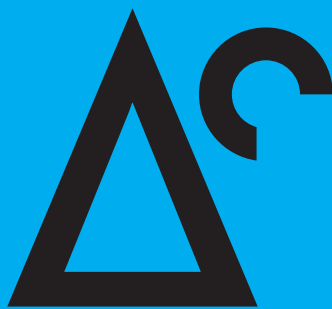


TRAINING AND
FINDING NEW WAYS
TO
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PRACTICES

ARTS
COLLABORATORY
NETWORK



**Arts
Collaboratory**



Preface

BY FELWINE SARR

Felwine Sarr is a Senegalese scholar, economist and writer.

One of the greatest challenges of our time is the production of “commons,” that is, the creation and maintenance of public spaces that are inclusive, and that guarantee as many people as possible have the right to use, access and benefit from shared resources. Ecological disaster, growing economic inequality and unraveling social fabrics worldwide are all crises that point us towards the need to leave behind the dominant paradigm of regulation and privatization created by the neoliberal economy.

Beginning in the 1990s, networks of organisations working in the field of artistic and social collaboration have emerged, seeking to respond to and reimagine this dominant paradigm. These new initiatives practice the co-creation of knowledge and skills drawn from collective, shared intelligence. At the heart, this is a new kind of relationship-building that produces new forms of participatory communal experiences; this kind of community-building has the potential to respond to and remedy the lack of democratic, participatory engagement found in many of our contemporary societies.

Neoliberal society is founded upon the violence of exclusion. By transforming our day-to-day social interactions, these inclusive practices bring into being new ways of inhabiting public space, thereby creating new possibilities for the transformation of neoliberal society.

Independent cultural organisations, locally-run art centers, Third Places, maker-spaces, fab-labs, co-working spaces, open-access software, electronic currencies, alternative pedagogies, municipal water management committees and agricultural land trusts are all methods by which communities respond to basic social needs, as well as help reknit the social fabric.

A community thus reknit, reconstituted and rebuilt grows regardless of the borders of state or nation, expanding its geography across the globe.

The Arts Collaboratory network brings together 25 organisations/structures primarily in Africa, Latin America, South-East Asia and the Middle East. Composed of various organisations that bring together cultural figures, activists, researchers, funders and practitioners, these organisations all have in common a desire to create social change through artistic practices, collaborative work, critical thinking, and the sharing of intellectual resources. These organisations engage in grassroots community work on issues related to environmental protection, human rights, alternative forms of education, the creation of commons, and the development of new economic models.

The Arts Collaboratory network sees itself as a trans-local ecosystem, focusing on art practices and processes of social change

and working with communities within and beyond the arts. It functions as a meeting point where the organisations it brings together can share knowledge, collaborate on projects, and foster solidarity based on an idea of mutual exchange. By being self-organized, the organisations thus maintain control over their evolution and history, as well as the narrative of their story.

By producing institutions and norms based on a richly interwoven social fabric, these collaborative practices make it possible not only to rethink citizenship, but also to articulate the scales of the local and the global. Creating together and sharing experiences regenerates the social fabric and offers individuals the opportunity to take both individual and collective action that extends beyond their socially-assigned roles of consumer, producer, voter, and citizen. By working together, the community creates its own commons.

These practices of social cooperation and experience-sharing are also ways of re-integrating social and ethical values into the management of what we have in common.

Based on relational and circular economies, these practices are inherited from ancient traditions and nourished by an imagination whose limits are constantly renewed. They thus respond to the challenge of reinventing the world and its forms of social connection, pushing the limits of what was thought possible and exploring new territories of doing, being, and living together.

Driven by a radical imagination that is conscious of our collective, long-term interdependence, these new artistic practices explore other territories of communal action and configure alternative ways of being in

the world. In order to contribute to the necessary task of reinventing politics, as well as the modalities of inhabiting the world that we live in, and in order to face the urgent ecological and civilizational crisis that we are collectively experiencing and which risks making our common world uninhabitable within the next half-century, we must discover and put into practice these new ways of being.

Cooperating, collaborating, producing collective knowledge, instituting inclusive economic practices oriented towards the dignity of human beings; working through culture to achieve the political conditions that will make it possible to achieve the ideal of the commons; reknitting the social fabric and rebuilding a social contract with the living world through artistic imagination and paradigm shifts: these are the only possible paths forward, explored in a unique way by Arts Collaboratory and its member organisations.

