was developed from the work of psychologist George Levinger, whose framework of interpersonal relationship defined the four specific themes and the related questions that are outlined below and which were visualised into the collaborative space of the MIRO board.

1. Association

Questions: How did you find each other or first meet? How did you establish a common language in order to discuss a working relationship?

Here, the intention was of establishing a context for becoming acquainted or being matched, of initiation or introduction and the significance of first impressions and initial *attraction* in establishing mutual interest or of having *things-in-common*). This discussion was focused on an identification of the experiences of stimulus (often regarded perhaps as negative, demonstrating shallow or self-interest).

2. Build-up

Questions: How did you identify common goals? Were there opportunities to bring together pre-established directions for the project?

Here, the tool hoped to reveal tactics and any means used to develop intimacy and trust, and to understand conditions for compatibility. This allowed for the identification of common goals and to gain insight into how conditions of interdependence could be created. Discussion was focused on identifying *the value of values* (often regarded as being deeper or more meaningful in helping to understanding the other in any relationship).

3. Continuation

Questions: How did you establish mutual trust? Are there any Considerations you had to make with regards to power within the relationship?

Here, the experience of participants and dialogue fostered by the use of the tool aimed to uncover the contexts or motivations for mutual commitment and to understand how stability was or could be established, grown and developed. Such progress (in relationship terms) is usually dependent on a deepening of mutual trust and with a continued association with mutual benefits and goals although these might be jeopardised when issues of power and / or hierarchy are introduced. Discussion looked to identify *the significance of roles* and how they might be helpful in establishing or developing the contexts for working together.

4. Transformation

Questions: Has the relationship changed since the first discussion and decisions? How have you been able to manage these changes?

Here, the tool sought to acknowledge a fluidity or process or development that is necessary in any relationship, and how participants viewed the relationship as being something dynamic or whether the earlier acknowledgment of mutual goals or values had helped to manage any changes which took place.

Correspondences as stories and story-telling

The use of Ingold's concept of correspondence allows for a particular mapping of ideas and of how we can understand or reflect upon the ways that relationships are and will be *entangled*. The use of bespoke participatory tools in this way allowed us to both define and explore each partner's relationships (with the project and with their external partners) as a process or state that could be distinguished by points or moments of exchange within which we hope to be able to identify as having particular characteristics of correspondence. Since they would be subject to forces from each partner and also marked by specific modes and *currencies* of exchange determined by their contexts and to those participating in the workshop, we were keen to consider how storytelling could be framed as and through dialogue.

The methodological approach taken in our research centred upon two interconnected activities: *active reflection* as *active writing*. A visual canvas (such as that accessed through the MIRO platform) allowed for a spatialisation of these activities and for the reframing of how memories of relationship can be elicited and articulated. We made use of three categories of experience which we hoped would allow for a useful structure through which the reflection could be organised: 'Ideas' (concepts and themes) - 'Actions' (specific activities or events) - 'Agreements' (points of consensus or when a relationship would change in some way) and these also allowed us to map the phases of the partners'

interpersonal relationships through a structuring of events, recollections and outcomes.

Results and discussion

We now aim to briefly review and discuss the results of one workshop which made use of the *relationship-as process-tool* and which took place as one part of the wider activities undertaken with each of the AMASS project partners. These results are a summary (of examples, moments, mentions or suggestions) of correspondence which were identified from one set of discussions with one of eight sets of participants. As such, the comments presented here reflect only one fragment of the broader range of responses which have been collected so far in our research. The collection in this article, therefore, aims to both demonstrate the potential of our tool and also to reflect upon the opportunities for analysis that are possible when using a critical lens of *dialogical aesthetics as a means to discuss experiences of correspondence*.

To structure this discussion, we will specifically and deliberately return to the *three characteristics of dialogical interaction* discussed above, which were used to cluster and structure emerging themes and to highlight useful insights. As mentioned, such a model of analysis is itself part of our wider research context and is one aspect of the broader processes and methods of data analysis taking place using each partner's workshop data. As such, this initial review is a snapshot (itself one moment of correspondence between ourselves and the data collected by our tool) which presents how the research currently is and, as a consequence of this publication, what it might become (one direction for how it may continue to develop).

From a participatory workshop with one AMASS project partner, therefore, the following notable moments or instances of correspondence have been identified, selected and organised in accordance with the broad categories of dialogical interaction. This synthesis of Kester and Ingold's concepts allows for correspondence to be mapped as one key characteristic (and outcome) of this distinct and particular instance of reflection and dialogue.

1. New knowledges at the interstices of collaboration

Three themes connected to Kester's category of *interdisciplinarity* emerged from the participants' narratives of *relationship-as-process*. Firstly, participants identified experiences of relationship as something active - an action and an intentional (or designed) activity which benefited from (and made use of) a pre-established 'network of networks'. There was value in previous relationships beyond the work they produced, and a need was recognised for

the collection and a careful curation of both your own and others' experiences so that the complex tasks and requirements of the project's *call instrument*¹ could be met - often with relationships (and their opportunities for correspondence) being shaped or moulded reflexively in response to the matter of the call text.

Second, there was a recognition of having to fit things together in ways that weren't precise or perfect and which, sometimes, might require use of a creative intuition in response to the uncertainties present in the call and to the cues that can be taken from others. Such exchange was described as an experience of '*feeling...sensing*' through things, and of having a tentative quality for how connections and correspondences might be developed.

Finally, when working in any situation where relationships are assembled by a careful combination of complex parts (and partners), it was acknowledged that dialogue must complement but not replace established hierarchies. There is, in order for dialogue to be sustainable, a necessity to both *cultivate motivations* and *recognise mutual need*. From these, a possible framework or axes for particular types of correspondence was suggested, perhaps determined or defined by a fuzziness or fluidity.

2. Operationally-polysemic meaning

For Kester, meaning refuses to be fixed into a particular thing or experience, or be determined by a viewer and their fixed position. Instead, through dialogue, any meaning that can or might emerge or be developed is situated across contexts and within or by relationships. From this constellation and the conditions and apparatus through which it is determined and contained, meaning can be identified and developed through the useful method of dialogical practice. Our participants' articulation of their experience in the formation of the AMASS relationships resulted in five notable insights.

First, that a perception of a project's value (however nascent or undeveloped at the early stages of the process) was situated by the range of constituents that made up its *network of networks* and of the connections between people

and institutions. Such perceptions were, in turn, defined by and dependent upon each partners' context (their institution, academic subject and disciplinary specialism or expertise).

Further, the indicative and open-ended nature of the project's call document meant that a deliberate activity of seeking or making meaning was itself developed through a series of dialogical interactions *around and through the call's text*. Such activities had value both in helping to develop an understanding of what was required or needed and also to consider the possibilities and opportunities that the nature and language of the call document would bring forth. Next, for our participants, the concept of trust was an essential aspect of how the network of partners were brought together so that connections could be established and extended - and that these activities of *research matchmaking* continued to produce new contributions to the mutual understanding of the project as it emerged from ongoing dialogue.

From this, participants recognised that an individual's motivations and connections between individual partners might not be enough to result in a stable or sustainable relationship through the project's initial stages of development. The *multi-directional and multi-dimensional attributes of how individuals connect to their respective institutions* (and whether they share common aims or ambitions) was not always easy or simple and, in some cases, resulted in relationships breaking down or in individuals disconnecting from the project due to a lack of confidence in whether their contribution could be institutionally guaranteed.

Lastly, the establishment (and continuance) of relationships in the AMASS network was frequently a *non-linear or interrupted* process and so didn't always mirror the sequence presented by and being used in the relationship model used in our research. Instead, it might be fractured or reconstituted and subject to its own forces and interactions so that certain aspects of the sequence might be looped or bypassed completely.

3. Uncertainty as one condition of meaningful engagement and dialogical exchange

Productive, innovative and potentially successful relationships (and their underpinning values) should, for Kester, embrace the *ambiguities and challenges which define their dialogical interactions*. In the context of an emergent research network and how any resultant actions begin to take shape, the call document's fundamental lack of certainty would need to be accepted and worked

1 A research project's formal call for proposals and participation (the instrument or mechanism through which applications are prepared for submission) is an intriguing document in itself. It's a text which must identify and establish a context that is explicit in how it invites a response - the proposal for a future action. These responses to the call must be both speculative (and therefore, in some sense uncertain) and also concrete (demonstrating the potential for success). The call text delicately solicits ideas for what could be, and require the assembly of a network (of individuals, institutions and experience) which they believe best fits the need of the call. Often the process which is set in motion by a call is itself exploratory and experimental, requiring the formation of new relationships, alongside a reconfiguration or renewal of existing ones.

through. Our participants recognised a number of instances of positive or constructive indeterminacy, where ongoing dialogue allowed for a correspondence which worked to co-create meaning for the network and its ambitions.

Progress in shaping the project's partners and their relationships was notable in how often it mirrored that of the project itself although the consequences of change (driven by both internal and external forces) did have to be managed. As such, it was also necessary to acknowledge and highlight how negotiation would take place at varying levels and how *interdependence was to be cultivated directly and deliberately through the relationships which would form the network*.

Also, *moments of certainty* (such as successes in the project's development and where progress could be observed) *were often a direct result of processes of dialogue and exchange*. So, for our participants, there was a need to recognise them as such and for an attempt to understand their meaning. However, change or challenges might often be unavoidable and unexpected and, in particular, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the project and its partners were significant. For AMASS, COVID-19 would force *dialogue and any resulting interactions squarely into and through digital space* and would radically transform those plans for the network and for the processes which would manage the project and its relationships that were developed as part of the network's response to the call document. Such plans (to meet, to work together, to make with others) would necessarily be swept aside but, participants would go on to acknowledge that new opportunities would be then created and that many of these positive changes would have been regarded as all-but-impossible until recently.

As a consequence, certain things which had been considered fundamental to the project's application and its execution would go on to be redesigned and, through such challenges, new methods for dialogue (and for correspondence) would need to be developed and trialled. The project's status or context as a form or type of fluid, dynamic and emerging social sculpture could be acknowledged, and with or through these the instances highlighted above, a *dialogical correspondence* would become recognisable.

Dialogical correspondences

"A dialogical aesthetic would locate meaning 'outside' the self; in the exchange that takes place, via discourse, between two subjects. Moreover, the identities of these subjects are not entirely set, but rather, are formed and transformed through

the process of dialogical exchange... in and through dialogical exchange." (Kester 2000)

It is perhaps worth noting that, as Kester suggests, what we might think of as the subject of or within any dialogical experience is not only or strictly limited to the individual or even their institution. We might also see such a claim as inherent in the earlier reflection that something notable occurs at points *between* dialogue and / or correspondence.

From this, it is possible to describe an experience of *dialogical correspondence* as something taking place in the spaces between the workshop participants, the storytelling tool, the project itself, the other AMASS partners, their own external (local) partners etc. Each is subject to an *instrumentalisation* by and within the context of the project which is marked by actions and activities that both serve the project's ambition, the project team's shared motivations and an individuals' own needs.

"Attachments, therefore, can be useful ways to describe how relationships are formed (by suggesting their 'dependency on' or 'commitment to' a particular cause), they reflect the fluidity of '... entanglements as sources and resources...'"

(Marres 2007, p.775)

Kester's model of *dialogical exchange* posits that meaningful and valuable connection and those moments of *correspondence* as a kind of *gift-giving* are characterised by a reciprocity that has impact. They are founded upon a *sustained relationship in space and time* so that both trust and any necessary sense of mutual understanding can be founded and developed. Such association constitutes the basis of shared experience, and in the making and developing which happens when together - a *co-participation in (the) specific material conditions of existence*.

Within the context of AMASS, therefore, such an exchange at points of correspondence also presents opportunities at which connections can be both made and reinforced. Such connections (perhaps particularly when undertaken during the preparation and writing of a project's application) *establish a set of attachments which act to develop those social infrastructures that have power in the potential that is brought together by a complex collection of individuals, communities and activities*.

From our participants' discussion the tools of a research project and, in particular the call document and their responses which go on to become the text of an application, establish a context *which is then populated by humans*

whose correspondences determine the potential scope, impacts and ambitions of any work that is to result. These relationships and their work are clearly bounded by a sense of attachment as Marres (2007) would define it. These human activities work to reshape those instruments which have in fact brought them together through a series of meaningful dialogical interactions between one other which are marked by exchange in moments of being-together, and which further help to determine the formal mechanisms through which their community is constituted (the submission of a grant application, for example).

The knowledge and language outcomes which can result both from a project and, perhaps most interestingly, the material that forms the basis of people's day-to-day correspondences, sets up how any outcome or impact might be considered. Those dialogues and their entangled mesh of correspondences which might otherwise fall between the gaps in a project such as AMASS can, we argue, have real value. Through our attempts to capture and / or (re)articulate them via a particular method of storytelling, we may be able to identify and make use of those insights that would otherwise be in danger of falling through gaps (or which might be overwhelmed by the other information resulting from a project's complex activities).

This article presents a brief initial review of and reflection upon one tool and its rationale which attempts to capture dialogue and help identify or even understand instances of correspondence within a very specific set of moments. Through the use of one scenario within the AMASS project's development, and working with one group of participants (themselves part of a larger community or artists, activists, educators, practitioners and researchers), we present a tentative summary of our initial findings. This work has also been undertaken to suggest how our theoretical framework and research tool might be further developed as we continue to apply it across different contexts and take other opportunities to engage with the varied communities of participants who are themselves at work within the broad activities of the AMASS research project.

It is perhaps obvious that one practical function for an approach and a tool such as this will be in how it helps or assists members of the AMASS community to gain insights which for themselves may be useful for the work. It may, in fact, also have value as a thought experiment in or of itself: where a conceptualisation such as this (of how dialogical interactions are made meaningful at or through particular points of correspondence) actually works to help us understand these complex scenarios and how our experiences might be defined or discussed, perhaps without

requiring further application or making any other impacts unnecessary.

Coda

It may also be worth considering that those socially-engaged arts projects which have also focused upon or made use of the languages of bureaucracy and which have reflected institutional formalities within and through their work (often as the basis for the production of visual and or conceptual arts outcomes) do also often work to occupy a space of criticality and take inspiration from the formal structures and perhaps invisible or deliberately opaque rules and systems through which such work (or in fact any work) must today exist within. And between.

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amass acting on the margins
arts as social sculpture



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Lugares de aprendizagem: pedagogias de emancipação através das artes

Learning places: emancipation pedagogies through the arts

Lugares de aprendizaje: pedagogías de la emancipación a través de las artes

Raquel Balsa

*APECV - Associação de Professores de Expressão e Comunicação Visual, GRiArCE
design@raquelbalsa.com*

Ângela Saldanha

*APECV - Associação de Professores de Expressão e Comunicação Visual, GRiArCE
correio@angelasaldanha.com*

Célia Ferreira

*APECV - Associação de Professores de Expressão e Comunicação Visual, GRiArCE
celiaferreira622@gmail.com*

RESUMO

Este artigo apresenta as estratégias educativas do grupo de investigação da APECV focado nas teorias de emancipação redescobertas em experiências de aprendizagem com um grupo de artistas, designers, professores, cuidadores e pessoas com deficiência mental durante um estudo piloto realizado em Oliveira de Frades em 2020. O estudo faz parte de um projeto internacional de investigação e inovação financiado pelo Programa da Comunidade Europeia Horizonte 2020 denominado 'Agindo nas Margens: Artes como Escultura Social' (ID do contrato de subvenção: 870621).

No estudo, uma investigação-ação com metodologias baseadas nas artes, foram compiladas narrativas visuais sobre lugares de aprendizagem, através de *photovoice*, e foram experimentados processos artísticos para dar mais visibilidade às vozes dos participantes na sociedade.

Os resultados da experiência são discutidos à luz de pedagogias de emancipação para compreender os processos de aprendizagem através das artes como transformação social. As conclusões indicam que através de atividades de educação artística os participantes puderam exprimir as suas vozes e mostrar as obras em espaços públicos aumentando a visibilidade da comunidade envolvida.

Palavras-chave: investigação participativa; ativismo artístico; pedagogia da emancipação; artes e design participativos; inclusão social; *photovoice*.

ABSTRACT

This article presents the educational strategies of the APECV research group focused on theories of emancipation rediscovered in learning experiences with a group of artists, designers, teachers, caregivers and people with mental disabilities during a pilot study carried out in Oliveira de Frades in 2020. The study forms part of an international Horizon 2020-funded research and innovation project called 'Acting on the Margins: Arts as Social Sculpture' (Grant agreement ID: 870621)

During the study, an action research with arts-based methodologies, visual narratives about places of learning were compiled, through photovoice, and artistic processes were experimented to give more visibility to the voices of the participants in society,

The results of the experience are discussed in the light of pedagogies of emancipation to understand the processes of learning through the arts as social transformation. Conclusions indicate that through artistic education activities the participants were able to express their voices and show their works in public spaces increasing the visibility of the community involved.

Keywords: artistic activism, pedagogies, participatory design, participatory art, social transformation, learning, social inclusion, photovoice.

RESUMEN

Este artículo presenta las estrategias educativas del grupo de investigación de APECV centradas en las teorías de la emancipación redescubiertas en experiencias de aprendizaje con un grupo de artistas, diseñadores, docentes, cuidadores y personas con discapacidad intelectual durante un estudio piloto realizado en Oliveira de Frades en 2020. El estudio forma parte de un proyecto internacional de investigación e innovación financiado por el programa de la Comunidad Europea Horizonte 2020 llamado "Actuar en los márgenes: las artes como escultura social" (número de identificación del contrato de subvención: 870621).

En el estudio, se realizó una investigación-acción con metodologías basadas en las artes, se recopilaron narrativas visuales sobre lugares de aprendizaje, a través de fotovoces, y se intentaron procesos artísticos para dar mayor representación de los participantes en la sociedad.

Los resultados de la experiencia se discuten a la luz de las pedagogías emancipadoras para entender los procesos de aprendizaje a través de las artes como una transformación social. Las conclusiones indicaron que a través de actividades de educación artística los participantes pudieron expresar sus voces y mostrar las obras en espacios públicos, aumentando la visibilidad de la comunidad involucrada.

Palabras-clave: investigación participativa; activismo artístico; pedagogía de la emancipación; artes y diseño participativos; Inclusión social; fotovoice.

Acesso igualitário empodera a comunidade

A igualdade de acesso à educação de qualidade e à aprendizagem ao longo da vida permite que as pessoas com deficiência participem plenamente na sociedade e melhorem a sua qualidade de vida. No entanto, devemos entender que o acesso igualitário precisa de atenção às diferenças e à diversidade de caminhos. Os sistemas escolares nem sempre são inclusivos, e a educação em massa pode ser extremamente discriminatória, promovendo a exclusão das pessoas marginalizadas.

Tem sido desenvolvido trabalho em escolas e em organizações da sociedade civil onde se experimentam estratégias de aprendizagem para o acesso igualitário através das artes - Combatendo a falta de oportunidades culturais

para aprender sobre a vida e estabelecer relações saudáveis com outras pessoas - Pessoas com uma vida cultural ativa também desfrutam de uma variedade de "efeitos colaterais", que incluem uma comunidade mais forte e envolvimento cívico, melhorias na saúde pública e estabilidade social ou revitalização econômica (Stern & Seifert, 2008).

Aprender com o 'Outro': linhas de ação da APECV

A nossa noção de aprendizagem e de criação artística é a de um processo colaborativo, capaz de criar novos relacionamentos e novas formas de compreender o mundo. Dessa forma, aprendemos muito sobre pedagogia com os participantes dos projetos que coordenamos na Associação de Professores de Artes Visuais APECV. A nossa organização é uma Associação de Professores de Artes Visuais de Portugal.

A associação foi fundada em 1988 e trabalha na área de educação em artes visuais, proporcionando oportunidades de aprendizagem através da educação artística e de projetos de artes comunitárias, tendo em conta o potencial da educação artística para a educação para os valores, cidadania, desenvolvimento sustentável e coesão social.

As ações de aprendizagem da APECV são baseadas, principalmente, na pedagogia emancipatória. Líderes do movimento, como Freire, explicam que a educação é sempre política e que educadores e educandos devem ser “trabalhadores culturais” (Freire, 1970) capazes de identificar e reparar injustiças, desigualdades e mitos de um mundo muitas vezes opressor. Humanização, Diálogo, Esperança e Pensamento Crítico são pilares essenciais desta teoria. Os processos de aprendizagem de Freire devem permitir que educandos e educadores desenvolvam uma compreensão criticamente consciente da sua relação com o mundo. Transformar o mundo num mundo humanizado, para Freire, só é possível através do verdadeiro diálogo que ocorre nas seguintes condições:

- Amor — o diálogo não pode existir sem um amor profundo pelo mundo e pelo ser humano. A nomeação do mundo, que é um ato de criação e recriação, não é possível se não for impregnada de amor.
- Humildade — o diálogo não pode existir sem humildade.
- Fé — o diálogo requer ainda uma fé intensa na humanidade, confiança no seu poder de fazer e refazer, de criar e recriar.
- Confiança — alicerçado no amor, na humildade e na fé, o diálogo torna-se uma relação horizontal da qual a confiança mútua entre os participantes é a consequência lógica.
- Esperança — o diálogo não pode existir sem esperança. A esperança está enraizada na incompletude do ser humano, de onde parte em uma busca constante - uma busca que só pode ser realizada em comunhão com os outros.
- Pensamento crítico — finalmente, o verdadeiro diálogo não pode existir a menos que os participantes exerçam pensamento crítico; para entender a realidade como um processo de transformação, ao invés de uma entidade estática; um pensar que não se separa da ação, mas que emerge constantemente na temporalidade sem medo dos riscos envolvidos (Nouri e Sajjadi, 2014).

Aprendendo com ASSOL: o diálogo não pode ser forçado

Existem instituições onde as pessoas com deficiência desenvolvem atividades artísticas e artesanais num ambiente tranquilo, promovendo um sentido de utilidade.

Uma delas é uma organização de solidariedade em Portugal chamada ASSOL.

Na ASSOL, os cuidadores usam uma metodologia baseada na pedagogia da interdependência defendendo o amor e o carinho como sendo a melhor terapia. Esta abordagem é utilizada pelos membros da rede “Gentle Teaching”, da qual a ASSOL faz parte. “Gentle Teaching” é uma parceria internacional que visa desenvolver mentores e formadores de acordo com os seus métodos. O seu foco é fortalecer o companheirismo e a comunidade para todos aqueles a quem servem - crianças, adultos e famílias com doenças mentais, com deficiência, falta de abrigo, vícios e envolvimento com o sistema de justiça criminal. “Companheirismo é a pedra angular das práticas, criando conexões humanas significativas entre a pessoa e o cuidador. A aceitação incondicional e a presença gentil dessa relação estabelecem confiança e cultivam a aprendizagem mútua e o crescimento coletivo” (Van de Siepkamp; McCrovitz; Vincent, 2018). Aprendemos sobre companheirismo através da prática do cuidador focada na segurança, em receber e dar amor, em dedicação.

O grupo de investigação da APECV colabora com os cuidadores da ASSOL, em Oliveira de Frades, há muitos anos, especialmente com Matias Pancho, um designer social, cuidador, facilitador e criador da oficina de encadernação na ASSOL, onde a nossa organização costuma fazer livros de artista para professores. Nas nossas frequentes visitas à oficina de encadernação, observamos uma cultura de esperança através do amor incondicional e do respeito mútuo. Muitas atividades desenvolvidas na instituição ajudam a encontrar significados e a criar novas memórias através de práticas artísticas que fomentam o sentimento de pertença. Aprendemos muito com os cuidadores da ASSOL. A primeira lição foi: não esperar nada. Pancho geralmente diz-nos para estarmos abertos aos resultados da prática, sejam eles quais forem. Esta é a consequência do amor incondicional e do respeito mútuo. O diálogo não pode ser forçado.

Aprendendo com a ASSOL: Que qualidades devemos esperar de um educador?

O nosso grupo de Investigação segue os Princípios Éticos da APECV, nos convites que fazemos à ASSOL, em Oliveira de Frades, tentamos ir ao encontro das suas expectativas, sabemos que as nossas atividades têm trazido mais valias à comunidade que gosta de participar em ações artísticas com professores e artistas da APECV e nós temos aprendido muito com eles. Por exemplo, num projeto anterior, em 2018, também financiado pela Comunidade Europeia



Figura 1. Reencontro na ASSOL e entrega dos Kits “Isolar com Amor”, junho de 2020.

(ERASMUS+, nº 2017-1-IT02-KA204-036912) convidámos 8 pessoas da ASSOL para uma conversa em grupo (Focus-group) sobre as competências-chave que consideravam importantes em professores, educadores e facilitadores. Interessavam-nos as suas opiniões para podermos preparar a nossa equipa para trabalhar em atividades com comunidades de pessoas com deficiências mentais. No final da conversa cada um escreveu num pequeno papel as três características mais importantes. Os resultados da conversa e da recolha dos papéis, mostraram que os participantes valorizam competências como gentileza e amizade. Foi interessante notar que para eles o companheirismo era muito valorizado (comer juntos, brincar juntos, aprender juntos). O facilitador, professor ou educador deve ser alguém em quem possa confiar e construir uma relação de amizade, não uma autoridade distante, mas alguém que se sente junto, um companheiro nas ações da vida diária. Os participantes da ASSOL também mencionaram que um professor, um educador ou facilitador deve ser capaz de ajudar, capaz de aprender, ser atento, observador e alerta. Essas características mostram-nos um perfil onde o professor, educador ou facilitador é um companheiro muito especial, aquele que fica atento, que se preocupa com a singularidade das pessoas, das ações e dos espaços e ouve

cada um com respeito e generosidade. É capaz de dedicar tempo ao diagnóstico para compreender as situações e as pessoas envolvidas nos eventos de aprendizagem e de agir em conformidade. Estamos aqui inclinados a olhar para a relação de aprendizagem como um processo imanente; como Atkinson escreveu: “o trabalho pedagógico não é, portanto, concebido como uma teologia de rotas prescritas e pontos finais (um enquadramento transcendente). Mas mais em termos de uma aventura em resposta à imanência de locais de encontro” (Atkinson, 2018, p 19).

Para os participantes da ASSOL, o professor, educador ou facilitador é alguém com conhecimento; capaz de ensinar coisas novas, capaz de fazer coisas; capaz de dar feedback (por exemplo, corrigir os erros dos alunos). O conceito de “Aprender” foi definido como encontrar algo novo com alguém em quem os alunos poderiam confiar como amigo e conselheiro.

AMASS

Em 2019 a Associação de Professores de Expressão e Comunicação Visual entrou como parceira do projeto europeu AMASS. O estudo faz parte de um projeto internacional de investigação e inovação financiado pelo Programa da

Comunidade Europeia, Horizonte 2020 denominado “Agindo nas Margens: Artes como Escultura Social” (ID do contrato de subvenção: 870621). O projeto visa o estudo do impacto das artes na sociedade e a implementação de projetos piloto com artistas em comunidades periféricas, em 8 países europeus. Uma vez que um dos objetivos do projeto era o desenvolvimento de trabalho artístico com participantes de comunidades marginalizadas, não hesitámos em convidar mais uma vez a comunidade da ASSOL, em Oliveira de Frades, como companheiros de eleição para o estudo piloto do AMASS em Portugal.

Deixamos o processo de seleção de participantes a cargo dos cuidadores, eles perguntaram na comunidade quem queria participar no projeto e organizaram a logística das nossas visitas conforme foi conveniente para a comunidade. Todos os participantes assinaram um consentimento informado para participar no estudo. As investigadoras lançaram o desafio da descoberta dos lugares onde se aprende, como arranque do estudo piloto.

O grupo de investigação incluiu duas investigadoras (a coordenadora do projeto em Portugal Ângela e a assistente investigadora Raquel Balsa) e designers sociais; três artistas; Dori; Carlos e Juliana; duas professoras de arte Célia e Teresa; dois cuidadores Pancho e Raquel Antunes e doze homens e mulheres com deficiências mentais, de diferentes idades e com habilidades e experiências de aprendizagem muito diferentes (António; Carla; Carlos; Deolinda; Diogo; Francisco; João; João Carlos, MariLúcia; Paulo; Rogério Paulo e Vera).

Os lugares onde se aprende

No âmbito do Projeto AMASS, durante o mês de junho de 2020, na primeira visita pedimos a ajuda do grupo para entender quais são os espaços onde a aprendizagem pode ocorrer (Os lugares onde aprendemos). Esta atividade, seria importante para que o projeto se pudesse desenrolar colaborativamente.

Os participantes foram convidados a fotografar os espaços de aprendizagem mais importantes das suas vidas durante uma semana, usando as câmaras tipo Polaroid que faziam parte do kit “Isolar com Amor, um saco feito à mão pela coordenadora do Projeto que continha também um pin com o nome do participante, uma máscara de pano para proteção do COVID-19, desinfetante e um frasco com água.

Algumas fotografias foram realizadas individualmente, por cada participante nos lugares e com as pessoas da sua eleição. Outras fotografias foram realizadas em grupo — os cuidadores da ASSOL tinham organizado carrinhas

para as viagens que permitiram fotografar os lugares de aprendizagem listados pelo grupo.

Na segunda ação, uma semana depois, foram realizadas conversas individuais e em grupo sobre as fotografias.

Como suspeitámos, dos resultados do *photovoice* foram listados lugares muito diferentes de aprendizagem, tais como:

- em casa com a família;
- com amigos;
- na ASSOL, com os cuidadores;
- na escola, quando os participantes eram mais jovens e frequentavam o ensino obrigatório;
- nos locais de trabalho (todos os participantes vivenciaram situações de trabalho);
- com as notícias, televisão, jornal local;
- com a internet;
- com livros na biblioteca;
- na natureza, nas florestas, nas montanhas, nos rios;
- nos lugares da aldeia.

É importante destacar que participaram no *photovoice* todas as pessoas do grupo, pessoas com deficiência mental e os facilitadores da APECV e ASSOL. Os participantes, com idades entre 21 e 55 anos, tiveram formação académica e experiências profissionais muito diferentes. No entanto, foi interessante encontrar a diversidade dos locais de aprendizagem e das pessoas, e verificar os nossos conceitos iniciais de espaços de aprendizagem como encontros de aprendizagem e de evento de aprendizagem como uma relação com o espaço e as pessoas.

Espaços de aprendizagem

Outras ações se seguiram durante o mês de setembro de 2020 com os artistas Dori Nigro; Carlos e Juliana. Os participantes gostaram de descobrir técnicas e materiais nas oficinas propostas pelos artistas. Consideraram importante produzir objetos com técnicas artísticas como, por exemplo, fazer cartazes em serigrafia e com tipografia; bordar ou tirar fotografias. Os demais participantes: as investigadoras; artistas e educadoras de arte descobriram um terceiro espaço onde o companheirismo é a chave para interagir com os outros. Aprendemos a respeitar o ritmo do grupo, estando abertos a novas situações, desafiando os nossos medos e formas de envolvimento através do amor.

Figura 2. (próxima página) Organograma do estudo piloto AMASS 2020.

2020

ASSOL

APECV

JUNHO | JUNE | JUNIO



REENCONTRO
Kit isolar com amor
REENCOUNTER
Kit isolate with love
REENCUENTRO
Kit aislar con amor

amor
love
amor

JULHO | JULY | JULIO



PHOTOVOICE
Os lugares onde aprendemos
PHOTOVOICE
Learning Spaces
FOTOVOICE
Los lugares donde aprendemos

escutar
to listen
escuchar

OUTUBRO | OCTOBER | OCTUBRE

aprendo
com um
Jesumão



ENCONTRO NO RIO
facilitador Dori Nigro
MEETING AT THE RIVER
facilitator Dori Nigro
ENCUENTRO EN EL RÍO
facilitador Dori Nigro

encontrar
meet/find
reunirse



SEMANA DAS ARTES ASSOL
Lendas das terras de lafões
ASSOL ARTS WEEK
Land of "Lafões" Legends
SEMANA DE ARTES ASSOL
Leyendas de la tierra de "Lafões"

histórias
stories
cuentos

NOVEMBRO | NOVEMBER | NOVIEMBRE



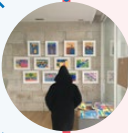
LENDAS DAS TERRAS DE LAFÕES
facilitadores Juliana Ferreira e Carlos Sousa
LAND OF "LAFÕES" LEGENDS
facilitators Juliana Ferreira and Carlos Sousa
LEYENDAS DE LA TIERRA DE "LAFÕES"
facilitadores Juliana Ferreira y Carlos Sousa

compartilhar
share
cuota



LENDAS DAS TERRAS DE LAFÕES
Intervenção participada
LAND OF "LAFÕES" LEGENDS
Participated intervention
LEYENDAS DE LA TIERRA DE "LAFÕES"
Intervención participada

reciprocidade
reciprocity
reciprocidad



EXPOSIÇÃO ASSOL: Lendas das terras de lafões
Biblioteca de Oliveira de Frades
ASSOL EXHIBITION: Land of "Lafões" Legends
Library of "Oliveira de Frades"
EXPOSICIÓN ASSOL: Leyendas de la tierra de "Lafões"
Biblioteca de "Oliveira de Frades"

comunidade
community
comunidad



PRODUTOS
Bordar
PRODUCTS
Embroider
PRODUCTOS
Bordar

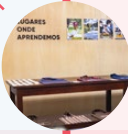
valorizar
to value
valorar



PRODUTOS
KIT Lendas
PRODUCTS
Legend KIT
PRODUCTOS
KIT de leyenda

devolver
give back
devolver

DEZEMBRO | DECEMBER | DICIEMBRE

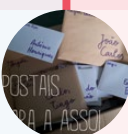


EXPOSIÇÃO OS LUGARES ONDE APRENDEMOS
Casa da Imagem, V.N. Gaia
EXHIBITION LEARNING SPACES
Casa da Imagem, V.N. Gaia
EXPOSICIÓN LUGARES DE APRENDER
Casa da Imagem, V.N. Gaia

empoderar
empower
empoderar

2021

MARÇO-ABRIL | MARCH-APRIL | MARZO-ABRIL



POSTAIS
coletivo APECV troca postais com o coletivo ASSOL
POSTCARDS
APECV collective exchanges postcards with ASSOL collective
TARJETAS POSTALES
El colectivo APECV intercambia postales con el colectivo ASSOL

ligações
connections
conexiones

ABRIL | APRIL | ABRIL



GRUPO DA ASSOL VISITA A EXPOSIÇÃO
Casa da Imagem, V.N. Gaia
ASSOL GROUP VISITS THE EXHIBITION
Casa da Imagem, V.N. Gaia
GRUPO DE ASSOL VISITA EXPOSICIÓN
Casa da Imagem, V.N. Gaia

empoderar II
empower II
empoderar II



Figura 3. Encontro na ASSOL, conversa sobre as fotografias tiradas, junho 2020.

