

# How do we know? Institutional listening and young agency in the arts



## Who is behind this book?

Teen Advisory Boards (TABs) provide paid positions for young people aged between 16 and 21. They bring together individuals with a variety of life experiences and support their explorations of art and culture today. Encouraging TAB members to take experimental and critical approaches to what they discover, host organisations integrate TAB members' reflective, critical views about contemporary art and culture into their organisational thinking and planning. Through collective discussion, the Boards propose projects and strategies for developing the in-

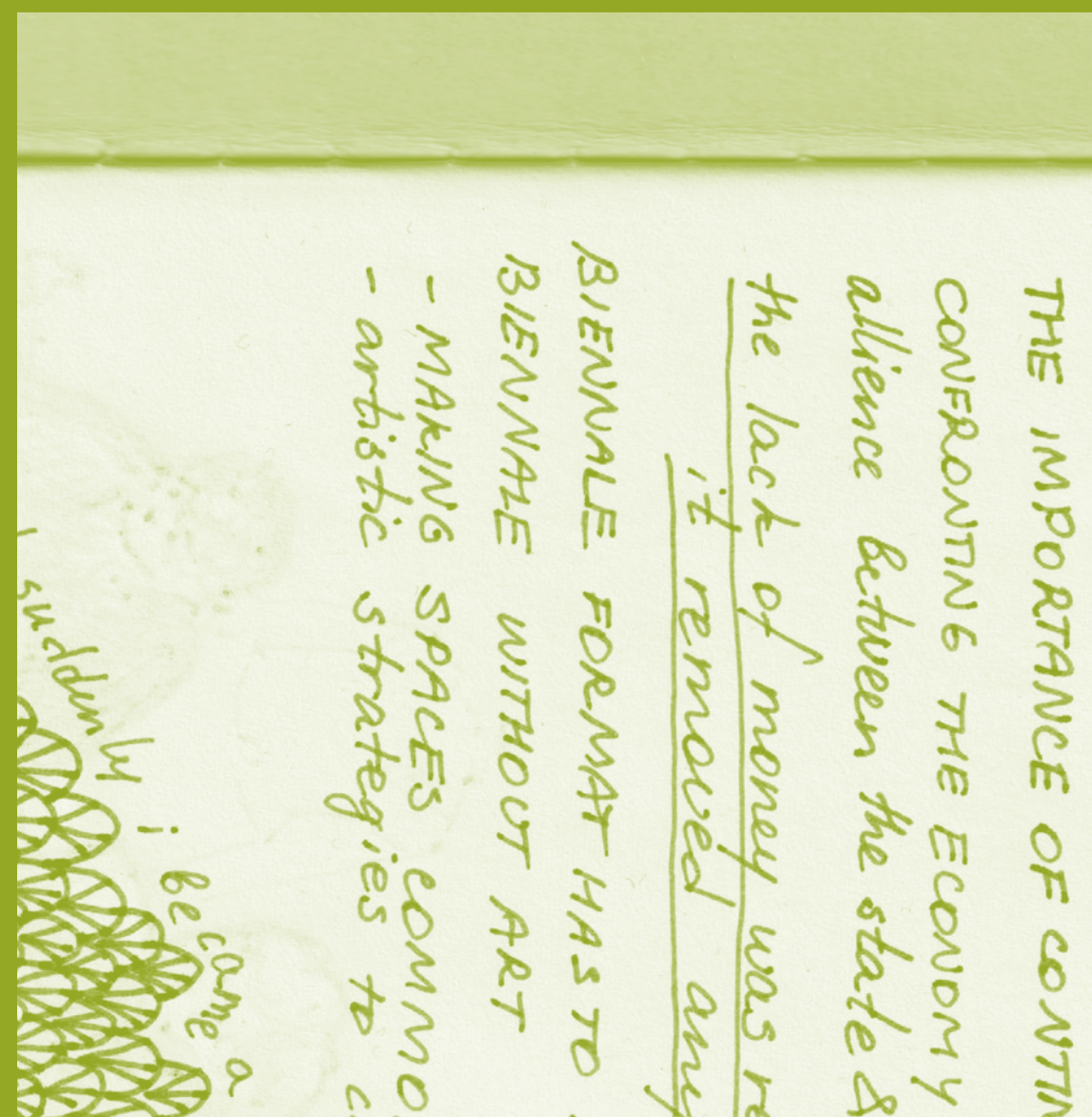
stitutions, and actively shape organisations' processes of decision-making, evaluation and programming. TAB members typically serve on the board for a year, though some remain involved for longer. Index launched its Teen Advisory Board in 2016. In 2018, PRAKSIS and Index began a collaboration to share experience and develop knowledge, leading to the establishment of PRAKSIS's TAB in the following year. PUBLICS joined this network in 2020, which led to the initiation of the PUBLICS Youth Advisory Board in early 2022.

PRAKSIS is a not-for-profit organisation fostering creative practice and knowledge production through collective activity and the exchange of ideas, skills and information. PRAKSIS seeks to establish dialogue between artists, thinkers and organisations locally and internationally, at all career stages, and across diverse cultures and disciplines. [www.praksisoslo.org](http://www.praksisoslo.org)

Index is a public art institution that serves both artists and audiences in multiple ways. It understands that its role does not begin and end with an exhibition: the activities, research processes and learning programs that Index supports, and the relationships it maintains with artists and audiences, are on-

going and complexly interrelated. Index's conceptual artistic approach makes space and time for criticality, dialogue and curiosity. It builds discursive situations that develop the role of art today in new ways. [www.indexfoundation.se](http://www.indexfoundation.se)

PUBLICS is a curatorial agency with a dedicated library, event space and reading room. It is based in Vallila Helsinki, an area known for its industrial working class histories and, more recently, for its influx of diverse artistic and academic communities. Within this publication, active contributions from young associates of PUBLICS can be found in Sayed Sattar Hassan's text. [www.publics.fi](http://www.publics.fi)





a searing desire for change

Polynomial Time Algorithm

Manifestation

AUSTRAE  
AND prac  
Feed back:  
in work.

ARE WE OUR  
COUNTRIES

Handwritten scribbles and faint text on a black background.



STEREOTYPES?



Talks w/ artist at Nordic hub  
point, about the residency  
program and stuff.

- Artists get a chance to  
live and work at a studio  
for a set period of time  
Online application, open call,  
fully funded.

- Trans artists: website has  
lots of residencies across the  
world.

Cont  
- In  
- Co  
- Av  
- Av  
- how  
- lo

아녕하  
안녕  
처는  
오심안아  
어오계기  
나랑 사  
랑

How do we know?  
Institutional listening and young  
agency in the arts

a collaboration between  
PRAKSIS, Index and PUBLICS



Thanks to all involved, including but not limited to:

Fortune Ativi  
Aisha Berge  
Fariha Fatima Malik  
Dugagjin Osmanaj  
Mey-Thip Mortensen  
Ilwaad H. Mahamed  
Emil Temim  
Gard Møller-Johansen  
Ari Sigurdarson  
Sujani Sutharsan  
Sadiah Hassan  
Nellie Barazandeh  
Mikkel Inchley  
Sumaya Elmi  
Annine Slettebø  
Noah Gylver  
Hannah Røsholt Siger  
Zeinab Al-khatib  
Nasteha Hassan Mahamed  
Alcina Nancy Munene Persson  
Anahita Mishra  
Felix Krausz Sjögren  
Luna Sackett  
Malin Issa  
Montadar Saleh  
Sarikazaman Ullah  
Vigo Roth  
Ville Ferm Thorgersen  
José Velasquez Esteban  
Emil Pita  
Sarika Ullah  
Simon Sjöberg  
Malin Issa  
Adina Edfelt  
Felix Krausz Sjögren  
Yosra Ali  
Leo Queiroz Gonzalez  
Alfred Nilsson  
Maryam Mohammed  
Alva Mårsén  
José Velasquez Esteban  
Aqueel Raffa  
Simon Sjöberg  
Leo Ramirez Iderström  
Lovisa Jonsson  
Sara Freds  
Ina Hagen  
Sol Archer  
Maryam Fanni  
Sayed Sattar Hasan  
Nicholas John Jones  
Marti Manen  
Paul O'Neill  
Emmeli Person  
Marit Silsand  
Eliisa Suvanto  
Isabella Tjäder  
Rachel Withers  
Charlotte Teyler  
Johannes B. Jellum  
Tonje Lona Eriksen  
Nadja Lipsync

Áron Birtan  
Kari Kvittingen Djukastein  
Hilda Levin  
Coyote  
Jinn Jansen  
Temi Odumosu  
Pontus Pettersson  
Sandra Praun  
Bronwyn Bailey Charteris  
Joanna Nordin  
SKF  
Ashik Zaman  
Alida Ivanov  
Ulla West  
Fredda Berg  
Tormod Carlsen  
João Doria  
Mia Habib  
Kirsty Kross  
Rudy Loewe  
Hanni Kamaly  
MYCKET  
Utke Acs  
Gelawesh Waledkhani  
Samamtha Lippett  
Helen Røstum  
Lou Mouw  
Jasmine Hinks  
Cori Ready  
Anne Klontz  
Linnea Hansander  
Afrang Nordlöf Malekian  
Nour Helou  
Julia Cristina Trochez  
Kevin Leander Fiabema  
Micol Curatolo  
Kari Slaatsveen  
Ric Francis  
Annelise Bothner-By  
Therese Möllenhoff  
Demitra Christidou  
Irina Mutt  
Vicki Christaki  
Tal Gilad  
Harold Offeh  
Laia Estruch  
Anastasiia Lapteva  
Manda Loipponen  
Valeriia Masliukova-Malova  
Erika Rypieva  
Róza Turunen  
Vanessa Uhlbäck  
Die Keure  
Erasmus+ ungdom  
Arts and Culture Norway  
Kulturtanken  
Nordic Culture Point  
Sparebankstiftelsen DNB  
Arts Council Sweden  
Stockholm City  
Region Stockholm

5	Introduction Our Many Perspectives
13	TAB 2022 Glossary
23	Contexts, Conversations and Camera Phones
45	A Brief History of HAM
53	Rolling on a River – From the Archive
112	Biographies – TAB 2022



## Introduction Our Many Perspectives

In this two-part introduction, Teen Advisory Board members and team members from the organisations that run the boards answer the same five questions.



## Pt. 1 – Teen Advisory Board Members Introduce This Book

*You are all members of the Teen Advisory Boards at Index (ITAB) and PRAKSIS (PTAB). What are these groups and what do they do?*

Sara Freds:

Our Teen Advisory Board consists of young people whose backgrounds are diverse in some ways but very similar in others. We regularly get together to learn and discuss interesting topics of various kinds relating to the world of art, artists and art spaces.

Ari Sigurdarson:

I think of the Teen Advisory Board as a place where young, art-interested individuals work together to find common solutions to including other young people in the world of art. It's also a place to learn, both by yourself, but also together with other young people.

Fariha Fatima Malik:

We're a lovely, magnificent dream team working towards common goals! We develop our artistic interests, and we also give information and advice about young people's relation to art, through workshops, conversations and outputs such as this publication.

Felix Krausz Sjögren:

The Teen Advisory Board's objective is to change the norms of the art world by getting it to listen to young perspectives. We are attempting to radically alter how art is viewed, consumed, curated and created.

*What is this book about?*

Ari Sigurdarson:

This book is about the lessons we learnt while on the board, and the ways we propose that others might be invited into the world of art.

Sarika Ullah:

To me, it's about perspectives. It is about the ways that different individuals interpret the same objects, concepts or situations. When I look at a flower I might see sunshine behind it, making the flower look brighter. But my friend might look at the same flower and see clouds behind it. Looking at things from different perspectives makes life more interesting and it can start an everlasting discussion.

Mey-Thip Mortensen:

This book suggests ways of making a place for young people in the art world and helping them navigate it. We'd like to break down barriers and make artworks more accessible. The glossary that we've compiled is about creating a language to help young people understand art better and feel more able to reflect on it.

*What has stood out most for you during your time on the Teen Advisory Board?*

Alcina Munene Persson:

Without a doubt, it's the sheer variety of art and related topics we got to cover. I'd expected that we'd mostly focus on traditional visual art, but I've really enjoyed having encountered a lot of other artistic mediums such as murals, collaborative writing and interactive installations, whether they involved real-time human performance or pre-prepared components. When I think of ITAB I think of novelty and exploration. You may come to the board with some previous experience of art, but when you're there you build a new understanding of it, together with other young people.

Luna Sackett:

It's been very special for me to have the opportunity to engage with art and gallery spaces in a different way – for instance through dialogue with exhibiting artists.

My view of art has shifted. It now feels more like a conversation or a relationship between me and art, rather than a one-sided process where I am only supposed to present art or have art presented to me.

Emil Temim:

What stands out most is how joining the board totally blew away my expectations. I never thought it would be so creative, or that we would have so many interesting workshops and tasks. On top of that, the people we've met via the board have been truly appreciated, both for their kindness and their interesting thoughts and ideas.

Ilwaad Hasan:

My time with PTAB has been nothing but lovely, but for me there are two stand-out aspects. The first was our workshop time with Sayed Sattar Hasan, who was always creative, outgoing and imaginative. He continually pushed us out of our comfort zone, and that taught me to freely explore new stuff with open eyes. The second is the teen advisory board members themselves. We discuss different ideas and build on them together as a team. We all have respect for each other and care for one another, and that makes the board feel like a community. When we met ITAB in Helsinki, we were two very diverse groups – a lot of people coming together, and that was a bit scary at first – but our very differences brought us together. Meeting ITAB in person taught me that creativity is not a set thing that you have, but a way of thinking.

*What have you gained through TAB? What has been most meaningful to you?*

Sujani Sutharsan:

During my time at TAB I've been able to explore many aspects of art. I've realised just how narrow my idea of the subject was before joining PTAB. It gave me an opportunity to explore an interest I didn't know I had.

Vigo Roth:

I've gained ways to think with others. Discussions and exercises have helped me to feel comfortable enough to really listen to others and their ways of communicating. It broadened my perception of discussions and what they can lead to, and strengthened my ability to reflect on my own and other's ways of thinking and formulate those thoughts clearly. It's been a two-way street of pure reflection!

Gard Møller Johansen:

It's given me a big opportunity to develop my knowledge and frames of reference and understanding of art and the art scene. Multiple workshops with different contemporary artists helped us challenge norms, cultural viewpoints, and prejudices. As a PTAB member, I also got a platform, together with the other members, to express and share how young people experience the art scene. The activities, including workshops with artists and the meeting with the Nordic TAB members in Helsinki, have been full of meaning. The result is that I now feel equipped to participate more actively in the art world, and potentially to work in the cultural sector as well.

*What are your hopes for this book?*

Anahita Mishra:

I hope this book will help others understand that art is different for everyone. One section is made up of images that we each sent in, and they are all very different. This shows that art is deeply personal. What one person considers art might not be something someone else considers art, and vice versa.

Dugajin Osmanaj:

I hope this book will help other young people and/or youth-interested cultural workers start similar programs to Teen Advisory Board in their own regions, cities, and neighbourhoods. This book sets out lots of terms, workshop ideas and structures that will be useful to you if you'd like to start an arts-and-culture-based youth organisation or make a publication similar to this. Establishing NGO "artivism" could be an important way of introducing more people to the world of artists, galleries and art organisations and what they offer.

Mey-Thip Mortensen:

I would like this book not only to be an introduction to conversations from the art world, but also an inspiration. I hope young people will become even more curious when they read this book, and feel they really have a place here in this particular field.

14

15

## Pt. 2 – Teen Advisory Board Organisers Introduce This Book

*What is this book about for you?*

Isabella Tjäder:

The intention for the publication is to collect the ideas and insights that the members of the teen advisory boards have gathered over the past year while working with artists and institutional staff. These insights and ideas have already been used to better the work of the institutions which the boards advise, and through the publication will be made available to a bigger audience that, like the institutions, can learn from them. In addition, the publication will offer a view of how a particular model for learning has been employed within two art institutions.

Marit Silsand:

Yes, it offers a summary of aspects of what the boards have been working through recently. The voices of TAB members and the two organisations meld into a "we". I am moved and inspired by the groups incitement of existing – they are a body of people with common interests in art and culture, and from different layers in the society, cultural backgrounds, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation. They had not met before they joined TAB. The warmth and joy that comes from the group is very special and inclusive. They teach me

much about differing perspectives that I don't think I would have gained anywhere else. For me this book is about sharing the essence of that with its readers.

Marti Manen:

This book is also a way to show that there are many voices that we need to listen to when rethinking institutional contexts. We see individuals thinking for the community, we see ideas floating, we see questions regarding art, culture, society and structures being addressed. We see dialogues between participants and artists, we see information and opinion. Somehow, this book is a historical vessel that shows thoughts and ways of working, aims, desires and the will to believe in learning processes to redefine the institutional context for the arts.

Nicholas John Jones:

I like that notion of the book as a historical vessel of important elements of the TAB members' experiences. This book is both a resource and a means to foster and carry the voices involved. It represents a circular process of encouraging and learning fresh ways of thinking, then gathering and sharing them – that is to say, the process of making the publication aimed to embody the content that it holds.



So you are all organisers of the Teen Advisory Boards at Index (ITAB) and PRAKSIS (PTAB). Could you tell us about teen advisory board?

Isabella:

The idea behind the Teen Advisory Boards is to gather groups of young people (ages 16–21) who collectively put together and suggest projects and strategies to develop Index and PRAKSIS, two contemporary art institutions located in Stockholm and Oslo respectively. The boards bring together youths with a wide range of experiences, who can approach the question of art's role in society in an experimental and critical way. The TABs use listening, discussion and play to critically examine, discuss and reformulate the norms ingrained in the art world.

Marit:

In my role as facilitator of the PTAB group, it is important to give them as much insight into the art and cultural field in Oslo as possible; to help them navigate what is out there. Together we visit spaces ranging from large institutions to artist run projects. The group meet professionals from the field including artists, curators, and directors among others. The aim is not for them to fit into the existing art and culture field. Nor is it to learn to speak the same language used between the art world contributors. Rather, I hope for the members to become aware of the type of language and structures used in the arts, so that they can define their own paths.

Marti:

The Teen Advisory Boards define moments and situations that are important both for its participants but also for the institutions. We, as people working and taking care of institutions, can learn a lot from these groups of youngsters that decide voluntarily to experience, react and think about contemporary art practices and cultural behaviours. Somehow, it is about voices. The institutional voice has historically had a tendency to be non-human, to be a cold voice sending messages but avoiding a real dialogue. The Teen Advisory Boards are for me (as director of one institution) not just a first audience but something more: they are participants now and in a possible future. If we are able to listen to them we will learn about what is important for next generations and how to deal with it.

Isabella:

For me as a curator, working with the advisory board means I am presented with diverse perspectives and that I am challenged to scrutinise my methods. It simultaneously offers an opportunity to experiment and explore topics together: developing and evolving.

This type of reciprocal learning is central to how we work together; it is all about listening, thinking collectively, and being open to reconsideration. Meaning it challenges the traditional idea of education, as well as the traditional idea of *the institution*: structures which historically have been fundamentally hierarchical, with one party supposedly representing (and therefore controlling) "the truth" and delivering it to one which does not.

Nicholas:

I absolutely agree with what the three of you say about Teen Advisory Board and its role. For my part, another aim for TAB is to strengthen the future of the arts and cultural field. By working with young people who have little prior experience of the arts, the intention is to bring fresh voices those working in the institutions can learn alongside, as well as to help the board members to feel welcomed and to take ownership of the space, not just during their time with TAB, but in the future as well. This is a part of a long-term perspective of encouraging a more intersectional, inclusive creative field.

Marit:

The two Teen Advisory Boards are tiny drops in the ocean of the arts field, however those drops create such powerful ripples. As professionals working in the field, the Teen Advisory Boards really keep us on our toes! Some of the members really challenge what they experience. If we were in H.C. Andersen's fairytale the "The Emperor's New Clothes", they would be the ones pointing out that the emperor is actually naked.

*Are there things that stand out to you from your time with the Teen Advisory Boards?*

Isabella:

In addition to offering new perspectives on how we conduct the institutional work at Index, the thing that particularly stands out to me from my interactions with our advisory board is their way of interacting, communicating, and cultivating relations. There is a lot of talk in the art world of community and the politics of care, but I have not once seen it practised as elegantly, thoroughly, and consistently as when working with ITAB. They have introduced me to methods for running meetings that promote mindfulness and attentiveness – never assuming but always listening.

Marti:

In fact, it's impressive to see how they "do" care, how they put care in practice with no need to explain it. The art world has the tendency to be a tough environment full of promises and precarious situations. With the members of the Teen Advisory Board we have seen other ways to be and work. It gives us hope. Another important thing is that the Teen Advisory Boards are arenas not necessarily for agreement. The participants have different opinions but they find ways to listen to each other to see the nuances of our society.

Nicholas:

When I think of the Teen Advisory Board, the first thing that pops into my mind is joy and laughter, which is a special thing in the often highly critical arts field. The second thing is a mix of eager curiosity and uncertainty ahead of a first encounter with a person or space. There are a lot of firsts times in TAB, both for the members and those working with them. Over the past years of working with multiple Teen Advisory Boards, the structure has always established a brave and supportive space, where the board members have been open and supportive of each other, even at times when

16

17

there has been friction over some of the sensitive and complicated topics the group take on.

Marit:

I'm so impressed by the bravery that so many of the board members show when speaking up. Another thing that stands out is the ability of some members to detect when something is off. For example they are sensitive to tokenism – whether an institution respectfully represents people from minority backgrounds, or if it is making use of people to improve its own image without genuine commitment. The boards are like octopuses that send sensitive tentacles in many directions, creating impressions and awaken awareness wherever they come in contact.

*What have you gained through TAB? / What about TAB and its work has been meaningful to you?*

Nicholas:

Teen Advisory Board involves being open to "unlearning": for the TAB members this is first unlearning a common notion instilled through school – that art is about technical skill, when rather engaging with ideas and context. But it's also unlearning for those working institutionally. Having voices unfamiliar with the arts often challenges things you no longer even consider, the areas where you have become institutionalised. A wonderful thing about working with young people is they don't filter out things that those a little older might be afraid will sound foolish. They can push you on things you don't want to have to address.

Isabella:

Also, the structure enables us to work with artists in formats other than the exhibitional. We can engage in a dialogue that is not about programming, and not reared towards producing a specific output, it's just about research and learning on all levels.

Marti:

I think that one of the most important and meaningful things that happens with TAB at the institutional level is that the time frame is modified. We are working clearly with the future, with possibilities. It helps us to understand our own position, our privileges and our internalised institutional behaviour. We learn a lot with this unlearning through dialogues with TAB members. TAB helps us to reconsider our position and way of working. With TAB I see thoughts and ideas in process.

Marit:

I feel lucky to call the teen advisory board members my colleagues. I'm grateful to have been part of starting PTAB at PRAKSIS together with Nicholas and Charlotte. I feel fortunate to have been able to collaborate with so many talented artists during the creation of the year-long programmes, and I'm proud that each year we have had such wonderful feedback from the participants. Meeting the board members who complete the workshops with their fully engaged participation – the way they share their thoughts and opinions – gives me a huge sense of achievement. I have gained a lot of knowledge from collaborating with other institutions

and art spaces through the programme and it has really been meaningful to collaborate with Index and Publics to experience how the teens and organisations join forces across national borders. It's a special programme that Nicholas and I have often said we wish we could have participated in when we were their age.

Through TAB I feel a sense of community, a place that is not about name dropping or competing – who got the biggest grants, or who will exhibit in a fancy gallery. It's purely about the subjects within society and arts – and constantly asking ourselves "how can art deepen understanding"?

*What are your hopes for this book?*

Nicholas:

My hope is that the voices in this book will encourage and enable people across age groups to engage with the arts, but also to consider their place in the world in general. I hope it offers interesting takes on how language can be used; on the kinds of spaces we inhabit and those that we create; as well as to recognise and challenge internalised prejudices, and patterns of behaviour, be those constructive or not. I hope it will inspire more institutions to listen to new voices, and more people to bring their voices to bear.

Marit:

I hope people will carry this book with them – that it has a space in their bag. I hope the readers feel included and recognise some of the topics and issues discussed in this book. I hope the readers return to the book several times and discover new things. I hope it's a book the reader can grow with, and that it inspires them to ask questions. I hope people actively develop the glossary section. I hope it's a book that someone passes to their younger sibling, friend or colleague when the time is right.

Marti:

One of the good things with books is that they have a long life and can be activated again in 5, 10, 20, 100 years. I hope that this book will show a time of thoughts, some subjectivities and ideas, some structural critique and a vocabulary that – with time – will be historical.

Isabella:

Speaking of time: Working in the open-ended way that we do, it is crucial to sometimes set aside some time to focus actively on looking backwards rather than contemplating our next move. It is only in doing so that we can discern the links and thematic correspondences that connect the different things we have been doing. That's something I'm hoping for from the book – discovering connections.



## FIELD NOTES

Your field notes are a way of keeping a record of what words and phrases are used and how they are used.

