NAVIGATING INFORMAL INFORMATION



Living Summer School Conference 2024.

Edited by Ruben Benoit, Elena Falomo and Jadd Hallaj

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Editor's Note

In September 2024 the Living Summer School (LSS) organised its first conference with the participation of a diverse group of 15 European cultural organisers and professionals involved at varying capacities in informal education. A seasoned ship-captain (a professional actor) sailed the group (on a bus) across the 3 building sites of the LSS. With the stage set, at each of these sites we facilitated peer-learning between professionals by discussing our practices, sharing insights and tackling challenges. The conference happened within the yearly edition of the Living Summer School "Living (in) Repairs".

Having engaged in informal learning for several years, the LSS organised this conference out of our growing need to learn from and collaborate with other European partners that do similar work. We invited panelists from a wide range of sectors such as social work, art, volunteering, activism, architecture, entrepreneurship, design and more to join us in conversations in Kortrijk. Beyond the ideas and impactful insights that emerged over the two days, a network of solidarity and kinship was seeded and we hope it will grow over the following years at the European scale. In fact, a need for such a large-scale network of informal educators was one of the main takeaways of our time together.

We called this event a "conference" with "panels" to equiparate informal education events to academic ones, highlighting informal education as a rightful source of research and innovation bridging theory and practice. However, as we will illustrate in this choral documentation of the event, our conference was expressly informal in its setting and format. We offered an immersive experience within the Living Summer School ecosystem, as the panels were held in the midst of construction sites, with the backdrop of hammering, chickens clucking, wood sawing and rustling leaves. This allowed for a permeability between an informal education experience underway and the shared reflection on similar practices.

Moreover, we decided to make this conference a moving conference, transporting participants from one site to another with a bus. Emphasising the importance of the context, touring Kortrijk's area allowed to witness the territory transitions and to take in the landscape. A forum, opened to the public, wrapped up the first day of the conference with a keynote by Floating University and tales from each construction site that intertwined with panel presentations and discussions. A celebration followed with food, a car-pool, movie projections and togetherness.

On the second day, conversations were further deepened in a roundtable setting facilitated by hands-on moderation.

The conference extrapolated from our own experience through three key themes: “In Context”, “Building Communities” and “Opening Doors”. These themes are both deeply intertwined with the pedagogical research of the programme as well as with the themes that emerged from the unique work on each site. Each theme was explored by a panel conversation with four conference participants who brought their experience in relation to the theme and each other, followed by a conversation that actively involved the audience.

As informal educators we decided to include in this publication on the works and actions of the participants of the “Living (in) Repairs” summer school who, over the course of a week, operated in parallel and intersecting the conference. Their doing and thinking as an emergent community deeply influenced the discussions and reflections of the conference, and it’s through this experience that our vision of informal education was informed.

This magazine closely follows a distributed and situated approach, reconnects discussions with place and with building in written form. But there is no one better to take you on this journey than Captain Wouter himself. Take them away!

Elena, Jadd & Ruben



Ahoy sailors!

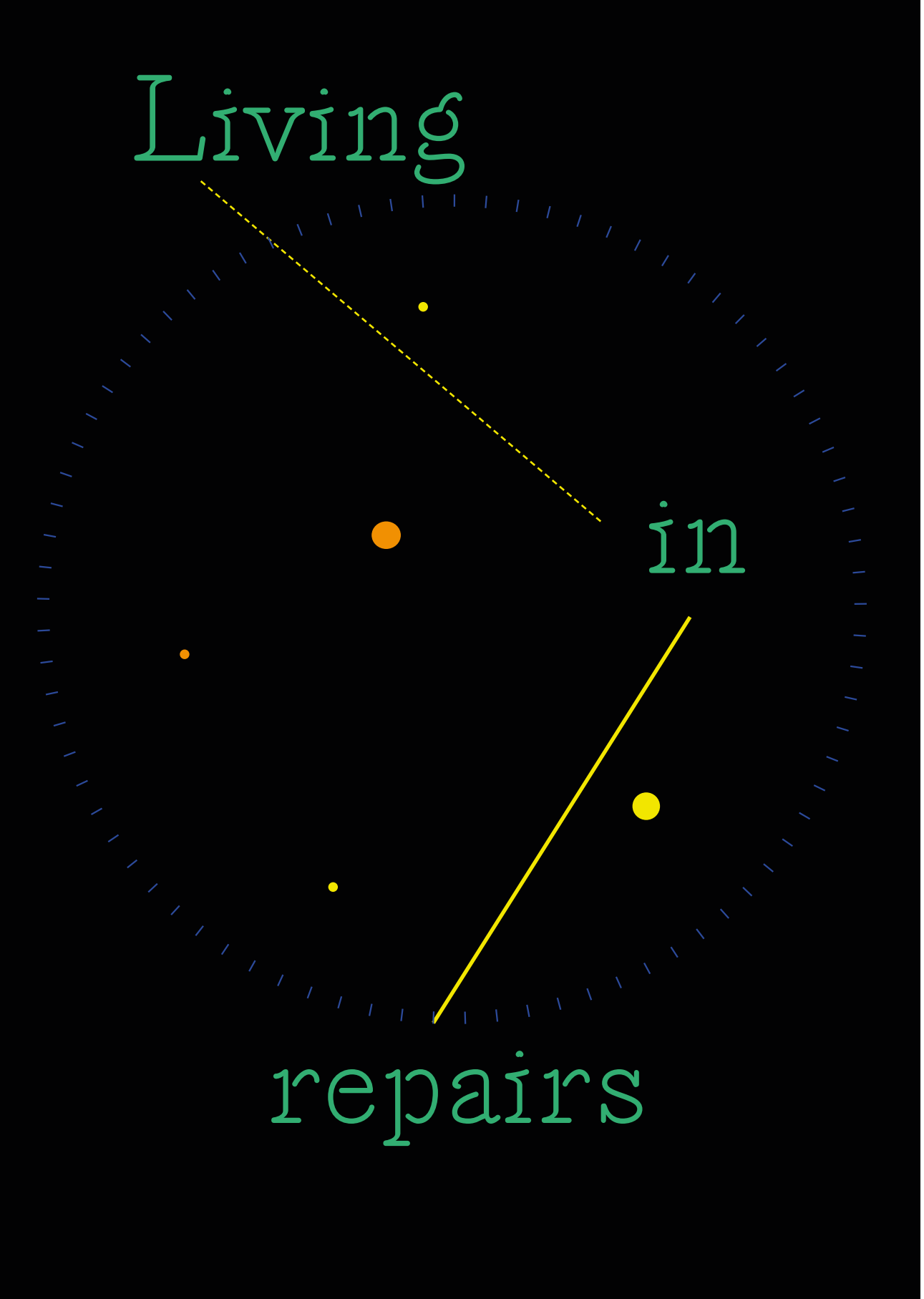
Welcome aboard our sailing adventure, where today we will not only glide over the waves of the water but also dive deep in the abyss of insight and learning. Today, dear passengers, we will take you along the beautiful shores of De Wilderness, the rustic splendor of the Heerlijkheid van Heule, and anchor our ship at the freeport Bolwerk.

But this journey is more than just a trip from place to place.

No, today we will be propelled by the wind of curiosity exploring themes that are profoundly enmeshed in our practices. “In Context” — the compass that shows us the way, enabling us to understand where we are and where we want to go. “Building Communities” — like bringing ships together to form a fleet, creating a harbor for each of us. And finally, “Opening Doors” — the key work of our journey, opening doors to new ideas, encounters, and opportunities, like locks granting us access to unexpected treasures.

So hold on tight, reel in the sails, and let yourself be carried away! For today, my friends, the horizon will open, and we will not only reach new shores but also explore new worlds within ourselves. And I, your captain, am honored to guide you on this magical voyage.

High winds, deep thoughts, and full speed ahead!



This edition of the Living Summer School builds on a four-year cycle of research and construction within the LSS and rests on one key assumption: sustainable construction, construction that is inclusive of the environment, society and its community of constructors, cannot happen overnight.

The first two LSS's editions, Living Waterscapes and Living Blocks, laid the foundation of the process by building the networks of humans, places and more than humans, as well as helping us to define our community's approach to pedagogy and applied research. Last year's edition Living Makeshifts served as a prototypical iteration, allowing us as organisers to integrate construction into our activities and enabling participants to develop a design intervention at the architectural scale, a prototype in itself.

These prototypes lived within the three construction sites and we gathered feedback from the sites' inhabitants over the course of a year to inform the process of this year's edition. The three construction sites that were involved were the adventure construction playground Wildernis, the social and ecological farm Heerljikheid van Heule and Bolwerk, our NGO whose story, ethos and activities are detailed in the following chapters.

The theme of repairs emerged from the idea of platforming a positive relation to maintenance, of highlighting the background labour that is often necessary, lovingly crafted, yet frequently overlooked. Repair also speaks to the practice of self-reflection, learning from oneself, as well as to community care and connection, both within the LSS and across its partners and wider network. On a societal level, repair becomes a way to practice to orient ourselves within a landscape of constant uncertainty. And finally, repair gestures toward rebuilding our relationship with the ecosystem.

Across the three sites, participants engaged in processes of deconstruction, mapping, questioning, reconstruction, material reuse, re-decoration, and much more to rework three constructions. The activities at each site were broadcast in real time through "sound boxes" created by SoundCamp, forming a "sound ecology" of the experience and sonically bridging the activities between sites. We curated moments of self-reflections and checking in, inviting participants to revisit their learning paths and practicing intentions throughout the process. Lastly, we partied and celebrated together to honour our shared accomplishments.

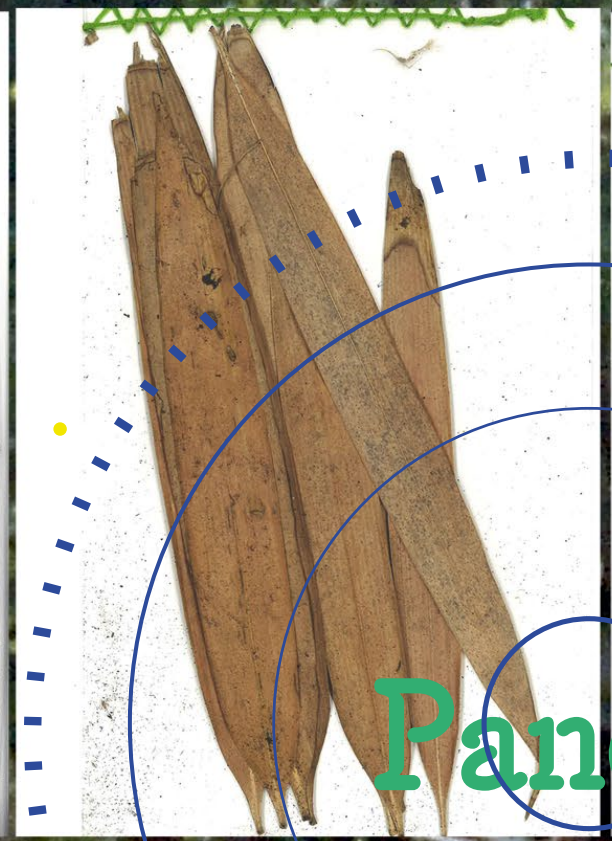
Elena, Jadd & Ruben

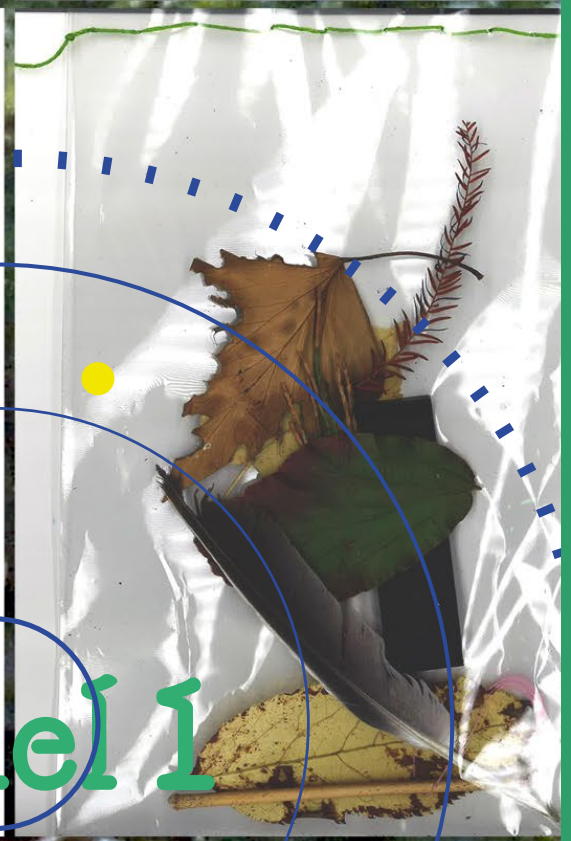
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Panel 1





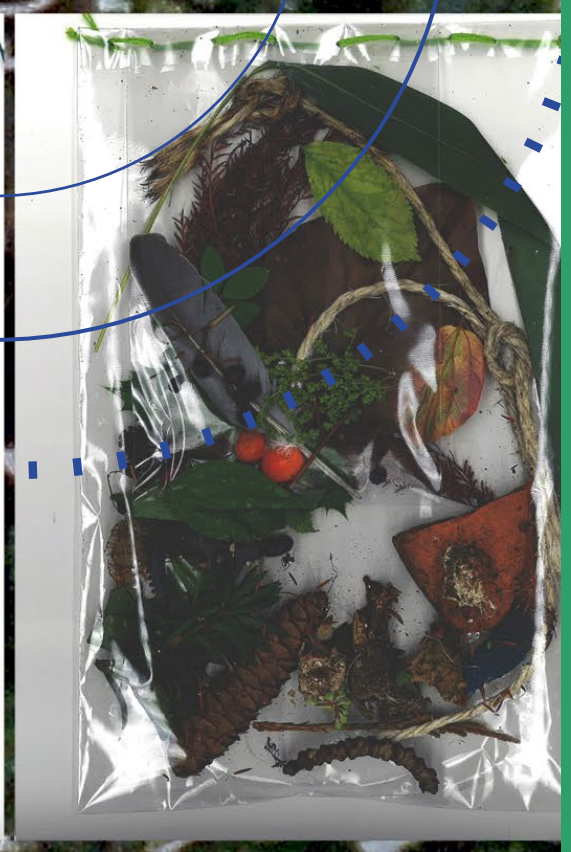


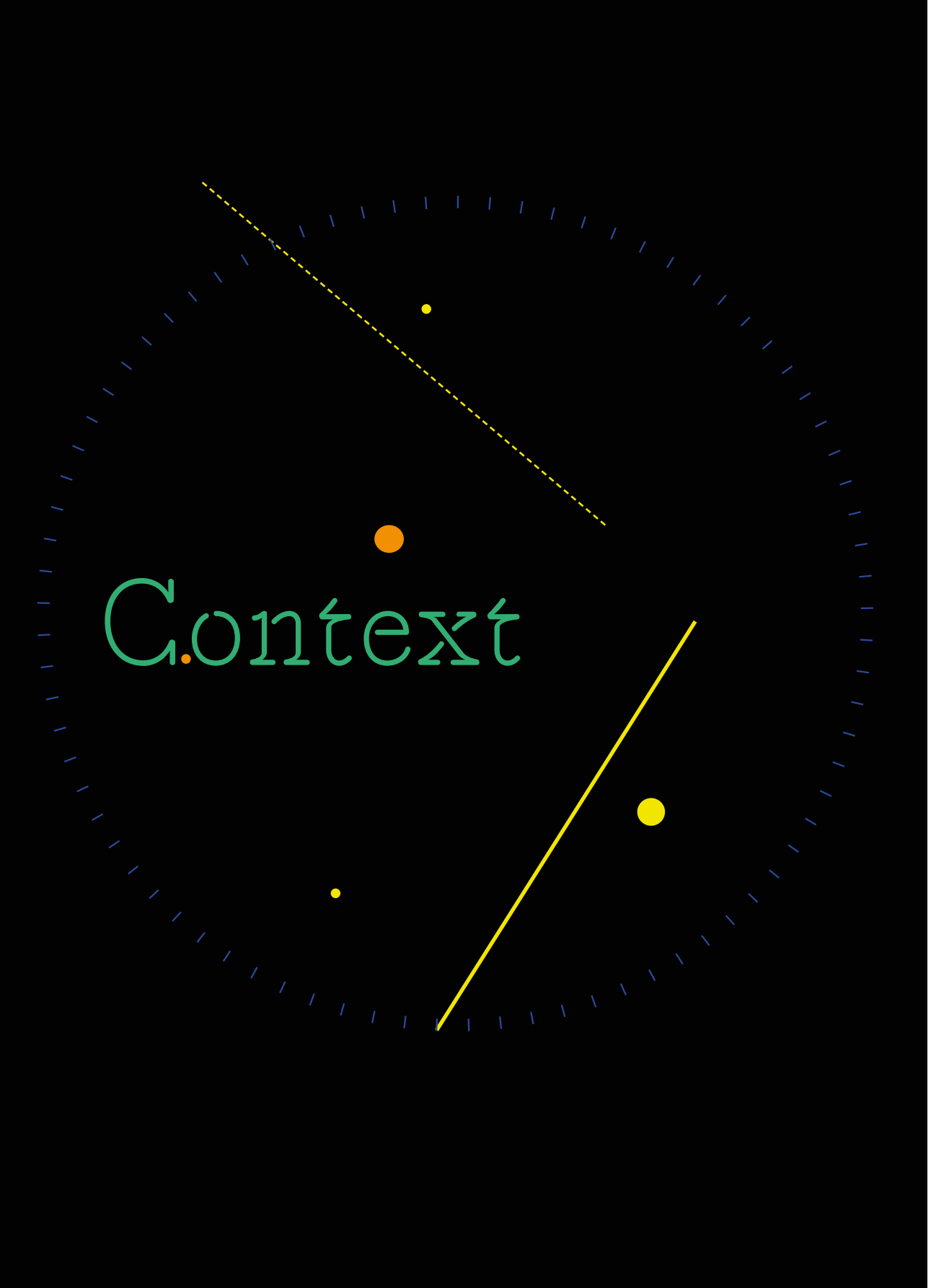












Informal education can unfold in many different spaces. What happens when we let our surroundings, geography, the social and the built environment influence our approaches to informal education? In this panel we presented and discussed practices that are rooted in place and locality, reflecting on the permeability of informal education to its environment.

- How is context and location important to informal education?
- How can we build trans-national alliances that are still rooted locally?
- How can informal education methods be scaled while maintaining sensitivity to local contexts?
- How can informal education foster a sense of place and belonging within communities?
- What role do non-human elements (e.g. nature, architecture) play in the effectiveness of informal education?

Wildernis

Wildernis is an adventure construction playground, created by the collective Wildebras. It is located on a peninsula in the Gebroeders Van Raemdonck Park and is separated from the rest of the park by a bridge. Only children can cross this bridge, venture onto the island where nature is left untamed and unleash wild play with minimal supervision by few playworkers. It's a place where informal education is nurtured through play, construction, peer-learning and interacting with nature. The specific configuration of the place, once a moated farmstead and then a botanical garden, is deeply intertwined with the pedagogical experience.

Repairing through Play

In 2023, Living Summer School participants constructed a playsystem based on modular wooden planes intended as both artifact and agent in the island's rewilding. A year later, the 2024 cohort mapped the island and its restoration one year after this intervention. They repurposed and altered the original structures, amplifying their play potential. Their interventions echoed the children's energy and weaved the feral materiality of Wildernis, further articulating the grammar of wild play through design.

Ahoy, dear adventurers and explorers!

We are now approaching our first stop on this grand journey: Wildernis! A place where nature runs wild and the air tingles with adventure and the thirst for discovery. This is no ordinary stop, oh no! Here lies a world teeming with life and uninhibited play — a truly magical piece of earth, where children take the helm of their own adventure.

In Wildernis, nothing is too crazy and everything is possible. Here, freedom reigns and dirt becomes a badge of honor. From jumping in puddles to climbing trees, from hammers and nails in hand to making fire in the passionate glow of the fire pit — it can all happen, and it is allowed. A place where young people learn to chart their own course, test the boundaries of their world, and assess risks, all at their own pace. For here, ladies and gentlemen, they not only become stronger but they grow — in body and mind.

Be inspired by the tireless energy of these young builders, who through free play learn what it means to stand in their power. For as the old sailors knew: adventure is the best teacher. And here, in this wilderness, they prepare themselves for their future, one step, one game, and one discovery at a time.

So drop anchor, friends. Let's go ashore, breathe in the fresh scent of wood and earth, and be inspired by the young explorers who, here in Wildernis, are charting their own course!





Wildernis
Author: Alessia Liscia

Once upon a time, there was an island, far from everything known to exist.

A place where everything seemed to remain unchanged by the passage of time.

It was a free, magical place, with towering trees that brushed the sky, winding paths that led to secret places, roots intertwined beneath the earth, while tiny mushrooms and mosses grew like flowers on the tree trunks.

On the island, there was only one rule: ‘Only children allowed!’

Here, you could live all kinds of adventures, climbing, swinging, building secret hideaways in the forest.

The island invited exploration and discovery at every step, as if it had a life of its own.

Everything on the island lived in harmony: animals, plants, and children helped each other.

But there was a mystery to unravel: how could they protect this island without disturbing its magic?

The children knew that their most important task was to protect the forest and all its creatures.

In every corner of the island, the children played, learned, and grew, getting to know the plants and animals that lived beside them.

One day, the oldest and wisest tree on the island whispered to them: “The island is changing. To protect it, you must become like the island itself.

Listen to it, and grow with it.”
The tree scattered magical boxes throughout the island, containing stories, seeds, and secret messages.

Each box held a magical message, a guide to protect the island. The children opened the boxes and realized that to protect the magic, they needed to understand and respect the island, just as they did when they played.

Every night, they gathered around the fire, sharing their discoveries and leaving new messages in the boxes for future explorers.

And so, the island continued to change, always welcoming new explorers who would play, learn, and protect its magic.

Feel like the island, think like a child, remember to play.



February 8th 2025
Author: Cristina Macelli

Dear curious human,
I write to you from the echoes of an unforgettable experience — a magical, annual summer school in Kortrijk, a once-unknown to me (yet now, special) town in Belgium. It was here that my understanding of space, play, and community was reshaped within 'De Wildernis' — an adventure playground nestled in a forest on an island in the Gebroeders Van Raemdonck Park, a natural sanctuary in the heart of the city, where children roam free to play and explore.

What I discovered went beyond the physical transformation of space—it revealed how play can transform us from within, shifting our perspective and reconnecting us with a sense of freedom.

Let me share some reflections from my 'Living Summer School' experience, in hopes that they might stir something within you.

We often limit our lives and imaginations to the urban spaces we know, assuming they are our only playgrounds. But our on-site playful explorations revealed something different — the need for rural spaces to be playgrounds too. These pockets of green, these quiet sanctuaries, offer moments of calm amidst chaos, an escape within the bustle. They remind us that cities need not consume every inch of space; they can coexist with nature. These "rural playgrounds" give us something different— a peaceful retreat where nature offers companionship in the midst of the constant stimulation of the daily urban rush.

For me, stepping into such a space evoked a kind of 'mourning' — a longing for the unstructured freedom of childhood, the chance to grow through curiosity and exploration. But perhaps this longing was an invitation — to step back into the wild and rediscover the joy of play.

And so, I did. In this space, play was an act of creation — imperfect, and freeing. There is something liberating about creating with your hands, free from the burden of perfection. 'De Wildernis' reminds us to let loose, to strip away our adult seriousness, and to reconnect with the simple, joyful act of play. Play isn't just for children—it's a release, a return to something raw and instinctive. To truly understand "wild play," we had to unlearn adulthood—to climb trees, build fires, and embrace the untamed. But this wasn't just nostalgia; it was a rediscovery—of the body's rhythm, the hunger for exploration and a reminder that laughter, movement, and carefreeness aren't just enjoyable — they're vital and refreshing.

De Wildernis offers a blueprint for others to "wildernise" their public spaces, showing that even rigid urban landscapes can soften — becoming places of joy, curiosity, and connection. This isn't about chaos but about balance — about allowing nature and the built world to coexist in a way that nurtures creativity and exploration. It's an invitation to see the overlooked corners of our cities differently—to transform them into spaces of possibility.
And perhaps that's the true power of play—not just in reshaping spaces, but in reshaping us. Because at its core, play teaches us something essential: adaptability begins with curiosity. It's the willingness to explore and to experiment. And perhaps, even the way we repair the world doesn't have to be rigid or solemn; it can be fluid, creative, and forgiving—just like play itself.
So I leave you with this: What if we invited more play, more wildness, into our lives? What might we rediscover?