Nas ações de junho de 2020, os educadores e cuidadores foram reconhecidos como locais de aprendizagem. Compreender um educador, um cuidador e um facilitador como um lugar de aprendizagem é um entendimento muito particular de uma relação pedagógica, onde o educador é um território, um lugar seguro onde coisas novas podem ser exploradas. Isso deve ser correlacionado com o contexto, os participantes da ASSOL onde se pratica a pedagogia da interdependência, que enfatiza o afeto e as relações significativas entre as pessoas e cuidadores e, da APECV, artistas, educadores de arte e designers sociais; fortemente Freirianos, e com experiência em práticas de arte participativa para transformação social com comunidades locais.

A aprendizagem precisa de espaço e tempo e ocorre tanto em situações de solidão como em momentos compartilhados. Nas atividades exploradas durante o estudo piloto, processos artísticos como a fotografia mostraram-se meios com bastante potencial, não só narrativo, mas também introspectivo, nesse tempo e nesses espaços, na imanência de *locais de encontro* como veremos adiante pelas palavras de JC.

“A sequência de fotografias, é como um diário, um livro de artista, é como escrever um texto, as fotos sugerem uma narrativa. Esta fotografia é um pouco cruel, evoca uma parede, mas está desfocada, indefinida. O que não pode ser definido acaba por ser um mistério. A crueldade está na imagem, na luz e na sombra, esse sentimento indefinido. Eu chamo a isso arte, a maneira que usamos para explicar, para demonstrar nossos sentimentos. Claro, eu crio essa fotografia para mim, ela mostra minha visão de mundo, para outros, pode transmitir outras visões, um olhar de um prisma diferente, uma forma muito diferente de ver. A questão dos outros é um enigma. A solidão das imagens, é algo que as pessoas descobrem. Os espectadores podem reconhecer-se nas imagens. Eles podem gostar ou não, podem fazer outras leituras. Eu transmito a minha visão “

(photovoice, narrativa áudio, junho 2020)

JC retrata a pluralidade das leituras da obra de arte. Ele refere-se à qualidade da luz e à intensidade das sombras como processos para transmitir uma narrativa sobre a sua solidão, sabendo que a sua visão não é universal.

Figura 4. JC conversa sobre as fotos que realizou durante a semana (photovoice, junho 2020).





Figura 5. Cartografias Bordadas com Dori Nigro num dos lugares de aprendizagem escolhido pelo grupo da ASSOL: O rio Alfusqueiro, setembro 2020.

Humildade, fé, confiança e amor

Através dos encontros de aprendizagem da APECV na ASSOL pudemos confirmar que as práticas artísticas oferecem ferramentas valiosas para nos ligarmos ao outro, provocar encontros e criar relacionamentos seguros. Como artistas, talvez nunca tenhamos pensado sobre o papel do amor incondicional pelo outro numa relação estética, e é isso que o trabalho com pessoas com deficiência pode ensinar aos artistas e trazer uma nova dimensão às práticas artísticas e de design social como trabalho cultural. Como professores, trabalhamos em estruturas hierárquicas movidas pelo poder da avaliação. A dimensão do nosso trabalho na ASSOL abriu-nos percepções muito úteis para entender a pedagogia da emancipação e as ideias de Paulo Freire na prática. “Ser” ganhou uma dimensão comunitária, alimentou-se do sentido de aceitação do outro e construiu-se pelo sentimento de pertença a um grupo.

“O que eu gostei mais foi do calor humano.”

(Vera, na folha de avaliação do projeto piloto, dezembro 2020)

Durante os eventos entre os participantes, foi criado um espaço de potencialidades. Esse espaço de encontro proporcionado pelo fazer arte foi um espaço de compartilhamento e compreensão, que pode ser denominado como arte participativa contemporânea

(Bishop, 2012). Além disso, o tipo de participação era de reciprocidade, artistas, designers e investigadores aprendem tanto quanto educadores, cuidadores, facilitadores e pessoas com deficiência mental. A dedicação do grupo a práticas artísticas possibilitou eventos de aprendizagem em situações dialógicas garantindo relacionamentos baseados na humildade, fé, confiança e amor.

Trabalhar de forma transdisciplinar, entre lugares e entre pessoas fez-nos antever as visões dinâmicas do trabalho para uma sociedade inclusiva - visões que passam pelo envolvimento e diálogo, através de práticas artísticas que nos unem, num compromisso com a mudança social e empoderamento de todos os participantes.

Palavras em rio

Os lugares de aprendizagem são espaços seguros, podem ser pessoas, ou lugares construídos por lembranças fortes e encorajadoras. Aprendemos nos rios. Foi no rio Alfusqueiro, Porto de Várzea, um dos lugares escolhidos como lugar de aprendizagem, que mergulhámos com o artista Dori Nigro. Confluímos com o fluir do rio pelas histórias contadas e partilhadas e então bordadas num leito de tecido. Em tempos de pandemia, cada um na sua ilha, um tapete de cor, todos em redor uns dos outros, um cordão de sol, conexão e relato. A história pessoal de cada um emergiu neste círculo num só fio de narrativa.

Desafio e reciprocidade

Para a semana das Artes 2020 a ASSOL escolheu o tema “lendas das terras de Lafões”. Lendas com voz local própria



Figura 6. Atelier de impressão serigráfica e tipográfica com Carlos Sousa e Juliana Ferreira, artistas de CentroPontoArte a partir das lendas de Oliveira de Frades. Outubro 2020. Esta ação foi pedida pelos participantes da ASSOL, porque foi o tema que desenvolveram esse ano na ASSOL- Oliveira de Frades.

e variações na sua narração. Os personagens de lendas tornaram-se protagonistas de ilustrações e explorações plásticas, desenhos e pinturas criados pelos artistas da ASSOL. Neste contexto a APECV e o Centropontoarte foram convidados a levar até à ASSOL as ferramentas e sensibilidade para transformar estas figuras em cartazes, em sacos, em outras figuras. Através da impressão serigráfica e tipográfica, uma obra conjunta foi-se desenvolvendo, gerando uma panóplia de configurações sobre e com a identidade local, narrativas da tradição e crenças da paisagem afetiva dos participantes. A grande oficina da ASSOL foi aberta e sob luz coada por cores vivas e vibrantes recortaram-se caminhos e possibilidades, novas histórias que contamos juntos.

Nesta trama de reciprocidade os artistas da ASSOL lançam um desafio, uma provocação generosa, aos artistas e designers que tinham vindo a colaborar com eles: pedem uma intervenção sobre e com as suas ilustrações criadas a partir das lendas.

Nas expressivas e sentidas ilustrações que revelam épocas, afetos, identidades, imaginação, nascem, assim, novas linhas, cosidas, submersas, animadas, desenhadas, revisitadas.

Neste entretecer a escuta molda os nossos passos, construímo-nos e à nossa circunstância numa sucessiva autonomia orquestrada. Trocamos experiências, tempo e papéis que ampliam as nossas competências comunitárias para a intervenção no dia a dia. Futuros construídos a partir da esperança.

Esta cartografia de nós e dos processos ficou exposta na biblioteca municipal de Oliveira de Frades, em novembro e dezembro de 2020, perto da ASSOL, inteligentemente atrás de uma grande montra que lhe permitia ser vista da rua, em tempos do distanciamento social da pandemia COVID-19.

Embalar o Amor

Em novembro de 2020, vivíamos ainda o tempo da pandemia, era cada vez mais difícil estarmos juntos. Assim, fomos pensando em estratégias de aproximação, de contacto, de esperança e de continuação dos afetos.

Em conjunto, mais uma vez, começamos a pensar como lançar sinais ao mundo das possibilidades de isolamento através do Amor, que o próprio isolamento era uma prova de Amor com os outros. As ilustrações, realizadas anteriormente com as “Lendas de Lafões”, serviram de base para enriquecer máscaras e sacos de pano, que se tornaram, com o apoio de uma empresa têxtil (Texiberica), um Objeto-Manifesto ao Amor, em que a venda reverte na totalidade para a ASSOL.

Partilhar com os outros

No final do ano, foi altura de expor o processo e partilhar com os outros todo o caminho percorrido. A Exposição foi inaugurada em dezembro de 2020, na Casa da Imagem (Fundação Manuel Leão), em Vila Nova de Gaia.

Mostrar aos outros, num lugar digno de exposição, dá visibilidade e notoriedade ao projeto, o que se revela



Figura 7. Produto-manifesto “Isolar com Amor”: saco de pano impresso tamanho A4, máscara de tecido certificado COVID-19, com motivo bordado, dois pins alusivos. Adquirir e ver mais em <https://www.apecv.pt/kit-isolar-com-amor>

essencial para o empoderamento dos envolvidos, que se sentem valorizados, capazes e com vontade de continuar a percorrer o caminho. Para os que veem (a sociedade em geral) percebem outras capacidades nas pessoas envolvidas, conhecem outras histórias e mais facilmente entendem essas realidades. Torna-se um espaço onde todos têm lugar e ocupam espaço próprio, com as suas capacidades, um lugar de crescimento e aprendizagem para todos (os que expõem e aqueles que visitam a exposição).

Encontros de aprendizagem através das artes para a inclusão social e bem-estar da comunidade

Diversos conceitos contemporâneos destacam as formas como a arte e a cultura contribuem para a inclusão social e o bem-estar das comunidades. Entendemos a inclusão social como um processo ativo para melhorar o desenvolvimento pessoal, melhorar a coesão social e a cidadania ativa e reduzir o isolamento social. Acreditamos que, através de atividades de educação artística, os designers envolvidos em design participativo e de serviços; artistas envolvidos em formas de arte participativas; educadores e professores com abordagens pedagógicas emancipatórias; e cuidadores (especialmente aqueles que praticam a pedagogia da interdependência) contribuem para a emancipação e inclusão social de indivíduos, grupos e comunidades desfavorecidos. Projetar e implementar ações ou eventos educativos que levantem questões estéticas, éticas e políticas podem promover o diálogo público em contextos locais e globais. Essa abordagem requer profissionais altamente

treinados para lançar e coordenar projetos na comunidade, educadores de arte como provocadores, ou animadores do diálogo através da arte para desenhar projetos e ações com a comunidade de forma respeitosa e responsável. Tais projetos de arte e educação em arte possibilitam um espaço discursivo onde os atores podem expressar as suas vozes e refletir criticamente sobre as suas vidas através de meios artísticos. Ao facilitar eventos ou situações onde as pessoas podem fazer arte, estamos a trabalhar como agentes de mudança, e a mudança só acontece quando o espaço, o tempo, o silêncio e a distância permitem caminhos para jornadas de aprendizagem. Uma prática artística, como Atkinson apontou “não está centralmente preocupada com a produção de objetos ou a representação de entidades ou seres no mundo, mas sim, com experimentar e explorar para forjar aberturas, correspondências e potenciais para a construção de novos mundos” (Atkinson, 2018. p. 206).

“(...) eu aprendo em todo o lado, nos locais onde me recolho, aprendo a luz, onde me reconheço nos objetos, em pedras, na luz no escuro, nos objetos nas florestas onde passeio, nas árvores, em livros e apontamentos, gosto de desenhar, em sítios de abandono, em ruas, em árvores, na paisagem, gosto de me reconhecer enquanto pessoa nos locais.”

(JC. photovoice, narrativa áudio, junho 2020)



Figura 8. Exposição “Os Lugares onde Aprendemos” na Casa da Imagem em Vila Nova de Gaia, Portugal, dezembro 2020- abril 2021.
Ver mais em: <https://www.apecv.pt/pt-pt/exposicao-amass-lugares-de-aprendizagem>

Através do fazer artístico as pessoas podem encontrar meios para expandir territórios existenciais, explorar e compreender criticamente situações e acontecimentos, espaços de aprendizagem que podem ocorrer nos mais diversos locais onde vivemos. A nossa humilde experiência com a ASSOL, é um exemplo de programas de formação inclusiva através das artes para compreender as margens, criando espaços partilhados para encontros de aprendizagem de forma colaborativa para uma maior participação, permitindo dar visibilidade às opiniões e às necessidades dos participantes para promover a oferta artística nos serviços sociais.

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amass acting on the margins
arts as social sculpture



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“You’d be in bed, you’d have... lesions and, and fever, and you’d be dying”: Challenging stigmatisation and misinformation about HIV through the arts

“Estaria na cama, teria... lesões e, e febre, e estaria a morrer”: Desafiar a estigmatização e a desinformação sobre o HIV através das artes

“Estarías en la cama, tendrías... lesiones y, y fiebre, y te estarías muriendo”:

Desafiar la estigmatización y la desinformación sobre el VIH a través de las artes

Isabelle Gatt

University of Malta

isabelle.gatt@um.edu.mt

Milosh Raykov

University of Malta

milosh.raykov@um.edu.mt

Raphael Vella

University of Malta

raphael.vella@um.edu.mt

ABSTRACT

This article studies how an academic research team, a creative entity, an NGO and a group of participants living with HIV in Malta each contributed to the creation of a theatre production and study aimed at challenging stigmatisation and misinformation about HIV. While the complete study integrated qualitative, arts-based and quantitative research methods, this article focuses only on qualitative aspects associated with interviewing participants in order to extract narratives that fed into the creative development of the play’s script. It shows how persons living with HIV with little or no access to a ‘public’ can still have their voices heard through a creative script that is heavily informed by their ideas. The study forms part of an international Horizon 2020-funded research and innovation project called ‘Acting on the Margins: Arts as Social Sculpture’ (Grant agreement ID: 870621). As a result of changes made in the context of COVID-19 restrictions, the production will pass through various successive iterations. This article discusses the initial stages of the study prior to any public performance in front of a general audience.

Keywords: HIV, stigmatisation, socially engaged arts, theatre

RESUMO

Este artigo estuda como uma equipe de pesquisa acadêmica, uma entidade criativa, uma ONG e um grupo de participantes vivendo com VIH em Malta contribuíram, cada um, para a criação de uma produção teatral e um estudo que visa desafiar a estigmatização e a desinformação sobre o VIH. Enquanto o estudo completo integrou métodos de pesquisa qualitativos, baseados em artes e quantitativos, este artigo enfoca apenas os aspectos qualitativos associados à entrevista de participantes, a fim de extrair

narrativas que alimentaram o desenvolvimento criativo do roteiro da peça. Mostra como as pessoas que vivem com VIH com pouco ou nenhum acesso ao “público” ainda podem ter suas vozes ouvidas por meio de um script criativo fortemente informado pelas suas ideias. O estudo faz parte de um projeto internacional de pesquisa e inovação financiado pelo Horizonte 2020 denominado ‘Agindo nas Margens: Artes como Escultura Social’ (ID do contrato de subvenção: 870621). Como resultado das alterações feitas no contexto das restrições do COVID-19, a produção passará por várias iterações sucessivas. Este artigo discute os estágios iniciais do estudo antes de qualquer apresentação pública para o público em geral.

Palavras-chave: HIV, estigmatização, artes para a transformação social, teatro

RESUMEN

Este artículo estudia cómo un equipo de investigación académico, una entidad creativa, una ONG y un grupo de participantes que viven con el VIH en Malta contribuyeron cada uno a la creación de una producción teatral y un estudio destinado a desafiar la estigmatización y la desinformación sobre el VIH. Si bien el estudio completo integró métodos de investigación cualitativos, basados en las artes y cuantitativos, este artículo se enfoca solo en los aspectos cualitativos asociados con las entrevistas a los participantes para extraer narrativas que alimentaron el desarrollo creativo del guión de la obra. Muestra cómo las personas que viven con el VIH y tienen poco o ningún acceso a un “público” aún pueden hacer oír su voz a través de un guión creativo que está fuertemente informado por sus ideas. El estudio forma parte de un proyecto internacional de investigación e innovación financiado por Horizonte 2020 llamado “Actuar en los márgenes: las artes como escultura social” (ID del acuerdo de subvención: 870621). Como resultado de los cambios realizados en el contexto de las restricciones de COVID-19, la producción pasará por varias iteraciones sucesivas. Este artículo analiza las etapas iniciales del estudio antes de cualquier actuación pública frente a una audiencia general.

Keywords: VIH, estigmatización, artes socialmente comprometidas, teatro

Introduction

This article focuses on an arts-based project dealing with the stigma and discrimination experienced by persons living with HIV in Malta. The concept of stigma has been studied in many fields, ranging from medicine to sociology and psychology. In one of the most influential and early studies on the subject, stigma was defined as an undesired physical, mental, religious or other attribute that discredits that person in others’ eyes by setting him or her apart from whatever is considered to be the norm, to the extent that “the person with a stigma is not quite human” (Goffman, 1986, p.5). In Malta, the effects of stigma on affected individuals and their families can be particularly strong, especially with certain attributes like mental illnesses (Agius, Falzon Aquilina, Pace & Grech, 2016).

The arts project was the pilot study in a series of creative experiments led by our research team at the Faculty of Education, University of Malta (UM), and forms part of a much broader, international Horizon 2020-funded research and innovation project called ‘Acting on the Margins: Arts

as Social Sculpture’ (AMASS). AMASS is an arts-based action research project which uses multidisciplinary approaches to using the arts to mitigate societal challenges in different parts of Europe. For the pilot study, UM was supported by a creative enterprise called Culture Venture (CV) led by Toni Attard, a theatre director, actor, cultural and creative industry specialist, and a socio-political organisation called MGRM, the Malta LGBTIQ Rights Movement. Initial discussions with MGRM showed that a project like this could be very significant for people living with HIV because of persistent misinformation and prejudices about the virus and those who are affected by it. MGRM served as research partners for both UM and CV, helping out with advice about HIV, recruitment, ethical issues and even the interviewing process. This study, along with the creative team and MGRM, were approved by the University of Malta Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee (FREC) that is responsible for institutional research and adherence of research studies to the national Research Code of Practice. Both MGRM and FREC’s reviewers demanded that the

vulnerability of this group of participants required a very cautious approach that would not reveal the interviewees' identity.

Some international research, particularly in contexts with a high prevalence rate like South Africa, shows that participatory, arts-based methodologies can strengthen one's sense of self-efficacy, contributing to the development of peer education interventions that could lead to HIV prevention (Wood, 2012). Besides, artists working in photography, community art activism and other visual strategies can help to raise awareness, obtain international support and challenge prejudices surrounding HIV (Coombes, 2019). In the United States, photovoice has been used as a method of inquiry to study issues of identity and community and help to raise awareness and initiate policy change in relation to persons living with HIV (Rhodes, Hergenrather, Wilkin & Jolly, 2008) and to explore ethical challenges related to photography experienced by women living with HIV/AIDS (Teti, Murray, Johnson & Binson, 2012). In yet another research pilot study that used interactive theatre to educate young people about sexual health, adapted for testing in the Southern USA, Lightfoot, Taboada, Taggart, Tran, & Burtaine (2015) found that adolescents lacked information about STIs. At post-test, the researchers found statistically significant increases in participants' HIV knowledge as well as changes in attitudes and awareness.

In Malta, while studies of people's perceptions about HIV infection have existed since at least the 1990s, there has been no known research about socially engaged artistic practices, HIV and stigmatisation. The pilot study conducted by UM and CV, therefore, appears to be the first of its kind in the country.

In view of this, one of the main objectives of the pilot study was to create a theatrical production directed by CV that would serve to challenge stigmatisation and misinformation about HIV through the arts. The global pandemic in 2020 led to some changes in plans, and it was decided that an online rehearsed reading would replace a planned public performance in November 2020. Nevertheless, a public performance with a modified script is still planned for 2021, and the central research question remains unchanged. Specifically, the study explores the following research questions: How can theatre advocate for the rights of persons living with HIV?

Research Methods and Ethical Issues

Data collection tools developed by the UM team combined arts-based and qualitative or participatory methods in combination with additional quantitative methods. While we acknowledged that this mixed approach could make the research process and data integration more complex, the intention behind using mixed methods was to draw on the strengths of different perspectives and explore issues related to HIV and the effectiveness of social engagement in the arts. Moreover, we believe that the layering of data emerging from different strategies is a more effective way of understanding the sense of otherness faced by some groups; hence, studying participation in the arts through different lenses allows researchers to better understand why "vulnerable and marginalised people are treated as if they inhabit a separate space in society" (Arts Council England, 2010, p.15).

Nevertheless, given the stigma associated with the subject and accompanying difficulty of accessing persons living with HIV, qualitative and arts-based methods were primary data collection methods for this study and will provide us with the focus of this article.

In preparation for the research, the UM research team had several meetings with MGRM, who stressed that it they should administer the interviews themselves and forward the data after anonymising it. While persons living with HIV in Malta contacted by MGRM also requested complete anonymity due to the stigma associated with their condition, they wanted their story to be told in a positive way, to portray the reality of living a normal life with their medications. They wanted the public to understand that their condition was under control, and to ultimately treat them as human beings worthy of respect.

The data was collected from a small sample of persons living with HIV recruited by MGRM and the interviews were conducted by professional counsellors since the potential vulnerability of the participants required a cautious approach to the collection of sensitive data. The counsellors were employed in order to protect the identities of participants, so UM team members and artists did not meet the interviewees. Interviews were held with five members of HIV Malta within MGRM who are currently living with HIV and were then transcribed by the counsellors. The interviews were recorded with altered voices to ensure the anonymity of the participants. The interviewers also functioned as potential counsellors to the participants, ready to assist should any participant require it. MGRM's Rainbow Support Service was also available to them as a further safety net.

While the co-creative process was determined by the ethical requirements of anonymity and confidentiality, the mixed research methods allowed for the integration of interviewees' stories in the script and their participation in the post-assessment survey. This strategy was developed to avoid superficial forms of citizen participation as outlined in Arnstein's two lower groups of rungs in her 'Ladder of Participation', defined as nonparticipation and tokenism (1969). The level of involvement in UM's project with persons living with HIV corresponds roughly with that of 'active engagement' in Tiller's spectrum of participatory performing arts practice, exemplified by performances that draw "on stories/lives of a particular group but performed by professionals" (Tiller, 2014, p.8).

While this participatory approach is milder than more direct processes in which participants take their own decisions and implement them creatively, it should be noted that ethical considerations were particularly challenging in this pilot study due to the sensitivity of the topic. According to the previously agreed and approved research plan, all participants were informed that the interviews would serve as a base for the development of an anonymized theatrical production related to the stigma of people living

with HIV in order to present factual information about HIV and in this way promote social inclusion of people affected by this condition. The participants were also informed that anonymized results of this study would be published in the form of a research report and journal articles to increase awareness of HIV-related issues and, in this way, additionally support people affected with this condition. In order to allow for further participation in the creative process, the participants were included in the evaluation of the draft script, held during a rehearsal.

In a very real way, the insistence on anonymity highlights the fact that living with HIV in Malta is still a very personal matter, with little, if any, open communication between different persons living with this condition. This problem has also been underlined by Checkpoint Malta, an NGO launched in 2019 to raise awareness and address the stigma surrounding HIV (Arena, 2019). The NGO's president, Christian Jung, a Danish HIV activist and also an actor by profession, was the only person living with HIV who was eager to take part in the whole process and actually perform in the play. Christian was also an important source of information throughout the creative process and confirmed many stories collected from interviewees.

From interview transcripts to script

The interviews served as a research base for the creative development of the play's script. Questions used in the interview protocol requested information about participants' experience of living with HIV and how this affected their social relations, daily activities, education and work. The interviews also provided the creative team with information about support groups and stigma that interviewees experienced, as well as their views on artistic works that deal with HIV.

Simon Bartolo, a full-time writer and director, wrote the script for the play, and it was decided that the play would be called 'NSFW' (Not Safe For Work). The research data (interview transcripts and audio recordings) allowed Bartolo to listen to the concerns, wishes and stories of the interviewees. He had to work within certain parameters; there could only be 6 actors due to budget restrictions but he felt this actually helped his creative process. Bartolo decided to have 6 characters only as he did not want actors to play multiple roles. Originally, the director and writer had considered creating a verbatim theatre piece. The Verbatim theatre genre, a subcategory of documentary theatre, is similar to documentary theatre, where the theatre maker explores events and themes through the words of the actual protagonists in life. Bartolo decided to discard the idea of making it a totally verbatim piece because this would have

limited the characters in the plot to only HIV infected characters. The genre he used was more like massaged verbatim (Valentine, 2009) as opposed to pure verbatim, that is, using verbatim techniques to create fiction and moulding the data around and into an invented narrative structure (Garcon, 2015).

Most of the interviewees were men, except for one woman, who was sixty years old and straight. Bartolo was struck by her extremely positive attitude to life and he loosely based Susan, one of the characters, on her interview. The characters created were not all people living with HIV; other characters were brought in to reflect the misinformation that still exists about this issue. The characters were written with the interviewees in mind and there are instances, even anecdotes, taken verbatim from the interviews even though most characters are fictitious. The cast for the play was selected by Toni Attard, who also directed it, and the group of six actors included a person living in Malta with HIV, Christian Jung.

As has already been stated, Christian Jung and the interviewees' most prominent wish was that the performance would portray their situation as positive. They were not after pity but wanted to show that one can live with HIV, that it is not all gloom and doom. Jung also advised on the use of the correct language to give the right information and perception of living with this condition. According to him, misconceptions about HIV are not only common among the general public, but of more concern is the fact that even young gay men are misinformed. This is what led Simon to create two young gay male characters, David and Axel, both of whom are promiscuous but are totally ignorant of the real consequences of HIV. At one point, Axel tells Marcus, who is HIV undetectable, that he could not possibly be infected because "You'd be in bed, you'd have... lesions and, and fever, and you'd be dying."

The plot factors in most of the interview findings and information given by the interviewees about how they were infected. It presents the audience with themes like chemsex parties, drugs used, society's misconceptions about persons living with HIV and the lack of information about treatment. The information that comes through the different characters in the theatre piece helps debunk common misconceptions and discusses how, by consistently taking their medication, people living with HIV are able to lower the amount of HIV in their bodies to undetectable levels. This means that, while undetectable, a person living with HIV can lead a normal life, is healthy and it is virtually impossible for him/her to transmit the virus during sexual relationships. It highlights the fact that it is not only society in general that has certain prejudices and misconceptions; the audience witnesses the misconceptions and fears that young gay people have even as they are engaged in high-risk behaviours experimenting with drugs and sex.

The plot structures action and emotion to make the audience go through a variety of emotions like tension, fear, frustration and balances these with comic relief mainly through Susan's character. As the story unfolds, emotion adds dimension, and the audience empathises with the characters. Theatre is shown to be a means of penetrating through the shell of the audience's ease, engaging the audience through emotion or critical reflection or both (Gatt, 2020).

Listening to the audience

After a change in plans caused by the pandemic, the play was piloted as a rehearsed reading on Zoom with an audience of around 40 persons. The audience consisted of a mixture of theatre practitioners, academics, MGRM members and other participants involved in the research study. The reading was followed by a discussion, during which several members of the audience debated various artistic and HIV-related aspects of the script. During the discussion most of the people in the audience said they felt highly emotional. There were some who spoke positively about it, especially the sudden twist at the end. However, the main feedback, especially from the activists, was an insistence that the ending had to be changed. In the last scene of the play's first version, David and Edwin, an older man he met on Grindr, find out, much to their distress, that they are father and son. Several activists argued that this shed a negative light on gay men, perpetrating harmful stereotypical notions about homosexuals being paedophiles or that they would be involved in incest.

This reaction from the invited audience came as a surprise to the author and the director. The twist at the end was intentional; the idea was that there are worse things than HIV which one can live with when treated. Neither realised that a relatively young audience would perceive it as so shocking. This discussion about the plot led the scriptwriter and director to review the script, creating a different ending and even a different title. The play's new title became *Il-Pozittivi* (The Positives), which brings together a literal reference to the condition of being HIV positive and the positivity that interviewees and Jung wanted to portray through the theatre production in order to challenge the stigma associated with HIV. In Malta, an additional meaning refers, with a measure of irony, to political rhetoric regularly bandied about by politicians in times of hardship, particularly during the COVID-19 saga.

The plan is to present this revised play to a larger audience during performances to be held at Valletta Campus Theatre (University of Malta) in 2021 and again in 2022, and conduct further research. Members of the audience will contribute with their views about the play and issues related to stigmatisation and misinformation in a paper and pencil survey. This involvement of the audience is in line with the co-creative philosophy of the project and with research conducted by the UM team (Vella & Pulè, 2021).

A positive transformation?

This article is a brief commentary on an ongoing artistic action based on interviews, feedback received from the invited visitors and various creative processes. This data set represents only a small portion of the data that we aim to collect during this comprehensive mixed methods study which is conceptualized as a critical and dialogical mixed methods study that integrates qualitative and quantitative findings from mixed methods studies conducted by researchers with different methodological orientations (Taylor & Raykov, 2020). Such results will be presented in a final research report upon completion of the entire study. To date, collected survey data indicate that visitors are highly interested in contributing to the promotion of rights of persons affected by HIV, contributing to the community, and learning more about HIV-related issues. One of the main preliminary findings of this study is that most of those who attended online reading have high expectations of socially engaged art. Also, most participants evaluated this form of socially engaged art quite positively after attending the online reading. This could be explained by the fact that many members of the online audience were theatre practitioners.

The play was generally well-received on social media. On Facebook, it was publicized by different entities and individuals, including MGRM, Culture Venture and Spazju Kreattiv, and posts disseminating information about it were shared several times. Overall, the results from this pilot study demonstrate a very high level of expectations and significant potential of socially engaged arts to combat misinformation related to some issues that marginalized groups face. Experiences gained from this play and the sharing of the rehearsed readings with professionals in the field of theatre in Malta are also expected to help other actors develop artistic performances that advocate for the rights of persons living with HIV, which was one of this study's objectives.

It will be important to see how the actual performance of a revised script later in 2021 will affect people's attitudes towards the topics under discussion as well as perceptions towards the transformative possibilities of socially engaged arts. Hopefully, the very open discussion of 'taboo' topics like HIV and homosexuality in NSFW can help audiences and artistic practitioners in Malta engage more strongly with the othering of specific groups through remedial actions and socially engaged art forms. Besides, the possibility of having an audience that is significantly broader during performances might also impact findings because most persons attending the online reading in 2020 were theatre practitioners and/or MGRM members.

Finally, it will be important to study how different types of participation affect the impact of the arts on various societal challenges. The pilot study's target group (persons living with HIV) participated only partially in the build-up towards the play's script: by providing stories and attitudes that were integrated by the scriptwriter in his script and characters. Other testbed experiments planned by UM will be more directly participatory, and this could lead to significant comparative results about participatory arts projects and programmes in Malta.

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amass acting on the margins
arts as social sculpture



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Arctic craftivism and revitalisation of crafting

“Craftivismo” ártico e revitalização do artesanato

“Craftivismo” ártico y revitalización de la artesanía

Maria Huhmarniemi

University of Lapland

maria.huhmarniemi@ulapland.fi

ABSTRACT

Knitting is a form of craft that is practised in many cultures with local features. Colour combinations, specific qualities of yarn, and decorative patterns give local character to mittens, cardigans, and other knits. In many regions, patterns have a communicative function: they carry cultural symbols and representations of cultural identities. In this visual essay, I describe artistic productions that have included participatory methods and the use of patterns as visual communication. The study follows the approach of art-based action research in which Northern cultural revitalisation is promoted. The artworks can be viewed as craftivism as the practice of engaging creativity regarding political or social causes.

keywords: installation art, political art, craft, art-based action research, Arctic

RESUMO

O tricô é uma forma de artesanato praticada em muitas culturas com características locais. Combinações de cores, qualidades específicas de fios e padrões decorativos dão caráter local a luvas, casacos de lã e outras malhas. Em muitas regiões, os padrões têm um função comunicativa: eles carregam símbolos culturais e representações de identidades culturais. Neste ensaio visual, descrevo produções artísticas que têm métodos participativos integrando o uso de padrões como comunicação visual. O estudo segue a abordagem da pesquisa-ação baseada na arte em que a revitalização cultural do Norte é promovida. As obras de arte podem ser vistas como “craftivismo” a prática de envolver a criatividade em causas políticas ou sociais.

Palavras-chave: instalação, arte política, artesanato, investigação-ação com base nas artes, Ártico

RESUMEN

Tejer es una forma de artesanía que se practica en muchos culturas con rasgos locales. Combinaciones de colores, cualidades específicas del hilo y patrones decorativos dar carácter local a manoplas, cárdigans y otros tejidos. En muchas regiones, los patrones tienen un función comunicativa: llevan símbolos culturales y representaciones de identidades culturales. En esto ensayo visual, describo producciones artísticas que han incluyó métodos participativos y el uso de patrones como comunicación visual. El estudio sigue el enfoque de la investigación-acción basada en el arte en el que se promueve la revitalización cultural del norte. Las obras de arte pueden verse como ‘craftivismo’, la práctica de involucrar la creatividad en causas políticas o sociales.

Palabras clave: instalación, arte político, artesanía, investigación-acción basada en las artes, Ártico

Introduction to revitalisation of cultural heritage and craft traditions

Revitalisations can be intergenerational and intercultural, with the aim of transmitting local knowledge, artistry, and cultural practices to new generations and new community members. Symbols and crafting methods, such as those in knits, carry cultural heritage. Crafts can be studied, and new meanings can be created for them. The method of crafting sustainability (Härkönen et al., 2018) is implemented in art projects where dialogue, revitalisation, and empowerment are created through crafting. I have carried out art-based action research in Northern Finland when studying how contemporary crafts can enhance dialogue and revitalisation of local traditions and heritage, and strengthen cultural pride. This study has resulted in installations in several group exhibitions.

