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Annual Report

PUBLICS

2022

PUBLICS

PUBLICS is a curatorial agency with a dedicated library, event space and reading room in Vallila. The organisation explores a “work together” institutional model with multiple overlapping objectives, thematic strands and collaborations. The space functions as the main office, as well as a public space, with a library of over 9000 publications. PUBLICS hosts talks, events, exhibitions and performances in collaboration with other partners in the city, nationally and internationally. PUBLICS is an educational platform and a critical agency where artists, students and communities are invited to engage with social issues, as well as gain and share knowledge through various discourses. These initiatives develop in parallel with longer-term curatorial projects.

PUBLICS is a producer of new artistic projects driven by social concerns, and creates connections between diverse groups, as an open, ethically-led platform for critical debate and collaboration. PUBLICS operates under the Artistic Direction of Paul O'Neill together with Program Manager Eliisa Suvanto through 2022.

PUBLICS YOUTH Advisory Board is a working group within our organisation and provides them with relevant opportunities, professional and learning experiences. It offers paid positions for a group of young people (18-21 years old) who actively support both decision-making and implementation of the annual program. The first Youth Advisory Board was established in 2022.

PUBLICS collaborative methodology aims to create an ecology and diversity of thoughts and experiences. In order to function as a multidimensional and multi-purposed organisation, PUBLICS prioritises working with collaborators whose practice supports intersectional dialogue. PUBLICS fills a middle area in-between the small (artist-led) initiatives and bigger institutions, by providing an important link, support and consultation. PUBLICS is dedicated to support dialogue between the local and the international. PUBLICS pays an equal standard fee for every artist/curator/collaborator in four different categories. Annually, an elected board of professionals approves mission, vision, and oversees program policy.

PUBLICS is a constellation of practices which:

- Commissions, produces and curates exemplary public art and events
- Supports new collaborative models within the art world locally and internationally
- Identifies, promotes and advances new local and international networks
- Collaborates with artists and curators emerging from various different socio-cultural backgrounds
- Offers educational, civic and public resource
- Increases intersectional participation and debate urgent issues
- Activates and actualizes diverse publics for art
- Sustains small, flexible, content driven and discursive platforms

ACTIVITIES

In 2022 the core activities of PUBLICS were: the Open Up network and program, connecting Helsinki-based professionals with international institutions and communities; the festival Today Is Our Tomorrow, presenting alter-futures being enacted; the SHAPE platform as a means of supporting other local organisations and initiatives; Reading Group, a monthly session for meeting informally, reading and collectively discussing topics arising from the selected texts; and PUBLICS YOUTH, an Advisory Board and as a part of the network with PRAKSIS (Oslo) and Index (Stockholm) connecting three small-scale organisations dedicated to collaborating with young people to curate new models, formats and modalities for future publics.

In 2022, PUBLICS developed and delivered a new three year Action Plan for 2023-25. Alongside its PUBLICS Commissions, PUBLICS will evolve around Six Key Program Strands and develop:

SHAPE Art Map and Online Platform;
PUBLICS Center of Curatorial Excellence;
PUBLICS Library;
PUBLICS Events;
PUBLICS Youth Advisory Board, and Learning from its Open Up Helsinki and EU Networks.

TIMELINE

PUBLICS Commissions:

31 Mar	PUBLICS Coupling with David Blamey & Lau Nau
06 May	PUBLICS Coupling with Marja Ahti & Mikko Kuorinki with Elisabeth Molin
07 Oct – May 23	PUBLICS WINDOW Commission, <i>Subwindows I & II</i> by Timo Vaittinen

PUBLICS Events & Parahosting:

26 Jan	Trojan horse Listening session with Petra van Brabandt & Maleka Fruean
12 Feb	In Character: Publication & Podcast Launch
05 Mar	Artist Talk & Screening with Noor Abed
17 Mar	Presentation and Performance with Latitudes & Laia Estruch
24 Mar	They Inhabit While Working with Jaana Laakkonen
11 May	READING SESSION: <i>vari*</i> zine
9–10 Jun	Open Up and Shape Helsinki Symposium with keynotes Carolina Rito, Bassam El Baroni and Cynthia Cruz, and others
21 Jun	Angel Tape Book Launch with Merja Kokkonen
30 Aug	<i>Conversation Park</i> Book Launch with Lönnström Art Museum & Studio Kalleinen
14–17 Sep	<i>Baytuna</i> with Shareef Askar, DJ 1UAN, Meri Helmi Särkkä, Yassine Khaled, Haliz Yosef
08 Oct	<i>Today Is Our Tomorrow</i> with KMRU, Eilien & Lenoczka, Harold Offeh, Laia Estruch, Irina Mutt, Sayed Sattar Hasan, PUBLICS Youth, PTAB, ITAB
04 Nov	<i>Assembling a Black Counter Culture</i> with DeForrest Brown, Jr.
07 Nov	Soup Talk with Mette Edvardsen

PUBLICS Reading Group:

16 Mar	<i>Reading Towards Becoming Casual</i> by Emma Cocker
13 Apr	<i>Lanny</i> by Max Porter
25 May	<i>Voice in Philosophy</i> by Alice Lagaay
22 Jun	<i>Curatorial Feelings</i> by Eloise Sweetman
19 Oct	<i>The Political Possibility of Sound</i> by Salomé Voegelin
23 Nov	Coming to Know, by Umashankar Manthravadi
07 Dec	Lexicon of the Mouth, Brandon LaBelle



Today is our Tomorrow, photo by Aman Askarizad



David Blamey and Lau Nau Coupling comission, photo by Aman Askarizad

● PUBLICS COUPLING: David Blamey & Lau Nau

Initiated in 2021, Coupling is a series of curatorial projects, collaborations and pairings, initiated by PUBLICS, where two artists/practitioners are introduced to one another for the first time and show together drawing from common concerns within their practices.