The way you keep notes can be very personal to you, they need to contain just enough information that you can remember what words were being used, but not be so detailed that you cannot keep paying attention to your surroundings while you record them. Record words that seem important to you, with information about why they stood out to you.

These notes are just notes, they don't have to be complete sentences or beautiful writing. They don't even have to be in English, if you are more comfortable in another language you can use that, (also, of course, you may be encountering words in various languages you want to include).

There is no 'best way' to keep notes, they are there so that you can remember, and so can include drawing, colour, diagrams, graphics, tables, maps, numbers, cut outs, and bits of other text.

What the notes do have to do is provide enough information for you to expand on them, and remember why something was important in some weeks time so you can share them with the rest of the TAB.

## Remember:

- > Keep the notes short.
- > Focus on the research: Words and phrases and how they are being used.

of term  
19  
The mind  
though b  
much mor  
Catch and  
let your t  
like a

This glossary is not a dictionary or an encyclopaedia. It does not authoritatively define words or set strict rules about the use of language. It is a guide to the ways language and terminology may be used in a particular context.

A glossary may be culturally specific – dealing with words used in a fan culture or a sport, for instance. It might be academically specific, for example showing how a term that's used in common speech can take on a different meaning when it's used in a specialist field: botany, for instance.

This glossary was made by us, the Teen Advisory Boards of PRAKSIS and Index, together with artists Sol Archer and Ina Hagen. It aims to help crack open the wall of language and welcome you, the reader, into our experience of exploring language.

To access any area of society, it's key to access its particular language and terms. This glossary is built around five key words that we feel are particularly important. They are collective, context, hospitable, intersectional, and representation.

## Introduction by Ina Hagen and Sol Archer

This glossary is a result of collective and individual writing. It was produced by the members of PRAKSIS and Index Teen Advisory Boards, during the workshop *If Culture Was A House, Then Language Was The Key* (this title is a quote from – Khaled Hosseini's novel, *And the Mountains Echoed*) led by the two of us, with support from Isabella Tjäder and Marit Silsand.

Our approach involved thinking of a glossary as a tool for opening up the use of language in specific contexts. In the sciences, the arts, the humanities, politics or any other field, the meaning of words can vary, just as it does between social groups, age groups, neighbourhoods, cities, and countries. This glossary sits at the meeting point of art language, generational language, and the differing experiences of young board members from Oslo, Stockholm, and Helsinki. It is not a definitive attempt to fix the meaning of words; it is a welcoming gesture into the space of language as it is shared by the TAB group, and an opportunity to reflect with them on how their experiences of art are channelled by the language they meet in art spaces.

This glossary is consistent with the plural and individual comments that characterised the workshops. It retains the differences in tone, diverse voices, positions and meanings carried within language that (even within a community as small as the TAB), produce different experiences in the users, arrangers, and receivers of language.

The TAB members discussed how art language is a specific form of writing and speech – a form that carries legacies of academic, class, imperial, and geographical histories. We discussed the balance between language's ability to introduce nuance and specificity into art discussions, and its capacity to produce boundaries and exclusions.

The PRAKSIS and Index TABs gathered most of this glossary's terms by keeping field notes during a visit to Helsinki, where they attended a seminar on contemporary art and took part in workshops and excursions with the Publics Youth Advisory Board. This approach to documentation is rooted in anthropology and scientific research; it is a means to record an experience while remaining attentive to your surroundings. [Fig 1, 2]

Following the trip to Helsinki we used a combination of conversation, writing exercises, anecdotes, and group definition processes to record how selected terms from the TAB field notes are understood within the group.

We focused the workshop discussion on five of the most frequently recorded terms from the TAB field notes. They were chosen as words holding the potential to gather together the other terms that had been frequently recorded in Helsinki. They offered frames for the TAB members to reflect on their encounters with art language.

As they wrote, the group members considered the contexts in which they'd encountered the words, and the connections they perceived between different pairs and clusters of words. They discussed the ways that they understand themselves: how they consciously determine their own work, how they apply their political views, and how they see their identity as a group – and this conversation produced a collection of terms that we've grouped under the heading "self-determination". This growing assembly of words has been recorded as a provocation – a seed or snapshot of language as it is growing within the group, and continuing to inform their directions and intentions. Reading their comments, we encounter the TAB members' experience of language as something embodied. It is affected by the spaces in which they have encountered it, by their encounters with the speakers using it, and by the power relations that it mediates. We invite you to make use of this conversation-glossary to make sense of, and critically examine, the language and terminology that you yourself encounter when thinking about, speaking about, experiencing, or doing art.

## Some suggestions that it may be helpful to be conscious of and record.

1. Be aware of where you are:
  - Is this a private conversation? Is it in a gallery talk? A film? A museum guide? A cafe? Is it a promotional poster in public? In a studio visit with an artist? How formal is the setting?
2. Be aware of who is there with you:
  - Is this public? Is it a TAB group? Is it a private conversation?
3. Be aware of who is speaking/ writing and how you identify them:
  - Are they professional culture workers?
  - What kind of age do you think they are?
  - Are they authority figures?
4. How do you feel when you hear the language they are using?
  - Were you comfortable or uncomfortable? Were you confused or illuminated?
5. How do other people around you seem to react?

## Interview tips

"If you had to choose two words that you think should be in the Glossary, what would they be and why?"

1. Don't be afraid to ask "why?"
2. Ask for explanations:
  - For example, you can say "I am curious about X, can you say more about that?"
3. Try not to use questions that contain the answer or can be answered yes or no:
  - Ask "what do you think about X", instead of "do you think X is good or bad."
4. Listen, don't speak:
  - Give people time to think, don't rush to fill silences.



# Collective

## Use it in a sentence

“We are a collective”  
“We work collectively”  
“We have a collective practice”

## Synonyms

Assembly\*  
Shared\*  
Group\*

## TAB definition

A collective is a group of people – maybe an organisation or a company. A group of people with a collective purpose or mindset, working towards the same thing, who chose to make use of their differences together.

“Collective” describes a sense of not being alone. It may refer to the collective experiences of a group, a shared thought, experience, or feeling.

Collectives have group dynamics, They share strengths to fulfil their needs from and with each other.

What's the difference between a collective and a cult?

The word “collective” describes a type of collaboration where you try to let everyone work in ways that are individually right for them, not ways that are imposed by someone. It suggests a non-hierarchical structure.

A collective space sounds like a more democratic space where people work together without a dominating power structure. Power and agency are distributed. It's a space where no one holds ownership, everyone is equal and everyone has access.

In our workshops in Helsinki, the discussion about how we can create open and inclusive spaces was key. Used as an adverb, “collective” action implies political mass action: striking, protesting, the powerful acts of a group taking power and using the power of many people being together.

In the Teen Advisory Board I think we are working towards a collective goal. We came with our own predispositions and goals, but now we work together towards the same thing, even if we are not necessarily all working in the same way, or towards something that affects everyone in the same way.

A collective needs to decide to come together. That may happen by coincidence, but you have to be able to come together to decide to be together. A group becomes a collective when they make a conscious decision and choose to see each other as equals. A group can assemble, but they aren't a collective until they choose to be.

It's easy to be on the outside labelling a group as a collective when that group isn't necessarily thinking that way. You may be in a group that acts collectively without realising you are. But sometimes people group other people together, and 'collective' is one of the words used for that – it can go hand in hand with political stereotypes. The difference between someone labelling a group, and a group labelling themselves, as a collective, depends on whether they have a straightforward shared goal or intention.

## Use it as a verb / How to DO it

As a verb, you can talk about practising collectively. A collective practice that we have at PTAB involves “check-ins” and “check-outs”: making sure to collect input, ideas and views from everyone in an equal and fair way. I think collective practice involves establishing some sort of mission statement which sets out how and what things people will contribute. A collective practice can be a condition or a norm that you share.

## Established definitions

Tate glossary: Loosely defined, an art collective is a group of artists working together to achieve a common objective.

Oxford Learners dictionary: a singular noun, such as committee or team, that refers to a group of people, animals or things and, in British English, can be used with either a singular or a plural verb. In American English it must be used with a singular verb.

Cambridge dictionary: Adjective: done or shared by every member of a group: a collective action/effort/decision. “It will require a collective effort from government, providers, and the media to meet our goals.” Collective responsibility/rights. “All directors take collective responsibility for board decisions.”

## Related words

*Collaboration\**

*Understanding\** When we visited a lady at the island in Helsinki, we were shown her textile art. At first it was difficult to see or understand this type of art, but after having her explain and educate us on her culture and the reason behind it, it was easier to reflect and see the beauty of it.

*Solidarity\**

*collective effort\**

*Cooperation\**

*Connection\** When we tried out different activities together, it felt like we connected as a group. It didn't feel like anyone cared about how unusual the activity was. It was a way for the workshop presenter to make us explore different forms of breathing and sound making. It didn't only make a connection between the TAB members, but also between the TAB groups and the presenter.

*independent\**

# Context

## Use it in a sentence

“Can I have some context for this situation?”  
“Putting a word in context.”  
“The context of a work.”  
“My statements were taken out of context.”  
“This idea/work/action needs contextualising.”

20

## Related words and ideas

Kairos: an ancient Greek word for the right, critical, or opportune moment. In classical rhetoric, Kairos means that you must find the best situation and take timing into consideration when you act. This word reminds us about the importance of finding the right contexts for acts or actions.

## TAB definition

A context is a setting. It's about background: all the things that are behind something.

What are the contexts of the word “context”?

Context is knowledge which can change the meaning of a subject.

“Situation” perhaps suggests the circumstances around something in the present, while context suggests the past: the broader conditions around something, and its potential. Context gives an idea of a situation from many angles. “Situation” may be just the now while “context” is a more complex network of conditions.

Context is the knowledge that's important to have to understand a situation. If you witness a fight and only see it from one person's side, your understanding will be completely different from seeing the other person's view.

Context involves diversity of knowledge. Everyone has different knowledge, and cognitive conditions are limited from person to person.

Context is a word which is used to alter the meaning of words in a discussion. Where a word is used makes a difference. In any situation, you can create different perspectives on meaning, language, and objects by appealing to context.

In the City Hall workshop in Helsinki I found our ideas and reactions were very grounded in how we'd previously thought about and done things in Oslo. Our previous context was very focused on art, and that affected how we did everything. Our thinking was pre-contextualised.

I didn't go to Helsinki, so when the rest of the group came back talking about having gone to an island, and started imitating birds with lots of yelling, it was very strange. Without their contextual knowledge, I didn't understand what they were doing at all.

It can be hard to describe context, because it moves and changes. Defining a context concretely can be very difficult. It relies on a lot of shared understanding: giving an idea of our context takes a lot of work. Setting a thing or event in context requires a mental effort. You have to identify the patterns of thought that give meaning to a thing or an experience.

Traditions are based on collective agreements that tend to be taken for granted. It can be hard to put things into context for someone who isn't familiar with those traditions, because something is “just how it's done, and has been done for a long time”. However, contexts can be created. This is exactly what we're doing with the Teen Advisory Board. We talk about the need for specificity. We talk about traditions, specific cultural communities, and the use of contextually specific language. We look at how behaviour patterns in art contexts are traditional, they are just “how things are done”, and we question that. This requires a lot of

21

introspection, and also sharing the context of your own background with other people.

## Use it as a verb / How to DO it

We should strive for more open definitions of the words we often use. If we are open to different definitions, conversations become more interesting. Don't try to decide the definition of those words, but open a discussion of their parallel meanings.

When discussing something, discuss its circumstances. The verb ‘to contextualise’ already exists – it means to put something in context. I think about contextualising as inviting someone in. In the advisory board we don't want to wait to be invited in, we want to get in ourselves, so can you reverse this invitation and put yourselves in a context, rather than waiting to be invited in?

You can insert yourself into a context without being invited. Some people who were invited may not accept you in, but thinking particularly about history and art, whether or not someone is considered a part of it is not just up to one person. There are people who consider themselves artists, but others don't recognise them as such until much later.

We walk in and out of contexts all the time. Sometimes we are aware of it and sometimes not. It's interesting to think of inserting yourself into a context. If you are “out of context” it is sometimes made very visible to you by gatekeepers, people who consider themselves to belong. The person with the most authority in a context has the greatest responsibility for sharing it, and how they do that affects how open it is.

To contextualise as a verb... we make contexts, but if you want people to know what context you are speaking from you have to make the effort of defining that context. I am speaking from the context of Norway now, as an artist in the arts context.

Contextualising your ideas and actions gives people a chance to understand. In academia it is required – you can't just speak without putting your thoughts into context, plus contextualising can give weight to your arguments and thoughts. Across different specialist fields the same word can mean very different things, so knowing the context gives meaning. We have to be really clear about our motives.

How do we make a new context? Someone has to start doing something differently. When you write you use a different language from speech. You allow yourself to create a context within which the things you do mean something new to you.

People can choose to define themselves as different. Before anyone else can define what they do, they give a definition for what they do directly, letting people know, ‘This is what I'm doing and this is the context’. This way, you can create or choose in what context you live.

In TAB we are trying to create a new context, a context that changes how we engage with different spaces including the arts. We are actively trying to create a new context. We rarely create new words; more usually we create new contexts, and allow new meanings to attach to words that already exist.



Established definitions

The situation within which something exists or happens, and that can help explain it:

The text or speech that comes immediately before and after a particular phrase or piece of text and helps to explain its meaning:

Related words

*Semiotics\** A way of thinking about language in which context is really important. Semiotics involves studying words and terms by working out how they depend on contexts. I feel that a workshop we did in Helsinki connected to this, we were at Suomenlinna and did a workshop based on things Publics TAB did with a Spanish performance artist. We explored the idea of body-language as a source of knowledge and learning, first by doing a categorising activity about artistic terms, then by challenging ourselves to try to make nonverbal sounds like bird song, for example. The idea that body language can be studied semiotically in the same sense as words challenges what the discipline implies and broadens it. The workshop made me reflect on the value body language can have as a channel of meaning and message.

*Discursive\**

*Geo-political\**

*Neo-liberal\**

*Capitalist\**

*Authoritarian\**

*Decentralised\** When I think about our workshop with Irina, an artist from Barcelona, I feel “decentralised” fits as a discriminatory term. A part of the workshop was focused on sound, specifically sounds of nature and common objects. To me, this shows how human focus has changed throughout history. Lately, for instance since the industrial revolution, focus has shifted away from long term sustainability, to “progress” and “growth” in the present and near future. In my opinion this is a perfect representation of how our collective mindset has been decentralised and has become unbalanced in favour of a central singular position.

*Ideology\**

*Cancel-culture\**

*Euro-centricity\**

## Hospitality

Use it in a sentence

“This is a really hospitable place.”

“This artists’ collective is hospitable.”

“These people take hospitality seriously.”

“There is a real feeling of hospitality in this group.”

Synonyms

Caring\*

Embracing\*

Welcoming\*

Inclusivity\*

TAB definition

In Helsinki we attended a big online seminar on hospitality and making public places welcoming. Many of us reflected on the way the participants talked about being hospitable and felt that, as youth boards, we weren’t included. We were placed in a separate room from the rest of the seminar and watched it on a screen. It was an interesting experience. I don’t like to use the word ironic... but... we had a different perception of the seminar, and that experience enabled us to give feedback as a group. We described how we’d listened to it and held our own panel at the end. We were told that hearing from us was very different. We were welcoming of each other’s thoughts and words. We had not decided our own answers in advance; we reflected on and built on each other’s ideas and feelings. By making this book, we are able to define what we learnt from that experience and find ways to reach an opposite situation; to create inclusive spaces.

Being hospitable means building on something that you know is common, trying to build on common ground. That’s important for preventing some of the audience from feeling left out of the discussion. Hospitality requires action, thought, and listening. Hospitality is when you are welcoming individually and as a group, so you have potential to progress, as a group and individually. It is important to express beliefs, and to be safe to express different perspectives.

It is interesting to reflect on hospitality in our Nordic cultures, which are not known to be particularly welcoming to people from non-Nordic cultures. I think that a lot of people who don’t have English as a first language may hear “hospitable” as related to “hospitalise” ... like we are hospitalising someone, which is entirely different. That’s worth reflecting on.

Some people might equate hospitality with warmer countries, cultures that are seen as hospitable. There is talking on the street, and talking on the stairs with the people who share your building, but I think that it is more to do with being acknowledged as belonging in a space. Making an effort so that someone can feel welcome.

It’s a double-edged thing: we are defined in Nordic countries as politically hospitable, but in an interpersonal way we aren’t seen as warm and welcoming. What came first: the hen or the egg? It’s an interesting contradictory thing in the culture of Sweden and I assume Norway also. Do you think there is a political sense of hospitality in Norway that is different to the interpersonal way?

To some degree yes. We are not the most extroverted or outgoing people. I believe that Scandinavian culture in general is less interpersonally hospitable than in the US, for example, where they are more outgoing or talkative.

Being recognised or acknowledged in a space is related to showing that you want to talk. When someone comes to you, asks questions and is interested in you, it gives you a sense of being welcomed – it can create a sense of hospitality.

Sometimes, even though people come and talk, it’s just small talk: it doesn’t feel like someone genuinely trying to get to know me, they’re just being polite. There’s a difference between being spoken to,

and being acknowledged.

We don’t always state clearly that we want to be hospitable, and some people may act politely but not have good intentions; there may be manipulation. A seemingly good thing can be bad.

To me the American version of friendliness is intrusive. It’s such a big thing inside the country and its culture that they want to export it to other countries. “Let’s go to Iran and give them our version of hospitality”. Political extremism is still present in both places.

Missionary work is a form of extreme hospitality. Violently ‘inviting’ someone to adopt your culture is like saying, “You had better be like us, we are going to give this to you”.

In Scandinavian countries everyone is very individualistic – we are raised to be independent. As a young person you are expected to leave home much earlier than in countries that are seen as more hospitable, and where you are maybe not raised to be as independent. In other places, you and your family expect to depend on each other for whole lifetimes, not just at certain times of life.

In countries where hospitality is seen as more common, there is a feeling that “I will help you and let you help me”, or “I will help you or make you more comfortable, because I have been raised to care for people”. Here it’s up to you to ask for help, or fix things for yourself. In my upbringing it is almost an expectation that you depend on your family, and that they depend on you both, now and later on. Everybody in my family knows everything that everyone is doing.

To be able to know someone and know how to care for them, intimately – to be able to know about and care for the people you are close to – this type of hospitality is very different in different cultures. That’s how I’ve been raised. In school here, it was a culture shock when some of us gave gifts to our teachers at the end of the year, to show we were grateful and thankful. Some of our fellows who were born here thought we were trying to bribe the teachers or get favours. It reminds me of Sweden-gate on twitter! Being hospitable isn’t just being polite, it’s a goal in itself. Practising it can make you more emotionally intelligent.

Use it as a verb / how to DO it

–

Established definitions

Hospitality: the quality of being hospitable. Receiving or treating guests warmly or generously. OR; an environment that is more than liveable (not just tolerable).

Related words

*Landlord\**

*Capitalism\**

Hospitality and the word capitalism: Capitalism is already in my notes from the first day in Helsinki. It’s repeated several times. At one point in the notes it is closely related to cannibalism. When I first noted it down we were at the conference ‘Rehearsing Hospitalities’. I don’t believe it was said by anyone, but my mind immediately went to the word, as money became a big topic of discussion in

one of the panels, and that seemed strange to me at an art-conference, dedicated to “hospitalities”. Our purpose, although we might think of it as higher, cannot escape capitalism. First food, then morality. What if we are eating each other?

*Capitalism and cannibalism\**

*Community\**

*Redistribution\**

*Public\**

*Gate-keeping\**

*Commons\**

*Rules\**

*Care (caretaking)* To be hospitable is to take care of someone. I’ve never heard someone say “I’ll be hospitable to you” but I have heard “I can take care of you, them (and so on).”

*Listening\**

*Agreements\**

*Inclusivity\**

*Resources\**

*Rules\**

In my experience rules are important to make things to work out well, and that correlates with safety in general and specific situations. To make the system work, rules are needed in society in general and in particular contexts, like healthcare where they are mostly for the patient’s safety. To draw up these rules there must be agreement and people must consent to them, and the wording of rules also needs to be consented to and agreed on. We all have experience of rules being understood in both bad and good ways. The bad way can be imprisoning: rules imposed without consent are a lack of freedom.

*Safety\**

*Para-hosting\**

*Accessibility\**

## Intersectional

Use it in a sentence

“It is important to talk about intersectional feminism.”

“An intersectional discussion.”

“Intersectionality offers a useful viewpoint.”

“It’s good to look at this question intersectionally.”

Related words

Reference

Multiplicity

Combination.

TAB definition

Intersectionality is a way of looking at things. It’s a hard word to find a synonym for: the closest words I can find are ‘multiple’ and ‘in combination’. Intersectionality is about all the different things which together make up your perspective. Intersectionality is how power and discrimination of different types combine to impact a person or situation.

We had a seminar where we talked about “the commons” and the different intersections that need to



come together to make a commons or common space. I thought about the synonym “partition”, which may be its opposite. You have to take the different parts of something, the differences that affect your and other people’s lives to make space that is common for everybody.

“Intersectional” carries the most political power of all the words we’ve discussed. It was invented by Black American lawyer Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, and now it’s an important political word. In an art discussion, it helps us think about art’s possible purpose as explicit political action. Intersectional thinking means entwining different perspectives into a discussion about a work of art – being careful to see beyond the art line or the position in society that the artist individually represents. You try to bring things to an art work or discussion that represent a community rather than an individual.

Art has the power to convey an idea or an experience in an intersectional way, which may be hard to express verbally or in other discourses.

We’ve talked about things needing to have context and perspective. We defined ‘collective’ in terms of different people coming together in a way that respects all their perspectives. I believe intersectional thinking gives a good foundation for that and the other terms we’ve discussed.

I think “intersectional” is quite academic. It’s not a word I am familiar with in daily life and I’m not used to using it. It’s an umbrella term for a way of interacting socially that’s about trying to build common references and conversations, so that different individuals can participate with the same agency. It is important to recognise all the different individual frames of reference in the discussion. That act is what we mean by intersectionality as an umbrella term.

While I don’t use the word much myself in daily life, its meaning is key for me. My experiences of everything are based on many factors. If a collective involves people coming together to use their difference to propel their movement, the members need to connect and work together understanding the ways each one is a complicated person – for example queer, a woman, a person of colour or more than one of those things. Intersectionality means being open to how these factors affect a person’s life when they combine – understanding how these factors are all woven together.

#### Use it as a verb / How to DO it

I am a woman, I am brown, I am part of all these groups that contribute to how I experience life. I don’t know if it’s grammatically correct, but my life is intersectional.

Whether I’m with ITAB or the art world or general everyday life, I just have to do code switching without thinking about it: changing my social language, performances and signals depending on what social group I am with and where I am. I don’t have to remind myself of it, I just follow my experience of watching people, looking at what people are doing and how they act. You learn these things and decide how to act within a certain context.

Intersectional awareness of who you are depends on who you connect with and your awareness of their intersecting issues. It is specific. I’m curious to know what you think about the emphasis in intersectionality on *intersections*, the meeting between things?

It’s not just about overlapping experiences – things that exist together at the same time. The focus is on where things meet.

If a collective can be defined by people coming together and propelling their movement forward by recognising each other’s differences, then intersectional understanding creates synergy – for instance, understanding what being a woman and a person of colour might mean, how those two struggles intersect. Intersectionality is a prerequisite for the other work. And I’m not saying something new here – I’m connecting it back to previous things we’ve said. It’s really nice to just listen and see how it all sort of weaves together.

#### Established definitions

Related to the way in which different types of discrimination (= unfair treatment because of a person’s gender, sexual orientation, race, disability, etc.) are connected to and affect each other.

#### Related words

*Decolonialism\**

*Feminism\**

*Discourse\**

*Decentralisation\**

*Infrastructural\** For a long time, people have focused on grouping people together and then assuming certain things about those groups. However, people nowadays are starting to explore how being in several groups can affect your life in complicated and overlapping ways – they are thinking about that infra-structurally. This changes the basis of how you “group” people together. I most commonly hear this word in relation to construction, travel, and building things but it is important to think about the social and political system infra-structurally.

*Eurocentricity\**

*Cultural capital\**

*Vulnerability\**

*Embodiment\**

*Para-hosting\**

*Geopolitical\**

## Representation

#### Use it in a sentence

“I am representing an age group: young people.”

“Representation is important.” “Representation can be important information to give.” “This statement is fully representative of my experience”. “This account is unrepresentative, it only shows one point of view”

#### Related words

Idol\*

Icon\*

Inclusion\*

Diversity\*

#### TAB definition

Representation can be done well or badly. Some representations include, others exclude.

Good representation is about creating spaces and conversations so that everyone, with their different backgrounds and experiences, feels present. It means recognising the way you talk about topics, problems, and challenges, that you feel the language used includes you and your background.

Good representation is about people being included, sensitivity towards peoples’ different experiences and beliefs, and helping people feel seen.

It is important to see representation in relation to intersectionality. If you belong to multiple minorities, for instance if you are queer, a person of colour, and a woman, full representation is about being seen and acknowledged in multiple ways – making your experiences visible, recognising their existence and difficulty.

You should be allowed to take up space. It validates your experiences when you see them reflected or represented.