Revitalisation is described as a practice that renews and remakes cultural traditions (Auclair & Fairclough, 2015). Revitalisation is often understood as the creation of cultural continuation from one generation to the next, as the reconstruction of forgotten skills, and as the promotion of cultural identities rooted in some specific regions. New meaning and functions can be given to elements of traditions (such as crafts) in contemporary art (Guttorm, 2015; Hansen, 2016; Härkönen et al., 2018; Iglolorte, 2019; Stöckell, 2018), art education (Gårdvik et al., 2014; Hiltunen, 2008, 2010; Hiltunen & Zemtsova, 2014), and creative tourism (Kugapi et al., 2020).

The concept of Arctic art and design (AAD) is used to embrace both tradition and innovation. AAD melds contemporary art, service, and product design with the core aim of investigating issues important in the Arctic region, such as Arctic sustainability, heritage, and livelihoods. As a concept, AAD is a parallel concept to Arctic art (Huhmarniemi & Jokela, 2020a, 2020b) and is defined in a similar way through concepts of changing traditions, sustainability, and political aspiration. Crafting is so common an approach in Arctic art due to the tradition of making and valuing arts and crafts as one and the same. The focus of my interest is on Arctic arts that study, represent, and reform local traditions, create new meanings with them, and implement local knowledge on new forms of expression and innovation. Arctic arts includes a dimension of cultural politics, since it is used to highlight specificities of the art and design in the Arctic and promote cultural sustainability, diversity, and the transformation of traditions as well as an awareness of cultural richness and diversity.

Craftivism, as a concept, joins the words craft and activism. Craftivism is commonly described as a form of activism, typically incorporating elements of anti-capitalism, environmentalism, solidarity, feminism and other similar socio-political aims. My knits are also a form of craftivism. Cultural politics are interwoven as statements in knits that I present in this visual essay. I call for cross-cultural learning and cultural aspirations in North.

This study is part of the wider research project *Acting on the margin: Arts as social sculpture (2020–2023)*, funded by the European Union. The project is based on the view of arts as something that can move people, educate societies, and create new narratives. The arts can also shed new light on the past, hold up a mirror to contemporary life, and launch new perspectives for the future. AMASS, an arts-based action research project, provides opportunities for people to come together and accompany artists as agents in creative projects and interpretations. The perspective of the AMASS project is on the physical positioning of European countries 'on the margins' in the underserved northern, southern, western, and eastern regions.

Methodological approach

Methodologically, my artistic research through knitting follows the research approach of art-based action research (ABAR), which has been developed at the University of Lapland to combine artistic work with educational practices and community empowerment (Jokela, 2019; Jokela et al., 2015). ABAR aims to develop the professional methods and working approaches of the community artist and artist-teacher-researcher. The strategy shares some common features with artistic research in general, as well as action research and arts-based research. In ABAR, practical and theoretical forms of research are conducted simultaneously, and research topics have relevance for art as well as other academic fields, such as health, well-being, and sustainability. In my knits, my aim has been to promote crafting in contemporary art and study ways to enhance revitalisation and cultural pride in Finnish Lapland.

ABAR is a cyclic process that includes setting aims, conducting artistic and art-based interventions, and analysing and presenting results in research publications and art exhibitions. Typical to action research, ABAR is commonly collaborative in all parts of the process. Thus, aim setting is made together with community members and artist peers, interventions are participatory, and analyses and representations are often jointly conducted. The research presented in this visual essay has included many forms of collaboration, such as open calls for participation and collaborative design of group exhibitions in which the artistic



Figure 1. Maria Huhmarniemi; Elna Härkönen and Miia Mäkinen, from the photo series 'Shared Woollen Patterns vol 2', 2019, photo by: Maria Huhmarniemi.



Figure 2. Maria Huhmarniemi, *Imaginary Identities I: Enontekiö (Finland), Viljandi (Estonia), Alahärmä (Finland)*, 2019, photo by Outi Kugapi.

productions have been shown. One of the installations presented in this essay, *Shared Woollen Patterns*, is made by an artist collective called Patterns Collective.

Shared Woollen Patterns installations were presented in the *Fringe* exhibition in 2019. The title of the exhibition *Fringe* refers to the outer edge, or the margin. The curators of the exhibition stated that when something is regarded as peripheral, marginal, or extreme, it often must be respected and protected (Huhmarniemi et al., 2019). The curators selected artists and artworks that blend arts and crafts and implement dialogical themes and methods from various perspectives with handmade techniques. They stated aims to increase appreciation and understanding of the diverse use of handicrafts in reflecting the North and in fostering revitalisation (Huhmarniemi et al., 2019). The *Fringe* exhibition presented a number of works by artists from Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, and the United States.

Forest culture, later titled as *Kukki Forest*, was created for the exhibition *Forest Talks to Us* as part of the AMASS research. The exhibition was an intervention into environmental

politics on the forest industry in Lapland as well as on cultural politics. The artworks in the *Forest Talks to Us* exhibition offered perspectives on the concepts of conversation and interaction. In the exhibition, visual and symbolic elements of knitted patterns were seen as one form of dialogue and communication.

Knits

When starting the series of knitted installations, I was inspired by patterns that can be localized to some specific regions but have also been adopted and transformed to other regions, not as cultural appropriation but as cultural exchange and learning. This knitted piece, *Imaginary Identities I* (2019), combines traditional patterns from the Enontekiö and Alahärmä regions in Finland and Viljandi in Estonia (Figure 2). This knitted piece reflects cultural, ethnic, and regional identity with patterns from two different parts of the world. Moreover, the mitten artwork highlights the cultural right to express identities between cultures (such as a Finnish-Estonian person or between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people).



Figure 3. *Patterns Collective* (Elina Härkönen, Miia Mäkinen, Maria Huhmarniemi and Jari Rinne) *Shared Woollen Patterns*, 2019. Photo: Janne Jakola.

The installation *Shared Woollen Patterns* (2019) by Patterns Collective (Maria Huhmarniemi, Elina Härkönen, Miia Mäkinen and Jari Rinne) examines a shared cultural heritage of the Arctic through traditional knitting patterns (Figure 3). The pieces of the three cloaks were collected in collaboration with knitters around the Arctic, who have shared their knowledge of their regional knitting traditions. The knitted pieces represent pieces of cultural identity and heritage. Presented together, the pieces show similarities and differences between different traditions. The installation includes a soundscape that includes actual knitting sounds and the creation of stories. The installation aimed to make the handcraft traditions visible and demonstrate their dimensions as a shared tradition of knitting that brings people together. Alluring audio cues aimed to create a feeling of a 'knitting state of mind', like slowing down, cosy feelings, and a safe space for sharing.

The second volume of *Shared Woollen Patterns* artwork consists of a series of photos in the three cloaks carried by Patterns Collective members (Figures 1, 4-5). These photos

underline cultural pride and the right to adopt elements of crafts and visual symbols into one's own cultural identity. The theme of the artwork is strongly connected to discussions of cultural politics in the Arctic, where cultural appropriation is judged. The artwork does not state that cultural appropriation should in any way be accepted, but pulls attention to possibilities of having a fair and open mix of cultural elements in one's own cultural identity and expressions of it.

Kukki Forest was an installation in the series *Sense of Forest Conflict* by Huhmarniemi (Figure 6-7). The *Kukki Forest* installation consisted of knitted elements that are associated visually with punching bags and trunks of pines in the exhibition that discussed forest disputes in Finland. The colours of the knitted elements referred to the grey, orange, and brown tones of the pines in forests in Finnish Lapland. Patterns in different styles, including decorative ornaments and animal figures, represented communication with trees as cultural heritage. The artwork is based on an experience of dialogue with trees as sensations and images



Figure 4,5 Maria Huhmarniemi, Elina Härkönen and Miia Mäkinen, from the photo series 'Shared Woollen Patterns vol 2', 2019, photo by: Maria Huhmarniemi.





Figure 6-7. Maria Huhmarniemir, *Kukki Forest*, 2021, Installation: 8 knits, chains. The installation is presented in the Art Cave Saimaa Retretti.
Photo: Saara Huhmarniemir.

in the mind's eye. Symbols of the heart were repeated in several of the knitted items, underlining care for trees and the experiences of togetherness with trees. Some patterns referred to traditional folk crafts in Nordic and Baltic countries and some to those in Scotland, associated with the essence of tree communication as a cross-cultural form of spiritual knowledge. The overall concept of trees as punching bags demonstrated the ability of trees to release human stress.

Reflection

Knits presented in this visual essay express how cultural meanings are not always told verbally but can also be conveyed through visual signs, symbols, the choice of material, and crafting methods. This visually crafted language has communicative effects both inside and outside local communities, and the language of crafts is important for sharing traditions, beliefs, and worldviews (e.g. Minnakhmetova et al., 2019; Schilar & Keskitalo, 2018). Traditional crafts can also carry spiritual and religious content (Helander-Renval, 2009; Joy, 2018), which have importance in contemporary society. Knits presented in this essay aimed to transmit heritage and revitalise crafting as communication. The knits can be described as Arctic craftivism.





Figure 8. Maria Huhmarniemir, *Kukki Forest*, 2021, Installation: 8 knits, chains. The installation is presented in the Art Cave Saimaa Retretti. Photo: Tanja Koistinen

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amass acting on the margins
arts as social sculpture



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Making your voice heard: a visual communication project for young Roma women

Fazer a sua voz ser ouvida:

um projeto de comunicação visual para jovens mulheres Ciganas

Hacer oír tu voz:

un proyecto de comunicación visual para jóvenes mujeres Romani

Andrea Kárpáti

Corvinus University Budapest

andrea.karpati@uni-corvinus.hu

Zsófia Somogyi-Rohonczy

Doctoral School of Education, ELTE University and Corvinus University Budapest

somogyi.zsofia@ludwigmuseum.hu

ABSTRACT

The Hungarian Roma have a rich and diverse cultural heritage, but it is not sufficiently integrated into an authentic and empowering school curriculum, not exhibited in a dedicated museum and consequently, is not recognised even by members of the cultural group. The major objective of the *Roma Cultural Influencer Training Program*, realised in two iterations in the framework of the *HORIZON2020 AMASS Project* is to design and implement a verbal, visual and digital communication skills development program that is motivating and useful in many ways for young Roma girls and women, whether at school or already employed.

In a social media course with 18 participants representing the whole cultural spectrum of the young Roma community, the first part of which had been finished in January 2021 and reported here, we enhanced their communication skills in primarily visual media. While preparing them for individual creation of social media pieces, we also motivated them to explore and represent their cultural heritage integrating it with contemporary social issues concerning Hungarian Roma in a youthful, easily accessible environment. The training program was accompanied by a participatory observation and portfolio assessment study. Primary results are reported here.

Keywords: Hungarian Roma, cultural heritage, social media presence, influencer, media-based intervention

RESUMO

Os Rom húngaros têm um patrimônio cultural rico e diversificado, mas não está suficientemente integrado num currículo escolar autêntico e empoderador, não está exposto num museu dedicado e, conseqüentemente, não é reconhecido nem mesmo por membros do seu grupo cultural. O principal objetivo do Programa de Treino de Mediador Cultural Rom, realizado em duas iterações no âmbito do Projeto HORIZON2020 AMASS, é projetar e implementar um programa de desenvolvimento de habilidades de comunicação verbal, visual e digital que seja motivador e útil de várias maneiras para as meninas Rom e mulheres, que estejam na escola ou já empregadas.

Relatamos aqui, a primeira parte do treino de media social concluída em janeiro de 2021 com 18 participantes representando o espectro cultural da comunidade jovem Rom. No treino trabalhamos habilidades de comunicação principalmente nos media visuais. Ao prepará-los para a criação individual de imagens, também os motivamos a explorar e representar sua herança cultural integrando-a com questões sociais contemporâneas relativas aos rom húngaros num ambiente jovem e de fácil acesso. O programa foi acompanhado por uma observação participante e estudo de avaliação de portfólio. Os resultados primários são relatados aqui.

Palavras-chave: Rom húngaras, herança cultural, presença nas redes sociais, influencer, intervenção baseada nos media

RESUMEN

Los romaníes húngaros tienen un patrimonio cultural rico y diverso, pero no está suficientemente integrado en un plan de estudios escolar auténtico y empoderador, no se exhibe en un museo dedicado y, en consecuencia, ni siquiera los miembros del grupo cultural lo reconocen. El principal objetivo del Programa de formación de influyentes culturales romaníes, realizado en dos iteraciones en el marco del proyecto HORIZON2020 AMASS, es diseñar e implementar un programa de desarrollo de habilidades de comunicación verbal, visual y digital que sea motivador y útil de muchas maneras para las jóvenes romaníes. y mujeres, ya sea en la escuela o ya empleadas.

En un curso de redes sociales con 18 participantes que representan todo el espectro cultural de la comunidad joven gitana, cuya primera parte se terminó en enero de 2021 y se informó aquí, mejoramos sus habilidades de comunicación principalmente en medios visuales. Mientras los preparamos para la creación individual de piezas de redes sociales, también los motivamos a explorar y representar su herencia cultural integrándola con los problemas sociales contemporáneos relacionados con los romaníes húngaros en un entorno juvenil y de fácil acceso. El programa de capacitación estuvo acompañado de una observación participativa y un estudio de evaluación de portafolios. Los resultados primarios se informan aquí.

Palabras clave: Romaní húngaro, herencia cultural, presencia en las redes sociales, influencer, intervención basada en los medios

Setting the context

The biggest Hungarian minority, the Roma (about 10% of the population of 9.500.000 in Hungary, inhabitants of central and Eastern Europe since the Renaissance, 14-15th century). Sociological research on Roma culture helped reveal paths for education to follow in order to build bridges between minority and majority cultures that supports mutual communication, and ultimately leads to a better understanding. In the framework of the 'Societies and Lifestyles' project, realised between 2006-2009, 10 post-communist countries documented and analysed lifestyles and values of so-called *fringers*: small ethnic groups living on the fringes of society. The Hungarian Roma served as examples of social groups whose rich cultural heritage had been exploited without its integration into an authentic and empowering curriculum, without exhibiting in a dedicated

museum and consequently, without recognition even by members of the cultural group. (Forray & Beck, 2008).

The Hungarian Roma, about 780,000 in number, the biggest majority in a country of less than ten million inhabitants. Hungarian Roma belong to two major tribal groups that are basically different in culture, lifestyle and attitudes toward education. Most of the 3% of the Roma cohort pursuing studies in higher education come from Romungro ('Hungarian', Vlach, 'Wallachian' or 'Olah') tribal members. They are proud of their culture, but their identity is not connected to their ancient tribal language which they lost in the process of acquiring middle-class Hungarian culture. The Boyash (or 'Beás') live in the South of the Transdanubian region of Hungary, in small villages in the vicinity of larger centres where they can find employment. Their identity is deeply rooted in their art (music, dance, crafts) and their language.



Merj lépni Merj változtatni!

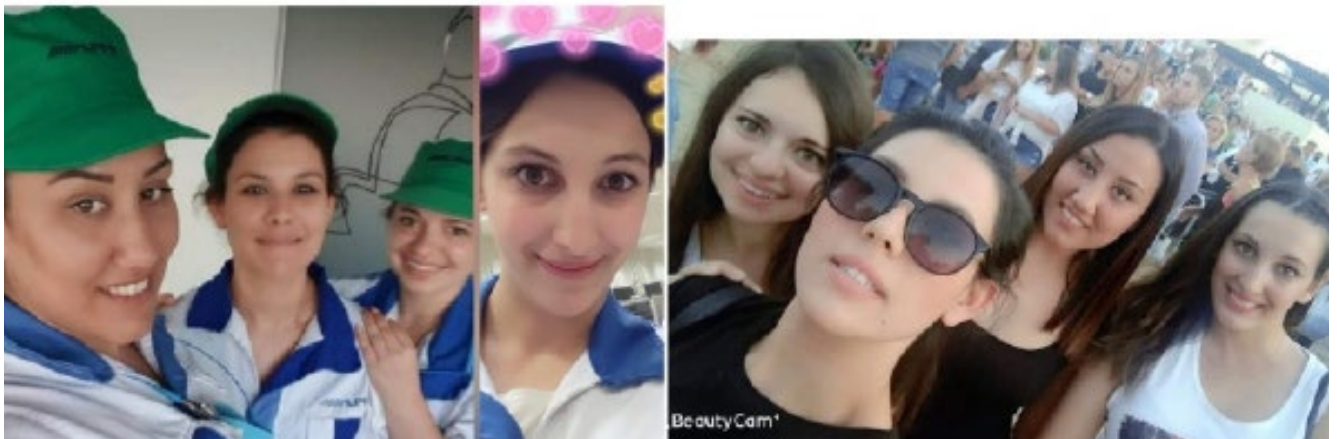


Figure 1. A pitch by Mária Farkas, participant of the Roma Cultural Influencer Program.

“Be brave to step! Be brave to change!”

The education of Hungarian Roma changed substantially when the country entered the European Union (EU) in 2003 and accepted the so-called Capotorti definition of this minority as a nation with equal rights to education in their native language, based on their needs and ambitions (Capotorti, 1977). While previous educational efforts were targeted towards segregation disguised as remedial primary level education in ‘special’ classes with lower attainment expectations (dead alleys that practically prevented further studies), new programmes envisaged textbooks in native languages and support for the training and subsequent enrolment of Roma teachers. Most young Roma who continue their studies after the compulsory eight years of primary education, attend vocational schools that often

train redundant workforce, as the system of vocational training in Hungary has not been restructured to meet the needs of a transformed economy. Thus, undereducation and unemployment are intricately related and the social distance between the Roma minority and the social majority constantly increases (Kertesi & Kézdi, 2011).

Knowledge about and appropriation of the cultural heritage of a nation is a basic constituent of *national identity and self-esteem*. Roma culture (apart from music) is practically invisible in Hungary (Kárpáti et al., 2014). Benevolent intensions for intervention from outside the Roma community always face the danger of cultural colonisation – presenting a new kind of expert or esoteric knowledge to replace that of the ruling

My Company

Ki vagyok én?

Párom Kedvese

A Godó család tagja

A Wáli István református Gigány Szakkollégium tagja

Tanárnő

Identitás-keresés bekapcsolva...

A Debreceni Egyetem PhD hallgatója

Tiszanána település származottja

Magyar vagy cigány? - NEM!
MagyarCigány

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Figure 2. Digital collage by Katalin Godó, participant of the Roma Cultural Influencer Program. Text: "Who I am? Identity searching switched on - Woman of my love, the member of the Godó Family, member of the István Wáli Roma College for Advanced Studies of the Reformed Church, teacher, stemming from Tiszanána, PhD student of the University of Debrecen. Hungarian or Roma? – No! Roma in Hungary"



Figure 3. Students of the Roma Cultural Influencer Training Program. Learning as a mother of a toddler is not impossible! (Photo by Lajos Kovács)

“Be brave to step! Be brave to change!”

(educational) elite. Young (2012) emphasises the need for ‘powerful knowledge’ for the underprivileged that develops flexible thinking and methods of knowledge construction instead of teaching readymade concepts and rules and is always open to challenge. Communication skills of young Roma, mostly visualisers and not verbalisers, are often underdeveloped because of the overwhelmingly verbal nature of teaching and learning (Kyuchukov et al., 2017). Communication through media is a motivating platform for *self-expression*, and visual language may facilitate their *conceptual development*.

The Hungarian Roma should have a cultural representation of their own in the social media, too, where their life is often represented in stereotypes of violence and crime or is reduced to entertainment music. *Roma cultural identity needs expression*, and social media seem to be ideal for this. Easily accessible, free platforms like Instagram, Facebook or YouTube may distribute knowledge about Roma culture: arts, crafts, customs, and the related visual and verbal heritage. Moreover, digital literacy and communication skills are a big advantage at school, during training and in the job market.

The major objective of the *Roma Cultural Influencer Training Program*, realised in two iterations in the framework of the *HORIZON2020 AMASS Project* with a telling title: “Acting on

the margins – the arts as social sculpture, is to design and implement a verbal, visual and digital communication skills development program that is motivating and useful in many ways for young Roma girls and women, whether at school or already employed. In a social media course, the first part of which had been finished in January 2021 and reported here, we intend to enhance communication skills in primarily visual media (easier accessible for them than, for example, channels like radio journalism) with high acceptance among them.

Several journalism courses for aspiring Roma newsmen and -women had been offered in Hungary before, with little lasting effect. To become a TV or radio anchor or shoot a documentary film, get your article into the printed press one needs a good network of mentors and much luck – features outside the range of possibilities of most young Roma. However, social media are there for everyone. Success depends on knowledge and skills, creativity and perseverance – skills and emotions can be cultivated through educational and mentoring programs.

The power of social media to change mindsets and influence beliefs, values and attitudes was proven repeatedly in studies before (Ngai et al., 2015). Some communication skills are essential in this mission: creation of oral and written media pieces, photos and videos and different genres in journalism.



Figure 4. The students of the first Roma Cultural Influencer Training Program with teachers and mentors at Corvinus University of Budapest. Photo by Lajos Kovács.

These are the skills that the first part of our intensive course has started to develop, and the second course will further enhance. Both courses are practice oriented in nature, with student mentoring and extensive laboratory and media practice (in three institutions offering programs for the Roma population). The duration of the course is twice 30 lesson hours in 6-hour blocks. This paper reports on the first iteration of the course, taught between 15 October 2020 and 8 January 2021, in 5 blocks of 6 lesson hours, 30 hours in total, with online mentoring between course blocks.

Roma culture is practically invisible in Hungary. There is no museum dedicated to Roma visual arts, crafts, music, literature, or folklore tradition. While preparing them for individual creation of social media pieces, we also motivated them to *explore and represent their cultural heritage* integrating it with contemporary social issues concerning Hungarian Roma in a youthful, easily accessible environment. A well-trained and engaged cultural influencer of Romani origin could be vital in the manifestation of these values in an inspirational way.

Communication in social media is a central part of the training that could be useful both in the professional and private life of the participants. The knowledge of modern online communication is an effective aid in the establishment and propagation of an enterprise as well. The development of the participants' communication supports their scholastic record through developing a better understanding of texts and images, and a more effective presentation of their knowledge. Their visual communication will help the students in the group in the visualisation of abstract ideas

and thus comprehend concepts and rules in the field of Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry as well.

The complex learning process is bi-directional: the communicational professionals will also learn from the participants and gain new perspectives about Romani culture and thus better support the work of course participants.

The project - in its complexity- is a pioneer venture in Hungary. The organizers combine top-level academic knowledge with the practice of everyday life in teaching social media communication. University staff and media professionals of Roma origin work together in this training, which symbolizes the cultural bridge between the communities. One of the key figures of the training - Mária Baranyai - will give a motivating example through her own life: coming from a poor Romani family, she has become a successful journalist, an authentic role model of self-branding and self-management.

The project invites participants from the whole the country and requires no prior training. The only requirements are commitment, motivation, and openness.

Research objectives

Cultural empowerment

The main aim of the project is to empower young Roma girls and women to *effectively express their cultural heritage, contemporary, social issues and achievements* through social media and thus disseminate knowledge and change negative attitudes about the Roma minority. Some communication skills are essential in this mission: creation of oral and written media pieces, photos and videos and different genres in journalism.

The target group of the project is disadvantaged on multiple levels: the Hungarian Roma are a socially undervalued, economically disadvantaged minority. Moreover, in Roma culture, the women - especially young girls- have even more limited life perspectives and possibilities to decide about their future. The expected attitude in this community is to prefer motherhood over further education and professional career. This attitude is more stressed in the countryside, where the scarcity of jobs forces women to give birth and support their families through childcare allowance. Despite these factors, strong-willed Romani women are often the catalysts for change and the driving force in the families.

CUB (Corvinus University Budapest), Media Lab of the Institute of Communication and Sociology. We intend to provide an immersion in the culture of higher education of an institution famous for its world-class business degrees. We want to show that it is possible to be part of this culture, to mingle with communication and media students and staff, to be supported by tutors and be praised for creative work and representation of a culture that is mostly unknown to us. Through an effective and authentic representation of Romani culture in social media and thus build a cultural bridge between minority (Roma) and majority members of the Hungarian society.

Development of social media literacy

The most important attitude enhanced by program: *self-assertion* through acquaintance with values of Roma culture for Hungarian society. Communication skills (oral and written, face-to-face and digital, were established in laboratory practice and will be further developed in the studios of a radio and a television channel as well as the Roma Press Centre of Hungary. Though our objective is to prepare our course participants for work in social media, we want them to learn from the best professionals about mass media genres and their adaptation for their social sites.

The girls came from a wide variety of social environments. We had a doctoral student, who came to polish here science communication skills, a few university students who wanted to use social media to spread their cultural knowledge, a young entrepreneur who intended to learn how to popularise her craft products (beautiful knitted children's toys), and several girls who recently finished secondary education and were curious about media career paths. They all have to be furnished with conflict management skills to negotiate prejudice, develop a better self-knowledge and self-understanding. Many of them need to acquire basic life skills (planning their work, making decisions, pursuing a goal systematically). We also invite them to engage in creative activities like filming, photography and multimedia arts that increase their well-being and contribute to their self-esteem.



Figure 5. First step: How could we communicate a simple product? The power of personal recommendation is the tool of an influencer.
Photo by Lajos Kovács.

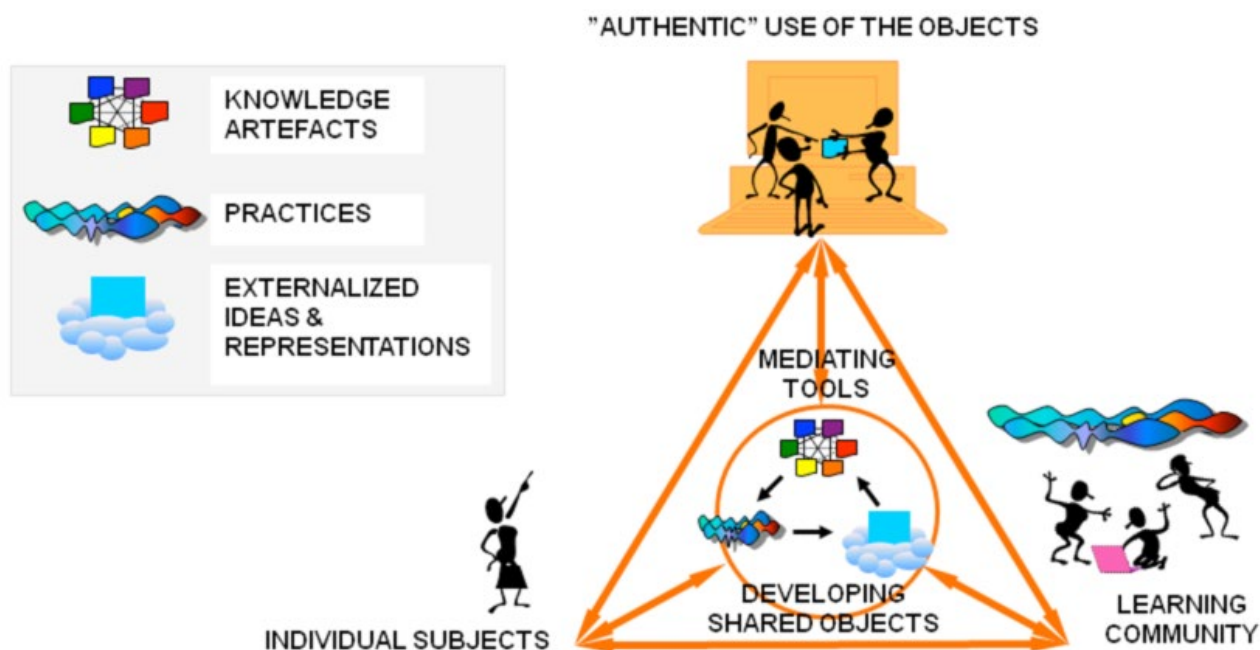
Research questions

Research questions of the participatory action study:

1. Is it possible to acquire basic knowledge and skills as well as a healthy media related identity and critical attitude during a short course of 30 lessons?
2. Can young women of Roma heritage establish themselves in social media through cultural messages?
3. Do they have an appeal and impact among their own community and among Hungarian youth?
4. Can they have an impact on the attitudes and publication practices of mass media covering Roma issues?

Research questions have been answered through a qualitative study documenting and assessing the first iteration of the course. Methods are discussed below. Our target population was an ethnic minority (Roma) girls and young women, who belong to a disadvantaged and neglected Hungarian minority both in terms of culture, education and work prospects. The number of enrolments in the first part of the course was 18, and 12 participants completed it.

Roma cultural heritage and current social issues should be expressed through *the synergy of creative arts and media pieces*. We hope that *young Roma girls and women*, who acquire arts and media skills (on a basic level), will be able to make themselves seen and heard more intensively and in a more sustainable manner. Apart from creating their own expressive pieces, we intend to teach them to develop social media platforms for art projects at schools or showcase Roma artists through reporting on them in social media.



6. Figure: The Triological learning Process explained. (Source: Hakkarainen, 2007).

What did we do? – The procedure of the study

Participants

First and foremost, we intended to empower young Roma girls and women, who are still being oppressed by the traditionally male-dominated Roma culture and still need encouragement, to effectively express themselves online, develop a powerful presence and give voice to contemporary, social issues and achievements (cf. EU Directorate General for Internal Affairs, 2013). Eighteen young Roma girls and women in the first (piloting) iteration, of whom twelve completed the course successfully. Participants for the first course were recruited through Roma associations and support organisations of the Hungarian Catholic Church. They were Hungarian Roma girls and women aged 16-23, living in Budapest, having a Roma identity and interest in pursuing medium or higher-level studies or opening a business and lacking necessary skills to succeed.

The *stakeholder community* around the Hungarian AMASS team includes local municipal decision makers, educational politicians, and community members from cultural and political associations of Hungarian Roma who reflect on course content and mentor participants.

Tutors from Corvinus University Budapest, experts in social media, digital art, filming and photography and media studies and invited *mentors*: artists, journalists and other members of the media of Roma origin or with an expertise in Roma culture create a synergy in teaching the course.

Students approached them for the collaborative production of media pieces.

The Triological Learning Model as a creative process

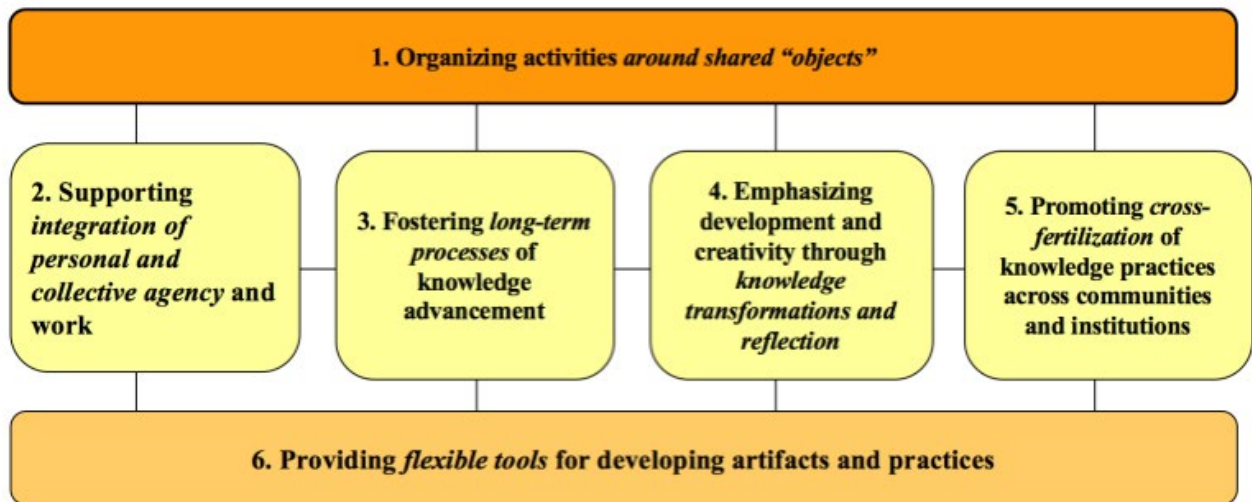
Media pieces are created in a collaborative environment, where the roles of mentor and mentee, teacher and student are not hierarchical. While learning, joint knowledge is built and shared among a group or community. Knowledge building interactions enable participants to experience creativity development supported by group interactions, inspiring them to grow.

Our educational practices refer to the Triological Learning Model and applies learning methods that invite learners to develop, transform or create artifacts (concepts, objects etc.), creating shared objects (media pieces like photo narratives, experimental films or multimedia). The activity is organised around this shared knowledge object that can be a part of a creative process: an idea, the image of a phenomenon, the realisation of an aesthetic or communication rule, principle, goal or topic).

Triological learning focuses on the interaction, not the final product and engages participants in collaborative creativity not just between the learner and the teachers (“dialogical approach”), or within one’s mind (“monological” approach). Throughout the learning process, the learners should be made aware of the goals of consecutive activities with the knowledge objects. Major guiding principles of this model are outlined in Figures 1 and 2.

Design principles for the triological pedagogy

(Paavola & Hakkarainen, 2009; Paavola et al., 2011; Paavola 2015)



7. Figure: Design principles for the Triological pedagogy. (Source: Paavola, 2015)

Combining digital technologies with traditional means of expression supports the goals of Triological learning design: digital tools enable with the transmission of knowledge and its transgression from individual learner's knowledge to communal knowledge repository.

What did we learn? Results of the first media-based intervention

Preserving cultural heritage through communication and social media skills development (accompanied by engagement with ancient art forms) were found a motivating and successful form of practice. Works produced by course participants reflected on their past and present through photography, video, graphic visualisations, reportage and narrative text.

In the training course, the process of technology acquisition and enhancement of image production ultimately resulting in a complex, often symbolic visual communication was integrated with the development of verbal and written communication skills of students. Based on the expert assessment of the media portfolios of the participants, we found that it was possible to acquire basic knowledge and skills and develop a positive identity during the first phase of the training reported here, lasting for 30 lesson hours.

The course was demanding both in time and effort, therefore 9 out of 21 participants left the course at various phases of the training. The 12 graduates have, however, made definite progress. More than 20 % of our participants could establish themselves in social media and develop both cultural and

self-reflective or own business-related messages. This finding is based on video interviews on experiences during the course and first results of the Roma girls and women as well as on expert assessment of the media pieces produced by course participants.