**THESE PRACTICES OF
SOCIAL COOPERATION AND
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REIMAGINING AND GENERATING WAYS OF LIVING LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY THROUGH COLLECTIVE ARTISTIC PRACTICES.¹

What is Arts Collaboratory?

Arts Collaboratory (AC) consists of twenty-five diverse arts organisations in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America and Europe.

Arts Collaboratory (AC) consists of twenty-five diverse arts organisations in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America and Europe. We create social change and sustainability in our local contexts through a multiplicity of practices that continuously push the boundaries of art. We connect grassroots, curatorial, activist and artists collectives. We connect people and organisations with different languages from different cultural backgrounds and with different interests.

Our network operates as an active ecosystem where knowledge and strengths are brought together through collective and collaborative processes. This is a radical experiment in social transformation that is possible when the experiences, dreams, and critical reflections of cultural practitioners from across the globe are allowed to meet. We create changes in the ways people live together and the way we treat our planet.



¹ Purpose statement of the network determined in the assembly in Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan 2018.

AC Mutations

2007-2011

FORMATIVE YEARS

Arts Collaboratory was founded in 2007 by two Dutch foundations, Stichting DOEN and Hivos, as both a funding program and a platform for knowledge sharing between artists' initiatives of the Global South. Soon after its beginnings the Mondriaan Fund joined, supporting the exchange between Arts Collaboratory organisations and the Dutch arts field. The first meeting of all the AC organisations of that time was held in Colombia.

2012-2013

TRANSITION TOWARDS SHARING

In 2013, the program of Arts Collaboratory was re-designed by Hivos and DOEN. The new mission of Arts Collaboratory became to promote sustainable, collaborative and open visual arts practices that contribute to social innovation. More emphasis was also put on building a trans-local community amongst the participants. A core group of 23 partners - along with the Foundations and Casco Art Institute as an associate partner- started to build on their collaborations and knowledge sharing, while around 45 other organisations received project funding.

2014-2015

BUILDING COLLECTIVE AGENDA

The network strived for a deeper knowledge of each member and focused on collaborative projects and building future plans. Annual assembly has been practiced to help structure this process. In 2015, during an Assembly in Senegal, the Arts Collaboratory members agreed to go further with respect to collaboration, to develop a common vision and to become independent and self-organised. Together they wrote a Future Plan that worked towards increased collaboration to help strengthen each organisation and its local ecosystem individually, through principles such as solidarity, trust, building 'lifelines,' openness and self-limitation.

2016-2017

CONNECTING WITH OUR ECOSYSTEMS

During the assembly in Kyrgyzstan in 2016 the network established mechanisms for self-organisation and shared governance. Another meeting in Berlin outlined the next steps and tools for facilitation and self-organisation. The new phase of working allowed for deep change in organisational and artistic practices of Arts Collaboratory organisations and thus increased impact in their local contexts. Arts Collaboratory becomes a self organized ecosystem of 25 members. DOEN Foundation becomes a horizontal member. The network in this way experiments not only with collaborative artistic practice but also with horizontal relations between donor and grantees and with a decentralised position of money. It provides 5 year core-funding to all AC organisations and participates in knowledge, network exchange and responds to the decisions taken collectively by the network.

2018 TO
PRESENT

Currently Arts Collaboratory emphasizes relationships based on sharing and trust and is reconsidering funding models and ways of working on transnational projects with local and community based arts organisations. Arts Collaboratory meets in Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan for Assembly.

“EXCHANGING KNOWLEDGE TO CREATE COMMON TOOLS AND LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER. HOW TO COLLABORATE MORE, COLLABORATE BETTER, EMBRACE FAILURE AS A WAY OF LEARNING, WHAT WE CAN TAKE BACK TO OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES FROM THE NETWORK, HOW TO BUILD A MOVEMENT THAT IS BEYOND OUR LOCAL CONTEXT.”

LINA, PLATOHEDRO 2018 ASSEMBLY



Palestine - Lebanon - Jordan 2018 Assembly. Photo: Eirini Vanikioti



Elephants in the Room inaugural Assembly at Casco Art Institute: Working for the Commons, Utrecht, the Netherlands, 2-3 November, 2018. Photos by Filippo Guiseppa Iannone. Image courtesy of Casco Art Institute.