In the second edition, Finnish artist and musician Lau Nau (Laura Naukkarinen) coupled with London-based artist and publisher David Blamey, culminating in two new bodies of work relating to the walls, floors, sights and sounds within and around PUBLICS space and elsewhere. David Blamey's *Substrates* is a selection of collages made from small painted objects displayed on PUBLICS walls next to a scattered floor installation made up of permutations of specific colour schemes. Lau Nau's *Work* is a spatial sound piece examining the relative closeness of work and play. It is made for a reel-to-reel tape player and a motion sensor player, a combination of analogue and digital techniques. The motion sensor player activates when detecting movement, filling the space with various sounds: of someone building the frames for the exhibition, whistling, playing with water drops. Sonic traces connect these activities with the listener to other geographies, sites, and times and with the immediate surrounding of PUBLICS library shelves.

● PUBLICS COUPLING: Marja Ahti & Mikko Kuorinki with Elisabeth Molin

For the third edition of Coupling, sound artist Marja Ahti and visual artist Mikko Kuorinki coupled with multimedia artist and writer Elisabeth Molin. The live program started with Molin's performative reading *not from concentrate*, as part of the event, Molin served tea made from oak bark extract. Marja Ahti then performed a live music set using and reorganising sounds from the installation intertwined with other electronic and acoustic sound sources.

For this show, each artist responded to PUBLICS' invitation by taking time to be in dialogue with each other around their particular, and sometimes shared processes and attention given to the publicness of materiality, textualities and resonances within their practices. Each artist explored ideas together whilst retaining their autonomy. The coupling culminated into two separate, new and distinctive responses to specific context at PUBLICS Library. Each artist took their own response to these spaces and to the public life of materials, their matter, sites and sounds offering a cohesive yet open ended premise for their emergent layers, relations, and co-mingling.

Elisabeth Molin's works explored the ecology of images, their infrastructures and how we see through and with images. These ecologies, of relations, ask how we recycle, share and distribute images. What do the notions and acts of spreading, erasure and loss of representation ask of agencies, and senses of belonging, leftover within images and their representations. Molin's show combined three distinct components. *your ink my glitch* (2022) is a site-responsive wall installation intervening with the sliding doors of the library and the adjacent wall. The work creates multiple overlapping layers between physical and imagined infrastructure and the tactility and the shift in meaning that happens as the sliding doors are being used. Molin's second new work is a video called *all.the.time* (2022), a visual and textual montage exploring the textures and materiality of time in the digital media. The montage combines footage where time is marked in gestures such as evaporation, pulses, glitches and time lines. The third and final part of Molin's response to Coupling, is *not from concentrate* – a live performative reading combining texts from previous publications; Lies and Diet

Coke, Black Rooms, (yet), as well as new texts reflecting on ideas of failures in representation and a floating time feeling.

Mikko Kuorinki's & Marja Ahti's *Shrine (Aether)*, (2022) is a collaborative installation of objects and sounds by Mikko Kuorinki and Marja Ahti. The work is a continuation of Kuorinki's on-going series of shrines and Ahti's compositional pieces organising sounds of everyday objects, materials, and spaces into quietly charged constellations.

The sounds and objects in the installation are poetically/energetically linked to each other as well as the room and surrounding environment. They combine everyday materials – artificial, organic, decrepit, mint, momentary, timeless – in a gesture releasing them from their usual practical function and giving them another. If the shrines have function it is simply to affect the space they are in and those taking care of them. Some are loaded and some empty. Some are placed within the shrine as a means of becoming charged, with meaning and value. Sounding events within the shrine are part of the on-going vibration of the material world.

● Today Is Our Tomorrow PUBLICS Annual Festival

With KMRU, Eilien & Lenoczka, Harold Offeh, Laia Estruch, Irina Mutt, Sayed Sattar Hasan, PUBLICS Youth, PTAB, ITAB

Today is Our Tomorrow is an annual transdisciplinary festival, initiated in 2019 by PUBLICS. The festival, taking a different form and location each year, supports intersectional ecologies and diversity of thoughts, practices, identities, and their experiences through its collaborative methodology and co-productive commissioning approach.

Beginning in October 2022 and for the duration of one year, *Today Is Our Tomorrow* focuses on the current futurity and presentness of the voice in its many sonic forms, vocal modes and acoustic modalities. Through a series of connected public moments and gatherings curated across twelve months, *Today is Our Tomorrow* will frame much of PUBLICS activities for the year 2023 focusing on the recurrent thematic and evolving concept of the voice.

The gathering in October 2022 explored the interaction between people, their acoustic worlds and the sounds of the environment that the listener hears and imagines. The voice was explored as material where the agencies of language, sound, silence, noise, music, field recording, as well as the agential qualities of listening, speaking, singing, dancing, and the performative voice as embodied practice.

The day-long public gathering on Saturday 8th of October gave special attention to the voices of young people, and the politics of listening. As part of this years' program, the Teen Advisory Boards of Index (Stockholm), and PRAKSIS (Oslo), and PUBLICS Youth had developed new artworks with co-commissioned artists. These three organisations are dedicated to collaborating with young people to co-curate new models, formats and modalities for future publics as part of a long-term project of engaging young people with institutions and arts professionals to work through subjects of representation, language, power structures, and inclusion in the art world.

In the framework of *Today Is Our Tomorrow*, PUBLICS Youth worked with invited artists Harold Offeh, and Laia Estruch as part of a cooperative learning and curatorial process. Sound artist and experimental ambient musician KMRU developed a new soundtrack for an imaginary future festival as part of a longer commissioning process. These artists each explored acts of listening, live



PUBLICS youth group Podcast Launch photo by Noor Lehtovuori



Today is our Tomorrow festival, photo by Aman Askarizad

recording and the voice as a body of cohabitation, and mode of living and being together, each giving form to the political present and to future futures. The culmination of these new commissions will be presented in 2023 in the final year of the Open Up project (2020–2023), co-funded by the Creative Europe programme.

Today Is Our Tomorrow was scheduled as a satellite to Frame's *Rehearsing Hospitalities* program, and included a series of three public vocalisations of *work in progress* by PUBLICS Youth, PTAB and ITAB developed in collaboration with artists Harold Offeh, Laia Estruch, Irina Mutt and Sayed Sattar Hasan.