However, the same data sources revealed that our would-be Roma cultural influencers have not had any significant impact on their own sociocultural environment so far. To establish an influential media personality and exercise an appeal and impact in the Roma community takes time. To reach out to the majority Hungarian population is a complex issue for which more media training (including content provision for different audiences) is needed.

Assessment methods and results

The learning process was monitored through the following evaluation methods – some of which had to be tailored to the changing learning environment as the pandemic took over and the university facilities were closed.

Video documentation

Important phases of all five sessions were recorded. Video documentations will be analysed through the NVivo video annotation software to identify patterns of student response to different teaching strategies. At present, based on first views, we witness that students were active participants with frequent note taking and asking questions when the learning content had a direct relevance to becoming an



Figure 8. A coaching session on the first day with Dr. Ágnes Veszelszki, Head of the Department of Communication and Media Science: “How do you imagine yourself in the future?” (Photo by Lajos Kovács)



Figure 9. Students on the training with mentors Mária Baranyi, Roma journalist, and Julia Sipos, reporter and media expert.

(Photo by Lajos Kovács)

influencer – and less so, when basic theoretical background knowledge was distributed.

Examples taken from media works often had to be explained in detail for understanding the context of the piece and the style of the example was judged differently by participants of different taste. Such discussions contributed to finding their own voice, identifying with a genre (from on-site gonzo journalism on sensitive social issues to vlogging on Romani fashion). This voice will be further developed through Course II, when they will have to cultivate their own channels.

Nice examples of comradery and peer support were also witnessed when the girls helped each-other or turned to the senior participant of the course: a middle-aged, established media worker, who came to our university to polish her digital skills and deepen her social media knowledge. A baby boy accompanying his mother at the face-to-face sessions was adored by all participants and contributed to the warm, welcoming atmosphere of the course.

Participant observation

The two face-to-face sessions were eye-witnessed, and the three online training days monitored online by the authors of this paper. Zsófia Somogyi-Rohonczy a doctoral student of educational science used a checklist to assess teaching and learning processes. She kept in touch through frequent e-mails and phone calls with our participants. Individual and group interviews were taken on video by Lajos Kovács, Associate Professor of Media Studies, who, with his students, also produced a documentary about the face-to-face training sessions.

Through an acute observation of difficulties during sessions and a follow-up of no-shows and undelivered homework, our dropout rate was only 30%. As most of our participants

came from remote parts of the country to attend the sessions, this is not a high percentage. Those who decided to leave, did so when individual assignments had to be delivered – short and easy to produce pieces like expressive and non-misleading selfies to be used on their own media site or a draft blog entry. They realised that, becoming an influencer means perseverant, continuous work and a lot of skills to be learned or improved. They realised that they were not ready for this. Their feedback, the interviews and participant observation notes told us about signs of insecurity and misunderstanding that we will try to better manage in Course II. The opt-out rate of 30 %, however, is not too high, considering the much higher early school leaving rate of Hungarian Roma at 45 %.

Background questionnaire

Questions about previous experiences with media, digital and media literacy and basic demographic data needed for issuing certificates and evaluate student progress based on previous media experiences. We realised that

-most of our participants have finished or were in the final year of their *secondary education*;

-*they were eager users of social media*, and knew some Roma influencers – though not culturally inclined ones as there seem to be none so far – whom they followed and even analysed later in the course;

-most of them had very *little practice in social media content creation* in general and were surprised to hear about the rules and regulations of the sites;

-*very few have filmed before* and practically none edited a film strip (although it is part of the elementary school ICT



Figure 11. Mrs. Antal, a young Roma entrepreneur arrived with her project the Nonna baby. Her mission is to offer high quality and hand-made toys for disadvantaged children and ensure happy childhood for them. She is one of the next Roma Cultural Influencer Training Program's participants, where she will further develop her product page and her social media presence..

-How to create effective photos and films, and how to build them into a media channel? A prize-winning documentary filmmaker and a web design expert explained, showed and helped with techniques, tools, and, above all, methods of capturing and keeping the attention of your audience.

Results of the participatory study

Our first research question related to the feasibility of the duration of the course. The answer is definitely no. More time and face-to-face training is needed to acquire basic knowledge and skills as well as a healthy media related identity and critical attitude. Intended results of the Roma Cultural Influencer Program were artistic and communicative representations of Roma cultural heritage: social media sites featuring art and media works on current issues of Roma life and values of their artistic heritage.

Therefore, we decided to continue the first course, 30 lesson hours in 5 blocks between September 2020 – January 2021, executed face-to-face in the first two months and online in the last three units of the program. Needless to say, online meetings were far less productive and effective, than face-to-face encounters during media lab practice, peer review of the first blog or Instagram entries or watching professionals organise a media program during a field trip to a studio.

Our second research question can be answered in affirmative. *Young women of the Roma community can establish themselves in social media through cultural messages*, although to gain a popularity similar to female influencers who post on cosmetics or fashion will never be achieved. This is not their objective, either: our third research question describes our intention: we want to train the girls to have an appeal and *impact among their own community – and potentially, also among Hungarian youth*. To answer this question, we are following the media presence of the girls and will evaluate their impact after the end of the second part of the training program.

Our fourth research question, however, may already be answered: *our influencer trainees have an impact on the attitudes and publication practices of mass media covering Roma issues*. More than twenty media pieces in media organs of national coverage were produced about our course and the intention of the Roma girls and young women to change the image of their community in the media. All reports were positive, emphasizing the need for the recognition of Roma culture and the potentials of social media in reaching the goal of mind change among youth.

Social impact of the program

Developing cognitive, affective, or psychomotor skills are obviously unable to solve social problems of an oppressed minority. Nevertheless, such educational empowerment may lead to the formation of a native group of intellectuals who may represent the interests of Roma more effectively. On the other hand, in times of economic crisis, unemployment hits unskilled workers first. Many Hungarian Roma families are targeted, and their educational success may help overcome their inherited social disadvantages.

Through social media, our course participants may disseminate knowledge and change negative attitudes about the Roma minority. As I emphasized before, there is very little positive media representation of Hungarian Roma, especially on their cultural heritage. We hoped to educate young people who would be able to alter this situation and create relevant, inspiring, and educating media pieces for their own community and for the Hungarian public as well. This objective was very well received by both the printed and digital media: the CUB staff and our Roma journalist expert employed for the whole duration of the course, gave over 15 interviews and our course participants were also frequently asked about their experiences and future plans.

Through this intensive media presence, documented partly on our Facebook page dedicated for the course, (<https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=roma%20influencer>) we made contacts with the Roma Press Agency (<http://romasajtokozyont.hu/>) that is an ideal site with a large network for our students to learn about socially oriented journalism. A new TV channel, Dikh TV (<http://dikhtv.hu>), that has an active presence on social media intends to offer our students a chance for media practice (<https://www.facebook.com/dikhtv/>, https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuyhUWU_RDcs-zmMXYyosDw).

The final work of our course participants was to create a media piece all on their own, from organising the interview to filming and editing it for a social media channel of their choice, adding text and images where necessary. Through this task that their mentors organised for them through previously approaching the personality and telling about our course, they encountered nationally acknowledged Roma artists, designers, teachers, social workers etc., *who could serve both as role models and as sources of cultural identity*. The works are online, and their young creators are spreading the news about them. We hope that in their local environment these films will have an effect and develop an audience for more content like these. The course is also sustainable, as most tutors are employees of Corvinus University Budapest. The Roma media personalities and reporters who acted as guest

lecturers or mentors have declared their intention to continue in Course II, when we support the creation and development of a social media site for each participant.

The major problem we encountered was the pandemic. Developing digital skills like filming, editing and post-production online is very difficult, and so is mentoring based on media works. Further problems resulted from *difficulties of travel* (most participants came from outside the capitol, the venue of the course at CUB, and had to travel 3-5 hours both ways. We secured student hostel accommodation for every participant requesting it, paid for both travel and accommodation, and provided catering for the course day. Tuition fee (a substantial expense for CUB students, was not charged of course.

Media lab facilities with technicians to help were also provided and they will be offered more extensively in the future. Our future influencers only have the basic equipment: smart phones and PC access somewhere in their town: at school, library or house of culture to produce their media pieces, but need to know how they can develop their work to meet the requirements of contemporary audiences. We showed them free software, tricks of lighting to be done even at home, with basic facilities etc., but we want to *prepare them to expand later* and establish a small studio of their own as thousands of bloggers and vloggers have done in our country. We hope to have some support for giving them some instruments like tablets and good microphones to take home and thus enable them to produce on the level their skills enable them.

Research on the first Roma Cultural Influencer Course shows that the *first encounters* of the girls with social media as content providers are very diverse - just like our population that ranged from secondary school students and unskilled workers to university or even doctoral students. Media portfolios of the twelve successful participants constitute a valuable dataset for case studies. In the second phase of the experiment, we intend to follow the creative paths of the first *cultural influencers* of the Hungarian Roma community and establish trends of development in media skills, quality of expression and level of representation of Roma culture.

News about a training that does not aim at “civilising” or “breaking in” Roma youth and channel them to tedious, low-paying jobs, but coach them to be media personalities, was extremely well received at all levels and genres of Hungarian media – from national press to special interest, online publications. Based on a content analysis of the coverage of the course and interviews with the participants, we can postulate that even the start of the training of protagonists of Roma culture in social media had a positive impact on the attitudes and publication practices of mass media covering Roma youth.

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AMASS acting on the margins
arts as social sculpture



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(Eco)Pedagogía (postdigital) de la esperanza: *Quadráginta*, proyecto colaborativo como escultura social en la era COVID-19

(Eco) Pedagogia (pós-digital) da esperança: *Quadráginta*, projeto colaborativo como escultura social na era COVID-19

(Eco) Pedagogy (postdigital) of hope: *Quadráginta*, collaborative project as social sculpture in the COVID-19 era

Carlos Escaño

Universidad de Sevilla

jcescano@us.es

RESUMEN

El presente artículo describe y reflexiona sobre la acción colaborativa artística del proyecto internacional *Quadráginta* (<http://institucional.us.es/quadráginta/>), un proyecto de reflexión audiovisual y colectiva realizado en tiempos de pandemia por la COVID-19. Ecopedagogía, postdigitalidad y arte como escultura social se relacionan dentro de su marco conceptual facilitando herramientas para analizar su acción y resultado. El proyecto se desarrolló desde abril hasta septiembre del 2020 y ha implicado a participantes de diez países distintos. La actualidad pandémica traduce un largo recorrido de agotamiento emocional de la sociedad, la cual repercute en todas sus dimensiones, en nuestras relaciones intersubjetivas y personales, desde la política hasta el ocio, atravesando todas las áreas de la cultura y el conocimiento, incluyendo a la educación y a las artes. El proyecto provoca una reflexión sobre la construcción del yo y su exigencia de interdependencia del contexto y del conjunto social, evidenciándose la necesidad de una acción pedagógica esperanzadora y constructora de realidades solidarias ante la situación. Tiempo y espacio postdigitales que manifiestan la necesidad de seguir generando nuevas utopías.

Palabras clave: Ecopedagogía, Postdigitalidad, Escultura Social, Proyecto *Quadráginta*, COVID19, Audiovisual.

RESUMO

Este artigo descreve e reflete sobre a ação artística colaborativa do projeto internacional *Quadráginta* (<http://institucional.us.es/quadráginta/>), um projeto audiovisual e de reflexão coletiva realizado durante os tempos de pandemia pela COVID-19. Ecopedagogia, pós-digitalidade e arte como escultura social estão relacionadas dentro de sua estrutura conceitual, fornecendo ferramentas para analisar sua ação e resultado. O projeto decorreu de abril a setembro de 2020 e envolveu participantes de dez países diferentes. A atual pandemia reflete uma longa jornada de esgotamento emocional da sociedade, que tem repercussões em todas as suas dimensões, nas nossas relações inter-subjetivas e pessoais, da política ao lazer, atravessando todas as áreas da cultura e do conhecimento, incluindo a educação e as artes. O projeto provoca uma reflexão sobre a construção do eu e sua exigência de interdependência do contexto e do conjunto social, mostrando a necessidade de uma ação pedagógica esperançosa e construtiva

de realidades solidárias diante da situação. Tempo e espaço pós-digital que mostram a necessidade de continuar gerando novas utopias..

Palavras-chave: Ecopedagogia, Pós-Digitalidade, Escultura Social, Projecto *Quadráginta*, COVID-19, Audiovisual.

ABSTRACT

This article describes and reflects on the collaborative artistic action of the international project *Quadráginta* (<http://institucional.us.es/quadráginta/>), an audiovisual and collective reflection project carried out in times of pandemic by COVID-19. Ecopedagogy, postdigitality and art as social sculpture are related within its conceptual framework, providing tools to analyse its action and outcome. The project ran from April to September 2020 and involved participants from ten different countries. The current pandemic reflects a long journey of emotional exhaustion in society, which has repercussions in all its dimensions, in our inter-subjective and personal relationships, from politics to leisure, crossing all areas of culture and knowledge, including education and the arts. The project provokes a reflection on the construction of the self and its demand for interdependence on the context and the social whole, highlighting the need for hopeful pedagogical action that builds realities of solidarity in the face of the situation. Post-digital time and space that show the need to continue generating new utopias.

Keywords: Ecopedagogy, Postdigitality, Social Sculpture, *Quadráginta* Project, COVID-19, Audiovisual.

1. Introducción (a la esperanza)

Este artículo reflexiona sobre la acción colaborativa artística del proyecto internacional *Quadráginta*, un proyecto de reflexión audiovisual y colectiva realizado por un grupo internacional de participantes y en tiempos de pandemia por la COVID-19¹. En el marco conceptual del proyecto entran en conversación conceptos como ecopedagogía, postdigitalidad y arte como escultura social, nociones que se convierten en herramientas de análisis para la acción y el resultado de un proyecto que pone de manifiesto la interdependencia social del sujeto dentro de unos tiempos y espacios postdigitales, los cuales expresan la necesidad de seguir generando nuevas utopías en un territorio social impactado profundamente por la pandemia.

Llevamos un largo recorrido de agotamiento emocional que repercute en todas las dimensiones sociales y en nuestras relaciones intersubjetivas y personales, desde

la política hasta el ocio, atravesando todas las áreas de la cultura y conocimiento, incluyendo a la educación y a las artes. En los primeros meses de la epidemia global todos nuestros sentimientos más negativos ocasionados por los estragos de la enfermedad se vieron en parte aliviados por un desbordante sentimiento de solidaridad, tanto en contextos locales como internacionales, y esta crisis se sintió como una oportunidad histórica para implementar cambios absolutamente necesarios en el sistema del capital global (Jandrić & Ford, 2020; Jandrić, 2020; Mañero, 2020). Pero tras un año de lucha y análisis, de expectativas y frustraciones, de crisis económica y sanitaria, en nuestra actualidad cotidiana —y como ya subrayase Petar Jandrić—, mucha gente está simplemente agotada. La situación en términos sociales, y específicamente educativos, se ha tornado desesperante y cada vez más dificultosa en un contexto dominado por una visión instrumental de lo digital y la precariedad formativa en términos educomunicativos. Solo el voluntarismo del profesorado y su estudiantado ha evitado el desastre educativo en términos mayúsculos y han paliado las consecuencias. No obstante, aun teniendo en cuenta el contexto de desaliento anímico —lógico en términos sociales—, el programa educativo de una sociedad no puede despegarse de un proyecto de esperanza que acoja a educadores y educandos, pero también a la institución.

1 El proyecto *Quadráginta* ha sido apoyado por el grupo de investigación ECAV - Educación y Cultura Audiovisual (HUM401) y por el proyecto I+D "Internet como campo temático y de investigación en las nuevas prácticas artísticas (INCATI/ART1)". Ministerio de Economía, Industria y Competitividad. Gobierno de España. Internet como campo temático y de investigación en las nuevas prácticas artísticas (INCATI/ART1).

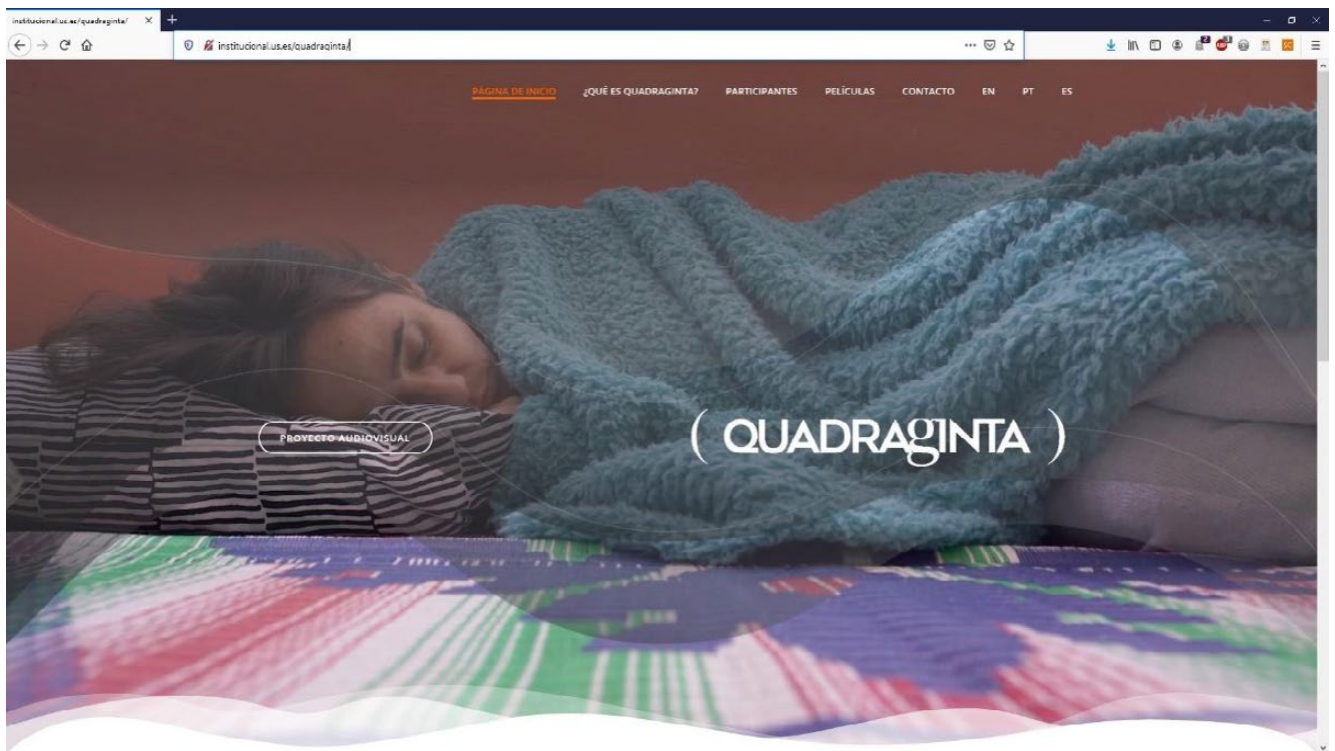


Figura 1. Web de Quadraginta (captura de pantalla).

No quiere decir que la esperanza tenga atribuida el poder de transformación de la realidad, sino que como subraya Paulo Freire (1993), es un mandato cívico y un imperativo categórico y existencial: la esperanza no basta, pero es necesaria, y pensar que esta por sí sola transforma el mundo es ingenuo y un modo excelente de caer en la desesperanza, el fatalismo y el pesimismo. Necesitamos no abandonar la intención de enarbolar siempre un proyecto cognitivo y afectivo global, necesitamos nuevas utopías, nuevos programas pedagógicos y políticos, diseños y experimentos que se ajusten a nuestra era pandémica del (post)Antropoceno (Jandrić & Ford, 2020).

2. Ecopedagogías postdigitales y escultura social

En esta tesitura conceptual se ubica el proyecto ético y pedagógico conocido internacionalmente como ecopedagogía, el cual, derivado de la obra de Paulo Freire, representa una transformación en el proyecto educativo y político: la ecopedagogía busca interpolar los objetivos freirianos por excelencia de la humanización de la experiencia, y la consecución de un mundo justo y libre, con una política ecológica orientada al futuro que se opone militantemente a la globalización del neoliberalismo y el imperialismo, e intenta fomentar una ecoalfabetización colectiva y realizar formas de conocimiento culturalmente relevantes basadas en conceptos normativos como la sostenibilidad y la biofilia (Kahn, 2010). La actualidad interpela a la ecopedagogía desde un marco que atraviesa una realidad hiperconectada, que hunde sus cimientos socioeconómicos y relacionales en lo digital y que, por extensión y lógica cultural, se desarrolla bajo los parámetros postdigitales. Es decir, una realidad donde la tecnología se da por sentada y recorre todas nuestras actividades sociales, una intersección entre mundos, lo viejo y lo nuevo, lo digital y lo natural (Jandrić et al.,

2019): lo postdigital como aquella lógica que informa sobre una manera particular de representación de la sociedad, el espacio y el tiempo dentro de una época que sucede después de aquella revolución digital, pero la cual permanece profundamente computacional y organizada a través de una constelación de técnicas y tecnologías que ordenan nuestro universo (Berry, 2015). La ecopedagogía atiende la sostenibilidad de nuestro mundo, pero como señala Berry, nuestro contexto ha mutado en espacios y tiempos postdigitales, y los desafíos contemporáneos vinculados a la era COVID-19 pasan por una reestructuración y equilibrio de las condiciones sociales de una realidad que debe asumir la necesidad de la interdependencia entre todos sus agentes participantes: individuo, colectividad y naturaleza. Los retos de la ecopedagogía postdigital se encuentran en la armonización de nuestra relación con la naturaleza en su más amplio sentido: es decir, ello no significa solo relaciones directa entre el ser humano y su entorno natural medioambiental, sino que tales relaciones se expanden hacia discusiones sobre los vínculos máquina-ser humano, sobre las consecuencias de los desajustes socioeconómicos globales, sobre las imbricaciones entre esferas pública-privadas-íntima y, finalmente y en definitiva, hacia la reflexión sobre el común, lo cual implica un análisis en todas sus dimensiones interdependientes: medioambiente, cuerpo, ciudad y digitalidad (Lafuente, 2007). En una coyuntura pandémica como la vigente, este marco conceptual y su discusión —la cual apunta a las necesidades de repensar las estructuras intersubjetivas y comunitarias del mundo— cobra una importancia superlativa, debido a que la toma de decisiones biopolíticas están interconectadas en una escala global. Y es en este marco de discusión conceptual donde se ubica lo que Braidotti (2015) reseña como ética posthumana para la sociedad: una ética que fortalezca un sentimiento de interconexión entre el ego y los otros, incluidos los humanos y los otros de la Tierra.

La tradición reflexiva artística ofrece una herramienta de reflexión y praxis que se ha revalorizado a partir de los parámetros ecopedagógicos actuales: el concepto de escultura social de Joseph Beuys. La idea parte de esa concepción del arte como fuerza revolucionaria capaz de transformar la tierra, la humanidad y el orden social: la *Gesamtkunstwerk*, obra de arte total, que implica la participación democrática de todos los ciudadanos en la reconstrucción de un organismo social como obra de arte (Adams, 1992). Esto suponía una concepción radicalmente ampliada de la idea de arte, que como Adams señala, Beuys consideraba sinónimo de creatividad en general. En otras palabras, la responsabilidad ecológica pasó del interés científico a la protesta pública y a las organizaciones

políticas alternativas, y de manera paralela, Beuys señalaba cómo su enfoque del arte se desarrolló desde los objetos tradicionales, a las instalaciones y performances y, finalmente, desembocar en la idea de “escultura social”: espacio conceptual donde todos los integrantes de la ciudadanía son entendidos como artistas y en la que, con nuestra implicación, se toma conciencia de que estamos desarrollando arte, naturaleza y sociedad.

3. *Quadraginta*, ecopedagogía postdigital y escultura social

Anteriormente, se adelantaba que para el proyecto *Quadraginta*, las nociones de ecopedagogía, postdigitalidad y arte como escultura social son herramientas conceptuales que sirven para reflexionar sobre su naturaleza artística y social. *Quadraginta* es un proyecto audiovisual internacional que se presenta como una reflexión audiovisual colectiva en la era COVID-19 y en el que hemos estado implicados profesionales e interesados por la esfera audiovisual procedentes de diez países distintos: Alemania, Brasil, Chile, Colombia, Perú, India, México, Países Bajos, República Dominicana y España.

Quadraginta se desarrolla como reflexión audiovisual, participando del concepto de escultura social, donde la construcción colaborativa es la base de su metodología, lo cual se erige como seña de identidad del proyecto y de sus resultados. El proyecto se propone en abril de 2020, en pleno confinamiento mundial por la pandemia ocasionada por el coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. El resultado del proyecto es un conjunto de películas que han sido trabajado a partir de la siguiente metodología:

Una primera fase de reflexión audiovisual parte de las preguntas: ¿qué nos une a todos los seres humanos en una situación así? ¿Cómo estamos viviendo esta situación desde nuestros diferentes contextos? ¿Qué estamos aprendiendo como sociedad en esta coyuntura tan excepcional?

Estas preguntas fueron realizadas al conjunto de participantes con la intención de que fueran contestadas de manera audiovisual. Se trataba de dar respuesta con nuestros dispositivos de grabación. Se mantenía libertad para elegir planos: cualquier tipo de duración, encuadres, naturaleza, etc. De todos los planos registrados cada uno de los miembros participantes debía elegir veinte. Posteriormente estos veinte planos, que habían dado respuesta a las preguntas formuladas, fueron dispuestos para que pudieran ser compartidos por el resto de participantes. Es decir, cada miembro donaba un conjunto de planos que formaban parte de un total de más de doscientos con la suma de todos.

La siguiente fase del proyecto se centraba en la guionización y consecuente edición del material comunitario. La premisa era que cada participante realizara una propuesta audiovisual personal a partir del material grabado por todos. Existía libertad creativa, con una única condición metodológica: las obras realizadas debían de contener al menos un plano de cada conjunto de aquellos grabados por cada participante. De esta manera la acción personal quedaba simbólica y explícitamente marcada por la acción colectiva. Es decir, nuestro hacer artístico particular dependía de la planificación generada en la dimensión colectiva y común.

El producto resultante del proyecto, publicado en septiembre de 2020, ha sido un grupo de 10 obras internacionales que pueden ser visionadas en: <http://institucional.us.es/quadráginta/>. En esta web se encuentra toda la información sobre autores, proyecto y obras.

Finalmente, este proyecto ha sido presentado en el 6º festival CCALM, festival de cultura libre y cine Creative Commons de Almería (<http://ccalm.es/programa/>), en octubre y noviembre de 2020. Un marco coherente con la naturaleza colaborativa del proyecto puesto que todas las obras están bajo licencia Creative Commons BY-NC-SA. Así, las diferentes producciones permiten que sean remezcladas para continuar y extender la participación colectiva.

4. Algunas conclusiones

El resultado inspira una reflexión sobre el contexto social, cultural y político, que nos condiciona, y sus vínculos educativos y artísticos. Podríamos deducir algunas conclusiones:

En primer lugar, más allá del meritorio trabajo particular de cada miembro participante en el proyecto, estamos igualmente —aunque sobre todo— ante una construcción colectiva de un relato. Un relato que implica reconocimiento de emociones, razones y argumentos comunes. Todos los trabajos juegan con las mismas emociones a nivel global. Proyectadas de manera diferente en cada trabajo, pero son reconocibles por parte de todos. Y no se debe de olvidar que sin el reconocimiento no existe comunicación: la base de la comunicación, etimológicamente hablando, es poner en común. En este sentido, todos los trabajos recogen una reflexión puesta en común: ante la debilidad de nuestra naturaleza física frente a una pandemia, la balanza debe caer del lado del cuidado, protección y desarrollo de la interdependencia, frente a la potenciación de un libre desarrollo estrictamente económico. La naturaleza y la sociedad están íntimamente vinculadas. Recuperando las palabras de Richard Kahn (2010), el reto al que se enfrenta la materialización de una sociedad debe tener en cuenta la multiplicidad de opciones individuales dentro de una comunidad y también el reto de cómo confederar equitativamente las múltiples comunidades en una red democrática; pero estas condiciones propias del capitalismo transnacional, si no tienen en cuenta la reintegración de toda la humanidad dentro del *oikos* (término griego que significa hogar y que es la raíz de ecología) de nuestra naturaleza en su conjunto, la acción de dominación y catástrofe ecosistémica global continuará como el gran reverso de esa búsqueda de esa libertad económica.

Quadráginta ha participado del concepto de escultura social en tanto que pone de relieve —desde su metodología y temática— la necesidad de la cooperación y solidaridad por encima de esos patrones de competencia individual, donde, por

ejemplo, los servicios de salud pública se han mostrado más claramente que nunca como el necesario y más básico escudo de protección de nuestra sociedad. Habitar tiempos postdigitales no se ejemplifica tan solo en el habitar interconectado digital de la red, sino que se ejemplifica de manera radical en la interconexión tecnológica, social y política de un contexto soportado por servicios comunes —como los sanitarios, pero también los culturales y educativos—, los cuales nos facilitan una coexistencia y supervivencia. Esta es una norma básica de cualquier sociedad, es una norma básica propia del conocimiento y de la acción pedagógica.

Por otro lado, otro aspecto concluyente se relaciona con la idea de que estamos habitando un contexto que irremediamente influye en la construcción de nuestras miradas. Es decir, la acción intersubjetiva conforma el discurso y los relatos sociales y viceversa. Podemos realizar un análisis relacionado con la manera en la que como sujetos participamos individualmente incidiendo en el discurso global social. Pero, asimismo, en este caso se nos propone una lectura inversa y complementaria. El contexto y el flujo de lo colectivo es determinante para la acción individual. Nuestro alrededor no digital y digital, en el que ya no cabe la distinción debordiana entre sociedad e imagen, puesto que la imagen es constructora de realidad social, es un potente articulador de nuestras realidades particulares. Esta idea se evidencia de manera clara en el proyecto *Quadraginta*: el colectivo se muestra necesario para el desarrollo de un relato personal: lo común se abre paso desde un punto de vista formal y conceptual. La necesidad del otro para la construcción del yo pasa por la influencia de la infraestructura y la superestructura. Nuestra mirada está conformada de manera inherente por la acción plural. Es decir, como conclusión pertinente, se subraya la necesidad del otro para la construcción del yo. No existe un yo si no existe el tú, si no existe el nosotros. Aquí aparece de nuevo la necesidad de una acción pedagógica esperanzadora: necesitamos al otro para construirnos. En esos términos se hace evidente el mandato cívico y el imperativo categórico y existencial: la esperanza como necesidad. De nuevo, se aterriza en el marco conceptual freiriano: el yo dialógico sabe que es precisamente el tú quien lo constituye (Freire, 1970). Necesitamos nuevas utopías. Visuales y educativas, artísticas y ecopedagógicas.

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Memory Box: A three-dimensional quilt as an arts-based method for recollective practices and memory work

Caixa de Memória: Um quilt tridimensional como método baseado em artes para práticas de recolha e trabalho de memória

Caja de Memoria: un quilt tridimensional como método basado en las artes para las prácticas de recolección y el trabajo de la memoria.

Melanie Sarantou

University of Lapland

melanie.sarantou@ulapland.fi

Vera Tessmer

Independent

ABSTRACT

The article explores the use of textile arts to counter dominant narratives associated with stigmatising memory loss and dementia. The article asks how textile arts can generate social transformation and elicit social dialogue to be a vehicle for mitigating societal challenges. Joseph Beuys's (1979, c.f. Harlan, 2004) concept of social sculpture will be used to understand how textile arts can be used to counter harmful narratives that stigmatise memory loss and dementia. The role of arts-based approaches in improving the quality of life (QoL) and creative engagement with people who experience memory loss, and the role of arts-based methods (ABMs) in recollective practices and memory work will be addressed through an arts-based research strategy that was supported by narrative approaches and documentation via the digital WhatsApp tool that enables text messaging, voice notes and photos to be shared.

keywords: Social sculpture, memory work, dementia, textile art, three-dimensional quilt, lapwork.

RESUMO

O artigo explora o uso das artes têxteis para combater narrativas dominantes associadas à perda de memória estigmatizante e à demência. O artigo questiona como as artes têxteis podem gerar transformação social e facilitar o diálogo para ser um veículo de mitigação de desafios sociais. O conceito de escultura social de Joseph Beuys (1979, c.f. Harlan, 2004) será usado para entender como as artes têxteis podem ser usadas para combater narrativas prejudiciais que estigmatizam a perda de memória e a demência. O papel das abordagens baseadas nas artes na melhoria da qualidade de vida (QoL) e no engajamento criativo com pessoas que experimentam perda de memória, e o papel dos métodos baseados nas artes (ABMs) em práticas de recordação e trabalho de memória serão abordados através da arte e de estratégias de pesquisa baseadas na arte, apoiadas por abordagens narrativas e documentação digital com a ferramenta WhatsApp que permite o compartilhamento de mensagens de texto, anotações de voz e fotos.

Palavras-chave: Escultura social, trabalho de memória, demência, arte têxtil, colcha tridimensional, trabalho de regaço.

RESUMEN

El artículo explora el uso de las artes textiles como contestación de las narrativas dominantes asociadas con la estigmatización de la pérdida de memoria y la demencia. Se pregunta cómo las artes textiles pueden generar una transformación social y provocar un diálogo que sea un vehículo para mitigar los desafíos sociales. Se utilizará el concepto de escultura social de Joseph Beuys (1979, cf. Harlan, 2004) para comprender cómo se pueden utilizar las artes textiles para contrariar las narrativas dañosas que estigmatizan la pérdida de memoria y la demencia; con enfoques basados en las artes para la mejora de la calidad de vida (QoL) y el compromiso creativo con las personas que experimentan pérdida de memoria. Se abordarán a través de un análisis basada en métodos artísticos y estrategias de investigación con enfoques narrativos y documentación a través de la herramienta digital WhatsApp que permite compartir mensajes de texto, notas de voz y fotos.

Palabras clave: Escultura social, trabajo de memoria, demencia, arte textil, colcha tridimensional, trabajos de regazo.

