

OWN CHANGE

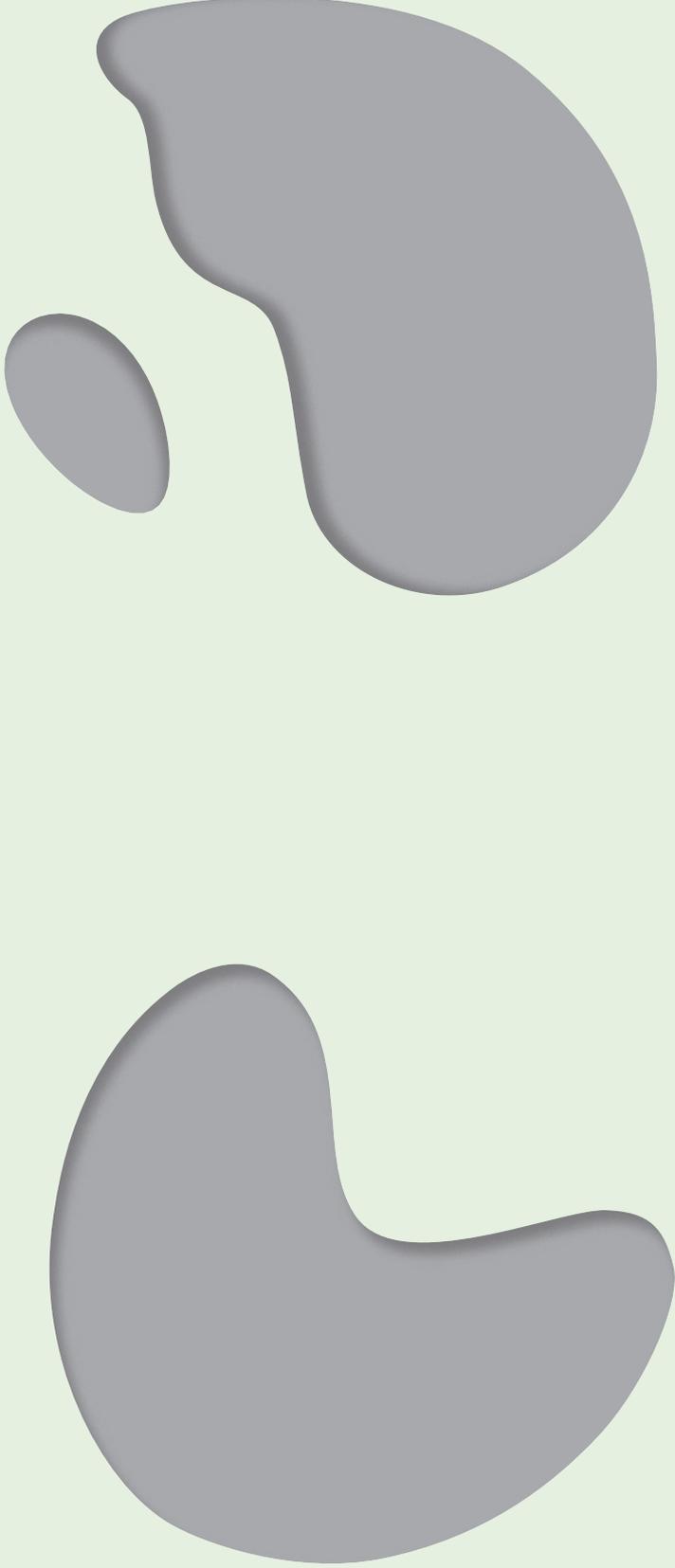
AFFECTING

THROUGH

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCIES

*At the same time, we are aware
that if a substantial part of everyday
life takes place online, isn't that
a new public space where the arts
also belong?*

Esther van Rosmalen, Witte Rook, Breda (NL)



ON
CHANGE

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THROUGH
ARTIST - IN - RESIDENCIES

WELCOME!

Last December 2020 and January 2021, we hosted the online symposium *On Affecting Change Through Artist-in-Residencies*. We were thrilled to see so many committed participants from various residencies and art organisations sharing their knowledge, and thankful for our wonderful speakers and their contributions.