Today Is Our Tomorrow 2022 gathering was co-funded by Erasmus+: Youth in Action, Nordic Culture Point: Volt, Creative Europe Programme, Kone Foundation, city of Helsinki, Arts Promotion Centre Finland.

As part of *Today is our Tomorrow* PUBLICS commissioned artist TIMO VAITTINEN: *Subwindows 1 & 2* (2022):

Subwindows 1&2 by Helsinki-based artist Timo Vaittinen was commissioned for the *Today Is Our Tomorrow* gathering in October 2022. Vaittinen's works continue and mark the fourth year of PUBLICS public art window commissions – this series started in 2019 with Hlyunr Hallsson's textwork for the first-ever *Today is Our Tomorrow* festival.

PUBLICS has been collaborating with Vaittinen in various settings and occasions, starting with the Bookies event in 2018, organised together with the artist-run publishing initiative Rooftop press and artist-run gallery SIC, both co-founded by Vaittinen.

Timo Vaittinen lives and works in Helsinki. He gained his MFA from the Academy of Fine Arts in Helsinki in 2007. Vaittinen works in numerous different techniques and materials. His art is tinged with a mystery that is firmly anchored in psychedelia and underground cultures, and ranges from a documentary level rooted in reality to dissolution into an imaginative, fictional narrative.

PUBLICS TALKS & EVENTS

● *Assembling a Black Counter Culture* DeForrest Brown, Jr.

The launch event of *Assembling a Black Counter Culture* by DeForrest Brown, Jr. took place on November 4th. *Assembling a Black Counter Culture* is a comprehensive account of techno with a focus on the history of Black experiences in industrialised labour systems—repositioning the genre as a unique form of Black musical and cultural production that encourages a reimagining of techno beyond the dancefloor.

The talk traced the genealogy and current developments in techno, locating its origins in the 1980s in the historically emblematic city of Detroit and the broader landscape of Black musical forms. Reaching back from the transatlantic slave trade to Emancipation, the Industrial Revolution, and the Great Migration from the rural South to the industrialized North, Brown detailed an extended history of techno rooted in the transformation of urban centers and the new forms of industrial capitalism that gave rise to the African American working class.

DeForrest Brown, Jr. is an Alabama-raised, Ex-American rhythm analyst, writer, and representative of the Make Techno Black Again campaign. As Speaker Music, he channels the African American modernist tradition of rhythm and soul music as an intellectual site and sound of generational trauma. His written work

explores the links between the Black experience in industrialised labour systems and Black innovation in electronic music.

● *In Character* publication and podcast launch

The launch event of the *In Character: Publication & Podcast* by the Teen Advisory Boards of Index in Stockholm (ITAB) and PRAKSIS in Oslo (PTAB) took place on Zoom. The two-part publication and podcast draw on questions collectively asked within the *In Character* project. Working together with artists and team members from Index, PRAKSIS, and PUBLICS the Teen Advisory Boards addressed behavioural patterns within the art world: What characters do we encounter? What roles do we take on? Do we change our behaviour depending on the space in which we find ourselves? What norms dictate the dynamics of art spaces?

In Character sets up a space to reflect upon social norms in an attempt to rethink them. The publication and podcast share 'games' based on workshops TAB were part of, as well as reflections on topics that TAB wish to highlight. The event featured short introductions from PTAB members Nasteha Hassan Mahamed and Mikkel Inchley, and ITAB members Adina Edfelt and Felix Krausz Sjögren followed by open discussion.

In Character: Publication & Podcast is co-produced by the Teen Advisory Boards of PRAKSIS and Index, together with team members from PRAKSIS, Index and PUBLICS. They have been shaped through encounters with many people including: Sol Archer, Fredda Berg, Tormod Carlsen, João Doria, Mia Habib, Ina Hagen, Johannes Jellum and Tonje Lona Eriksen, Hanni Kamaly, Kirsty Kross, Kevin Leander Fiabema, Rudy Loewe, MYCKET, Temi Odumosu, Sandra Praun, Marit Silsand, Klara Utke Acs, Gelawesh Waledkhani and Byverkstedet Press.

PRAKSIS Teen Advisory Board 2020/21: 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 2020/21: José Velasquez Esteban, Emil Pita, Sarika Ullah, Simon Sjöberg, Malin Issa, Adina Edfelt and Felix Krausz Sjögren. *In Character* hosted a conference at PUBLICS in the Autumn of 2021, where aspects of the publication and podcast content were developed. In 2022, the collaboration continued with the addition of the first PUBLICS YOUTH Advisory Board.

● PUBLICS Talk & Screening with artist Noor Abed

PUBLICS hosted a talk and screening with interdisciplinary artist and film-maker Noor Abed, introduced and moderated by curators Basak Senova and Paul O'Neill.

The event was part of the Octopus Programme, a guided research-based educational programme encouraging artistic research and production-based collaborations between academies, art institutions, students and professionals. From this diverse network, PUBLICS along with the Saastamoinen Foundation are the Helsinki based partners. Noor Abed's talk was part of PUBLICS collaboration with the Octopus Programme of courses, tutorials, guest lecturers, activities, exhibitions, screenings, publications, and residencies through a network of institutions, partners and artists in Austria, Finland, Tunisia, Palestine, South Africa, Sweden, and Turkey.

Noor Abed's practice examines choreography and imaginary individual



Noor Abed, PENELOPE, 16mm film still, 2014



Latitude, Laia Estruch Performance, photo by Noora Lehtovuori

relationships creating situations where social possibilities are rehearsed and performed. Combining forms of the 'staged' (performative) and the 'documentary', the work establishes representational modes of documentary intertwined with aspects of the 'magical', the 'mythical', inspired by everyday life's contradictions.

Basak Senova is a curator, designer and educator, leads the Octopus Programme and is a Visiting Professor at University of Applied Arts Vienna. PUBLICS was the Finnish partner with the Saastamoinen Foundation for the Octopus Programme 2021-22.