Current Network Organisations

CRÁTER INVERTIDO
MÉXICO CITY, MÉXICO

TEOR/ÉTICA
SAN JOSÉ, COSTA RICA

MÁS ARTE MÁS ACCIÓN
CHOCÓ, COLOMBIA

LUGAR A DUDAS
CALI, COLOMBIA

CASA TRES PATIOS
MEDELLÍN, COLOMBIA

PLATOHEDRO
MEDELLÍN, COLOMBIA

RAW MATERIAL COMPANY
DAKAR, SENEGAL

KËR THIOSSANE
DAKAR, SENEGAL

CENTRE SOLEIL D'AFRIQUE
BAMAKO, MALI

NUBUKE FOUNDATION
ACCRA, GHANA

DOUAL'ART
DOUALA, CAMEROON

KIOSKO
SANTA CRUZ DE LA SIERRA, BOLIVIA

DOEN FOUNDATION
AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS

CASCO ART INSTITUTE
UTRECHT, THE NETHERLANDS

ASHKAL ALWAN
BEIRUT, LEBANON

RIWAQ
AL-BIREH, PALESTINE

AL-MA'MAL
JERUSALEM, PALESTINE

DARB 1718
CAIRO, EGYPT

ART GROUP 705
BISHKEK, KYRGYZSTAN

THEERTHA
COLOMBO SRI LANKA

RUANGRUPA
JAKARTA, INDONESIA

KUNCI CULTURAL STUDIES CENTER
YOGYAKARTA, INDONESIA

32° EAST | UGANDAN ARTS TRUST
KAMPALA, UGANDA

WAZA ART CENTER
LUBUMBASHI, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

VISUAL ARTS NETWORK OF SOUTH AFRICA
JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

**WHY IS
ARTS
COLLABORATORY
IMPORTANT ?**

The international scale and presence of the Arts Collaboratory network represents a powerful force that is constantly exploring ways of collectively addressing some of the most urgent issues of our time. It is accomplishing this in the following ways:

ARTISTIC PRACTICE AS A WAY TO APPROACH LOCAL AND GLOBAL ISSUES

Arts Collaboratory uses artistic practice and radical imagination as ways to question paradigms and to explore new visions of environmental, social, political, cultural and artistic issues. The network's organisations develop projects that are embedded in their local contexts and which focus on the struggles and challenges that surround their practices in order to generate change.

SHARING KNOWLEDGE AND CONTENT

Despite the diversity of organisations and contexts, the network has been able to work together and make itself stronger by sharing the common interests between the organisations and common realities in each context. This has enabled powerful exchanges that have created a rich knowledge base and has changed Arts Collaboratory's ways of working. Sharing has been possible through multiple mechanisms: residency exchanges, a common funding pot for shared projects, collective research groups, shared connections between the different local contexts and collaborative projects.



Community radio workshop with the children of El Faro neighborhood during the Interactive Port project. Medellín, 2018. Photo: Platohedro.



Bruno Mazzoldi during his conference in the Uncertain School in 2017. Photo: Lugar a Dudas

BECOMING STRONGER THROUGH ENGAGING MUTUAL SUPPORT

Arts Collaboratory has been experimenting with new ways of organising and considering the sustainability of the organisation and the individual arts initiatives. Clustering projects by common interests or by geographical proximity is an example of how the network acquires different configurations locally, regionally or globally. Friendship and solidarity become catalysts for ideas that can later grow into collective actions, taking advantage of the network's shared resources.

CHALLENGING THE FUNDING PARADIGM

Arts Collaboratory recognizes that the deep social, political and economic problems we face are not only outside of us, but also within our own mental structures, social relations, and historical and cultural contexts. Through radical imagination Arts Collaboratory and its funders actively explore and rethink paradigms regarding the power dynamics attached to funding practices. For example, through Arts Collaboratory all members, including donors, participate in a Collective Pot where money, knowledge, artistic thinking, networks and other resources are shared on a horizontal basis in order to strengthen all involved.



Eyob Kitaba during his residency. Photo: 32 East Ugandan Arts Trust

OPEN KNOWLEDGE AND TOOLING

By creating and sharing a diverse range of tools, documents and publications that are built through the different experiences and exchanges the Arts Collaboratory aims to become an open source so that the acquired lessons and knowledge can be replicated in other organisations and communities.