About the author

John Bingham-Hall is a researcher, writer, and cultural organiser based in Paris and Marseille. His current work focuses on the ways how climate adaptation strategies are transforming the cultures and politics of the urban public sphere, engaging critical humanities, creative research methods, and artistic works to address sonic, choreographic, and narrative dimensions of change.

Drawing on a training in music and urban studies, as well as a decade of work connecting arts and urbanism with Theatrum Mundi, he analyses the complex dynamics that shape public life in cities through a series of cross-cutting threads including ecology, infrastructure, sound, movement, culture, and voice. He is Co-Director of Theatrum Mundi, Associated Researcher at LAVUE (Paris Nanterre) and teaches at Central Saint Martin's, EUR ArTeC, and the Paris School of Architecture.

https://johnbh.co
Staging Ground for Lifelong Learning

The concept of "theatrum mundi" evokes the idea of the world as a stage on which reality is performed. Performance, then, can be both a framework and a set of tools for shaping this reality. The work of the independent Franco-British urban research centre Theatrum Mundi asks questions about urban public life that are hard to answer with the traditional languages of architectural and urban design, and brings performance into play. How could urban mobility become an experience of cultural and social immersion rather than dislocation?; how do citizens stage and amplify their political voice?; what does sonic heritage sound like? We have led a number of residencies, inviting performers, urbanists, activists and researchers, not to find 'solutions' to these questions but to learn through the experience of responding to them together in a new city. As such, they sit outside of a pedagogical programme and enter into the framework of a lifelong learning that is enriched by productive encounters across boundaries of place and discipline.

Here, rather than describing the content of these projects, I will conceptualise the infrastructures through which these responses are developed, outlining a set of spatial and conceptual typologies rather than specific sites – the street, the field, the workshop, and the stage. Together, these represent a methodology and a set of conditions that allow for a mode of education that is less about knowledge transfer than its production across and between disciplines.

THE STREET

The fundamental starting place for these questions, the street, is an emblem of access to, or severance from, all those of our needs that go beyond the domestic. As Saskia Sassen has argued in the essay Does the city have speech (2013), streets are the spaces in which powerlessness can be inverted, where those with the least political sway in society can mark their presence through everyday adaptations, or make themselves heard through protest.

In the residency project The City Talks Back (see backtalks.city), Theatrum Mundi and Onassis Stegi invited architects, anthropologists and performance artists to document and propose strategies for amplifying political voices in Athens, responding to the question in Sassen's essay title. Rather than making spatial interventions, the residents investigated strategies including protest rhythms and song, guerrilla amplification in public space, and of women's communicative solidarity in markets, to show how the political voice of the street might be heard more loudly. Engaging with the street demands an overlapping of fields – spatial design, language, politics, technology – and taking the street as a field of study enables these artificially divided systems of knowledge to come together around a shared focus. So how can "fields" of expertise, rather than suggesting enclosure, become infrastructures for an imaginative expansion of urbanism?

THE FIELD

Fields are real places studied by researchers, and they are also "imagined communities" (to use a term from Benedict Anderson) shaped around scientific frameworks. In both forms, though, they have roots in a kind of violence: as territory to be conquered, and then through the controlling and ordering of the world through human and botanical 'sciences,' that were wrapped up with colonial extraction. How can we find a more ethical relationship to fields?

Partly in the simple phrasing of a question. Picture the question as a signpost in open fields on a country walk, for example. If the signpost is located at the edge of the field, it can be viewed from different enclosures, perhaps showing ways between them. The question 'how can we improve citizen participation in planning processes?' sits close to the middle of the field of urban planning. So, for The City Talks Back, we placed voice at the centre of the project as a metaphor for political participation, but also as a bodily, fleshy mode of expression. As such, it became possible for vocal performance artists, as well as anthropologists and architects, to meet at a signpost that made sense within all of their fields, and to embark together from there in a shared direction.

The nomadic residency programme School for Sonic Memory, curated by Theatrum Mundi in partnership with Onassis Stegi and Mucem, asked how sound, that is often fleeting and ephemeral, could become heritage. It took the three cities of Alexandria, Marseille and Athens as fields in which to explore cross-Mediterranean resonances of sonic memory. It connected six nomadic artists travelling between the cities with three artists living in each one. They were immersed for a week in the work of these artists, in their company, their favourite places. The effect, we hoped, was to shift from observing and extracting from the field towards the making of a shared and mutual experience. The visitors' perspectives and emotional responses transformed the ways locals saw their own environments, as much as their knowledge was carried by the nomadic artists between the three fields.

THE WORKSHOP

The messy work of shaping new forms is rarely intended to be made publicly visible. This is why we understand the workshop to be a metaphor for the backstage, where performance is rehearsed before being made public. Richard Sennett describes the workshop as a setting for developing a common focus and the implicit bonds that can overcome difference (Sennett, 2008). Putting the workshop on display takes the focus away from these horizontal connections and puts pressure on outward performance.

A workshop can be a physical space or event, but it can also be a set of conditions carried out into the field. A common focus can be tested in public through both words and actions, which are not directed outwards towards an audience but inwards towards the making of something shared. For the Tram des Nations residency (see tramdesnations-residency.art) exploring how to make public art for spaces of transport infrastructure, a group of local and visiting artists and architects traversed the landscape of a new tramway extension through four walks led by local practitioners. Instead of performing pre-existing knowledge of the landscape, the collective Dénominateurs Communs invited the residency participants to test unhabitual ways of moving through it: walking behind instead of in front of a bus stop, taking the path through the trees instead of the pavement, feeling the textures of surfaces instead of looking at them. All of this without verbal instructions, only suggestive gestures. The result was not a transfer of information but the production of a new shared sensory reality that was for many of the residents the most influential experience of their immersion in the field.

THE STAGE

Typically, of course, the aim of the creative production supported through a residency is to create work intended to be placed on stage. The French translation of staging – mise-en-scène – evokes a finality to this moment, a 'putting' on stage of something complete. The English word staging evokes a more ongoing process, once that assembles institutional, financial and human resources to bring about a new reality. Both meanings, though, inform our approach to the moment of performance in which results are shared. For example, The City Talks Back became part of a curriculum developed over three years by Theatrum Mundi for the MA Cities programme at Central St. Martin's. In the module Voices from the City, students heard talks from residency participants, explored the vocal strategies represented by their works, and then staged their own moments of political mise-en-scène addressing civic issues they are engaged with (see cities.work for more).

Mise-en-scène, in this definition, is just one moment in an ongoing process of staging the act of learning, one that constructs and works through temporary infrastructures of street, field and workshop to arrive at a moment of response that ideally acts as a provocation for the next cycle of production, whether by the same people or in handing on to someone else. But it is a moment of temporary completion that nonetheless helps to motivate and drive forward a shared learning process.

STAGING GROUND

It has proven particularly challenging and rewarding when the infrastructures that stage this learning – the street, the field, etc. – are the focus of the question itself. The "staging ground", then, is both the whole set of spaces that allow a concerted action to take place, but also the process of putting the grounds themselves on stage, making the very infrastructures we are inhabiting the subject of enquiry. In this case, alternative education might hope to impact on the world not only through knowledge but by interrogating and shaping its own conditions, in real time and at one-to-one scale.

This text is an abridged version of an essay previously published by the author (2024). With thanks to Christos Carras who commissioned this work and supported these residencies.

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About the Authors

Spolka was founded in 2016 in Košice as an informal collective of young women who were connected by their interest in their hometown. Building on the values of care and sustainability, Spolka has been engaged in spatial practice for more than nine years. Currently, the collective brings together six members, from the fields of architecture, sociology and urban planning. Spolka has been part of several international initiatives (e.g. New European Bauhaus Awards shortlist 2024, LINA fellow 2023, Year of Climate Care 2022 and others) and has successfully established itself in projects with the themes of caring planning and co-creation in Central Europe. In 2022, the organisation expanded its scope to include Spolka Studio, which implements the values of care and sustainability also in design and architectural practice.

This article was written by two of its members, sociologist Lýdia Grešáková and architect Viktória Mravčáková, who presented Spolka's work at the Navigating Informal Education conference. Never Never School: Caring learning for a caring city

The city is a web of relationships shaped by various actors, human, natural or built, and their changing perspectives. Caring is a daily activity in these relationships, whether when commuting, working, learning or relaxing. Our needs and perceptions of care evolve with time. Architecture can either foster caring, dialogue and equality or promote exclusion, influencing how we live and interact in our unique environments. To truly understand and shape these intricate relationships in the built world, one must become a (spatial) practitioner who perceives and appreciates them. However, traditional education, narrowly focused, often falls short, failing to provide space for exploring relationships.

This gap led us to create Never Never School, an informal education platform where we can speculate, experiment, and work interdisciplinary. By embracing diverse viewpoints and non-hierarchical learning, Never Never School prioritizes health, well-being, and community over productivity. Here, participants are free to explore and express themselves without the pressures of evaluation, cultivating a playful, feminist approach to learning that helps us reshape our environments. By reflecting on the past of the school, whether successful and fun, or failing, this text seeks to highlight various formats and practices that foster a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.

Prefabricated estates, in-between spaces, caring cityscapes and housing alternatives.

Over the years, Never Never School has evolved but remains rooted in Košice, Slovakia, home to Spolka members and partners. This connection shapes our work, as we engage with the city's context and challenges (we "stay with the trouble" (Haraway 2016)) to develop solutions tailored to local needs. Košice, with 230,000 inhabitants, grew rapidly during the socialist era due to its steel factory, Slovakia's largest polluter. While the city seeks alternatives in culture, creative industries, and IT, a new car factory reinforces its reliance on heavy industry. The Košice housing situation, with prices rising by 30 % in the past year, caused many, including children, to be affected by homelessness, a consequence of unequal policies against the Roma people. With few regulations and the current political coalition undermining cultural institutions, environmental protections, and the justice system, change seems unlikely. Through Never Never School, we focus on modest, community-based practices grounded in the perspectives of all residents, exploring how these situated solutions can inform better spatial practices in other places too, and lay the foundation for more sustainable, adaptable futures.

During the first year in 2018, the participants collectively explored the suburban prefabricated high-rise estate Ťahanovce in Košice, where they were rethinking the concept of utopia as a form of speculative political action. In 2019 we brought together thirty local and international participants to a large riverside brownfield in our town to imagine its potential futures. In 2021, we focused on caring cities, experimenting more with a non-hierarchical approach. In 2023, we built on these insights while drawing parallels with the Ukraine refugee crisis and exploring affordable housing solutions. We also summarized the knowledge gained via publications that are mostly open-access (Grešáková and Mravčáková, forthcoming; Grešáková et al., 2022; Grešáková et al. 2019; Spolka, 2021).

DEEPENING IMPACT: FEMINIST REFLECTION IN PRACTICE

In July 2024, we conducted yet another workshop to reflect on past years of the Never Never School – we do many of these reflections to foster self-awareness, accountability, and growth within the organizing collective. For us, it is a feminist practice we wholeheartedly adopted, because it helps us to critically analyze our internal dynamics, to confront issues of power and inclusion, and thus amplifies the impact of our efforts. This time, we reviewed all the formats and events organized during the previous 4 years of the school.

PEER-TO-PEER APPROACH

In our ongoing exploration of education models, we emphasise the significance of peer-to-peer learning, which challenges the traditional top-down methods. Thus, instead of relying solely on expert-led instruction, we foster a collaborative environment where participants actively share knowledge and learn from each other. This approach not only democratizes learning but also reflects our commitment to care and inclusivity. Informal activities, such as shared meals or discursive brunches (Hoskyns et al. 2017), for example, create spaces where participants can connect and engage in meaningful discussions, strengthening the learning community and nurturing mutual support.

We strive to integrate guests as participants rather than mere lecturers, though this presents challenges in balancing fair compensation and expectations. We have tried various forms of co-creation of the program with participants – through open calls, early communication to develop content, and training on workshop structuring. We also include open slots for improvised sessions, allowing for spontaneous interests. In 2021, we pushed the format equality to the limit by having all the participants also be teachers, for which they were rewarded with a stipend. However, the program was too diverse and we didn't manage to create a cohesive learning community. Not everyone has the same capacity to be able to teach and learn well and we later moved away from it. We kept it as a short-entry option, without an obligation.

NEW LEARNING WAYS

Situating our learning, for instance, plays another crucial role in our educational platform, for example, we explored positionality maps, which reflect participants' diverse backgrounds and experiences . In 2023, we started the school with a card game that enabled us to anonymously share answers to questions, like where we are from, what field (methods and tools) feels comfortable to us,... We then put the answers together, clustered and placed them near the coffee and snacks table to be reminded of what backgrounds influence us as a group during learning each day.

Group work, although not widely prevalent in Slovak education, becomes a central aspect of our approach, fostering collaboration and collective problem-solving. The contextual nature of learning, recognizing that each participant's perspective is shaped by their unique background, adds an interdisciplinary challenge. Our emphasis on reflection not only as a practice of care but also as a fundamental part of education, helps participants understand their learning processes and motivations. Additionally, open design sessions in the second half of

summer school provide unstructured time to expand on personal interests and group work.

CENTRED ON CARE

The formats aim to support a caring atmosphere within Never Never School. We differentiate between managed and unstructured care, recognizing that while structured activities provide clear guidance and a sense of being cared for, free time and open slots allow for exploration and self-realization. Lectures and reading lists at the start of our summer school serve the purpose of levelling initial knowledge gaps and providing a foundational knowledge base, which helps to equalize participants' understanding and enhance their learning experience.

Organizing accommodation and other basic needs reflects our commitment to care. We have tried various forms of accommodations and food provision throughout the years – from hostels and hotels to finally our own homes. While addressing the topic of housing in 2024, we semi-recreated the situation of housing during the Ukraine war refugee crisis from 2022, by having the participants stay with friends and people from Košice, who temporarily provided them with a couch/room or an entire apartment to share. At the same time, we have also moved to different homes, to create the collective sense of temporary "living in someone else's home". This shows care is important for Never Never School also through its partners, friends and our "social circle". We barter or get donated things – cooking, production, space for events and much more.

CONTESTING PLANNING DISCOURSE

Although we consider Never Never School as an introspective learning experience, with its contextualisation in Košice we also aim for impact on local discourse, politics and at least, expand the imagination of what is possible.. We like to focus on local issues – sometimes the topic is very broad, but sometimes it concerns a particular area. We aim for the public to be involved. This, however, seems particularly difficult. On one hand, penetrating the meticulously co-tailored Never Never School community is challenging for externals and on the other, getting involved in the discussed topics might not be accessible to everyone.

In speculating about the future of Košice in 2019, we aimed to foster a deep connection with specific space, encouraging advocacy and care for these areas. The effort highlighted the importance of falling in love with and advocating for the spaces we engage with. Despite no immediate change of space, the book on this area we published informed the winners of an urban competition tasked to work on the site a few years later. Sadly, from the position of non-formal educators, we have not been invited into further debates about this space and also, we have shifted our interest into more critical issues.

WISHES FOR THE FUTURE

The formats and approaches employed, while not entirely novel, gain their impact from the way they work together and the way they adapt to our specific context. And that might be our secret ingredient to the process that engages meaningfully with local issues and imagines more supportive, equitable futures. For us, Never Never School is about two challenges. On one hand, it helps us rethink the methodology of caring learning experience. On the other hand, it also serves as a framework for a change in the planning discourse. Pedagogy can have an impact especially when situated – influencing local discourses and opening up the imagination for many, serving as a method of activism towards supporting caring planning in formal architecture.

As we look ahead to the 2025 edition, we see our approach focussing on strengthening the creation of a learning community, supporting the informality of our educational settings, and continuing to emphasize local eating and living as principles of care. We also aim to incorporate more free time and terrain-focused activities to enhance engagement and exploration. Importantly, we recognize that non-hierarchical learning does not require every detail to be meticulously orchestrated. Sometimes, the most meaningful experiences arise spontaneously, and these moments of flow are integral to our approach. By remaining open and adaptable, Never Never School will continue to evolve as an open platform, creating enriching learning environments that challenge and inspire.

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About the Authors

Soundcamp is an arts cooperative with members in Ireland, Germany, Greece and the UK. Our work is developed through collaborations. It appears as broadcasts, workshops, publications, sound devices and events.

As part of the Acoustic Commons network, we coordinate the long-form radio broadcast Reveil (2014–), and a series of sound and ecology events (soundcamps) on Dawn Chorus day each year.

Recent projects include: Spree ~ Channelsea Radio Group – a transmission project between rivers in London and Berlin (2023); l a g – a residency with Kate Donovan for Sonic Acts' Inner ear(th) programme (2022); and As if radio.. (AIR): An experiment in ecological activist radio at COP26 Glasgow (2021).
Home education and Practice of everyday life
Hello, my name is Sasha and I am here with two other people, Grant and Mort who will be around later at Bolwerk.
We are part of soundcamp, which is an art's cooperative of 10 people, based in South London, Crete, Berlin, Glasgow and a few other places.
And we work with live audio streams of environmental sounds.

We have been working since Saturday across the different sites of the summer school and with the group, using live sounds to document the work that has been taking place. We call this kind of practice making ecological radio which is what we like to do, but we will talk a bit more about this later on in the day when we can share some sounds from the week as well.

Alongside this i'll also say a little bit about myself and how this fits into the theme of informal education in context.

I am a creative geographer, and I study geography and performance in Glasgow.

I was home educated for the first 16 years of my life, although I would say I am still home educated in many ways, and this experience of informal education was really foundational for me and continues to feed into what I might call my practice of everyday life: my studies, artistic practice, communal living situation, relationships, etc.

I'm going to spend the next few minutes talking about home education, and the first thing to say is that home education is a spectrum, and everyone does it differently.

And the second thing to say is that it is a family collaboration, so I'll quickly name the other people involved who are: Paula Baraitser, Grant Smith, Sam Baraitser Smith and Max Baraitser Smith.

THE HOUSEHOLD /
DOMESTIC SPACE
— one unusual thing about home education is that some of the study happens in domestic space
— this has some implications...
— if there is no spatial distinction between where study takes place and where everything else takes place then what is actually considered study becomes an open question
— so anything is a legitimate project

example: chickens
— when I was a child I was really in to animals and I started this chicken project
— I spent a lot of time studying chickens, drawing them and researching them in various ways - especially how to make a chicken enclosure safe from foxes which is a problem in London
— and also how to feed them food scraps, because we have always had compost at the house
— and eventually we got some chickens
— and keeping chickens is a really amazing experience, they have specific tempos tied to the daylight hours which change over the seasons
— they have interesting social dynamics and ways of interacting with each other and with humans
— and because they can be quite loud, they also complicate the idea of a private garden, and in fact if you have a cockerel in the city and it makes to much noise the neighbours can make you get rid of it which is kind of crazy
— so this all made a really big impressions on us - including being a catalyst for going vegan
— and all this because a young child said hey mum can we get chickens?
— It's been funny this week listening to chickens and all these companion animals on the farm site while making the radio over the past week, because it really reminds me how communicative they are and how intensely they engage me as a person

These projects are real
— they are not an exercise - they change the space and the ways we live
— So the house and the family is never a fixed construct it is always DIY

Child led + Curiosity
— but the key approach of home education (the way we do it) is that projects are child led
— and that curiosity is a legitimate basis for learning
— this is often about finding common areas of interest and curiosity among members of the household but it is not necessarily confined to the household
— so I wanted to give another example of this opening out quality

Example: bee keeping
— ok so when we were kids, Max my brother, got really interested in bees
— so he and Grant, my dad, went to do a bee keeping course at Roots and Shoots in South London - which is a horticultural project with young people who are facing barriers to employment
— they proposed to do some bee keeping with other young people at a home educating group
— so they found a nature reserve in South London, we were given some bees by a beekeeper called Clive, we built a bee enclosure as a group of children
— this children's beekeeping group ran for 9 years
— in this way the household interests are extended

It's important to acknowledge that
— families can be the sites for re-producing privilege, and social and cultural capital
— they have often been described by feminists as the primary patriarchal structure
— and artistically and personally the family is often something to be survived and then to be broken out from in order to become the self possessed autonomous subject
— but I guess I'm trying to point towards a more open and promising model for the household, as a site for experimentation and collaboration and collective action

Going back to thinking about the spatial contexts of education
— the home is one key place of study, but this is always opening out onto a wider set of spaces
— for us, living in London, the city was our other classroom
— and we spent time moving around on public transport in groups during the middle of the day when all the other kids were in school, and this exposure caused sometimes young people getting stopped by the police etc.
— and this is really about performing our rights to the city, and our rights to declare the city as space for study, and therefore declaring it as a space that needs to be contested

So towards this I will wrap up by saying
— for me the most significant thing about home education is growing up always being reminded that there are alternative to everything
— and so even with supposedly mundane tasks, like agreeing how me and my flat mates share the cooking, shopping and cleaning, there is always this search for that other system, that sits against the grain of the mainstream, and is committed to learning and collaboration and our community of practice.

About the Author

Irhana Šehović, an architect and sustainability strategist, is from Sarajevo and now resides in Oslo. Her academic journey spans Sarajevo, Barcelona, Stuttgart, and rounds off with a master's degree from NTNU, Trondheim. Dunja Krvavac, born and educated in Sarajevo, embarked on her architectural journey at the University of Sarajevo in 2011, culminating in a bachelor's degree in 2017, specializing in architectural design and constructive systems. Currently pursuing her Master's, her thesis delves into inclusive urbanism. Dunja and Irhana are actively engaged in LIFT Spatial Initiatives, a non-profit non-governmental organization that aims to educate local communities on architecture, urbanism and design. They are currently project coordinators of two of LIFT's biggest projects which are: biennial festival Days of architecture Sarajevo and LINA European Architectural Platform. They work on exploring the topic of Sarajevo public spaces, inclusion and feminist perspectives in urbanism. They have together developed a list of projects, besides the above mentioned biennial festival, such as (UN)CONTEXT_Dissecting the layers- Sarajevo residency workshop and exhibition, a project titled BATTLE FOR RESILIENCE as a collaboration with the Academy of Performing Arts in Sarajevo, 'Buone Nuove: Women Changing Architecture'; with MAXXI Rome. In 2023 they co-authored the first architectural guide for Sarajevo published by DOM publishers.

Title

We started LIFT 15 years ago because this transitional society has had huge effects on us. For example, right after the war, we were stuck in a post-socialist, Russian-influenced school system. As architecture students, we felt trapped in something that didn't project onto the future, our society, or us personally. Known as rebellious and loud, we started this organization to bring in more perspectives.

We operate on three main levels—two are more consistent, and one is more abstract. The first is our annual festival, originally launched as Days of Architecture Sarajevo, where we bring outside perspectives to Sarajevo, organize workshops and lectures, and have hosted speakers from over 50 countries. This is where we educate young architects, professionals, and others interested in our field.

A huge part of our work is also educating local communities, who may not realize the effect they can have on their city's development, especially as it grows so quickly. For them, we hold monthly events called "Nights of Architecture," which vary in form depending on the theme we're exploring.

The third level includes our other activist projects, which we undertake whenever we have the funding and time. An important part of our work is having fun; we have regular jobs that are sometimes fun, sometimes not, but with this work, we want to create a space where people can enjoy and shape their cities with us. Through this approach, we hope to help people become comfortable with architecture and show them new aspects of our city.

For example, here's our most recent project. There's a small dancer here in the photo—it's part of an artistic film centered on a unique building in Sarajevo. This building was constructed in 1992 as a "home for all people," but it has never been fully operational and has stood vacant for 30 years, almost like a massive sculpture. Now, it's going to be demolished and turned into a shopping mall.

Because it's one of only two examples of postmodernist architecture in Sarajevo, we wanted to pay tribute to it with an activist moment. But since it's fenced off, traditional activism wasn't possible, so we opted for an artistic approach instead.

We gained access to the building and created a dance performance within it, reflecting on the delicate situation of people who might have lived there and the struggles of those in Sarajevo who still lack basic housing. Few residential buildings have been constructed here since the war. This project became a kind of final farewell—a cinematic experience that channels our activism in a different way. It's interesting to think about how you can adapt local constraints into something that leads to a better future.

We also try to bring attention to vacant, forgotten, or underutilized cultural spaces in the city through our festival. For example, our opening party in 2015 was held in the Historical Museum, one of the most prominent buildings in Sarajevo. This building doesn't have anything that can attract you towards it and also it doesn't attract any kind of investments. So, for a whole year, we installed ourselves inside the museum, worked with the museum, and then for the opening and closing and the festival we focused attention on the space. Three years later, the museum received significant funding for partial renovations, though much remains to be done.

Conversation_panel_session_1.mp3

{ 0:03 }
Speaker 0: Did any of the chickens have names?
Speaker 1: Yeah, they did have names over the years. Chicken have different lifespans to humans. The chicken that I connected with the most that I would usually have shown a photo of is a Silver Laced Wyandotte Bantam chicken, which is quite a small chicken that's kind of upright and she was the one that I connected with the most.