Hospitality – being made welcome to exist in a space – depends on representation. If there is a lack of representation, you will probably feel unwelcome.

Representation has become a very political word. It is 100% necessary for democracy that everyone’s thoughts are considered. You can only include those thoughts when you include people who experience them. It’s about reflecting society and how it actually is.

As a POC myself, I go out and see lots of women like me on the street. So it feels weird when I don’t see people who look like me on TV. The TV offers a poor representation of life, but what it does represent is the fact that a choice has been made. Why was that choice made?

When we talk about representation it’s hard not to head in a political direction. There’s good representation and stereotypical representation – it may head in the direction of prejudice. TV programme makers may argue that a group being is represented but use a lot of stereotypes – so that group is not, in fact, being fairly or accurately represented. That makes me ask the question: is it better to be represented badly than not represented at all?

Representation is not just about being seen, or seeing someone who looks like you, it’s at the core of our democratic system. We elect people and expect them to represent our ideas and interests.

As an advisory board we are a body selected to represent the ideas of a specific age group inside an organisation. We are selected rather than elected. One board chooses the next, so it’s a jury of peers, but I don’t think of it in those terms. We represent a youth voice, but “youth” is not a monolith and we haven’t been selected by a large number of people to speak on their behalf. I don’t say “I am here representing all the Jewish Swedish teenagers in relation to art spaces”: this is not how I think we work.

Of course we work on the TAB to make art spaces more democratic, but I don’t think of my role as, “Well, I am this, and so I am representing these types of people”. Rather, I’m trying to make things better for everyone.

Historically, leadership was inherited – passed on generationally. That is still the case to some extent.

When leaders gain power they may benefit economically and get rights and protections. But once a member of a vulnerable, threatened or oppressed minority achieves security, power or leadership within a system of representation, they may no longer experience the combination of pressures, threats, and oppressions of others within their group. They may no longer be fully part of that minority.

For us, representation is a task not a role. On TAB, we are not representatives of the youth voice, we are an expression of the diversity that we find in our age group. That gives the work that we do a different quality: it’s an expression of the diversity and the differing perspectives that our age group has, not a monolithic representation of “Youth” towards the art world. This gives us choices as to how we represent ourselves.

Representation isn’t just a part of politics, it exists outside and around it. Political power structures and social conditions may heavily influence who is represented and how, but representation grows and seeps through the cracks that politics leaves open, and people can grow into those new spaces as they open up. Politics may try to control representation, but it never has the power to fully limit it.

#### Established definitions

A person or organisation that speaks, acts, or is present officially for someone else.

The way that someone or something is shown or described.

The fact of including different types of people, for example in films, politics, or sport, so that all different groups are represented.

Tate Art terms: Representational: “A blanket term for art that represents some aspect of reality, in a more or less straightforward way.”

#### Related words

*Diversity* Good representation is about making sure everyone is seen, whether it’s about depicting their experiences or thoughts. To make sure everyone feels represented, representations need to show a variety of people whose markers of identity are visible to members of the same group. I hear the word diversity almost every time someone brings up representation because the two words are so intertwined. I hear it a lot when going to places: “This place is so diverse”. It’s something I look for, so that I won’t stick out. One of my school mottoes is “A school full of tolerance and diversity.”

*Solidarity\**

*Perspective\**

Perspective is related to representation. Different perspectives can show the different value of objects in life. In my civics class, I was able to share perspectives about the struggles Bangladeshi people face in their everyday life and the unfair lives they’re living. I felt as though I was a voice for these people, since Bangladeshi people are not



represented in the media here. Representation of different groups of people is important for everyone to get a fair perspective.

Process\*

Authorship\*

Beauty\*

Aesthetics\* On ITAB,

we've been discussing art from various angles, including aesthetics. I relate this word to a ITAB workshop that looked at historical Persian art and its aesthetics of femininity and masculinity. Representation forms a part of philosophical studies that looks at the nature of beauty as part of the philosophy of art. However I've come across it in more popular culture too when talking about people's specific visual interests and lifestyle ideals – for example *dark academia* or *cottage core*. In Helsinki, this word came up in our workshop looking at the City Hall murals, and when visited the Helsinki International Artist Programme on Suomenlinna Island. There we talked about different types of exhibition, including the one there, featuring birds, which wouldn't be seen as particularly "beautiful", but more immersive.

Masterpiece\*

Symbolism\*

Accountability\*

Politics\*

Foreground\*

Framework\*

Perception\*

Inclusive\*

Pattern\*

Para-hosting\*

Representatives\*: On day 2 in

Helsinki we visited Nordic Culture Point on Suomenlinna island. Index intern Vicki who came with us to Helsinki, invited us to do an exercise involving drawing a big circle on a table covered with a large piece of paper on it. We had just one minute to do it. Firstly we decided to elect one person to draw the circle. One person volunteered and we all vaguely agreed, so they went ahead and drew a circle in about 50 seconds. Next we were given two minutes to draw another circle, but differently from the first time, so we let two people draw one half circle each. Then we had three minutes to draw a third circle, again differently from the first two. So we decided to have five people draw the line together using three pens. I knelt down to join in drawing the circle. It was by far the most wobbly, but it was my favourite, and surprisingly it took less than three minutes to do. Afterwards I noticed several people drawing a version of the last circle in their notebooks, using multiple pens. I drew it too, and wrote 'The best/most important circle' in the space around it.

## Self Determination Section

26

### Discovery

ITAB has helped me discover so many types of art that I didn't know existed. Previously, my idea of art was limited to things on walls made with paint, but through ITAB we met an artist who worked with movement. I've seen art in ways I never saw before. Discovery needs movement. Creativity requires movement for discovery and adventure – discovering what's new, discovering the future. We started the year with questions and a vague idea of how we engage with art and space, and we didn't know what answers would come up, so it's been a process of going into the unknown to discover what happens in art, without expectations to limit it.

### Communication

Communication is necessary to decide what to do with the TAB project and what we want it to become. We measure our experience in exhibitions and when we do this we feel the fences in every institutional space. We communicate with each other and aim to understand each others' thoughts – even this publication is us communicating with the readers, sending something out into the world. It's connected with perspective, connecting across and with different perspectives – that's the vital tool. Contributing to realising this publication is one of TAB's key tasks. We're trying to give our perspective of the topics and challenges, shedding light through the publication content.

### Perspective

This is our task – we are here to bring perspectives into the art world, and share them with young people like us who haven't yet discovered ways to appreciate cultural spaces.

### Representation

We are here to be honest. The TAB functions well, because we have an open, non-judgemental space where everyone is valued. We work to make a safe space to formulate our honest perspectives. In this sharing of our perspectives, we represent ourselves.

### Diversity

ITAB is a diverse set of people who I would never otherwise have met. It's a great experience that more people should have a chance to take part in. Saying that people are different is one thing, but actually sharing a space where some people are more knowledgeable in some things than others and where there's space for different types of knowledge to rub together is something else, and it's important. Oslo TAB explicitly wanted to bring together people from all over the city and bring together diverse and varied perspectives. We talk about different things, and we bring perspectives from the west of Oslo and the different struggles in the East side. I think there is a good representation across both ethnicity and where we come from in Oslo. We represent different neighbourhoods and experiences across the city.

27

### Deliberation

All of the terms that have come up require deliberation, including diversity and difference, This is what we do: in different and intricate ways, we look at certain things and deliberate on them. We think about what is, what could be changed, and what could remain the same. We have to respect people and the rules and limits on what they want to liberate and deliberate. We ask how to undo oppression. We are deliberately liberating by deliberating.

### Measuring

When you grow up together it is important to know what you have to do better and where you are. Measuring ourselves against one another is part of what we do. We have to see people and the scene and understand where it needs to change, by putting ourselves in it. To deliberate, we need to take a measure of things and people. Everybody has something they can bring, something they are good at that they can contribute. In our work we use ourselves as the measurement, as the yardstick for our experiences in workshops and galleries and our lives. It is important for us, something for us to learn – using ourselves, our experiences and memories as the measuring stick. Not measuring our experiences based on what we think is expected, but on how we actually experience them.

### Connection

We create a form of connection within the groups and across our differences. Our group has different connections to knowledge and what we know. Given that we are all one age group, it can be strange that we are all here, but we all have different connections and knowledges.

Voice\*

Contribution\*

Collaborate\*

Learning\*

Inclusion\*



The texts that follow arose from a collaboration between TAB members and the artist, designer and researcher Maryam Fanni. Fanni invited the group to use visual research to explore thoughts and feelings about concepts of “public” and “private”: public spaces, private rooms, and the areas in between.

The research continues the lines of exploration that have been central for the boards: how art spaces make one feel; how spatial qualities and social contexts affect one’s senses and emotional life, and one’s imagination and dreams.

The activity began with an invitation to everyone to take two photos, one showing a place where they felt it was easy for them to be who they are or who they want to be, and the other showing a public art work that had affected them significantly. The category “public art work” was very broadly defined: maybe a sculpture or a mural, or anything that might interestingly be thought of as art.



## “My desk encapsulates a lot of my life: it’s where I usually write my to-do-list at the start of the day, and my diary at the day’s end.”

Across the ITAB year, we’ve had a great variety of different workshops. We’ve discussed topics that included fiction writing in relation to portraits and photography archives – this was with artists Nour Helou and Afrang Nordlöf Malekian. In a museum workshop looking at choreography with Utke Acs, we analysed and performed the “choreography” of how you’re expected to behave in a space such as a museum. Linnea Hansander’s workshop explored interactive art and touched on the topic of accessibility in art spaces, and most recently, Ina Hagen and Sol Archer’s workshop looked at the role and limitations of language in the art world. In it, we talked about how the language used to discuss art might become more accessible. This gave the basis for our continuing work creating a glossary, which you can read in this book. The glossary deciphers art-related terms that are useful and helpful to understand. It aims to open up what the art world has to offer, and it’s designed so that readers can bring their own experiences and thoughts to bear on it.

For me, Nour and Afrang’s workshop was the most touching and thought-provoking. On one hand, their work connects with my own love of writing fiction: I’ll spend any free time I have writing and thinking up new ideas for stories. But their subjects and the content of their stories are quite remote from me, so I really enjoyed this combination of known and unknown. The theme of their work, which is to find out about pre-colonial societies and their art, is something that really interests me. This area is always both revealing and saddening – but Nour and Afrang also made it uplifting, for example by showing positive aspects of Iranian society and culture before Islamic fundamentalism took over.

My first image is of my little corner desk in the student apartment I moved into this spring. I believe most people are quite at home in their own personal spaces – like this desk, which is where most of my ideas are formed – even if those spaces might be set in a place which isn’t particularly comfortable. Here I research and plan. Many of the opportunities I’ve gone for, such as my ITAB application, started at this desk. So it encapsulates a lot of my life: it’s where I usually write my to-do list at the start of the day and my diary entry at the day’s end. I’m there after I get out of bed in the morning and last thing at night, so I’m not always in the most conscious of states when I am sitting at it! This photo was part of a series of pictures taken to show my new apartment to a friend who lives abroad, and it’s probably the first time I’ve ever taken a picture that makes this important place its main focus.

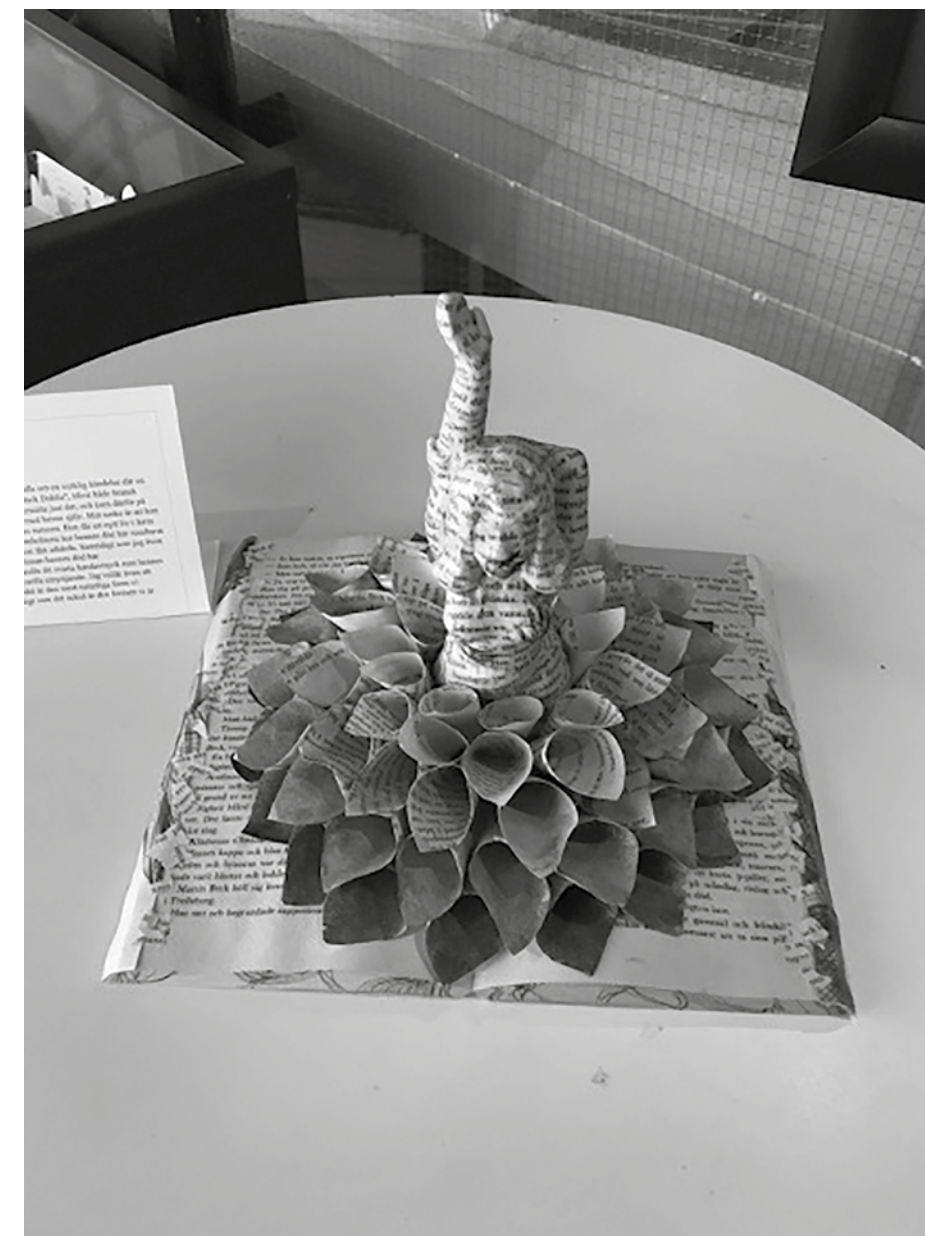


My second image shows a single piece that was part of a larger exhibition of artists’ books in my local library. The exhibition didn’t stand out greatly – it was designed to blend in with the library setting. I liked how the artists’ books had themselves been made from printed books, and how they had been displayed in conjunction with the titles and genres they related to (some more loosely than others). I really liked this specific art work, *En Kvinna Liv som Blomma* (A Woman’s Life as a Flower) by Kajsa Jonsson – it was the piece that made me most interested to know what book it aimed to illustrate.

Having not read the book it was based on, I thought at first it would be some sort of fantasy, or maybe a coming-of-age story. It turned out to be a representation of a woman nicknamed “The Black Dahlia” who was sexually assaulted and brutally murdered. The explanation for the artist’s piece was that it aimed to bring together the woman and her nickname, and to symbolise her rebirth in the form of a flower: her return to nature. The woman’s pose wasn’t explained and it made me wonder. It reminded me of when a magician’s assistant steps out of a “magic box” after showcasing a magician’s trick, or maybe a pose from a burlesque show. Her naked body had handprints painted on it, and this was explained as a way of showing how the things she had been forced to experience had affected her. That set me thinking that the printed words on the

pages used to make the work did something similar, and that they added perfectly to the purpose of the piece. She performs or displays what’s been done to her and encourages you, the spectator and reader, to come closer and pay detailed attention to her story.

Maybe if she’d been listened to and had been given that attention when she was alive, she might have been saved. Of course, these ideas are partly based on assumptions, but nonetheless this is the message I got from the piece.





“It makes me feel loved and included, but also sometimes just sad, because I meet so many people and I still feel alone.”

MI:

This photo shows the place where you feel it's easy for you to be who you really are, or who you want to be. Where is it and what's going on in it?

FFM:

It was taken at the Oslo anti-racist centre in No. 25 Storgata. It's a meeting place for young people, a place that's free to go to and that's always going to be free from all kinds of racist behaviours and discrimination. It's open every Tuesday. In this interesting photo you can see a table, and on the wall behind the table, you see a picture of a table – the same table – repeated three times.

MI:

Do you need to be a member to go there, or can you just drop in when you want to? How does this place make you feel?

FFM:

It's voluntary and free of charge and you can go every time you want. It's for anyone aged from 13 to 25, but it's used mostly by young people of about 17 to 18. I think this place is unique compared to the other free-time clubs for young people I've been to. I've never seen a more inclusive, lovely place. The young adults are inclusive – they aren't just doing their job, but they do stuff like playing ping pong that you can get involved in, and you don't ever feel alone – you feel included.



MI:

It sounds like a really good place. How long do its sessions last? Is it just an hour, or a whole afternoon?

FFM:

I have a really good time there. The centre is open from 18:00 to 20:00, but sometimes it stays open for longer.

MI:

Do you go there for actual meetings to talk and communicate with other people and discuss how to solve problems?

FFM:

No, it's not formal like that but it can have that function. You can let the people there know if you've experienced something racist or discriminatory and they will take you seriously. It's a social place – we play Mafia and Murder – the important thing is fun. It's a place where you can get to know people, for young people to spend time instead of out on the streets. It makes me feel loved and included, but also sometimes just sad, because I meet so many people and sometimes I still feel alone. But now I want to ask you a question about your first picture. It shows you and some people with masks. Where was the picture taken and what does it mean to you?

MI:

This photo shows the team that I work with and some classmates as well. We work in healthcare, in biomedicine analytics, at Karolinska Institutet Hospital in Stockholm. It's a really big institute, one of the best university hospitals in Europe. The photo was taken two months ago.

FFM:

What do you feel when you look at it?

MI:

This picture really gives me joy! I feel we are helping people and making people's lives easier. We discover things that they want answers to and yeah, it just means a lot to me that I can help people in that way.

FFM:

To you, how does this show that?

MI:

Just look at everyone's eyes (laughter) – the look in my eyes, and look at my classmates – this shows the positive energy that I get from being there. It's a feeling connected to doing something you want to do and things you want to achieve and strive for, so it's really calming and gives me supportive energy. Tell me about your second picture: what is it?

FFM:

It's a picture of a mural that's a Holocaust Memorial.

MI:

Did the people it shows die in Norway?

FFM:

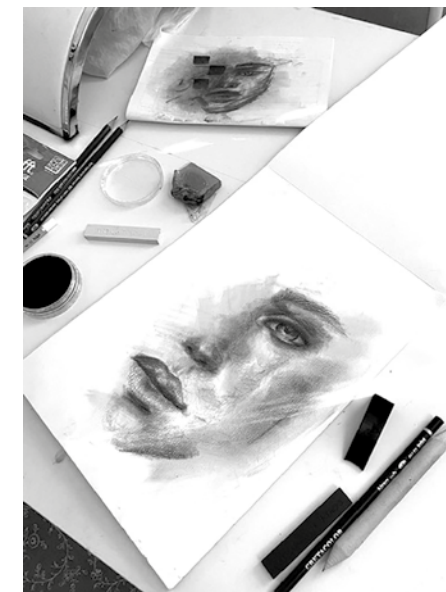
Yes.

MI:

How does the image affect you?

FFM:

That's a good question... It makes me sad to think that these people died and to know that discrimination and racism still exists in Norway. People are getting poorer and poorer and the rich are getting richer. Rich people can be exposed to discrimination and racism too, but they have more possibilities to go to court – even though we have free legal counselling it can still cost money to act on racism and discrimination. This picture gives me mixed feelings. I get angry, I get sad,



and yet I also get joyful. I know maybe Jewish people have rights in Norway now, but they are still a minority. So it has a connection with my first picture, because that was taken in an anti-racist centre, while this is art about people who have suffered from racism.

MI:

My picture is not as meaningful as yours, it doesn't have that kind of history behind it, but...

FFM:

That's fine, why did you pick it?

MI:

I read the task and it said you should choose some kind of art, so I thought of photographing one of my artworks, and that this would be a good choice. When I make art there's often a meaning behind it, but not everyone who looks at it will see the same meaning – it depends on your perspective. That's why I chose this picture, because it shows that people don't have to share the same perspectives on art.

FFM:

If you could describe it with one word, what would that be?

MI:

One word? Dreamlike, because this is kind-of realistic, but I have made it using charcoal. With a drawing like this you start making marks with your fingers, and as you make it, it feels like you are in some other place – like you are not in this world.





“The art is constantly changing. New layers of paint keep getting put on and it’s very cool to see.”

SF:

My first image shows the train station. When you’re on the train you’re obviously going somewhere and when you’re in that state of travel you don’t really think about having to “be someone”. You’re just yourself, and excited to go wherever. The second photo is of this house with these “cool” windows. When I stood in front of it, I kept thinking about what was happening inside.

ET:

I agree about what you said about the train, and travelling as well. Even though many people might think that it’s boring, I like it because I kind of always have something nice to think about.

SF:

Yeah, yeah! When you’re travelling you just listen to music, since you do nothing but simply travel to a certain place. That’s what I love.

ET:

My first picture is of the street art on the Gamlebyen Old Town Sport skatepark in Oslo where I used to skate a lot, more than I do now. It’s legal to paint on the walls there and the art is constantly changing. New layers of paint keep getting put on and it’s very cool to see.

SF:

Yeah, I agree! Have you painted it, or some of it?

ET:

No, but one of my friends does it in his free time. So I’ve been trying a little, but not anything serious. And my other picture was taken quite close to where I live. We have a football team which almost everybody who lives in this area is a big fan of. I almost call it – not nationalism, but some kind of -ism. It can be... Some of the fans are... Some of the fans might take it too seriously. But it’s... it has its own feeling, I suppose. I have been living there all my life, so ...

SF:

Just for clarification, are there any famous footballers?

ET:

No, they aren’t famous, but the club is. It is a very central thing for this area. And there are quite a few football pubs as well.

SF:

Sounds nice!





## “Societies have a tendency to think about culture as something solid, but in fact it is just the opposite.”

GMJ:

So Luna, what do you feel you've learned and what topics have you worked on in ITAB this year?

LS:

I think the way that ITAB works is quite process-based – there is a vague theme at the start of the year. So, *In Character* was the theme for last year's group, and we were introduced to that at the start of the year. But across the year, we were given many different workshops with different artists and they gave us different activities and things to do and to experiment with in relation to their work.

I think my favourite was Utke Acs, a non-binary choreographer who looks at social behaviour. They asked us to look at how people behave in different social contexts – anything from how people behave walking down the street, or controlling vehicles in traffic, or travelling on the subway – all the etiquette in those places, as well as the habits you have in your own home, making a meal or cooking and cleaning: the ways we move or perform in these scenarios. We met them for a workshop at Moderna Museet in Stockholm which began with observing visitors at the gallery and how they moved and behaved in the space, and after that we went back into the gallery and kind of replicated how they moved: for example standing with your hands behind your back while sort of leaning into things...

GMJ:

Do you feel that artists' workshops like that helped open up the art? Did you recognize something from your own life in the art and your experience of it?

LS:

One of the things I enjoyed the most about that workshop was the idea of using the art space differently from how it was intended. In fact we did end the workshop looking at and doing something related to the art work, but generally we were looking at other people in the gallery rather than the art, and that was just something I found really fun. I look at the space of art galleries in a different way now.

This is the first picture I've chosen. Isabella asked us about the place where it's most easy to be ourselves, and I thought, if I can't think of anything else fast, let's just take a photo of the place I'm in right now. Since moving to Sweden in the past year ITAB has definitely been the most welcoming and kind of embracing space for me as a transgender person. It's an unquestioned thing in the art spaces in Stockholm and the Nordic area that I've been to. Things like giving pronouns at the start of a workshop are really common

and normal. I was kind of anticipating, 'Oh, is someone going to ask me a question about myself?', but no: people just accepted me as I am. That really stood out for me, so when that question was asked, "Where do you feel comfortable with yourself?" I thought, it's right now, here in front of me.

Looking for my second image (a public artwork or something that could be art) was trickier. I haven't seen much public art in Stockholm: I can't think of anything apart from a fancy fountain in Sergels Torg. Art can be a broad term, but that installation is just so soulless – it feels very corporate. There are a few weird things where I live – scraps of metal jumbled together and some things around Moderna Museet that are actually quite interesting, and an Ai Weiwei that was recently installed, but I don't connect with that. However the Norra Tornen towers (which I can see now from where I'm sitting) are a distinctive feature on the skyline. At the time of year I moved here, light was reflecting off it, almost blinding you – if you look at it you can get a blind spot in your eyes from the sun off the windows. You can see it from different points in the city and I find myself thinking 'there it is and I can see that!'. It's weird, it is almost like a personification I have of a friend in the city, and architecturally it's beautiful in my opinion. It is not only how it looks, it's the way that the two towers are placed together and the reflections they give. So it gives me a positive, kind of interesting feeling of familiarity. But over to you: tell me about PTAB!