● PUBLICS Event and Performance by Latitudes & Laia Estruch

PUBLICS' year-long Parahosting of Barcelona-based curatorial office Latitudes began with a public presentation by Latitudes curators Max Andrews and Mariana Cánepa Luna, and performances by artist Laia Estruch in MACBA, Barcelona and PUBLICS, Helsinki.

In MACBA, for Panorama 21, PUBLICS supported the co-production of the installation and series of Performances Ocells perduts (Stray Birds) by Laia Estruch.

At PUBLICS Laia presented Mix (2021–ongoing), a solo performance compilation that revisits the diverse voiced sounds, resonances, and articulations she has developed and learned throughout her projects to date. An exercise in sonic recall and muscle memory, Mix is a live non-chronological edit that extracts the most ephemeral aspect of her practice – the voice – while exploring it as a kind of organ of the body, and as a tool for sculpting air.

Founded in 2005, Latitudes has worked in a variety of formats and situations including more than 50 projects encompassing exhibitions, public realm commissions, performance productions, film screenings, editorial and discursive programmes. In 2021 the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA) initiated a new multidisciplinary triennial programme entitled Panorama, focusing on contemporary art practices in and around Barcelona. The inaugural edition of Panorama, Notes for an Eye Fire, was curated by Hiuwai Chu and Latitudes. For Panorama 21, PUBLICS supported the co-production of Ocells perduts (Stray Birds) by Laia Estruch.

Already in 2020–2022 PUBLICS Parahosted the curatorial studio Shimmer (Eloise Sweetman and Jason Hendrik Hansma) with a year-long project ACROSS THE WAY WITH... where artists, poets, philosophers and curators from around the world were invited to explore the notion of intimacy in online readings, each recorded, captioned, and distributed to form an archive of readings from across the world.

<https://shimmershimmer.org/across-the-way-with/>

Bassam El Baroni, editor of *Between the Material and the Possible: Infrastructural Re-Examination and Speculation in Art* (Sternberg Press and Edith Russ Haus, 2022); in with architect and researcher Constantinos Miltiadis.

Cynthia Cruz, author of *The Melancholia of Class: A Manifesto for the Working Class* (Repeater Books, 2021); with poet and novelist Niko Hallikainen.

The *Open Up and Shape Helsinki Symposium's* objective was to widen institutional knowledge, and to open up more sustainable collaborative methods for working with more equal, diverse and ethical practices for small to medium scale art organisations. Speakers included Carolina Rito, Bassam El Baroni and Cynthia Cruz. The symposium mobilised synergies around SHAPE (Spaces, Helsinki, Art, Projects, Events) platform, initiated in 2021 by PUBLICS and Kohta. Over the course of two days Open Up and Shape Helsinki Symposium structured around a position paper, a moderated discussion, followed by performed propositions in the form of rants and raves. The symposium, taking place at PUBLICS in Vallila, focused around three key thematics: institutional reimaging and future publics; infrastructure of power, and (re-)distribution; and money, class and access.

The respondents were Constantinos Miltiadis and Niko Hallikainen, Dahlia El Broul, Henna Harri and Jussi Koitela. The Rants & Raves were delivered by Alkovi, Rab-Rab Press, Pengerkatu 7-Työhuone (Massage & Beauty), Globe Art Point, PALO art productions, PUBLICS, Vargas Print Studio, Trojan Horse and Pixelache. A panel discussion took place between Justina Zubaitė-Bundzė, Helen Kaplinsky, Maria Mkrtycheva, Irina Mutt and Henri Terho. Six Chairs Books were providing a selected collection of their books for sale during the event. At the end of the first day PUBLICS screened: *Deep Structure* by Ilona Sagar. Drinks were provided by Vallilan Panimo & Mingle. Kohta prepared an evening event and also provided drinks.

The symposium programme was planned in collaboration with Kunsthalle Kohta in the framework of the three-year Open Up (Creative Europe) project, for which PUBLICS is a partner. Through *Open Up and Shape Helsinki*, PUBLICS will map out, invite, and nurture new audiences for its activities. Frame Contemporary Art Finland collaborated by co-hosting one session in the context of *Rehearsing Hospitalities* public programme.

PUBLICS PARAHOSTING

PUBLICS Parahosting began in the Autumn of 2018, and continued through the interim period, Parahosting has grown into a key method of decentering its own curatorial authorship and opening its doors to diverse and expanding audiences, visitors, partners. Through Parahosting PUBLICS supports its para-sites, para-institutions, para-guests, and has grown into a flexible, evolving, expanding, and sometimes messy, programme.

● Trojan Horse Listening session with Petra van Brabandt, Maleka Fruean

PUBLICS' first listening session of 2022, organised by Trojan Horse together with Petra van Brabandt & Maleka Fruean, took place via Zoom. Trojan Horse is a collective and autonomous educational platform that combines architecture, design, art and theory. Its identity is hybrid and under constant formation. As part of the PUBLICS' Parahosting program they facilitated a session around the theme of community-based care. Trojan Horse invited two speakers to join the event: Petra van Brabandt shared a talk related to her work with Engagement Arts, a small artists-led movement battling sexual harassment and power abuse



Open up SHAPE Symposium, Cynia Crux, photo by Aman Askarizad



OPEN UP Shape Symposium panel discussion, photo by Aman Askarizad

in the arts sector. Maleka Fruean talked about the Germantown Info Hub, a project focusing on localised, community specific information sharing and solutions based journalism.

The event started with an introduction to Trojan Horse by a filmmaker and writer Hanan Mahboub and spatial designer and researcher Kaisa Karvinen, who are both members of the initiative.

Trojan Horse was invited by PUBLICS to organise a small gathering as part of the Open Up cultural project and Parahosting Laboratory including listening and reading sessions and talks with cultural workers and independent non-profit initiatives. By gathering different individuals and organisations together to listen to each other's concerns and points of interest, institutional knowledge can grow wider, and more sustainable collaborative methods can be found. Open Up is co-funded by the Creative Europe programme.