Speaker 2: { 0:44 }
Can I ask a question to other panelists?

Speaker 3: { 0:47 }
Of course I forgot to mention that's absolutely encouraged.

Speaker 2: { 0:50 }
I'm really curious because it's an always unresolved question for me, and it kind of came up quickly in what you were saying, but I'm sure it comes up for everyone.

{ 0:59 }
How do you navigate the balance between wanting to make your informal learning experience public and the effect that this has on the process? Also this whole issue that I think probably we face in all of the kinds of things we do, we are together all day, every day for a week, for two weeks, for however long it is for each one of you and you see so much richness of learning and it's almost impossible to represent most of it. But you feel this pressure to, for example, make a publication, and do something to somehow show it to the funders, to the world. There's so much happening. But, how do you navigate that? Do you feel a lot of it gets lost or, sorry, no, it doesn't get lost, it doesn't get represented. How do you manage to represent that? Do you just accept not representing it?

Speaker 4: { 1:50 }
I guess that's true. Meaning, I don't think we are able to represent it in any kind of way.

{ 1:58 }
Yeah, it's just another new thing that kind of comes from the informal learning experience. It's not any kind of representation. I would say especially these public moments, they are mostly like a curated part which is maybe safe for everyone to see, but especially when we're talking about the books. We are also doing one right now from the last summer school, and that one is even more loosely connected to the summer school as such. We ask participants to propose ideas for essays, visual essays, and other forms of productions after the summer school, which are connected to the summer school topic but are not not necessarily rooted in it.

{ 2:43 }
And so there was this really nice example when one of the participants did this really nice project about documenting where everyone was living. They repeated this exercise with the same methodology in Brussels and wrote a simple text about it. So I think in this example it's an experience that kind of arises from the summer school but I don't think you're able to represent it fully.

Speaker 5: { 3:12 }
I mean, I do strongly believe in stories and I think what we accomplish in each representation is to somehow tell the story, imprint stories and enable everybody who was participating to spread the story further. The story doesn't have to necessarily focus on solutions, but on the method and the tools we used.

Speaker 4: { 3:34 }
Yeah, I think that's a nice thing that you mention. Because in the last year of summer school, in 2021, Lydia had a role in the summer school to be the ethnographic observer, and she actually wrote as a sociologist, which is her field of study. So she wrote and that was really nice. I think it worked, but I'm not sure how many people read it though.

Speaker 6: { 4:06 }
For us it's very specific, since we had no governmental support in the beginning or this kind of funds did not really exist in Bosnia at the time, we could actually work very hard on understanding how can we shape all the fundings and all the sponsors into something that suited us best., And the fact that we all worked and did not depend on the project's funding primarily was one of our ways to deal with this. So we really wanted a space without constraints for us and understanding how we can find the funding that actually fits into our space was super interesting. I think we have managed to a certain extent to actually achieve this and get to some funds which are really great, like LINA [i.e. EU Project "Learning Interacting and Networking in Architecture"] .

Speaker 1: { 4:58 }
In soundcamp, we use this term "half turned to the public". When we're working with live materials, our response to this question is to try and be in the live as much as possible, because the live removes this question of whether something has been captured or not. So yes, the question of whether someone is listening or not listening like reading or not reading is still very much there. But for us, when we're working with the live streams, we are always half turned to the public, which is like a middle ground.

Speaker 2: { 5:32 }
I think radio is so special like that because you can have that intimacy and you can feel like you're just really together in this quite small intimate space, but you can also just as equally make that opening.If anyone

wants to listen, they can. But there's not quite that same pressure of someone being there and watching. So yeah, radios work really well.

Speaker 5: { 5:53 }
When we found out that, which is quite obvious andI'm sure you also know, people, animals, everybody communicates in different ways. So that's why it's nice to see all of our methods combined and listening, seeing, touching things can always tell a different story to anyone who's willing to listen to it.

Speaker 7: { 6:55 }
I was wondering, what does it mean to teach well or what does it mean to teach?
I was wondering if you facilitated this exchange of learning amongst participants and if you have some methods to share with people who are uncomfortable with teaching. And yeah, I'm just curious about how it went?

Speaker 4: { 7:30 }
So in that particular year,we had a pre-workshop to the summer school where participants could consult with us and we could navigate them through structuring their contribution to the summer school. We structured the programme in such a rigid way that there were always two activities per day one and that every participant was responsible for one and they could do basically whatever they wanted with other people.

{ 8:00 }
Probably also due to the Czechoslovak context, a lot of participants were very structured and they were actually proposing really frontal formats. We tried to encourage them to not plan such frontal interactions, not just lectures, not just presenting their project, but rather explore, question through a workshop, and propose a more collaborative experience. That proved to be really difficult because when someone doesn't have previous experience away from hierarchical education, it's really hard for them to already perform in a different way.

Speaker 5: { 8:41 }
In the end, this also put a lot of weight on our shoulders because we had to consult constantly with participants.

These people even during the school and in the evening before their lectures and it was kind of hard.

Speaker 7: { 8:57 }
Did you have some feedback on this? And following this would you have done things differently?

Speaker 5: { 8:41 }
We had some reflection rounds and we had the brunch that I was talking about. This was also part of this year, every year we do it, where we went deep into their programs. How was it for them? How did they learn? And they did even give feedback to each other in the learnings and whether they respected each other, whether it was caring at all or not. So we kind of deconstructed it. But yeah, it was full of tension before we did it. So, I totally recommend doing reflections of learning processes because it also helps people to deconstruct their own motivation to find why they were doing it themselves.

Speaker 4: { 9:57 }
We just recently started using the words "learning community" or "learning group", because we think it's important that we realise that we need to create this group of people that trust each other in this learning process. And we didn't have this emphasis that year. So it was just like jumping from one activity to the other and participants were just not sure who they were and what their position was. You know, it was really confusing. So now we know we believe that there's a need for proper introductions, disclosing positionality, and really taking the time to create this group. It's a sort of start to the process of creation before actually getting into particularities.

Speaker 3: { 10:49 }
First of all, I'm talking from the perspective of a country that's still at war, where half of the kids are not in school, where there's a big question: "where do you put your resources?".

I'm just working on a report right now to look at alternative ways recommended for the educational processes of young people. We have in Syria several de facto powers. None of them is Democratic. None of them is really looking at education beyond the very confines of ideological indoctrination. And still the big question is how do you teach young people in such a way that they get at least the basics and still get an experience?

{ 11:48 }
The evidence we have from the field is that non formal education rather than informal education, because there is no safe informal education process possible at the moment, is that non formal education can give a lot more than formal education. But still they're not getting the formal education. So the question here is, I really want your opinion on that: How do we bring this richness of knowledge to scale up so that you can cover formal education? How do you integrate what you're learning here to create a scalability that is not available otherwise? I mean, in Europe and the West in general, the schools are providing the basics of reading, arithmetic, whatever, and then they may fail on other things. But the basics are being taught in school, maybe with also a lot of ideological constraints.

{ 12:52 }
But the big question is when you don't even have the basics, where do we put our resources? My very specific question is that you are opera-

ting in a world where you probably are doing some good counter institutional experiences in the city, but still developers are building a lot faster than you do. You're doing work with young people, but schools are indoctrinating far more than you are liberating. How do you infiltrate the school systems? How do you liberate the school systems from the inside? How do you scale up?

Speaker 5: { 13:48 }
We have been asking each other these questions since the beginning of the school. We are from Eastern Europe and when we talk to our friends from the West, they always ask

{ 13:59 }
"But what's new about your approach? How can you scale it up?" We are already behind, you are already behind. We came up with this summer school a long time ago. And we have been asking ourselves how to scale things. We are also in contact with war. Yeah, in fact, we don't know. We don't know, we only found out that we can scale the values and some tools, never the solutions. And everything is very situated with our approach. We always come up with something new. None of our school editions are the same as the previous one.

Speaker 2: { 14:48 }
The domestic space can be a kind of answer to some of that.

Speaker 5: { 14:52 }
Yeah, I was thinking about it, but I don't know.

Speaker 1: { 14:59 }
I also don't know, but I think maybe thinking about what is "basic learning" is maybe useful. So for me, the basic learning that we were exposed to through home education is to learn how to learn. OK? It's not about gaining particular skills, it's not about what you mentioned tools, but everyone is trying to learn how to learn because that gives you some ability to take that into different situations.

Speaker 8:
I really have no idea, maybe that's how I ended up here [in the Wildernis]. We always say that here we are trying to form the future rebels and let them learn the things that they don't get to learn in school. If we try to start small and go from there.

Speaker 6:
I feel like it is very hard to take on the context: there's something about the scale of formal and informal education. Informal education is mostly smaller, in the context, from the context. And very often in formal education, at least where I come from, I always believe that there is value in connecting these two.


Panel 2

Building Communities
Informal education relies on and nurtures networks of people to generate knowledge and garner support. Does materiality influence this process? how? In this panel we presented and discussed practices that engage with the duality of “building communities”- both in the sense of creating social networks and in the physical act of building.

How are hands-on and construction approaches relevant within informal education?
What are the implications of using construction as a metaphor for building social and educational structures?
How can informal education practices help in building resilient communities in the face of social change?
How can hands-on approaches be adapted to different cultural and geographic contexts within informal education?

Heerlijkheid Van Heule
The Heerljikheid Van Heule is a social and ecological farm surrounded by a moat in Heule. This historic farm’s mission is to create a deeper connection with oneself, others, and the environment. The produce and animals are grown ecologically with respect to the environment and the personnel includes farmers and social workers who involve vulnerable people in the daily labour, especially marginalised or at risk youth. Twice a day volunteers, employees and visitors meet in a circle to share tasks equally. It’s a place where relations are rebuilt through solidarity.
Repair through Solidarity
In 2023, Living Summer School participants built a transportable dry toilet on a car trailer, complete with a water system. The construction was movable to help the farm to reach the neighbourhood beyond its moat to be used in city-wide events. A year later, the 2024 cohort turned the dry toilet structure into a tiny house and they moved the dry toilet onto another wheeled platform, elaborating on the knowledge gathered throughout the year. A “Cow-mping” a campsite with cows was also conceptually explored and brainstormed on with the Heerrljikheid’s community as the stationary ground of the tiny house and toilet.

Ahoy again, beloved crew and curious travelers!

We are now on our way to a place that is not just a destination but a living story that has been unfolding for over 900 years. Our next stop: Heerlijkheid Van Heule! An ancient farm in the heart of Heule, an oasis of peace and connection, surrounded by the urban and industrial hum of Kortrijk. But as soon as we set foot on land, we will discover that time flows differently here — the seasons, the colors, the scents, they all tell their own story. A story that we will continue to write together.

The Heerlijkheid Van Heule is a place where nature and humanity come together in harmony. A place where every new day begins with a circle, where everyone, from every background, is welcome to participate in the community. Here, it doesn’t matter who you are or where you come from. Everyone is equal, whether you come from youth care, are a local resident, or simply a passerby searching for something you didn’t yet know you were looking for.

We are arriving at a living community built on connection — with ourselves, with each other, and with the nature around us. This is a place of meeting, where history blends with the present, and where care for one another and for the place itself is at the heart.

So let us sail into this serene haven with respect and open eyes, ready to hear the stories of the people who are building their own little piece of heaven on earth here. And who knows, friends, perhaps today we will also take a new step in their centuries-old story.

Drop the anchor, the adventure awaits — welcome to the Heerlijkheid!

Link to Images:Images - Louise
Author: Louise Lafage

Savatten sanitation design
It's all fun and games until... the end?

Who are we to repair and transform a structure we have not designed for someone we barely know, in a record speed period of 5 days? How do we, ultimately, do repair – considering that it's what we're here for - accurately for those who will actually use and live with the structure? Those questions are inherent to the work of architects and designers who, de facto, are supposed to create for others. And these questions, if possible logically, usually, find resolutions through dialog1. However, when it comes to dialoguing with 11 excited young designers, engineers and architects with diverse nationalities and various approaches to design and space, the task can become more complex.

Who do you look like ? My grandmother in the morning, same hair. My donkey, same smile. A little boy, same face (she's 32). Eva Green, same face. Ryan Gosling, all the same (they're 1,60m and not very muscular). Okay nice, what's your plan for the toilet structure from last year?

Of course a team of very motivated architects, engineers and designers would have managed to design a structure for mobile dry sanitation, a room on wheels and a camping ground. But how do 11 brains align on all 3 briefs, to design together to build a gender-inclusive dry sanitation, a mobile living-room and a participative sheet to design a Koemping2? How do designers and architects, with fundamentally different academic approaches to briefs, design, communication, methods, manage to work together and create? Or, how do they have a nice time answering creatively three different briefs, ever-adapting to new parameters?

Hi, good morning all! Let's start with savatten frisbee. Behind the line everyone. Ok one by one throw your right shoe. No, don't cheat, you don't get a second throw even if it landed behind. Looks like we have champions here, congratulations. I still won but you're good players. What do you plan on finishing building today?

Actually, none of the brains had to actually answer these questions. There was never the time to dwell upon a lack of idea, the incapacity to make a decision, or uncertainty. Never the time, and never the occasion: games and joy entirely structured each day. Games, led and instaurated by Stan and Valentin during each morning circle and evening circle3 - a way for everyone to get to talk about what they had worked on, what they would have liked to do, or how they were feeling. But it was also a way to be in a team, with everyone. Even on days we arrived a bit late to the farm, or finished working much later than expected, the time to play a game was never negotiable. Because those 10 minutes of fun did not matter on the structure of the day, but they really did matter, in fact, on the quality, the quantity, and the perception of the work done and to do. And fun and bliss prevailed even upon the weather4.

Today was rough, no ? (everyone is soaked) Valentin invented a game we have to play before you leave. Pick someone, make duos, attach one's left foot to the other's right one. 3, 2, 1, go. Second pool in place. 3, 2, 1, go. Third pool in place. 3, 2, 1, go. The winners in place. 3, 2, 1, go. Congratulations, you can go home. (after having bandaged 2 people)

Team circles and games are one way of using fun to structure and give a rhythm to the days, a given pattern. On a more spatial and sensorial prism, whether considered as a background or not, the place, the social farm Heerlijkheid Van Heule, also entirely shapes the approach of what is work, on two other levels.

Firstly, other groups of volunteers working at the farm and also doing team circles, working with the animals, preparing the weekend festival and installing tents, lived in parallel to, but in the same space as us, with another working schedule and rhythms. Whether or not one actively notices the meetings on the side, being part of a group where multiple people work or take breaks at different times, undeniably impacts one's relation to work to. One might call it « decentralised » work5 - in the great scheme of the farm -, or « being part of something », if anxiety kicks in. Or maybe « solidarity » ?

Recurrent sonic atmosphere : cows mooing

To this day we still don't know if 1% to 99% of the mooing was cows, or Valentin imitating cows6.

Secondly - and that directly refers to Soundcamp's work -, working outside in a farm, in the middle of cows, donkeys, chickens, pigs, and other animals, means constantly being surrounded by their lowing, their braying, their cackling, their grunting. Although it can happen, when focused, to stop hearing the surroundings; having to care for radio microphones, sometimes stuck somewhere in the henhouse, or next

1 Humankind has built quite a lot of very different types of settlements that can attest this.

2 Cow-camping, but in Dutch and with humour.

3 "Circle time" were instituted from the first day on, consisting of all of us standing outside in a circle, to organise the day, ask for help, critics, feedback, ask questions, or inform of progress.

4 But not fever, unfortunately.

5 In opposition with « disorganised » work. More about this can be found in the book "Joyful Militancy : Building Thriving Resistance in Toxic Times", by carla bergman and Nick Montgomery.

6 Note to self : ask Soundcamp if they had any idea of this / if they did hear a difference.

to cows, was also a way to perpetually re-notice animal sounds, animal rhythms, and a possibility to take a break whenever needed to go pet the animals, ... thus reminding us to also un-focus and take a step back in whichever task we were doing. And go pet animals.
All those continuous occasions to take breaks, enjoy downtime, and re-focus (and have a laugh), are a direct consequence of the farm's liveliness and the Living Summer School being only just one part of the activities of the farm as a whole. But, also, replacing the reason of our presence, echoing our inner questioning, made it that much more evident to made decisions, and build.
Nice job today all. The person who won this morning has to create a new game today. Now. ... Who stays the longest on their right foot, wins. ... This can be very long. Then we bounce until the last one stands. Everybody falls.
Maybe we found an answer to existential questions there. Or, maybe we just found one way, there and then, to make sense, and to repair through solidarity. Well « found », really, we just like fun, and liked following the planned games and Stan's ambitions. But maybe having fun and caring is one of the many positions one can have on designing and making sense. Maybe.

An accurate representation of the atmosphere set by a game-led structure : we're all designers or architects, we know we can build something (at some point). But working in Heerlijkheid, within its space and surrounded by its inhabitants, means – quite literally – focusing primarily on what and who's already there. And from this, then we design and build.
Image Credit : Louise Lafage

It really happened.

Image Credit : Miguel Lallana

e a few that you like and we'll run the choice by Emma
About the Author
Toestand is a non-profit organisation based in Brussels. It deals with temporary use of vacant urban spaces by developing inclusive social and cultural dynamics, based on meeting, action and creation.

New situations to learn

Hello everyone, my name is Emma, and I work as a youth worker for Toestand. The name of the organisation itself, "Toestand", holds a dual meaning: on one hand, it could be translated as "situation", as in "express your situation", while on the other, it means "get out of your situation", moving beyond it. Our aim is to create new situations by reactivating vacant buildings and spaces in Brussels. I'm not going to talk about empty buildings, because that happens everywhere. Our philosophy is not just to fill empty spaces, but to shape meaningful community interactions within them.
Rather than simply addressing the issue of vacant spaces—a reality in cities everywhere—we focus on what happens inside them. Our philosophy centers on creating community and giving back space to people who deserve it in a diverse city like Brussels. We celebrate this diversity with our approach, which is always bottom-up. We do not impose a fixed program; instead, we identify and collaborate with partners in the local neighborhoods. Our approach is: "Hey! Would you like to do bike repair? Come here! We have a place for you and you can do bike repairs here without having to pay anything for it". Additionally, we can seek state funding together, to further sustain initiatives.
For me, the greatest value of the Toestand initiative lies in the fact that it creates places where people can simply be. And be as you want to be. These are not spaces driven by consumption, unlike other spaces, but by participation. Not having a programme also plays towards this idea. If someone wants to build a chicken coop, we do it together, regardless of whether anyone knows how. The process itself is what matters.
I work in an alternative youth house, one of six projects we have in Brussels. It became evident early on that the neighborhood lacked spaces for young people—many of whom do not attend school and have very difficult home situations marked by violence and systemic exclusion. These youth are often victims of racism and police violence, yet they have nowhere to go, they don't have space. To invite youth that come by we tell them that there is no obligation to participate, but they are welcome. By creating an environment where young people are not pressured but are invited to engage on their own terms, the project evolves in an organic and natural way.
Our focus is on the process rather than predefined results. This often makes securing state funding difficult, as our project is not

about numbers, which are often a priority for funding opportunities. Our model is truly based on the process, not on numbers alone; it requires time and building trust. That's also why our model of youth work is rare in Brussels, Flanders, and Belgium, even though it serves the very communities that need it most.
We really try to do things that are radical and accessible, you don't need to come to Toestand and have an idea about what your skills are or what is your value for the community. No, this will be found together and this means that any person who approaches us needs time and space to answer these questions. We don't provide answers. We don't push the youth we work with, we just stand behind them and if they need us we're there. This makes the process a long labour of building confidence.
We also embrace failure as a crucial part of growth. Society often pressures individuals to succeed, but in reality, failure is a big achievement in life, it is essential to the learning process. By removing the fear of failure, we create a space where young people can experiment, take risks, and build confidence.
Everything we do is free, made possible through various projects, including international collaborations like Erasmus+. In our international exchanges we come together with people from different countries and we create a community space, which has a different meaning for every country, so projects are really diverse. When we realise a project we do work that is really needed and in this way labour becomes very horizontal, everyone who joins is free to make decisions and we always say "do it yourself and the doer decides".
An initiative in Brussels that we started is Limbo which is a space where we collect free materials and everyone can pick them up for free. This is an important project for us to promote a culture of reuse and resource-sharing while bringing people together. People with different backgrounds and interests need materials and through this space they can also meet and have a chance to discuss and get to know each other. I got to know a lot of people over the years. At Toestand we celebrate diversity in life, in all forms. Everyone. I think, as it should be. A social worker wants diversity, wants inclusivity. That's why radical accessibility is important to us. If we truly want to have diversity and inclusivity, we must actively reach out to those who need it most. We don't wait for people to find us; we take our initiatives to them.
We visit large apartment buildings with a crazy old go-kart, with the kids, to greet residents, because those in need rarely seek us out on their own.We really try to reach those in need, by going to them, they will not come to us by themselves. That's why we had this one project.
Most of our projects are temporary, as we only get temporary use of spaces through agreements with property owners, the city, or multiple owners. We rely heavily on direct action and do not claim to have all the solutions. Instead, we focus on collective action on doing things together. It's important for the people we reach to forget the context and external influence.
We create moments and situations where people can get to know each other. And maybe, if you feel safe and I feel safe, then we can talk about things and create something. Putting yourself into concrete action projects really works as we have often experienced with Toestand.

Another particular project that comes to mind is Little Guy which ran for nine years, I wish you could have all seen it—it was so, so crazy. We managed to create a real hub for an incredibly diverse range of people—from those fleeing war to corporate professionals. It brought together unexpected constellations of individuals, united by shared experiences such as playing ping pong or practicing Tai Chi, without even knowing each other's names.
I think the strength of our organisation, and also the reason why we keep doing what we do, is because the city is begging for places where you can just be — where you don't have to think all the time about consuming. And I believe to create these spaces that bottom-up is the only way to go. You have to start by talking to the people, to create something together. And you don't have to impose your own values, the values of the organisation, on the people.

Link to images: ConstructLab - Jan Striker

About the Author

After several years working as a construction manager in Basel (CH), Jan Stricker joined the international Constructlab network in 2020. His interests lie in addressing complex challenges in construction and residential renovation, planning, coordinating, and executing temporary projects within the broader context of urban practice. As an urban facilitator, Jan Stricker has collaborated with European architectural practices, gaining extensive experience in collaborative and socially responsible design.

His collaborations include practices and collectives such as Sqadra (CH), Popticum (DE), Atelier le Balto (DE), ZKU (DE), Paredes Meias (PRT), raumlaborberlin (DE), Floating University (DE), and 019 Gent (BE). He has contributed to projects commissioned by institutions including Radialsystem (DE), La Cuisine Centre d'Art et de Design (FR), the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg (DE), Technische Universität Berlin (DE), ArchPlus (DE), Kiosk of Solidarity (DE), and Hochschule für Gestaltung und Kunst Basel (CH).

It will always be a collaboration Constructlab's form of organization and how it fosters informal learning

Constructlab is the description of a collaborative spatial and artistic practice that builds on an interdisciplinary and participatory approach. The way Constructlab is organized reflects the idea of adapting concepts, sharing a common vision for implementing projects, contributing, and fostering further development of the network. It is a balance between an individual and collective dynamic, with a variable number of contributors, moving centers, and landing grounds. Today Constructlab has four core active associations in Belgium, France, Germany, and Switzerland and many hotspots in surrounding countries - Portugal, Italy, Sweden and the Netherlands - allowing for the network to expand, mingle, and exchange while at the same time being rooted in several localized territories. Local collectives within an international network are connected through a common idea of how to implement a project and how to support each other's interests. To foster informal learning, Constructlab creates projects for an (ex)change of knowledge in different fields such as architecture, social design, and artistic and spatial practices in urban contexts.

The composition of a project team is always fluid, varying from one project to the other. Each team is uniquely formed and adapted to address specific needs, skills, and competencies. There are no fixed rules or predefined job descriptions. Starting a project involves assembling a new team, including members from the existing network, collaborators from new partnerships, participants recruited through open calls, or volunteers supporting on-site. Participating in a project is always about searching for a role, taking over a task, having an impulse to contribute, bringing in ideas, and looking for people to support each other. Inviting someone to participate in a project is always connected with trust and expectations. It is about figuring out, searching for common ground, dealing with conflicts, and solving problems. All these processes foster social skills. The fact that the team and contributors change with every project makes it interesting and educational. So to say, the way Constructlab is built and organized is meant to facilitate collaboration with each other individually. Reliability and trust are requirements for this kind of work. Autonomous and creative connections among people and the environment has a significant potential to have a positive and supportive impact on us as individuals and how we act together. By building projects and addressing these aspects, informal learning naturally shapes the entire process.

Social interaction -> Create a project, live and care together, deal with the outcome, and process the impact of the project.