GMJ:

We have had some visits to art galleries but for the most part we collaborated with the artist Sayed Sattar Hasan. His work is all about exploring definitions of culture and how cultural references and ideas affect us as individuals.

LS:

He was in residence in Oslo City Hall?

GMJ:

Yeah, he was there for two years, and he created a workshop there with us where we imagined ourselves as guides, so it was about exploring our own experience of the place on our own terms. The City Hall has multiple functions as the seat for the city council but it serves as a cultural meeting point as well. Its walls are covered with murals that are intended to show our cultural and historical background, so it's also a kind of art space.

LS: Yeah.

GMJ:

Open access to the murals has really altered people's experience of them, because it raises the question of whether the murals are out of step with the times. They have been criticised because they are old. How can they represent the diversity of an increasingly heterogeneous society?

LS:

Yeah, they represent Oslo and Norway at the time they were made...

GMJ:

...which was in the 1950s, and you start reflecting on that pretty fast. But experiencing the murals can be positive, even though they represent a different age, and there is a lot to debate about them. The workshops we had around the City Hall with Sayed challenged me and got me thinking about how a lot of people are not conscious of the ways the culture they are part of affects their views. A really concrete thing that has changed for me is that I look deeper and have a better understanding of the strengths of a diverse community with diverse foundations. I can see how our culture is changing in many ways and much more than we think. Societies have a tendency to think about culture as something solid, but in fact it is just the opposite.

LS:

Yes! Tell me about your photos.

GMJ:

My first picture shows a place in the centre of Oslo where they sell old books. It's in an area where there are still a lot of old buildings, as the reflection in the window shows. The red brick building in the reflection is actually Oslo's old National Gallery. The area is quite central but it's still a bit hidden and not very busy. It's a safe-feeling place that I've visited often: I've always had an interest in books and literature so it's been a natural place for me to seek. It has authentic and special books that I probably wouldn't have found in other places, and what I guess appeals to me is the timeless environment: it's a space to store and shelve books, and there are even books on the floor, as you can see. It's all about the content, and not some strict idea of tidy management of the space. The problem with some spaces is how they become exclusive, because of expectations that are associated with them – whether that's restaurants, cafes or art galleries. As places become more and more exclusive it affects us as individuals and can make us feel less welcome. We could talk about the very smart new public libraries recently built in Oslo and Helsinki. These spaces still have this welcoming feeling.

LS:

Well, the whole point about libraries is that they are for the public – they are for everyone.

GMJ:

In a way, this bookstore is an exclusive space, but it doesn't give that impression or have that atmosphere.

LS:

They are not trying to kick you out.

GMJ:

No, I've been there several times without buying a single book, they still smile each time, and if you have a question about anything they help. This might sound like a cliché but this is a place where I seek refuge and get time to reflect about life in general.

I was a bit unsure what to choose for my second photo, of something in public space that was either art or could be art. The "could be art" part of the task really appealed to me. This picture shows a shop

in Sagene, a place north of central Oslo that I see every morning when I get the bus, or wait for the bus. I once read that Sagene was declared by some as one of the best functioning and special neighbourhoods in the whole world – out of a list of hundreds of neighbourhoods, Sagene was top 16. I think the shop sells wool and knitting equipment. It's exterior is really appealing and it contributes to the city's landscape. It isn't disturbing to people who pass by. It's quite a simple exterior but somehow it contributes to creating a safe atmosphere. I don't know if that sounds logical.

LS:

I think that's similar to my choice of image. It's something familiar that's a reassuring part of the city landscape. You see it whenever you take the bus. It's like a kind of landmark, a piece of scenery with a distinctive view.

GMJ:

Absolutely, and an interesting or funny aspect of this is that the writing on the wall, "details", is simply the name of a shop.

LS:

Yeah, it's not just detailed.

GMJ:

You could say that a simple name on a shop wouldn't be likely to give a shop a "soul", if you can call it that. But it still gives the shop a sense of personality. In my opinion, this shop front that people see everyday could be considered "art", because it quite possibly affects people as they walk by – it is creative and can be stimulating. So, this picture gave me an understanding of how there can be commercial spaces around the city that can be exclusive, or even "excluding" to some people, for example certain shops where, when you walk in, there's a natural expectation to spend money. At the same time we should expect these exclusive spaces to give something back to the public. By having an exterior that I see as "giving", this shop creates additional space that doesn't have the requirement of a financial exchange. I think that is important to reflect on.









“We saw our mistakes as a learning process and we could easily accept each other for what we were... we created lovely memories together.”

SU:

So it's time to talk about the pictures? Hold on, I just need to find them. Shall I start?

The first picture shows a place I feel really comfortable, the gym, and last year it really helped me a lot, mentally, especially when I get stressed about school. It's become my comfort zone. I go there for exercise everyday, and it doesn't have to be hard training, just walking on the treadmill or whatever. It's become a part of me now.

My second picture is of a small bowl. When I went to Bangladesh last year the restaurants used to serve seeds in these bowls after every meal. I'm not actually sure if it was seeds, but they serve stuff in the bowls that you usually eat after a meal. I find it really fascinating because I've never seen them here in Sweden, but it's so common in Bangladesh.

IHM:

Your explanation is really lovely! The first picture I chose is of my friend, plus you can see a projector in the background. I chose this picture because we've been best friends for a very long time. She's been there for me through hard times, through Covid and everything. We have this lovely friendship, but it's also a beautiful picture. She brings me a lot of comfort.

SU:

That's so cute!

IHM:

The next picture is from Denmark. I went to Ragnarock museum. There's a giant record you can stand on. It goes around slowly, and the quicker you walk on it the quicker the song plays.

SU:

That's so cool, I need to visit that museum.

IHM:

How do you feel these pictures show what's made you who you are today?

SU:

The gym picture represents a daily habit for me. I go there, I meet the same type of people everyday, and I've made friends there. So it has had a positive effect on my life. It just makes me feel more comfortable - before, I had problems with anxiety and stuff. It's a comfort zone for me now. The second picture with the bowl, it's just

interesting to see - it shows a whole other world, and I don't go to Bangladesh a lot. I think I've been there three times, but because my parents grew up there I want to see where they grew up, and how they grew up, you know?

IHM:

Yeah.

SU:

Even though my parents have brought their culture to Sweden, Bangladesh still seems very different to me, it's not my everyday life. I get a lot of new perspectives when I see this type of thing. What about you?

IHM:

Well, I grew up in Kenya and I met the friend in my first picture when I came to Norway. We met each other when we were learning the language, and we found comfort in each other. We built a friendship through that, because we started going to elementary school together and ended in the same class. We explored the city together, and learned about a new culture together. It brought us even more together, and at the same time it made us feel comfortable with each other. We saw our mistakes as a learning process and we could easily accept each other for what we were and how our journey was going to be. We created a lot of lovely memories together.







## “Appreciating colour made me appreciate life – life seems more colourful.”

MTM:

Colours are what really move me and grab my attention. In all of the pictures you can see different types of colours. Here you can see shades of pink and yellow from the sky. But in the second picture you have different ratios and combinations of colours. It's actually from a workshop, where I thought: “this is really pretty, I will take a picture of it”, because it grabbed my attention. We don't have a lot of public art in Norway, or art that I find inspiring or moving, so that's why I didn't take a picture of an already existing artwork. I thought the most important part of this task was to pick something that actually inspires you or makes an impact. I really love colours – especially soft colours, and pink. When I was younger I strongly hated pink, but as I grew older I got out of that mindset and today I love it. To appreciate colour made me appreciate life – life itself seems more colourful now. It's weird to say, but I used to wear a lot of black, white and grey clothes. Those were the colours I was comfortable wearing at the time, but it was also incredibly depressing. Then suddenly I started wearing more colourful clothes, and my mood changed, as well as my behaviour. I think colour shapes the way we see art, ourselves and life in general. It affects our emotions, changes how we are as people and influences others too.

FKS:

Do you want to go to the last photo, and talk about it? Let's go to the next one, which shows where you're sitting now, right?

MTM:

Yeah, this is a picture of where I feel safe, or where I can be myself. It's a picture of my room. I was torn between taking a picture of my friends and me together or my bedroom, but in the end the task was more about finding a place than people, so I chose the room. My room is a really big part of me. I painted the walls, built the bed and laid the floor, everything here is from me. When I pick something for it, it's as if I give the room a part of myself, and it makes me feel at home and at ease since this is all me. I haven't heard myself saying it out loud before but now when I'm hearing it – it's true! So yeah, just decorating and making it feel cosy makes me feel at ease.

FKS:

Exactly what is it that makes you feel that? Is it because you're alone?

MTM:

I think it's the relaxing atmosphere. It's also partly because I'm alone and I get to just choose how to behave

or how to organise the room. But in addition to this I'm a really big fan of lights such as candles or fairy lights, and the lighting makes me feel at ease because their effects are so pretty.

FKS:

You said before that Oslo doesn't have a lot of public art – is that right?

MTM:

No, it does, but nothing that really draws me in because a lot of it is very hard to come by, or it's private, or it's just statues. There's nothing wrong with statues, but they just don't inspire me. We have Frognerparken which is certainly beautiful to look at, but it doesn't inspire me. For me it's just statues of humans.

FKS:

It's interesting that you don't find that kind of public art inspiring because that's what it's supposed to do – to inspire the public and do something other than being beautiful. Perhaps it can send a political message or something. Obviously, I don't want to put words in your mouth, but might it be that their political message is something you can't really subscribe to or feel you are represented by? What would you say?

MTM:

Yeah, in honesty I don't really understand it. If I did, I would probably find it more inspiring. I haven't been trying to look for public art, therefore it's hard for me to identify and find inspiring. In addition, I haven't been taught a lot about that particular side of art. So I don't feel a connection to statues.FKS:

Sure, I get you. Should I explain a little bit about my photos? Maybe it's not so clear what this one is. I live in Lund in the south of Sweden and recently went to an exhibition in a museum here that is dedicated to public art. We have a state department that is in charge of buying art and putting it in public spaces like museums, universities, schools, law courts, etcetera, and this exhibition was showing the art it had bought during the pandemic, to support Swedish artists. This picture shows a piece by Anna Sjons Nilsson that is called “När Meret Oppenheim börjar knyppla”, or in English, “When Meret Oppenheim started to make bobbin lace”. It's like a paraphrase on a very famous artwork by an artist called Meret Oppenheim, and I thought it was very funny. I don't know if you can see it, but it's in fur, and it has this pearl trail that goes down this little table. And you think, “Okay, so this is art, and it's supposed to be public art, and be put out in public spaces!” How does that even work? When you think about public art it's usually a statue or sculpture of some kind. I think this kind of sculpture is trying to push the boundaries of what public art can be.

MTM:

OK, so what I'm getting is that you took a picture of this because you found it really boundary-pushing, but also funny, in a way.

FKS:

Yes.



MTM:

I'm not sure I really understand why it was funny to you.

FKS:

I thought it was funny because it's an imitation of another artist. I thought it felt really ironic and in that sense, very funny and also very aesthetic. Plus it's so weird – you don't quite get what it is when you're looking at it, and I just thought that was funny.

This second picture shows me in my institution at university. I'm in the quiet reading room where I sit almost every day, and I just love being here. It's completely silent and everyone is working. One of our pictures is supposed to show a place where you feel comfortable or where you're most yourself, or where you want to be most yourself. I thought that both those ideas apply. I am sitting and studying – I'm aspiring to be something, and I am trying to learn something, but this is also very much a place where I can be entirely myself because I have no shame! If someone is making a noise, I shoosh them. The other week when I was sitting here, in my favourite spot on the left, a girl came in and sat down and she didn't close the door. So I kind of looked at her, and then I pointed at the door, and she was like, "Oh I'm sorry" – haha!

MTM:

So you are quite at home here?

FKS:

Yes, I feel very at home. I'm there to work, and to read. I don't want any distractions. I don't want you to be a brat and not close the door, and I will tell you to close the door. I feel it's aspirational, and that's why I'm here – to become something, and I can live in a part of myself that I actually like very much.

MTM:

Okay, so in my understanding, the room you are comfortable in is quiet, and therefore quietness is a big part of it. But, does that mean it's the quietness that allows you to be more of yourself, or is it that you spend a lot of time there?

FKS:

That's a good question. Quietness when I'm studying is essential for me, because I need complete silence. I can't work with people speaking, or making noises. But I think this place allows me to be someone in a sense that it is very much like a core. There's basically no verbal communication, it's only movement. I didn't need to tell her to close the door. I just looked at her, caught her attention and then just pointed at the door, and she understood. I've studied literature, so I'm very focused on language all the time – I'm very interested in words, but at times it can be nice to strip things down just to movement.





“I’ve never felt like this before about a piece of art... it left me kind of speechless.”

AM:

For me, the most memorable workshop was with these two artists, Afrang Nordlöf Malekian and Nour Helou. They talked about how beauty standards for different genders were affected by colonialism in the Middle East. They explored how earlier, beauty standards for both men and women were to look like a moon, or a sun, with a round face and round eyebrows, and they talked about how, after colonialism, the standards changed. Men had to be more masculine and women had to be feminine, whereas before, the standards were more fluid. They showed us different printed pictures that they had found while doing their research. I think they might have come from Lebanon, but I’m not sure.

SS:

We were given a task to find a picture of a place that felt like home. Would you like to talk about your choice of picture?

AM:

So you know what I’m talking about, here’s the picture. This is a road in Stockholm, close to the city centre but also close to my school, and it’s a place where I reckon I can be myself. I don’t think anyone from my school often goes that way and I’ve never met anyone I know there. I feel like there’s no risk of being judged there. I know you shouldn’t be scared of what other people think, but I just think it’s nice in the mornings to go down that street knowing I won’t meet anyone I know. It’s like my – I won’t say “secret” – street, but few people walk there, which is really strange, because it’s so close to the city centre. It’s also close to Index, our art hall. It’s very peaceful in the mornings. I only walk there when I start early, so I’ll be there around 7.30am, and it’s very beautiful.

SS:

And the other photo?

AM:

I know we were supposed to take a picture of an art work, but I was sick for a month and I haven’t been outside much. However I was taking a walk the other day here, which is close to where I live. It’s like a port, and there are boats there. I took the picture and intended to take another photo of the building next to the water. It’s an old building from the 1800s and it’s the only thing that has been constant there, throughout the past 200 years. I just thought that was really interesting, and I like the way it looks. It has a tower and bricks, and with the bright colours, I think it looks aesthetically pleasing. I thought it was such an experience to walk there with the sun setting, and there were so many things happening at once, with all the colours and the reflection in the

water, and the boats, so it felt like going to an exhibition, although it was just a view of nature and buildings. That’s why I chose that photo – but what about yours?

SS:

The first picture shows a corner of my home. At home, I don’t need to put on a facade. I feel safe and able to be myself.

My second photo shows an art work. I don’t have any real explanation for it – it was more about the feelings I got from it. I just couldn’t stop staring at it – I don’t know why, but there was something very captivating about it. It was the first time I ever felt that some type of art had made me feel something strongly. Usually I just think, “Oh, this is a nice picture, I understand what you’re trying to say with this”, but looking at this, it gave me a sense of an attraction that I’ve never felt before about a piece of art. It shows these Barbie-type girls out shopping, but they have guns, and it left me kind of speechless.





## “When I’m in Albania I don’t have that minority stress.”

DO:

I chose this picture of my family’s home city. It’s a relatively big city in Kosovo, with 80 or 90 thousand citizens, and this picture was taken by my grandfather in the 70’s, I think. The building on the right is Hotel Dugagjin, so I share my name with this building. We also have a house not far from this square so even though I wasn’t born there, this is my and my parent’s hometown. It’s the place of my background and my image – it’s where my family is based, my home. I was born in Norway but I’ve been going to Kosovo every year with my family since I was born, and in the past five or years we have been going even more often. It’s really home in the sense of who we are and the city we are connected to. We have a lot of pride in our social identity and where we come from.

You talked earlier about minority stress and got me thinking about that in Norway. I was born here, I go to Norwegian school and have Norwegian friends, but I still do not feel a part of Norwegian culture completely, because I don’t participate in things like typical Christmas traditions and stuff like that, and I really like that my family hasn’t. So I never developed a lot of knowledge and the collectivity around it. When I’m in Albania and Kosovo I don’t have that minority stress. I can be part of the majority and feel really at ease. This is what I would call the most comfortable place for me personally – what I call home.

VR:

Ah, that’s really nice. I have your second picture in front of me here – would you like to tell me about it?

DO:

I took this picture the weekend I went on a trip. I didn’t take it in regards to the project, but afterwards I realised this is the picture I was going to use for the project. I took it on the way to Gol, a small city in Norway near the mountains. A lot of Norwegians have cabins in the woods, which they visit several times a year for holidays, skiing, hiking and stuff, to be away from the city, I guess. Gol has about 2,000 citizens, I think, and there was a kind of parking spot in front of this building. Me and my friend had been invited to his family’s cabin in Gol and we stopped there.

I realised this is a place where people stop and take pictures because it is really beautiful to capture in a picture. I thought, this has to be an art work, it’s a work of nature that’s also an art work. I was trying to give some idea about the intention and meaning of this photo earlier. You can clearly see this is an abandoned building that was formerly a house or home. The point of a house is to host life, and now, even after it has been abandoned, it’s still hosting life – you can see the trees growing on it. It’s become a place for trees and plants and moss to thrive, and it still lives up to its intended purpose of hosting and protecting life.

VR:

Yes, I also thought that it was really beautiful. It says something about change, and about how we are as humans, and it’s very eye-catching! The art work photo that I’ve brought is this picture of a man sitting on an elephant, and two children playing around him. It’s a statue in a play park in Malmo. I saw it a month ago and got this uncomfortable feeling about it, but I hadn’t really thought about it in depth till we got this assignment. I was drawn to the park again and I realised that this statue really made me question things – it really made me uncomfortable. The ears of the elephant are drums, and the man sitting on the elephant is kind of square-jawed, just square in general. You feel he is being really rough, and also that he’s sad – he’s banging on the drums that are the elephant’s ears, and the elephant has his snout hanging down sadly as if he’s given up. And there’s the man sitting on him and drumming on his ears and looking really rough. It got me thinking a lot about hierarchies – how from a very small age we are asked to get used to this kind of rough way of thinking about domination, for instance dominating another species or dominating another race, and making them feel small and vulnerable. It really hit me that this statue is in a children’s play park, and that it feels absolutely natural that it’s there somehow. It really told me something about how we handle things in our society.



48

49



The picture showing where I feel the most safe and at home is a picture of me resting my head between my girlfriend’s thighs, and it was taken the day that the pictures for the assignment were due. So my girlfriend showed it to me and I was like, yes this is very accurate and true. I feel at home and safe and comfortable when I’m there – it’s like having headphones on and closing

your eyes, and you’re in your own space and closed off to the rest of the world. But when I’m there I also know that I’m surrounded by love in a really physical way. She wants me to be there and she appreciates me and that’s why I feel comfortable and safe. So yeah, that’s my second picture.



Roleplaying proved an exciting element in Sayed Sattar Hasans' workshop series. The following work is a collaboration between the artist, PTAB, ITAB, PYAB and editor Rachel Withers, which takes the youth's improvisations at Helsinki City Hall a terrifying step further. The illustrations are by Sayed Sattar Hasan.

These days, the internationally celebrated *Hasansen Agreement for more Murals (HAM)* and associated awards need little introduction, but let's introduce them anyway.

Founded by semi-famous post-Norwegian cultural explorer Hasansen in 2022 during his three-year studio residency at Oslo City Hall, HAM was inspired by the flagship building's historical murals and conceived in response to various absences.

First, there was the fact that across the sumptuous murals' grand and sweeping vision of Norway's national story, historical events deemed worthy of representation abruptly stopped in 1950. Second was the fact that the murals' grand and sweeping vision, as it swept, seemed to have brushed a good deal of information under the metaphorical wall carpet. What sense, Hasansen wondered, might these images make to young Norwegians born after the invention of smartphones?

Characteristically undaunted by the hazardous cultural crevasses before him, Hasansen forged forward on a quest to find out. Accompanying him were a hand-picked team of indomitable young adventurers (the 2022 PRAKSIS Teen Advisory Board), each one equipped with a Clas Ohlson pocketknife and City Hall's wi-fi code, issued strictly for research purposes only. Their mission: to explore the municipal edifice,

seek out its artistic wonders and boldly critique its relevance to contemporary society and the group's own lives, all without losing a single crew member's interest along the way.

On their journey they were exposed to turbulent subjects ranging from patriotism, belonging and inclusion to appropriate clothing. They faced their diverse opinions head on, wrestling challenging topics with courage, mutual respect, foresight and the unifying force of tasty snacks.

They admired Oslo City Hall's artistic celebration of society, regardless of how it painted history. However they now understood the value of their own ideas and views, and the validity of their desire to see pictures reflecting their world on its walls.

Thus, the concept of the HAM awards was born. Eventually, the team's prodigious effort led to the signing of the *Hasansen Agreement for more Murals* by Norway, Finland and Sweden. A landmark pact intended to create a more inclusive society through art, HAM requires City Halls across the entire Nordic Region (excluding Denmark, Iceland, Greenland, the Faroe Islands and Åland) to run mural awards every ten years and realise the winners' achievements on their walls.

Through its periodic updating of the Nordic story, HAM aims to ensure that history will never repeat itself. The multifaceted dialogue that follows, conducted at the *Hasansen Agreement for more Mural Awards* in Helsinki City Hall in 2122, testifies to HAM's measure of success in this respect - and helps show why Hasansen's efforts to inspire unity through art eventually earned him a Nobel Peace Prize (though the names of the 2022 members of PTAB were unfortunately not mentioned at the award ceremony).



TV Reporter

Hello from the HAM 2122 awards live at Helsinki City Hall. With me are some distinguished attendees, as well as the Starving Artist, one of this year's nominees. Starving Artist, why should your mural win this coveted prize? What's it all about?

Artist:

Hmm, well, given this world in which we find ourselves, in a time of great hardship and difficulty, facing a struggle for survival, with scarcity, anger and despair all around, I wanted to instill a new sense of hope in the Finnish and Nordic people, um, er, um... and that is what I have done.

*The artist chews hungrily on his fist. Shouts of an angry mob can be heard in the background, plus the thumping of a battering ram against the fortified entrance to the building. The group duck as breaking glass showers over them from a nearby window. Cries of "More food, less art!" are heard outside.*

Reporter

Right now, Minister, the people whose taxes will pay for the mural aren't displaying much of a sense of hope. How would you explain it to them?

Politician

In my White Paper I argue that in a time of permacrisis, hope is our most important resource. By remembering the hardships we've been through and survived, we gain strength to carry on. And that is why I shall be actively pushing through new legislation on hope, with strict penalties for the hopeless. There's no room for hopelessness in a post-apocalypse world.

Reporter

Professor, over to you. Wouldn't it be better to spend the money on food, for example?

*A voice from outside: "Why can't we have food and art?" is followed by a strangled cry.*

Historian

Exactly. Throughout human history, clear symbols of hope have been important for humanity. We must continue to create meaningful new symbols which help us see beyond the hardships we face. Hope...

*The Norwegian Architect interrupts.*

Architect

What's wrong with preserving what we've got? Personally, I don't want to see this new work installed. This building is one of the few remaining physical things from our past. It represents the pre-collapse period.

*Plaster dust and ceiling tiles cascade from above. A weighty marble Symbol of Hope (2092) crashes onto the historian's head, knocking him unconscious.*

Reporter

Optimist, your concept has been described as "hideous", "hamfisted" and "utterly shoddy", and Kunstkritikk

dubbed it "a crap Banksy knock-off". How do you respond?

Artist

Well, art is subjective. We all see what we want to see in a work of art, and if we hadn't had to eat our stock of candles we would be seeing the proposal in a different light. We are all barricaded inside this building and we live, as I said, in times of great hardship, but this does not mean the artistic spirit ceases - it goes on. That's all I have to say, though I'd hoped there'd be food this evening. I've been fantasising about rat pate and used business-card canapes all month. It's hard to keep going when you're this hungry.

Reporter [Turns to camera]

So, to sum up, it's hideous, but it's art! Moving on, the burning question everyone's asking: Is Kim Kardashian still alive? Over to the --

*In a hangry rage, the Swedish artist grabs the journalist's sound recorder and begins to eat it. A group of heavily armed HAM award visitor guides wrestle him to the floor and haul him away. Meanwhile, at another time and another place in the Hall, a group stands in front of a holographic mural. Families and children can be seen playing and frolicking in a winter wonderland. Roald Amundsen spontaneously leaps out of the mural to invite onlookers to step into the scene. Artificial snow sprays onto the viewers from a snow machine.*

Journalist

City Hall's former entrance is an interesting choice of location for this mural, given that the south side of the building is continually exposed to lethal ultra-violet rays. Why did you put it here?