● *They Inhabit While Working* with Jaana Laakkonen

PUBLICS parahosted the launch of 'They Inhabit While Working', an essay collection from artist Jaana Laakkonen, published by Archive Books in 2021. The book consists of Laakkonen's texts from 2016–2020, some of which were written to accompany exhibitions, some that were performed as part of workshops and her artworks and some that were written specifically for this book. Jaana's practice in recent years has entangled paint, text, feminist posthumanism and the everyday, among 'others'.

For the book launch event Jaana invited Hello Dust and curators Petronella Grönroos and Miina Hujala to perform and read sections from 'They Inhabit While Working'.

● READING SESSION with vari* zine

On Wednesday 11th of May, Publics hosted a reading session with the contributors of vari* zine.

vari* is a nordic-based hybrid zine which explores different perspectives, practices and thoughts on intersectional feminist research, intending to address complex feminism topics and initiate discussions through a playful and humorous approach. This zine is designed for the wannabe feminists and those who have a general interest in the topics.

● *Angel Tape Book* Launch with Merja Kokkonen and Antti Nylén

Merja Kokkonen's book *Angel Tape* was launched June 21st. The launch included a brief discussion about the book between the artist and the publisher, Antti Nylén from Bokeh editions, who also designed, manufactured and bound the artist's book. After the introduction, Merja Kokkonen performed as Islaja. Islaja is Kokkonen's recording and performance project active since the early 2000s. A parallel, but independent recording project, also called "Angel Tape", will be published later.

Angel Tape is a 44-page artist's book published by Bokeh Editions, in an edition of 100 copies. It is based on 27 monotypes that Kokkonen printed in her studio in Berlin during the first half of 2021 using a vintage printmaking press originating from the early 20th century. Each copy includes one original print, used as the endpapers of the work. The book has very little textual content, just a separate "data sheet" that explains the technical details in six languages.

Bokeh Editions is a Helsinki-based publishing project, active since 2020 and run by Antti Nylén. The project focuses on small print publications and artist's books, DIY made and always in strictly limited editions, combining publishing practices from the fields of literature and contemporary art. Bokeh is supported by the Kone Foundation.

● **CONVERSATION PARK Book Launch:**
Lönström Art Museum & Studio Kalleinen

On 30 August 2022, Lönström Art Museum and Studio Kalleinen presented and launched the English version of *Conversation Park*; a book exploring an in depth overview of a unique artistic experiment in transforming an abandoned plot of land into a public park in Rauma, Finland. The book, which was for sale at the event, is written by artist duo Tellervo Kalleinen and Oliver Kochta-Kalleinen, and co-edited by artists, curators and researchers Miina Hujala and Arttu Merimaa. At the book launch in PUBLICS, Tellervo Kalleinen & Oliver Kochta-Kalleinen introduced *Conversation Park* project followed by response from prominent Finnish researchers on participation – Kaija Kaitavuori and Robin Lybeck – providing additional commentary and insights with respect to their expertise on participatory art and participatory urban planning.

In 2019 thirty residents between 6 to 89 years old became players in a two-year-long “Public Space Game”. The mission was to turn thirty individual ideas for a park into a collective urban reality in 6 game moves. The cooperative park was opened in 2020. *Conversation Park* is a Lönström Project and made possible by the Lönström Art Museum in Rauma.

In the book Kalleinen & Kochta-Kalleinen describe their original intentions when designing the game and share their insights gained whilst working on the *Conversation Park* for four years. The book touches on core questions with regards to engaging citizens in designing urban public spaces. It is an attempt to open-source the *Conversation Park* project so it can be analysed, modified, and replicated. It is an invitation to learn about the many factors which have to be considered when designing a participatory project – whether it takes place in art, urban planning or politics.

Helsinki-based Tellervo Kalleinen and Oliver Kochta-Kalleinen are an artist duo whose practice merges the languages and approaches of multiple disciplines, such as film, performance, game design, experimental education, facilitation, social architecture and alternative economies.

Robin Lybeck is a researcher at the sociology department of Åbo Akademi University. He has studied typologies of engagement in urban planning. His PhD looks at how technology is applied in the context of participatory planning and urban development.

Kaija Kaitavuori is an educator and art historian. Her research focuses on audience participation in contemporary art. Her dissertation “Art of Engagement” discusses participatory processes in terms of democracy and the extent to which participation in art can be understood as ‘democratic’.

● *Baytuna*

Exhibition with Shareef Askar, DJ 1UAN, Meri Helmi Särkkä, Yassine Khaled, Haliz Yosef

Baytuna, meaning ‘our home’ in Arabic, was an interactive, mobile exhibition celebrating Southwest Asian and North African (SWANA) literature and art, in which audiences could gather to read, play, listen, touch, watch, and feel the



Soup Talk, Mette Edvardsen, photo by Norra Lehtovuori



Today is our Tomorrow event, KMRU, photo by Aman Askarizad

present and the distant past in a cosy and relaxed atmosphere. Baytuna featured artworks by artists Shareef Askar, DJ 1UAN, Meri Helmi Särkkä, Yassine Khaled, and Haliz Yosef. The exhibition consisted of three small living rooms where visitors could read a selection of books covering 4000 years of history of art, literature, and science, watch interviews voicing the experience of multiculturalism in today's Finland, dive into the work of contemporary artists, practice cuneiform writing, handle 3D printed historical artefacts, compare material heritage from different places, and understand how archaeologists reconstruct long gone worlds from the material culture left behind. Baytuna completed and entered into a multi-leveled dialog with the *Exploring the Ancient Near East* exhibition, shown in the National Museum until 4th of September 2022, and re-opening in the Museum of Central Finland in October 2022. The exhibition was co-curated by both of these museums together with the University of Helsinki's Centre of Excellence in Ancient Near Eastern Empires.

● Soup Talk with Mette Edvardsen as part of Moving in November

Soup Talk with artist Mette Edvardsen took place November 7th. The event was part of the Moving in November festival, taking place between 3–13 November in various venues and production houses in the Helsinki metropolitan region.