Cultural and intellectual exchange -> Learn from each other's backgrounds, cross borders, transnational understanding, share skills and manuals, (ex) change knowledge.

Commerce and trade -> Find a way to enable an economic basis of trust and shared outcome.

Physical and intimate relationships -> Build friendships and relate to places and local dynamics, communities, cultures, and environments.

Working and living together

How to generate the need to act as a team

After assembling a team, preparing and outlining a project, the moment of inhabiting a space is when everything comes together — improvising, building and getting in contact with the local environment. A functional group dynamic becomes crucial when expressing goals and aspirations for a spatial intervention while sharing and respecting local dynamics. In the group dynamics you can foresee negotiating unexpected challenges, reacting to desires, defining goals, or surprising each other with a simple favor. This dynamic, carried through a limited period of time, breaks the daily routine and is fruitful. It is about building a culture, a democratic platform where living and working melt together, and an informal way of exchange emerges , enabling collaborators to get inspired by each other.

„Parallel to the construction of the basic structures for collective living, the community builds its own identity and negotiates the

information

rules of the group, distributing roles and tasks, rhythms and functions, logistics and missions. The first mode of governance is based on the experience of the members, constituting a force of proposition, and is able to evolve within the duration of the projects."
Joanne Pouzenc, Convivial Ground. Jovis, 2023, p. 25.

Constructlab's practice is about generating spaces and atmospheres where collaboration becomes an exchange of knowledge and skills, where cohabitation is influenced and shaped by the initial situation, used as a starting point of the project, where time and outcome are tied to capacity and to a specific need, and where creativity and playful interactions are fostered and supported. It is a setting influenced by informal learning, where the shape of the project and the network itself builds on each individuals' know-how, shared and created by a group acting within a specific place and context. The aim is to try to leave space to be filled, without definitions. A collaboration thus becomes an attitude and the skeleton of every decision-making process. Opinions are therefore formed collectively, not through arguing in endless discussions but listening to and encouraging each other's experiences.

Conclusion
Implementing a project and developing a way to express an artistic position, attitude, or desire is a continuous process. As a network of individuals and local collectives, Constructlab develops a common idea of a creative approach to address and form values. An informal, natural way of evolving the network happens by shaping and adapting, adding and reactivating experiences from members and participants.
The network's framework, together with the attitude of each project, highlights the need for creativity to solve specific problems, find answers but also to leave questions behind. Being open-minded means being interested in people, their skills, know-how, and their methods of experimenting and prototyping. Therefore, a learning environment needs to be built where mistakes are allowed. Trust is the basis for getting influenced, and time is needed to reflect, adapt, and apply changes.
Informal learning is a never-ending process and is happening every day. Using it as an expression to frame projects is interesting and can subvert points of view. Everything we do while working together, living together, caring, performing togetherness, and perceiving the environment can relate to informal interaction and communication. Evolving an open culture of exchange where everyone's input is welcome makes every project more interesting and unique. The moment you leave the comfort zone, act as a team, and include all different kinds of skills is the moment you start an informal exchange.

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Caption - © Clo Catalan (2024). Collective effort
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About the Author

I am Jesse Torenbosch. Over the past years I have been a literature student, an English teacher, a pedagogue, and the last years I have dedicated myself to being a PhD researcher at KU Leuven. I have been a part of the European SoLiDi project, in which I worked on the project 'Solidarity in diversity within youth work. Towards an ethnography-based public pedagogy'. In this project I analyzed which characteristics of Flemish youth work strengthen non-formal vocational education.

In this research period I also contributed to a project on entrepreneurial education and skills within Flemish youth work, and I wrote multiple articles and contributions, some of which are still under review or development as of the time of writing. From next year onwards, I hope to finish my doctorate.

However, beyond all that, I am simply very interested in contributing to non-formal education as both a researcher and a person, as these spaces become more and more important. Skills, practices, and conversations that have disappeared from formal schools, have found their way back into non-formal educational practices. From repair café's and public studio's, to makerspaces and community gardens; non-formal educational practices have shown that they are resilient, important, and above all: transformative spaces for the people who work in them.

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Educational Labour: how obstinacy can help non-formal labour practices.

Informal education has an ambivalent position in relation to formal education. On one hand, informal education is not usually taken seriously as an educational environment, yet on the other hand, informal education is expected to take up a myriad of serious issues. Issues, that in turn, originate from an equally diverse variety of sources, such as policy-makers, parents, participants, and even institutions of formal education (schools, universities; see Baldridge, 2018; 2020; Torenbosch et al., 2024; Torenbosch & Vandenabeele, 2023b). Due to these pressures and demands, practitioners of informal education often have difficulties in articulating exactly what is educational about their own particular practices. This is especially striking for non-formal education, since – even though the terms "informal" and "non-formal" are used interchangeably – the term is often used to denote the intentional educational character of social practices, as opposed to the incidental learning that may happen in other contexts (Rogers, 2004). Yet, for many practitioners, the ambivalence and uncertainty around their own educational practices makes it difficult to create sustainable educational partnerships and practices both in and outside of their own fields.

However, this is not to say that there is no possibility for informal educators to create unique and emancipatory educational practices. This possibility of educationally experimenting through labour practices with public concerns is what this short paper aims to explicate as it develops an heuristic device for obstinacy in (Flemish) youth work. By heuristic device, I mean to say that this device can be used as a method in order to make relevant choices in your practices and to use the relevant data you already have. In other words, this device can be used to make decisions without practitioners needing to collect "more" data. After all, practitioners already know many things about their practices and this device utilizes that knowledge.

Thus, this device, which contains three types of questions youth workers – but also other social workers – should ask themselves in order to emancipate and articulate their own educational practices in the landscape of both formal and non-formal education. This device is based on research done between February 2022 and August 2024 in Flemish youth work. It can be used by practitioners to decide who to work with (e.g. other organizations or partners) or when to take up certain public issues or apply for certain streams of funding. Additionally, this method can be used during reflection moments, meetings, or training moments in order to help practitioners articulate what the educational dynamic of their labour practice is. In doing so, this method for finding obstinacy can be a valuable emancipatory tool for informal educational practices under pressure.

Youth practices as ecologies

With this method, I approach practices as ecologies in flux in which the practitioners have specific ways of relating to a practice by speaking, doing things, and relating to the world around them in ways that are tied to that practice (see: Kemmis, 2019; Kemmis et al., 2012; Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008). Furthermore, these ecologies are not only made up of people (practitioners), but also of a constantly moving combination of resources (monetary and material), political and social influences, and cultural arrangements that come together in a practice-site. In other words, in a practice the arrangements and the "ways of relating" are constantly changing.

Despite this continuous flow, practices are not arbitrary. Behind the actions in everyday practice lies a complex interplay of many influences. This also means that there are actions within a practice that may seem incomprehensible or pointless to an outsider, yet they have their indispensable meaning or purpose within the practice. Furthermore, because practices are ecologies, one action within a practice influences and makes

the next step in the practice possible (Kemmis et al., 2012). To give a small example: building a stage for youth to perform on, lays a foundation that makes different kinds of work possible, such as making music, doing drag shows, or maintaining the stage itself. The practitioners, the "ways of relating", and the materials that then come together, we will refer to as "actors", as each of these has an effect on the way a practice flows.

Negt and Kluge: Labour and community

The concept of obstinacy [Eigensinn] is based on the work of Alexander Kluge (b. 1932), a famous German filmmaker, and Oskar Negt (1934-2024), a famous German pedagogue and social work researcher. In their work (e.g. 2023), Negt and Kluge have focused on obstinacy of labour and social practices. The aim of their theory of obstinacy is to allow practitioners to navigate the world in the best interest of their labour practices, rather than to be the instrument of other practices. For example, to be a recruiting tool for another organization or to be a PR-instrument to make a business look good.

However, before we can discuss how obstinacy can serve as an emancipatory method, we need to discuss how Negt and Kluge see labour practices as far more concrete, educational, and emancipatory than we speak of nowadays (2023). When they speak about labour practices, they do not only speak about practices that earn someone money, or worse yet, practices that aim to make individuals into consumers. This is, sadly, the way that most conversations about labour and education have historically gone (see: Torenbosch & Vandenabeele, 2023a).

In fact, for Negt and Kluge, labour practices are never purely individual. Rather, they emphasize how labour practices create a community as for Negt and Kluge, labour is something that always occurs between two or more people. This community emerges because individuals work on materials together to create a product. This product can be physical or mental, but what is an important characteristic according to these two authors is that a product of labour is always unpredictable to an extent. After all, if people work with materials together there will be improvisation, friction, and discussion between the materials, as well as between the individuals themselves.

Thus, in labour practices a collective of humans is created through creation of products. These products transcend individual wants and actions of participants. For example, building an art-studio together also transfers with it the responsibility to maintain and take care of that studio. Thus, even if individuals do (and will) not always want to take care of this studio, the responsibility to do so now exists in the practice. Other examples include, but are certainly not limited to: taking care of chickens, making pizzas, and helping with homework but also the creation of a protest method or political mission. Regardless of what is created, as soon as a product is created through shared labour it becomes part of a practice and carries with it a call within that practice to be responsible for it. Unsurprisingly, then, the shared creation of this product is always particular to a specific practice. What I want to elaborate on in this short essay is how this approach of Negt and Kluge makes it possible to understand non- formal education as labour practices where education is contingent but not "non-committal". That is to say, even though its products are unpredictable, labour itself involves a commitment by individuals to engage in working and living together with others. At the same time, through this commitment, these individuals are collaboratively exploring what it means to live together in a good way.

Therefore, the possibility of sustaining a community of labour is the particular quality of labour practices for Negt and Kluge. This requires that a practice allows for practitioners to constantly make, remake, and sustain their practice. This is a process that Negt and Kluge call 'self-regulation' [Selbstregulierung] and that I similarly called "ecologies in flux". In this way, labour practices allow their practitioners to contribute and grow within a community of labour. This also means that within this framework, we can see that non-formal educational practices are labour practices pur sang. After all, within these practices people work together in order to transform themselves, their lifeworld, and their communities.

What is obstinacy?

Yet, as Negt and Kluge note, and as I have also noted in the introduction, in the modern landscape of non-formal education, there are often demands placed on both individuals and on practices. Demands to be efficient, profitable, or, as one of my respondents noted, to 'write out certificates' (24-05-2024). When these outside demands invade a practice, two reactions can happen. One of these reactions is to surrender and give in to demands. This can lead to being instrumentalized by other practices, a well-known problem in youth work and non-formal education, such as becoming a recruiting tool (e.g. Coussée, 2006; Torenbosch et al., 2024). In this sense, the practice stops being self-regulating and instead turns into an extension of the demanding practice. However, what can also occur when such one-sided demands are made is obstinacy. In this sense, obstinacy is not a "natural" characteristic that practices generate by themselves. In a purely self-regulating practice, there is no need for obstinacy as the practice will constantly make and remake itself in search for forms of labour and education. However, obstinacy emerges out of a bitter need to protect the self-regulation of one's practice and it expresses itself as a form of protest 'against expropriation' (Negt & Kluge,

2023 p. 292) that originates from a care for the materials, people, and "ways of relating" in one's practice.

Obstinacy, then, occurs as a reaction from either an individual towards their environment, or the reaction of a labour practice to the demands of society or other practices. Yet, Negt and Kluge again differentiate between forms of obstinacy: a "childish" expression of obstinacy and what I will call a "caring" expression of obstinacy. While they argue that practices should be obstinate when it serves the community of labour in the practices themselves (i.e. caring), this does not mean that practices should simply refuse to do things only because they "do not want to" (i.e. childish). In Figure 1, I note a pathway that practitioners can take to think about how to be obstinate in their practices. I do not mean to suggest that practitioners should always say no, but sometimes they might have to in order to protect those products that really matter in their practices.

Figure 1: A pathway to obstinacy

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Image1: Caption - © Jesse Torenbosch (2024). An example of labour in youth work.

Image2: Caption - © Jesse Torenbosch (2024). The inside of a youth house.

Image3: Caption - © Jesse Torenbosch (2024). Working together on something new.

Image4: Caption - © Jesse Torenbosch (2024). A pathway to obstinacy (figure 1).

Image5: Caption - © Jesse Torenbosch (2024). Different contexts matter.

information

Suggested Bibliography by Jesse Torenbosch

Short introduction

I was asked to give suggestions for texts or movies that could help inspire non-formal educators in their practices. Especially texts that, perhaps, non-formal educators themselves would less quickly come across in their search for new insights.

After a long time of thinking, I decided to suggest only texts because a) Any movie I would suggest would be a documentary and I think that you (as non-formal educators) are more likely to come across those, and b) because documentaries are, by their nature, more open-ended than a text that is arguing for something, it might be more difficult to find a link to your practices in these movies.

As such, I will suggest texts in 3 categories:

Readings on the non-formal and formal: These texts deal with discussions on what non-formal education means and how to conceive of education when it does not happen in school.

Inspiring practices: These texts contain examples of different kinds of non-formal practices and contain a language that can be used to think about one's own practice

Inspiring language and thought: These texts, though a bit more abstract, are fundamental philosophical texts on education itself. These texts can help inspire the reader to think what education means in their practice and how and why it is important.

Furthermore, if you, dear reader, are interested in doing your own research into non-formal education, a website I can heartily recommend is: https://infed.org. This is a rich database, with a wealth of inspiring texts that, at the time of writing, gets actively updated and some of the foremost experts in the field of non-formal education contribute to it.

Of course, as a final note, this is not an exhaustive list of texts and the texts I have selected are texts that I have, personally, found very inspiring in thinking about non-formal education. Therefore, it would be good to keep in mind that I'm a pedagogue (not a social researcher, for example) and only human, so there are certainly more inspiring texts outside of this list. Without further ado, these are my suggestions:

1. Readings on the non-formal and formal:

Rogers, A. (2007). Non-formal education: Flexible schooling or participatory education? (Vol. 15). Springer Science & Business Media.

Though this is an older book, the discussion in it feels as timely as ever. In a brilliant historical reading on the, by now, decades-old search of non-formal education to find its own identity, Alan Rogers manages to also capture how and when non-formal education matters. This book also contains descriptions of many debates around non-formal education that are still ongoing today, so it is an especially worthwhile read if you do not yet know what already has or has not been said about non-formal education before.

Kelava, P., & Žagar, I. Ž. (Eds.). (2014). From formal to non-formal: Education, learning and knowledge. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

This book contains a selection of texts by various contributors. Going back to texts discussing non-formal education in Ancient Greece, to case studies of community learning in Portugal, to discussions of what professionals need in order to have their practices be validated by the world around them. If you are wondering on how to grow more professionally as a non-formal educator, this book is a very inspiring read.

Tummons, J. (2022). Power and Possibility: Adult Education in a Diverse and Complex World: Edited by Fergal Finnegan and Bernie Grummel, Leiden, Brill Sense, 2020, 200 pp., Open Access (DOI: https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004413320) ISBN 978-90-04-41330-6.L:

An excellent selection of texts that have been made open access and are thus open to anyone to read online. While some of the texts do speak more to formal education, a lot of the texts also speak to non-formal education in today's world. These texts especially ask questions about social justice, emancipation, and power in education and what it means to engage adults in education today.

Torenbosch, J. A., Darling, J., & Vandenabeele, J. (2024). Inexhaustible education: on supplementarity and a youth work "yet-to-come". Ethics and Education, 19(2), 143-167.

This text, written by me with colleagues, is, I think, an interesting exploration of the difficulty that non-formal education has in defining its educational contributions to the life of people. By using Flemish youth work as an example, I make the argument that non-formal education should start relating itself to what education is, rather than to "formal education" (or "schooling").

2. Inspiring practices

Khasnabish, A. (2020). Ecologies of the radical imagination. Information, Communication & Society, 23(12), 1718-1727.

In this article, Alex Khasnabish tries to put to words what it means to imagine things through a practice. This is a good read if one wishes to understand how, through action, new thoughts can come to exist.

Schildermans, H., Vandenabeele, J., Vlieghe, J., & Zamojski, P. (2020). Studying in the Superdiverse City: System_D and the Challenge of Solidarity in Brussels. Studies in Philosophy and Education, 39, 257-268.

A case study of what it means to study something in a non-formal context, by examining a film festival in a marginalised area in Brussels. This article asks fascinating questi-

ons about the relationship between politics and education, and studying and learning.

Biesta, G. (2012). Becoming public: Public pedagogy, citizenship and the public sphere. Social & Cultural Geography, 13(7), 683-697.
This well-known text is about the relationship between pedagogy (i.e. the study of education) and the public sphere (e.g. the streets or public squares, but also bars, or libraries), which also includes "the public", which are the people for which public education is intended. This text wonders what it means for a practice to truly be public education, and what would be needed for public education to not be, for example, indoctrination or simply instruction on how to behave.

Swillens, V., Decuypere, M., Vandenabeele, J., & Vlieghe, J. (2023). Towards a post-humanist design for educational inclusion. Proposing a study pedagogy for litter polluted critical zones. European journal for Research on the Education and Learning of Adults, 14(3), 379-395.
Though the title would suggest an abstract text, the text itself is a carefully designed method on how to deal with critical educational issues in urgent situations (such as environmental crises). The author draws upon their research in designing an educational intervention in a small fishing village in Flanders in order to make an argument for a different approach to social and political questions in communities
3. Inspiring language and thought
Freire, p. (1970). Pedagogy of the Oppressed. (any version)
Published in 1968 by Brazilian Pedagogue Paulo Freire, this book is one of the greatest works in the field of education of all time. Freire, who was responsible for a movement against traditional and oppressive education brilliantly expands in this book on what it means for education to be emancipatory. Especially his ideas on taking education out of schools and into communities has been influential and is particularly inspiring. The ideas of Freire are actually one of the driving forces behind the rise and acknowledgement of non-formal education, and as such are good to return to in order to understand with what language he managed to convince so many people. As a bonus: His work has been translated in many languages, so you might find a copy in your native tongue.
John Dewey (1938). Experience and Education. (any version)
This work, written by another titan within the field of education, is very inspiring if you want to understand what an educational experience is. Nowadays, we are often quick to jump to questions of utility (what did I get out of the experience), but Dewey challenges us to think about education as more than just a purely personal experience that only does something for us, and instead asks us to consider our environment, community, the tools we use, and the society we live in. This book is especially interesting because, in spite of its age, today it would be considered radical to speak about education in this way. So, if you are interested in what education could be, this book is one of the best choices. Additionally, like Freire, Dewey has been translated globally, so finding his work in your language should be possible.

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Link to images: BONJOUR - Paul Auboin

About the Author

I'm Paul Auboin, recently graduated as an urban engineer & architect. My practice is meant to bring together and foster collaboration between multiple and often opposing stakeholders (kids, teenagers, public and private institutions). I like to think of spontaneity as a real opportunity, finding these experiences often very constructive.

The past two years were rich in discoveries, encounters and hands-on apprenticeships and workshops. I decided to do a gap year because I felt I needed to. I'd been surrounded by the cult of education for 6 years already, the social pressure to finish my studies as quickly as possible so that I could work, but for what? for whom? for what purpose? I had to answer these questions, discover other practices and shake up my own. I had the chance to meet a lot of inspiring people with whom I've been able to spend some pleasant and creative moments. I participated in workshops and projects such as the Mood for Wood collective, weaving a community carpet for Milano Arch Week, creating an outdoor kitchen on Lake Como and writing a few contributions for a fanzine called La Tourbe. The atmosphere and synergy of these collaborative and community-based experiences really allowed me to realize how much I could flourish in these cooperative environments. Sharing and learning from others 'practices showed me that I could fully invest myself in different projects while adapting and learning quickly. All of those experiences motivated me to initiate the BONJOUR project.

Towards the Creation of a Place of Conviviality, for and by the Residents of Îlot 27 in Pantin, a Participatory and Experimental Approach

The sharing of knowledge and new experiences forms the foundation of a collective commitment that naturally leads to transformative processes, thereby creating opportunities to evolve our spaces and daily lives. There is no longer a single decision-maker; the space becomes a collective work, in the true sense of the word, an art of construction, an aesthetic object, a composition of fragments. Often, it is necessary to show things in order to change habits.

I am Paul, 26 years old, recently graduated from EIVP, Paris, as an urban engineer from the city of Paris and from ENSA, Paris La Villette, as an architect.

Since the beginning of my studies in architecture and urban engineering, I have accumulated knowledge to enrich and develop both personal and professional projects. The knowledge economy, as defined by Idriss Aberkane 1 in the context of biomimicry, argues that knowledge is infinite, unlike material resources. Knowledge multiplies when it is shared, in contrast to material goods: "If I give you €20, it is no longer mine. But if I give you knowledge, it is still mine." This perspective of positive-sum exchanges fuels my ideas and inspirations, just as the experiences of neighborhood residents, site managers, and collaborative and creative encounters enrich my analogical thinking, which is essential in the work of an architect.

In a society where rigid norms and architecture sometimes seem to lose their inclusivity and freedom, it is crucial not to give in to resignation. It is necessary to overcome the fears and constraints imposed upon us. This is how BONJOUR was born, as a bold and necessary response to current challenges. This simple word embodies meetings and exchanges, symbolizing inclusiveness, curiosity, and sharing. This is invariably how we, as human beings, initiate a conversation, a thought, or a relationship. This diploma project advocates for participatory, creative, and inclusive architecture, where every participant, whether an architect or not, contributes to the co-creation of our common spaces.

Context

I faced the necessity of involving "non-architects" in an experimental process in a neighborhood near the Paris suburbs — Îlot 27, Pantin 93500 — affected by a project from the ANRU (National Agency for Urban Renewal). This public organization funds and supports local authorities and social housing providers in implementing large-scale renovation projects in the most vulnerable neighborhoods, often with procedures that are standardized and poorly adapted, despite the vastly different contexts.

Directly approaching the residents about the renovation project was not going to be welcomed by everyone. My perspective was not to directly favor one side over the other and my empathy has fostered an impartial and cooperative approach, which I aimed to apply here for the common good, in a social sense.

Thus, I aimed to start giving a voice to the residents on one side and initiate the city's participatory strategy on the other. In a way to integrate myself without being too intrusive, I adopted more inclusive (addressing especially kids and elderly) and plastic methods, where the architect commits to understanding the environment by sharing and creating residents' experiences of the neighborhood. Together, we created the first element of this urban transformation: a place of conviviality. Its impacts remain uncertain and experimental, but I hope it will lead to mutual awareness.

Aware of the daily life and the fatalistic atmosphere experienced by many residents of this neighborhood, who are affected by

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the lack of communication about these urban projects, I wanted to make the residents feel at the core of the action. Understanding and paying close attention to this situation directly influenced the stance I wanted to develop, driven by the need to invent and implement “anti-fatalistic,” mobilizing, and participatory approaches.

Tools

Through three participatory workshops on Îlot 27, focusing on co-production, shared diagnosis, and collective reflection, I aimed to help residents understand the changes in their neighborhood and the importance of becoming active in shaping their daily environment. We were constantly re-evaluating the tools developed, engaging in collective reflections, sharing scenarios and conclusions. The goal was to extend this approach beyond the course requirements for final presentation by implementing the actual construction of the BONJOUR Pavilion with the involvement of the residents, thereby serving as an experimental step in the ongoing process of transformation of the neighborhood. Finding meaning in an ideologically impactful project was much more important than simply fulfilling the educational contract. My tutors, Bendicht Weber and Valentina Moimas, allowed me this freedom, whilst emphasizing the need to carry out the experiment with a critical mind to ensure rigor within this essentially intuitive approach.

Working alone on the project, I had to establish local partnerships and collaborations to make the process more impactful and meaningful. Local actors, including a fashion brand, a multidisciplinary collective, and a solidarity organization, provided significant support by supplying materials for recycling in the workshops and pavilion construction, such as fabrics, plants, wood, and recycled materials. The collaboration with the local projects house and the youth center facilitated communication, initiated participation from groups of children and teenagers, and secured the use of local spaces. The involvement of Rachel Rouzaud, architect, teacher, and artist, offered residents a different participatory experience, engaging diverse reflections and fostering equality.This first workshop focused on co-programming and the creation of a rug, co-designed to represent the district. Our collaboration was part of her on-going project “A Grand Tapestry for Greater Paris,” winner of FAIRE 2023, a program supported by the Pavillon de l’Arsenal de Paris, the Caisse des Dépôts, and the City of Paris. The tapestry served as both a story-telling medium and a means of achieving the workshop objective which was to create greater inclusiveness regarding the conversations about architecture and urbanism.

This hands-on approach proved to be extremely fruitful and was articulated through other unique creations, such as atmospheric collages, paintings, fabric patchworks, and architectural models. This diversity allowed the same topics to be explored through different art forms, creating a true dialogue. These tools are particularly accessible to children, who have such creative imaginations, greatly inspiring me as I develop my approach as an architect.