“THE UNCONDITIONAL FUNDING PERMITS EXPERIMENTATION IN THE PROGRAMMING OF AL MA’MAL. “IT ALLOWS US TO BUILD AND CHANGE OUR PROGRAMMING TO ADDRESS THE LOCAL NEEDS, WHICH ARE CONSTANTLY CHANGING.”

AL MA’MAL, PALESTINE



Two spectators watch the screening of the documentary *The Last March*, by Ivo Aichenbaum (Argentine artist) and Jhon Martínez (ex-FARC combatant), during the exhibit *Material archive* (2008). Photo: C3P.

ARTS COLLABORATORY IN ACTION

ONGOING COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

Arts Collaboratory has developed collaborative projects that arise from interests of the member organisations and that connect different contexts to strengthen the different processes involved. Some collaborative projects have included Art Schoollaboratory, Territories, Here And Now, Minga, Exploring Utopia, Scattered Seeds, AC School, and Falling off to the Periphery, among others.



Nubuke Foundation presented Ghana Must Go: Forward in 2018, a three-month intensive programme and co-working space for 40 talented thinkers. Photo: Tarimobwei Egule



Artist Dineo Seshee Bopape during her residency in Chocó, Colombia.
Photo: Sebastián Bright for Más Arte Más Acción

Scattered Seeds

Scattered seeds is a multi-disciplinary project that aims to create a connection between Colombia, Africa and the African Diaspora through a long-term collaboration that will look at their similarities in culture, tradition and beliefs.

Participating organisations:
Más Arte Más Acción/Colombia,
Lugar a Dudas/Colombia, Raw Material
Company/Senegal, VANSÁ/South Africa.