This small publication is a summary of the main themes and questions discussed during the symposium as well as a collection of hands-on tips, tools and methods for use in organizing and participating in residencies. This is not a comprehensive manual. Instead, this is a map of possible paths through our current predicament of precarity, disparity and our continued belief in art. We have listed do's and don'ts, methods and sources that might help in creating more inclusive institutions. It's far from exhaustive but we have tried to provide further readings and links to additional information. Hopefully this can help you navigate through the hills and valleys of an often confusing and challenging present!

Miriam, Josine and Heidi

The symposium *Affecting Change Through Artist-in-Residencies* took place online on 8 & 10 December 2020 and 14 January 2021. It grew out of the social and political unrest of 2020 and the drastically changed ways of life that face us in the moment and wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Together, these circumstances spurred us, the organisers, to reconsider how we, as (small) institutions, can play a role in shaping our local contexts in meaningful ways and create positive impacts locally and in our fields. We felt compelled to ask: How do we work towards reconfiguring our positions and practices in a changing social sphere? How can we create space for new relationships and new ways of working and being? Which are the tools at our disposal?

On 8 December 2020, we started with a conversation between Clare Burcher and Thato Magotsi on the shifting role of residencies in contemporary art ecologies, specifically in light of the relationships between the Global North and South. On 10 December, Miriam Wistreich elaborated on Hotel Maria Kapel's experimental program *Slow Burn*, a year of reflection and redirection in which the institution tried to understand what it means to host and care for artists and build institutions of care. Through artistic and curatorial research, *Slow Burn* brought together a range of voices to think about the politics of the artist residency and how to navigate through the landscape of the art world with care. After the morning livestream, we gathered for three work sessions: artist Anika Mariam Ahmed discussed the subject of *Intercultural Dialogue*; Deveron Projects director Claudia Zeiske looked into the practice of *Hosting Trans-locality*; and U-jazdowski Castle program director, Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka, invited us to explore how caregivers might learn to care for themselves in the workshop *Care, Community, Laboratory*.

Guided by questions and the prompt to look inwards raised during the first sessions, the final public session on 14 January 2021 focused on "sitting with discomfort". Nathalie Hartjes, director of Showroom MAMA, discussed the ongoing work of becoming a more inclusive institution; while with the expertise of Lisa Baraitser, Professor of Psycho-social Theory at Birkbeck University of London, we evaluated the outcomes of the three afternoon work sessions about cases of professional unease (i.e. practicing vulnerability and sharing in order to learn). In addition, artistic contributions were made by Sekai Makoni and G (*A Pair of Clogs and Two Brits*), Iarose Iarose (*Problematizing the romantic figure of the nomadic artist*) and Harriet Rose Morley (*Tools for Collective Navigation*).

- I TRANSPARENCY AND EXCHANGE
- II CARE AND LABOUR
- III SITTING WITH DISCOMFORT

Here you find full info on the program, the initiators and contributors. A reader composed for the symposium can be accessed [here](#).

I TRANSPARENCY AND EXCHANGE

The symposium started with a discussion of how we can be transparent about our position and consider what is exchanged in residencies.

At the start of their opening conversation, curators Clare Burcher and Thato Mogotsi symbolically established themselves based on their identified geographies. Their proposal was for this kind of transparency to become a standard in the practice of art residencies, concerning not only the individual position and background but also the specific set of relationships one finds oneself in, in a residency program. Residencies, after all, are often very specifically located both geographically and historically, though positions and their subsequent politics aren't always acknowledged.

Oftentimes, residents arrive at a specific place and are invited to respond to that particular place with little sense of what its parameters are: the assumptions, agreements and histories that residents are entering into. Awareness of ancestry and history and their resonance to our contemporary institutions – as well as in the art economies surrounding and sustaining them – should, according to Mogotsi and Burcher, provide the basis for reflection on and the development of shifting approaches.

Thinking critically about the context would also include the difficult task of addressing what is actually exchanged and on which terms. With residency models historically rooted in the concept and models of “cultural exchange,” vital questions become: what are the terms of the exchange in question? What is being exchanged between host institutions, resident practitioners and local communities? How might these material and immaterial resources be redistributed?