The Soup Talk centred around Edvardsen's project *Time Has Fallen Asleep in the Afternoon Sunshine*. For the project performers memorise a book of their choice, forming a living library. The books bring their readers to a place or a walk, while reciting their content – and possibly valid interpretations. The project is now presented as part of the Moving in November festival at Kunsthalle Helsinki and has been shown in over fifty bookshops and libraries in different cities since 2010, including the first edition of PUBLICS' Today Is Our Tomorrow gathering in 2019.

Soup Talks is a series of informal conversations with artists presenting their work as part of the *Moving in November* festival. The talks bring the audience and the artists together around a big bowl of warm soup.

PUBLICS LIBRARY &
LEARNING PROGRAM

PUBLICS Library is an educational resource where critical learning, knowledge production and discursive programming are integral to its curatorial approach. At PUBLICS, contemporary art production, and discursive practices are in constant dialogue through its multiple learning strands.

Taking the form of PUBLICS Library, and its public programmes of Talks, Events and Commissions, these overlapping strands are organised alongside PUBLICS YOUTH program, placing art education, critical research and publicness at the centre of curatorial practice.

In addition to the material library, PUBLICS hosts events linked to the library, as well as educational and collaboration-based research projects. PUBLICS Library is a space dedicated to critical social thinking, learning, education, representing concepts, theories and practices of curating contemporary art, education, history of curating, culture and social theory, public art and activism. The library includes 6000 books, catalogues and other printed matter. Online catalogue holds information on all titles and makes it accessible prior to the visit to the library.

PUBLICS Library is open once a week on a regular basis with consistent opening hours and by appointment. Visitors are provided with a space to read, learn, discuss and research. To keep the library up-to-date, new titles are bought monthly, incorporated into one of sixteen existing categories.

PUBLICS has organised a series of events emphasising the importance of publishing, including book launches with publishers, authors and designers; Coupling, a series of collaborations between two or more artists that are deeply linked to the library as a starting point or a source of materials, ideas and possibilities; and a Reading Group which highlights selected books from the library.

READING GROUP

Introduced as a new element in our library program in spring, PUBLICS Reading Group is a monthly chance to meet informally, read and collectively discuss topics that arise from the selected text-based work. Reading Group is co-initiated and led by Jo Hislop, an artist and producer working across photography, film and writing. Her work explores the nuances and intricacies of sensorial and bodily experience. Originally from the North of England, she is currently based in Helsinki.

The first reading sessions were varied in themes. First session on 16th of March featured Emma Cocker's essay *Reading Towards Becoming Casual*, published in *Reading/Feeling* volume as a part of *If I can't dance* publication series. Emma Cocker uses the notion of affect to discuss an embodied and felt approach to reading that is flowing and active, drawing attention to the joys and possibilities of collective reading.

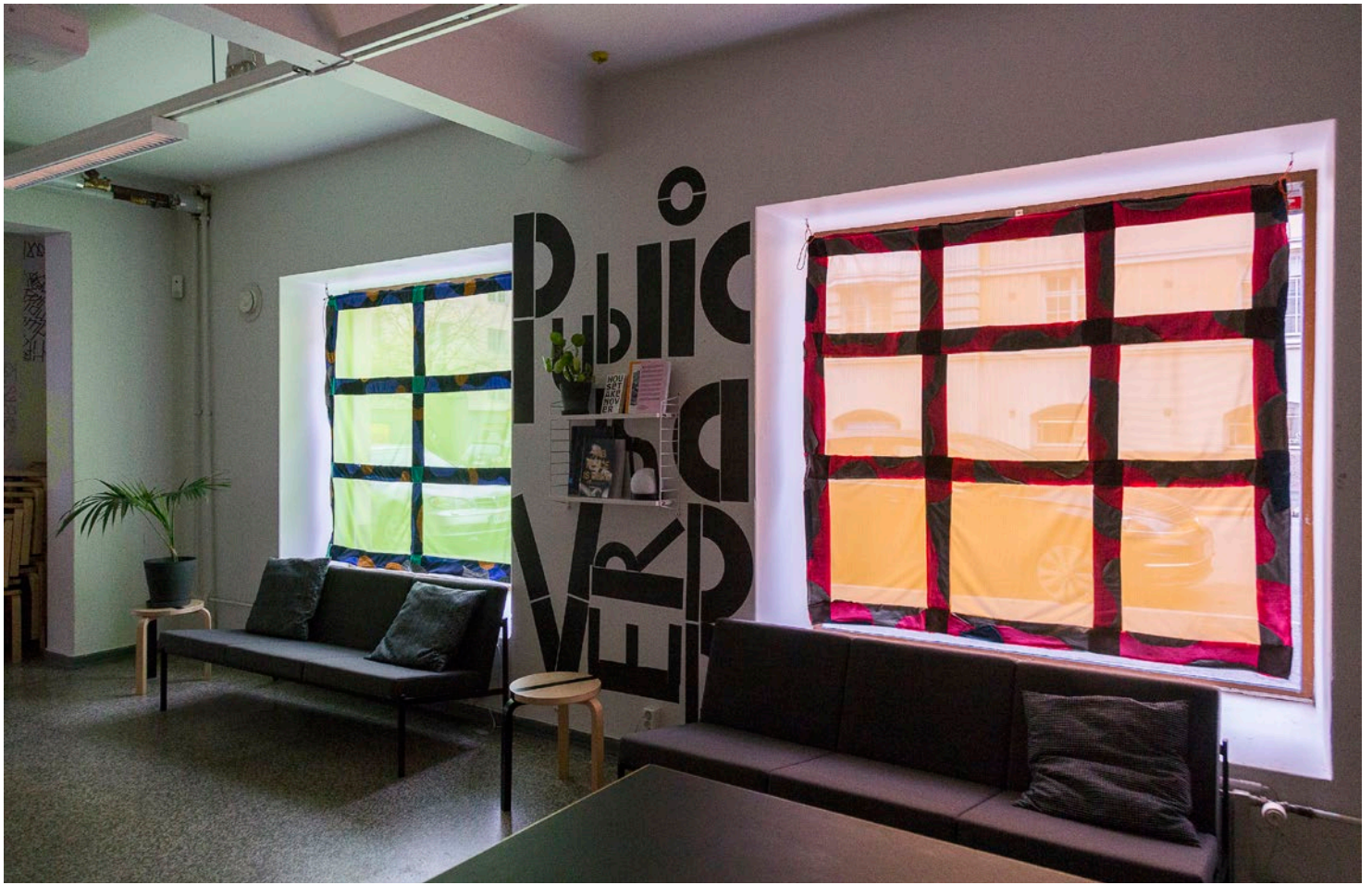
Second session, focusing on and around Max Porter's novel *Lanny*, took place on 13th of April. Written in 2019, the captivating and unsettling novel describes the human experience with beautiful honesty and silliness.