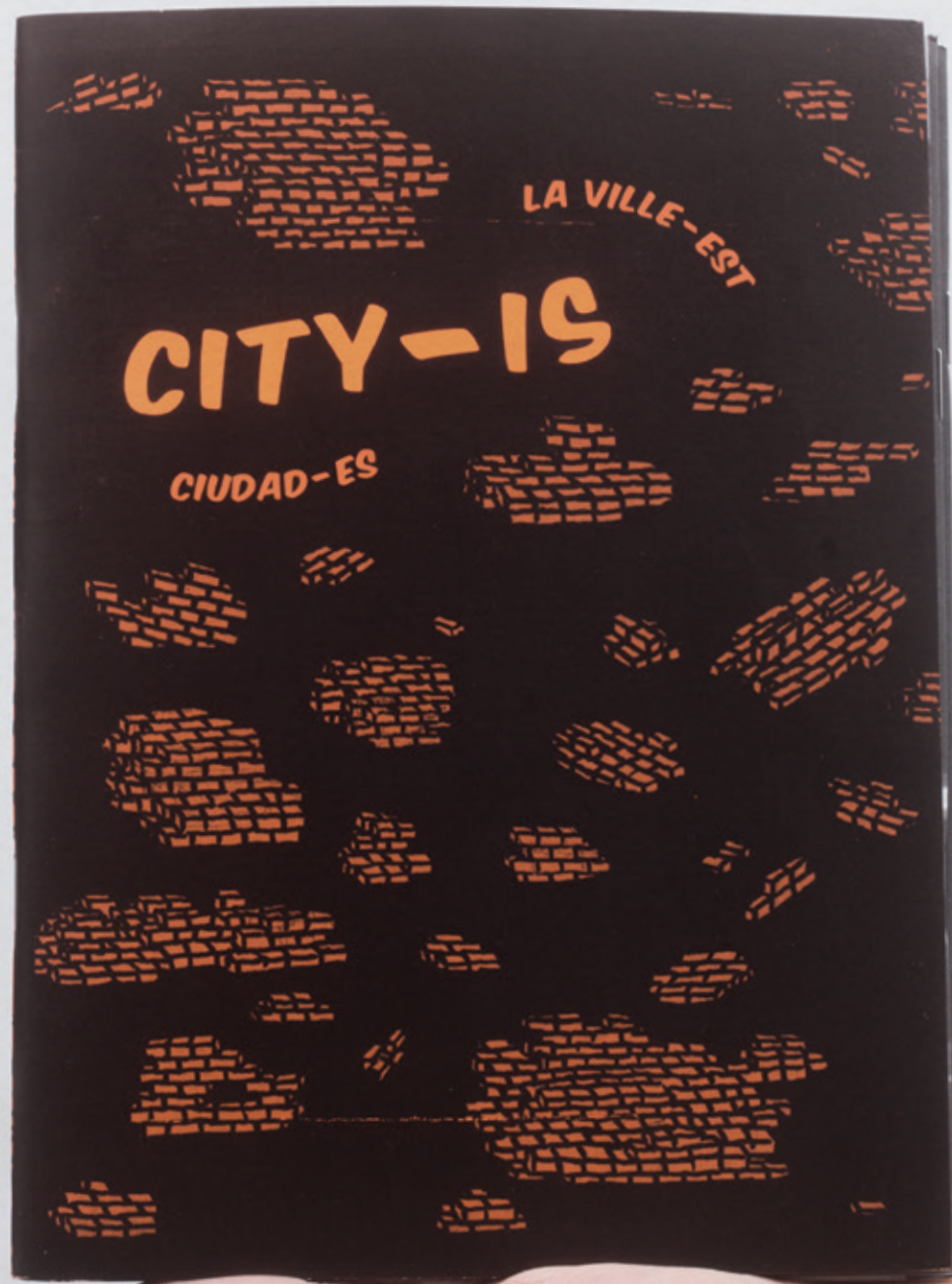


Photo: Cráter Invertido

Territories

Territories is an experiment in radical sharing that strengthens our contexts, histories and political autonomy. It is made up of projects based in a few places around the world that take as their departure point the urgency of creating and strengthening the sense of community and political awareness. By sharing our experiences and methods, as well as our differences, we can now imagine different, non-hegemonic kinds of territory both in symbolic and in physical terms.

Participating organisations:
Doual'art/Cameroon, Art Group 705/
Kyrgyzstan, Cooperativa Cráter Invertido/
México, Centre Soleil d'Afrique/Mali,
Más Arte Más Acción/Colombia and
VANSA/South Africa.



Photo: Mickey Maniako

Radio Banga

Radio Banga was a four day encounter in Cali, Colombia between Arts Collaboratory organisations to reflect on the socio-techno-political dimension of using the radiolibre.co as a common tool and resource. It included workshops to develop tools, experimental listening sessions and meetings with local radio collectives. Some questions that came up were: [Can this model of collaborative radio-making be a blueprint for an Arts Collaboratory online radio and audio-archive platform?](#) [Is it affordable?](#) [Is it needed?](#) [Might it expand our limited ways of communication?](#)

Participating organisations:
Cooperativa Cráter Invertido/México,
Más Arte Más Acción/Colombia and
Lugar A Dudas/ Colombia.



Photo: Kunci

Editorial Residency

In 2016, Syafiatudina (Dina) from Kunci-Cultural Studies Center in Indonesia visited Cráter Invertido in Mexico and was very impressed with their printing workshop, as well as the study sessions and the editorial cooperative. Back in Jogjakarta, Dina shared the excitement with other members of Kunci and, one year later, a print shop was established. In mid-2017, Kunci invited TPE to Jogjakarta to continue dialoguing and to learn together about self-publishing and editorial cooperativism.

Participating organisations:
Cooperative Cráter Invertido/México
and Kunci/Indonesia

ONGOING PROJECTS EMBEDDED IN
ORGANISATION'S CONTEXTS

Connected with their local contexts and struggles, organisations in Arts Collaboratory have been leading projects with continuity and weaving relationships with other organisations and communities from their local ecosystems.

The School of Commons

The School of Commons is a project where the In-Common is experienced in everyday life. It is intended to be a space for open transdisciplinary research and experimentation, intersecting art, technology, urban ecology, economics, and good neighborly practices. Through the proposed projects and meetings, the aim is to enable art and culture to contribute to sustainable innovation by applying the concepts of free culture and exchange of knowledge.

Participating organisations:
Ker Thioissane/Senegal

3rd Qalandiya International - Series of 'un-curated' events

Qalandiya International (Qi) is a contemporary art event that takes place every two years across Palestinian cities and villages. Qi aims to place Palestine on the world's cultural map by producing a series of exhibitions, as well as performances, talks, film screenings, workshops and tours, that open up channels for dialogue and exchange, both locally and internationally. Within the 3rd Qalandiya International, Riwaq proposed a series of un-curated events in the form of hikes, sessions of knowledge exchange and exhibitions that question taken-for-granted concepts like memory, heritage, mobility, space, home, and return, allowing for renewed meanings and relations to emerge and intermingle with the concrete landscapes of Palestine.