How and why are an architect’s skills necessary in a process where people, who are usually passive, suddenly become mobilized and able to act as contributors and decision-makers?

I believed in the importance of creating moments of conviviality and dialogue where residents can express their needs and aspirations. The chosen mediums (artistic, visual, diverse, and inclusive) play a fundamental role, not only in gathering valuable information to guide scenarios but also in strengthening the sense of community and belonging.

Controversial Process

Going beyond the course expectations, the initial decisions impacted the organization of the rest of the process and structured a clear and rational schedule. This process evolved through different stages that allowed me to establish a relationship of trust with some of the residents. This dynamic approach was a real discovery, contrasting with the often tedious or uninspiring methods of consultation and citizen participation. The issue of time remains central in this relatively short process, where even continuous personal investment is not always sufficient to have a significant impact on an entire neighborhood.

The formal creation of the BONJOUR association, followed by the collaboration with local stakeholders, firmly roots the project in a virtuous, community-driven, and citizen-empowerment dynamic. The associated efforts have helped me establish credibility in my role as a young architect and navigate the administrative challenges of the professional world. This iterative process culminated in a final workshop, held after my final presentation, with the co-construction of a conviviality pavilion out of reused materials from local factories or donated by construction sites. This polyvalent pavilion serves as an experiment and an invitation to use and reinvest in the plaza. Though intended as temporary, its sudden presence sparks a collective awareness about sharing and using common spaces, whatever form they may take.

The project demonstrates the possibility of starting from a situation where residents are passive and turning it into one where they can invent, create, and shape their environment. This project aimed to show them the positive impact their everyday experiences and local knowledge could have on decision-making, which is still too top-down to help create a more inclusive and adaptable future. This approach also strengthens community res-

ilience and project sustainability, as solutions developed together are usually better suited to and more accepted by the local population.

“This experience allowed me to rise above the anger and disappointment I felt towards the decision-makers and to focus on the rare opportunity it gave me to successfully lead a real project.”

The project confronted me with the challenges implied in working with public organizations on the one hand and the benefits of involving those directly impacted by urban projects on the other hand. In a struggling neighborhood, initially entrenched in passivity, I am proud to have been able to autonomously lead the residents in creating a convivial space of their own, which was completed in only four months, and to have obtained the support of local companies in the process.

This project takes an inclusive, participatory, and dynamic approach. It immerses itself in the place, its history, flaws, and customs, drawing on the most unique and valuable resource: the residents.

This text was produced as part of Paul Auboin’s diploma project at ENSA Paris-La Villette 01/02/24 -08/07/24

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Elisa Silva (2024, janvier), Engadin Art Talks forum : Un-learning in messy fields.Image Credits

Caption - © Author’s name (Year). Title. URL (if relevant).
p2-Paul 1, Alain Savard - Urban walk and exploratory map with local kids.
p2-Paul 2, Paul Auboin - View of the conviviality pavilion from the top of the social housing towers.
p2-Paul 3, Paul Auboin - Local children playing in the pavilion.
p2-Paul 4, Anthony Vajou - Co-production with residents of architectural models of a common space for the neighbourhood. Workshop 2
p2-Paul 5, Alain Savard - Co-production of the neighbourhood rug with Rachel Rouzaud.

About the Author
Jonas is a social-cultural entrepreneur and bicycle technician with extensive experience in research, development, and project management. He has built broad expertise in network and partnership development, policy planning, advocacy, and lobbying. His passion lies in creating valuable and impactful projects that make a difference in local communities. With a focus on entrepreneurship, he has developed various initiatives that support young people in discovering and developing their entrepreneurial competencies. He works from an informal and non-traditional learning context, providing youth with the space to grow at their own pace and on their own terms.

The Power of Informal Learning Contexts: Entrepreneurial Action as a Framework for Competency Development in Youth

In a rapidly changing world, where traditional educational systems often fail to provide enough space for personal development and the discovery of one’s talents, informal learning and education offer a powerful alternative. Haven, an organization focused on supporting young people, uses entrepreneurial action not as an end goal, but as a valuable tool – a method, framework, and approach – to assist and guide young people in their growth. The focus here is not on starting businesses or achieving profit, but on developing skills that can help youth in their daily lives, work, and future.

Entrepreneurial action as a framework for personal growth
In the informal learning contexts offered by Haven, entrepreneurial action is not seen as the endpoint but as a powerful means to develop an entrepreneurial mindset in youth. Through DIY and learn-by-practice approaches, young people are given the chance to turn ideas into action, experiment, fail, and try again. Instead of being confined by rigid structures, they are encouraged to think actively, solve problems, and creatively find solutions. The entrepreneurial framework offers them the space to develop these skills, which not only strengthen them as potential entrepreneurs but also as individuals in other areas of life. The strength of these informal learning contexts lies in the fact that young people are not limited by formal requirements or expectations. They have the freedom to develop their own ideas and test them, enabling them to build independence, self-confidence, and creative thinking. Entrepreneurial action is used here as a method to challenge, support, and guide youth in their personal development
A ’community of practice’ for entrepreneurial action
Haven collaborates with youth workers and youth organizations to develop a community of practice where young people can learn from each other, from mentors, and from professionals in the entrepreneurship field.

This creates a valuable network in which knowledge sharing, inspiration, and collaboration are central. By involving youth workers in this process, Haven strengthens the effectiveness of the support young people receive. Youth workers learn how to apply entrepreneurial action as a methodology, enabling them to better guide youth in their personal and professional development.

This approach allows Haven not only to support youth as entrepreneurs but also to equip them with skills that make them stronger as active, self-aware citizens in society.

Local and Flemish reach for greater impact

Haven offers an accessible and low-barrier approach to competency development, both at the local and Flemish-wide level. This broad reach ensures that young people from various regions have the same opportunity to develop their entrepreneurial competencies. Haven helps lower barriers for youth and gives them the space to experiment and learn in a safe, informal environment.

By not limiting youth to the traditional educational path but allowing them to develop in an informal and non-formal learning context, they are encouraged to explore their own ideas and dreams. This strengthens not only their entrepreneurial competencies but also their self-confidence and ability to deal with challenges.

Professionalization of youth workers as a key factor

In addition to supporting young people, Haven also focuses on the professional development of youth workers. It is important that youth workers have the right tools and knowledge to effectively implement entrepreneurial action as a methodology. By training and equipping youth workers to facilitate a culture of entrepreneurial action, Haven helps them play a more impactful role in the development of youth. This enhances the effectiveness of youth organizations and makes them better equipped to guide youth in their personal growth.

Societal impact of entrepreneurial action as a tool

Although entrepreneurial action is used as a tool within the context of Haven, it also has broader societal impacts. Developing entrepreneurial competencies helps youth not only in their careers but also contributes to their role as active, self-confident, and resilient citizens. This entrepreneurial approach to youth work has the potential to make a local and societal impact by preparing youth for a changing world.

Conclusion

At Haven, entrepreneurial action is not an end goal but a methodology that helps young people develop their personal and professional skills. It provides youth with the tools, framework, and space to experiment, learn, and grow. By leveraging informal learning contexts, youth are encouraged to develop the competencies that make them stronger as individuals who can find their way in the world. Entrepreneurial action thus becomes a valuable tool in the growth of young people.

conversation_panel_session_2.mp3

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Speaker 0: { 0:02 }
All right, let's open up the conversation a little bit. Are there any questions?

Speaker 1:
So all our work spans over time, sometimes it takes very long to create a project. So the question is whether you follow up on the impact you are creating or the youth is creating, whether you somehow systematically try to measure it, reflect on it, or whether this is even important to you, whether it even makes sense to you.

Speaker 5:{ 0:59 }
No, no, no, I don't really. I think we don't really believe in impact making because that again is denying the strength of the process and focusing on what was the result. In the end, if you made a chicken coop that worked, it would be a good result. But if it didn't work, then you learned a lot. And it's the same with numbers.
It's funny because we do have a document where we put figures like "Today we ate 5 hot dogs".

{ 1:43 }
So we kind of have this archive of numbers, but it's never about the amount of projects or actual measurement numbers. I don't really believe in their efficacy in youth work, measuring your impact can destroy the process.

Speaker 5: { 2:16 }
What's important is the personal growth of individual youngsters and of collectives of youngsters, and it's beautiful to give them the recognition. You do not need a formal assessment to see personal growth in others and you.

Speaker 1: { 2:37 }
[Inaudible]

Speaker 5:
Of course, but that's something else. I just don't need numbers to show to politicians that we're doing something good. Because I will tell the youngster "Wow, what you did is crazy." That's the difference.
About this fundings aspect that you mentioned, actually we are not focused on the result aspect. So that's why we're not getting so much funding.

Speaker 1:
So is this value really that strong for you? Like, would you not even try to present some results just to get funding? I mean can you stay very firm in your values — not doing anything commercial?
Speaker 5:
If we want to keep going, we need state money. It's a shame I didn't bring one of our funding files to show how we actually do that.

{ 3:52 }
I think it's very clear in what we write and how we present it to the politicians, and it will never be with numbers. That's why we try to really explain why it's not necessary in the files. And then, because there are not a lot of organizations doing what we do, which is called experimental youth work, we get the money without numbers. Because also they do notice. Politicians do notice, like, "Okay, all these youngsters... yeah, if they're on the streets, they cause more problems than if they're in places like these." So that's why. But it's a very interesting question, because I think in the future it will be necessary. And that's what saddens me.
{ 4:57 }
In our last staff reunion, we were already talking about, okay, maybe we should start...
Speaker 2:
Just to add to that. You recently had a funding application for innovative youth work that you were trying to get. It was a call about vocational education. I think you had eight or nine partners and you had this beautiful educational program you were going to do. But the thing that the funders stumbled over was the fact that you refused to hand out certificates.So nothing else about the proposed program was requested to be changed, but funders really said "No, you need to hand out a certificate."

Speaker 5:
Yeah, we didn't get any money this summer.
Speaker 2:
Simply because they said "No, we don't want to do that." Because the kids you engage with really don't like the idea of getting a certificate for it.
{ 5:58 }
For them, it cheapens what they're doing in the youth house.
Speaker 5:
But maybe to answer your question, that's why with projects like Limbo, where we try to get all the materials and stuff, we made sure that in the summer we did make a pizza oven. Because we had materials we could get for free, you see? But it's not sustainable in the future if you want to do bigger things. So we will have to — I won't say sell our soul, but...
Speaker 3:
Same as in the case of Haven. Johan and Reineke are really on the barricade for us — we had the same discussions or the same talks about our youngsters. It's a discussion you have with your funders too.
Speaker 3:
I wanted to ask a bit about the definition of "community." It was interesting and quite specific that you really asserted this idea that community can only be built through a kind of shared labour. This idea of commoning, I suppose. Whilst, we have this real emergence of identity-based commu-

nity as a way of thinking about community. I suppose from my own perspective, that's queer community. It's about nightlife, it's about pleasure, shared pleasure, as a central experience of community, rather than labour. And I think it's interesting that a lot of what you've spoken about actually does fit into this labour model. It's about building together, constructing together...
{ 7 : 5 8 }
It's about caring for resources together,... I wondered if any of you have experience or a position on nightlife, pleasure, hedonism, identity, ... these other modes around which community might be built? Or whether that doesn't really work? Because when I think about my participation in queer community, it's more like a social network. I don't think it fits into the community in a certain definition, but it could fit into another definition. So just an open question on how we define community and the different kinds that can exist around that.
Speaker 2:
Perhaps, just to jump in, when I say labour, there's a whole list of things. Labour for me isn't just limited to building something with your hands. It's really like you were saying, with the queer community, they're committing themselves to do something, and they're putting effort in. That is also a form of labour.
{ 8 : 5 9 }
I guess the question then is, does it transcend the individual fun, and is there something more that emerges? Or does it, like you said, remain a social network? Even then, that can be a community.
Speaker 6:
Yeah, I don't know. I questioned myself while preparing for today if it's correct in our case. Because we talk about communities and I think in our case it's rather a form of organization. And also trying to bring people together through pleasure. So this togetherness, I think, is definitely part of it, of finding each other, and maybe defining yourself in a certain way by sharing common or similar interests.
{ 9 : 5 6 }
But — is the need there? That's a question I always have in mind. When you do a project, is there a need? Is there maybe also a situation where you have to say "no"? For example, do you look for something you should build? Or maybe you could build? And I think it's often the case that we also fail. From three projects, maybe one is really, like you also mentioned, "Wow, that was a project. The energy was amazing." But out of all these projects, maybe, in the end, something grows. So, sometimes maybe there's not a need to do a project. But you do it, and you don't address the need, then it's not about community. Then it's just... I don't know, maybe a try.
Speaker 7:
Again, reflecting from the perspective of a failed society, I see a lot of talk of "community," but not much about "society." What's happening across the world right now is that communities are getting smaller and smaller, standing up to the notion of society, which has become a bit alien. We're living in a kind of post-utopian world, creating counter-utopias on a much smaller scale, because we can no longer affect the bigger societal utopias.

{11:54}

So we look at donors, politicians — "they." And in a sense, we're no longer in a position to affect society, we're running away from it, trying to save ourselves through communities. But one of the key problems is that if you look at Europe, and how nation states were created, they were created from little solidarity structures like the ones you're doing, that were somehow brought together... and then somehow usurped by the states. So my question is: how do you protect these very precious communities you're creating? How do you link them up in such a way that they create a critical mass — so they can shape society beyond the individual communities? Or... is society a hopeless case?
Speaker 5:
Maybe I want to give an example. For instance, there's this movement that came out of the Toestand project. Because if you look in the book, there's also a lot of images where, for example, we did an action with the little children where we were painting a McDonald's banner and then we put it on a McDonald's, linked to boycotting McDonald's.
{ 1 3 : 5 8 }
And then you do it with the little youngsters, I mean really little, and they ask you, "But why can't I buy a burger?" And you don't give them the burden of society nowadays, because it's not fair. But you start having dialogues. You start talking.
And there's this movement, it's called Free San Cath, held in a public space in Brussels. It was this place with no commercial shops, cafés...
{ 1 5 : 0 0 }
And people came together every Friday on the square, playing football, frisbee, taking chairs from cafés, sitting down, reading a book... And that's what I think of when you ask, does it go further than your own community? It's something we talk about a lot, Toestand is cool, we have these little projects. But what is our effect in the bigger picture? In the city? And for me, if you don't have this, then what are you doing? That's a question for me, personally.
{ 1 5 : 4 4 }
I really believe that community nowadays is the strongest form of rebellion. But you have to take care of the in-between communities. And that's a problem many organizations struggle with, to not be divided. We should all be united to fight something bigger.
The volunteers working for Toe-

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stand, people who did things there, still go to these gatherings at Saint-Cath because they feel like it's a place of relief. It's first of all combined with pleasure, because I just get to see people again, and also I'm doing something I believe in.

{ 1 6 : 5 9 }

You need this form of "I identify with the problem, so I want to go there, I want to be there." But it's not just political actions. It's also linked to warmth, being together, not just hardcore political actions.

S p e a k e r 4 :

Also, I think the scale of urban commoning projects and spaces has been growing quite significantly. And this place [i.e. Heerlijkheid Van Heule] is maybe one example of that. Of course we can have a whole debate about what fits into the idea of Commons. There's this project "R-Urban" in Paris, it's a network of spaces where resources circulate between them.

{ 1 7 : 5 7 }

And we can see that these kinds of spaces, perhaps we could call it appropriation, but at the EU level, they're now being discussed in the New European Bauhaus framework. And part of the reason why this is happening is initiatives like this. There's been a lot of network building, conferences, and education initatives. A lot of the spaces participating in these actions are learning how to go a step further by learning from others.

T h i s i s h a p p e n i n g .

And like quantifying young people's progress, it's hard. But we really have to try and pay attention, and look for the evidence of where it's scaling up. I think assumptions about what "city-making" means have changed at a European level. And I'm sure they've changed at a municipal level in cities like Paris, where I live.

{ 1 8 : 5 8 }

I think it is changing at a societal level. It's just that at the same time, society is going in horrendous directions in a lot of places. So it's strange, but these things can coexist.

S p e a k e r 2 :

It's funny that this is all coming up, because up until seven days ago, I was part of this big European research network — Solidarity and Diversity. It was created exactly to discuss these questions. Because when you say the word "solidarity", it's often used very positively. But we can't forget that neo-Nazis also have strong solidarity networks. They really support each other. When you say, "Oh, we look at how the EU was created," it was a more homogeneous society back then. The nation-state was still a shared identity.

{ 1 9 : 5 9 }

Nowadays, it's far more complicated. So I recommend watching that network, there were 14 brilliant researchers, along with me. They did better work than I did. But the question of how to protect these communities while scaling them up, I think you have the answer. They'll find each other. Where solidarity under the nation-state has failed, this bottom-up community solidarity, people who care about the world around them, is rising. And the EU is catching up, slowly.

Because this idea that "We are all Flemish" or "We are all Dutch", it doesn't work anymore. So we need new ways to care about society, when we maybe don't feel attached to a country the way we used to.

S p e a k e r 1 :

This is what I meant by having an impact. How do we follow up on the effect we create? How do we connect? Is it a good effect? What does "good" even mean? What's the quality of it? How does it connect to society, not just numbers? Because if we're all just process-oriented, and we don't care about solutions, is that what we're doing?

S p e a k e r 2 :

Of course. But I think maybe what you're pointing to is that when you say "impact," you very quickly get into efficiency-thinking. Like, "Oh, you reached 30 kids, great." And I think "impact" and I see what you mean, but the world's been corrupted to mean something else.

S p e a k e r 4 :

But what you said about stories, and people deciding how to narrate their own progress and change, that's really important. Maybe not through numbers, but maybe through film. Or other kinds of storytelling.

S p e a k e r 6 :

We also need to discuss the difference between output and impact. Output is about numbers. Impact is about societal change. When we're stuck on output, it's: you did an activity, checked in 30 kids. But if we're talking about impact we are investigating what did those kids do in their lives? How did they transform their communities?

{ 2 2 : 3 0 }

It's a different concept altogether.

S p e a k e r 4 :

And you can account for that in a story, in fiction, in all sorts of non-numerical ways.

S p e a k e r 6 :

But also, when you aggregate it, the question is, what kind of impact did you create on a societal level?

--- End of transcript ---



Panel 3

Opening Doors
Informal education offers access to education for people who are often excluded from traditional educational opportunities across various sectors of knowledge. How can informal education create more inclusive and equitable pathways? In this panel, we presented and discussed practices that break down barriers to knowledge, discussing how informal education can bridge gaps, empower marginalised communities, and democratise access to learning.

How can informal education create more inclusion in the arts and with creativity?
How can informal education networks address social inequalities and promote inclusivity?
In what ways can informal education help bridge the gap between formal education and practical, real-world skills?
What role do partnerships between formal institutions and informal education networks play in expanding access?
How can informal education initiatives ensure they are culturally sensitive and responsive to the needs of different communities?

Bolwerk
Bolwerk is a cultural freeport founded by 4 young students. Currently Bolwerk is situated in a former textile warehouse in Kortrijk, along the Bossuit–Kortrijk Canal. It's a creative hub that supports cultural entrepreneurship, creative innovation, environmental regeneration and quality of life. Within the organisation there are 3 entities: an Atelier, a Public House and a Production House. Each of these entities are connected through creative programming.

Repair through Craft
Bolwerk is where the LSS first started in 2021. In 2023, LSS participants hacked a caravan and transformed it into a social and cultural centre for the municipality of Roeselare. In 2024, the new cohort worked on a container in Bolwerk's park, transforming it into a community garden shed, building upon the knowledge of shared construction generated by the previous year. Bolwerk in its building activities cultivates attentiveness to details and materials, always repurposing and reutilising found objects and components.

Ahoy, adventurers of creation and discovery!

Our course leads us to a place where ideas collide like waves, where inspiration and wonder fill the air, and where encounters are the compass. Brace yourselves, for we are approaching the dynamic and wonderfull world of *Bolwerk*! A home for creatives, dreamers, doers, and thinkers, where the grand workshop serves as an anchor point for anyone wanting to bring their ideas to life.

Bolwerk is no ordinary stop—

it's not just about creating something tangible. No, here, experiences are crafted that stimulate the mind and make the soul dance. This is a meeting place where like-minded individuals come together to create something new. From master technicians to young artists, they find each other here and together create magic.

The Bolwerk Bar, as the bustling center, invites people to meet, share stories, and admire each other's art. Artists find their audience here, and young people with a passion for technology and art forge bonds that extend beyond the ordinary.
And what lies at the heart of this melting pot of ideas and encounters? Astonishment/Verwondering, my friends! The projects that emerge here speak to the imagination, taking us to worlds we've never seen before. Visitors to this magical place are touched, inspired, and enchanted by the way creations take shape here.

So, sharpen your senses and let yourself be carried away by the creative currents that give *Bolwerk* its unique character. Here, the impossible becomes possible, and wonder grows into reality.

Let's go ashore, and who knows, maybe we ourselves will be inspired by the wonders of Bolwerk*!

Link to images Images - Bashar
Author: Bashar Maharmeh
What remains, what becomes
Bolwerk defines itself as a cultural freeport, a place where creation, encounter, and ecology intertwine. What struck me most there was how effortlessly it lived by the philosophy of repair, not as a way to fix what was broken, but as a way of thinking, of moving through the world. It was about constantly adapting, questioning, and reimagining. A rainwater collection pool, the surrounding walls covered with growing vines as if nature itself was reclaiming what had once been industrial, even a car turned into a jacuzzi, heated by burning wood! Nothing there was static, nothing was wasted. It all carried this quiet ingenuity, this refusal to throw things away just because they'd outlived their original purpose. In a world obsessed with replacing, consuming, and discarding, Bolwerk felt like proof that another way was possible.

The site itself felt layered. Old industrial structures. Some things looked abandoned, yet nothing here had truly been discarded. I was thinking about how different this was from the way we usually treat things, how quick we are to throw something away just because it isn't perfect anymore. I was seeing choices, decisions to keep, to mend, to repurpose.

We started the summer school by building microphones on the first day, and from there, each group took one to their site every day. We could access each site through a different radio channel, listening to the subtle sounds of each space. It was about feeling the pulse of the environment, noticing things you might otherwise miss. It was interesting how sound has a way of capturing the essence of a place, the unspoken parts of it. Even though we were all separated, we could still listen to each other's spaces, connecting in a way that made me rethink how we experience the world around us.

At first, everyone moved through the site differently. Some arrived with a clear plan, knowing exactly what they wanted to do; others drifted between tasks, figuring things out as they went. I was somewhere in between, observing, listening, and trying to understand how everything came together before deciding where to step in.

But work has a way of pulling you in. You sand down a piece of wood, and suddenly, you care about how it fits. You tighten something, and it matters that it

holds. At some point, the process of making and refining objects became more about asking, “What else could this be?”

The summer school stopped feeling like a ‘program’ and became a way of life. We moved around on bikes, cooked together, divided tasks, argued over ideas, figured things out as we went. Sometimes it was frustrating, when something didn’t fit, when we couldn’t agree on how to do something, when it felt like nothing was moving fast enough. But that was part of it too. Repair isn’t instant. It’s slow. Messy. Sometimes it means sitting with a problem longer than you want to.

Nights had their own rhythm, stretching out in a way that made the days blur together. We drifted back to the place we called home for that week, where the day never really ended, it just shifted into something else. Over dinner, we sat together, talking about what had worked, what hadn’t. The conversations wandered. Some nights, we played games. Other times, we walked to the lake or sat around the fire, where words faded in and out, and the work of the day softened into something else. It felt like we were already building something beyond the work itself.

By the end of the summer school, repair had become about learning to stay with something, to care for it rather than give up on it. It was about seeing the potential in an object or a space instead of focusing on what it lacked. I carried this shift in perspective with me, a renewed sense of purpose, and a belief in repair as an ongoing process, one that never truly ends but constantly evolves.
Later, even in my university project, I found myself weaving it into my design. The juries appreciated the idea, emphasizing the importance of reuse as a sustainable practice. Ultimately, the essence of the experience wasn’t just in what we built but in how we observed, listened, and connected, with the space, the objects, and each other.
The summer school taught me that nothing stays the same, but that doesn’t mean it fades or loses significance. Instead, it shifts, takes on new forms, and finds meaning in different ways, through the people we meet, the things we build, and the relationships we nurture along the way.

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About the Author
Compagnie Cordial is a social enterprise dedicated to fostering an inclusive and supportive society. Their mission centers on empowering newcomers: refugees, asylum seekers, and status holders,by providing them with meaningful employment opportunities, skill development, and pathways to integration. Through tailored job placements, training programs, and mentorship, Compagnie Cordial helps individuals build confidence, expand their professional networks, and actively participate in Dutch society.
Bart Rogé serves as the Business Coordinator at Refu Interim, bringing passion and strategic insight to the organisation. His role involves forging partnerships with businesses and community organizations to create inclusive work environments that value diversity and offer newcomers the chance to realize their personal ambitions.
Three Opening Doors

I have 3 ‘opening doors’ ready for you.