Introduction

As a result of globally ageing populations, there is an increase in the number of people who are diagnosed with dementia annually. Worldwide almost 50 million people are currently affected by dementia, and the number is estimated to grow to 131.5 million people by the year 2050 (Alzheimer's Society UK, 2020; Dementia Australia, 2021). Dementia is a complex clinical syndrome with no cure (Windle et al., 2016), involving the deterioration of cognitive, behavioural, emotive and interactive functions (Moss & O'Neill, 2019). Due to its complexity, the syndrome needs to be understood from a variety of perspectives, also through the lens of creativity (Basting, 2014). Participative arts are generally accepted as 'representing beneficial interventions' (Zeilig, Killick, & Fox, 2014, p. 7), but little is known about how the arts can be beneficial for people living with dementia (PLWD).

Dementia is often oversimplified as a condition that only entails memory loss, instead of a syndrome that may have varied symptoms in terms of how it is experienced by the individual and how it develops over time (Dementia Australia, 2018, p. 4). Too often, misinformation can strengthen stigmas that prevail in the wider public about issues related to memory loss amongst the elderly. Therefore, how dementia can be portrayed in the media needs ongoing critical evaluation to create understanding and sensitise the wider public about this complex syndrome.

Misinformation in the media deepens 'how society imagines', and also engages with PLWD (Zeilig, 2014, p.79).

In addition, hurt and harm is caused to PLWD and their carers (Andrews, 2016). The anxiety caused by exaggerated reporting of dementia in the media on PLWD, their families and carers, is illustrated by Andrews (2016), who condemn such practice as cruel as no cure exists for dementia or memory loss. Such exaggerated and unmoderated reporting can lead to 'spin' reporting that aims to create sensational publications that is based on distortions of experiences and information towards a possible favourable outcome (NHS Choices, 2012; White, 2014). Also, 'spin' can create false hope, and especially new medical trial reporting contributes to 51% of this kind of media 'spin' (NHS Choices, 2012; White, 2014). Reporting strategies such as 'spin' overemphasises the 'beneficial effect of the experimental treatment' (Yavchitz, Boutron, Bafeta, Marroun, & Charles, 2012, p. 9). Research has shown that 'exaggerated and inappropriate coverage of research findings' result in reaffirming the general bias influencing the interpretation of these results (Yavchitz et al., 2012, p. 9). Zeilig (2014, p. 78) argues for raising awareness that dementia is a 'socially and culturally constructed condition', that is predominantly based on public understandings surrounding the syndrome; hence, the dominant cultural narratives that stigmatise dementia need moderated and robust counter narratives to deconstruct the misperceptions that surround dementia.

This objective of the article is to explore the role of ABMs to create awareness and dialogue about the syndrome in wider audiences and the general public. The article seeks to address how QoL can be improved through social and creative engagement with people who experience memory

loss. Another objective is to explore how arts-based practices and arts in public spaces and everyday life can contribute to constructive and critical discussion to counter-narrate the stigmas associated with taboos. The article asks how textile arts can generate social transformation and elicit social dialogue to be a vehicle for mitigating societal challenges and social sculpture (Beuys, 1979, c.f. Harlan, 2004). In addition, the role of ABMs in recollective practices and memory work will be explored. Memory loss is often accepted as a normal part of ageing, but research continues in the yet unexplored area of Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI), which refers to a condition of more than usual sense of memory loss experienced by ageing populations and those who have not been diagnosed with dementia (Dementia Australia, 2020).

The article draws on arts-based research (ABR), artistic research and reflexive research to understand the impact of a three-dimensional quilt, a textile art project that was executed by myself and my mother, Vera Tessmer. We engaged with the project virtually. WhatsApp was used as a platform to share process data between my mother, the textile maker, and myself, the maker-researcher. At the time Vera was living and situated in Namibia, while I was working and living in South Australia. The project was executed between December 2018 and November 2020. The three-dimensional quilt was exhibited in the A-Class Regional Arts Gallery in Port Pirie, South Australia, from 21 December 2019 until 28 January 2020.

The arts as social sculpture

Joseph Beuys understood arts to be a way of life and that the arts could be embedded in human ‘thoughts, actions, dialogues, as well as objects’ (Jordan, 2013, p. 142). The engagement of the arts in public policy was brought to arts audiences by Joseph Beuys and his Büro der Organisation für direkte Demokratie (Office of Direct Democracy) in 1971 (Jordan, 2013, p. 144). Jordan (2013, p. 144) explains:

‘For eight hours a day, Beuys and his two assistants discussed the possibility that average people could initiate public policy with the local and international art audience. Stemming from his participation in the international avant-garde movement Fluxus in the 1960s and the teachings of Austrian philosopher and social reformer Rudolf Steiner, the Office for Direct Democracy was the first concrete manifestation of Beuys’s concept of social sculpture.’

Joseph Beuys equated thinking to sculpture. He explains that art is action that produces objects that are imprints of the action (Beuys, 1979, c.f. Harlan, 2004). Beuys also maintained that social sculpture is the ‘thinking, speaking

and listening with others’ and constitutes what he referred to as ‘warmth sculpture’ (Harlan, 2004, p. 2). In the United States the influence of Beuys also transformed the way artists interacted with the wider public and their arts audiences (Jordan, 2014). Beuys’s social sculpture perhaps set the trend for community development and socially engaged arts as artists started to interact with institutions through artistic methods and approaches (Harlan, 2004). The arts became a vehicle for change through activism with a focus on ‘education, democracy, and the environment’ (Jordan, 2014, p. 145). Grande (1997) also understood the work of Armand Vaillancourt as social sculpture. In his PhD thesis he explains his understanding of ‘art to be a tool in generating social transformation’ and art not only being an ‘end product, but ... equally [a] vehicle for engendering controversy and social dialogue’ (Grande, 1997, p. iii). The role of the arts to elicit dialogue and generate discussion around important societal challenges, such as the growing population that will be living with dementia, is emphasised. The arts offer a strategy to engage with unethical media practices such as ‘spin’ by offering more constructive, engaging and critical dialogue.

The TAnDem project as an example of the role of arts in dementia

The initiative reviewed in this presentation is the research project TAnDem (which in short means ‘the arts and dementia’). The objective of TAnDem is to contribute to building evidence-based practical ways of enabling people living with dementia and their families to live well by engaging in the arts and artistic practice (Arts and Dementia, 2020). The project focused on the role of arts in improving QoL for people living with dementia (Alzheimer’s Society UK, 2020). The use of the arts in the context of dementia is a field of practice that is starting to receive attention due to the meanings and value that the arts may bring to people’s life (Windle, Newman, Burholt, Woods, O’Brien, Baber,... & Tischler, 2016). The arts can be enjoyed in many ways and all art forms, for example all visual and performing arts, can be employed when working with PLWD (Basting, 2014). Creativity and imagination are the driving force behind activities that improve QoL (Windle et al., 2016). However, methodological rigour lacks in this field of interdisciplinary research, with the result that the impact of the arts in the lives of PLWD is often not clear (Gray, Evans, Griffiths, & Schneider, 2018).

The rationale of the project is to generate more research is needed for understanding and assessing the impact of the arts on dementia (Basting, 2014). For example, the immediate and indirect impact of the arts on dementia

needs to be evaluated, how arts can overcome, through imagination and creative engagement (Basting, 2014; Windle et al., 2016), ‘barriers between professional staff and carers in care homes’ (Arts and Dementia, 2020). The arts have, due to their potential to express through a variety of modes, methods and media, the potential to engage people who have difficulty with expression through ‘rational written or spoken language’ (Basting, 2014, p. 133).

The project design followed by TAnDem is discussed next. The research project TAnDem is one of eight research initiatives that received funding from the Alzheimer’s Society in 2015 within the United Kingdom to focus on research in arts and dementia (The Arts and Dementia, 2020). TAnDem is a collaboration between the Association for Dementia Studies, University of Worcester and the Centre for Dementia, University of Nottingham (Alzheimer’s Society UK, 2020; University of Worcester, 2019). Eight PhD researchers participated in the research project by the Association for Dementia Studies between 2015 and 2020. Their project design focused on a) integrating the arts into care practices for people living with dementia (both those diagnosed with dementia and their carers); b) practical training and support, for example integrating evaluation skills-training in their project design; c) integrating networking, collaboration and knowledge sharing activities in the project design.

Next, the feasibility of the project is considered. Arts practices may be impacted by impairments due to age-related decline (poor vision, limited motor skills), which may result in feelings of inadequacy or incompetence (Basting, 2014). Arts practice may be a challenging activity for those people who have never practiced some arts forms earlier in their lives (Leavy, 2015), hence some PLWD may enjoy consuming arts, but not the making processes that are associated with it. Many argue that the arts should be practiced for the sake of arts and so research quality may be affected (Basting, 2014; Arts and Dementia, 2020). The arts can overshadow research in various ways, for example ‘it can mobilise emotion and action and enhance understanding of complex ideas’, which is a more positive outcome, but how the arts can be used to disseminate research findings about dementia may have ethical implications if the intentions of the researcher are not understood (Bartlett, 2015, p. 12). On a positive note, engaging PLWD with the arts can support the understanding of them as ‘creative, relational and agential’ (Zeilig, West, & van der Byl Williams, 2018, p. 135).

When considering the impact and evaluation of the research project TAnDem, we have to look into methodological rigour ‘or its absence, (which) is often a

focus of concern for the emerging field of evaluation and research around arts and dementia’ (Gray et al., 2018, p. 782). It is important to justify ‘how and why methodological choices are made, what pragmatic, political or personal factors determine these choices and the success of the resulting work, how other stakeholders are involved, if and how the cross-disciplinary nature of the arts and dementia field is reflected in the process, whether tensions result, and how these might be resolved’ (Gray et al., 2018, p. 782). Methods can not only ‘uncover realities, but also produce them’ (Gray et al., 2018, p. 782), and methods for impact assessment of the arts in dementia need to be developed and integrated into project design, as was the case in TAnDem.

However, for many reasons, such as the lack of resources to having to deal with cognitive, behavioural, emotive and interactive decline of PLWD, it is often not possible to use rigid mixed-methods study designs for more robust testing of effectiveness (Windle et al., 2016). TAnDem sought to tackle this lack by integrating evaluation skills-training in their project design. An additional question is whether the effect of the arts on PLWD should be measured and justified in the first instance, because it is widely accepted that arts practice brings joy and fulfilment to the lives of many, including those living with dementia. Whether evaluation of impact is appropriate and to whom it matters should also be considered (Arts and Dementia, 2020). Also, research should collect, analyse and make better use of anecdotal data that is collected by researchers and artists who run arts activities with PLWD (Arts and Dementia, 2020). The attention to anecdotal data and the value of its analysis can uncover ‘individual perceptions, hidden assumptions and underlying social and political structures’ that impact on the work of the arts in dementia (Gray et al., 2018, p. 782). Many dissemination activities arranged by the group of researchers of TAnDem involved seminars, round tables and publication of open access arts toolkits and academic papers and research.

Methodology

The ABR engaged with reflexivity to explore the role of textile art in creating personal discussions about memory loss and memory work between the textile maker and maker-researcher. Patricia Leavy (Jones & Leavy, 2014, p. 2) understands ABR as ‘human inquiry that adapts the tenets of the creative arts as a part of the methodology’. ABMs can be used ‘during data collection, analysis, interpretation and/or dissemination’ (Jones & Leavy, 2014, p. 2; Leavy, 2015). Jones and Leavy (2014, p. 2) both reject ‘the science-art binary’ by acknowledging both as a ‘result of creativity’.

Creative processes were documented and shared, while at the same time the personal narratives around memory loss and the role of creative activity continued.

The reflexive researcher goes beyond the attempt to understand the ‘assumptions, biases, and perspectives that underlie one component of their research’ to understand the ‘the interrelationships among them’ (Weber, 2003, p. vi). The reflexive researcher tries to first understand all the single components of a phenomena through pluralistic views on theories and methods they use to develop a holistic understanding of their research and use meta-theoretical assumptions in guiding them to explore interrelationships between the single components (Weber, 2003, p. vi). Attia & Edge (2017, p. 33) argue that reflexive researchers should develop procedures integral to the environments in which they work through conceptualisation, awareness of context, and practice in which the researcher consciously distances herself from action to create theories that can be implemented by, also by the researcher.

The working processes and discussions textile maker and maker-researcher were captured via WhatsApp as text messages and photos were sent between Namibia and South-Australia in 2019. The narrative strategies used in the artwork is semiotics and visual storytelling. In analysing storylines from a Balian perspective that draws on focalisation (Bal, 2006, p. 46), the relationship between what is presented or performed and what the audience sees needs to be analysed. Bal developed the theory of the focaliser that presents the perspective from which the storyline is viewed (p. 47). In a presented storyline, two views can exist: a) the view of the audience or wider public on the artwork and its meaning to the viewers or arts audiences; and b) the view of PLWD and their carers on how their creative expressions, arts or artefacts are received by the audiences and whether understanding and empathy is generated around the complex and feared syndrome.

The visual analysis method of Bal, Janssen and An Der Wand (1996, p. 28) can be used to understand that the ability to have empathy with, or access to the thoughts of PLWD as they may be presumed to not to have memory, the ability to recollect, or any other skills. When using methods for visual analysis by Bal (2006) and Bal, Janssen and An Der Wand (1996), the impact of the performative and storyline aspects of the arguments brought forth in the artwork on PLWD and their carers can be analysed to better understand the perceptions of the syndrome in the wider public.

Memory box: Three-dimensional quilt

As a young child in the 1950s, Vera enjoyed creating exquisite garments for her dolls from her stepmother’s box of laces. She remembers: “I was never allowed to cut the lace, so I had to use gentle and clever sewing to dress my dolls, and I had to undo everything afterwards and pack away the laces as I found them.” Later in life, Vera worked with me, her daughter, to create fashion collections that were showcased in the USA, Finland, Germany and several African countries from South Africa to Niger.

Vera’s career as a maker was usually intertwined with my work as a fashion designer, but in the work titled ‘Memory Box’, our usual working roles were reversed. Vera steered the creation of the 104 ‘boxes’ that represent themes from her childhood and her connection to her natural environment, love for animals and birds, and her ongoing desire to use techniques and materials to express these memories. The making processes were about the memories of Vera, for example about plants and flowers from her garden, and animals, such as birds and insects. These memories were expressed in creative ways using recycled and found objects, as well as beads and wire. Memory work played an important role as we, while working together, reminisced about the memories of our lives and many hours of working together, our collaborative creations of the past and dreams about future work and collaborative projects. In this sense, the memory work established hope for the future despite the challenges with memory loss that Vera experienced at the time.

The work can be reinterpreted as a collection of memory boxes that each hold a particular memory, but it can also be interpreted as a three-dimensional quilt that has been collectively stitched. Green, blue and brown shwe-shwe printed textiles, originating from southern Africa, were used to create the cubes that were filled with reused materials to retain their shape.

The decorative stitching and making of the top sections of the 104 boxes were made between January 2018 and May 2019. The shwe-shwe bases of the boxes were stitched in July 2019 with the assistance of two contracted seamstresses in Namibia. The disassembled sections were shipped to South Australia where the construction of the boxes continued. They were filled with recycled materials and the top sections were hand stitched to the filled boxes by myself between August and November of 2019.

The memory cubes were installed as a three-dimensional quilt, titled Memory Box as a collective work in the ‘Have you met my Sister’ exhibition at the Flinders gallery of the



Figure 1. Memory Box by Vera Tessmer and Melanie Sarantou. 163 x 96 cm. The colourful work is created from all sorts of collected, found, reused and new materials. Photography by the authors.



Figure 2. Memory boxes in assembling stages with top sections that were creatively stitched and created with thread and wire and the shwe-shwe base sections that were filled with recycled materials. Photography by the authors.



Figure 3. Memory Box. A three-dimensional quilt installation (163 x 96 cm) exhibited at the Flinders Gallery in Port Pirie, 2020-2021. Photography by the authors.

Port Pirie Art Gallery in South Australia. The hand stitching and finishing of the boxes, as well as the curation of the larger group exhibition was taken care of myself.

Findings

The aims of the artistic process were to use arts-based practices as a method to overcome a difficult period in the life of the textile maker when she dealt with memory loss and contradicting diagnoses. We experienced many obstacles that influenced how we, mother and daughter, the extended family, as well as outsiders dealt with the situation. Most challenging was to engage in dialogue about the matter.

Need for collective creative activity

Due to the distance between us, the process came about through several conversations in which our need for collective creative activity was expressed. Lenette (2019, p, vii) explains that 'collaborative arts-based methodologies help to challenge dominant discourses, promote recognition and inclusion'. Due to our shared history of collective making, creating and design, the conversation was able to emerge and continue effortlessly, drawing from recollective practices. Several weeks, or rather two months went by before we made a start. Ideas were generated step-by-step and the process was never forced or structured in the sense that ideas or outcomes were not pre-designed, but we wanted to instead let serendipity guide the way, opening up for improvised processes and aha moments to emerge (Sarantou & Miettinen, 2017). We solved problems as they occurred and as we went along, but we also endured the unknowing and the answers that we were hoping to find in both creative processes as they were not based on preconceived outcomes.

While Vera started to embellish, embroider and use wire work on small eight by eight-centimetre textile squares, I also involved myself with handwork by using vintage underwear that I embroidered and mended to create a collection for an exhibition in Finland. Having both creative processes evolving, one in Namibia and the other in South Australia, enabled us to share creative experiences. Although our processes, as well as the lessons we learned were so different, the parallel processes were stimulating because of the differences. The acknowledgement of the need of shared creative activity despite being apart, set the stage for a creative pathway to be discovered and to unfold. Vera often questioned what form her embellished squares will take on, but it only needed time for us to incubate the ideas about the three-dimensional quilt, which was a result

of a conversation with a trusted friend who was familiar with the aims of the project.

Dialogue

ABMs were used to elicit dialogue in multiple levels about a topic that is difficult to discuss by especially the individuals who experience memory loss. Dialogue not only comes about through performed actions, such as speech, and words, but visual stimuli and the image are also important mediators of dialogue (Quinn & Calkin, 2008). Dialogue came about, first, between Vera and myself, the textile maker and maker-researcher. Our conversations were waiting and wanting to emerge and it often felt as if they anticipated their uncovering. The engagement in shared creative activity and making enabled dialogue despite the distance between us. Secondly, dialogue amongst the broader social circles about Vera were and are still strained, which raised my awareness about how negatively memory loss is perceived in our close family circles, but also the wider community as a taboo that hampers dialogue and engagement.

The third level of dialogue was elicited by the art installation itself, in the gallery space and through social media. In understanding the audience's reaction to the work, the use of the Balian (2006) 'focaliser' technique enables the analysis of various perceptions by the audience as explained earlier in the methodology. Dialogue came about through the engagement of the arts audience and the installation itself enabled people to ask questions and express their understanding and misunderstandings about memory loss and how it is often immediately, but wrongly, associated with Alzheimer's disease, which is only one of the many diseases that constitute the wider syndrome known as dementia. Many audience members were not able to recognise the installation as a three-dimensional quilt, but once the story behind the work was revealed, opportunities for dialogue emerged. However, most importantly the finding that the arts are able to elicit dialogue about the topic that may be taboo is not new, but more targeted arts-based approaches that can improve QoL for people dealing with memory loss can drive meaningful dialogue about the topic.

Narrative practices and lapwork

Narrative practices enabled the various levels of dialogue that came about during making and exhibition processes of the three-dimensional quilt. Storytelling, as mentioned earlier, also generates dialogue about the topic of memory loss. The arts can intersect dominant narratives and create social awareness (Lenette, 2019), demystify and address

stigmas, which is a key challenge in shaping better care experiences and QoL for PLWD.

Globally, many communities and individuals engage in lapwork as an intimate, social and creative practice (Sarantou, 2017; Sarantou, Sillgren & Pokela, 2019). Laps, and the capacity and role of the human body in expressive language (Sennet, 2008), support practices such as craft making that assist women in particular in identifying their place in this world (Johnson & Wilson, 2005). The role of lapwork as a learning space for intergenerational knowledge transfer has also been established (Sarantou, Sillgren & Pokela, 2019). Memory Box came about through such intimate lapwork, in the laps of my mother and myself. I have established elsewhere that the intimate spaces of laps and the creative work we engage in within these spaces encourage dialogue and storytelling, but also care practices for the self and the wider social circles we are moving in (Sarantou, 2017; Sarantou, Sillgren & Pokela, 2019). Memory Box as an arts-based method can nurture the values of caring in socially engaged arts as it can be practiced in spaces where care is given, such as hospital rooms, or flexible spaces such as laps.

The findings generated from Memory Box and my role as the reflexive researcher, took a sudden turn in October 2019 when my mother-in-law was hospitalised for three months due to illness. Shortly after her admission to hospital she was diagnosed with moderate to severe dementia. I spent many hours, days, weeks and finally, months in the hospital visiting, engaging in lapwork while hand stitching and assembling Memory Box. The bold colours, their unified and simple cube shapes and my slow and repetitive hand work made a significant impression on my mother-in-law, which I only understood much later.

Ricoeur (1994) explores the role of storytelling in shaping memories, but also in forgetting, which are practices of selective action on the side of the individual in daily life as there are matters that we choose and want to forget. However, memory cannot be controlled, but the role of narrative can facilitate the nurturing of memories. At the same time, the findings of the research illustrated how arts elements, such as colour and shape, can boldly shape new memories although it is widely acknowledged that new memory making is a challenge in the advanced stages of dementia.

The role of arts methods in memory work

During the making of the boxes the role of memory making emerged. Memory work became increasingly important throughout the making processes as Vera was struggling with mild memory loss at the time. 'Collective and social memory' functions through 'reconstructing, that is, it always relates its

knowledge to an actual and contemporary situation' while 'communicative memory' is based on collective memories and everyday conversations and communications (Assmann & Czaplicka, 1995, p. 126). Memory work in this article refers to the use of arts-based activities, creativity and various forms of expression to enable and strengthen recollections about life. At the same time, memory works are forward looking as it uses storytelling and creative making processes to shape new memories that are expressed through artistic means. My mother-in-law had a profound reaction to the art although she never saw the installation in the gallery due to her period of hospitalisation. The colourful cubes I made while sitting next to her side in hospital enabled memory work at another level that still assists her to connect to me in ways that are meaningful to her and brings her joy.

Conclusion

The article addressed how QoL can be improved through social and creative engagement with and by people who experience memory loss. Arts-based practices and arts in public spaces and everyday life can contribute to constructive and critical discussion to counter-narrate the stigmas associated with taboos. The three-dimensional quilt can serve as an adaptable concept as an ABM for recollective practices and memory work. Memory Box is a flexible ABM that can be transferred into various forms, materials and media. Layered with storytelling, it can also address multiple creative aims for creating engaging dialogue, but it can also fulfil, after Leavy (2015), research needs such as interview and visual data collection, analysis and dissemination. Textile arts can generate social transformation and elicit social dialogue to be a vehicle for social sculpture (Beuys, 1979, c.f. Harlan, 2004).

Valuable assessment of the project and the co-authoring of this article came about more than a year after exhibiting Memory Box. In reflection on our shared activity Vera wrote in WhatsApp during the co-authoring process: 'Thanks, now I understand this condition better. (This experience is) very profound for me (and it) spurs me on to develop more art. In my thoughts ... and if I know that it helps me, I'm happy to continue to tinker with crafts during my final years. It resonates with me so positively ... and encourages me not to give up...'. After the Memory Box exhibition, despite her experiences with life in isolation in her home in Swakopmund due to the COVID pandemic in Namibia, Vera's QoL improved due to adjusted medication after her diagnosis with severe Vitamin D deficiency. As a result, another shared activity is in progress.

Although the condition of my mother-in-law has regressed significantly since her diagnosis (for example we now do

not any longer share a spoken language), the memory work she engaged in unknowingly continues to help her to interact with me when we meet. She never fails to refer to the colourful cubes I was stitching. She mimics slow sewing gestures when she happily recollects those moments and it is a way for her to identify with me through her memory. This anecdote illustrates the important role of the arts as social sculpture in recollective practices and memory work, even in advanced stages of memory loss. These findings offer avenues for further research to improve care practices for PLWD.

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Las instalaciones de juego como Escultura Social: experiencia comunitaria en una visita-taller al museo del Prado de Madrid

As instalações de jogo como Escultura Social: experiência comunitária na visita-oficina do Museu do Prado de Madrid

Installations for play as Social Sculpture: community experience in a visit-workshop to the Prado Museum in Madrid

Javier Abad Molina

Centro Universitario La Salle (UAM)

j.abad@lasallecampus.es

Ángeles Ruiz de Velasco Gálvez

Centro Universitario La Salle (UAM)

ange@lasallecampus.es

RESUMEN

El sentido de la *Escultura Social*, como “concepto ampliado” del arte, implica la acción y la participación de un colectivo en un lugar significado e investido de valor simbólico a través de las interrelaciones y el intercambio. Así, se genera una experiencia singular por parte de una comunidad interpretante que ofrece un testimonio de cómo habitar juntos el espacio como metáfora de vida en relación.

Se ofrece a continuación el relato visual-textual de una performance didáctica que sucede en el museo del Prado de Madrid y que se manifiesta a través de la lúdica como manera de compartir todo lo extraordinario que acontece en un encuentro intergeneracional entre niñas y niños acompañados de sus familias tras la visita a la sala que alberga las pinturas de El Bosco y, en concreto, el tríptico de “El jardín de las delicias” (1500-1505). En el taller del museo se dispone y propone después una *instalación de juego* inspirada en las diferentes narrativas y figuras de la obra para ser recreada por el grupo participante. Desde el sentido lúdico de la propuesta, que implica la construcción de diferentes relaciones y vínculos entre *cuerpo-pensamiento-palabra-objeto-acción*, se favorece una conciencia de la capacidad de transformación del lugar de juego y, por tanto, del tránsito del imaginario colectivo al contexto real o externo al juego.

Palabras clave: Escultura Social, *Instalaciones de Juego*, Etnografía Visual, Procesos Simbólicos, Arte Contemporáneo.

RESUMO

O significado de *Escultura Social*, como um “conceito ampliado” de arte, implica a ação e a participação de um grupo em um lugar que é significante e investido de valor simbólico por meio de inter-relações e trocas. Assim, uma experiência única é gerada por uma comunidade de intérpretes que oferece um testemunho sobre habitar o espaço juntos como metáfora da vida em relacionamento.

Neste artigo apresenta-se um relato visuo-textual de uma performance didática que aconteceu no Museu do Prado em Madrid baseada no jogo como forma de compartilhar tudo o que de extraordinário pode acontecer num encontro intergeracional entre meninas e meninos acompanhados pelas suas famílias após a visita à sala onde estão as pinturas de Bosco e, especificamente, o tríptico “O Jardim das Delícias Terrestres” (1500-1505). Na oficina do museu, uma *instalação de jogo* inspirada nas diferentes narrativas e figuras da obra é então organizada e proposta para ser recriada pelo grupo participante. A partir do sentido lúdico da proposta, que implica a construção de diferentes relações e vínculos entre *corpo-pensamento-palavra-objeto-ação*, uma consciência da capacidade de transformação do lugar do brincar e, portanto, do trânsito do imaginário coletivo dentro e fora do jogo.

Palavras-chave: Escultura Social, *Instalação de Jogo*, Etnografia Visual, Procesos Simbólicos, Arte Contemporáneo.

ABSTRACT

The meaning of *Social Sculpture*, as an “extended concept” of art, implies the action and participation of a group in a place that is meaning and invested with symbolic value through interrelations and exchange. Thus, a unique experience is generated by an interpreting community that offers a testimony of how to inhabit space together as a metaphor for life in relationship.

This article presents a visual-textual account of a didactic performance that took place at the Prado Museum in Madrid based on the game as a way to share everything extraordinary that can happen in an intergenerational encounter between girls and boys accompanied by their families after a visit to the room where Bosco’s paintings are kept and, specifically, the triptych “The Garden of Earthly Delights” (1500-1505). In the museum’s workshop, a *installation for play* inspired by the different narratives and figures of the paintings is then organized and proposed to be recreated by the participating group. From the playful sense of the proposal, which implies the construction of different relationships and links between *body-thought-word-object-action*, an awareness of the capacity to transform the place of play and, therefore, the transit of the collective imagination inside and outside the game.

KeyWords: Social Sculpture, *Installations for Play*, Visual Ethnography, Symbolic Processes, Contemporary Art.



Figura 1. El “Jardín de las delicias”. El Bosco (1500-1505). Museo del Prado, Madrid.

Introducción

En un espacio lúdico o “jardín de objetos” configurado para las familias y el encuentro intergeneracional en el contexto museológico sucede lo posible, inesperado y maravilloso. Así, en cada encuentro, comienza una historia que construimos juntos en el espacio imaginario y que las pinturas del Bosco del Museo del Prado de Madrid facilitan para la realización de una experiencia de “Escultura Social” que implica a todo un colectivo. Las obras elegidas son pues lugares para ser interpretados a través de la lúdica compartida y expandida en singulares universos simbólicos donde lo extraordinario se convierte en creación comunitaria para la transformación de una *instalación de juego* inspirada en las diferentes escenas, figuras, animales y objetos de “El jardín de las delicias”.

Así, transformar y habitar el paisaje objetual se refiere a la horizontalidad de la tierra y a la verticalidad del cielo, ambos temas muy presentes en el desarrollo simbólico de los cuadros del artista flamenco. Habitar pues “la tierra y el cielo” sugiere la oportunidad para compartir el espacio lúdico que desvela la *metáfora relacional* de ser nosotros en relación con otros. La propuesta se concreta así en la creación de un *espacio-ambiente* que evoca posibles acciones plenas de simbología que toman forma a través del juego compartido en el taller del museo.

En este espacio se concreta la presentación inicial de las *instalaciones de juego* como “presencia estética” para generar sorpresa a los participantes y el deseo por el juego

de la transformación y la significación del lugar. La propuesta tiene una duración dos horas, incluyendo el tiempo de la visita inicial a las pinturas, la acción de juego y el tiempo final de recogida, agradecimiento y despedida grupal.

Desarrollo de la propuesta: las *instalaciones de juego* y la *escultura social*

Las *instalaciones de juego* es una propuesta educativa y lúdica concebida desde la presentación estética e intencional de unos objetos específicos en un espacio transformable, que se dispone para favorecer las relaciones entre un grupo de niños y los adultos referentes que acompañan los procesos simbólicos de la infancia, ya sea en un contexto de educación formal o no formal, acogiendo y favoreciendo el desarrollo de la capacidad simbólica que permite la evolución y representación del pensamiento (Ruiz de Velasco y Abad, 2019). El espacio lúdico es pues un espacio transformable y dispuesto así para la transformación.

Es decir, son contextos lúdicos concebidos desde el encuentro y la intersección entre juego, arte y cultura. En estos espacios de transformación y relación, la infancia tiene la oportunidad de contar su propia historia y compartir ese relato particular y universal con “otros” a través del juego acompañado en espacios con intencionalidad estética. Son pues “lugares de ensayo” para los aprendizajes de la vida y espacios de creación simbólica que desvelan la identidad del *yo en el nosotros* como representación de la comunidad. Desde su enunciado originario, las *instalaciones de juego* fueron concebidas para ofrecer un lugar de encuentro en



Figura 2. Momentos de la visita inicial de la Infancia con sus familias a las obras elegidas del Bosque. Imágenes cedidas por el Museo del Prado (2020-2021).

el que la infancia pudiera expresar y compartir *lo real, lo imaginario y lo simbólico* en todo ámbito educativo o espacios socioculturales como los museos.

Las *instalaciones de juego* se inspiran en el arte contemporáneo, donde el juego deviene arte y el arte es juego. Son, en esencia, ambientes lúdicos que proponen ir más allá de lo puramente manipulativo, perceptivo o sensorial para ir en pos de lo simbólico, lo narrativo y relacional. En este contexto se inscribe la acción de las niñas y los niños acompañados de sus familias al estar “contenida” en un marco o encuadre dado (sala, habitación, taller, espacio exterior con límites, etc.). Así, los *lugares de símbolo* transmiten la idea de ser espacios seguros que ofrecen la oportunidad de ser transformados para reinventar nuevos órdenes y contener la expresión de las emociones y el valor del cuidado, el acuerdo y la empatía, entre otros. Los objetos de las *instalaciones de juego* son pues mediadores que permiten “reinventar” diferentes narraciones, además de crear otros cuadros en el espacio lúdico para “jugarlos” juntos como escultura social.

“El lugar del juego” o *jardín de objetos* en el taller del Museo del Prado

Para el Bosque, el jardín representa la *metáfora* de la condición humana y lo efímero que es posible expresar e interpretar mediante la lúdica. También se refiere a la sensorialidad y al habitar juntos “lugares de posibilidad”. Estos *ambientes* serán el soporte objetual y simbólico de la “recreación” de los cuadros visitados y que después, en el espacio-taller del museo, continuará su relato a través del juego compartido en un marco de celebración configurado como *lugar de símbolo*. El colectivo se siente así reconocido para el “modelado” de esa *escultura social* cuya materia prima son las biografías e *historias de vida* de las personas con la posibilidad de ser visibles y transformarse en nuevas ideas.

Esta es la dinámica de juego tras la visita a las salas del museo: en el *espacio-ambiente* del taller existen zonas delimitadas por alfombrillas circulares, es decir, una para la mirada, la observación y la proyección del juego y otra para la construcción compartida con *otros*. El colectivo se divide en dos grupos y cada uno de ellos “juega” en un espacio diferente con la sugerencia de intercambio en la mitad del



Figura 3. Presentación en el taller del Museo del Prado de una instalación de juego que interpreta la obra *El jardín de las delicias* de El Bosco y se ofrece para su transformación.

tiempo ofrecido para que el otro grupo continúe el correlato *espacial-objetual* que se encuentre como novedad y genere así una posibilidad de diálogo y colaboración entre los participantes. Al final de la sesión de juego, se propone un momento para narrar de palabra lo sucedido y compartir el sentido de cada acción y construcción, para generar un espacio inclusivo y ser conscientes del juego como metáfora de la vida de *relación*. Así, los objetos elegidos en la evocación de los cuadros “habitarán” los *lugares de juego* en el que se proponen diferentes configuraciones espaciales que las familias participantes podrán transformar para continuar o reinventar nuevos relatos en compañía de *otros*. La lúdica será pues el “adhesivo social” que convoca para el placer de “ser juntos”.

Simbología objetual en la obra del Bosco

Desde el universo objetual de la pintura ya referida, se eligieron varios elementos para diseñar la *instalación de juego* por sus posibilidades simbólicas y lúdicas.