Photo: Platohedro

La Jaquer EsCool

La Jaquer EsCool (since 2014) is an inter-generational participant need-based, art-science-technology experimental workshop guided by an expert tutor. La Jaquer EsCool is a weekly open and safe space for unlearning and learning and sharing knowledge. Each person is responsible for their own and collective process. It is characterized by self-training, integral, holistic and experimental education with gender perspective as a transversal line. Knowledge is free and shared. It is for anybody who wishes to partake and experiment through art and open technology.

Participating organisations:
Platohedro/Colombia





Arts Collaboratory celebrates openness. Openness is our ethic to share knowledge publicly and to 'invite' others into the ecosystem. Openness also allows each of us to dissolve, disappear or reduce the need for certain resources from the AC. This can be seen as a self-checking system, which then allows other organisations to join and to bring in new resources and receive support when needed.

Arts Collaboratory is a decentralised, trans-local organisation. Entanglement and non-hierarchical relationships are two of the main characters of the ecosystem.

Decisions are made through consensus and an active study of dissensus and power is dissolved through sharing.

Arts Collaboratory is run by shared-management and shared-governance. We all can give mutual support to address hierarchies in our own organisations.

Arts Collaboratory values the diversity of all members, taking advantage of its quality as an 'unnatural network.' Likewise, it also embraces the diversity of commitments of all members and provides room for the diversity of members' shared-determination.

Arts Collaboratory is dedicated to critical thinking and deep collaboration.

We share learning and unlearning processes in common and they are the core of our spirit. We call learning and unlearning 'study' that we want to build as our habit. This means, we remain open to self-reflexive and contextual thinking. The emphasis on study implies the responsibility for sharing what one learns or unlearns. Tooling what we study is also a key for our operation and forms a radical pedagogic method, which in turn allows us to increase our capacity and lets us share our radical imagination with others.

We are dedicated to critical hospitality (distinguished from the service of providing hospitality in tourism) and a critical notion of friendship and conviviality. Our relations are not social capital that can be measured and commodified.

We take conversation as the best means for learning and relating to each other. This allows us to study with a focus on process rather than on production. The conversation also makes it possible to remain vulnerable and honest.

This also means that we value discomfort rather than comfort in our relations and collaborative works.

Trust is the basis of our relations. We have a strong faith in abilities as well as in failures, because what we aim for is a network as a space for radical imagination.

Inherent in the trust is collective risk-taking practices, which can provide Arts Collaboratory with flexibility and the willingness to permit constant mutation, change, and re-evaluation.

We value experiments and serious playfulness.

Arts Collaboratory is based on care, which works against the system of punishment, exclusion and indifference. In doing so, reciprocity or mutualism serve as the basic principles. The idea of self-limitation accompanies this: your share is based on the consideration of others and in order to share you may need to limit your own (in)take.

We take reciprocity, or our sense of reciprocity, as a practice, with which to precipitate the development of solidarity. Solidarity thus can be defined as a mutual feeling as well as a space where certainty amidst uncertainty can be created.

Lifelines versus deadlines as a way to imagine, write and plan the lives of our organisations.

Ways of sharing and working together?

Arts Collaboratory has a self-governing structure that has experimented ways of sharing and collaborating. Assemblies, bangas, working groups and the multiple mechanisms that the network has developed to organize and operate, have become sharing mechanisms that have put into practice alternative ways of communication, knowledge distribution, decision making, reporting and funding.

ASSEMBLIES

The annual assembly is integral to the way in which Arts Collaboratory operates as a trans-local organisation which is in line with our ethical principles. It is the moment in which the organisations gather and live together, share and develop tools to share knowledge, address issues and challenges in a mode of collective study, and engage in decision-making processes.

BANGAS

Banga meetings are for working, conversing, and collective learning, not for showcasing or promoting. They are based on a “call for gathering” for friendship, self-care, reciprocal support, and collective study on a particular subject/issue. Bangas can be called for advisory purposes, for collective study, and for skill-sharing. The development of tools based on the organisations’ collective study/learning process is a key value of a Banga.