Artist

We wanted to create an oasis of coolness where the public can chill out and forget about raging forest fires, desertification, and rising sea levels. The visit is well worth the risk.

Architect

It's mesmerising, it grabs viewers and sucks them into the scene - literally!

*Roald Amundsen makes a seductive come-hither gesture in the direction of the journalist.*

Journalist

What's the concept behind the work?

Artist

This work uses cutting-edge holographic technology to replicate the past and the things we've lost through climate change. For instance, snow, which we haven't seen for donkey's years - and the famous arctic explorers who went extinct along with it.

Historian

Yes. It connects the past with the future, virtually. It's a historian's dream.

More food and more art





Journalist:

Wouldn't you say this longing to recreate "traditional" winter has become a dangerous craze? Practically every home now has a snow machine and often two or more, although we're aware how heavy their carbon footprint is. Don't works like this "fuel the problem"?

Historian:

Finland has always been deeply concerned with the environment and developing clean technologies, but those damn oil reserves keep on giving. Here, I defer to the mayor of Oslo and Helsinki.

Journalist:

Over to you, Mayor - the first person to serve simultaneously as head of both capitals, a role that has provoked some controversy, let's note, but sticking with the question: your last election campaign included an offer of large discounts on snow machines to party supporters. Is this mural really anything more than a snow machine advert?

Mayor:

At the risk of provoking more controversy, I'm sure you're aware that our sponsor, Snowhope Global Incor...

*On the other side of the foyer, a man in black with an earpiece gestures threateningly to the mayor to stick to the script.*

Mayor:

The simple fact is that people want snow machines. We politicians have no business telling them what to do with their hard-earned cryptos! Likewise, the public has no business telling us what to do with their hard-earned cryptos. We respect our voters and must enable them to realise their dreams. And as more and more migrants come to Nordic countries to find zones that still support human life, we must ensure the ones who survive can enjoy the benefits of snow machine ownership, through long-term credit schemes where necessary. That's what inclusivity is all about.

Artist:

On top of that, new technologies will help us transition from fossil fuels. For example, as overpopulation leads to mass death, we now have the real possibility of using human remains as an energy source - to power snow machines, for instance. And (*upbeat voice*) it works surprisingly well! New futures need new solutions, and art can help introduce them.

*Within the mural, a smiling figure in overalls is seen feeding a human foot into the back of a snow machine. Fridtjof Nansen spins a neon advertisement high into the air. It flashes 'Buy now, pay with a kidney!' mid-flight, before he deftly catches it behind his back.*

Mayor:

And every time the body of a loved one or dissident becomes fuel, we are gifted with a tangible reminder of them. Every snowflake truly is an angel. Practically and spiritually, this is a technology that really "has legs".

Artist:

It was inspired by the Lion King; you know, the circle? The circle of life. This is an opportunity for dead people to give back to the living. It's a circle...

Everyone:

(*singing*) 'Til we find our place, On the path unwinding, In the circle, The circle of life!

*The group leap into the mural holding hands, leaving the Journalist staring at it, aghast. Some time earlier, in advance of the HAM award event, a frazzled PR officer tries to glean information for a press release...*

PR Officer:

Are you ready yet...

The Group:

(*Collectively shout*) No!

PR Officer:

(*Reads to herself*) With rising sea levels adding to the legendary glamour and sparkle of the HAM Awards, stars aplenty will paddleboard to City Hall to see who scoops the prize. Event highlights will include...

*The group appears, 30 minutes late.*

PR Officer:

Thank you for attending, it's very helpful. Firstly I need to ask some questions about the winning mural...

VR Designer:

It's more than a mural. What we're looking down on is a site-specific oceanic virtual-based sculptural installation which connects Helsinki City Hall to the most exclusive underwater lifestyle habitat in the world. Using cutting-edge reality-blocking snorkels, you can dive into the extraordinary history of the Nordic region and experience how we liberated ourselves from the oppressive winter of social democracy to become a tropical tax-free paradise where fashionistas and fascists can live their best life. For marriage ceremonies, ordained dolphins are bookable.

*Below them, a North Atlantic Kardashian can be seen enjoying some retail therapy. They squeeze their feet into a pair of walrus-tusk Jacques Cousteau flippers. A flunkey rushes up and pours Cristal down the tube of their snorkel.*

Historian:

I can't collude with this abomination any longer! I profoundly regret the part I've played in the destruction of my beloved country's history and cultural traditions. For the sake of the people and smaller whales everywhere, we must rise up and stop this travesty!

*HAM visitor guides immediately harpoon the historian and toss in a replacement.*

PR Officer:

So, the basics - it's a collaboration between Norway, Sweden, and Finland? How would you describe that collaboration?





Dictator:

Well, as the “democratically elected leader” of Finland and the Nordic Republic (*winks*) collaboration and compromise aren’t always at the top of my to-do list. However by locking myself in my heavily guarded office, I establish a safe space to explore my issues and let myself be vulnerable. It’s something I take very seriously.

PR Officer:

It’s brave of you to share that with us.

Dictator:

Key to this project are our much loved (*makes heart shape with his hands*) Norwegian and Swedish construction slaves who – literally! – risked life and limb to build this ambitious structure. I want to say to the survivors, “Well done!” and that Inhuman Resources will be in touch with you shortly for your next creative assignment.

Economist:

We’d also like to thank our Nordic neighbours for “donating” more priceless cultural treasures than we could fit on our dear leader’s superyacht. It’s immensely generous. They are a showcase feature of this project. We’ll be back for the rest in the very near future. We’ll call in on Denmark on the way.

Dictator:

Good times!

*The dictator fist-pumps the economist.*

Economist:

Our neighbours understand our superior ability to look after, own and appreciate this fabulous cultural heritage. Gems such as “The world’s last Ikea shelf” and the “Grandiosa Viking Helmet” will go on display in the site-specific oceanic virtual sculptural installation – and are also on sale now! Private collectors looking to brighten up the inside of their vaults, DM me. Naturally, we’ll share the profits with our Norwegian and Swedish partners...

*The group burst out laughing and mouth “Not!”*

PR Officer:

History is full of “ups and downs” and “very long”, but rewriting it can be, erm, controversial. How will we publicly defend this act of appropriation?

Historian 2:

Appropriation is a loaded term that has nothing to do with this situation. The historical narrative we’re presenting benefits from being 100% factually correct. It’s short enough to fit in a social media post and littered with smiley emojis. We in Finland are well known for being a happy country. If you don’t like it here, jog on.

Dictator:

OK, that’s enough time wasting, our lunch is waiting. Have the press release on my desk in an hour. We’re confident you can spin this the right way – or (*he smiles unpleasantly at the PR Officer*) you are welcome to clear

your desk and take up an exciting new role in underwater construction.

*They head off towards an underwater table laden with tiger steaks, baby-whale-en-croute and octopus beaks on a bed of pureed red panda. In other words, a surf ‘n’ turf.*

END

56

57

Floatilla





The work of the Teen Advisory Boards is open-ended and continuous: insights and developments from past work continually feed future plans and activities. Comments and questions raised by one year's board form a key basis for research and activity carried out by their successors a year later. The principles of longevity and continuity keep propelling the work forward, allowing an approach to the same core issues in fresh and relevant ways. This book marks this by including reprints of two TAB zines issued in 2021, themselves the result of previous collaborative meetings between board members and artists, researchers and designers, plus diverse encounters with the worlds of recording and broadcasting, publishing, writing, editing, choreography, performance and more.

The zines form two parts of one publication, each group's contribution offering a different approach to the sharing of TAB experience. In PTAB's *In Character:*

*The Game Manual – Your ticket to the World of Art*, the group turn their art world learnings into practical advice and guidance for readers seeking to engage that world themselves. ITAB's *In Character: Index Teen Advisory Board* offers insights into the board's experiences by combining written reflections on keywords with documentation of programme activities.

PTAB contributors to this section include Sadia Hassan, Nellie Barazandeh, Mikkel Inchley, Sumaya Elmi, Annine Slettebø, Noah Gylver, Hannah Røsholt Siger, Zeinab Al-khatib, and Nasteha Hassan Mahamed. Temi Ondumiso generously agreed to the reprinting of her text, *Decolonial thinking for beginners*.

Index Teen Advisory Board members were José Velasquez Esteban, Emil Pita, Sarika Ullah, Simon Sjöberg, Malin Issa, Adina Edfelt and Felix Krausz Sjögren. Their publication was designed in collaboration with Sandra Praun.



In  
Character

Index

Teen

Advisory

Board





# Content

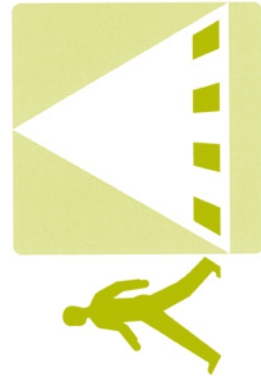


Illustration by Eugene Sunkelius von Rosen, documenting  
*Going to a Conference: In Character.*

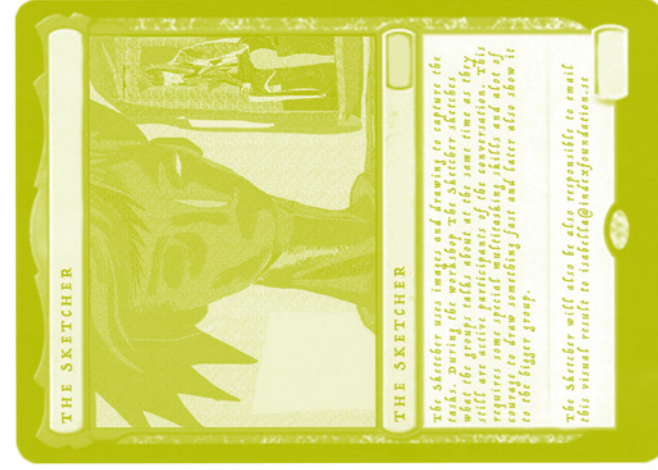




a kursen 50 Factor spf UV-filter

Illustration by Eugene Sundelius von Rosen, documenting *Carried Characters*, a workshop originally developed by Bronwyn Bailey Charrens, and led in this iteration by Emmeli Person.

Illustration by Eugene Sundelius von Rosen, documenting *Going to a Conference: In Character*.



Role-playing cards by Eugene Sundelius von Rosen, used at *Going to a Conference: In Character*.



# Space

Look around you, outwards.

Look beside you, inwards.

Two different spaces, yet two sides of the same coin.

Your experience is based on the outer and the inner.

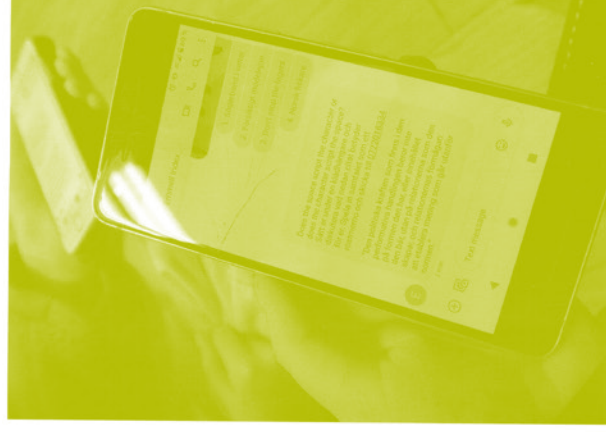
Your experience is unique and unrepeatable.

Its very nature makes it remarkable.

How does the space around you (or the lack of it) affect you? Would you behave differently if you were anywhere else? Would the experience change in any way, if you were outside? In a dungeon? Out among the stars? In a classroom? A church?

Try to think as if you were somewhere else. Try to do what you wouldn't normally do where you are right now. Allow yourself that tiny liberty, that small victory of changing the narrative, letting in new thoughts and challenging norms, projecting your inner space outwards.

— Jose Velasquez



Recording conversations, exploring spaces. As part of the workshop *Going to an Exhibition: In Character*, led by Emmeli Person in October 2020.

ITAB member Jose Velasquez alters Moderna Museet through digital manipulation. Taking space in the art world. October 2020.



Inhabiting the space at Kohlia, Helsinki. October 2021.

Recording conversations, exploring spaces. As part of the workshop *Going to an Exhibition: In Character*, led by Emmeli Person in October 2020.

Guiding each other through virtual exhibitions during *Going to a Conference: In Character*, blurring the line between digital and IRL. Creating space within space. January 2021.





# Movement

Movements differ when you are located at different places of value. Not only does the place change the way you move, but also the person you are. A soldier may move more “formally” with a straight back and straight legs, while a civilian may walk more casually with arms swinging on the side.

A museum, temple and a luxury brand store are examples of places with high value. When you walk into a museum your first instinct might be to walk more carefully and not be noisy. This is because there are valuable items in that place which cannot be destroyed. The place is also a calm environment for everyone to be free with their thoughts which is why it is unnatural to speak loudly when you are in a museum. A temple or a luxury brand store are places where you go to when you are searching for something, like your faith or maybe an LV bag. A temple can be connected to a museum as the same concept is applied. A temple is a place for your thoughts to be free, hence why it's very normal to be calm and quiet there. However, a luxury brand store is a space where the items hold the most value because of how they are produced. This is why most luxury brand stores have security guards at the entrance as well as inside the store. People are more aware and careful when walking in these types of stores to avoid accidents such as knocking something over or breaking something.

When walking in a more casual place such as at a park or in the city we tend to be more talkative and loud. Some may be running trying to catch a train, others may be chasing after their children, or maybe join a parade. People tend to walk more freely when they are in big and noisy environments because it won't bother anyone.

If we change the roles it might look very odd. If we walk into a museum being loud and running around the hall, people are going to look and maybe even give weird looks towards us. That is because we are doing something against the norm in an exhibition. Doing something against the norm in a society can be seen as controversial because people are used to only one type of behaviour in specific places.

— Sarika Ullah



ITAB challenging notions on how to move and behave in art spaces during a workshop in Moderna Museet. Moving in coordination, choreographed by Klara Ulke Aes. October 2020.



Workshop with Marit Silsand at Kohti in Helsinki where ITAB and PTAB used movement and space to share fears and re-stage dreams. October 2021.



# Appearance

Appearance is everything, it is how the world sees you, it is your identity and culture. When you are choosing a costume for going out in character go for something that says to other people how you want to be approached. Beware when you are going out in character you can “change” or just use that other side of you that people have not seen yet this can come off as confusing to people who have known or seen you in a different setting, don't panic it is still you but another side. Everything you are wearing can change you whether it is clothes or accessories but don't let it spook you. Appearance should be embraced in different styles. It gives you that boost of confidence and strength in both who you are and who you want to be.

— Emil Pita



During *Going to an Exhibition: In Character*, a workshop led by Emmeli Person, participants got to choose a character and thrift a suitable costume for it before visiting an exhibition: Changing appearance to see how it affects one's experience. October 2020.







During *Going to an Exhibition: In Character*, a workshop led by Emmeli Person, participants got to choose a character and thrift a suitable costume for it before visiting an exhibition: Changing appearance to see how it affects one's experience. October 2020.

## Language

How do we talk about art?

During a gallery or museum visit, we often keep a formal and serious tone. There are unspoken rules governing how we ought to discuss or talk about the art in front of us. But the rules on how to talk about art are in no way constricted to art spaces - they follow us everywhere. Art talk can feel complicated and excluding; there are expectations placed on one to already know certain things, and know how one is supposed to express oneself.

One might be considered simple if one is not familiar with the classics, or shallow if one does not ponder with care. One is supposed to know what is up and know what to do when. The big institutions use proper, cultured language, keeping it neutral. Museums hold their art in high regard, frame it as something to be respected and be taken seriously. It is no place for laughter or jokes.

The art world is dominated by white men. Their voices are usually the ones put forth, effectively pushing aside the voices and perspectives of others. The way we talk about art has the power to influence and develop the art field. It is important to look at what voices are heard and listened to, and invite a broader range of representatives to open up the art world to more people.

– Simon Sjöberg



Picture from PTAB and ITAB's trip to Helsinki. An example of image based, almost intuitive language; a possible tool to overcome the language divide between the two groups.





# Knowledge

There are two ways in which we can acquire knowledge. Either through practical experience or through theoretical information, i.e. reading, i.e. what you are doing in this very moment. The likelihood that people who read about art also acquire knowledge about art through practical experience is, according to my experience, 100%. However, not everyone who goes to an art gallery or museum, reads about art. This is the fundamental difference between reading and doing, or rather between readers and doers. So, the chances are that you who picked up this zine, did so out of a sense of agency. You opened its pages with the comfort that you would understand its content. But make no mistake, this publication is a carefully disguised trap. It is here to unravel the mere concepts of agency and comfort, which come primarily from your previous practical experience, which in turn allowed you to pick up this zine.

But regardless of whether you are a reader or a doer, knowledge provides the basis for all interaction with art and the so-called art world. You know which cheek to kiss first when greeting an acquaintance, which way to nod your head and how to distinguish between art and not art. In addition to this, you know which words to use when you put this knowledge into speech.

Ultimately, knowledge, when it comes to art and the art space, is about value. Is it more valuable to actually enjoy art or to know how to enjoy art, and specifically what art to enjoy? Well, anyone can like something, but not everyone knows what ought to be liked and why. Because those people did not read a zine in this store, because they don't come to this museum very often, and what would then be the use of reading a zine about art, that they probably don't have enough knowledge – experience – to understand?

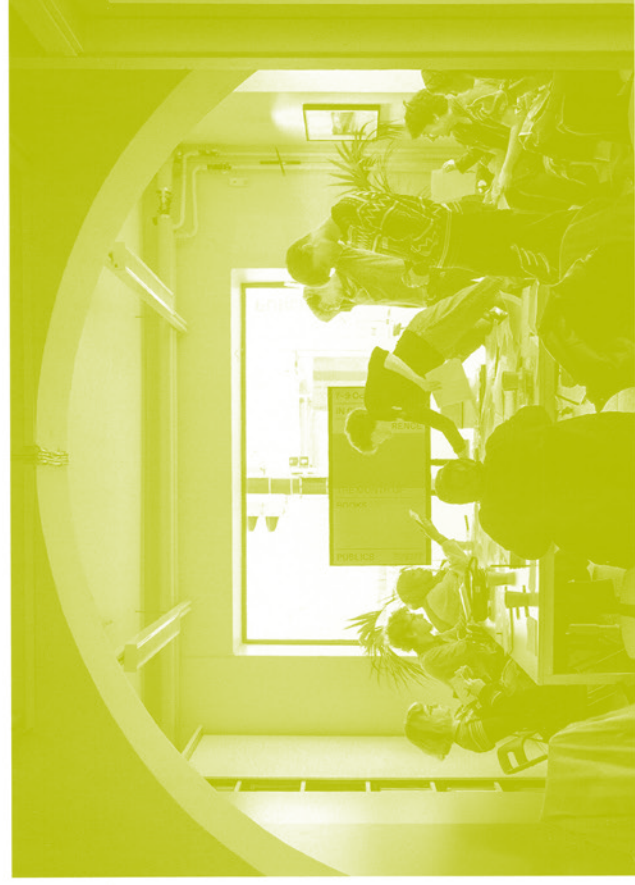
Now you must read the zine. Because otherwise, what would people think – that you don't understand it?

– Felix Krausz Sjögren



One of the playing cards instructing you to approach art spaces in character. Created by ITAB during a workshop with Fredda Berg in March 2021.

PTAB and ITAB meeting at PUBLICS in Helsinki to exchange knowledge and experiences from the In Character-project. October 2021.



A mind-map from ITAB's workshop with Hanni Kamaly, visualising their artistic research practice and exploring different ways of structuring knowledge. July 2021.



# Perspective

We tend to enter a museum thinking we are there for a reason – observing, learning. But is this necessarily the case for everyone, or is it something you simply assume everyone is doing?

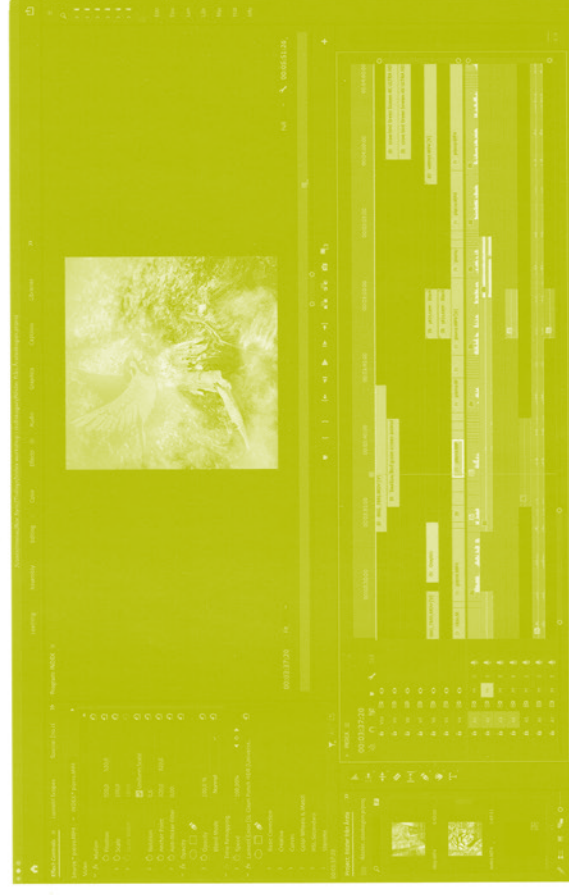
Perspective play into an exhibition visit in multiple ways. The art itself can influence how we look at or interpret an issue, it can change our perspective. Our own perspective shapes the way we look at an art work, but not only that, it affects the way we look at an entire museum, or the people populating it. We can allow our experiences to be altered by other people's perspectives, because their particular outlook might have enabled them to pick up on details we missed. Perspective can also be about where we choose to focus our attention: Could we flip the card and look at something other than the art on display? Like the visitors? Or the staff?

– Malin Issa



ITAB broadcasting live from *Leading Container*, using methods inspired by *The Parrot*, a recurring format at Index, experimenting with the subjective glitches in re-telling and re-listening. September 2020.

A work-in-progress snapshot of an animated short, in which characters inhabiting the Arsta forest – trees, twigs or pools of water – were brought to life by animation and given a voice to share their perspective of life. The animation was created by ITAB in collaboration with the design collective MYCKET. May 2021.



Visiting PUBLICS in Helsinki, working with them to develop a Teen Advisory Board of their own. October 2021.



# Senses

To understand the world humans must rely on their senses to provide the information needed. The senses, commonly known as five; sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste, are used in every aspect of our day-to-day-life. We use our eyes, ears, nose, mouth and skin to touch base with our surroundings. In addition to being vital for survival, our senses also enable us to experience art. Further, one definition of art is "creation meant to appeal to senses or mind", it is hence apparent that the arts would be nothing without the senses. At the same time, one could claim that the foundation for all art is creativity. So why is it that art, which is supposed to be driven by liberation, unable to fit the narrow box of ordinary life, is so often limited to being visual or auditory. It is surprising that, even though it is well-known that cutting of a sense heightens the sensitivity of the other senses, that notion is not utilized in the art industry.

In exploring alternative ways to experience art and discussing ways to challenge the prosaic fashions used in the exhibition spaces, fiddling around with the common concept of how to use the senses, is an interesting thing to try. How does it feel to see an art exhibition from another perspective, for example by crawling around on the floor, or to only feel a painting with your fingertips? Hyperactivating the senses, slowing down, zooming in, could revolutionize art, as well as making it more accessible for people who are, for example blind or deaf. Living in a digitalized world during a pandemic, zooming in becomes ordinary life, yet, converting humans and the art into being two dimensional, decreases the sensory experiences. Nevertheless, creativity allows for new opportunities and there are ways to embody the digital world by creating space for touch, movement, smell, taste and changes in both visual and auditory aspects. To play with the senses are some of the most artistic and innovative ways to take in the world, be digital and exhibit, as well as experience, art.

—Adina Edfelt



Three of the playing cards instructing you to approach art spaces in character. Created by ITAB during a workshop with Fredro Berg in March 2021. (More cards can be found at the end of the publication.)



*Going to a Conference: In Character.* ITAB and PTAB met in a live broadcasted, online conference. Zooming in on Zoom. Discussing, thinking, living digitally. Trying to awaken the senses by breaks for movement, playing with virtual backgrounds and change of appearance. January 2021.