Así, las *esferas transparentes* expresan el juego de aparecer-desaparecer, velar-desvelar y contener, las escaleras son el

soporte simbólico y lúdico, el espejo simboliza la imagen del “sí mismo” que el objeto refleja como identidad del yo, la *pelota* es un *objeto relacional* y mediador de la comunicación y del intercambio, los *embudos* son evocadores de las construcciones y simbolizan la capacidad de espera, las cajas son símbolo de contención, protección, seguridad, refugio o envoltura, el *maniquí* articulado y adaptable en el movimiento representa la figura humana y las piedras transmiten la idea de estabilidad, perdurabilidad y firmeza.

Significado de las acciones corporales en la obra del Bosco

Las acciones corporales inherentes al juego son la expresión inconsciente de la dimensión psíquica del pensamiento. En la obra del Bosco se puede observar una simbología asociada a las acciones y los movimientos realizados con el cuerpo y que están contextualizadas en escenas de relación con *otros* y que también suceden en el espacio del taller como interpretación corporal de la obra:

. *Contener* algo o *contenerse* a sí mismo: introducir unos objetos dentro de otros o partes del cuerpo, cubrirse o envolverse con un objeto o completar huecos. Está



Figura 4. Detalles del "Jardín de las delicias" de El Bosco (Museo El Prado, Madrid).



Figura 5. Los maniqués de madera representan el cuerpo humano en todas las acciones posibles que se muestran en la obra y su simbología en la relación con otros.

relacionado con la vivencia de los límites corporales, la diferenciación del "adentro" y el "afuera" o la necesidad de completar el "vacío" de las ausencias.

. *Acaparar*: se relaciona con la inseguridad ante la ausencia o la carencia asociada a la "pérdida" de objetos o personas. Proporciona seguridad por su función compensatoria pues equilibra el "Ser" con el "tener" y calma la ansiedad.

. *Equilibrarse*: está asociado a la sensación de dominar y controlar el cuerpo a pesar de perder las referencias (autonomía de uno mismo). Significa también el placer del desequilibrio, el perder el "control" o ponerse en riesgo como un reto.

. *Ocultarse*: desaparecer de la mirada del otro. Sentir vergüenza es una emoción vincula de forma dolorosa el ser y la apariencia, la interioridad y la exterioridad, el individuo y la colectividad. Actúa de manera íntima y pública al mismo tiempo.

. *Trepar*: elevarse, ascender, conquistar la altura es la vivencia de la "separación" o despegar los pies del suelo para realizar avances y logros por uno mismo.

. *Presentar y mostrar*: aparecer y hacerse visible posee un significado que se interpreta como reconocimiento, desvelar la verdad y afirmación de la identidad.

El carácter moralista de las pinturas del Bosco continúa con la representación del ser humano "por dentro" o retrato psicológico que le muestra con sus virtudes y sus grandes defectos pues representan la ambición, el egoísmo, la soberbia o la falta de empatía y solidaridad con otros. Un objeto destaca y es el símbolo de la escalera, elemento que colabora en la idea de alcanzar lo que es deseable y está lejano todavía. Ese objeto o soporte (presente en la *instalación de juego* en el taller), servirá como hilo narrativo para crear un diálogo con los participantes y presentar el espacio como metáfora de la vida que implica "crecer con otros".

Simbología animal en la obra del Bosco

Durante la visita a la obra originaria, se suscitó la conversación con las niñas y niños a través de un tema de su gran interés: los animales o la fauna que aparece profusamente en los cuadros del Bosco. Existe un detalle realmente muy curioso a comentar y es la existencia de una figura muy parecida a la de un *ornitorrinco* (un hecho realmente misterioso pues se descubrieron a partir del siglo XVIII). También se solicita la búsqueda de animales fantásticos como unicornios y aves del paraíso, además de la famosa jirafa *Bosquiana* que sugiere la pregunta de cómo podía conocer el pintor este animal si no existía en el Flandes de la época.

La respuesta está en las descripciones de viajeros y libros en los que el pintor se documentó. Así, la construcción de un “bestiario” resulta muy atractiva a los visitantes jóvenes por sus posibilidades lúdicas y otorgar así el rol de “creadores” de nuevas especies animales desde su propuesta creativa. Algunos ejemplos en la página siguiente.

Se propone entonces la dinámica de mostrar imágenes de “medio animal” reconocible y crear así el origen de especies híbridas que podrían haber sido incluidas por El Bosco en *El Jardín de las Delicias*. Esta dinámica de juego tras la visita y antes de la acción comunitaria en el taller del museo, es importante para generar un ambiente distendido entre los participantes pues propone una trasgresión o diferente forma de entender la realidad desde la permanente y consciente posibilidad de que, una vez traspasado el umbral del lugar de juego, el mundo es como deseamos que sea. O, de otra manera, que es posible recrear nuevas realidades diferenciadas desde nuestra propia decisión como creadores.

Conclusión

Las *instalaciones de juego* proponen, en su sentido metafórico y literal también, un espacio lúdico como Escultura Social que es posible transformar para ser transformados en interacción recíproca. En el juego compartido en estos lugares de encuentro y relación, existe una conexión evidente y tácita al mismo tiempo con un mundo simbólico común que tiene resonancias en el pasado, pero que se reactualiza en el presente. Así, el significado de las acciones corporales y la posibilidad de crear un relato proyectado a través de unos objetos determinados genera una dialéctica alternante entre la presencia y la ausencia que es la esencia y origen de toda creación simbólica. En este “lugar de símbolo” o espacio potencial donde *todo* está por comenzar, la infancia tiene la oportunidad de hacer “pensable” cada acción transformadora para generar



Figura 6. Representación del ornitorrinco (parte izquierda de la fotografía).



Figura 7. Representación de animales fantásticos en “El Jardín de las Delicias”



Figura 8. Ilustración de una jirafa realizada por Ciriaco de Ancona (1391-1455) en el libro “Egyptian Voyage” del que probablemente El Bosco se documentó para sus obras.



Figura 9. Jirafa del Bosco, símbolo artístico y también comercial del Museo del Prado.



Figura 10. ¿Y si unimos dos figuras diferentes?, ¿cual es el nombre de este animal?



Figura 11. Y este animal imaginario o real, ¿cómo se llama?, ¿cebrerro o pecebra?



Figura 12. Narrativa visual de la experiencia “El lugar del juego: un jardín de objetos (diciembre 2020-enero 2021). Imágenes cedidas por el Museo del Prado de Madrid:

El lugar del juego (un jardín de objetos) - Actividad - Museo Nacional del Prado (museodelprado.es)



una conciencia diferente y diversa que colabora en la construcción del *soy-somos* como cruce de biografías.

También a través del tiempo, arte y juego han compartido un mismo patrimonio simbólico que transvasa el sentido metafórico de la vida que se puede (y debe) verificar en la realidad. Es decir, jugamos la vida y la vida es juego desde un compromiso lúdico con los otros y con nosotros. Y ya sea de forma conjunta o separada, las fronteras entre ambas situaciones o estados resultan borrosas en su explicitación y carácter como *círculo mágico* donde el ritual y la celebración generan un “goce moral” (no solo sensorial o psíquico) que es independiente de su finalidad y que trasciende en su significado para la comunidad que crea unida.

De esta manera, una propuesta de actividad para las familias, contextualizada en la programación rutinaria de un museo, también puede ser un comienzo *sin-fin* cuando la Escultura Social ya no es solo el manifiesto del *discurso Beuysiano*, sino una oportunidad, singular y plural, para reconocernos en los otros y darnos cuenta de que el verdadero sentido del arte significa el “hacer con y por otros”. Las *instalaciones de juego* rescatan pues la idea de *investidura*, es decir, una forma de conferir dignidad o importancia a algo o a alguien en un momento especial, elegido y esperado. Se trata de transferir un carácter extraordinario a un lugar donde los objetos dispuestos plantean una realidad propia y, desde ella, invitar a participar en un *contexto relacional* para “instalarlos” en él y ofrecer un lugar a todo aquel que lo desee. Y, por tanto, dar sentido a nuestro devenir lúdico.

El lugar del juego (un jardín de objetos) - Actividad - Museo Nacional del Prado (museodelprado.es)

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Figura 13. Momentos del taller. Imágenes cedidas por el Museo del Prado (2020-2021).

I will dye my hair for this - Failure in participatory art or emergent turn in play?

Vou mudar a cor do meu cabelo por causa disso - Fracasso na arte participativa ou reviravolta emergente no jogo?

Me teñiré el cabello por esto. ¿Fracaso en el arte participativo o un giro emergente en el juego?

Nina Luostarinen

University of Lapland, Faculty of Art and Design

Humak University of Applied Science, Cultural Management

nluostarinen@gmail.com

This visual essay presents an art-based playful intervention into place that did not go quite as planned. I, as a play designer, had planned a participatory light installation in the heritage surroundings as a serene and calm component of a small festival next to Raasepori castle ruins in Finland. I had prepared a designerly intervention (Sumartojo & Pink 2019) that sought to shift the ways one can feel in a specific locality and make the atmosphere. As Sumartojo & Pink suggest, the role of design is to create interventions that make possible the circumstances through which particular types of atmosphere might emerge, but alone it cannot predetermine or predict exactly what these atmospheres will be experientially (Sumartojo & Pink 2019, 95). I was dressed in an illuminated cape and had dyed my hair into bright turquoise colour in order to generate a mystical moment and an illusion that it actually could be the ghost of the river Raasepori who was distributing the lights. I aimed for tranquil ambience enabling introverted play: participants gazing quietly as the floating lights form shapes in the dawdlingly moving water, some just quietly directing them with provided sticks coated with fluorescent paint. As this circle of my art-based action research (Jokela 2019) shows, sometimes the outcome takes quite an alternative path than intended.

The Lights on Raasepori festival was part of European Union Interreg funded project which sought to find new audiences for eight ruined heritage sites in Finland and in Estonia. The project wanted to improve the visitor experience with both infrastructure improvements as well as bring new insight to these merely forgotten destinations. As a part of offering a new perception of the places a series of light festivals were organised. As all the sites in this project are remote and peripheral and therefore hard to reach, the organizing project partners (Humak University of Applied Sciences and Metsähallitus, state-owned enterprise which manages the site) expected up to 400 participants for this festival held in Raasepori, in the Southern Coastal area of Finland. As it started, more and more people started appearing and in the end it was estimated that the number of the audience was up to 4000-5000. The participants were mostly locals from surrounding areas (of which many said they had not visited the heritage area in decades) but the festival attracted attendants even from Helsinki, the capital area, approximately 100 km away.

The original aim for the activity I had planned was to reveal the narrative layer of the surrounding of the castle ruins of Raasepori and thus enable a novel, empathy-based relationship with the location. The main imaginary character of this endeavor was the

ghost of the river Raasepori who was leading participants in building floating participatory light art. As Mason (2018) suggests, affinities are charged with the energies of fascination, wondering and discordance (p. 54) and that was just what I wanted to create with this collaboration with people in a place of ruined castle surroundings and the enchanting atmosphere of dusking August night. As Matarasso (2019) states, the emergence of participatory art is still an unwritten chapter in the history of art (p.128).

In the planning phase, the aim was to create a serene, calm and peaceful atmosphere. As an artist I had an assumption of how the participants of this co-created art would behave, but as the visuals below tell, the 'homo ludens' (Huizinga 1949) took in and the shift in atmosphere happened. I had envisioned a slow-tempo side corner scene of a desolate festival, but in reality I was suddenly tightly squeezed with a huge crowd. Eager hands were ripping the lights from me. First, people followed my instructions and launched the lights into the river as intended. But suddenly it all reversed. Participants seemed to desire a more active, dynamic and playful atmosphere. The thing that triggered this might have been the distributed objects, the round floating lights that slowly changed color. As an object, they were smooth to touch, cute to look at and had almost some pet-like characteristic. The objects themselves invited participants into toy play. Like Heljakka (2013) proposes, people can play "with" or "at" the objects and relationships of the world, but they may also be "in" play. Play occurs in many different settings and involves many different kinds of objects. Or as Roos & Said (2016) suggest, objects by virtue of having a particular material instantiation and being accessible through all senses allow us to draw on many aspects of tap into our emotions and make us feel differently. This might explain why this playful emergence occurred. As Fink, Saine & Saine (1968) put it sharply, "play is finite creativity in the magic dimension of illusion" (p.28) and that magic dimension of the place was just the thing we were pursuing for. It just happened slightly differently than expected. The participants did not want to obey the action plan given, but allowed the tiny objects to lead them into corporal play.

The objective was to generate tactic and latent knowledge (Sanders & Stappers 2012, 67) and insights of the place by allowing participants to feel something touching and encourage their imagination. Based on thoughts of Mason (2018) I wanted to focus on sensations to take us beyond that somewhat limiting frame. This intertwines with the thoughts of Salami (2020) about sensuous knowledge of how when something is sensuous, it affects not only your senses but your entire being and potentially transforms your deepest thought patterns by affecting you entirely (p.14).

This is supported by the manifesto of Abramovic (2020) how we should trust the body more than the mind (p.111). So, I had no other choice than let the bodily sensations of the crowds alter the course of events and let the magic of play emerge. So, in the end, it seems that this art-based intervention got even more valuable after a kind of failure. As Schrag (2020) puts it: failures are vital for artists; they are the cracks that let in the light: they are opportunities!

As the overall aim of the project and this event was to offer opportunities for novel perception of place this playful, emergent turn seems most serendipitous. As I wanted to shake the dignified, stiff - and boring - notion of a heritage site, my original idea was actually only halfway there. Targeting for pious and poetical mood was not courageous and alternative enough: the participants were braver and relied on their bodily knowledge: the play objects felt too lovely to be cast into the cold stream. Fishing and swimming the lights out of the river, throwing them high towards the dark sky and to others and petting them like small creatures was rebellious and boisterous enough to factually make the playful turn happen in perception of this heritage place. The participants co-constructed the event and I was happy to see my role turn into facilitator and let the participatory art happen. The participants took the course of events into their own hands and created an even more playfully versatile piece of art than intended. My emotions rollercoasted from being optimistic to scared, from frustrated to disappointed and ending up into joy and admiration in how many ways these objects can be played with.

Afterwards, even years later, the participants have been asking when something similar will happen again. The atmosphere and emotions experienced during the event seem to have created lasting memories, empathy and attachment. It seems that now this heritage site has new friends with art-based play-escorted ties to it.

Lights on Raasepori!

26.8.2017

Suomi
Finland
100

luonnon
päivät²¹

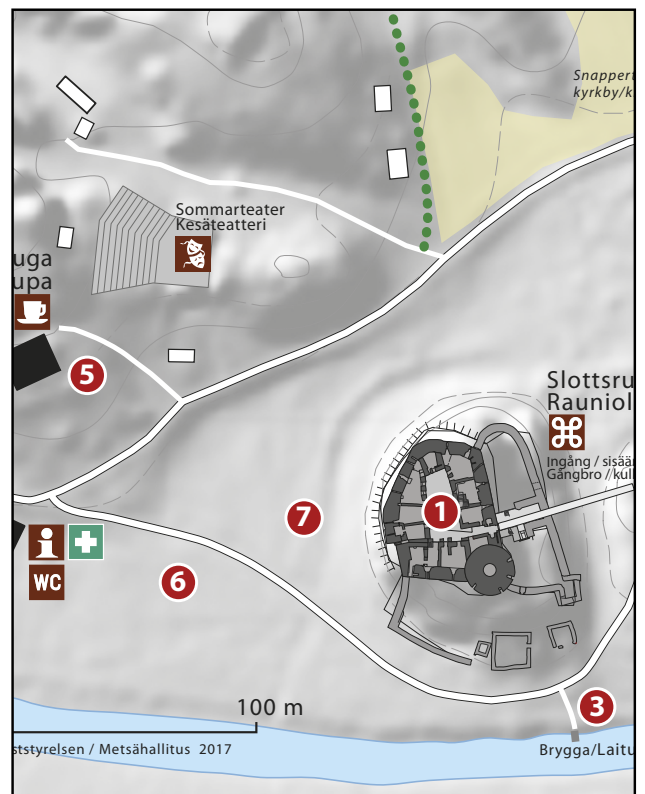


AS A PART OF LIGHTS ON! PROJECT (FUNDED BY THE EU'S INTERREG CENTRAL BALTIC PROGRAMME) WHICH SOUGHT NEW WAYS TO BRING THE FORGOTTEN PAST ALIVE IN RUINED CULTURAL HERITAGE SITES, A LIGHT ART FESTIVAL WAS BEING ORGANISED IN AUGUST 2017 IN RAASEPORI, FINLAND.

ONE OF THE MANY ACTIVITIES OF THAT EVENT WAS A PARTICIPATORY STORY-BASED FLOATING LIGHT INSTALLATION.

IN THE PROGRAM THE PARTICIPANTS WERE INVITED TO THIS ACTIVITY LIKE THIS: "COME AND GET YOUR OWN FLOATING LIGHT FROM THE SPIRIT AND OF THE RAASEPORI RIVER - AND PLACE IT IN THE RIVER ALONG WITH YOUR NARRATIVES AND EXPERIENCES AT RAASEPORI CASTLE. LET IT FLOAT AND BECOME PART OF THE WEAVE OF STORIES FORMED ON THE CURRENT."

THIS VISUAL ESSAY REVEALS HOW THINGS FAILED, OR EMERGED.

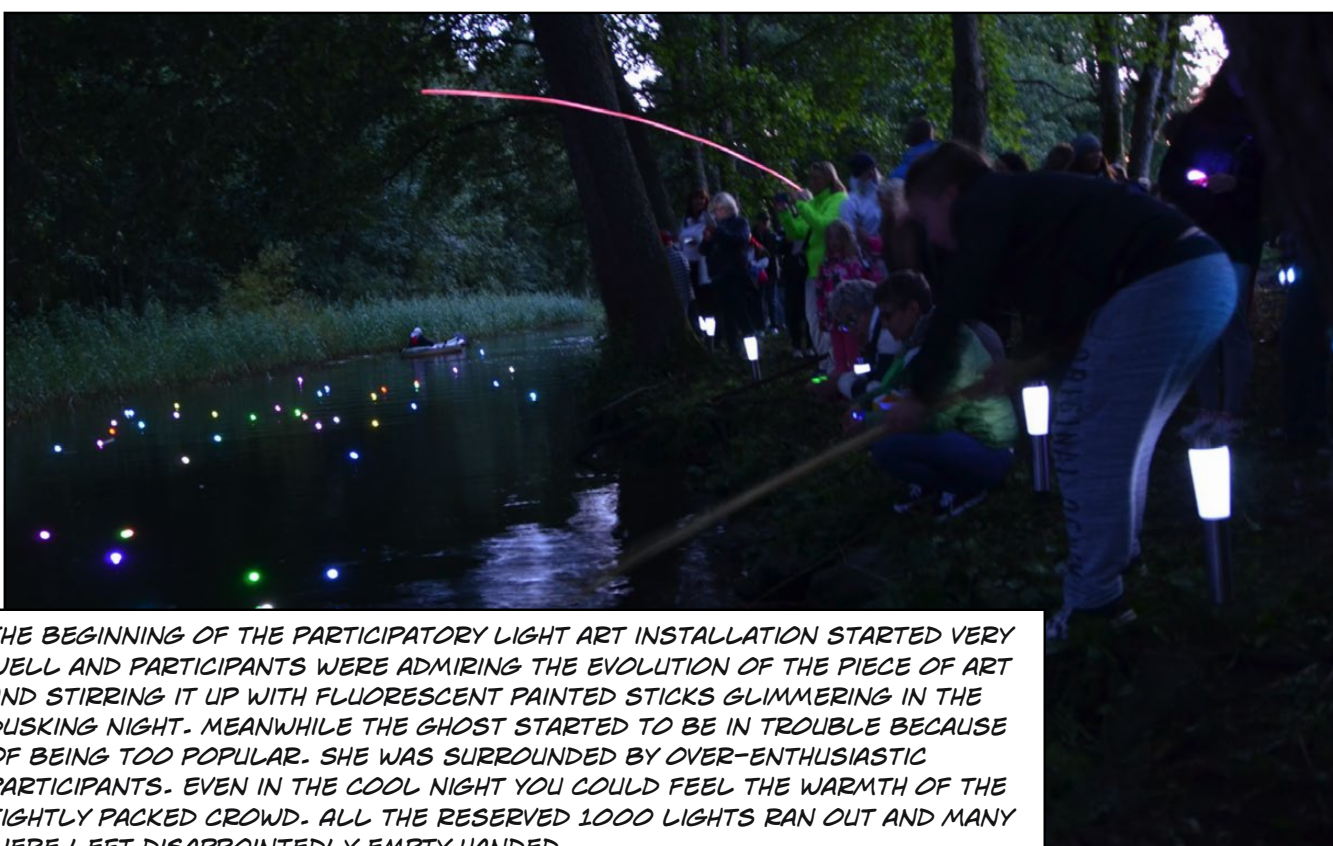


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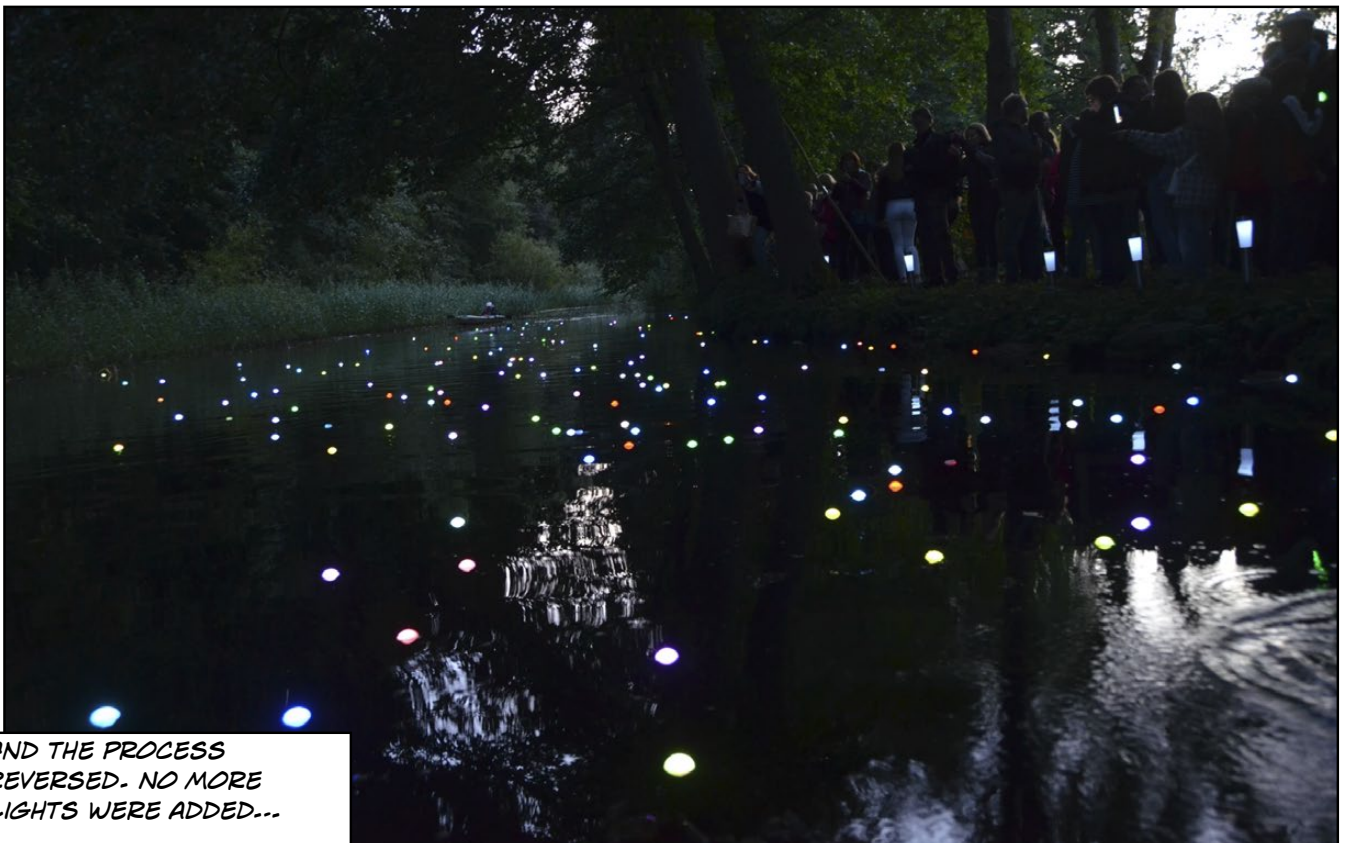
THE ORIGINAL IDEA WAS THIS. A PERSON, THE AUTHOR OF THIS VISUAL ESSAY, WAS BEING DRESSED UP AS A GHOST OF THE RIVER RAASEPORI. THIS CHARACTER - WITH AN ILLUMINATED CAPE AND HAIR DYED IN TURQUOISE - IS DISTRIBUTING FLOATING LIGHTS AND PARTICIPANTS PLACE THEM INTO THE RIVER IN ORDER TO FORM A COLLECTIVE LIGHT ART WHERE THE SLOW MOVEMENT OF THE STREAM CONSTANTLY CHANGES THE COMPOSITION.



THE BEGINNING OF THE PARTICIPATORY LIGHT ART INSTALLATION STARTED VERY WELL AND PARTICIPANTS WERE ADMIRING THE EVOLUTION OF THE PIECE OF ART AND STIRRING IT UP WITH FLUORESCENT PAINTED STICKS GLIMMERING IN THE DUSKING NIGHT. MEANWHILE THE GHOST STARTED TO BE IN TROUBLE BECAUSE OF BEING TOO POPULAR. SHE WAS SURROUNDED BY OVER-ENTHUSIASTIC PARTICIPANTS. EVEN IN THE COOL NIGHT YOU COULD FEEL THE WARMTH OF THE TIGHTLY PACKED CROWD. ALL THE RESERVED 1000 LIGHTS RAN OUT AND MANY WERE LEFT DISAPPOINTEDLY EMPTY HANDED.



SOON AFTER BEGINNING THE FORMATION OF THE FLOATING LIGHT ART INSTALLATION, THE PARTICIPANTS NOTICED THAT THESE LIGHTS WERE ACTUALLY QUITE LOVELY AND CUTE WHEN HELD IN HAND. THEY STARTED PLAYING WITH THEM IN VARIOUS WAYS: PETTING THEM GENTLY, PUTTING THEM INTO THEIR MOUTHS AND LETTING THE LIGHT TRANSLUDE THROUGH THE CHEEK, FLINGING THEM TO EACH OTHER, HAVING TWO OF THEM FOR OVER THEIR EYES.



AND THE PROCESS REVERSED. NO MORE LIGHTS WERE ADDED...



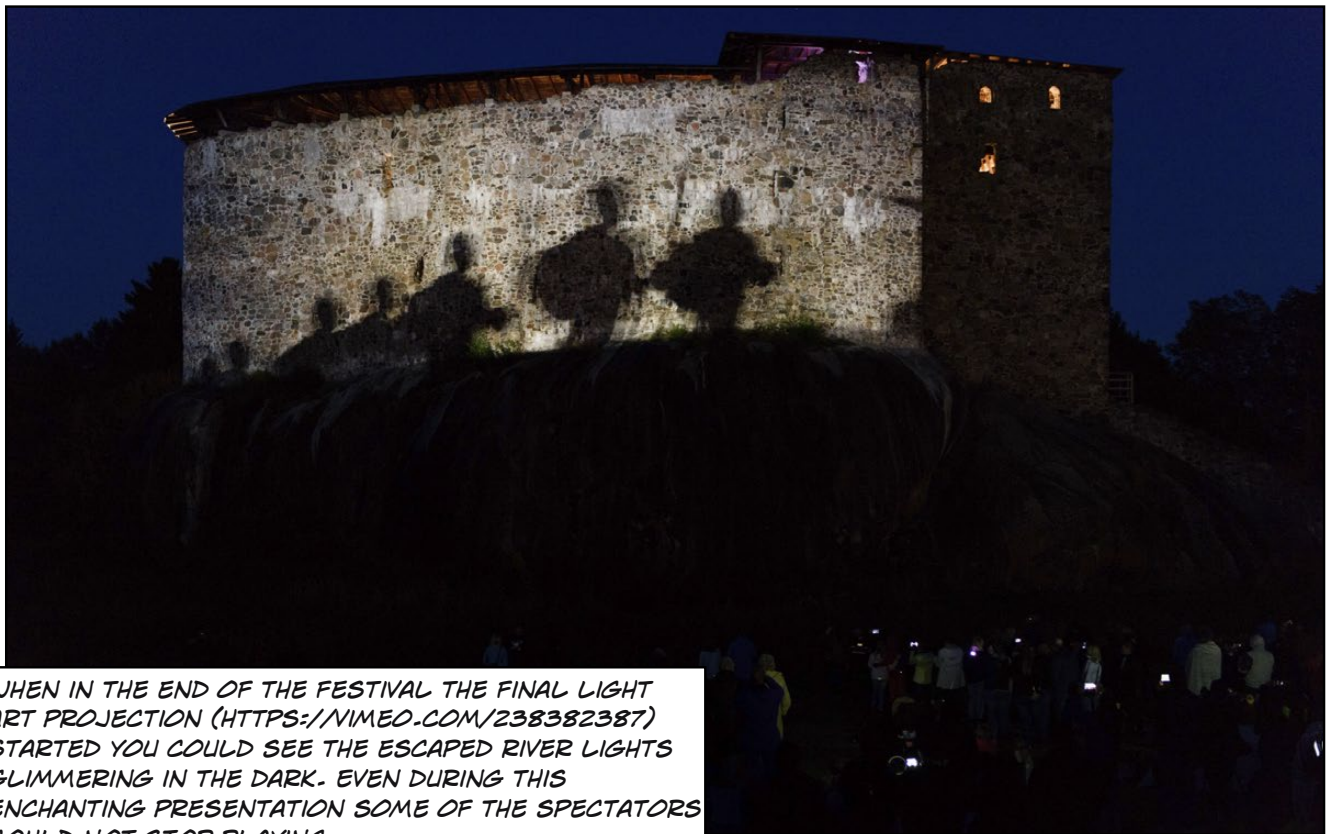
...BUT INSTEAD THE PARTICIPANTS STARTED FISHING THEM OUT OF THE RIVER. SOME EVEN SWAM IN THE CHILLY RIVER TO CATCH THEM AND REALLY NERVED THE SECURITY GUARDS OUT.



INSTEAD OF BUILDING UP INTO A LIGHT ART IN THE RIVER ALL THE RESERVED OVER 1000 LIGHTS WERE SPREAD AROUND THE HERITAGE AREA IN THE HANDS OF THE PARTICIPANTS.



PARTICIPANTS SEEMED TO REALLY ENJOY HAVING THE LIGHTS AND PLAYED WITH THEM IN VARIOUS WAYS, THROWING, CATCHING AND DRAWING LIGHT SHAPES WITH RAPID MOVEMENT IN THE DARKENING DUSK.



WHEN IN THE END OF THE FESTIVAL THE FINAL LIGHT ART PROJECTION ([HTTPS://VIMEO.COM/238382387](https://vimeo.com/238382387)) STARTED YOU COULD SEE THE ESCAPED RIVER LIGHTS GLIMMERING IN THE DARK. EVEN DURING THIS ENCHANTING PRESENTATION SOME OF THE SPECTATORS COULD NOT STOP PLAYING.



WAS IT A FAILURE OF PARTICIPATORY ART AS THINGS DID NOT GO AS PLANNED? OR WAS THE ACTUAL SPIRIT OF THE RIVER RAASEPORI THAT JUST GUIDED THE PROCESS IN AN UNEXPECTED WAY? DID SOMETHING MORE MAGICAL THAN OUR EYES WITNESSED JUST HAPPEN?

Imagens Images

Images 3, 7, 9 & 10: photography Ilkka Nissilä

Images 4, 5, 6, 8, 11: photography Venla Luostarinen

Image 1: Light painting Kirsi MacKenzie, photography Sari Vahersalmi

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Performing in an Art Fair: Inviting Strangers into the Artistic Action.

Marija Griniuk is a performance artist and doctoral candidate at the University of Lapland (Finland), Faculty of Art and Design and lecturer at Vilniaus kolegija / University of Applied Sciences (Lithuania), Faculty of Business Management. mgriniuk@ulapland.fi

Abstract

The phenomenon researched in this essay is performance art with a particular focus on interactive performance at large-scale events, such as art fairs. This research focuses on two performance art cases performed at the *Supermarket Art Fair* in Sweden in 2017 and at the *ArtVilnius Art Fair*, in Lithuania in 2018. The cases are analyzed by the author from an autoethnographic approach. The data collected during 2017-2018 include video and photo documentation, notes and interviews, and EEG (electroencephalography) data. The cases are analyzed from the following perspectives – emergent responsivity, inhuman interconnections and transcorporeality – as recommended by the author to integrate the performance design when the artwork is created as a social sculpture in a large-scale venue, such as an art fair. This research can be useful for performance artists and designers as well as interaction designers.

Research Question: How can passers-by be invited into an interactive performance with biometric data at an art fair?

Introduction

The art fair as a venue for the performer is very site specific due to the nature of the events that take place for large art-interested audiences. Art fairs usually consist of a large number of booths that have traditionally focused primarily on art objects, which are sold to individuals or collections. Yet during the past decade, more and more art fairs invite artists to present live events and performances. The challenge within the art fair format is to establish a connection between the performer and the visitors who might not be familiar with performance art and may not quite know what to expect from the interactive elements or that they could be invited to co-perform with the artist.

The author of this essay is a performance artist and researcher working with interactive performances involving the performer's biometric data, such as EEG (electroencephalography). She explores the art fair format as an interactive environment where the invitation to visitors to interact is supplemented by monitors that project the bodily conditions of the performer so that the viewers can see what happens as the performer moves among them talking and inviting them to touch her. In a custom-designed program, the monitors show the performer's remediated conditions of concentration and relaxation as a colored running graph on the black background. This digital mediation of the bodily states of the performer aims to create maximum transparency of what happens in the moment of performance and provide an interpersonal connection between the performer and audience members. When connections happen, it impacts the bodily state of the performer, which is immediately visible on the monitor for the audience to see.