TOOLS FOR TRANSPARENCY AND EXCHANGE

MANAGE EXPECTATIONS

Managing expectations is paramount in any professional situation where both hosting and residing parties need to vocalize expectations to make sure they are on the same page. Providing a contract is one of the tools for making sure expectations match. Time should be set aside to revise the contract together in order to reach a mutual understanding. Drafting a contract enables each party's expectations to be discussed, clarified and met.

For suggestions on regulations and contracts, see the [AiR Checklist #2 Practical Matters](#).

For an overview of the current code for Fair Practice in the arts sector, [click here](#) (English pdf for download).

ENGAGE IN (INTERCULTURAL) DIALOGUE

Artist Anika Mariam Ahmed's workshop on intercultural dialogue investigated the relevance of different cultural contexts for artistic practice. Ahmed urged all of us to reflect on the blind spots in our ideas and beliefs about art and its histories. For example, we may ask ourselves how exactly we understand and define the notions of beauty, talent or value, and how those categories may be specific to where and how we are located. In order to clarify and make transparent our discussions, we need to acknowledge the diverse cultural as well as individual perspectives and frameworks that underlie our discussions.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

It happens that emerging artists get stuck between an institution and/or collective, particularly when artists are unable to address the situation due to power relations within the organisation or when there is a lack of accountability from the organization. It would be helpful if an artist is offered the possibility to share these experiences with others and to try to overcome auto-censorship by facilitating connections and reaching out to a group of peers or by offering the option to reach out to an external disclosure office or to counsellors outside the organisation. (such as [Mores Disclosure office for undesirable behaviour](#)).

REVIEW AND EVALUATE

It can be hard to do when one is on a tight budget and timeline, but properly reviewing one's projects is of great importance. Make sure to schedule meetings during and after a residency or project to review and potentially change your process: to look back in order to understand what you did well and what you might need to do better.



Watch

II CARE AND LABOUR

The concept and practice of care has a long history within feminist theory, where it is often tied to care work both in the home and outside of it. One part of looking into care is to acknowledge the hidden economies of labour, particularly the reproductive labour, that is necessary to just keep things going. This perspective is generative in looking at labour both in the arts and in residencies.

Residencies are often built around an infrastructure of care and support – often provided by the organisation – for the resident artist. The success of the organisation and the wellbeing of guests and its hosts are dependent on the relationships between them. However, in practice, these relationships are often under pressure of resources.

In the symposium, we tried to understand how to address and value the often invisible and repetitive labour that goes into maintaining a residency as well as being a resident. And most importantly: how can we adequately take care of both?

We must acknowledge that taking care can be a difficult task, which, at times, requires that we make tough choices. Caring for your staff, your institution and its diverse residents may sometimes be at odds, as caring for one party may sometimes mean hurting another. However, facilitating a good residency for an artist – which includes intellectual and emotional care – goes hand in hand with the residency operating as a practice in itself: a tool for dialogue and implementation of the projects of both residents, curators and organisers.

Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka's workshop *Care, Community, Laboratory* asked how residency organisers could learn to care for themselves by, for example, clearly defining work hours and time spent with the artists-in-residence. Through the artistic contribution *A Pair of Clogs and Two Brits* by Sekai Makoni and G, the artists underlined that caring for residents of colour can be a complicated and, for 'white' institutions, often a daunting task that is necessary in order to change. For the entire list of questions from *A Pair of Clogs and Two Brits*, see *III: TOOLS FOR SITTING WITH DISCOMFORT*.

Residencies also often operate in close exchange with their local surroundings. In the workshop *Hosting Translocality*, Claudia Zeiske introduced Deveron Projects' program that is committed to supporting, connecting, interfering and contributing to the community of Huntly, a small town in rural Scotland. The residency has a '50-50 approach' to art and local community, meaning neither artists nor local community is privileged over the other. The team invests extensively in building social net-

works and activities that allow for sharing and exchange, of time and experiences, as well as the opportunity to listen to and observe what makes a community tick. This allows Deveron Projects to carefully pair artists with the subject at hand, allowing projects to develop gradually in stages which then helps ideas to root and the process to gain in value.