**indexfoundation**  
Index Foundation - Swedish Contemporary Art Foundation in Stockholm  
Art English Creative

**Going to a Conference: In Character**

**RECOMMENDED CHANNELS**

- bts CSGO** Counter-Strike: Global Offensive • 25.7K
- sodapoppin** Terraria • 21.2K
- LCS** League of Legends • 2.7K
- Chess** Chess • 23.5K
- x2Twins** Fortnite • 9.3K
- benjyfishy** Fortnite • 26.8K
- ROSSTEIN** Slots • 16K
- Quin69** Path of Exile • 553
- CyrusTWO** League of Legends • 855
- NymN** Just Chatting • 3.6K

**STREAM CHAT**

wishnous: Painful arguments in social settings.

indexfoundation: Words from our Zoom room: Procrastination, Stop procrastinating and shopping online, hurtful memories, insecurity, thinking my singing voice is "bad", Toxic relationships, Pretending to always know, Doubt of identity, Shutting people out, lying to myself, Jealousy, Picking up my phone 4 Seconds into being bored by something, the feeling of inferiority, Looking back too much + forgetting friendliness, Judgement, comp het, internalized hatred, The idea of a tortured genius, feeling less...

indexfoundation: ...stop regretting things, trying to read peoples' minds rather than asking what they think or feel, be yourself

wishnous: Sara Ahmed is welcome all days

wishnous: ha\_ina: \*applause\* so good

herfilm: aronbirtalan: \*\*\* this day was beyond awesome \*\*\*

**indexfoundation**  
indexfoundation

**Now:** The Battle of Imagination  
**Soon:** Video Ending

**indexfoundation**  
Index Foundation - Swedish Contemporary Art Foundation in Stockholm  
Art English Creative

**Sign up to experience the**



THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING > THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING



Search your surroundings. Find three objects, and arrange them into an installation.

THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING > THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING



Ask somebody working in a museum or cultural institution how much money they make an hour.

THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING > THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING



Pretend the exhibition space is extremely sunny.

THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING > THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING



Ask somebody working in a museum or cultural institution how much money they make an hour.

THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING > THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING



Act like you are famous.

THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING > THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING



Imagine having a huge argument, or causing a scene in this space.

THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING > THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING



Ask someone watching a sculpture what they think about your art.

THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING > THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING



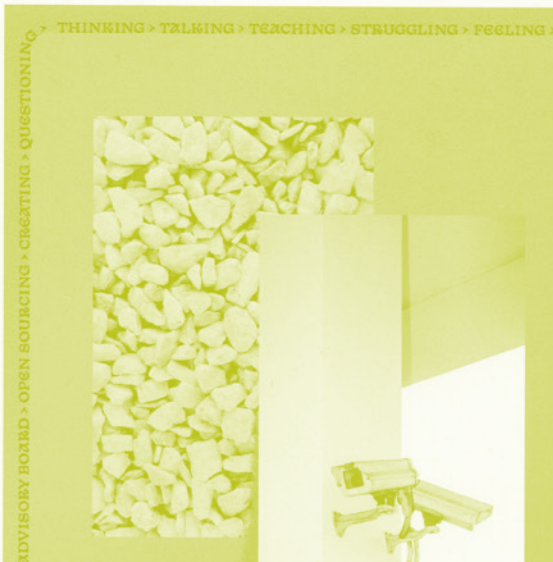
Pretend you're visiting the exhibition together with someone else in the room, even though you don't know each other.

THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING > THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING




Sneak into a museum and plant an external object. Create your own exhibition. Make your own truth.

THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING > THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING



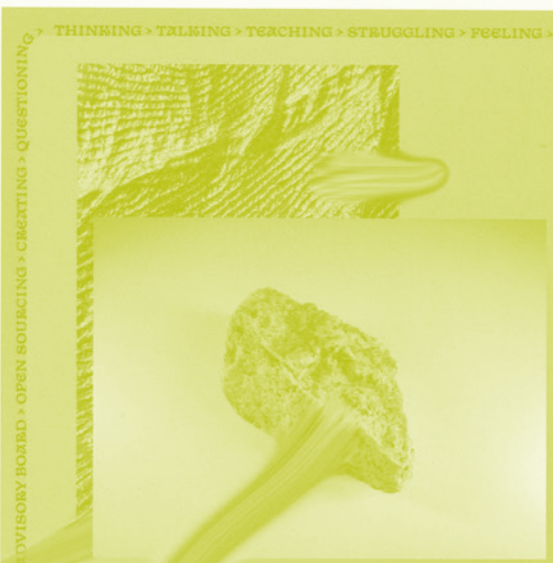
Imagine ways an artwork could be stolen.

THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING > THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING



Introduce a stranger to the power play deck. Ask them to draw a card.

THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING > THINKING > TALKING > TEACHING > STRUGGLING > FEELING > FOUNDATION > INDEX TEEN ADVISORY BOARD > OPEN SOURCING > CREATING > QUESTIONING



Imagine the personality of an artwork or object, and discuss a topic with it.



In Character: The Game Manual

# In Character: The Game Manual *Your Ticket To the World of Art*

*Your Ticket To the World of Art*

PRAKSIS Teen Advisory Board (PTAB)





Ever been curious about the art world? Whether you are reading this alone or in a group, we invite you into a place of exploration. Welcome to *In Character: The Game Manual*. This part of it is made by PRAKSIS Teen Advisory Board (PTAB) – a group of 16–21 year olds from the Oslo area who meet each month – together with PRAKSIS team members and guest artists and designers. Here you'll create spaces where you can challenge yourself and the world of art. The contents of this publication are going to introduce different topics that we have been discussing in our group and that we think are important. There's guidelines, games, assignments, and more.

—PTAB

PART 1 | GUIDELINES FOR PLAY

How PTAB suggests handling ... .7  
 PTAB's principles . . . . .9  
 The glossary . . . . .14  
 PTAB's glossary for common understanding . . . . .15  
 Your glossary . . . . .17

PART 2 | SETTING THE SCENE

Who are we when we are together? . . . . .22  
 Ready, set, squeeze . . . . .24  
 Energizzerrrr . . . . .26  
 Draw on your imagination . . . . .28

PART 3 | NITTY GRITTY

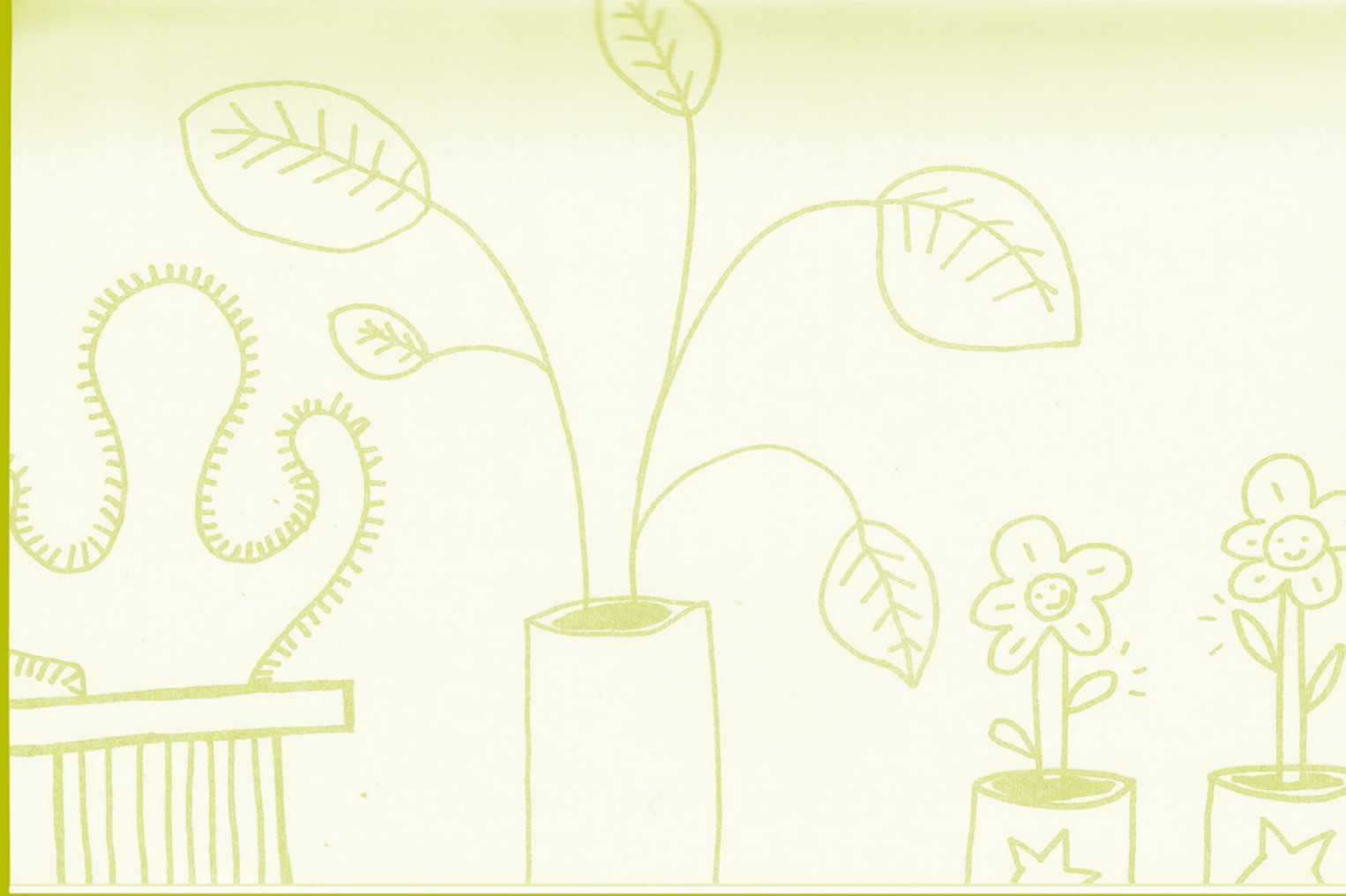
What's behaving normal anyway? . . . . .32  
 The art of seeing . . . . .34  
 Write on! . . . . .36  
 What's it worth? . . . . .38  
 The faces that make us; "us"? . . . . .40  
 Who's who? . . . . .42  
 Map your characters. . . . .46  
 Decolonial thinking for beginners . . . . .49



# Guidelines for play

Below are suggested guidelines of play to help create a positive environment as you play.  
(On p. 22, following our suggested guidelines are instructions to help create your own).

## Part 1



This game manual aims to help its players: think about art, discuss politics, critique political ideas, think politically and socially, think about structures in society, choose sensitivity to personal experiences, share personal experiences, engage in each other's lives, respect different opinions, open up for new experiences and opinions, listen, give space when someone is talking, work to make an environment where everyone is heard. It encourages queer-affirmation, feminism, anti-racism, anti-xenophobia.

*Following this Guidelines for Play there is the beginnings of a Glossary. The words in this text that are underlined are the ones we (PTAB) feel should be defined in the Glossary. At the time of writing we are still working on our glossary and we encourage you to underline words throughout this game manual and add your own definitions of these words to the blank pages of the glossary.*

Innsjekk & utsjekk (check in, check out)

Hold an 'Innsjekk' (check in) when you meet and an 'Utsjekk' (check out) when you're finished playing:

Set aside at least five minutes for the innsjekk. For this, sit or stand in a circle that includes everyone in your group. The Innsjekk is a chance to talk about needs you each have for the rest of the session, and/or to share how you are. It is also a moment to reflect on personal boundaries, inform the group of changes in how to address you (c.g. preferred pronouns) and other conditions that affect your needs during the session. Everyone is expected to take part in the innsjekk, but it is not a requirement to participate in any other way than by listening. Everyone should respect and take into consideration needs that the innsjekk makes visible.

**Utsjekk:** Sit or stand in a circle that includes everyone in your group and discuss your experience – what was interesting, fun? Was anything challenging? Listen, be open and accepting.

## How PTAB suggests handling ...

### Emergencies

① If you need to leave, do so – explain as little or as much as you feel comfortable with. You can explain more later, in person, by message, or by email when you feel ready to. If you leave without the intention to return, give someone notice that you will do so for emergency reasons. Explain why this happened when you feel ready to.

② If there is a situation that affects everybody – try to keep calm and empathetic. Attempt to get everyone's attention. Calmly and clearly explain what has happened [see p. 10 on language]. If you are experiencing an emotional reaction to something, attempt to explain your emotions. It is OK to ask for time to manage a situation. We discuss complex and vulnerable subjects. In case of evacuation, etc. follow the evacuation instructions of the building. When you believe that the situation is resolved, hold an Utsjekk (check out) to confirm with all participants.

### Conflict

This is a short procedure based on the Principles of Behaviour (below).

- \* Be aware of the difference between the person and their actions.
- \* Be specific when addressing someone's actions or speech.
- \* Describe what they are doing, not what they are. *i.e. saying someone is using racialised language is an opportunity to learn together, calling someone racist doesn't help them learn.*
- \*\* This helps the whole group understand the effects of language on people around them.
- \* Own your feelings. Talk about what you feel about what someone is doing, not what they are making you feel.
- \* Ask someone to mediate if you feel uncertain about how to proceed, this could be another member of your group, or someone else you trust.



### Disagreements

- Mediation is helping people communicate with each other, not establishing who is right.
- If possible everyone involved should go together to a different, quiet, location.
- Describe what someone is doing or saying, not what they are.
- Refer to the Code and Glossary for definitions.
- Ask each person involved to describe their experience of what has happened.
- Be clear, be specific.
- Allow people time to understand their feelings.
- Ask people to be specific about what they need.



6

## PTAB's principles

*These Principles were agreed between members of PRAKSIS Teen Advisory Board for when we meet together. We hope they are helpful to you.*

### © PRINCIPLES OF BEHAVIOUR

We are here to learn together. We accept each other's self-identification, including livelihood. It's important to be respectful of each other and have an open mind.

How we make our identity known to each other.

How we define ourselves for the ones around us.  
*e.g. Pronouns, Nationality, Ethnicity, etc.*

- If you want me to know, tell me, if you want the group to know, tell them.
- No-one has the right to define another person.
- It is never too late to let each other know.
- Add new terminology to the Glossary.
- The Innsjekk is a time when you can update people about how you identify.
- No-one has a right to an explanation of your identity.

How we make addressing specific needs easier

*e.g. cognitive needs (Dyslexia, etc), family need, disability, etc.*

- The PTAB facilitator will ask if there are specific needs at the beginning of the programme.
- During the innsjekk there should be a moment to address specific needs anyone has on that day or which are changing.
- Be specific about duration. e.g. If you have long-term needs or short-term needs, e.g. dyslexia, or "today I am upset about X and need more sensitivity about it today".

7

- Be specific about what you need. e.g. if you have dyslexia, do you need more time to read material? If you have a family emergency, do you need to be available by phone during the meeting?
- During Utsjekk ASK whether needs specified during innsjekk have been adequately met.

How to define touch and physical boundaries

- Do not assume touch-consent.
- If you are a physical communicator ask before touching others.
- Be specific: e.g. "Can I touch your shoulder?"
- Consent to one thing does not mean consent to another, e.g. agreeing to a hug does not mean agreeing to holding hands.
- Only use touch with consent!
- Do not assume that consent from one person means consent from another.
- Consent can always be withdrawn.

### © PRINCIPLES OF LANGUAGE

How we use language

- We encourage language that supports equality and help each other avoid discriminatory language (sexualised, radicalised, violent language, etc.)

What Kind of Language do we consider positive?

- Use language that is inclusive in the sense of making room for different backgrounds.
- Allow time for asking if there are words someone doesn't understand.
- Use vocabulary that feels natural, instead of one that aims to prove an intellectual or advanced level.
- Speak in a way that aims to include.
- Offer explanations if using specific terminology.

8

How we define language use

- You are is the way you describe yourself, while you do is what you choose to act on.

How we platform non-discriminatory language

*e.g. how to avoid sexualised, radicalised, violent language, etc.*

- Educate don't punish.
- Good will when explaining — people want to learn and people make mistakes.
- Confront someone if they are using discriminatory language.
- Not everyone has had a chance to learn the same things, be sensitive to this fact.
- Describe the language used, not the person.
- Offer alternatives.
- Spread awareness.
- Always communicate.
- Create a safe space for speaking up by following listening procedures.
- Give reasons.
- Respect your own needs and boundaries.
- No member of a minority identity group has an obligation to educate others about themselves.
- Find ways to educate yourself if you have been confronted by someone. Understand it as an opportunity to learn, not as a calling out of your failure to know.

How We Listen

- Listening is active. Listening is a conscious choice.
- Let the person who is talking know that you are listening.
- Keep eye contact, nod or confirm verbally that you're listening.
- Don't project your own thoughts and feelings onto the person speaking.
- Don't make assumptions about their intentions.
- Don't think about what you are going to reply.
- Reflect after listening before you reply.
- Ask if you don't understand something.
- We Become Comfortable With Ideas At Different Speeds.

9



How We Make Time and Space For Communication and Clarity.

- \* We make space to hear each other's reflections when they come after some time.
- \* Conversations are dynamic and aren't bound to follow one specific and linear course.
- \* When the conversation is coming to an end or a pause, take time and ask if there are thoughts that are unheard, or any points to mention.
- \* Make space for the conversation to have a natural flow.
- \* It is better to return to a thought or topic than to stop someone from speaking.
- \* The Utsjekk (Check Out) is a scheduled time to return to earlier conversations, share thoughts, and reflect on things that have taken more time to settle.
- \* Remember: It helps the whole group when you ask to return to an earlier idea or subject.

How and when we return to a previous conversation

- \* *When it feels natural.*
- \* *After everyone has shared their reflections on the present theme of conversation.*
- \* *Through a reference in the present topic.*
- \* *During Utsjekk.*
- \* *Managing communication*

How to introduce someone with different frames of reference:

- \* If you are in a 'Teaching' position, be patient.
- \* Do not assume that other people know what you know.
- \* Do not assume that people have the same references as you.
- \* Designate a 'teacher' from the group who a new person can come to with questions.
- \* You can't force someone to learn from you.
- \* Listen before you react.
- \* Take time to reflect if you disagree with something.
- \* You are allowed to feel what you feel but give some time before you react.

How to meet with another group:

- \* Share our code of conduct.
- \* Do not assume that other people know what you know.
- \* Do not assume that people have the same references as you.
- \* Respect that you have different starting points.
- \* Respect yourself as well, set boundaries for yourself.
- \* Be welcoming, talk, create a conversation.
- \* Include everyone, make time for the quiet ones.
- \* Try to check in with yourself if you react to something, see how you feel.
- \* Think through what behavior your feelings are in response to, aim to describe them as clearly as you can, emphasising what was done or said, not what someone are.
- \* Own your feelings: Talk about what you feel about what someone is doing, not what they are making you feel.
- \* Refer to the Principles of Behavior and Principles of Language in this code.

*These suggested guidelines of play were adapted from the PTAB Code of Conduct. The PTAB Code of Conduct was originally written on 26 June 2021 by Annine, Mikkel, Nellie, and Sumaya, with guidance from artists Ina Hagen and Sol Arøver, and PTAB organiser Marit Silsand. Formatting was done by Ina and Sol in the week following the workshop. PTAB organiser Nicholas Jones adapted this for the game manual on 3 November 2021. [All dates of future revisions are to be listed here in a similar manner]*

# The glossary

On the next page is the glossary we have started. It is a space for improving accessibility and equality, a tool for learning, and to provide shared understanding.

The words in this manual that are underlined show what we think is helpful to define. We are still working on our glossary and we encourage you to help us by using the blank pages that follow to finish defining the words we have underlined, and to continue to underline and define words you choose throughout the book.

- \* Asking to add a word to the glossary is an action that helps the whole group.
- \* Norwegian (and probably other languages too) doesn't have all the terminology that we find useful to communicate ideas, thoughts and feelings. The glossary is also a tool for bringing International terminology into Norwegian conversations.
- \* If you are in the position of knowing something that someone else doesn't know, take it to mean that they haven't had the opportunity to learn it yet.

How it works

During a game a word can be added at any time. You can return to work on definitions later to avoid breaking the flow of the session. If you are using specific words and terminology, offer explanations, don't assume people will ask. When questions about specific or identity-related terms arise, it is someone's responsibility to speak about something they don't want to. **HOWEVER** someone with personal or minority experience has the right to explain IF they indicate that they want to. No-one has a Duty to educate you. You can also disclaim "I don't have this background but I have heard that ..." If you want to look up the terms on your own, do, and share them with the group during Innsjekk (check in).

# PTAB's glossary for common understanding

This Glossary accompanies the Guidelines of Play and the PTAB Principles. It is an ongoing document that records specific words, terms, and concepts along with their meaning and use by the group. We hope that the glossary will be helpful for us and others after us.

At any point, anyone can ask for something to be added to the Glossary. Meanings in the glossary can change with time. They can be updated and in these cases the editor should date the changes.

## Structural

What do we mean when we say structural? There is a difference between talking about a structure compared to something structural: Something being structural is more vague and abstract. It is something you should be more proven on what you mean. It is a way of describing unspoken ventures. It might be more conceptual.

## Topics within Structural:





# The Queer Glossary

## How do people use the word?

Self labeling

Identity

Self Identity

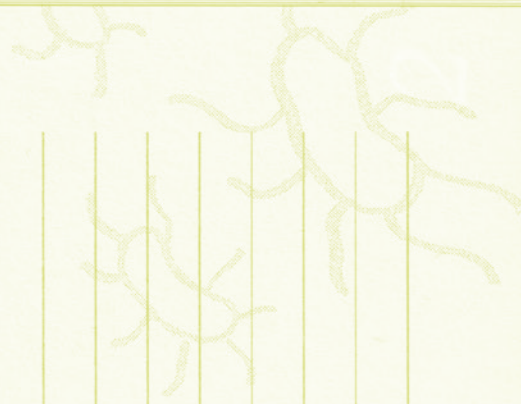
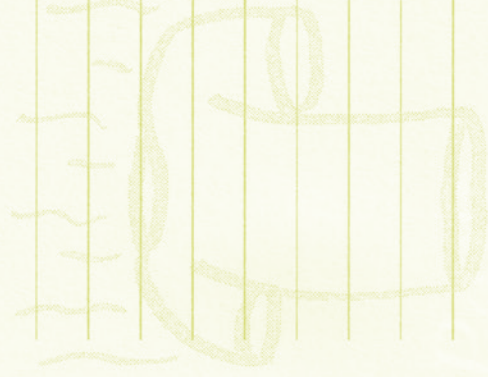
"Queer used as a smear" = something weird

Queer trauma (Generational trauma)

## Your glossary:



## Queer trauma





# Setting the scene

Several of these games ask you to discuss serious topics, and to be open about your opinions. To set the stage, we have a few activities to help you and your friends warm up.

## Part 2



18

### Who are we when we are together? *Create your own code of practice*

Bravery rating: 2/3

Number of players: 4+

#### Plot:

How can we create a healthy space for all to play these games? This is more of a task than a game, but it's an interesting way to think about how we behave towards each other – something that's normally simply taken for granted. You're going to write a new *Code of Practice*, in which you'll define how to act and behave together. The resulting document will address assumed normal behaviours and law, clarifying grey areas between the two.

As you write this code you will also write a 'Glossary', which is a tool to help find your way together through the code of practice. It collects and explains more tricky words, terms, and concepts.

#### Materials:

Pen and paper (you could also use a computer or a phone)

#### Location:

Somewhere comfortable where you can talk easily

#### Before you start:

Assign a *Keeper of the Glossary* – As you work together to write your *Code of Practice*, any words or terms that anyone is unsure of should be discussed, defined and noted down (together with the agreed definition). It is the *Keeper's* job to make these notes.

You can keep adding to your glossary as you try the different games from this manual. Write down the following questions. Discuss each one, noting down your agreements:

20

Bravery rating: 2/3

Number of players: 4+

- \* How do we want to be treated, and so how should we behave?
- \* How should we speak to each other?
- \* How do we create a positive space together where we can disagree but still respect each other and be friends?
- \* How can we approach radicalized language, sexualized language, violent language?
- \* How should we manage emergencies?

Your agreements are your *Code of Practice*. Try to behave as you have agreed you should.

#### Extra information:

Codes are non-legal frameworks (unlike laws or contracts which are legal frameworks). The code of practice is a guide to help define and agree how you want to conduct yourselves as a group.

*Afternotes: These instructions are adapted from a workshop held by artists Ina Hagen and Sol Archer on 26 June 2021.*

21



## Ready, set, squeeze

Bravery Rating: 1/5

Time: 5 minutes+

Players: 5-100+

### Plot:

Need to clear your head before you get going?