Third reading group session – *Voice in Philosophy* – took place on Wednesday, 25th of May. Through *Voice In Philosophy*, philosopher Alice Lagaay unravels possible approaches to the voice as a medium and a material, noting 'an increased attentiveness to the embodied and acoustic nature of human utterance and communication' across multiple fields. Drawing upon the contrast between linguistic meaning and abstract sound, the essay centres around the textuality of spoken words and the voice as an embodied experience. The text travels through performative, philosophical and linguistic approaches to both individual and collective voices.

On 22nd of June the Reading Group dove into *Curatorial Feelings*, a collection of writing from curator, gallery director, writer and teacher Eloise Sweetman. Her book gently leads the reader through thoughts and reflections generated through exhibitions and projects Sweetman has curated over the past ten years. There is a bodily, sensorial and intimate nature to the descriptions and language used. Fall's Reading Group program reflected and engaged in a dialogue with PUBLICS current discourse and focused on presentness of the voice in its many sonic forms, vocal modes and acoustic modalities, as well as extending into the topics of sound and listening.

First autumn's session – *The Political Possibility of Sound* – took place on 19th of October. Featuring a publication by Salomé Voegelin under the same title, October's meeting highlighted an essay on *Hearing Subjectivity: Bodies, Forms and Formlessness*. The essay focuses on how the formless quality of sonic materiality opens up possibilities for ever-changing shapes and identities. Commenting on the participatory nature of listening, the text then goes on to discuss the performance, writing and sound works of artist Evan Ifekoya. During the session, we watched two works by Ifekoya: *The Gender Song* (2014) and *Disco Breakdown* (2014).

The second autumn session on 22nd of November focused on *Sound, Rhythm,*



Timo Vaittinen Window Installation, photo by Noora Lehtovuori



David Blamey and Lau Nau Coupling event, photo by Aman Askarizad

Body by Phiroze Vasunia, an excerpt of the publication *Coming to Know*. *Coming to Know* is the second book in a three-volume series titled *An Archeology of Listening*, that centres around the work of 'self-taught Acoustic Archeologist' Umashankar Manthravadi. *Sound, Rhythm, Body* uses the work of Sound Archaeologist Umashankar Manthravadi as a backdrop to unravel some of the historical and cultural ways in which the bodies relate to sound. Phiroze Vasunia weaves an eclectic range of moments and memories together, tracing through topics such as: the healing properties of sound, ritual, communal bodies, and rhythmical language. To open the session we read 'Poem for Three Voices' by Umashankar Manthravadi as a warm up to the topic and a taster of his work. During the Reading Group, we watched a workshop by Samita Sinha in connection to selected publications.

The last Reading Group of the year on December 7th led by Jo Hislop focused on *Introduction: Movement from Lexicon of The Mouth* by Brandon LaBelle, published in 2014. In *Lexicon of The Mouth*, LaBelle discusses how the significance of the mouth, as a site, has been overlooked in considerations of the voice, linguistics and embodiment. The text draws upon the frantic comings and goings that occur in this bodily space, somewhere that is full of activity, a site of entanglement. By highlighting the cacophony of functions and actions that take place in this 'oral cavity', LaBelle places voice in inescapable connection to the body.

PUBLICS YOUTH

PUBLICS YOUTH Advisory Board is a long-term education and employment opportunity for 18-21 year olds. This annual role offers young individuals first-hand experience in the practices of PUBLICS and of the wider field of arts and culture, sustaining an ongoing discussion on how the organisation and the field at large can provide young people with greater access to the creative field now and in the future. Beyond contributing to PUBLICS yearly activities in Helsinki, the Youth Board collaborates with the Teen Advisory Boards at Index Foundation (ITAB) in Stockholm and PRAKSIS (PTAB) in Oslo, who launched their In Character Publication in January 2022.

Following a period of local outreach and an Open Call announcement that ran from November to December 2021, the first PUBLICS Youth Advisory Board was recruited: Anastasiia Lapteva, Manda Loipponen, Valeriia Masliukova-Malova, Erika Ryppieva, Róza Turunen, and Vanessa Uhlbäck worked at PUBLICS until December 2022.

PUBLICS Youth 2022 worked extensively on the concept of voice as an expressive tool. This reflection was undergone through the collaboration with London-based artist and educator Harold Offeh, and Barcelona-based performance artist Laia Estruch. The latter was part of PUBLICS co-commissioning with Latitudes Barcelona, with the mediation of curator Irina Mutt, drawing on Estruch's latest work *Ocells perduts (Stray Birds)*. PUBLICS Youth met curator and writer Max Hannus, curator Orlan Ohtonen, artists David Blamey and LauNau, the collective of young creatives Nuori Taide, Helsinki International Artist Programme HIAP, Nordic Culture Point, and Rehearsing Hospitalities conference FRAME Finland.

In October 2022, PUBLICS Youth, ITAB and PTAB publicly presented their work-in-progress at *Today Is Our Tomorrow*, as part of a three-day program of workshops and meetings led by the three Boards. As a result of their yearly tenure PUBLICS Youth 2022 produced a podcast in two episodes featuring Harold Offeh, which will be launched in February 2023.