WORKING GROUPS AND YALLA-YALLA

Yalla is an Arabic word that means ‘hurry up’ or ‘let’s get going.’ The Arts Collaboratory ecosystem requires strong rituals and habits to interiorize and practice the self-managed model. Establishing a common rhythm is necessary to keep this process alive. This rhythm is understood as the habit of conversation, studying, and working together, and is formulated through the mechanisms of triangles, made up of three Arts Collaboratory organisations, working groups and the Yalla-Yallas which is a regional coordinating team that helps maintain the momentum of the ecosystem, from fundraising for the commonwealth of the ecosystem, to our internal and external communication processes.

COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

Member organisations within the Arts Collaboratory network have the opportunity to develop collaborative projects using funding from our common pot, which allows for a pooling of different approaches and creative energies. The projects may take different forms and enrich the network by involving a diverse range of arts practitioners and others who develop aesthetic forms drawn from each organisation’s ecosystem. It is understood that looking after the health of the network, and realizing its radical potential, means working together across different imaginaries. Through trans-local projects, members learn from one another, share moments of creativity, intellectually replenish and challenge their individual practices and create meaningful changes in their contexts.

INTERINSTITUTIONAL RESIDENCIES

A mechanism where one organisation visits another for a longer period to study together on a specific issue and to support that organisation in its learning process.

“BEING PART OF A NETWORK THAT SHIFTS THE WAY IT OPERATES IN RELATION TO FUNDING, ITS APPROACH TO COLLABORATION IS GLOBAL SOUTH-DRIVEN AND CENTERED AROUND KNOWLEDGE SHARING.”

2018 ASSEMBLY



Palestine - Lebanon - Jordan 2018 Assembly. Photo: Eirini Vanikioti

CURATORIAL RESEARCH

**INTERVENTIONS IN PUBLIC
SPACE AND ACTIVISM**

LOBBYING

**FORUM, SEMINAR AND
WORKSHOP ORGANIZING**

EXHIBITION MAKING

FESTIVAL AND BIENNIAL ORGANIZING

**WRITING CALLS FOR
PROPOSALS AND PROJECT GRANTS**

**AUDIOVISUAL AND ALTERNATIVE
MEDIA CONTENT CREATION**

MANAGEMENT SKILLS

**SUPPORTING YOUNG ARTISTS
AND CURATORS WITH GRANTS**

DOCUMENTING AND ARCHIVING

POLICY AND GOVERNMENTAL ENGAGEMENT

RESEARCH AND PUBLISHING

ARTIST INITIATIVE DEVELOPMENT

**TOOLING AND SHARING
OF METHODOLOGIES**

**EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH LOCAL
COMMUNITY AND PARTICIPATIVE PRACTICES**

**DIVERSE ALTERNATIVE AND
NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PRACTICES**

HACKING AND DO-IT-YOURSELF WORKSHOPS

AND MANY OTHER WAYS OF DOING.

SHARED RESOURCES

The organisations that comprise Arts Collaboratory have strong ties to their local contexts and the political, social and economic issues relating to the arts communities and wider societies. This creates a broad range of interests which result in trans-local collaborative projects. Some of these interests are listed here.



Palestine - Lebanon - Jordan 2018 Assembly. Photo: Aline Khoury

CULTURAL AND ARCHITECTONIC
HERITAGE PRESERVATION

CONTEMPORARY ART
PERFORMANCE ARTS
AND MUSIC

POLICY AND ADVOCACY

FREE CULTURE

COLLECTIVISM AND ECOSYSTEM

ARTISTIC PRACTICES

ALTERNATIVE PEDAGOGY

VISUAL ARTS IN CONTEXT

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION

LEARNING AND EDUCATION

HUMAN RIGHTS AND
MINORITY RIGHTS

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

GENTRIFICATION

LAND RIGHTS

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

POLITICAL ACTIVISM

DECOLONIZATION

TEXTILES, WEAVING AND
CULTURAL TRADITIONS

FILMMAKING

COMMONS

WORKING FOR THE COMMONS
AND ALTERNATIVE ECONOMIES

COMMUNITY BUILDING

RADIO AND MEDIA
COMMUNICATION

QUEER STUDIES
AT-RISK YOUTH

GENDER
IMMIGRATION

HACKING AND ALTERNATIVE
TECHNOLOGIES

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

CULTIVATING AND FOOD
SOVEREIGNTY

ALTERNATIVE MANAGEMENT
MODELS

ANTI-CAPITALISM THEORY
AND PRACTICES

ECOLOGY

FREE SOFTWARE

TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND
TECHNOLOGIES

OUR INTERESTS

The organisations that comprise Arts Collaboratory have strong ties to their local contexts and the political, social and economic issues relating to the arts communities and wider societies. This creates a broad range of interests which result in trans-local collaborative projects. Some of these interests are listed here.