TOOLS FOR CARE AND LABOUR

CHECK-IN

Review your check-in procedure. Make sure to communicate well about the resident's arrival and departure. What can they expect? Will the resident(s) be picked up from the airport or train station? Provide them with thorough information including team availability and working hours, inquire after dietary requests, and stock the fridge so they can go to bed on a full stomach.

SHADOW CURATOR

The Shadow Curator is a guest to the art institution that invites them to develop a critical inquiry into the curatorial model it inhabits. This absolutely equal form of peer- and self-reflection maps the curatorial process through querying and critiquing the assumptions of the institution. In other words, it creates a mirror that, when held up against practice, brings constructive alternatives to the work process and promotes accountability and critical review.

This critical methodology is developed by Nuno Sacramento, director of Scottish Sculpture Workshop in Lumsden. You can find his lecture *The Practice of Interruption. Shadow Curator and the Contested Countryside* [here](#). See also *ARTocracy. Curator and Shadow Curator*, a handbook for curatorial practice, based on the Shadow Curator dialogue developed by Claudia Zeiske and Nuno Sacramento.

CARE RIDERS

Riders are used by rock stars and divas all the time. They are helpful for everyone involved, because the guests can express what they need in order to do their thing, and the institution knows exactly how to provide support for them. A care rider is a document that allows your residents to tell you what they need to do their best work. They are based on Access Docs developed by disability activists to offer residents and workers the opportunity to put their needs on paper.

Perhaps your resident suffers from anxiety or insomnia and prefers not to start work before 10AM. Perhaps they don't tolerate long meetings. Perhaps they feel unsafe in certain art spaces and would find it helpful to be accompanied by a plus one. Care Riders address the fact that our working patterns may be different from person to person.

By asking your residents to clarify their needs, you can have an honest conversation about what the residency can provide and how you can best support them. [Here](#) you can find a downloadable template to make an Access Doc by Johanna Hedva. Hotel Maria Kapel has worked on re-editing the Access Doc into a Care Rider. To know more, contact the aforementioned institution.

ACCESS NOTE

If the Care Rider is aimed at communicating artist's needs, the Access Note is the institutional response. An Access Note is a written text posted on the institution's website (and/or presented to the artist in residence) that gives abundant information about what to expect when visiting your institution. Is your space wheelchair accessible? Suitable for allergies? Which language(s) do you operate in? Do you provide sign language interpretation? Is it accessible by public transportation or by car?

You can also experiment with clarifying the structures that are at work within your team and try to think through what hidden or invisible norms are at play. This may be helpful for your resident who has just offered their care needs. Do you work long days? Do you live locally? What is the makeup of your team: identity positions, languages spoken, cultural background etc.?

Remember that no one should be forced to give more information than they are comfortable sharing. Here are examples of Access Notes by [BAK](#) in Utrecht (NL) and the [MoMA](#) in New York (USA).

KEEPING A DIARY

Diaries can be a useful tool for exchange and team sessions in organisations, such as this experimental journal *Slow Burn: Diary Of A Changing Institution* written by the team of Hotel Maria Kapel.

LIMITED APPOINTMENTS

Consider limiting the length of employment for directors!

This is a potentially controversial but interesting suggestion that allows for rotation and for new ideas and strategies to be brought into the organisation on a regular basis.

REFUSAL

Consider saying no!

Decline to participate in preconceived notions of a resident-artist relationship. Refuse the expectation of productivity. Refuse poor treatment. This goes for both artists and organisers. Saying No is a radical and powerful approach in all its simplicity.

Watch



III SITTING WITH DISCOMFORT

Spurred by the Black Lives Matter protests and the #meroo campaigns, the symposium addressed inclusion across race and gender but also across class, education, parental status and physical disability. Strongly influenced by the artistic contribution of Sekai Makoni and G, the final symposium day focused on the potential of sitting with discomfort as a path towards institutional change.

Artists Sekai Makoni and G presented *A Pair of Clogs And Two Brits*, a film piece and conversation on residencies, inclusivity and care. Makoni and G discussed the challenges faced by black artists and artists of colour entering white art spaces, as well as possible care structures, harm reduction and accountability processes. Care, accountability and justice are all areas of deep growth and, if we want things to improve, we need to bring people who have the expertise in handling issues of race, to create inclusive workspaces. Makoni and G formulated a series of questions that institutions can ask themselves before engaging with artists of colour (see below under *TOOLS*).