Open Up is a four-year long cultural project (2020-2023), co-funded by the Creative Europe program, that aims to bring to the surface and promote under-represented artists and cultural workers. OU aims to help them establish sustainable practices via training, activities and workshops. Open Up is a partnership between seven distinct organisations from seven cities across Europe. Through its collaborative activities, Open Up aims to establish and support sustainable art practices through the network, and provide participants with training and knowledge based activities and actions, including numerous laboratories, workshops, festivals, exhibitions and publications. Open Up aims to empower creators and artworkers to develop, present and sustain their practices and its contexts.

The consortium consists of the following cultural organisations and academic institutions: Pierides Foundation (Nicosia, Cyprus), PUBLICS (Helsinki, Finland), Université de Picardie Jules Verne (Amiens, France), University of Thessaly (Volos, Greece), New Hand Lab (Covilhã, Portugal), Autonomous University of Barcelona (Barcelona, Spain) and Valand Academy of the Gothenburg University (Gothenburg, Sweden).

In 2022 we sent 30 young people from Finland to 9 different OPEN UP workshops in 4 different European partners countries. At the beginning of October we sent our PUBLICS YOUTH Group to Valand Academy of the Gothenburg University (Sweden) for a booking making workshop. Valentina Cerniauskaite, Micol Curatolo, Erika Ryppeiva, Anastasiia Lapteva, Manda Loipponen and Vanessa Uhlbäck attended. In October we sent Pola Laamanen and Kristina Khamutovskaja to a fashion workshop, Anastasiia Lapteva, Manda Loipponen, Erika Ryppeiva and Josef Ka to a performance workshop and Alex Kollerova to the entrepreneurial workshop at Pierides Foundation, Nicosia (Cyprus).

In November we sent David Flood, Chih-Tung Lin, Anna Knappe, Suzanne Mooney and Tmi Pinja Valja to Portugal for a photography and image making workshop at the New Hand Lab Covilhã, (Portugal).

At the end of November Helena Aleksandrova, Surabhi Nadig, Ines Montalvao, Ondiso Mandete, Haliz Yosef, Hanan Mahbouba went to a *'Memories and Ornaments'* workshop. Agnese Gemetto, Leda Vaneva, Darya Chernova-Dash Che and Alena Tereshko went to a workshop titled *'Sculpture and Memories'* and Ceyda Berk-Söderblom went to an *'Entrepreneurial'* workshop all at the Université de Picardie Jules Verne Amiens, (France). Juozapas Švelnys attended a sound workshop at Valand Academy of the Gothenburg University (Sweden) for a video editing workshop. These artists have been recruited via the following organisations GAP, AV. ARKKI, Catalysti, Academy for moving images and people, PUBLICS Youth and UniArts through an open call process.v

Throughout 2022 we had consistently between 60-100 people attend our events including the parahosting events, commission openings and library events.. Our library opened its doors every Wednesday and attracted visitors on average between 5-15 per session. Groups often booked to visit the library from the academies and art schools as well as abroad in such cases the numbers were 30 per session. The reading groups attendance was between 10-20 people per session. During months when PUBLICS was open for commissions and exhibitions events and the festival the Month of Books we had on average 10 people per day visit.

Our social media channels are steadily growing with our instagram followers 6300 by the end of 2022. Shape-Helsinki close to 1000 followers and our mailing list over 3000 active subscribers. Google analytics will be in place to track all social channels for 2023.

PARTNERSHIPS

Aalto University, Academy of Fine Arts, Academy of Moving People and Images, Artists at Risk, CCA Estonia, Finnish Culture Institute in New York, The Finnish Institute in London, Flock Network, Frame Finland, Globe Art Point, Index Foundation, Institute of Modern Art (IMA), Keep It Complex, Kiasma, Kohta Kunsthalle, Latitudes, Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art, Lugemik, MACBA Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, Narva Residency, Nida Art Colony, NO NIIN, PALO art productions, PRAKSIS, Rab-Rab Press, Rooftop Press, Saastamoinen Foundation, Shimmer, The Showroom, Studio Julia, TAXISPALAIS Kunsthalle Tirol, Third Space, Uniarts Helsinki.

Open Up Network: Pierides Foundation (Cyprus), University of Picardie Jules Vernes, (France), Autonomous University (Barcelona), University of Thessaly (Greece), New Hand Lab (Portugal), Valand Academy (Sweden).

ADMINISTRATION

The supporting association behind PUBLICS is Checkpoint Helsingin Tukiyhdistys, born in 2013 in a moment where the political imagination was open to envisioning the economic and cultural benefits of making a grand investment in the arts. The association has taken this momentum seriously and worked towards the most interesting roadmap, enabling the local cultural field to develop in dialogue with the international scene. In 2022 board members were Pilvi Kalhama (chair), Adelaide Bannerman, Taru Elfving, Bassam El Baroni (vice chair), Kati Laakso, João Laia, Axel Straschnoy and Pilvi Takala.

In 2022 the board met four times. The Spring meeting was held via May 31st in Publics and on zoom. The Annual General meeting was held on 16th December, the board met at PUBLICS and online via zoom. PUBLICS had two full-time employees, artistic director Paul O'Neill (1/1–31/12/2022), program manager Eliisa Suvanto (1/1–31/12/2022). The organisation employed Valentina Černiauskaitė from January 2022 until December 2022 as coordinator of the library and SHAPE helsinki. Micol Curatolo was employed as an intern from April until June 2022 from the ViCCA programme at Aalto. From August 2022, Micol was employed part time and worked as coordinator of the PUBLICS Youth Advisory Board. Annabelle Antas was hired as a part time coordinator for the OPEN UP project from September 2022-December 2022. Throughout the year PUBLICS employed professionals to work for projects and commissions.

In 2022 PUBLICS main funding support came from the Kone Foundation (up to 50% match funding), Creative Europe Program (Open Up developed in partnership with 7 institutions across Europe), Erasmus+ Youth in Action program of European Union (In Character project developed in partnership with Index and PRAKSIS), the Finnish National Agency for Education (between 2021–23 to support the Open Up), Arts Promotion Centre Finland, the City of Helsinki, the Baltic Culture Fund (Today Is Our Tomorrow Festival) and Saastamoinen Foundation (Residencies of Jeanne van Heeswijk, Joy Mariama Smith, and Merike Estna).

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