### Materials:

Just yourselves

### TASK:

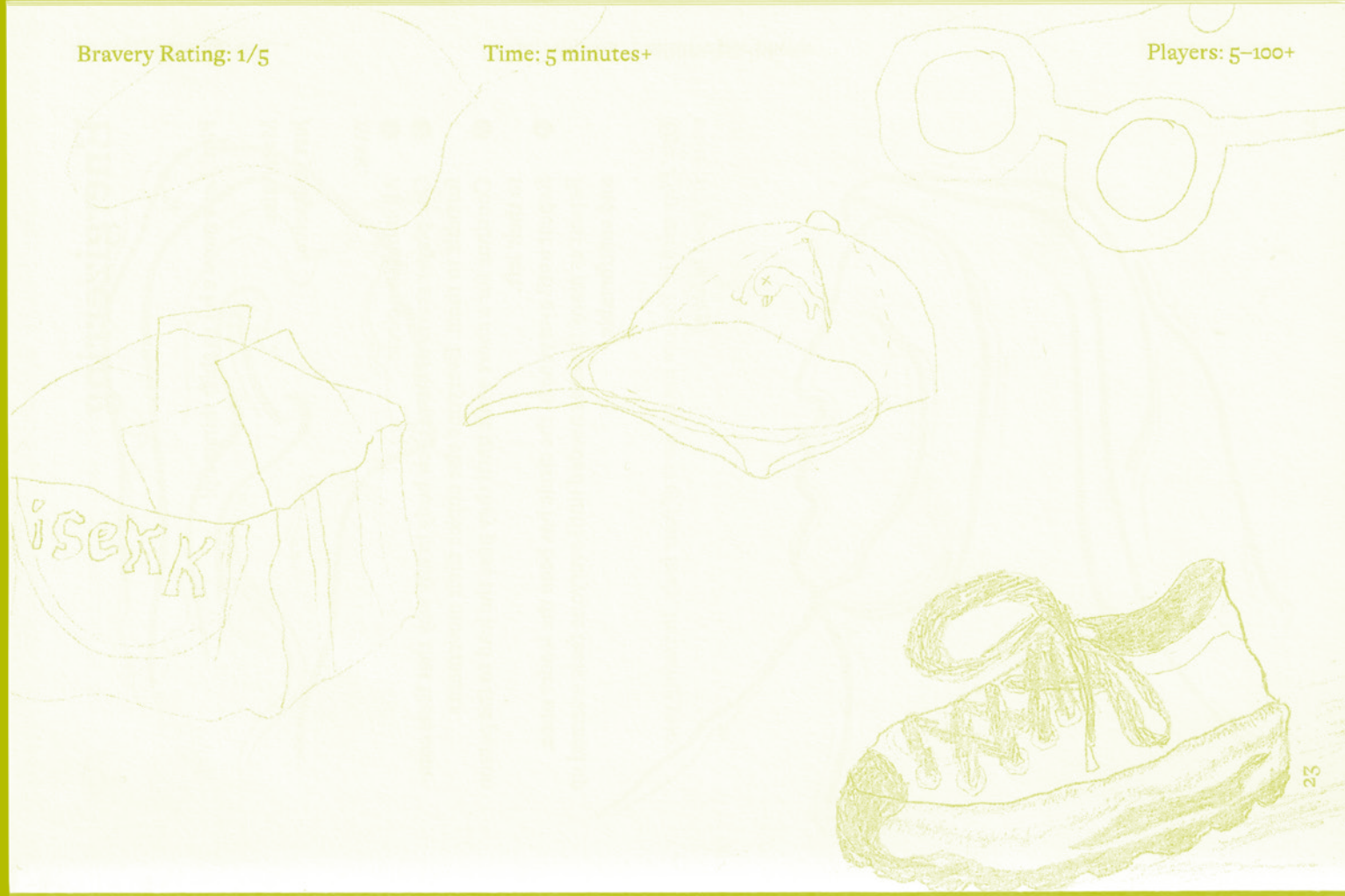
- 1 Sit in circle, making sure you are comfortable
- 2 Hold hands with the people next to you
- 3 Look at the person opposite you and then close your eyes
- 4 Take a deep breath all the way down into your stomach and hold it until you can't and let it out. Repeat three times.
- 5 Pick a person to start. They squeeze the hand of the person on either their left or right. When you feel this, squeeze the person who is next in line until it has gone all the way around the circle.
- 6 Open your eyes and get going.

22

Bravery Rating: 1/5

Time: 5 minutes+

Players: 5-100+



23

## Energizzerrrr

Bravery Rating: 2/5

Time: Approx. 1 minute per player

Players: 5-100+

Plot: Let's move a bit to shift things up!

### Materials:

Just yourselves

### TASK:

- 1 All stand in a circle
- 2 One player starts to move their body in any way that feels comfortable to them. Everyone else copies their movements.
- 3 Continue for a short while until they pass the lead to the person to their left.
- 4 Repeat until everyone in the circle has been the leader once. Repeat as many times as needed until everyone feels warmed up and comfortable

*Tips: Play with it. You can use all parts of your body, including your voice. It's good to laugh.*

24

Bravery Rating: 2/5

Time: Approx. 1 minute per player

Players: 5-100+



25



# Draw on your imagination

**Plot:**  
Who are the characters you meet in the artworld? Where do you and your friends fit in?

**Materials:**  
Something to draw with and on

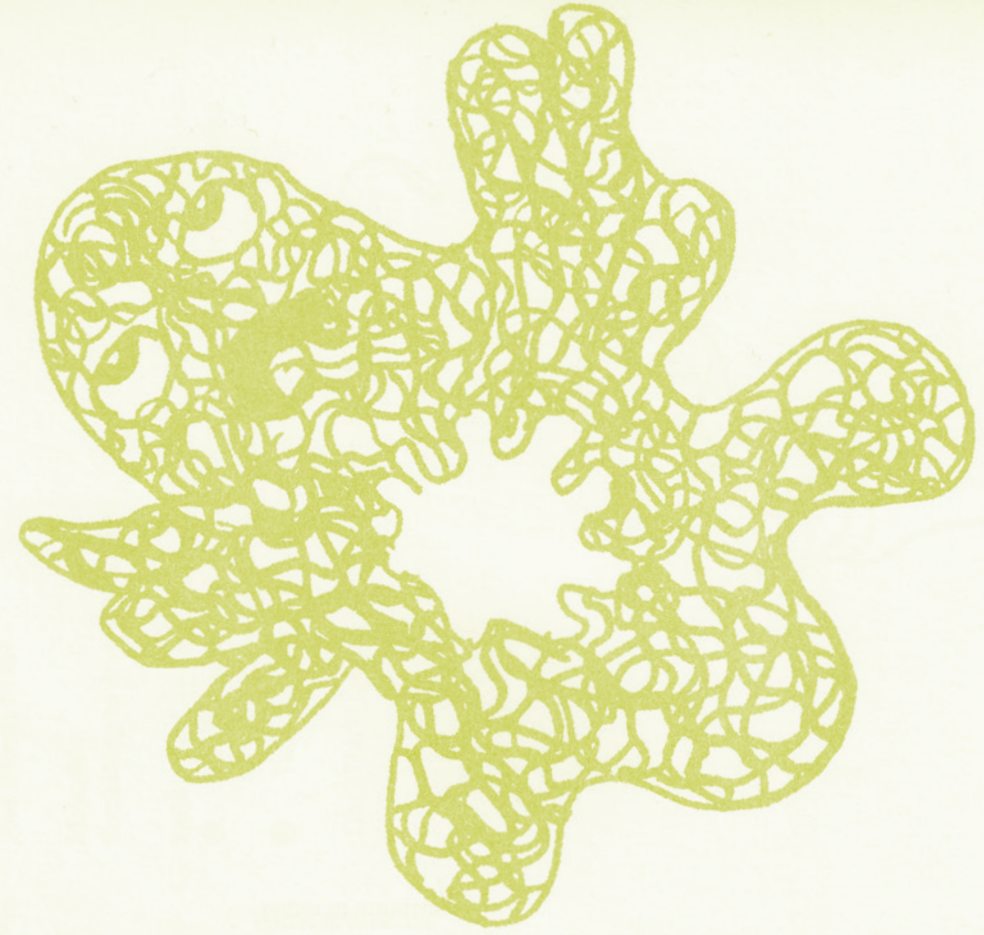
- TASK:**
- 1 Use 5 minutes to draw a non-human character that represents you as a character in the artworld. Write one line about it.
  - 2 Take it in turns to share your sketches and read the line.

*Tips : This is for fun, don't take it too seriously.*



# Nitty gritty

# Part





## What's behaving normal anyway?

Bravery rating: 2/5-5/5

Time: 3 hours+

Players: 3+

### Plot:

This is a confidence boosting challenge to make your own performance in public space. You can do it in outrageous costumes and confuse everyone around, or use everyday clothes to perform a character you'd like to play!

How do you behave in public spaces and why? What about others? How do people look at each other? Are there cultural rules – open or hidden? How does art highlight/challenge these rules? What roles do we play? When do you find yourself in character? What do these characters mean to you?

Here you will plan and act out a performance in public space where you explore these questions.

### Materials:

What can you get hold of to make a costume?

### Medium:

Performance

### Location:

Public space – for example a park, station, or museum (The more serious the better). Please choose somewhere that is safe.

30

Bravery rating: 2/5-5/5

Time: 3 hours+

Players: 3+

### TASK:

- 1 Find a location where you can perform – for us, this was an old fort in the city centre.
- 2 Discuss how to reach the public audience – decide on the rules or plan for your performance. Do you want your performance to directly address a topic, or to play with normal behaviour? How can you use being in a group?
- 3 Make/choose costumes and props together – these can be really flashy or simply deliberately chosen everyday clothes. *Does making the costume develop your ideas?*
- 4 Perform at your chosen space – have fun, if you like someone can take photographs, make videos etc.
- 5 Performing in public can be an intense experience! How did you feel? Talk, write or make a video together to help process what you have done.

*Tips: We recommend doing this with friends you are comfortable with. Do you all wear the same or different costumes? This may push your comfort zone ... Own it!*

### Afternotes:

*This game is not an invitation to upset other people or put yourself in danger! These instructions are inspired by a PTAB workshop that was developed with performance artist Kirsty Kross that took place in Oslo in 2021.*



31

## The art of seeing

Bravery Rating: 2/5

Time: 1 hour +

Players: 5+

### Plot:

This is an experiment in noticing. Observing yourself, others around you, everyone's movements, even the floor under your feet! We found ourselves in another space/time.

What do you focus on when you visit a museum? What happens if you change the pace of your movements? What do you notice? How do you feel?

### Location:

Visit a museum – or choose an alternative location to try these steps

### Materials:

Something to write notes on.

### STEPS:

#### Part 1

- 1 Explore a museum of your choice.
- 2 Once you are comfortable, slow down your movements.
- 3 Study what is around you, the exhibits, but also the walls, the people, the dust, gum stuck on the floor – this is about your entire experience and every aspect of it is equal.
- 4 Write at least three notes each reflecting on your personal experiences.

#### Part 2

- 5 At a normal pace again, have a look at your fellow museum visitors. How do they stand, walk, behave? Are there any patterns?
- 6 Write at least three notes each reflecting on your personal experiences.
- 7 Take it in turns to lead your group in mimicking behaviour patterns you find.
- 8 Write at least three notes each reflecting on your personal experiences.
- 9 Gather together your notes to make a collective notebook.

32

Bravery Rating: 2/5

Time: 1 hour +

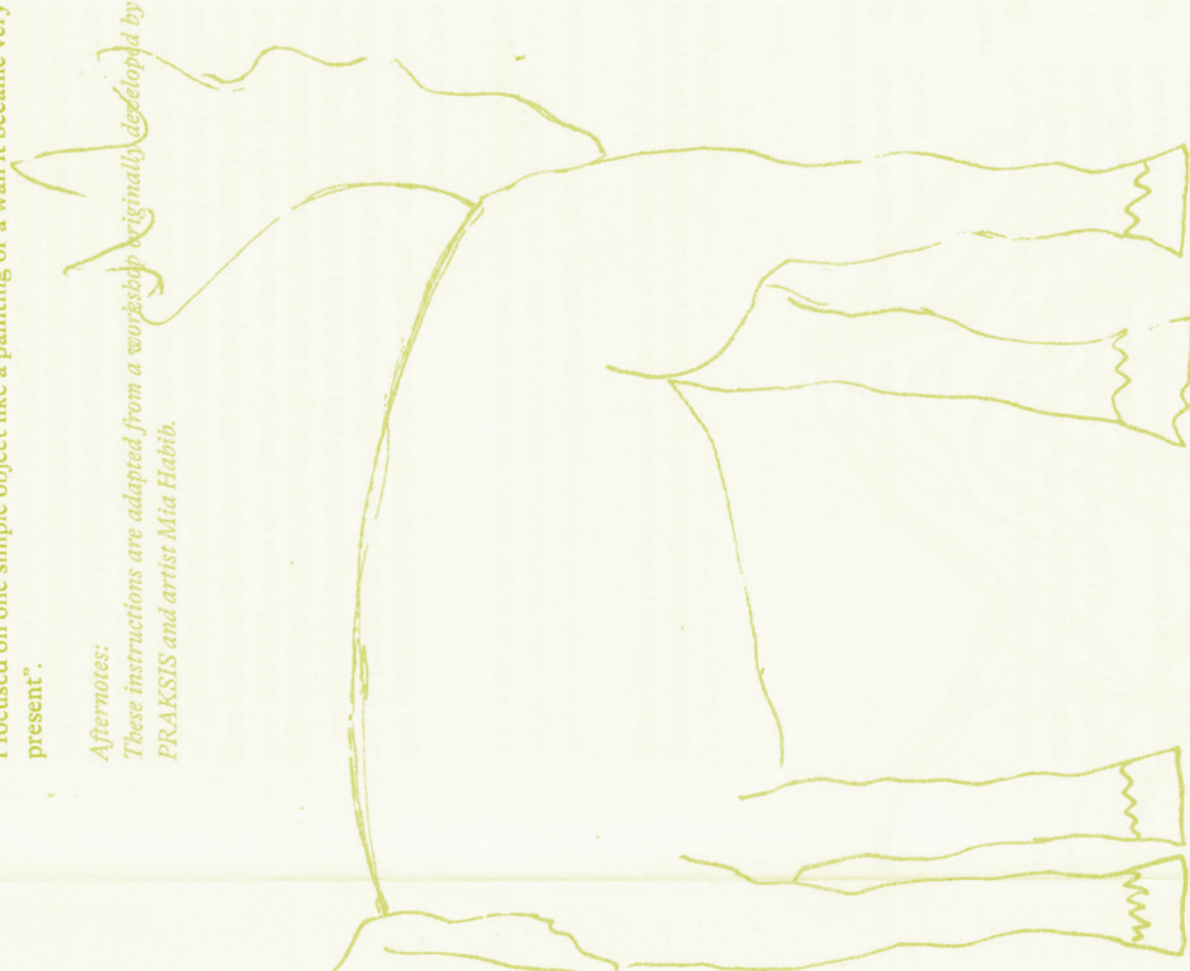
Players: 5+

### PTAB Comment:

Hannah explains: "I got so caught up by the details that I didn't get any impression of the whole room, I lost track of the totality. Because I focused on one simple object like a painting or a wall it became very present".

### Afternotes:

*These instructions are adapted from a workshop originally developed by PRAKSIS and artist Mia Habib.*



33



## Write on!

Bravery Rating: 2/5

Time: 1 ½ hours

Players: 2–8

Plot: *Let's rewrite some too-arty language.*

Art galleries and museums write texts about what they exhibit, but often people struggle to understand them – have you ever experienced this? Maybe this made you feel stupid or out of place? Have you thought about who writes these texts and who they are writing for? Could the text be written to attract journalists to write about the artwork(s), or to encourage a collector to buy them? How much of the language used feels like it's for people inside the industry – for example artists who are educated to understand the language? Is it simply that the text is badly written, and in reality, no one finds it easy to understand – but no one dares say so out loud – in the same way as nobody in H.G. Andersen's fairytale "The Emperor's New Clothes" wants to admit they don't understand?

Medium: Text

Materials: Paper, pen, mobile with camera

Location: An art space. For example a museum, gallery, outdoor sculpture park, project space, or a place where an art collection is presented such as a library.

TASK:

Before starting:

- 1 Pick one in the group to be the timekeeper.
- 2 Decide where to go.

Start:

- 3 On arrival read what is written about the show. (This can often be found beside the artwork, on a wall or maybe printed on paper. Sometimes there is a QR code to get access to the text online.)  
*Timekeeper – this should take 20 minutes.*
- 4 Pick a text you don't really understand. Make sure all participants agree on the selection.

34

Bravery Rating: 2/5

Time: 1 ½ hours

Players: 2–8

- 5 Discuss the text, including what you understand and what you don't.  
*Timekeeper – please keep this to 10 minutes or less.*

- 6 Split up.

- 7 Each of you write your own view of the chosen subject on paper. You can walk back to the artwork or exhibition and view it again. Think about how you would tell a friend about this artwork. You may find it helpful to remember the design principal K.I.S.S. – KEEP IT SIMPLE STUPID\*. *Timekeeper – 10 minutes please.*

- 8 Come together and compare your texts – how did you approach writing? What were important points for you?

- 9 Now, work together to write one text. *Timekeeper – another 10 minutes.*

- 10 Optional: Make this new text public. For example, you could email the text to staff at the venue with a friendly suggestion to use your text? Or do an artistic *guerilla action* – stick the new text beside the existing text.

*\*The KISS principle states that most systems work best if they are kept simple rather than made complicated; therefore, simplicity should be a key goal in design, and unnecessary complexity should be avoided.*

Afternotes:

*These instructions are inspired by a PTAB workshop developed with artist Ina Hagen on 3 October 2020 which addressed 'Language & Narrativity'.*



35

## What's it worth?

Bravery Rating: 2/5

Time: 30 minutes per round

Players: 2–10+

Plot:

What is art worth, and who pays for art? How does an artist, art gallery, museum etc. pay the bills? What is government cultural policy, a cultural foundation or a corporate sponsor? What is the role of the commercial art market? Do the values of these different sources of money affect how much and what type of art you see?

Media:

Text and drawing

Equipment:

A phone with internet connection may help

Location:

Any art space with. Recommend a private room.

TASK:

- 1 Go to an art gallery or museum that has a group exhibition on. A group show is one with artwork by more than one artist.
- 2 Everyone splits up for 15 minutes and tries to find the artwork that is most expensive.
- 3 Research the prices. Winner = the one who chooses the most expensive work. *If it's difficult to find out, can you ask someone working at the space?*
- 4 Discuss why you think the prices are different. What is it that gives an artwork value?

Afternotes:

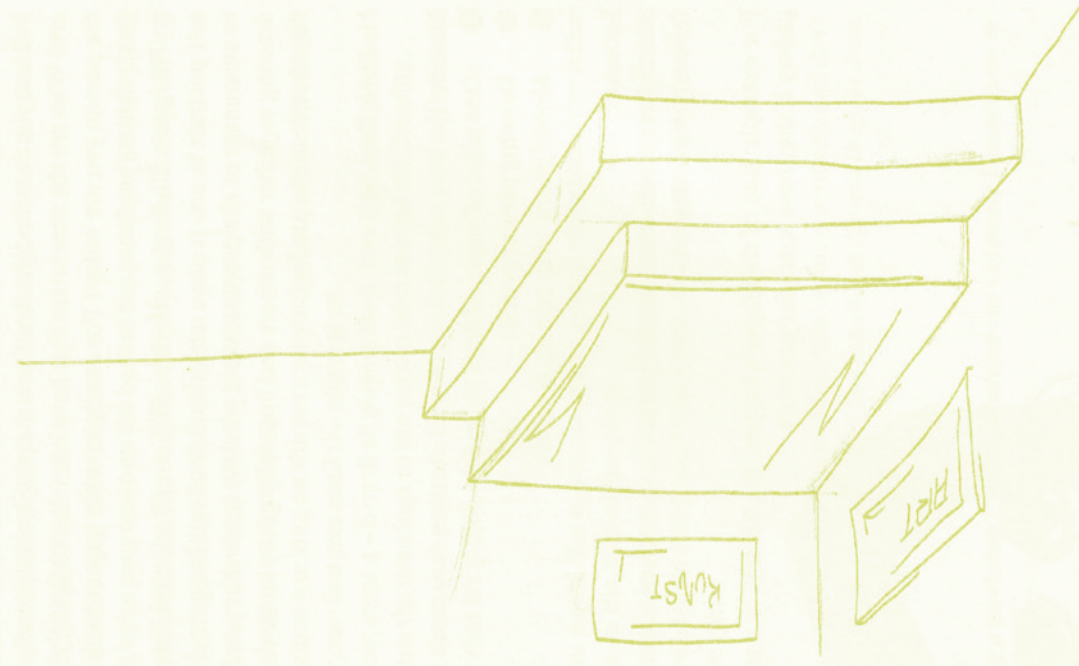
*Inspired by the workshop we had with artist Tormod Carlsen on 5 December 2020 about Policies and Structure. During Tormods workshop his CV was used as a model to look at how different structures affect artists. We researched Norwegian institutions that have given him money for his projects, such as Kulturrådet, Festsplilene i Nord Norge, Det Norske Teateret, Black Box Teater and KORO.*

36

Bravery Rating: 2/5

Time: 30 minutes per round

Players: 2–10+



37



## The faces that make us; “us”?

Bravery Rating: 2/5

Time: 20 minutes – several days/weeks.

Players: 3–10

### Plot:

Draw together with friends. Challenge the typical art self-portrait. Maybe even get to know yourself and each other a little better.

Have you ever thought about how the people around us form who we are? Who are the characters that have been there helping you become the person you are today? For example, what impact have friends or family had on you?

This game thinks about the idea of the ‘self’ and the tradition of the self-portrait in art. It plays with the idea of self-image and encourages awareness of the people around you. We hope that you’ll have fun drawing together with others and hopefully get to know each other a little better in the process.

### Medium: Drawing

### Materials:

- 1 One piece of paper each
- 2 Drawing pens or pencils
- 3 Mobile phone with camera function

### Location:

Somewhere comfortable, where you can concentrate, and with space for everyone to draw.

For example: one of the player’s homes, the library, or a museum or gallery if they have space for you to sit.



38

### TASK:

#### Before starting:

- 1 Select one person to be the photographer (using their phone).
- 2 Select one person to be the timekeeper.

#### Start:

- 1 The photographer takes a single portrait of each player, and sends it to them.
- 2 Timekeeper set 5 minutes please.
- 3 Each write your name on the back of the paper and start drawing yourself from the photo. (When the alarm goes off, stop drawing – don’t worry if you don’t finish)
- 4 Exchange drawings with the player to your left.
- 5 Timekeeper, set 2 minutes.
- 6 Continue working on the portrait you’ve been given, drawing in your own features until the alarm goes.
- 7 Repeat steps 4 – 6 until all players have drawn on each piece.
- 8 Return the drawings to the person who started the drawing.
- 9 Talk about each portrait. How do you feel about your self-portrait now that it’s mixed with other faces?

#### Optional:

- 1 If you would like to you can write a small text about your reflections on the back of the paper.
- 2 We would love you to share your drawings on Instagram. Tag in @praksisoslo and @praksistab with #incharacter and we will share them!

#### Tips:

*These are quick drawing rounds. Don't take them too seriously and don't worry about drawing perfectly! :) You can change the length of the drawing rounds if you want to.*

#### Afternotes:

*Inspired by a workshop PTAB had with artist Gelawesb Waladkbani in February 2021*

39

Bravery Rating: 2/5

Time: 20 minutes – several days/weeks.

Players: 3–10

## Who’s who?

Bravery Rating: 4/5

Time: 2 hours

Players: 4–8

Plot: Use photography to play with storytelling to create characters that acknowledge (and maybe challenge) your own art world prejudices.

We think it’s fair to say that just about everybody holds prejudices – negative assumptions about certain characters, groups, jobs even. What exactly is prejudice and where does it come from? Are prejudices dangerous, and is it possible to change them? Do you have assumed prejudice about anyone in the artworld? For example, do you stereotype the first time visitor or the museum director? What might happen if you acknowledge and visualise your prejudice? Could you make a photoshoot and tell a story about it?

### Medium:

Photography

### Materials:

Camera (mobile or another digital camera)  
Costumes (to make your character)

### Location:

Ideally an art space (museum, gallery, outdoor sculpture park, project space, a place with art collection)

### TASK | Preparation

- 1 Prepare:  
Individually each think about a prejudice you carry against a character in the artworld – for example: the artist, the collector, certain visitors, those working at museums (try to be honest with yourself). Think about how you could become that character – what is their role, their motivation? How could you act it out? You may find the *Map Your Character* exercise on page 40 helps with this.
- 2 Decide a location for your photoshoot – somewhere with good space and light. Looking at photos online or visiting the place beforehand are great ways to prepare.

40

Bravery Rating: 4/5

Time: 2 hours

Players: 4–8

### Start

- 6 Meet up at your chosen location and introduce your characters.  
Tell each other:
  - What prejudices you feel and why.
  - How you see this character interacting with other characters in the game.
  - How your character behaves in the space you are in.
  - How your character will interact with other audience members in the space.

Spend five minutes reflecting on your discussion.

- 4 Sit down together and make a storyboard. What is the story? How do the characters interact and behave? Where is the scene photographed? What camera angle do you want and who will take the photo? Decide how many photos you take – go for more than three but less than fifteen. Draw the images you want to take – think about the narrative happening in each one.
- 5 Give your photo series a title and write it at the top of the storyboard.
- 6 Prepare your costumes.
- 7 Use your storyboard to carry out the photoshoot. It’s ok to make changes during the shoot if you all agree they’re for the better. When one image is done check it to be sure you’re happy with the result. When you are, move to the next scene.

When you are done, choose the final images and look at the series. Does it represent the story you want to tell? After playing these characters, do you feel any closer to understanding their motivations? How do you feel about them?

#### Tips:

*The most important is the creative process – work together and have fun.*

Would you like people to see what you’ve done?

Use Instagram or other social media and tag in @praksisoslo and @praksistab with #incharacter and we will share them.

You could also print the images and ask your school, local library, a café or even a gallery with a project room to show them.