Three insights we had, from experience at Compagnie Cordial, about learning, specifically informal learning.

I tend to look at the world fairly philosophically. My colleagues have urged me to make my presentation more practical, so they asked me to explain my ‘opening doors’ with an example.

Last night we all gathered for a drink at the ‘Textielhuis’. Ruben closed the bar at 10PM. So that everyone would be fresh and attentive today. We saw a lot of you afterwards at the ‘Vlasmark’. You all drank a few beers. The world-famous Belgian beer.
So I’m going to talk about beer.

In fact I’ll be using as an example our workshop to learn how to tap beers.
What do you learn when you learn to tap a pint? You know what I mean: pouring beer from a tap into a glass. It is a skill.

My name is Bart and I work for Compagnie Cordial, ex Refu Interim. Compagnie Cordial helps people who are new to Belgium find volunteer work. We have 7 offices. 6 in Vlaanderen, the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium, 1 in Brussels. Today, we have 2109 active volunteers. This year alone, we have enrolled 846 new people and filled 6710 volunteering shifts/positions.

This is to give you an idea of the scale of our operation.

In our workshops we teach refugees, asylum seekers, migrants… to tap a beer in a glass, in order to enable them to do volunteer work in different places.

1st Door Opening: Be Aware Of Power Differences And Strive For Equality (Or Equity)
Power differences are quite evident in formal learning.

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You have a teacher. He or she owns all the knowledge. That knowledge is standardized. There has to be a way to validate the transfer of knowledge. That is the exam.
The diploma of certificate is proof that the transfer of knowledge has been successful.
This is a mechanical way of transferring knowledge. We do it on an industrial scale. In schools, at work.
We don't do it at home.

At home, learning is organic, because it is informal learning. Informal learning is organic. Informal learning is not mechanical but organic. It feels good, right, more natural. It is intrinsic to being human. Informal learning is intrinsic to being human.

Organic or intrinsic does not mean there are no power differences!
You don't speak the language. I do.
You can't tap a beer. I do.
I can even change a keg!

What does that power difference mean when we teach a volunteer to pour beer from a tap into a glass?

You have to be mindful of inequality and strive for equality. Not easy.

It's about making the trainee the boss of the bar. Making them feel powerful mastering a skill.
Knowing the expectation.
Knowing what it is to be part of a team that is running a bar at a venue or festival.
Having a task, performing your skill.
Doing it well.
That is powerful.

You should never hide your own position of power. You want to be powerful. You should use it. Use your power. Use it to make the world more equal and fair.

Volunteering helps people to find work. They build network, show skills.
We encourage people to put volunteering on their CVs, on their resume.
Organizations where people volunteered become references on that resume, a place where future employers can inquire about an employee they want to hire.
That's powerful. Use that power!

2nd Door Opening: Learning By Doing

Learning is done by repeating.
We learn by imitating. Imitating actions, imitating people.
You have to fail to learn.
As long as you are doing something and repeating it, you learn.
Don't talk about learning especially if your trainees don't speak your languages. Do not talk about it, do it!
Don't make it boring. Make it fun!

So, when we give a workshop to tap a beers -> We have our trainees pour a lot of beers. We invite a lot of people (partners, former trainees, volunteers, friends). We do some role playing (play the drunk or difficult customer), do some games, put on some music, dance,... That's how we train our volunteers to tap beers.
And it works perfectly.
It's learning by doing.

3rd Opening Door: Volunteering Can Be 'learning By Doing Good'
For this third door I'll go a bit philosophical, but I will get back to practical examples, so stay with me.

Our trainees, refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants, come to us not just to learn how to tap a beer. They come because they want to participate in society. Volunteering gives them a way in. It's free labour, yes,- but it's for a common cause. A good cause.

That changes how learning happens. We set up training to make people feel comfortable and confident enough to step into a volunteer role. From there, everything starts to open up.

Our trainees want to learn: What do they want to learn?
They want to meet people, so we offer community activities, group outings, even a lecture on how to make friends in Belgium.
They want to get to know their new city, so we create chances to explore it through volunteer work.
They want to learn the language, so we place them in real-life situations where Dutch or French is spoken, where they can hear it, speak it, use it.

They want to contribute. To give back. There's another kind of learning that happens when people do something meaningful for others. We call this learning by doing good.

That, too, is a kind of learning. A powerful one, because it empowers people.
Our training is framed around a set of skills to become a volunteer—and everyone has the ability to be a volunteer. Everyone!
And from there, something spills over.

Link to images: Art Academy of Latvia - Dina Suhanova

About the Author
Dina Suhanova is a researcher and project manager at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Design and Architecture of the Art Academy of Latvia. Dina has a diploma in Architecture and a Master of Arts degree in History and Theory of Art and Culture. Parallel to several years in architecture practice, Dina has turned her interests toward processes, research and activities related to contemporary architecture culture. Dina has been an editor of numerous academic publications and frequently contributes with writings and publications to local and international journals. In recent years Dina has also performed as an Architecture programme director, and lecturer at RISEBA and led various interdisciplinary projects related to the architecture field and education. In 2019 Dina was a co-curator of the international conference "Architecture of Migration" organized by the Latvian Association of Architects as part of the Union of International Architects forum in Riga. Since 2018, Dina has curated a summer course for temporary architecture and spatial design "FestivaL'and". From 2022 Dina is one of the researchers working in the Latvian Science Council-funded State research program project "Landscapes of Identities: History, Culture, and Environment" (IDEUM) within the Art Academy of Latvia.
https://www.lma.lv/en

Creating New Spatial Experiences through Short-term Design-Build Interventions
The Case of "FestivaL'and"

Learning from and in real life in connection with an actual setting, urban context, site, client, timeframe, materials, budget and deadline in the form of short-term camps to experience a full design cycle for realising spatial experiments – this is how the approach of architectural summer schools (courses, camps, workshops), which has developed into an independent method of architectural and design pedagogy, could be described. This paper/presentation is a report on the experiences of envisioning, planning and making Summer School on Temporary Architecture and Spatial Design "FestivaL'and", held five times since 2018 in Valmiera, Latvia.

[Image] 1. Introduction lecture for "FestivaL'and 4.0", a former Boiler house in Valmiera, 2024. Photo: A. Melniks

Summer schools as real-time design-build projects as an informal education approach have been implemented by many architecture, design and art schools in different formats, mainly through partnerships expanding institutional boundaries. Generally, architecture-related summer school history in Latvia dates back to around 2012 when such first notable (and international) summer activity was implemented by the Riga Technical University. Since then this format of extracurricular short-term courses has gained popularity and numerous similar events, summer camps, workshops or hackathons have been organised by Latvian architecture and design schools. However, it is not so common when these practical courses/summer camps are planned and implemented as an integral part of the formal education process and included in the study curriculum. There are several reasons for that – firstly, the study plans are already packed with obligatory credits to reach set learning objectives. Also, for a long time, it has been the norm that students obtain the practical training component of their studies by going on internships with architectural offices. Moreover, architectural educators have not been familiar with this approach and, to some extent, its implementation involves a much greater commitment, time and resources – at the end of the day it is not mandatory and does not even comply with academic standards. Real-time design projects are studied and analysed from different perspectives. The first studies and conference papers appeared ~10 years ago. There are ongoing attempts to consolidate the method itself – what aspects need to be taken into account when executing such projects? Convincing, evidence-based support for the implementation of these projects is needed to achieve a holistic integration into current and future architectural curricula, at least in the Latvian context. For us, it also seems necessary to clarify the most appropriate title – as the summer school will only be relevant under certain conditions.

The interest in developing a non-formal but academy-based architecture summer school came from my observations while working as the director of the Bachelor of Architecture programme and as a lecturer in a design studio at the RISEBA University of Applied Sciences. The detachment from the "real world" and the need to go beyond the boundaries of the classroom, to learn crucial practical skills and explore materials, and work in teams with realistic 1:1 construction was significantly lacking in architecture and design education. Moreover, I saw that this approach is as relevant for urban planning and development processes, as for research contexts and also valuable to the general society and local communities.

[Image] 2. Project "Urban performers" in "FestivaL'and 5.0", 2024. Photo: A.Melniks

"FestivaL'and" is a summer school format developed in a hig-

hly valued partnership with the Valmiera Summer Theatre Festival (VVTF) – so far in 2024 already 5 events have been realised together with a contemporary theatre event held in Valmiera town in Latvia. Dedicated to the creative synergy of art, design and architecture, the Summer School acts as an urban laboratory, temporarily transforming specific sites for the duration of the theatre festival, bringing them to life, offering unexpected experiences, changing perceptions and revealing the potential for new uses. Partnering with the festival allows Summer School to gain attention, involve the public and become a meaningful part of the city and festival's program. During the course, by analysing the context of the place, cultural and historical aspects, through an experimental, practical design approach, making and testing, using participatory and interdisciplinary methods of cooperation, as well as the social dimension of planning, interventions in the urban environment are realised creating a spatial framework for a public event. The Summer School's teaching staff consists of theorists, lecturers and practitioners in the fields of architecture, design and art with experience in both practice and pedagogy. Invited key personnel is composed based on the relevant expertise – especially valuable in this case is experience in building and construction, as well as mentorship skills to guide student teams and oversee the whole development process.

[Image] 3. Workshop in "FestivaL'and 5.0", 2024. Photo: A. Saurova

By taking part in the course, participants gain knowledge, skills and experience in the process of design creation from research, ideation, and tectonic experimentation to 1:1 scale hands-on construction. Each event is focused on a specific conceptualised theme. The interventions into the urban environment find their place in often abandoned or derelict buildings and underused sites, vast green spaces in the city, unfriendly city park and non-functioning urban block. From the very start of the implementation of the course, there has been a belief that real-scale temporary design and architectural elements can trigger a change for the place and propose a sense of its future potential, its perception and usability. Interventions can be considered as place-making pilot projects to "open up" and revitalise an area, to analyse the possible use of space, to activate the local community, and to create an inclusive and accessible environment. The format of the summer school is characterised by unpredictability and openness to the unexpected. At the same time, the projects are linked to particular event. This allows for immediate feedback and evaluation from users and what is particularly crucial – also city authorities.
The competencies acquired through design-build courses are critical, extending beyond formal learning outcomes to include interdisciplinary collaboration with clients, professionals, and stakeholders. Students gain practical skills in project management, material selection, marketing, and budgeting, while actively participating in all project phases. Additionally, these experiences enhance teamwork, communication, and contingency management, and foster critical evaluation abilities alongside valuable friendships and international connections.

[Image] 4. Lecture-demonstration by Rudolf Bekič in "FestivaL'and 5.0", 2024. Photo: D. Suhanova

Architecture summer short courses can characterised by their unpredictability yet openness to unexpected solutions. It is a special form of experiential learning, practice and the acquisition of valuable competencies. The linking of projects to reality, in the context of an event, allows for immediate feedback and evaluation from users and a "different" perspective on the urban environment. Partnering with municipalities, decision-makers, public-private partnerships, NGOs, and other creative initiatives these projects also play a special social role: unlike top-down decision-making, an experimental approach offers, through a short-term solution, to test options, gather observations, assess the sustainability of a solution, refine the final work or design task.

[Image] 5. Project "Kinetic Forest" in Hansa Square in Valmiera, "FestivaL'and 1.0" in 2018. Photo: G. Priednieks

In 2018, Valmiera's Hansa Square became a pop-up city and festival centre with functions typical of a central town square. The intervention using timber materials with a conceptual title "Kinetic Forest" was designed and built creating a precedent for a wide variety of activities for different age groups in a green but underused urban space.

[Image] 6. Project "Playful City" in the park in Valmiera, "FestivaL'and 2.0" in 2019. Photo: L. Millere

In 2019, focusing on children and families, the installation with a conceptual title "Playful City" was designed and built in so far very formal park. Celebrating three days of the theatre festival, this intervention tested unusual playground elements, stimulated the imagination, and encouraged togetherness, creativity and inventive playing inviting not only festival visitors but local youngsters as well.
[Image] 7. Project "Disco during Pandemic" for "FestivaL'and 3.0" in 2020. Photo: V. Borskis

In 2020, during the pandemic and while several restrictions on gatherings were still in force, a festival centre for public events was created at Divalina Meadows – a diffuse field and place too vast for human scale and use. Thematically the summer school brief was related to the challenges of how can we adapt public spaces to the constraints of the

pandemic. How can public events take place when we need to ensure the distancing measures? In the diffuse field, with the platform-nest for DJ performances, the spatial structure of moulded wooden slats was developed allowing controlled encounters for the visitors.
[Image] 8. Installation in the parking lot of the former Boiler house, “FestivaL’and 4.0” in 2021. Photo: A. Melniks

[Image] 9. Project “Temporary Museum of Incidental Traces Through the Eyes of Another”, “FestivaL’and 4.0” in 2021. Photo: L. Millere

In 2021, the participants developed ideas for the pop-up festival hub in the building and the site of the former boiler house in Valmiera. Titled “Temporary Museum of Incidental Traces Through the Eyes of Another”, a prototype for a conceptual indoor gallery was developed highlighting the multi-layered history of the building, framing artefacts and spatial elements as well as offering a canvas for peoples’ participatory experience. The modular walling system of indoor installation was complemented by the outdoor structures that served as the backdrop for the stage with several functional exterior props. As a unifying tectonic assembly, a prefabricated wooden modular framework with multiple alignment capabilities was designed, with a reference to Gustavs Klucis’s work and the structural explorations of constructivists.

[Image] 10. Project “DIAPHANOUS”, “FestivaL’and 5.0” in 2024. Photo: A. Melniks

In 2024 in the context of climate change, circular economy principles and the quest for a humane, socially inclusive and natural environment, the theme “Life” was highlighted, inviting students to experiment with the possibilities of using wood, other raw and natural materials and by-products of industry. The participants developed ideas for spatial interventions in the diverse venues of the theatre festival in the city. The six installation prototypes were built at 11 festival venues. In addition to wood, various construction waste and packaging materials were used for the installations: coloured pipes, polyethene films and bags, plastic tapes of different colours, wooden strips and spacers. After the festival installations were moved to the nearby Circular Economy Centre.

This article is prepared in the framework of the State research program project “Landscapes of Identities: History, Culture, and Environment” / IDEUM (Project No. VPP-LETONIKA-2021/1-

Link to images BAF! - Emma Pauwels
BAF!
Baf! Collective
BAF! is a community of artists and creatives based in Kortrijk, bringing together individuals from a variety of backgrounds including product design, painting, sculpture, textiles, illustration, music, writing, and digital arts. The collective originally formed through a grassroots artistic project at Bolwerk, where members collaborated on building a maze and showcasing their work. Since then, BAF! has evolved into a platform that supports collaborative artistic practice, offering space and opportunities for both emerging and more established artists.
Their current base is Het Textielhuis, a repurposed heritage building in the city center, where they have developed shared studios and a collective workspace. Here, artists can work independently or engage in joint projects, fostering both individual growth and collective experimentation. BAF! also organizes public activities such as exhibitions, workshops, and their bi-weekly Chill&Draw sessions, aimed at making art accessible and encouraging participation from the wider community. Through these initiatives, the collective focuses on co-creation, skill-sharing, and building connections across different disciplines and communities.
Link to images: Forecast Platform - Rabea Kaczor & Sophie Charleson
About the Authors
Forecast is a platform dedicated to facilitating, mentoring, and promoting trailblazing creative practices and audacious artistic practitioners. Carving an independent space for experimentation and generosity, Forecast helps to bring daring ideas to fruition and enable their access into larger networks. Forecast reaches a global creative community through open calls, and identifies burgeoning developments, innovations, and approaches with extraordinary potential. Through festivals, workshops, discursive events, and publications, Forecast spurs a wide audience to encounter and engage with the final productions as well as the creative processes behind them. Founded in 2015 by Freo Majer, Forecast encompasses the one-on-one mentorship program Forecast Mentorships; the workshop series Forecast Condensed; and is the initiator of collaborative projects with multiple institutional partners, such as Driving the Human (2020–2023) and Housing the Human (2018–2019).

Freo Majer is the artistic director of Forecast. Rabea Kaczor has taken care of collaborations, program development, and fundraising since 2023. Sophie Charleson joined the team in 2023 as production assistant. Both Rabea and Sophie took part in the Living Summer School “Navigating Informal Education Conference”2024.
Informality in Forecast’s one-on-one mentorships
Forecast is an international fa-

cilitator that takes various approaches to informal learning through its different programs: one-on-one mentorships; the workshop series Forecast Condensed; as well as collaborative programs with multiple institutional partners, such as Driving the Human (2020–2023) and Housing the Human (2018–2019). Although having different focuses, these programs all share a common approach: find creative projects from all over the world through an open call, bring these practitioners together with experts or mentors to develop their projects, which are then showcased at a transdisciplinary festival. Instead of dictating a certain outcome or developing a "one size fits all" learning curriculum, Forecast commits to the needs of creative practitioners, and gives them the opportunity to develop their projects with the support of mentors or experts.

Mentoring is a form of learning that has been used for thousands of years. In contrast to school-based or other traditional forms of learning, mentoring consists of a close relationship between the mentor and their mentee: the mentor does not follow a general curriculum, but provides individual feedback and closely accompanies the mentees in their development.
Within the one-on-one mentorships, Forecast takes up this approach and offers artists and creative thinkers from anywhere in the world the chance to work with accomplished mentors toward bringing their projects to fruition. As an international mentorship program with annual editions, Forecast transcends neatly defined disciplines and genres to provide insight into creative production processes, and carve out space for the questions on the minds of the next generation of trailblazers. For each edition, Forecast selects six mentors from various disciplines who offer individual participants their expertise in specifying and realizing their project ideas. Each edition of Forecast is different; the selected mentors impact the nature and content of every iteration. Each of them defines the variety of applications submitted, and plays an instrumental role in helping their respective mentee develop an idea from proposal to production. The mentoring process offers a space in which both parties can experiment, deepen a methodology, and push their individual concept in new directions.
Each year, creative minds working in various disciplines are invited to submit project proposals via an open call. The selection process is two-tiered. First, the mentors carefully review all proposals and invite three nominees each to workshop with the mentor and present their ideas at the Forecast Forum in Berlin. At the Forum's conclusion, each mentor chooses one mentee. The six mentees then receive extended mentoring including a work-stay, in which mentor and mentee meet in person for up to two weeks of intensive exchange, usually with a host institution. At the end of the mentorship phase, the six mentees present their final productions to the public at the Forecast Festival.
Forecast takes different steps to ensure informality within the project. We believe the best ideas come when people of different cultures, professions, and ages come together. We aim to create programs where people meet who usually would not have had the chance to meet, and give them space to inspire each other, inciting a process of reciprocal learning. One of the first steps to induce this kind of informality is our annual international Open Call. There are no restrictions or requirements regarding disciplines or genres, and no overarching theme. It is possible for a practitioner in one field to apply for mentorship from a mentor in another field; in our eighth edition, for example, we had a dancer mentored by a filmmaker. There are also no requirements regarding previous formal education or training. The only precondition for participating is that someone has an engaging project idea and knows why they want to work with a specific mentor. The open call process prioritises creativity and curiosity as well as the wish to work within a mentorship framework, in contrast to more formal types of training.

The mentor's work within Forecast is to promote the mentee's endeavor. This framework allows the mentor to turn towards the mentee and find ways to support them. In that sense, every mentoring tandem relationship is unique. Often, the mentors are very open to accompanying nominees and mentees from other fields as well, which Forecast encourages. This is an opportunity that we would not expect to see within formal educational contexts. While the mentor is there to help the mentee in their creation, they do not dictate what the mentees should do, rather they accompany them in their creative process, and offer support in finding their own artistic expression.

The mentoring process itself is defined by a great level of individuality and openness. Forecast gives a structure to the mentoring process: The Forecast Forum, Forecast Festival, the work-stay, as well as individual monthly mentoring calls. Nevertheless, the mentoring process is created by and reflects the close relationship between mentor and mentee. This also means that the mentee's project will of course change over the course of its one-year development . The work shown at the concluding festival will always be different from how it was conceptualised in the initial proposal, and we explicitly encourage each mentee to evolve and progress their ideas in response to the mentoring.

We also encourage connections between the participants: During the Forecast Forum, the mentors offer workshops for all participants, and we organise joint

excursions to different cultural institutions. Oftentimes, participants find a surprising connection and decide to work with each other, even though they may come from vastly different practices.

With Forecast, we also want to respond to the market pressure on artists, which often leads to a formalisation of the art, incorporating trends and buzzwords to their work which are supposed to make them apparently more successful. In doing so, the creative process and freedom are being restricted. Forecast reacts to this alienation, and devotes itself exclusively to the personal wishes and needs of the artist, giving them space for development apart from the formalised structures of the commercial artistic world.

Our goal in offering informal formats for artistic creation, is to give artists the opportunity to develop their work with more freedom, and focus on the relationship between mentor and mentee, as well as the artistic work.

Driving the Human and Housing the Human - informality through interdisciplinary collaboration

In the programs Driving the Human (2020–2023) and Housing the Human (2018–2019), Forecast collaborated with international institutions and focused on pressing questions of the present. While Housing the Human focused on future lifestyles, social spaces, housing, and concepts for coexistence, Driving the Human dealt with questions related to eco-social renewal. Forecast is convinced that there is no shortage of bright minds thinking about these issues, but there is a shortage of opportunities to turn ideas into reality. The project was jointly led by four partner institutions – acatech – National Academy of Science and Engineering, Forecast, the Karlsruhe University of Arts and Design and ZKM | Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe – and relied on the expert knowledge and skills of their combined networks. Together, these partners worked to enrich the various developments and outcomes of the initiative. Following its first public presentation in November 2020, Driving the Human launched an open call, inviting several participants – designers, artists and other multidisciplinary agents – to engage with these knowledge networks and interdisciplinary know-how, in order to develop future-proof concepts and test them as prototypes. The seven final prototypes materialized in different ways: from walk-in room installations to designed objects, architectural mock-ups to interactive games, video works to performances, and many others. Throughout 2023, the community of participants, experts, and the larger audience that Driving the Human brought together explored diverse phenomena such as the social impact of global warming, energy cycles and technology-driven disruptions, the impact of collective decision making, and contemporary processes of exchanging values and objects. The results of these explorations were shared and communicated over the project's three-year duration, and deployed strategies for action in the form of physical experiences, with a strong individual and collective impact. Ultimately, they created tools that enabled new ways of envisioning and inhabiting the world.

Informal learning within Driving the Human took place, as with Forecast, in one-on-one and peer mentorships, facilitated by the leading partners throughout the program . Yet in contrast to permanent one-on-one mentorships, Driving the Human did not focus on establishing only one mentor-mentee tandem, but rather organized different forms of interactions, and in particular various cross-disciplinary learning experiences by bringing the creatives together with scientists. A mutual exchange and novel knowledge production was initiated. Cross-genre collaboration is able to particularly trigger informal learning processes, as it allows for overstepping familiar schemes and disciplines, thus leaving room for experimentation and mutual learning. Through our events we wanted to leave space for imagination, curiosity, and experimentation, approaching the topics of Driving the Human in a non-didactic, activating way. We thus offered different workshops and walks to explore materials and themes.

The projects by Forecast are always shaped by the belief that uncertainty is nothing to be afraid of. Each project unfolds individually, and a final outcome will not be predefined in advance. This dedication to uncertainty allows creatives to develop in a way which would not be possible in a formal setting, and allows participants as well as the audience to think about topics from an unknown angle.

Link to images:

About the Author

María Paszkiewicz is an independent curator with a Master's degree in Curatorial Studies from the University of Navarra, Spain. She graduated from the University of La Plata with a degree in Architecture in 2008 and became an assistant professor teaching courses in Architecture, History, and Theory. In 2019, she earned her Master's degree in History of Architecture from the University of Torcuato Di Tella, Buenos Aires. Currently, she is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Navarra's architecture school, focusing her research on innovation and creativity in architectural education.

She has collaborated and participated in several projects with the architects' collective La ciudad que Resiste. In 2021, during the workshop on feminist design practices, she was part of the teaching team accompanying the students.

Feminist Project Practices Workshop: Re-thinking the Architectural Project from a Gender and Dissidence Perspective*.

*This article is based on the presentation made by La ciudad que resiste for the "First Workshop on Feminist Design Practices" published in the Proceedings of GADU 2022, Institute of Human Spatiality, UBA GADU Program, 1st edition, Autonomous City of Buenos Aires

Introduction

What is feminism? And how does it relate to our design practices? These seemingly simple questions open up a profound debate about how and from what perspective architecture is taught in academic institutions. Latin American universities, and especially design studios in Argentine universities, still rely on pedagogical proposals based on historiographical constructions founded on mainly Central European references and models that reinforce traditional and historical divisions of labor and space.