Aim

The aim of this essay is to explore how technology-based visualization of the inner state of a performing body (the artist) can be extracted, remediated, and shown live on a screen to reflect the changing inner conditions of concentration and relaxation when the artist interacts with visitors. This interaction produces a visual co-creation, a social sculpture, at the art fair venue, which has traditionally focused on static art objects on sale.

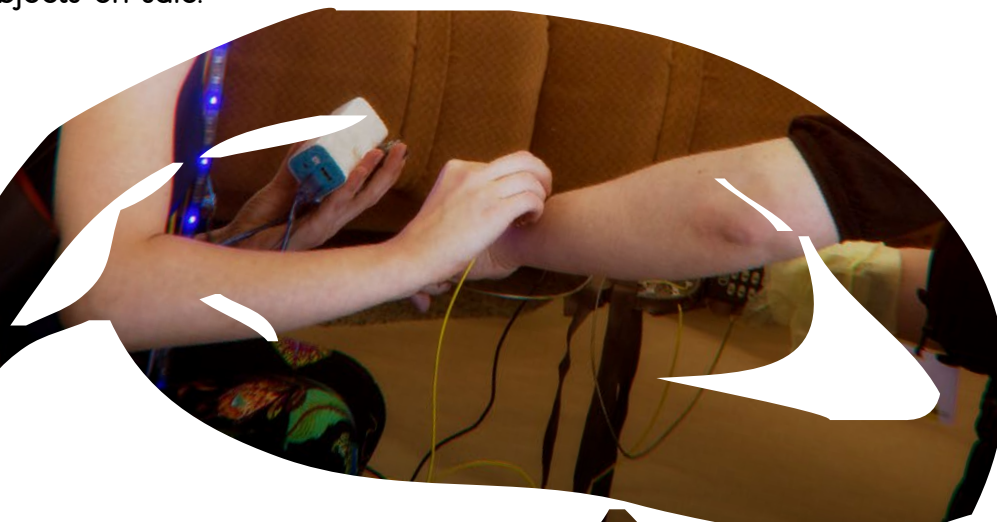


Fig. 1.

Methodology

Theory

Participatory performance is seen here as a work of art consisting of space, time, performing body, and audience (Schechner, 1977) and is built upon interhuman connections as a trigger for interaction (Bishop, 2014). In the present case studies, this interaction is illustrated using digital technology that tracks the bodily condition of the performer in real time and remediates it onto a monitor. The theories within this case study analysis are inhuman interconnections and trans-corporeality (Cohen, 2015; Alaimo 2010; Griniuk, 2021), where the performer's body is extended by technology and projected onto a screen as an additional visual layer that invites the visitors into the interaction. The performer becomes a trans-corporeal body with the involved audience at the art fair.

The site-specificity of the performance (Pearson, 2010) in the art fair venue is, in its own way, trans-corporeality because it is incorporated into a large-scale event, and the visitors, who are the primary audience of the entire art fair event, become the co-creators and/or participants in the performance. Site-specific performance (Pearson, 2010) is a performance developed according to the specific site or place. The case performances for this research were developed specifically for the context of each of the two events; what they have in common is the screens that show the audience the remediated bodily states of the performer.

Materials and Methods

The two cases of performance art with biometric data within this research are analyzed through auto-ethnographic means (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). In the auto-ethnographic method the researcher is engaged in telling her own story (Russel, 1999) and the value is in her inner knowing of the research field (Duncan, 2004). In auto-ethnography the self is used as a data source (Holt, 2003). The data of this study is auto-ethnographic, as the author, while conducting the performances in 2017 and 2018, took reflective notes and collected video and photographic data from her own static pre-installed cameras, from the photographers involved in the documentation of the events, and from reflective notes written after the performances. In developing this essay, the author is re-narrating the cases from today's perspective on the past two events while continuing to interact with the material. The research is ongoing, and the author is planning to expand it into new horizons after participation at the Supermarket Art Fair and Affordable Art Fair in Sweden in 2021.

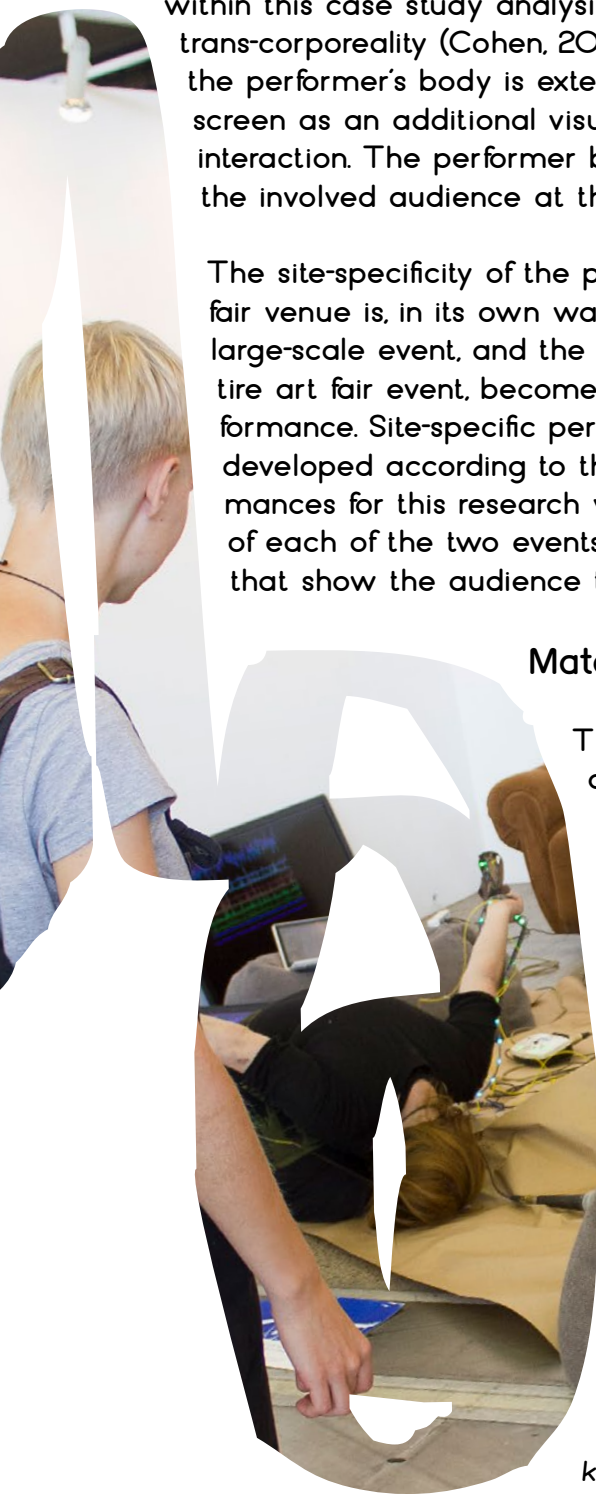


Fig. 2.



Cases

The first case, "Mark Making with the Robots," consists of performances realized at the Supermarket Art Fair in Stockholm, Sweden in 2017 (Fig. 3 & 4). The performances were scheduled as daily sessions of one-hour duration and were situated near the entrance of the art fair; the performance was literally the first artwork the visitors encountered after entering the art fair venue. The artwork was

about the extension of the performer's body and art practice into a digital reflection uniting the audience, the performer's body, objects, and surroundings into one work of art. The artist integrated technology to make visible not only the performative acts, but the inner bodily states of the performer; the space consisted of the floor covered with paper and moving and drawing DIY (do-it-yourself) robots made from recycled materials, such as an old shoe and old toys. Five DIY electronic instruments were mounted on the performer's body; these were made from the recycled materials that made sounds when the members of the audience touched the performers skin. The performer had an EEG device on her head and the screen, placed on the floor, showed a running graph. The performance was assisted by one person, who was photo documenting the interactions, talking to the audience, and introducing the technology behind the artwork. The walls behind the performance were covered by silkscreen print posters, picturing the performer wearing the technological devices that were the same as what the visitors saw during the live action. Piles of posters were also lying on the floor, and the visitors could take a poster with them.



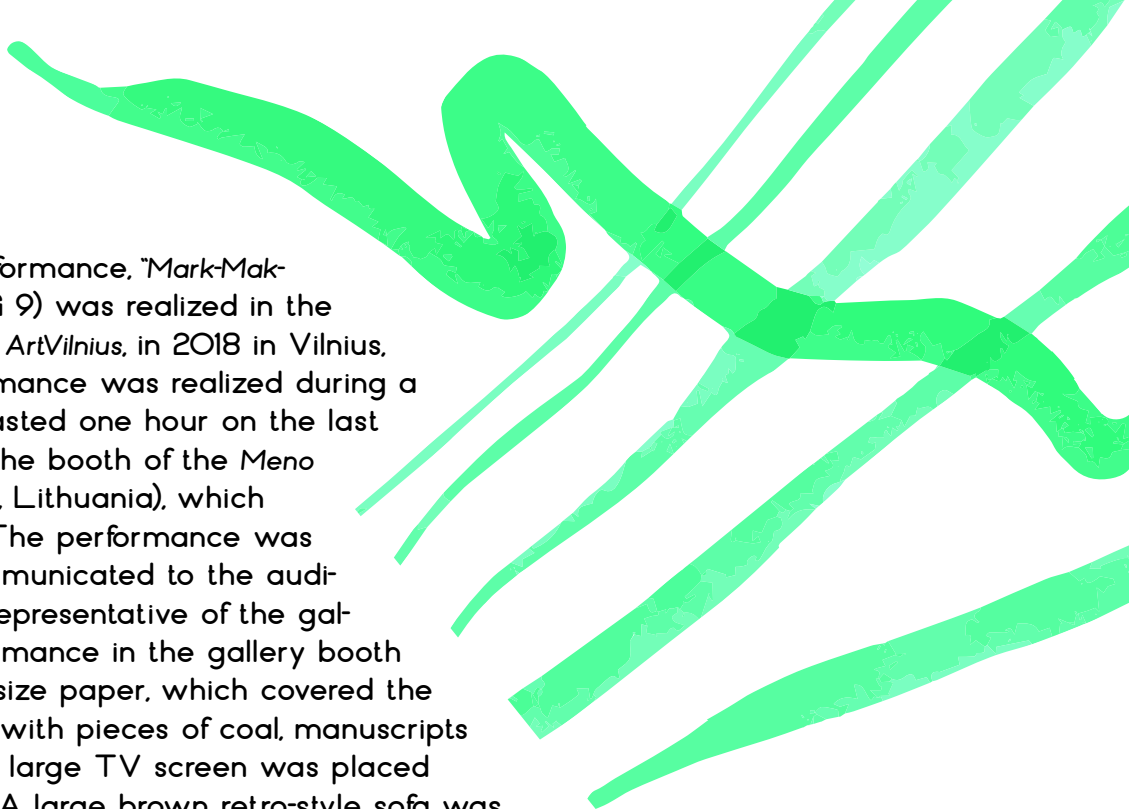
Fig. 3.



Fig. 4.



Top: Fig 5.
Middle: Fig 6.
Left: Fig 7.



The second case performance, "Mark-Making" (Fig. 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9) was realized in the context of the art fair, *ArtVilnius*, in 2018 in Vilnius, Lithuania. The performance was realized during a scheduled time and lasted one hour on the last day of the art fair in the booth of the *Meno Parkas Gallery* (Kaunas, Lithuania), which represents the artist. The performance was documented and communicated to the audience members by a representative of the gallery. The site of performance in the gallery booth included brown large-size paper, which covered the floor and was littered with pieces of coal, manuscripts and two computers; a large TV screen was placed vertically by the wall. A large brown retro-style sofa was placed in the space for the visitors and the performer to sit on if they wanted to interact. Silkscreen posters picturing the performer were placed on the floor and the visitors could take those home. The performer wore a silkscreen print dress similar to those on the posters. She had an EEG device mounted on her head. The performance consisted of several sequences where the performer read a text, moved in the space, or talked to the visitors and invited them into the space of the booth. As the performer moved, traces of the coal were left on the brown paper and the visitors, by stepping into the space, left their coal footprints as well. Some of the visitors sat on the sofa and participated in the space. The visitors could see the running graph on the screen that represented the performer's moments of concentration, for example when she was reading the text, or moment of relaxation, for example, when she was sitting on sofa or lying on the floor in her movement sequences. The goal of the performance was to invite the visitors to step into the space with the performer inside the gallery booth, create footprints on the paper together, and witness the digitized co-performance.

Discussion

The two performances took place in large-scale art fair venues, where the invitation of the audience unfamiliar to the performance and the artist was designed by the following means: the involvement of the screens/monitors, where the inner states of the performer were visible, an assistant or representative of the gallery, who communicated the performance to the audience in real time, and the bodily and verbal communication of the performer. The screens incorporated in both performances utilized EEG as a means to transmit to the audience moments when the artist was relaxed or concentrating.

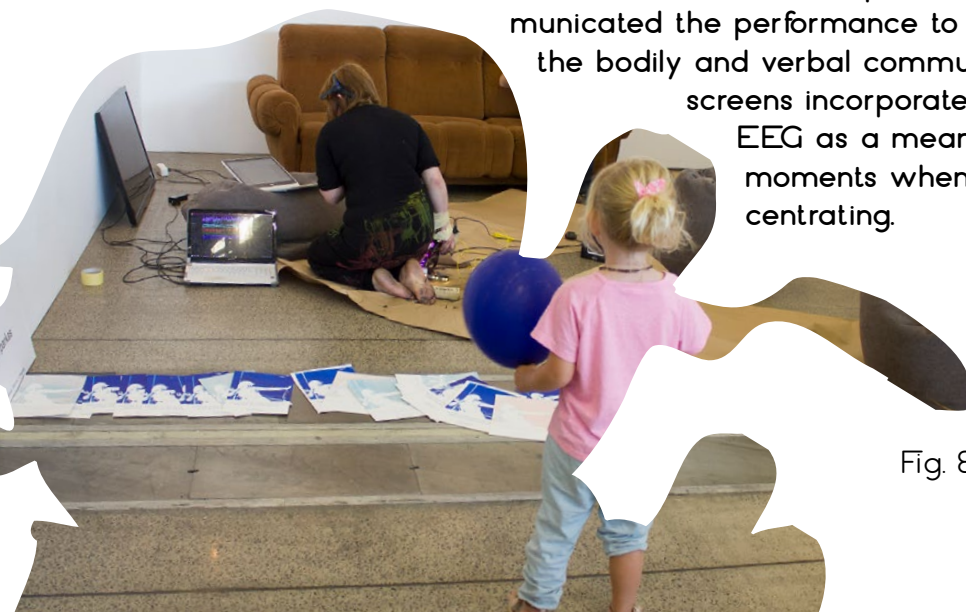
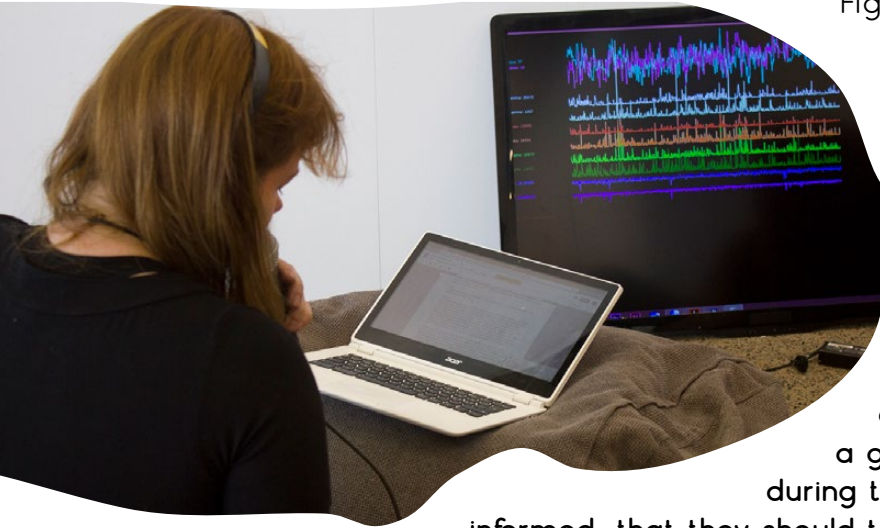


Fig. 8.

Fig. 9.

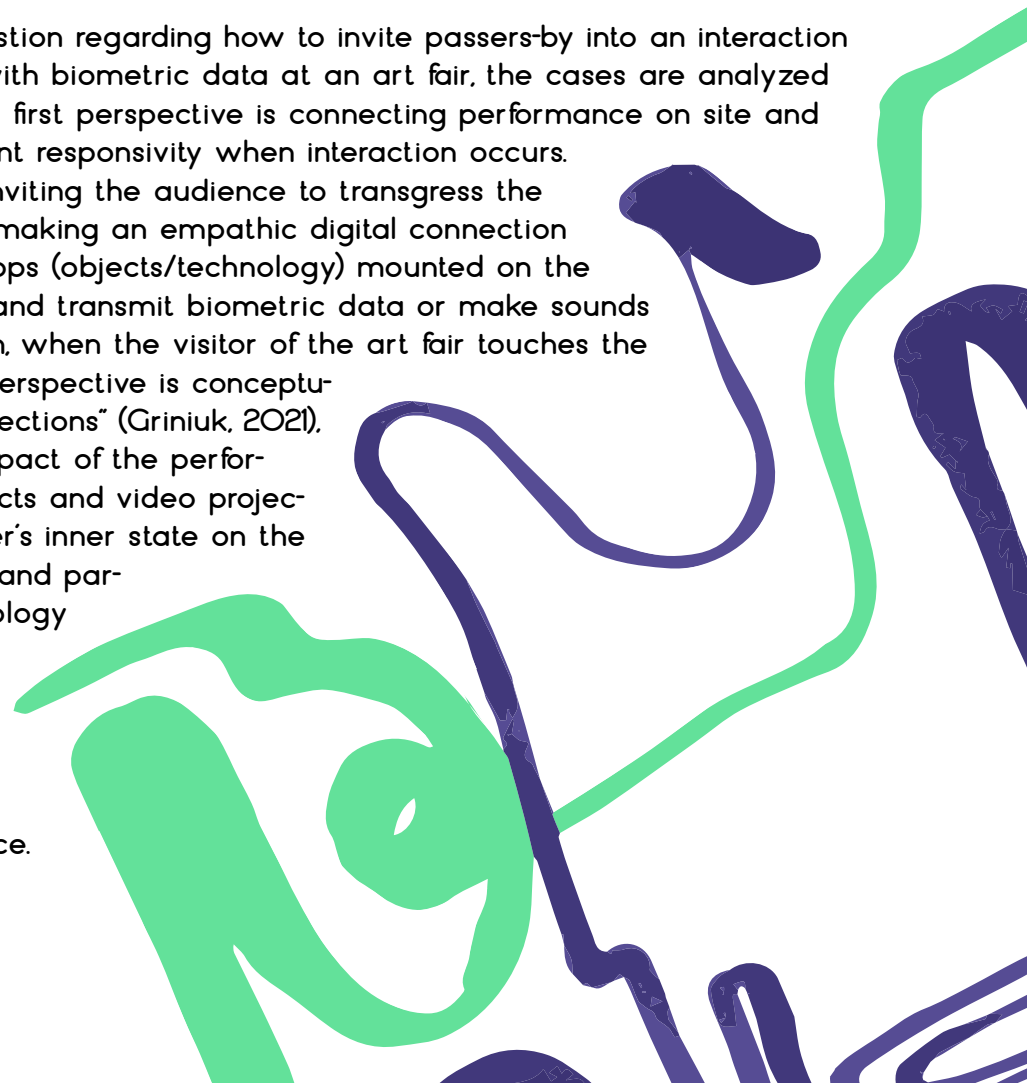


EEG, as explained by the scholar and medical scientist, Vuust (2007), reads the small electrical charges from the activated neurons divided into delta, theta, alpha, beta, and gamma frequencies (waves), which each appear as a separate color on a graph projected onto a black screen during the performances. The audience is informed that they should track alpha and beta waves in particular, as alpha waves show the states of physical relaxation and mental non-activity (Noachtar et al, 1999), and the beta waves show the concentrating inner state of the performer (Krugman & Hartley, 1970). The performer in both cases used the *NeuroSky* device mounted on her head, along with up to five devices mounted on her body, which made sounds when touched by the audience members.

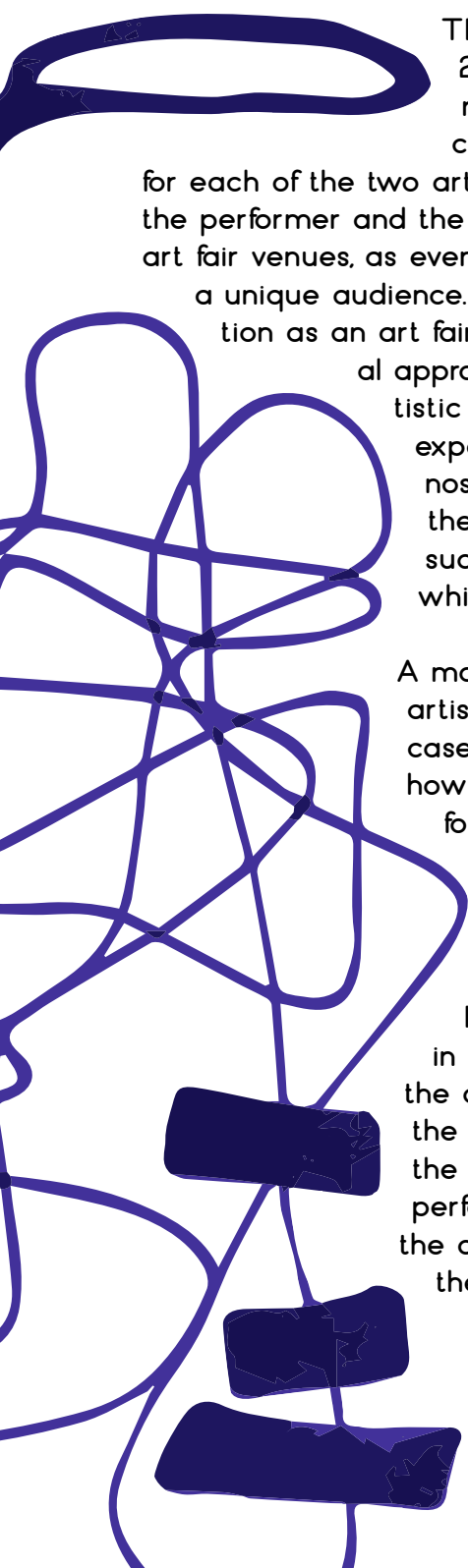
This technological complexity of the performance situation, where the spectators are passers-by at a large-scale event, needed assisting individuals to explain to the audience what was shown on the screen and how the technology works. These individuals acted as the primary voice of the performer; the impact of the participatory experience was, in these cases, supplemented with a didactic approach from the position of the external co-facilitator, who explained how to understand the technology involved in the performance and the frameworks of the interactions.

To answer the research question regarding how to invite passers-by into an interaction with a performance artist with biometric data at an art fair, the cases are analyzed from three perspectives. The first perspective is connecting performance on site and video with focus on emergent responsivity when interaction occurs.

The second perspective is inviting the audience to transgress the normative spectatorship by making an empathic digital connection to the performer through props (objects/technology) mounted on the performer's body that read and transmit biometric data or make sounds at the moment of interaction, when the visitor of the art fair touches the skin of the performer. This perspective is conceptualized as "inhuman interconnections" (Griniuk, 2021), in other words, the equal impact of the performance itself and of the objects and video projection, visualizing the performer's inner state on the experience of spectatorship and participation. In this way, technology (interpreted as the objects mounted on the body) impacts the visitors' experience in the same way as the performer, that is, as live subjects within a performance.



Due to the objects and technology involved, the performance becomes a social play where the participating viewers can test their own and the performer's boundaries and see changes in the performer's inner state immediately on the screen. The viewer can speculate about their own inner state in the moment of interaction. In other words, the remediated information, for example, the real-time exploration of the performative situation as a liminal space, results in transformation (Schechner, 1977). Performance and the building of performative interactions can be likened to the process of sculpting; here producing a *social sculpture* which, according to Beuys, is an artwork within the social realm, which requires social engagement and participation (Moore, 2021). The performance thus becomes a social sculpture that emerges as the audience members begin to interact.



The third perspective is transcorporeality (Cohen, 2015; Alaimo 2010, Griniuk, 2021) and in the case of performances, it is connected to the socio-cultural context. This needed to be taken into consideration as the performances were designed site-specifically for each of the two art fairs, which have quite different contexts and histories. Not only the performer and the mounted objects, which invite social play, but also each of the art fair venues, as every event in every country has its own background, which attracts a unique audience. Transcorporeality within the *Supermarket Art Fair* is within its tradition as an art fair for artist-run initiatives and artists. In this case, the transcorporeal approach is within the culture and context of readiness to join the artistic interaction to a higher degree than in the other case. The artist experiences moments when the strangers would touch her face or nose to activate the technology mounted on her body. In contrast, the *ArtVilnius Art Fair* has a more traditional format where the artist successfully involves young representatives of the audience, children, while the majority of the audience remains spectators.

A major difference between the two cases is that in the first case, the artist represented herself and her artistic practice, and in the second case, the artist was represented by the art gallery. All this impacts how the interaction happens, especially in the second case, the performer is facing an audience largely unfamiliar with the performance media within the format of an art fair.

Conclusion

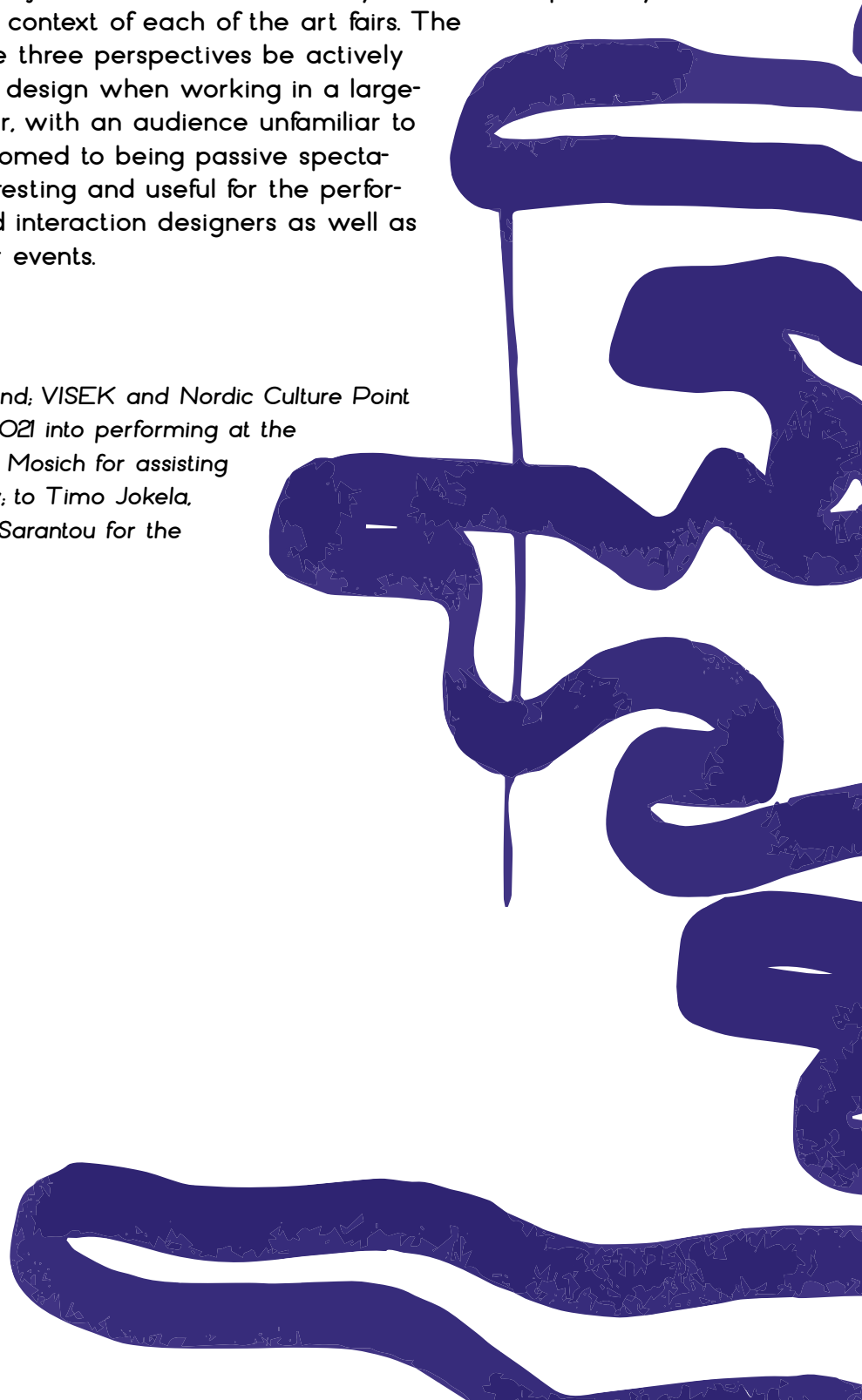
In this research, the author discussed the peculiarity of performing in art fair venues in Sweden and Lithuania. The spectators come to the art fair to see large scale art galleries and venues, represented in the booths, but not single performance art. Therefore, invitation into the active co-creation requires certain tools. Those unfamiliar to the performer, and sometimes to performance as media, were invited into the co-creation of the performative space, as the social sculpture by the following means.

First, the performer extended her body by using technological devices that remediated her inner bodily conditions onto the screens, lying on the floor or standing by the wall of the exhibition space. The up to five electronic devices, mounted on her body, produced sounds as the audience interacted with her by touching her skin. Second, the viewer experience was supplemented by the didactic approach of an assisting person who explained to the audience members how the technology worked and photo-documented the live performance.

The design of the invitation to interact within the performance can be discussed from three perspectives: emergent responsivity to the art of interaction; inhuman interconnections as the equal impact on the audience experience from the performer as the living body and the objects mounted on the body; and transcorporeality as the particular socio-cultural context of each of the art fairs. The author recommends that these three perspectives be actively incorporated into performance design when working in a large-scale venue, such as an art fair, with an audience unfamiliar to the performer who are accustomed to being passive spectators. This research can be interesting and useful for the performance artist, performance and interaction designers as well as curators of art fairs and similar events.

Acknowledgments

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Images

Fig 3 & 4. Supermarket Art Fair 2017. Video documentation. Stills. Credits: Marija Griniuk

Fig 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9. ArtVilnius Art Fair 2018. Photo documentation. Credits: Airida Rekšytė

Sketches for the silkscreen prints, used for the performance costumes 2017 – ongoing. Marija Griniuk.



Construyendo espacios colectivos. Intervención artística y social en la obra de María Ortega Estepa.

Construindo espaços coletivos. Intervenção artística e social na obra de María Ortega Estepa.

Building collective spaces. Artistic and social intervention in the work of María Ortega Estepa.

Javier Domínguez Muñino

Departamento de Educación Artística, Universidad de Sevilla

javierdzm@us.es

RESUMEN

La investigación-acción social ha encontrado en la práctica artística un medio adecuado para abordar desafíos colectivos, entre ellos el de la convivencia. Las intervenciones artísticas de Ortega Estepa plantean la convivencia, no desde la perspectiva de una problemática social, sino desde un plano connatural a nuestras propias historias de vida. Con este sentido vertebrador, la cohabitación comunitaria se canaliza a través del *espacio* y del *afecto* como medios. Nuestro marco es el de la asimilación de las vidas individual y de grupo; de tal modo que, las construcciones identitarias y de lo social van de la mano, y la vida comunitaria es aquella que mejor explica la actividad artística. Los proyectos comunitarios de Ortega Estepa evocan la naturaleza en el propio espacio habitado, rompiendo la tensión entre interior y exterior en un gesto de empatía que nos armoniza. El medio *espacial*, *afectivo* y *temporal*, es dinámico en tanto es convivencial e implica lazos entre personas e historias vivas en el hilo del tiempo. Este modelo de proyectos sociales e intervenciones artísticas, es trasladable a todos grupos o comunidades: mayores; mujeres; menores; migrantes. Analizamos, desde un replanteamiento del espacio común, el refuerzo a través de la acción colaborativa y de los vínculos horizontales.

Palabras Clave: Arte Comunitario, Espacio, Afecto, Historia de vida, Pintura mural

RESUMO

A pesquisa-ação social encontrou na prática artística um meio adequado para enfrentar desafios coletivos, entre eles o da convivência. As intervenções artísticas de Ortega Estepa apresentam a convivência, não a partir da perspectiva de uma problemática social, mas de um plano connatural às nossas próprias histórias da vida. Com este sentido vertebrador, a coabitação comunitária é canalizada através do *espaço* e da *afeição* como meios. Nosso marco é o da assimilação das vidas individual e de grupo; de tal modo que as construções identitárias e do social vão da mão, e de tal modo que a vida comunitária é aquela que melhor explica a actividade artística. Os projetos comunitários de Ortega Estepa evocam a natureza no próprio espaço habitado, rompendo a tensão entre interior e exterior num gesto de empatia que nos harmoniza. O meio *espacial*, *afetivo* e *temporal* é dinâmico na medida em que é convival e implica vínculos entre pessoas e histórias vivas no fio do tempo. Este modelo de projetos sociais e intervenções artísticas é transferível para todos grupos ou comunidades: idosos; mulheres; menores;

migrantes. Analisamos, a partir uma reformulação do espaço comum, o reforço através da ação colaborativa e dos vínculos horizontais.

Palavras-chave: Arte Comunitária, Espaço, Afeição, História de vida, Pintura mural

ABSTRACT

Social research-action has found in artistic practice a suitable means to address collective challenges, including that of coexistence. Artistic interventions of Ortega Estepa raise coexistence, not from the perspective of a social problem, but from a connatural plane to our own life stories. With this pivotal sense, community cohabitation is channelled through *space* and *affection* as means. Our framework is that of the assimilation of individual and group lives; in such a way that identity and social constructions work together, and community life is the one that best explains artistic activity. Community projects of Ortega Estepa evoke nature in the living space itself, breaking the tension between interior and exterior in a gesture of empathy that harmonizes us. The *spatial*, *affective* and *temporal* means is dynamic as it is convivial and as it implies ties between people and living stories in the thread of time. This model of social projects and artistic interventions is transferable to all groups or communities: elderly; women; minors; migrants. We analyze, from a rethinking of the common space, the reinforcement through collaborative action and horizontal linkages.