41



# Map your characters

**Plot:** Here you can map out valuable clues about a character to help you visualise and understand them better.

**Medium:** Drawing

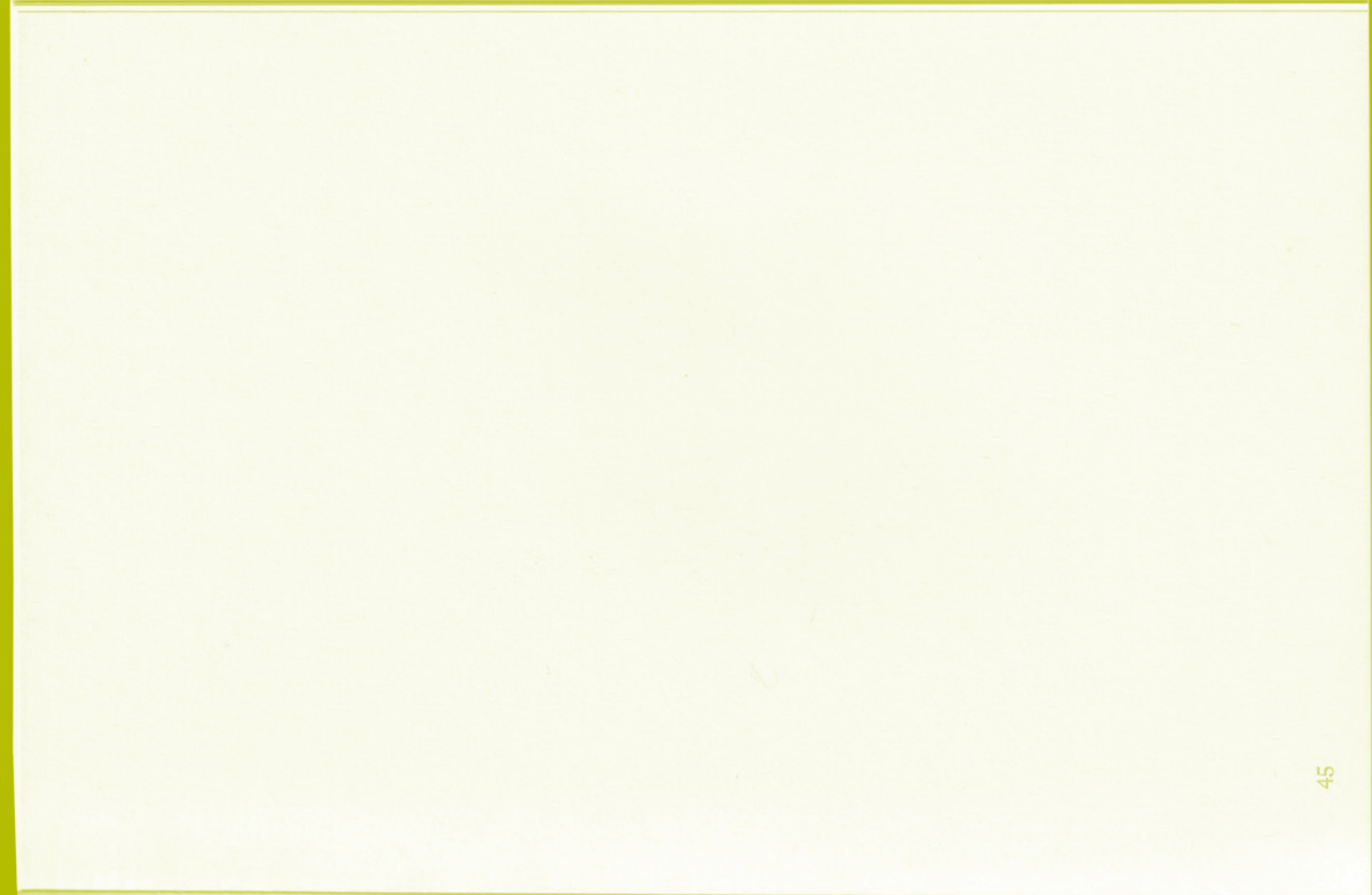
**Materials:** Things to draw with

**Location:** Somewhere comfortable

**TASK:**

- 1 Start by drawing the character you are thinking of in the middle of the page. Draw what the character is wearing and its posture.
- 2 Transform the drawing into a diagram by labeling the characters different characteristics.
- ☆ Near its legs: Write a list of important actions the character does. These reveal what kind of person they are—what’s important to them, what they want, what they love, and what they hate.
- ✦ Near its eyes: Describe the characters general world view
- ☞ World view can include: values, emotions and ethics
- ☞ Near the core of its body: State the characters primary internal conflicts. For example, struggles about: relationships, work, self-confidence, beliefs, ethics etc.

Map your characters:



© Marit's Example Character Map – The Grumpy Collector



#### Affirmations:

Who's who? and Map your characters are inspired by a workshop PTAB held with artist Marit Silsand on 27th of June 2021.

## Decolonial thinking for beginners

February 2021

Temi Odumosu

Senior Lecturer in Cultural Studies,  
Malmö University, Sweden

How are you feeling right now? Stop. Take a moment. Maybe even close your eyes. Breathe deeply. Connect with the wisdom of your body. What does it say?

Today, on a Saturday afternoon, I am relaxed but also concerned. We are living in some very challenging times. Probably you have been feeling the intensity. Over the last year, the global pandemic impacting human health, and the call for social justice and equality arrived at the same time. These major problems also added intensity to the ongoing environmental crisis, which has been on our minds for a while. It is becoming clear that all of these issues go hand in hand. We cannot really deal with one without addressing the other. At the same time, most of us are simply trying to get through the day in a safe and healthy way. We feel alone and afraid and are unsure of what to do. Thinking about all of this, and considering how to react, can be overwhelming.

Because everything is moving so fast, I think we need tools to be able to respond to and adapt to change. I wrote the following text a few years ago as a response to emerging discussions in Scandinavia about the term "decolonization". It was becoming trendy in the arts and also in universities. But I started to get concerned that the meaning of this term was not properly understood. What does it mean to decolonize? How can we do this without first taking a long study-course in history? Is it possible for this word to keep its political energy, but at the same time be practical?

So, I was asked to get back to the basics, and write something more accessible. Initially the text was written for "twens" (10-12 year olds), but when I read it back, I realised that this could be used by anyone. I share it here, once more, in slightly edited form, to support your own journey and conversations. I hope it helps!

47

In January 2021, Going to a Conference: In Character

gathered people with the goal of re-imagining social constructs connected to art spaces. One of those people was Dr. Temi Odumosu, who asked the questions: why has so little progress been made towards decolonisation, given that decolonial discourse has been widely present since at least the 1950s? How should we process all the feelings that history brings? Below is Temi's short guide to help understand how we can all take steps towards decolonisation:

#### Tips & strategies for quiet but radical change

Do you want to be a decolonial thinker?

Be prepared for mind and heart expansion!

Here are some tips:

1. Look back. Learn about your history, and not just out of a book, but also from different places; like art and museums, and also by listening to people. Listen to the elders. You need to gather many sources, and I will tell you why. When you attend a music concert, there is usually a big crowd. Everyone experiences the event in a unique way: one person met the band and got autographs, but another person sat at the back where the sound was not good. Those two people will not describe the event in the same way. History is the same. There is always more than one perspective.
2. Look outwards. Now learn about the world's history. Navel-gazers are not interesting. What more is there to say?
3. Drop the labels. "He's short", "She's loud", "He's cool", "They're nerdy", "She's different". Boring! Would you like to live in a very tight box with no windows for the rest of your life? Probably not. Labels are uncomfortable and confining, like a box. They don't just limit others they also limit you. The world is full of unlimited possibilities. If you want to be decolonial, be open-minded and free!
4. Confront the bully in YOU. Everybody wants to be liked by others. I mean popular people always look like they are having so much fun! But are you making other people unhappy or uncomfortable in your quest to be seen? It's a hard question, but I know you can take it. So much of history has been about people trying to be the Lion King. It's definitely time for change. Share the power, share the love.
5. Take a spiritual selfie. Yes, you heard me! Instead of focussing on your face all the time, take a moment to look at what's *inside* your head and your heart too. Self-reflection (i.e. asking yourself questions about the special kind of person you want to be) is a basic decolonial practice. Why? Because it helps you to separate what is true to you, from what you have borrowed from the world.
6. Art is fresh air. Go to an art museum or the theatre next time someone asks you. Exposing yourself to art is important. Artists are amazing because they are always thinking in new ways. They ask questions, notice

48

the things that we ignore, and make us feel so many different emotions. Art keeps us open and curious about the things outside of our personal experience. Remember, no navel-gazing!

7. Mind your language. Try to stay away from any words that are not inspiring or that undermine the dignity of others. Basically, words that make people feel bad. This means you have to be extra vigilant! You may not use the "N-word" when you are speaking, but is it in your storybooks? Or in the music you listen to? Words are tricky, they creep into everything!
8. Memories are treasure. Look after your memories and other people's memories like precious things. Keep the long and the short ones. Memories remind us of where we have been and what we have achieved. Honestly, they are the only true possession in life. The good memories will keep you warm; the bad ones will remind you to hold on to the good ones, *and* to make more of them.
9. Racism is real. Period. A decolonial thinker who has read their history will already know that we have inherited cruel ideas about human differences. We cannot change the past but we can decide our actions in the present day. Please respect when somebody tells you they have experienced racism. It is real and painful. Ask that person what you can do to help, or, just listen. If you are that person, I am sorry you had to experience that.
10. Feel it in your body so it sticks. Let's do a decolonial thought experiment. Imagine this: You are standing on the playground at school and then suddenly a tennis ball hits you from behind. You were not looking, so it catches you by surprise. It really hurts and will probably leave a bruise. This is how racism can feel. It appears suddenly and without warning, and then leaves something nasty behind. You might be walking down the street quietly daydreaming, and then somebody behind you says: "do people like you wash your hair" OR "go back to where you came from". What a mood-killer! Such moments happen to many people every single day!
11. You don't know it all. Decolonial thinkers realise that human beings are always learning and that good ideas and information can come from so many different sources. They also actively seek to learn in places that others will not go. Have you ever had a conversation with a homeless person to ask them about how they live? When was the last time you watched someone who is visually impaired navigate space? There is so much they know that a full-sighted person does not. Stay open.

49









55



57



54



56











## Colophon

PRAKSIS teen advisory board (PTAB) and PRAKSIS would like to give a heartfelt thank you to all the fabulous characters who have helped make this publication and the workshops and process that lead to it. These include but are not limited to: Sol Areher, Tormod Carlsen, João Doria, Mia Habib, Ina Hagen, Jinn Jansen, Kirsty Kross, Samantha Lippett, Marri Manen, Temi Odumosu, Paul O'Neill, Emmeli Person, Elisisa Suvanto, Charlotte Teyler, Isabella Tjäder, and Gelawesh Waledkhani. We greatly appreciate the support of our sponsors: Erasmus+, Youth in Action programme of the European Union, Norske Kulturrådet, Oslo Kommune, Nordic Culture Point, Sparebankstiftelsen DNB, and Kulturtanken.

2020/2021 PTAB board members include:

Sadia Hassan, Nellie Barazandeh, Mikkel Inchley, Sumaya Elmi, Annine Slettebø, Noah Gylver, Hannah Røsholt Siger, Zeinab Al-khatib, and Nasteha Hassan Mahamed.

*In Character: The Game Manual!*  
Your Ticket To The World of Art

ISBN: 978-82-692757-0-4

Trykk: Risografi, Byverkstedet

Papir: Munken Pure, Colorit 19, Seandia 2000 Ivory.

Edited by: PTAB, Nicholas Jones and Marit Silsand

Illustrations by: PTAB

Graphic design: Tonje Lona Eriksen and Johannes Barlaup Jellum

Produced by: PRAKSIS / Byverkstedet  
www.praksisoslo.org

The purpose is to get out of your comfort zone. No talents needed. No experience needed. You have to go with the flow and let the fear go. At the end you will discover that you can do anything as long as you put your mind to it.

—Nasteha

The art world is not so scary! Before I joined PTAB, the art world seemed very far away, but in reality, artists and the curators are just people like everyone else, who most often also want to include everyone else. You don't have to have such tense shoulders when you are at an exhibition! The art world is nothing without ordinary, raw people. This book helps you realise that the art world is not that scary.

—Mikkel

This has been an eye-opening experience. The exercises in this book have changed my relationships with art and art spaces, by changing my understanding of the purpose and function of art.

—Noah

Patience. Be open minded. That's what these workshops have taught me. Before these workshops, I felt out of touch with anything that has to do with art, and usually ignored it, seeing it as different to me. With patience and an open mind, I have learned a lot, and the most important of them all – I have learned that art has a place for everyone. You don't need to be a singer, good at drawing, a dancer or a creative person – you can be anyone and still be a part of art somewhere.

—Sumaya

I've learned a lot from the workshops that inspired this game manual. One thing that I'm forever taking with me is the artist's passion for what they do. The glow in their eyes as they shared with us and taught us. I too want to have that kind of passion!

—Sadia

I have learned that art is mainly about human connection, and by reaching out and meeting others with honesty, I now feel much more comfortable in art spaces.

—Annine



ISBN: 978-82-692757-0-4



## ITAB

Sara Freds (b. 200X) currently lives in Stockholm and is part of ITAB. She has a great interest in a variety of arts, photography being her favourite.

Malin Issa (b. 2002) has been an ITAB member since January 2021 and lives in Stockholm, Sweden. Malin is a student of Biomedicine Analysis at Karolinska Institutet.

Felix Krausz Sjögren (b. 2003) has been an ITAB member since January 2021. Felix studies literature and French at Lund University and he is editor of the literary magazine Ordkonst.

Anahita Mishra (b. 2005) is currently a member of ITAB and lives in Stockholm, Sweden. Anahita is currently a second-year natural science student at Kungsholmens Gymnasium.

Alcina Munene Persson (b. 2001) is a member of ITAB, a Media Technology university student living in Stockholm and an avid hobbyist.

Vigo Roth (b. 2003) is currently a member of ITAB and lives in Skurup, Skåne, Sweden. At present Vigo is pursuing their first year of filmmaking studies at Skurups Folkhögskola.

Luna Sackett (b. 2001) is a member of ITAB and lives in Stockholm, Sweden. Luna is an artist currently studying courses at Stockholm University while she learns Swedish.

Sarika Ullah (b. 2002) has been an ITAB member since January 2021. Sarika lives in Stockholm, Sweden and is currently studying her second year at Röda Korsets Högskola to become a nurse.

## PTAB

Fariha Fatima Malik (b. 2002) is a Norwegian artist, actress, writer, poet, slam poet and activist living in Oslo. She is involved in the Department of Education's "cultural schoolbag" scheme, and her work has

been showcased in various Oslo centres of art and performance, including Kunstgalleri Oslo and the new Centralteater.

Dugagjin Osmanaj (b. 2001) is an Albanian-Norwegian student of political science and cultural history at the University of Oslo. Deeply engaged in literature and writing, he is currently working on a book project.

Mey-Thip Mortensen (b. 2004) is a Thai-Norwegian PTAB member living in Oslo. She is curious about the world around her and loves discovering new information. In the future she hopes to create better living conditions for people everywhere.

Ilwaad H. Mahamed (b. 2004) is currently in her last year of high school study in Oslo, Norway. She enjoys learning about both art and technology and combines a passion for baking with volunteer work.

Emil Temim (b. 2004) is Norwegian-Bosnian-American and grew up in the east central area of Oslo. In his last year of high school, he is studying art, design & architecture, with the goal of becoming an architect. His interests include exercise, skating, politics and the climate.

Gard Møller-Johansen (b. 2004) is in his last year of study at Oslo Cathedral School. Engaged in school theatre, literature, music and politics, he is interested in the social and political aspects of art both as values and as a means to do things.

Ari Sigurdarson (b. 2002) is pursuing a BA in International Studies at the University of Oslo. A keen saxophonist, Ari is interested in many forms of the arts, especially the ways that context, presentation and individual mindset can shape the perception and meaning of works of art.

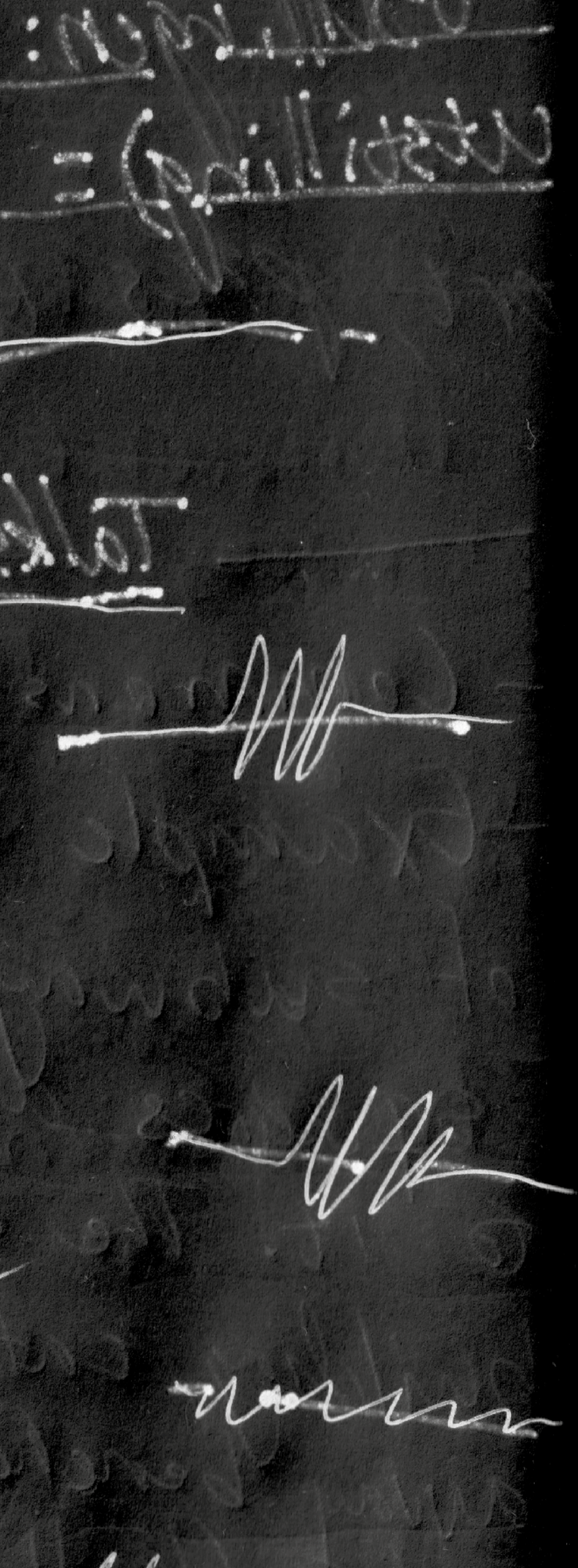
Sujani Sutharsan (b. 2003) is a Tamil-Norwegian student currently studying computer science at the University of Oslo. Sujani is passionate about fair and equal representation. She is currently working on a movie project.











...for own movement  
...centric notion of commons  
...THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUOUS REBELL  
...CONFRONTING THE ECONOMY OF ART WORLD  
...alliance between the state & social  
...the lack of money was removed  
...BIENNALE FOR  
...BIENNA

...everyone is blonde  
...PROTOTYPES  
...social  
...weather  
...-Progressive  
...-Scandinavian  
...-Performative  
...-MY LAND  
...ayad sattar Hasan  
...WORKSHOP

## About How do we know?

### *Institutional listening and young agency in the arts*

*How do we know? Institutional listening and young agency in the arts* was co-created by the Teen Advisory Boards of Index (Stockholm) and PRAKSIS (Oslo) together with PUBLICS Youth (Helsinki) and organisers at Index, PRAKSIS and PUBLICS. The young boards at these organisations convene regularly and work to improve artistic and institutional practice from the inside.

This book represents two years of activity and features contributions from both the 2020-21 and 2021-22 Teen Advisory Board membership. The first part of the book reflects 2021-22 activities, including TAB members meeting in person together with Publics Youth in Helsinki, where they participated in the conference, *Today is Our Tomorrow* at PUBLICS. Supporting this are lightly modified reproductions of TAB zines generated in 2020-21: PRAKSIS's publication *In*

*Character: The Game Manual*, and Index's magazine *In Character: Index Teen Advisory Board*. Together, the three sections offer three distinct perspectives on TAB members' explorations and discussions.

As well as documenting activities and sharing TAB members' reflections on the arts and culture today, the sections contain practical details of workshop strategies and practices engaged by board members as a means both to encounter and intervene in the world of the arts. Thus, the book serves not just as documentation of two years of vibrant, joyful creative activity and youthful critical thinking, but as a potential tool for others looking to embed young people's views, hopes, concerns, experience and knowledge into the core of their organisational and/or cultural practices.

[PRAKSIS Teen Advisory Board Members](#) In 2021/2022, the PRAKSIS Teen Advisory Board members were Fortune Ativi, Aisha Berge, Fariha Fatima Malik, Dugagjin Osmanaj, Mey-Thip Mortensen, Ilwaad H. Mahamed, Emil Temim, Gard Møller-Johansen, Ari Sigurdarson, and Sujani Sutharsan. In 2020/2021, the PRAKSIS Teen Advisory Board members were Sadia Hassan, Nellie Barazandeh, Mikkel Inchley, Sumaya Elmi, Annine Slettebø, Noah Gylver, Hannah Røsholt Siger, Zeinab Al-khatib, and Nasteha Hassan Mahamed.

[Index Teen Advisory Board Members](#) In 2021/2022, the Index Teen Advisory Board members were Alcina Nancy Munene Persson, Anahita Mishra, Felix Sjögren, Luna Sackett, Malin Issa, Montadar Saleh, Sarikazaman Ullah, Vigo Roth, and Ville Ferm Thorgersen. In 2020/2021, the Index Teen Advisory Board members were José Velasquez Esteban, Emil Pita, Sarika Ullah, Simon Sjögren, Malin Issa, Adina Edfelt and Felix Krausz Sjögren. In 2019/2020, the Index Teen Advisory Board members were Yosra Ali, Leo Queiroz Gonzalez, Alfred Nilsson, Maryan Mohammed, Alva Mårsén, José Velasquez Esteban, Aqueel Raffa, Simon Sjögren, Leo Ramirez Iderström and Lovisa Jonsson



Co-organisers:

Nicholas John Jones  
Marti Manen  
Paul O'Neill  
Emmeli Person  
Marit Silsand  
Eliisa Suvanto  
Isabella Tjäder

Contribution leads:

Sol Archer  
Ina Hagen  
Maryam Fanni  
Sayed Sattar Hasan

Text editor:

Rachel Withers

Book design:

Johannes B. Jellum  
Tonje Lona Eriksen

Printed and bound by:

Die Keure, Belgium

Paper:

Munken Lunx Rough  
90gsm 1.4, Munken  
Lynx 240 gsm

Typeface

Basel Grotesk by Optimo

This publication and the *In Character* programme through which it has been developed was made possible by support from:

Erasmus+ ungdom  
City of Oslo  
Arts and Culture Norway  
Kulturtanken  
Nordic Culture Point  
Sparebankstiftelsen DNB  
Arts Council Sweden  
Stockholm City  
Region Stockholm

Along with the Teen Advisory Boards themselves, the development of this project has involved many people. Warm thanks are offered to all the people who have played a part in the background of planning and making this publication, including but not limited to:

Nadja Lipsync  
Áron Birtan  
Kari Kvittingen Djukastein  
Hilda Levin  
Coyote  
Jinn Jansen  
Temi Odumosu  
Pontus Pettersson  
Sandra Praun  
Bronwyn Bailey Charteris  
Joanna Nordin  
SKF  
Ashik Zaman  
Alida Ivanov  
Ulla West  
Fredda Berg  
Tormod Carlsen  
João Doria  
Mia Habib  
Kirsty Kross  
Rudy Loewe  
Hanni Kamaly  
MYCKET  
Utke Acs  
Gelawesh Waledkhani  
Samamtha Lippett

Lou Mouw  
Jasmine Hinks  
Charlotte Teyler  
Anne Klontz  
Linnea Hansander  
Afrang Nordlöf Malekian  
Nour Helou  
Julia Cristina Trochez  
Kevin Leander Fiabema  
Micol Curatolo  
Kari Slaatsveen  
Ric Francis  
Annelise Bothner-By  
Therese Möllenhoff  
Demitra Christidou  
Irina Mutt  
Vicki Christaki  
Tal Gilad  
Harold Offeh  
Laia Estruch  
Anastasiia Lapteva  
Manda Loipponen  
Valeriia Masliukova-Malova  
Erika Ryppeiva  
Róza Turunen  
Vanessa Uhlbäck



This publication presents:

“an attempt to radically alter how art is  
viewed, consumed, curated and created”  
— Felix Krausz Sjögren

“an opportunity to engage with art  
and its spaces in a different way”  
— Luna Sackett

“a two-way street of pure reflection”  
— Vigo Roth

“a challenge to scrutinise your methods”  
— Isabella Tjäder

“a platform to express and share how  
young people experience the art scene”  
— Gard Møller-Johansen

“an effort to break down barriers and  
make the arts more accessible”  
— Mey-Thip Mortensen