The COVID-19 pandemic was a global turning point that challenged not only our physical and psychological adaptation as a human species but also destabilized and repositioned our relationship with everyday space and the inhabited environment in architectural and urban terms. The agonizing time allowed us to revisit our own experiences, reorganize and revisit practices regarding what has been said, built, and concluded.

In this context of global uncertainty and suspension of university teaching in classrooms, the first (virtual) workshop on "Feminist Design Practices: Rethinking Architectural Projects from a Gender and Dissidence Perspective" was conceived, organized by the collective La ciudad que resiste (The City that Resists) as part of the university extension project "Art, Gender, and Public Space" at the National University of La Plata (UNLP)7. Together, a pedagogical proposal was built with the aim of creating a collective and horizontal learning experience among teachers and students, developing tools to implement a pedagogical experience that would allow for sharing and traversing everyday practices in a transversal way (Bilmes, 2024).

Workshop Structure. The Use of Collective Mapping.

For the virtual workshop, an open call was made to students from universities in Argentina and neighboring countries. Each team was required to present an architectural project (either a public facility or collective housing) to be reviewed and intervened throughout the sessions, with the aim of rethinking it from a gender and dissidence perspective. For every group of three students, two members of the collective and university professors would be their tutors, ensuring dynamism, dialogue, and horizontal construction.

The implementation relied on collective mapping exercises that allowed for collaborative visualization, synchronous knowledge construction, and joint reflection. During each session, participants created sketches or "esquicios" on the virtual whiteboard in response to questions and prompts: What is feminism? How does feminism relate to architecture and urbanism? Who do I represent with my project? These questions addressed not only aspects of graphic representation but also formal and material aspects of architectural and urban design itself.

The workshop was held over five sessions (on Saturdays) lasting four hours each, and was divided into three parts: an introduction to feminist theoretical perspectives, an analysis of the selected project, and an exchange of the intervened projects. In each session, the theoretical approach aimed to provide thematic and conceptual support for future interventions.

Virtual Encounters

The first meeting or "introductory session" was a collaborative work through a virtual whiteboard, aimed at presenting and getting to know the students. The questions: "What is feminism? How does it relate to architectural projects? And to design thinking?" served as prompts to gather diverse opinions and build a common understanding framework. (Image 1)

The second meeting or "sketch 1" was titled: "Designing space is designing behavior" based on the famous phrase by Austrian industrial designer Victor Papanek. Through the analysis of feminist

7 La ciudad que resiste. It is a network of collectives of architects, in-disciplinary, artists, teachers, researchers, masters, mothers, students, feminists, singers, performers, LGTTBIQNB+ activists, from the city of La Plata. Since 2018 we intertwine projects and experiences to push us towards a feminist urbanism. We conducted mapping workshops, urban tours, and artistic and performative interventions from a gender perspective. They form an Extension project called: Gender Art and Public Space in the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism UNLP since 2018.

theories, movements, and actions, we reflected on the power and responsibility inherent in designing spaces. Far from being a neutral action, design is a political and situated stance that installs and promotes lifestyles and behaviors, normalizing them in the process. The panel question was then: "For whom do we design cities? Who is excluded?" The goal was to make visible the main demands of the feminist movement and rethink urban designs and the behaviors they entail, if we want to improve conditions, quality, and citizen participation in the spaces we co-inhabit. (Image 2a + Image 2b)
The third session or "sketch 2" was titled "Served and Servants? The Binary Space". Through a series of design theories and feminist references, topics such as the sexual division of labor in domestic tasks, bathrooms, storage and maintenance areas, and kitchens were addressed. The latter point was explored through the question: "What would happen if we eliminated kitchens from our homes?" Some early 20th-century feminist thought currents, like Melusina Fay Pierce (1836-1923) and Margarete Shutte-Lihotzky (1897-2000), proposed optimizing design through the collectivization of care tasks or rationalizing kitchen design. The panel encouraged reflection on the normalized "served-servant" hierarchies in architecture workshops (in Latin America and Argentina), questioning how to optimize design by collectivizing work within a single unit. (Image 3a + 3b)
The fourth meeting or "sketch 3" was titled "Distrust Images". It explored the relationship between images and collective imaginary, symbolic and material graphic representation, and the concept of beauty. "What norms inhabit the images of our projects?" This question allowed for the analysis of advertising images and urban project renders, identifying hidden meanings, reproduction of hegemonic aesthetics, and exclusion of certain contexts, especially Latin American ones. Theories and intersectional feminist perspectives were analyzed, questioning hegemonic beauty models and reflecting on Judith Butler's expression: "what is not named, does not exist". The importance of language (and images) in shaping our reality was highlighted.
The objective of this panel was to understand that "taste" is something that is educated, constructed, and imposed as a collective practice of consensus and dissent. Also, to review and analyze the students' productions, their graphic representations, symbolic contents (contexts, hegemonic users?), and the represented and/or desired imaginaries from architectural forms, materials used, and constructive logics. (Image 4a + 4b)

Final Day and Some Certainties

The workshop contemplated a final instance of reviewing the students' architectural projects, assuming that with small modifications, they could incorporate the feminist perspective into their own practice. Each team presented their project interventions, showcasing the collective exchange, reflection, and horizontal work between students and teachers. The topics developed in each group addressed (some or all) the topics discussed in the workshop, such as: the sexual division of labor and space, diversity of users, ecofeminism, ways of inhabiting, among others. (Image 5)
Finally, the students were asked to return to the initial question: "What is feminism? How does it relate to our design practices?" This exercise yielded new reflections and some collective certainties that highlighted:
- The importance of a conscious design practice that, through a feminist perspective, identifies inequalities.
- Reflecting on experiences of inhabiting spaces is also essential knowledge for any project.

Final Reflections

The workshop was a time-bound instance, but sufficient to instill in each of us a projective consciousness in our architectural practice and other related fields: research, teaching, and/or simply observing the city as we walk. The workshop was a pedagogical laboratory to rethink teacher-student relationships and build, from a horizontal perspective, an open, inclusive, and feminist thought. An excuse to review previous processes, challenge norms, and make visible the origins of what is represented (symbolically and materially). In this complex world, dominated by patriarchy and consumer culture, it remains valuable to construct spaces (virtual and physical) for encounter, collective participation, and reflection and debate around new pedagogical experiences. Having the "space" to think, re-examine, test, and continue revising what is given, done, and said. Learning from the process, learning from others, moving away from common places and socially validated contexts to incorporate "the other". The interest of this article lies in reflecting on other ways of thinking and teaching architecture. Showcasing what is done in the 'other corner of the world' to share experiences, spark curiosity, and think with a feminist perspective about today's problems.

information

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Public Forum Introduction: Living Conference 2024: Navigating Informal Education

Authors: Jadd Hallaj & Elena Falomo, co-founders, Living Summer School

My name is Elena Falomo and I'm really thrilled to welcome you to today's Public Forum! I'm a designer and one of the creators of the Living Summer School, an initiative that organises free informal education programs on territorial innovation.

Over the last four years, we have experimented with informal education as a means to inspire new forms of being. Informal Education is usually seen as any form of education that is held outside of the traditional school or lecture room. During this two day conference, today and tomorrow, and in parallel to this year's summer school edition "Living (In) Repairs", we're trying to bring together a community of people who see the potential of informal methods.

As you might have noticed, we gave ourselves the challenge of organising a conference that embodies the very topic of the conference itself: informality. As we have discovered over the course of today's conversations and throughout the week, this can mean various things. So we've decided to bring together a group of people who have inspiring practices and research or who are looking to develop informal moments within their own practice.

Today we held 3 panel sessions with 15 panellists in the 3 sites that the LSS participants are currently building in. In each site we tried to discuss topics that were relevant to the space itself. A bus sailed us from site to site as we participated in conversations, some of which were organised, but more importantly, others that were not. These conversations were linked to themes we wanted to address within the specific spaces we were in, in the presence of trees, rainwater pools, individuals, architecture, cows, wood planks, circular saws, insects, drills and dogs. We're looking forward to presenting a summary and some of the main takeaways of these conversations and the link with the current workflows of the participants later on.

We are not here to talk about the Living Summer School as an organisation. However, before continuing any further, I think it's important to discuss where this interest in informal education emerged from for the Living Summer School. It was born 4 years ago in this very hall that we are currently sitting in. I can see many familiar faces who were sitting around the makeshift bonfire with us when, on a cold night a couple of us started talking and exchanging ideas and an opportunity emerged to organise the first summer school together.

It was during this break, and in the sidelines of a design residency that Jadd and I were working on, that we met Ruben and Servaas-the creators of Bolwerk who built this amazing space plank by plank-and we started dreaming with them. It was unscheduled, unplanned and very informal. It was also not completely legal, because it took place during the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic.

And this brings us to more serious reflections about informality.

The pandemic has completely altered the way we interact, socialise and learn. An entire generation has not experienced school parties let alone late night bonfire dreaming. Online schooling has also taken off since then, but we are yet to discover how to light digital bonfires.

Education is also drifting away from practice: it's getting harder for dreamers to build, and for builders to dream. This drift is accelerated by dramatic funding cuts across Europe. I hope that the keynote by Floating University might shed some more light on that.

And more horrifyingly, this is all happening in the backdrop of the rise of extremist political movements in Europe and the destruction of educational infrastructure in places such as Palestine, Ukraine, Syria, or Sudan.

And here we need to pause...
As informal educators it has been very hard for us to plan this edition of the Living Summer School while every single school and university in Gaza has been destroyed during the ongoing genocide of Palestinians that has taken the lives of more than 40,000 thousand people. An entire generation is not going to school. There is no bonfire for Gaza, rather an endless inferno, and we would like to make use of this platform to implore European institutions to take action to end this madness.

But for right now, let us go back to our bonfire, that we may keep it kindling while we dream of better days.

The bonfire really has all the elements we need to understand how informal education can help build a brighter world.

For one thing we met each other and were able to learn from each other ever since. There were no hierarchies between us, and we were in the ideal setting to be creative and free. We shared opportunities with each other and explored possible projects, and ideas just seemed to emerge organically. We tackled challenges and shared the skills we would need to address them. We were having fun, we were engaged, we were eager to learn more. We were outside and we got our hands dirty. We were allowed to make mistakes and we were there for each other.

I hope that the participants in the LSS might one day also remember their own experience this week in similar terms.

Now, unfortunately, we are not gathered here because the Living Summer School has discovered some perfect formula for informal education, quite the contrary. Informality is accepting that no such thing can ever exist.

Oftentimes, people might be afraid to start their own projects or collaborations because they might be intimidated by their peers or scared of not being the next big thing that is hyped in fancy architecture or design magazines. We believe that initiatives such as those led by people in this very room should increasingly emerge across geographies, fields and disciplines, practices and thrive through collaborations, knowledge and resource sharing.

And in that sense we would like to thank you for coming today to join us in this journey.

We would also like to thank Jint and Erasmus + for their continuous support throughout the years
Start@K and Vlaio for submerging us in the rich Flemish context. We really hope that we get to develop more projects in the region that have been a source of inspiration for us.
The LINA platform for European Architecture for connecting us with an amazing community of European organisations, and for matching us with really incredible fellows. You will be meeting Bernadetta Budzik and Grant, Mort and Sasha from Soundcamp later on, but we are extremely thrilled to have also welcomed fellows and partner organisations from LINA in today's conversations. Theatrum Mundi, Spolka, LIFT, Art Academy of Latvia, and Forecast.
Project Partners and Facilitators: Constructlab, Forecast, NHL Stenden, Fab Lab Torino who have been essential in planning and running the activities of this week.
Our wonderful Site partners that deal with our building shenanigans: Wildernis, Heerlijkheid and Bolwerk who have welcomed and opened their practices to us.
And a very special thanks to Cathlyn from the Heerlijkheid Van Heule who has also organised the collective kitchen this week and last year and who inspires us every day through our stomachs.
Thanks the facilitators, key pillars of this experience
But most of all, we would like to thank our wonderful participants who are the real motors behind the experience and without whom we would never learn anything.

Now we have a real treat for you, new friends of ours from Berlin, Felix and Jade, who would like to share an inspiring example of informal education: the Floating University.

Floating University Berlin
Extracts of Keynote delivered by Felix Wierschbitzki and Jade Dreyfuss.
floating-berlin.org
{ 6:45 } vlcsnap-2025-09-19-15h58m19s309.png
The first iteration was made by the architecture collective Raumlabor Berlin, who started the whole project, and it was meant to be there for one year. The idea was basically to have an offshore campus to invite other universities to do their normal programme—what they usually do in the university but not in their ugly buildings—to do it with us, parallel with other universities. It was such a success. Here are some construction images: you see a lot of students, and there were 37 universities from all over the world coming during the year. 10,000 people visited the site in just four months, and we were only five people working, totally overworked. So at the end we decided to create an association and hand it over. Now we are 60 people in the association, so it's much more comfortable.
{ 7:59 } vlcsnap-2025-09-19-16h00m52s022.png
And actually Floating is not floating and is not a university. We had to change the name because we don't have accreditation. We almost had to pay a €100,000 fine because we used the word "university." Just some words on the architecture: as it was always temporary, we are very used to scaffolding as a modular system. This is our architectural language. For the future, we are going to change this a bit, but so far it's our element. We really know how to do it. I know by heart that this beam is 43 millimetres, and it's 2 metres 57 from this corner, with 13-centimetre cycles. It is super easy for us to work with this. That's why this huge structure was possible.
{ 9:01 } vlcsnap-2025-09-19-16h04m27s594.png
Then 2019 came. We had just founded the association, and suddenly all our funding was cut because it was connected to something. That year was very hard for us. We had only €30,000 for the whole year. As a symbol, we built a melting iceberg. Then Corona came, which was actually good for us, because Berlin made a lot of money available for cultural institutions. We were one of the first institutions or cultural spaces outside, so we were allowed to open first. We received quite some funding and could rebuild completely new. This is what you see now. Since then, it has been standing like this: three iterations so far.
{ 15:59 } vlcsnap-2025-09-19-16h06m54s624.png
This is one of the printed materials that actually comes from the association. We have a lot of externals coming and running programmes. Climate Care is not organised by Floating—it's its own group. Free Radicals is something different, but the reader is really made by the association. It is about how you communicate what is happening, because you learn by doing and by being there. This is a calendar of our activities. We are seasonal, as we are outside and really a nature–culture space, organised around the seasons.
{ 16:52 } vlcsnap-2025-09-19-16h08m06s388.png
In winter, we have a phase of hibernation, applying for funding, organising ourselves, reflecting on the year. Then comes spring, with a refresh of the buildings and structures, and the action days that we will talk about later. Summer is for programmes and maintenance, as well as opening times. Then comes autumn, the end of the season, when we prepare the space for winter—making it winter-proof. That means ready for the cold, when no humans are there, so the structures remain in good condition.
{ 2:53 }
The fact that this is so influenced by the weather and these conditions means that every time you go to Floating, you see a Floating that is different. You also adapt yourself—where to go, how to move. This trains flexibility. That is the essential of it. And to talk a bit about this multi-species place: you can find birds, spiders in specific buildings like the Rain Palace, mushrooms, a garden, and a small forest all around. There are also super curious objects—dirt from the street that has been here for ages in the basin, starting to mutate and form reeds.
{ 3:54 }
So what can you learn from this space? Being in this space and exploring it is one of the core interests of the Kidzini programme. You learn by tasting, running around, climbing, and listening. These are some pictures of those interactions. For example, here are two girls who gave a tour and presented Floating through their own perspective. This table also shows what is happening here, and the kids wrote a manifesto.
{ 5:00 } vlcsnap-2025-09-19-16h12m03s148.png
This is the Floating Kids Manifesto:
Only here, you are here.
Here the world is rebuilt.
We test everything that is built here.
No standing around and commenting.
Mud, mud, mud, mud, mud.
Here is another time
The thinking comes with doing.
The doing comes through what is here.
What is here is interesting.
G o !
{ 13:56 }
We are here also to take care of the space, learn from it, and archive it.
{ 14:09 }
Politics has been the real trouble in recent months, especially connected to funding. We were squatting the site for two years, in 2021 and 2022. Now we have some standing. We fought and did a lot of lobbying, and finally we are at the table with the politicians trying to develop the site, and with the owner, the Senate. We will get contracts until 2030.
{ 14:54 }

After this, they want to transform the basin—probably remove most of the concrete and let the water irrigate the site, because this would save them a lot of money. They pay sewage fees for this water going into the public channels. We are finally talking about the future of this world. We are involved in the designs and in the research. But there are many stakeholders with different interests. Politics in Berlin has two different levels: the land and the city, and then the districts. They all have different interests, run by different parties. We are in between. And there are also crazy ideas. This is how the Social Democrats imagine Floating.

{ 15:55 } vlcsnap-2025-09-19-16h14m38s576.png

Seventeen thousand people want to live on this 24-square-metre land. It is still a rain retention basin, under the parking lots. We are surrounded by 200 allotment gardens, and Berlin's oldest sports club is our neighbour. We are fighting continuously with the districts. For example: the owner wants to clean it because they don't want to pay. The environmental and natural district departments want to keep the animals, and they don't even want us to step into the water. There are many conflicts, and we are in between.

{ 16:58 }

A lot of contradictions.

{ 16:59 }

Yes. As an association, our only goal—the reason we are nonprofit—is to open the site and make it public. All our programmes are free, and you can enter anytime. We try to fund it in different ways. We have knowledge sharing at a very low-key level. At the same time, we are attacked from many sides. You can really see this: here are the owners, here are the network maps, and we are in between. This is unacceptable. If we publish pictures like this, we immediately receive a letter, with threats to kick us out.

{ 19:52 }

With this funding crisis, we are now thinking: we need to develop new techniques and other ways to fund our activity. We organised a fundraising event, but this year is really horrible in terms of funding. We are trying to move into this—do we have to restructure our activity? How do we evolve in this super formal and restrictive frame, when we are constantly fighting against it?

Soundcamp

The members Grant Smith, Sasha Smith, and Mort Drew of Soundcamp were our 2024 LINA Fellows. They established a live sound radio whose sonic presence and practice had been weaving together the experiences of the conference and the summer school, Wildernis, the Heerlijkheid and Bolwerk. By introducing the practice of listening and live broadcasting, they brought and nortured a new kind of attentiveness, individual and relational, inward and outward, toward our surroundings and one another. What follows are extracts from Soundcamp's sound piece, created by selectively recording parts of the broadcasts and merging them with live sounds.

{ 0:10 }

Theoretically, you can hear me now. Hello. But you will hear this too — this is the fun of working with sound. That sound you just heard is the lag of a microphone in a stream box by the sound box. Everything we've heard has gone through an internet server with our collaborators in Locus Sonus, then been re-downloaded and streamed to a server in Acre, in Upstate New York. Throughout the week we've been doing this here at Bolwerk. We'd like to say thank you — I'm holding the microphone for everyone at the Living Summer School: the participants, facilitators, and organisers, for co-creating this radio with us. Thank you for taking part in the workshop to build these stream boxes, taking care of them at each site, plugging them in, charging them, making sure they were in good places, moving them around so we could hear new things, and allowing us to listen with each other.

I'll pass it over to Grant, who will say something about ecological radio — which is what we call what we're making here.

{ 1:24 }

Thank you very much. Can we listen to the left channel? Thank you. This is the sound of a little pool in an overgrown vegetable garden just over there. It's very small, covered with green pond weed.

What's interesting about the pond — thinking with the pond — is that it refracts a lot of things beyond itself. Many of the forms we've been working with this week, sonically and socially, have been around these amazing little islands, like the heerlickheijd. They both enclose a communal experiment — a biosocial community — and at the same time remain radically open.

So I would say that ecological radio is an ongoing experiment. I wish this weren't feeding back as much as it is — that would be better — but we're used to working with these conditions. Ecological radio is an ongoing experiment by Soundcamp. We're a cooperative of ten, and it's very directly inspired by the book Three Ecologies8 by Félix Guattari, and his work at Radio Alice. Guattari talks about three kinds of ecologies. There are environmental ecologies, which we often

8 Guattari, F. (2000). The Three Ecologies. Athlone Press.

information

think of first. But there are also ecologies of the self, of subjects and persons. And as we've heard vividly from Floating, there are ecologies of social organisations. These come together at different scales — from the pond, to Floating, to the heli-kite.

We normally work with live sounds. We'll play some later. But first, we wanted to share three vignettes from the week's work, excerpts from live transmissions that happened during the week. We'll move from site to site, starting with the social farm at the heli-kite.

information

--- Log opened Tue Sep 03 11:59:22 2024
11:59 -!- Irssi: Log file log.txt opened
11:59 -!- Your host is irc.local, running version InspIRCd-2.0
11:59 -!- This server was created on Debian
11:59 -!- irc.local InspIRCd-2.0 iosw bhiklmnopstv bhklov
11:59 -!- AWAYLEN=200 CASEMAPPING=cp1250 CHANMODES=-b,k,l,imnpst CHANNELLEN=64 CHANTYPES=# CHARSET=ascii ELIST=MU FNC KICKLEN=255 MAP MAXBANS=60 MAXCHANNELS=20 MAXPARA=32 are supported by this server
11:59 -!- MAXTARGETS=20 MODES=20 NETWORK=ReveilIRC NICKLEN=32 PREFIX=(ohv)@%+ STATUSMSG=@%+ TOPICLEN=307 VBANLIST WALLCHOPS WALLVOICES are supported by this server
11:59 -!- 92IAAAAMR your unique ID
11:59 -!- irc.local message of the day
11:59 -!- End of message of the day.
11:59 -!- There are 2 users and 0 invisible on 1 servers
11:59 -!- 1 channels formed
11:59 -!- I have 2 clients and 0 servers
11:59 -!- Current Local Users: 2 Max: 6
11:59 -!- Current Global Users: 2 Max: 6
11:59 -!- Mode change [+i] for user commonslog
11:59 -!- nickserv: No such nick/channel
11:59 -!- commonslog [root@37.185.88.242] has joined #acousticommons
11:59 [Users #acousticommons]
11:59 [commonslog] [web59]
11:59 -!- Irssi: #acousticommons: Total of 2 nicks [0 ops, 0 halfops, 0 voices, 2 normal]
11:59 -!- Channel #acousticommons created Tue Sep 3 10:39:02 2024
11:59 -!- Irssi: Join to #acousticommons was synced in 3 secs
12:00 #acousticommons: < web59> Hello
12:00 #acousticommons: < web59> Roosters
12:04 #acousticommons: < web59> Parakeets
12:06 #acousticommons: < web59> voices taken over by power tools
12:07 #acousticommons: < web59> walking
12:08 #acousticommons: < web59> ahh it's raining, that is why
12:08 #acousticommons: < web59> this is a reservation so they cannot sit here
12:08 #acousticommons: < web59> but they can sit in the kitchen
12:08 #acousticommons: < web59> potential rain
12:08 #acousticommons: < web59> roosters not bothered
12:11 #acousticommons: < web59> dropping gain as helicopter comes over
12:12 #acousticommons: < web59> Walking
12:13 #acousticommons: < web59> ooo can I have a cherry?
12:14 #acousticommons: < web59> that is a good idea to go to the shop yeah
12:14 #acousticommons: < web59> this part might need a new entrance for the cows
12:15 #acousticommons: < web59> the cows need an entrance
12:15 #acousticommons: < web59> creating space for the cows
12:15 #acousticommons: < web59> it's all about the cows
12:16 #acousticommons: < web59> the cows have all the grass to eat
12:16 #acousticommons: < web59> we don't need a path in the grass we can leave it for the cows
12:16 #acousticommons: < web59> nice to have things that can be moved around: cows, tents...
12:17 #acousticommons: < web59> why working on paper?
12:17 #acousticommons: < web59> how to transfer what we imagine to a paper where there are no cowsa
12:17 #acousticommons: < web59> because the cows are in the field
12:18 #acousticommons: < web59> helicopter
12:18 #acousticommons: < web59> drowns out the voices
12:18 #acousticommons: < web59> clipping
12:23 #acousticommons: < web59> discussing how to set up an informal living situation
12:23 #acousticommons: < web59> maybe for families
12:23 #acousticommons: < web59> what do we need?
12:23 #acousticommons: < web59> a palce to repair bikes
12:23 #acousticommons: < web59> glue
12:23 #acousticommons: < web59> tooth brushes
12:23 #acousticommons: < web59> sewing kits
12:23 #acousticommons: < web59> the stuff we always forget
12:25 #acousticommons: < web59> hello
12:26 #acousticommons: < web59> hello
12:26 #acousticommons: < web59> carrots!
12:26 #acousticommons: < web59> many carrots
12:26 #acousticommons: < web59> what to do!?
12:30 #acousticommons: < web59> Rain or a person?
12:33 #acousticommons: < web59> touring box
12:33 #acousticommons: < web59> how are you doing
12:33 #acousticommons: < web59> hey hey
12:35 #acousticommons: < web59> lhandling
12:35 #acousticommons: < web59> zips
12:35 #acousticommons: < web59> cool
12:35 #acousticommons: < web59> drillllll
12:36 #acousticommons: < web59> donkeys
12:36 #acousticommons: < web59> ki ki ki
12:36 #acousticommons: < web59> bhhhhhhh
12:37 #acousticommons: < web59> rooster
12:37 #acousticommons: < web59> these are sleeping
12:37 #acousticommons: < web59>