Keywords: Community Art, Space, Affection, Life Story, Mural painting

1. INTRODUCCIÓN AL CONCEPTO DE ESPACIO AFECTIVO

1.1. El precedente atávico de la casa u hogar

En los signos de la expresión gráfica infantil, se ha descrito la aparición de temas frecuentes que reflejan la proyección de un modelo interno; así como, al tiempo, estos temas funcionan como signos visuales que identifican los elementos del mundo circundante más importantes para la vida en la infancia (Luquet, 1978; Sáinz, 2011).

Así como la casa, un tema frecuente en la etapa evolutiva pre esquemática del arte infantil (Lowenfeld y Lambert, 2008), se entiende como el más primitivo elemento que con pocas líneas contrapone un interior a un exterior (Wigley, 1994, p. 213); el espacio doméstico o domesticado, familiar o afectivo, también delimita una zona caracterizada por los impulsos de protección y comunidad, siguiendo esta metáfora de Derrida, y atendido el que supone un arquetipo visual que los niños adquieren tempranamente. Estos espacios, primitivo símbolo que reúne significados relevantes, son también los espacios sociales o comunitarios con que un grupo de personas, afectivamente vinculadas, identifica su libre capacidad de desarrollo.

Si trasladamos este objeto o arquetipo visual, el concepto mismo de hogar, a espacios más extensivos e inclusivos, entonces nuestro análisis visual del espacio requiere ampliar las lentes hacia el concepto -más panorámico- de Cultura

Visual (que acuña en 1971 Baxandall pero hace frecuente hacia los posteriores ochenta Alpers).

Trasladamos, el análisis, de los objetos visuales a los espacios habitables que nosotros -artistas estudiantes y docentes- empavesamos de nuevos muros y lienzos, con nuevos giros visuales creados para redimensionar el espacio comunitario. Unos espacios que ya estaban dispuestos, antes de ser habitados, como espacios fríos y neutrales que aún no pertenecían a sus habitantes. De modo que lo reinventamos visualmente para así *hacerlo nuestro*.

En su análisis sugerente de la visualidad, Mieke Bal sostiene que “el acto de mirar está anclado al cuerpo [...] Ni se limita a un órgano de los sentidos ni a los sentidos mismos [pues] el acto de mirar está inherentemente encuadrado; encuadra, interpreta. Además, está cargado de afecto” (Bal, 2016, p. 31).

En este trabajo nos haremos eco de una propuesta con que hacer converger los conceptos de *espacio* y *afecto* que en esta autora holandesa, estudiosa de la Cultura Visual, hallan nodos de conexión.

1.2. El espacio afectivo como despliegue del individuo colectivo

Pensar en la creación artística como un fenómeno colectivo o comunitario, sin la disolución del plano individual por ello, nos devuelve al marco del pensador neomarxista Lucien Goldmann; quien en 1965 escribe: “La creación cultural en las sociedades [describe] un proceso de estructuración de una conciencia colectiva [...] la obra conserva un carácter a la vez colectivo e individual, siendo el grupo el único capaz de elaborar un conjunto categorial orientado hacia la coherencia, una visión del mundo” (Goldmann, 2008, p. 112). El autor rumano-francés ha asimilado, así, las vidas del grupo y del individuo en el campo de toda creación cultural. Y cuando posteriormente se edifica el ámbito de estudio de la Cultura Visual, aquellos presupuestos colectivistas se revalorizan cobrando aún más sentido. Pues no podemos ignorar la concomitancia entre las formas de vida sociales y las formas estéticas o artísticas que allí se engendran.

Tomando éste como nuestro marco de referencia, el modelo educativo en Artes Plásticas y Visuales más consonante es el que trabaja el ya paradigma transestético. Tras la crisis estructuralista del sujeto individual, el propio Goldmann ya hubo tratado el término de sujeto *colectivo* o *transindividual*, en el sentido de que nuestras conciencias del mundo no pueden significarlo sin comprender las acciones como acciones conjuntas o colectivas (op. cit., p. 146). Asimismo, la *transestética* supone una perspectiva definida por una cultura ante la que debemos ser críticos y estar vigilantes. Cuando Baudrillard acuña el término en 1990, está pensando en la necesidad de garantías para que los procesos creativos entre individuos -también los comunitarios- escapen a los dictados y modas (Baudrillard, 2001). Así, en la enseñanza y práctica artísticas, la consideración del conjunto se vuelve tan radical como importante en poder asumir la *función* de la actividad social y, a su vez, liberarla de imperativos que le sean ajenos.

Familiarizado con esta perspectiva, el concepto de arte relacional redundante en la idea, de raíz goldmanniana, de que la actividad artística puede mejor explicarse desde el contexto social en que se dan las interacciones humanas y “los procesos flexibles que rigen la vida en común” (Bourriaud, 2008, p. 56). Tomando este marco en la práctica educativa, estamos favoreciendo que los bloqueos de índole cultural no obstaculicen los procesos creativos determinándolos. De modo que una comunidad de individuos, vinculados por unos afectos y en un espacio compartido, no vea alienada su capacidad creadora al momento de interactuar y generar sinergias.

El arte funciona como un medio de vinculación que otorga al juego, en el sentido que lo concibe Gadamer (2010, pp. 32-33), el poder de la exploración y la indagación sin cortapisas a las que cedamos a priori; incluyendo aquí todas aquellas cuestiones formales y normativas que con frecuencia se replican en la enseñanza-aprendizaje del arte (como las relativas a unos formatos determinados, o a una obediencia mimética en la iconicidad, por ejemplo).

Retomando la cuestión de un espacio de acogida, un espacio que sea familiar en la medida en que haya sido recreado por la comunidad que lo habita y comparte, y que bien nos recuerda al arquetipo visual de *hogar* o casa, estos presupuestos teóricos sirven para entender cómo y por qué vivenciamos un tipo en concreto de intervención artística: la que se desarrolla en los ejes de *espacio* y de *afecto*, rompiendo la edificada tensión que tradicionalmente ha separado el interior doméstico y la naturaleza exterior.

2. EL ESPACIO Y EL AFECTO COMO EJES Y MEDIOS DE INMERSIÓN (CON)VIVENCIAL

Ocupándonos primero del eje espacial como medio, y proponiendo romper su tenso horizonte entre interioridad y exterioridad, resulta que lo habitable se abre –se libera- y la naturaleza entra –coloniza- permeándonos en un mismo acto que implica ambos sentidos o direcciones.

El espacio se comporta como un medio en que ya estamos introducidos, no sólo sensorial sino vivencialmente; de modo que podemos hablar de un “espacio háptico” o “táctil” más allá de “óptico” o visual –en término de Aloïs Riegl- (Deleuze y Guattari, 2010, pp. 499-500). Esta apreciación es importantísima cuando en la enseñanza y práctica artísticas involucramos al sentido del tacto; no sólo de la visión. Porque, como bien detallan Deleuze y Guattari, la lisura y rugosidad remiten a texturas con significados de *naturaleza*; de forma que la propia materia y sus propiedades se nos antojan asibles. Cuando se explican los elementos del grafismo, como por ejemplo el trazo o la espiral (Caja, 2008, p. 31), no podemos ignorar aquellas cualidades de alcance táctil. Superando también la barrera retiniana, el espacio *háptico* es más experiencial; liquida la distancia; y agota con mayor rendimiento nuestro contacto e inmersión. De este modo, las capas o estratos orgánicos se revelan en un espacio que funciona a pleno rendimiento como un medio físico.

Y en segundo lugar, ocupándonos del eje afectivo o del “afecto como medio” (Bal, 2016, pp. 231-233), lo habitable aquí no tanto ya resulta como radica –de raíz- social, intrínsecamente. Aquí requiere primera mención la propuesta desarrollada por María Ortega Estepa (España), cuyas analogías con el legado de Doris Salcedo (Colombia) son pertinentes a pesar de una profunda antítesis en el espíritu que adopta. La opción estética es el verde, como bien comenta Mieke Bal; y el afecto es comprendido como el lugar de lo no representable (en contraposición con el pathos que ostensivo representa, exhibe, unos sentimientos que ya han sido conceptualizados). El afecto en cambio compromete la vivencia y no permite la indiferencia; pues “no hay narraciones ni personajes con los que identificarse” (op. cit., p. 231), porque el régimen de lo teatral es abandonado por la experiencia inmersiva y colectiva que implica la convivencia, la cohabitación. Se trata de un “afecto libre para vagar por el espacio [...] como una diferencia cualitativa en lo sensible [...] imposible de localizar, pero crucial para el arte político” (op. cit., p. 232). Aquí es traído, para desplegarse, el plano de la construcción de lo social: no como una dimensión adjetiva o simplemente cualitativa, sino como aquella dimensión sustantiva en que los sujetos colectivos (antes referido) comparten, y aún

antes constituyen, un medio dinámico y nunca estático. Por lo que también, estas prácticas e intervenciones, involucran el factor del tiempo.

3. LA PROPUESTA ARTÍSTICA DE ORTEGA ESTEPA: RASGOS ESTÉTICOS Y VÍNCULOS SOCIALES

3.1. El planteamiento de la denuncia contra la indiferencia individual

En la concreción comparativa de propuestas artísticas de Salcedo y de Ortega Estepa, la primera es una obra con fuerte carga conceptual a pesar de que no conceptualiza los sentimientos o las emociones. En la instalación “*Plegaria muda*” (2008-2010) la artista colombiana plantea una denuncia colectiva del efecto destructor de la violencia sobre la vida. Lo hace colocando más de un centenar de piezas compuestas por dos mesas (una, patas arriba, sobre la otra colocada al derecho), y dejando una capa de tierra abonada (entre ambas tablas) que siempre permanece húmeda. Así, brotan briznas verdes de hierba que crece por las grietas y agujeros de las tablas de madera. De modo que, evocando un campo funerario, presenta la vida como un elemento grácil, parco, tímido y callado (de ahí el título) en forma de briznas de verde hierba.

Este tipo de intervención en el espacio, o de instalación, juega con el afecto a través de la presencia (al no ser una propuesta representacional que narre) y de la evocación (el propio eco de algo que, sin ser narrado, se presenta tangible). Para denunciar colectivamente la violencia sufrida en su país, Doris Salcedo construye espacio, de una vida abonada, que se estrecha entre tablas de mesas de madera; conjuga lo inerte con lo vivo (la presencia del color verde) para sustanciar un ambiente propio, autónomo, que se sostiene por sí mismo, donde las personas que lo transitan (viéndolo y aun tocándolo) despiertan el afecto más contrario a la indiferencia (de cuyo riesgo advirtiera Theodor Adorno tras los horrores humanos vividos en Europa).

Concluimos el comentario de este tipo de planteamientos reafirmando la presencia del afecto, y también del tiempo, para hacernos vivir la lentitud en el crecimiento de esas briznas de hierba. Se trata, de un modo especial, de invocar un hogar que ha sido violentado y que a todos nos concierne –sin indiferencia posible-.

3.2. El planteamiento de la acción colaborativa contra la indiferencia individual

En cambio, la española Ortega Estepa trabaja intervenciones, en un medio espacial y afectivo, que sí implican la acción colectiva con el espíritu de crear comunidad; y con la autorreferencialidad cromática volcada en la naturaleza, a través de murales que colonizan las superficies habitadas. En ambos casos, prevalece la performatividad sensible a mover lo ético y –comunitariamente– lo social. En el primero, esta acción acontece desde el silencio de la propia materia dispuesta; y en el segundo, el acontecimiento no queda sino más bien *pervive* vocalizado, articulado, por las personas vinculadas. Pues se interviene para inventar un hogar de valores tanto estéticos como éticos, con los que las acciones de habitar y convivir son canalizadas. De ahí que, principalmente, el comentario comparativo entre ambas propuestas nos lleve, desde una reflexión de *lo inerte* o *lo silente*, hacia una asunción de *lo vivo* o *lo animado*. Si, en el caso de la artista colombiana Salcedo, asistimos al planteamiento de un hogar violentado; en el caso de la artista española Ortega Estepa asistimos al planteamiento de un hogar apacentado, nutrido, jugando con el color verde que evoca la naturaleza con que empatizar. En cuanto al uso cromático del verde, su “belleza visual [también] se convierte en un medio en sí misma” (Bal, 2016, p. 230) y no en la finalidad; abriéndose a la lectura, en palabras de Mieke Bal, de un “esquema de color [...] activamente empático” (op. cit.).

La artista española lo plantea a través de objetos y murales donde el motivo arbóreo o vegetal protagoniza el espacio. En concreto, la obra “*Mapping-me*” (2014-2015) es un proyecto que emplea troncos de árbol y piezas de pintura para abordar la

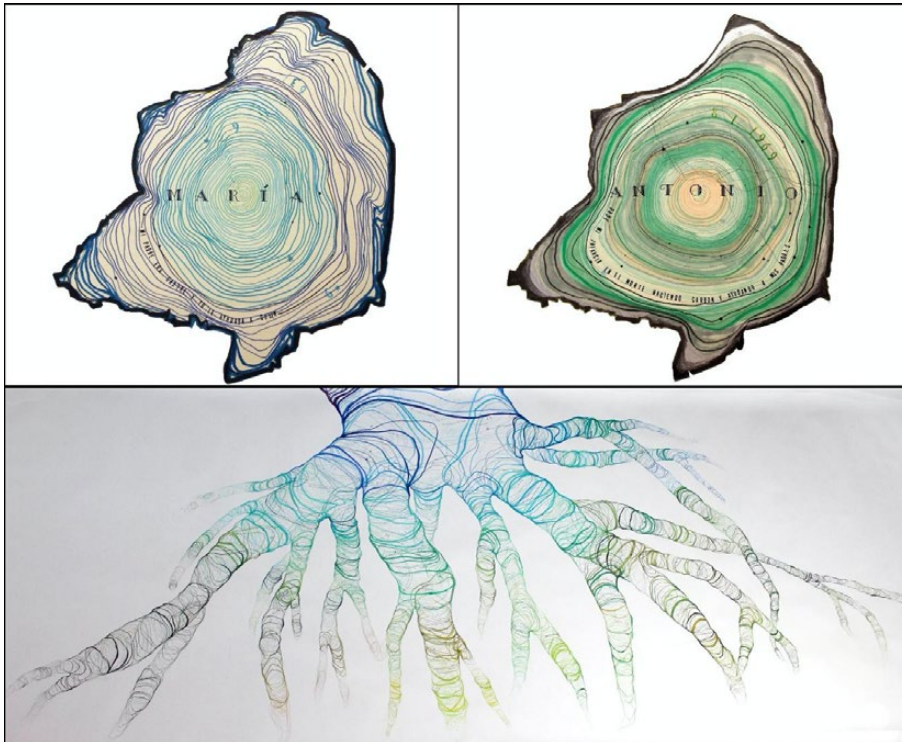


Figura 1 y 2. (superior izquierda y derecha): María Ortega Estepa, “*Mapping-me*”, 2014-2015. Detalles del Proyecto realizado en Centro de Mayores de Requena, Valencia (España).

Figura 3. (inferior): María Ortega Estepa, “*Mapping-me*”, 2014-2015. Detalle del Proyecto expuesto en Matadero Madrid (España). Cortesía de la autora.

naturaleza atemporal. La experiencia viva se plasma en una cartografía de la naturaleza, y nos invoca a todos la memoria infantil –primera-. “A través de elementos vegetales, enraizados umbilicalmente en la tierra, Ortega no hace sino revivir su vida, reforzar lazos con sus seres queridos, con el entorno familiar que le cobija [...] testigo mudo de cosas innumerables” (Perera, 2013, p. 255). Pero la propuesta no queda limitada a lo autobiográfico: la artista la hace extensiva a más historias reales de personas que comparten vida en centros de mayores, situados en el pueblo cordobés La Rambla o en el valenciano Requena (España). Partiendo de la escritura, de recuerdos de la infancia, se emplean mapas topográficos y dibujos que se hilan intergeneracionalmente (de abuelos a nietos). Algunos mayores inscriben sus nombres propios (“María”, “Antonio”,...) junto con hechos que afirman su vida; y estas escrituras o inscripciones, quedan grabadas siendo memoria sobre los anillos de crecimiento de un tronco arbóreo. La autora propone y dispone el medio en que, los protagonistas, hagan cohabitar la memoria y la vida como una misma sustancia presente y compartida. La propia artista lo confirma: “Los árboles que traigo tienen historia, tienen voz y nombre” (Ortega, 2012, p. 28).

Pero si este ejemplo contiene un mayor componente narrativo, la intervención “paisajes de mil vidas” (2010) en cambio otorga al objeto un lenguaje emancipado, autosuficiente: el uso de troncos de árbol que son sesgados utilizando en ellos pintura y papel enrollado; materiales que evocan los anillos internos del tronco, y que son directamente trabajados en comunidad de mujeres del mismo pueblo riojano Santa Lucía de Ocón (España). Una intervención, en un medio natural, cuya labor implicada en el proceso la fundamenta; pues la reunión comunitaria para esta labor conjunta es el eje en que gravita el sentido de la propuesta.

Estas propuestas con mayores y con mujeres, se trasladan a otros grupos o comunidades como el de una población infantil más vulnerable (injustamente por su condición migrante) que pertenece a la *Fundación Márgenes y Vínculos*. Cuando se produce en 2020 esta intervención artística, en un proyecto comunitario con niñas y niños, se está atendiendo de raíz –en las edades más tempranas– la cohesión social, gracias al refuerzo del grupo en su convivencia. Una convivencia caracterizada por la acción colaborativa y por las relaciones horizontales. La artista Ortega Estepa interviene así en la ciudad gaditana Algeciras (España). Esta intervención para el desarrollo comunitario, con niñas y niños de entre 5 y 14 años, trabaja los vínculos durante la creación de un mural con motivos vegetales. En



Figura 4. María Ortega Estepa, *Pintura mural*, 2020. Intervención realizada en Algeciras, Cádiz (España) en colaboración con la Fundación Márgenes y Vínculos. Cortesía de la autora.

esta pintura mural el verde centra un degradado cromático que abarca del amarillo al azul; creando un nuevo paisaje que transita la calle de un barrio inmerso en un plan de mejora municipal.

Semejantes son otros proyectos: como “Viajando el Paraíso” (2008-actualidad), una idea que Ortega Estepa lleva más de diez años itinerando por distintos lugares en que resituar un bosque de árboles pintados y murales; o



Figura 5. María Ortega Estepa, “Viajando el Paraíso”, 2009. Intervención realizada en Torremocha de Jarama, Madrid (España). Cortesía de la autora.

como la intervención también colaborativa “Peatones en flor” (2019), en que la pintura recrea el espacio que los viandantes transitan a diario junto al Colegio de Educación Infantil y Primaria Ramón Hernández Martínez del pueblo cordobés Cañete de las Torres (España).

Centros educativos, y también hospitalarios, han sido intervenidos por la artista en distintos proyectos sociocomunitarios cuyos ejes son los vínculos afectivos y la recreación de espacios comunes habitables.



Figura 6. María Ortega Estepa, “Peatones en flor”, 2019. Intervención realizada en Cañete de las Torres, Córdoba (España). Cortesía de la autora.

Pero volviendo a la noción viva de *memoria* con que definíamos el proyecto “*Mapping-me*”, el factor del tiempo vuelve a introducirse en el proyecto “*Contiene recuerdos*” (2019): otra intervención mural comunitaria que vincula a mujeres mayores que compartieron espacio de la infancia en su antigua escuela, en el pueblo pacense Berlanga (España). Esta propuesta, donde el motivo vegetal continúa permeando, “habla de esas experiencias vividas a través de la poética del paisaje de la noche como recuerdo imborrable” (Ortega, 2021). De modo que el espacio afectivo y el tiempo se conjugan para albergar un *hogar de lo vivido*.

3.3. Aprendizaje afectivo-espacial, a modo de conclusión

En buena muestra de su obra, la artista española ha hecho de los espacios “lugares no tanto físicos como mentales, imágenes [...] como los recuerdos o la experiencia [...] un esquema memorístico” (Perera, 2013, p. 254). Esta idea engarza con la de habitarlos (*espacio*) nosotros mismos, vinculados por la memoria (*tiempo*) y por la convivencia (*afecto*): conceptos que hemos triangulado desde el principio de este trabajo. Como las briznas de hojas verdes de Salcedo, los anillos interiores del tronco denotan la presencia de un vínculo (en clave entendida de dolor funéreo, o en clave de convivencia social –de espacio-tiempo compartido-). En palabras de García Perera, respecto al icono arbóreo en estos paisajes vegetales

que repiensen el espacio, “la visión del árbol muta gracias a esta nueva perspectiva: ya no es tronco y copa majestuosos; ahora es materia, y es cuando se entra en ella, ahí, desde la médula, que el árbol puede ser un medio para hablar de otras cosas que nos atañen de cerca” (*op. cit.*, p. 255).

Esta hábil reflexión nos confirma, una lectura, y una función de la propuesta artística: la naturaleza no es motivo paisajístico sino medio, en sí misma, espacial y vital. Y las coordenadas espaciales de una vida no pueden ignorar las otras personas que la integran. Por lo que el proyecto comunitario es el que mejor puede cumplir este sentido al que tales intervenciones artísticas acceden.

Recapitulando, la principal razón de la intervención artística comunitaria es, en nuestro análisis, su enorme capacidad para concernir a todas las personas que protagonizamos nuestras vidas en comunidad desde que nacemos (tanto la escuela como el vecindario y otras comunidades en que una edad o una circunstancia vital nos hace convivir). Además de concernirnos, la acción artística colectiva sirve para replantearnos el espacio como medio afectivo y vincularnos horizontalmente. En un reciente trabajo, Pilar Soto lo precisa muy bien: en el sentido de “repensar el espacio público desde la necesidad de nuestra reconexión con la naturaleza” (Soto, 2020, p. 44). Desde distintas perspectivas, tanto la ecoartística



Figura 7. María Ortega Estepa, “Contiene recuerdos”, 2019. Intervención realizada en Berlanga, Badajoz (España). Cortesía de la autora.

como la biográfica, la afectiva y la socio-colaborativa, venimos sosteniendo la importancia del arte como espacio “permeable a la sociedad” (op. cit., p. 42) sin lugar a dudas ni indiferencias.

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BIOGRAFIAS BIOGRAPHIES BIOGRAFÍAS

Andrea Kárpáti

Andrea Kárpáti is Professor and UNESCO Chairholder at the Institute of Communication and Sociology, at Corvinus University Budapest. She is Head of the Visual Culture Research Group of the university and UNESCO Chairholder for Media in Education.

She is member of the editorial board of three international educational research journals, served two consecutive terms at the Executive Committee of EDEN (European Distance Education Network), three terms as National Representative in IFIP (International Federation of Information Processing). She also served as Vice President of the International Society for Education through Art, (InSEA, an UNESCO affiliated NGO - twice re-elected) and was Executive Committee member of the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI, twice re-elected).

She is member of the Educational Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and founding Chair of its ICT in Education Sub-Committee. She has published 18 books, 60 book chapters and more than 200 research papers in five languages. She served as a Fulbright Research Professor at Northern Illinois University, US, 2009/2010.

Her current research foci visual culture of children and adolescents, digital literacy, museum learning and STEAM: synergy of science and arts education.

Ângela Saldanha

Ângela Saldanha is vice-president of the Association of Teachers of Expression and Visual Communication (APECV- Portugal), where she coordinates research in art and community and art and education. PhD in Arts Education and Postdoctoral degrees in Digital Media Art. She is a Postdoctoral fellow at the University of Brasilia, Institute of Arts, at Design Department. Her research interests are contemporary art for sustainability, art and community, art education and diversity.

E-mail: correio@angelasaldanha.com;
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0404-0088>

Ángeles Ruiz de Velasco Gálvez

Ángeles Ruiz de Velasco Gálvez. Doctora en Pedagogía (UNED) y Terapeuta en Psicomotricidad. Centro Universitario La Salle (UAM). ORCID: 0000-0003-4773-5824. E-mail: ange@lasallecampus.es

Carlos Escaño

Carlos Escaño. Profesor titular de la Universidad de Sevilla. Doctor en Bellas Artes (Univ. Sevilla, 1999) y Doctor en Educación y Comunicación en Entornos Digitales (UNED, 2017). Su labor docente e investigadora está vinculada a la educación artística en la intersección de las artes y la cultura audiovisual y digital bajo un enfoque pedagógico crítico y orientado a la transformación social.

Célia Ferreira

Célia Ferreira is a PhD Student in Child Studies-Artistic Education Specialty. MA in art Education. Post-Graduation in Pedagogical Supervision. Secondary school art teacher in Portugal. Research interests: Education through art; textile art, handicrafts, community art and heritage.

Member of the APECV, since 1996 and Board of the Portuguese Association of Visual Art Teachers: APECV since (2008 /)

Member of InSEA since 2006 and Treasurer since (2019 /)

E-mail: celiaferreira622@gmail.com ORCID iD 0000-0002-9082-7014

Cia Gustrén

Cia Gustrén is a research assistant in the AMASS project. She is a Ph.D. student in media and communication studies at Umeå University. Her research interests are self-presentations, visual culture, organizational communication, and discourse theory.

Isabelle Gatt

Isabelle Gatt (Ph.D Exon) is lecturer in Drama and Theatre Education at the University of Malta. She is also a theatre practitioner both as an actor and TV/ theatre producer/ director. She is specialised in children's television programmes, theatre productions for children and community theatre working in Rehab Centres and with youth. She has served as a board member on National Committees such as the St. James Cavalier Centre for Creativity and the ARTS COUNCIL Malta.

Javier Abad Molina

Javier Abad Molina. Doctor en Bellas Artes (UCM). Artista Visual y profesor Titular de Educación Artística Centro Universitario La Salle (UAM). ORCID: 0000-0003-2347-9010. E-mail: j.abad@lasallecampus.es
[@instalaciones_de_juego](https://www.instagram.com/instalaciones_de_juego)

Javier Domínguez Muñino

Javier Domínguez Muñino (Sevilla, España, 1983) ha sido Profesor e Investigador Postdoctoral de la Universidad de Sevilla. Ha desempeñado su actividad docente e investigadora en el Departamento de Estética e Historia de la Filosofía, donde ha coordinado las asignaturas "Estética y Poesía" y "Estética y Tecnología" entre otras; habiendo sido profesor en la Facultad de Filosofía, en la Facultad de Comunicación y en la Escuela Politécnica de Ingenieros. También ha sido Profesor Doctor en la Facultad de Educación de la Universidad de León, donde ha desempeñado como Coordinador del Área de Didáctica de la Expresión Plástica. Actualmente es Profesor Interino de la Universidad de Sevilla en el Departamento de Educación Artística (Facultad de Ciencias de la Educación).

Doctor cum laude por la Universidad de Sevilla y Licenciado en Bellas Artes. Tesis Doctoral en el área de Estética y Teoría de las Artes; y Diploma de Estudios Avanzados en el área de Didáctica de la Expresión Plástica, obtenido en el Programa de Doctorado con Mención de Calidad "Artes Visuales y Educación: Un enfoque constructorista". Es componente del Grupo de Investigación financiado "Educación y Cultura Audio-Visual". Desde 2010 colabora con la Fundación Internacional Artecittà; y es miembro de la Sociedad Española de Estética y Teoría de las Artes.

Ha publicado capítulos de libro sobre educación artística en las editoriales Dykinson y Octaedro; así como diversos artículos en las revistas científicas Educación Médica, EARI Educación Artística Revista de Investigación, ASRI Arte y Sociedad, Tercio Creciente, Estúdio, Gama, Bellas Artes Revista de Artes Plásticas Estética Diseño e Imagen, y Espacio y Tiempo entre otras.

Jenny Johannisson

Jenny Johannisson is an associate professor of Library and Information Science at The Swedish School of Library and Information Science (SSLIS), Sweden. She is primarily interested in municipal and regional cultural policy in the light of globalization processes.

Maria Huhmarniemi

Doctor in Art, Maria Huhmarniemi is an artists-teacher-researcher living in Rovaniemi, Finland. She has worked as a university lecturer in art education at the University of Lapland, Faculty of Art and Design, since 2004. As a researcher she is interested in political contemporary art, relation of contemporary art and visual art education, environmental education, socially and environmentally engaged art and the use of traditional handcraft in contemporary art and art education. In her research she develops collaboration of artists and other researchers. The motive of her research is to find out how contemporary artists can participate in local discussions on environmental politics through art. She uses research strategy of art based action research. The topics of the debates have dealt with current issues impacting the environment and communities in the North, such forest disputes, conflict on mining plan and the problems that have emerged with regard to the picking of wild berries, reindeer herding and the mining industry. The results of the research stand to inform and enrich the

training of art education teachers and artist in the field of applied visual arts. Her research also provides knowledge for developing art-based methods in environmental research and science communication.

Marija Griniuk

Marija Griniuk is a performance artist and doctoral candidate at the University of Lapland (Finland), Faculty of Art and Design and lecturer at Vilniaus kolegija / University of Applied Sciences (Lithuania), Faculty of Business Management. Email: mgriniuk@ulapland.fi

Melanie Sarantou

Dr Melanie Sarantou is a senior researcher at the University of Lapland. She is also an editor and artist, working across continents to fulfil and publish her research. Her arts practices currently involve the use of embroidery, felting techniques and bioart to explore her relationships with the women in her life who continue to form her most treasured experiences and connections to place. Since migrating from Namibia to Australia, Melanie re-connects to people and place through the processing of materials to reconstruct her identities and meanings to belonging. Felting, textile and fashion art are important mediums through which these identity processes come about.

Milosh Raykov

Milosh Raykov is Associate Professor in the Department of Education Studies at the University of Malta. He teaches postgraduate and undergraduate courses in sociology and research methods in education. He is involved in studies of early school leaving, lifelong learning, wellbeing and quality of work, and the outcomes of students' involvement in paid work and unpaid work including voluntary work and extracurricular service-learning.

Nina Luostarinen

Nina Luostarinen has a background in puppetry, performing arts and new media content creation. She has been producer and scenographer for various cultural events and theme parks. She has also been a designer for interactive games, web platforms, and an animator for the national TV broadcaster in Finland. In recent years, she has been working with several EU-funded projects seeking to connect different forms of art and culture with other fields of life. She is fascinated by visual things in general and especially by the power of photography. A common thread in her work has been believing in serendipity, existence of the invisible worlds and enabling illusions. She works at Humak University of Applied Sciences in the Department of Cultural Management and she is a Doctoral Candidate at the University of Lapland where she is researching the possibilities of art-based play in regards to place attachment.

Paul Wilson

Paul Wilson is a Lecturer in Graphic Design at the School of Design, Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures, University of Leeds. Much of his work orbits ideas and ideals of utopianism found in manifestations of the utopian action in both community and place, and made concrete via language and typography.

Raphael Vella

Raphael Vella is an Associate Professor in Art Education at the Faculty of Education, University of Malta. He lectures in art education, contemporary artistic practices and socially engaged art, and his research revolves around the overlaps between art, education and contemporary art. He has published articles, book chapters and edited volumes on the notion of the artist-teacher, curation, the Mediterranean, ethics and identity in art education.

Raquel Balsa

Raquel is a Portuguese designer. She was integrated in several companies, co-founded one, founded "vincilho.pt" experimental notebooks project, collaborates with APECV-GriArCE, C3 and ID +.

Dedicates herself to community and participatory projects such as "Circle" or "AMASS" with APECV; "EU no museu"; "Jóias que nos unem"; "Criação

de uma Marca na ASSOL"; "Horta de Deméter"; "Abraçadores (de árvores)"; "Talho O Mimo" or "Pedais - ANEIS Visu".

Roger Blomgren

Roger Blomgren is a professor of Library and Information Science at the University of Borås. His primary research focus is the role of organisation, steering, and professions in implementation of reforms in cultural policy making.

Sofia Lindström Sol

Sofia Lindström Sol is a lecturer at the University of Borås, The Swedish School of Library and Information Science (SSLIS), Sweden. Her research interests are participatory processes and methods in local cultural policy, the intersection between cultural and social policies, and policy understandings of the social impact of the arts.

Tang Tang

Tang is an Associate Professor at the School of Design, University of Leeds, UK. Tang has a BEng and an MSc in Industrial Design and a PhD in Design at Loughborough University. Her recent research focuses on design for behaviour change, understanding how design can be used to create healthy, sustainable user behaviour and effective cross-cultural communication and collaboration.

Vera Tessmer

Vera Tessmer worked with her daughter Melanie Sarantou under a Namibian fashion label to create fashion collections that were showcased in the USA, Finland, Germany and several African countries from South Africa to Nigeria from 1993-2007. Vera's career as a maker was usually intertwined with her daughter's work as a fashion designer, but in the work titled 'Memory Box', the duo's usual working roles were reversed. Vera steered the creation of the 104 cubes that represent themes from her childhood and her connection to her natural environment, love for animals and birds, and her ongoing desire to use techniques and materials to express her memories.

Zsófia Somogyi-Rohonczy

She received her MA diploma in history of art and communication at Pázmány Péter Catholic University and spent one semester at Universidade Católica Portuguesa in 2011, she studied Portuguese Language and Culture, art history and communication. In 2013 she had a three-month internship in The Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice. After university education, she acquired her professional experiences in the Kunsthalle Budapest and the Deák17 Youth Gallery as a communicational professional.

Since 2017 she has been working as a museum educator in the Ludwig Museum, where she is responsible for the Hungarian round of the 'Knack for art' international competition. In her museum education programs, she uses dramatic elements and applies multidisciplinary aspects to strengthen the curriculum's connectivity. In 2019 she gained the Museum Education Award with her colleague for the Bauhaus Theatrical Summer camp program.

She started her PhD education in 2018 at the Eötvös Loránd University Faculty of Psychology and Education in the Theoretical Module, here research interest is contemporary museum education, multimodal approach in the interpretation of art the cooperation of museum and school.

In the AMASS - Acting on the Margins: Arts as Social Sculpture, she is responsible for the museum projects and, as a research assistant, helps the Hungarian research team.

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APECV