Towards a funding paradigm shift

In our post-colonial, neo-liberal reality 'sustainability' and financial practice in the cultural realm remain for a large part dependent on 'old' donor/philanthropy/funding practices. Although these practices have had positive impacts, they repeat and bring about problematics such as continued hierarchy between the so-called haves and have-nots, or the ones in power and the ones that are not. In the case of funders, the ones in power of the money decide the priorities, modalities of working,

visions on what is development, quality and sustainability of the ones in need of money. This leads to a reality in which throughout all elements of the funding chain (funder, funder of the funder, organisation, employees, artists, beneficiaries, communities) these mechanisms are repeated on a macro, meso and micro level.

“DECENTRALIZATION OF DECISION MAKING, ACTIONS AND FUNDING USE. REDISTRIBUTION OF POWER WITHOUT HAVING A CENTER OF POWER. FOR EXAMPLE, THE USE OF THE BANGAS TO ADDRESS CERTAIN ISSUES RELEVANT TO SOME BUT NOT TO ALL; THIS IS A SIGN OF MATURITY OF THE NETWORK.”

LINA, PLATOHEDRO

The Arts Collaboratory ecosystem has been experimenting and collaborating with new ways of being and doing such as solidarity, collectivity, openness and trust, and towards ways of living that are closer to human and ecologi-


cal needs and inclusive life. Since 2015 DOEN Foundation and the other 24 members in AC have studied and experimented with building a fairer funding practice between them, inviting other donors to study this. In the coming years AC intends to continue and publish its study through a so-called AC School. One of the study lines works towards a paradigm shift in the relation between funders and grantees, and of the central role funding bodies have in the sustainability of artistic and arts organisational practices. Arts Collaboratory itself is an experiment with this, in which funding organisation and artistic organisations work alongside in a more or less horizontal way, towards the health of each other's processes and that of each other's ecosystem. This continuous experiment addresses the following questions:

- How can we develop a funding practice that operates in this living system, enhancing sustainability of ecosystems, instead of repeating (post-)colonial practices and imposing Western paradigms?
- What does a funding practice based on mutual support, solidarity, local relevance and openness really mean?
- How can we redefine 'sustainability'? Less focussed on (financial) sustainability of individual organisations and more on creating so called 'living' ecosystems, in which both organisations and funders operate in a dynamic, larger ecosystem, and in which there is a more holistic approach combining cultural and ecological values.
- How can we redefine and decentralise the role of money in our practice, and give more intention and emphasis to other values such as knowledge, collaboration and solidarity?
- How can we practice with collective ways or collaborations to enhance our organisation processes?
- What are the practical mechanisms and tools we can build as alternatives to accountability?



Elephants in the Room inaugural Assembly at Casco Art Institute: Working for the Commons, Utrecht, the Netherlands, 2-3 November, 2018. Photo by Filippo Guiseppe Iannone. Image courtesy of Casco Art Institute.

**ARTS COLLABORATORY ECOSYSTEM
HAS BEEN EXPERIMENTING AND
COLLABORATING WITH NEW WAYS
OF BEING AND DOING SUCH AS
SOLIDARITY, COLLECTIVITY,
OPENNESS AND TRUST, AND
TOWARDS WAYS OF LIVING THAT
ARE CLOSER TO HUMAN AND
ECOLOGICAL NEEDS, AND
INCLUSIVE LIFE.**





GUDSKUL. Contemporary art collective and ecosystem studies, Indonesia. Photo: ruangrupa



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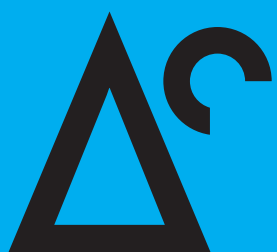
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