owwwwwwww
12:37 #acousticommons: < web59> haha
12:37 #acousticommons: < web59> always drilling in back ground
12:37 #acousticommons: < web59> but they are sleeping
12:37 #acousticommons: < web59> I wonder what the drills sound like for them
12:37 #acousticommons: < web59> the chickens
12:38 #acousticommons: < web59> ahhh nice
12:38 #acousticommons: < web59> we call it a maran
12:38 #acousticommons: < web59> a cookoo maran
12:38 #acousticommons: < web59> its sleeping
12:38 #acousticommons: < web59> the animals are sleeping
12:38 #acousticommons: < web59> the non-humans
12:38 #acousticommons: < web59> they are sleeping
12:38 #acousticommons: < web59> rooster
12:38 #acousticommons: < web59> leggy chicken
12:38 #acousticommons: < web59> very leggy chicken
12:38 #acousticommons: < web59> the roosters say hello
12:38 #acousticommons: < web59> hello hello
12:39 #acousticommons: < web59> call and response
12:39 #acousticommons: < web59> the roosters animate
12:39 #acousticommons: < web59> they call to eachother
12:39 #acousticommons: < web59> they croak
12:39 #acousticommons: < web59> they interrupt
12:39 #acousticommons: < web59> always interrupt
12:39 #acousticommons: < web59> interject
12:39 #acousticommons: < web59> 9 roosters
12:39 #acousticommons: < web59> they are inside
12:40 #acousticommons: < web59> clippign
12:40 #acousticommons: < web59> the roosters break
12:40 #acousticommons: < web59> the sound
12:40 #acousticommons: < web59> the clip
12:40 #acousticommons: < web59> they cause a break
12:41 #acousticommons: < web59> bang bang, bang bang
12:42 #acousticommons: < web59> young people walking in the farm it can be peaceful
12:42 #acousticommons: < web59> how to create a place where you can walk together
12:42 #acousticommons: < web59> beautiful houses need to be protected
12:43 #acousticommons: < web59> the land can only be used for farming
12:43 #acousticommons: < web59> chikory
12:43 #acousticommons: < web59> chickory
12:43 #acousticommons: < web59> chik ary
12:43 #acousticommons: < web59> the gate is a bridge
12:43 #acousticommons: < web59> we are off the island now
12:43 #acousticommons: < web59> so we were on an island
12:43 #acousticommons: < web59> lots of islands
12:43 #acousticommons: < web59> they are connected under ground
12:44 #acousticommons: < web59> people eat in the trailer
12:44 #acousticommons: < web59> all the farming area, the green houses and places to grow vegetables
12:44 #acousticommons: < web59> and all this is a camping site
12:44 #acousticommons: < web59> with fruit trees
12:44 #acousticommons: < web59> secret hidden places are around for you to find
12:44 #acousticommons: < web59> i bring you to the secret places
12:45 #acousticommons: < web59> a medieval brick building with white pointing
12:46 #acousticommons: < web59> here there was a castel
1 2 : 4 6 - ! - w e b 4 6 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
1 2 : 4 6 - ! - w e b 4 6 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
1 2 : 4 6 - ! - w e b 9 1 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
1 2 : 4 7 - ! - w e b 9 1 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
1 2 : 4 7 - ! - w e b 4 6 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
1 2 : 4 8 - ! - w e b 7 5 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
1 2 : 4 8 - ! - w e b 7 5 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
1 2 : 5 0 - ! - w e b 6 8 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
1 2 : 5 1 - ! - w e b 6 8 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
1 2 : 5 1 - ! - w e b 6 3 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
1 2 : 5 1 - ! - w e b 6 3 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
1 2 : 5 1 - ! - w e b 9 3 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
12:51 #acousticommons: < web59> noisy bag
12:52 #acousticommons: < web59> sounds like lunch time
12:53 #acousticommons: < web59> a hidden final place
12:54 #acousticommons: < web59> a caravan for private coffee
12:54 #acousticommons: < web59> lets listen to the sleeping pigs
12:54 #acousticommons: < web59> maybe they will snore
12:55 #acousticommons: < web59> hello friends
12:57 #acousticommons: < web59> rain
12:57 #acousticommons: < web59> on the roof
12:57 #acousticommons: < web59> huffing pigs
12:58 #acousticommons: < web59> chickens
12:58 #acousticommons: < web59>

then wild
13:26 #acousticommons: < web59> box34 now
13:26 #acousticommons: < web59> at construction site during lunch time
13:27 #acousticommons: < web59> soothing rain
13:27 #acousticommons: < web59> and drills haha
13:29 #acousticommons: < web59> crunching
13:29 #acousticommons: < web59> messing with box?
13:36 #acousticommons: < web59> moved to the wilderness
13:36 #acousticommons: < web59> in the rain
13:38 #acousticommons: < web59> Felix from floating university talking about the project
13:44 #acousticommons: < web59> back in the pig shed
13:44 #acousticommons: < web59> the pigs have been fed
13:44 #acousticommons: < web59> we can hear them chomping
13:45 #acousticommons: < web59> more-than-human alternative education in practice
13:49 #acousticommons: < web59> roosters really testing the limits of the tech today
14:00 #acousticommons: < web59> nice mix coming from LSS farm
14:00 #acousticommons: < web59> ahh not yet mix from lss
14:01 #acousticommons: < web59> it is coming soon I think
14:10 #acousticommons: < web59> mix coming from the farm now
sleeping
13:01 #acousticommons: < web59> huff
13:01 #acousticommons: < web59> car?
13:02 #acousticommons: < web59> is that pig snoring?
13:03 #acousticommons: < web59> its amazing how the sounds change when human enter vs when the animals are left to be together
13:03 #acousticommons: < web59> machinery?
13:04 #acousticommons: < web59> flap flap
13:12 #acousticommons: < web59> chickens scratching around in the straw
13:12 #acousticommons: < web59> and talking to eachother
13:12 #acousticommons: < web59> a pig is awake?
13:12 #acousticommons: < web59> snorting
13:13 #acousticommons: < web59> rain
13:13 #acousticommons: < web59> maybe the rain woke them
13:14 #acousticommons: < web59> pigs go wild
13:14 #acousticommons: < web59> humans have come in
13:15 #acousticommons: < web59> situation has gone wild
13:15 #acousticommons: < web59> food?
13:18 -!- web22 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
13:23 #acousticommons: < web59> pigs still going wild
13:24 #acousticommons: < web59> then silence
13:24 #acousticommons: < web59>
14:29 #acousticommons: < mort> i moved machine
14:29 #acousticommons: < mort> but i am still on the island
14:29 #acousticommons: < web59> Hey
14:30 #acousticommons: < web59> I am eating a sandwich haha
14:30 #acousticommons: < mort> the souunds we are listening to are from two streamboxes on the farm mixed together
14:30 #acousticommons: < mort> hey web59
14:30 #acousticommons: < web59> pigs!
14:30 #acousticommons: < web59> full after their lunch
14:31 #acousticommons: < mort> in one set of microphones we havea group design meeting for the farm campsite area, this is inside a wooden wagon
14:31 #acousticommons: < mort> yes!
14:31 #acousticommons: < mort> and the second set of microphones is with the pigs
14:31 #acousticommons: < web59> nice
14:31 #acousticommons: < web59> who is mixing?
14:31 #acousticommons: < mort> but grant has just gone out to pick up that box and is going to try explore the perifory of the island / farm
14:32 #acousticommons: < mort> mort currently
14:32 #acousticommons: < mort> but we're hoping that after the design meeting people would like to join us
14:32 #acousticommons: < web59>
14:12 -!- web11 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
14:13 -!- web11 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
14:22 #acousticommons: < web59> crazy chicken haha
14:23 #acousticommons: < web59> hard levels to balance
14:23 #acousticommons: < web59> with roosters and voice
14:23 #acousticommons: < web59> the roosters have a lot more gain than us humans
14:24 #acousticommons: < web59> no clipping which is good
14:26 -!- web48 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
14:26 #acousticommons: < web59> mixers?
14:26 -!- web48 is now known as mort
14:26 #acousticommons: < mort> hello friends
14:27 #acousticommons: < web59> hello hello
14:27 #acousticommons: < mort> i'm here at De Heerlijkheid van Heule
14:27 #acousticommons: < mort> the farm on an island
14:29 -!- web53 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
14:29 -!- mort [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
14:29 -!- web53 is now known as mort
14:29 #acousticommons: < mort> hello friends

nice
14:32 #acousticommons: < web59> we have been broadcasting for 3 hours and 42 minutes so far
14:33 #acousticommons: < mort> the listening room on the farm, on the island, is an old woodpanneld kind of study room
14:33 #acousticommons: < mort> it smells of old wood and rain from the open door to the farm courtyard
14:33 #acousticommons: < web59> very nice
14:33 #acousticommons: < mort> nice
14:34 #acousticommons: < mort> geese?
14:34 #acousticommons: < web59> I didnt's hear
14:34 #acousticommons: < web59> chomping olives too loudly probably haha
14:34 #acousticommons: < mort> hahaha
14:34 #acousticommons: < web59> back ground metal noise on my end
14:34 #acousticommons: < mort> ahhhh
14:35 #acousticommons: < web59> can be hard to tell what is headphones and what is not
14:35 #acousticommons: < web59> I would like to camp at this campsite
14:35 #acousticommons: < mort> yes me too
14:35 #acousticommons: < mort> chairs!
14:35 #acousticommons: < web59> movement
14:35 #acousticommons: < web59> I think I have delay no?
14:36 #acousticommons: < web59> you hear the mix first
14:36 #acousticommons: < web59> and then me
14:36 #acousticommons: < mort> of course
14:36 #acousticommons: < web59> and then the listeners at wave farm
14:37 #acousticommons: < mort> from farm, to locus sonus (marseille), to farm, to locus sonus, to Bolwerk, to wavefarm(arca, new york)
14:38 #acousticommons: < web59> our text can travel much faster haha
14:38 #acousticommons: < web59> and to fewer places
14:38 #acousticommons: < mort> i am mixing using mobile phones as inputs
14:38 #acousticommons: < mort> and it is new
14:38 #acousticommons: < web59> impressive
14:39 #acousticommons: < web59> will go wash up my plate and then come back
14:39 #acousticommons: < mort> and the wifi signal is confusing - there are some phone hot spots and some modems and signal drops
14:39 #acousticommons: < mort> thick air
14:40 #acousticommons: < mort> we also have a jbl speaker playing out the sound in the room
14:41 #acousticommons: < mort> so i hear the sounds from the farm, the sounds from the farm picked up by livestram through my headphones, and then the sounds from the speaker through the back of the headphones
14:41 #acousticommons: < mort> the place moves
14:41 #acousticommons: < mort> geese over head
14:41 #acousticommons: < mort> or ducks?
14:43 #acousticommons: < mort> road
14:43 #acousticommons: < mort> im going to see if people want to join now the meeting is over
14:43 #acousticommons: < web59> confusing
14:43 #acousticommons: < web59> ok
14:43 #acousticommons: < mort> ha
14:43 #acousticommons: < web59> levels are very low still
14:43 #acousticommons: < web59> but roosters are a thing I know
14:44 #acousticommons: < web59> better now
14:44 #acousticommons: < mort> yes hahaha
14:44 #acousticommons: < web59> nice
14:44 #acousticommons: < mort> brb
14:44 #acousticommons: < web59> ok!
14:44 #acousticommons: < web59> zip
14:47 #acousticommons: < mort> back
14:47 #acousticommons: < mort> i couldn't find them
14:47 #acousticommons: < mort> and had mixers anxiety
14:48 #acousticommons: < web59> haha
14:48 #acousticommons: < web59> I can take the stream back over if you want to go searching?
14:48 #acousticommons: < mort> i think if people were in a mode to switch jobs they might be in the commuunal area
14:49 #acousticommons: < mort> "yo yo yo"
14:51 #acousticommons: < mort> hm
14:52 #acousticommons: < mort> the cruunch of gravel underfoot makes me think one of the streamboxes might almost be back
14:52 #acousticommons: < mort> maybe i will go searching
14:52 #acousticommons: < web59> makes sense
14:52 #acousticommons: < mort> would you take the mix back for a little while
14:52 #acousticommons: < web59> ok you want to leave ur stream running or I change it?
14:52 #acousticommons: < web59> yes maybe I will go to Bolwerk power tools for a change haha
14:53 #acousticommons: < mort> nice
14:53 #acousticommons: < mort> i will write you here when i am back
14:53 #acousticommons: < mort> :)
14:53 #acousticommons: < mort> :)
14:53 #acousticommons: < web59> ok!
14:53 #acousticommons: < mort> i prefer emoticons to emojis
14:53 #acousticommons: < mort> :>)
14:53 #acousticommons: < mort> :^)
14:54 #acousticommons: < mort> brb
14:54 #acousticommons: < web59> same
14:55 #acousticommons: < web59> at Bolwerk now

14:55 #acousticommons: < web59> rain on roof
14:57 #acousticommons: < web59> base hum of power tools
14:59 #acousticommons: < web59> truck
15:02 #acousticommons: < mort> im back
15:02 #acousticommons: < mort> people are getting ready to work
15:02 #acousticommons: < mort> grant's streambox is maybe by some water
15:02 #acousticommons: < mort> its raining quite steadily now
15:03 #acousticommons: < web59> has grant gor 33?
15:03 #acousticommons: < web59> got
15:04 #acousticommons: < web59> wait no 33 is at Bolwerk
15:04 #acousticommons: < web59> so we are with the water stream now
15:05 #acousticommons: < mort> nice
15:07 #acousticommons: < web59> walking
15:09 #acousticommons: < mort> exploring
15:10 #acousticommons: < mort> human noise
15:10 #acousticommons: < mort> machine noise
15:11 #acousticommons: < mort> self made
15:11 #acousticommons: < web59> timelessness
15:11 #acousticommons: < mort> trejectories
15:12 #acousticommons: < mort> ah
15:13 #acousticommons: < web59> as grant arrived back I moved to the studio stream by accidne t
15:13 #acousticommons: < web59> so we got echo
15:25 #acousticommons: < mort> we're going to pack down here on the farm
15:25 #acousticommons: < mort> bye all
15:26 #acousticommons: < mort> hear you in the stream
15:26 -!- mort [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
15:27 #acousticommons: < web59> ok great
15:30 #acousticommons: < web59> metal on metal
15:37 -!- web46 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
16:14 -!- web93 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
16:14 -!- web22 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
19:45 -!- web59 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
20:33 -!- web41 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
20:40 -!- web41 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
20:52 -!- web87 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
20:52 -!- web87 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
23:15 -!- web36 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
23:15 -!- web36 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
--- Day changed Wed Sep 04 2024
00:19 -!- web10 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
00:19 -!- web10 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
00:20 -!- web92 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
00:20 -!- web92 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
00:33 -!- web60 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
00:39 -!- web67 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
00:39 -!- web67 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
00:40 -!- web58 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
00:41 -!- web58 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
00:41 -!- web60 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
07:43 -!- web59 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
07:49 -!- web59 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
08:53 -!- web8 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
08:54 -!- web8 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
08:54 -!- web34 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
08:54 -!- web34 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
09:16 -!- web82 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
09:16 -!- web82 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
09:45 -!- web45 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons
09:52 -!- web45 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has quit [Connection closed]
09:58 -!- Irssi: warning Connection reset by peer
09:58 -!- Irssi: Connection lost to 185.181.117.6
09:58 -!- Irssi: Removed reconnection to server 185.181.117.6 port 6667
09:58 -!- Irssi: Looking up 185.181.117.6
09:58 -!- Irssi: Reconnecting to 185.181.117.6 [185.181.117.6] port 6667 - use /RMRECONNS to abort
09:58 -!- Irssi: Connection to 185.181.117.6 established
09:58 !irc.local *** Looking up your hostname...
09:58 !irc.local *** Could not resolve your hostname: Request timed out; using your IP address (37.185.85.143) instead.
09:58 !irc.local Welcome to ReveilIRC!
09:58 -!- Welcome to the ReveilIRC IRC Network commonsl1g!root@37.185.85.143
09:58 <commonsl1g> identify soundcamp
09:58 -!- Your host is irc.local, run-

ning version InspIRCd-2.0
09:58 -!- This server was created on Debian
09:58 -!- irc.local InspIRCd-2.0 iosw bhiklmnopstv bhklov
09:58 -!- AWAYLEN=200 CASEMAPPING=cp1250 CHANMODES=-b,k,l,imnpst CHANNELLEN=64 CHANTYPES=# CHARSET=ascii ELIST=MU FNC KICKLEN=255 MAP MAXBANS=60 MAXCHANNELS=20 MAXPARA=32 are supported by this server
09:58 -!- MAXTARGETS=20 MODES=20 NETWORK=ReveilIRC NICKLEN=32 PREFIX=(ohv)@%+ STATUSMSG=@%+ TOPICLEN=307 VBANLIST WALLCHOPS WALLVOICES are supported by this server
09:58 -!- 92IAAAANO your unique ID
09:58 -!- irc.local message of the day
09:58 -!- End of message of the day.
09:58 -!- There are 1 users and 1 invisible on 1 servers
09:58 -!- 1 channels formed
09:58 -!- I have 2 clients and 0 servers
09:58 -!- Current Local Users: 2 Max: 7
09:58 -!- Current Global Users: 2 Max: 7
09:58 -!- Mode change [+i] for user commonsl1g
09:58 -!- nickserv: No such nick/channel
09:58 -!- Irssi: Your nick is owned by root [root@37.185.88.242]
09:58 -!- commonsl1g [root@37.185.85.143] has joined #acousticommons
09:58 [Users #acousticommons]
09:58 [commonsl1g] [commonslog]
09:58 -!- Irssi: #acousticommons: Total of 2 nicks [0 ops, 0 halfops, 0 voices, 2 normal]
09:58 -!- Channel #acousticommons created Tue Sep 3 10:39:02 2024
09:58 -!- Irssi: Join to #acousticommons was synced in 5 secs
09:59 -!- commonslog [root@37.185.88.242] has quit [Ping timeout: 121 seconds]
11:58 -!- web12 [7f000001@185.181.117.6] has joined #acousticommons

PLEASE SEE FIRST TRANSCRIPT OF THE IRC LOG FROM TUESDAY 3 SEP 2025 HERE

— https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/y8z8as63yluyow6qb4yva/IRC_LOG_24-09-03_complete_unedited.txt?rlkey=ihdd182l9q-bqq3fp5ki3nrwv4&dl=0

ALSO IN CASE OF USE:

NOTES DURING THE RESIDENCY [selected, unedited]

TO DO

— Work on stream recordings
— Work on comms with project spaces and streamers
— Make a radio group to be in contact
— Try out the streamrecorder
— ** Agree where to keep files, label, etc
— ** Create a shared file for holding materials [dropbox, google drive..?]
— Find usb cables
— Document - 2 custom devices
— using the mix as a way to make the process of processing recordings more concise for ourselves
— Make a server we can use for local file sharing etc
—

STREAMBOXES

Box #	Who	Where / Date	Note
19			No modem on 1 SEP evening → check and fix (Elena found the modem and will re fit it)
27		Forest / 2 SEP	
32	Oisin	Dok	
33		Bolwerk / 2 SEP	
34		Farm / 2 SEP	
35	Daan	Farm / 2 SEP	
36			
37			
Demo	SC	Bolwerk / 2 SEP	

information

TOOLS

Streamrecorder
Available on the local network [now Reveil7] at:
streamrecorder.local
Dev notes to update: +Streamrecorder

Pi logger (Commonslog)

IRC chat: https://acousticommons.net/listen/
[logger is listening]
Player is currently playing wave farm soundcamp mix
This will be available when we are running the studio

NOTES BY DATE

4 SEP

LSS

/Butt local recordings
7hrs 40 mins
35mins
1hr 26mins

/downloads from wavefarm
22mins
48mins
3hrs 18mins

/streamrecorder recordings

/vlc recordings - across machines

Monday 2 September

Notes

9:30 am
Box 35 running from the farm with roosters and distant conversation (opening circle) [Farm]
sounds of chickens
Birds – parakeets?
Airplane -09:44
Someone is bashing something - 09:50
Helicopter and parakeets - 09:53
Someone moving and walking with box
walking - box is being moved - helicopter continues 09:54
helicopter gets louder and then quieter - rooster takes over 09:55
some talking in the back ground: 09:35
moving things 10:07
Rooster is working hard 10:08
Talking 10:14

10:45 am
Listening to the Bolwerk box
TO DO
Update the URL to stream_33:
Your stream url is ..... http://locus.creacast.com:9001/stream_033.mp3
OR https://locus.creacast.com:9443/stream_033.mp3
Check connections on the box
Restart to update the URL to 033
Check if sound is ok now
→ Talking with people about the boxes and using them. Includes music
Adjust gain

Bolwerk

11:15 (stream demo)
Brief
Fitting out the container for use by gardeners
Where to put tools, labels, information sharing systems?

Box 27 comes online 11:50
Trying to figure out where it is / who has it
Discussing privacy, how intrusive is the box, how much of the children's conversation should we hear?
Maybe put the box in a tree?
discussing in ... what language?
Wood pigeons
What is the definition of a child?
Describing the live stream to someone - how it works - important information
global scale vs local scale
nice to hear others describing the project 12:06
Fish and video live stream with gate
fuck Israel, free Palestine 12:08 pm
Making a statement about Palestine in the public moment - how to make an appropriate statement 12:10

Jadd's voice, Alena's voice
bird call - Fweeep^ - a short rising call
something is squeeking, a swing?
wind through the leaves of trees, twigs breaking underfoot, wood pigeons up in the right ear
wings of insects buzzing past the microphone - en route to somewhere fast
road
bells toll
taking apart the box
"i like the idea, but, what is it actually"
"they* will have answers of course"
*soundcamp are they
"because it's weird"

Stream 35 around 12:10 pm
Toilet pdf?
Camping sites with less impact on the environment
sounds more journalistic - maybe they are inside?
We (sc) don't want to be the end point of the sound - we need to get the studio set up

Bolwerk demo stream 12:30
People stopping for lunch, collecting plates and water
We are thinking of wrapping for lunch soon as well

Themes

Whether different projects activate different patterns:

Eg the farm is performing kids of plurality in terms of wider group of participants, birds, companion animals, becoming farm animals?
social farm
towards agro forestry..

Bolwerk is more about physical materials, structures

The wilderness / forest island
Ideas of separation eg autonomous space for children
Ideas of
Ref Desert Islands

Appearance of rupture on even very brief appearance of parents / authorities
Different to say some ideas of free schools or other alternative education formats where power - dynamics and relationship are interrogated but often as ongoing and together relationships
Islands imply this kind of re-beginning - a re-imagining of founding a society - Deleuze
To what extend can this be done within...
Sound? What if the parents are heard but not seen?
Windscreens made of synthetic fur- an ecological concern - interfering in ecological succession - but the site is already contaminated... by agriculture, traffic, history

Outside farm space
More inside space
Working on a garden tool shed
Interior design being given a kind of secondary status in architectural practice - a gendered situation
The inside - how to store tools - an internal structure for gardening.
Then coming away from the structure to use different tools to think about how the space might be
Design process creating a nature/culture split
A regime of attention
An ecological design process - holding at arms lengths our assumptions about how these things are articulated
Could listening support a more nuanced understanding of what this process might be?
Designing for a group of people who are not present - can you design a really useful tool shed for a gardening group without being in discussion with them - or maybe they are around?
Who is / are the gardening group?

Wilderness
Stream 27
Listening 12:13 2 SEP 2024
Testing the political limits / reach / feel of the network
Eg saying: 'fuck israel free Palestine'
Thinking back to the manifestations of the far right after we arrived

Sasha: if feels like a problem that the sound is coming in but not going back out
We need to set up the station so the transmission loop is complete

12:38
Detailing discussion

13:18
Box35 - from the Farm
Really nice balance of practical conversation and building sound
In conversation with box34, also at the farm, but more environmental (helicopter) sound (low gain)
Box27 from the forest - quiet, wind sound through trees
Really nice impressions of the three different sites Copyright

information

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