Thinking about change also means acknowledging past mistakes, which can be uncomfortable, embarrassing and painful. We feel guilty, exposed, maybe even a little blind or dumb. It's easy to get defensive and cause further harm. Let us address and acknowledge these feelings of guilt and offense in order to move beyond them and explore how they may help us build new ways of working. Taking discomfort as a trigger for change implies positionality: a need to deal with questions of power and privilege to understand where we ourselves are in the art world as well as in relation to the institution.

Sitting with discomfort is also acknowledging vulnerability in its many forms. It's no secret that many cultural workers find themselves in professionally precarious situations: overworked, underpaid, combining multiple jobs and often working long hours without managing to be financially independent. In discussions on inclusivity and diversity, it is useful to think about how the status quo – meaning precarity – plays a role. Precarity creates an environment of lack, a feeling of being faced with a scarcity of resources and having to claw and fight for the resources that do exist.

Creating an inclusive environment, according to psychoanalyst Lisa Baraitser, means understanding that this scarcity is in fact a fiction. We must begin to understand that making space for those who have been kept out of the art world does not need to happen at the expense of those who seem to have

'made it.' On the contrary, we all will gain from it. To 'decolonize' means to oppose the scarcity mindset and embrace plurality without fear of loss. Decolonizing your mind requires rethinking what equality and social justice means.

Inclusion is not something you achieve. Inclusion is produced through an ongoing process, a series of actions rather than a result, and it is never finished. Therefore, we have to approach diversity and inclusion systematically step by step to make it at the core practice of our institutions and not merely an addition to them.

TOOLS FOR SITTING WITH DISCOMFORT

WHO ISN'T THERE?

Here is a series of questions by Sekai Makoni & G for institutions to ask themselves before engaging with artists of colour:

- Who isn't there?
- Who is missing from your organisation right now?
- If you look around you, who isn't represented?
- Who hasn't been there? Including the residents and the core management structure?
- What or who makes you feel uncomfortable?
- Who were the voices in the past that were difficult for you?
- In this moment where people were coming to knowledge, if you look back honestly (not in a head space but a heart space) what felt difficult to receive?
- What was difficult for you to sit with?

INCLUSION AS PROCESS

Diversify your board. If needed, acquire institutional help from experts. Diversify your pool of programmers and/or juries, allowing for a program comprising different perspectives. Think about who gets to talk about what. Reach out and develop new ways to communicate and recruit. Think about ways to reach other communities other than your usual suspects.

Remember that selection is not neutral.

(MIS)COMMUNICATION.

HOW TO HANDLE CONFLICT?

Going into emotional processes at work is complicated. However, avoiding confrontation — as we often do in the cultural field under the guise of politeness — can be detrimental to

organizational change. You might want to consider introducing rules into your conversations.

These are examples of rules that may be helpful:

- Agree to respect each other's opinions even if you disagree
- Agree on confidentiality by accepting and applauding self-disclosure and vulnerability
- Agree not to interrupt
- Do not give advice but do share experiences

Here are some methods to help you structure difficult conversations in the workplace:
Non-Violent Communication, Consciousness Raising, Deep Listening.

SOCRATIC DIALOGUE AS AN INSTITUTIONAL TOOL

Many of our institutions are based on informal exchange such as dialogue and conversations. Sometimes more structured and rule-based dialogue tools can be helpful to level and push conversations forward. Socratic Dialogue is one such conversation tool.

PEER NETWORKS

Invest in connecting with peer networks and platforms that share your affinities, or form your own peer groups. There are public platforms available to support artists and organisations when partaking in or hosting residencies. Examples include: TransArtists, AiR Platform NL, AiR Platform Brabant, Res Artis.

THE CONTRIBUTORS

Anika Mariam Ahmed is a painter living in Groningen (NL). She holds a BFA in Painting and a BA in English Literature from Dhaka (BD) and an MFA from Frank Mohr Institute (NL). Her paintings are intimate restatements of being present in the world, often from the viewpoint of an adolescent and in dialogue with everyday encounters.

Lisa Baraitser is a psychoanalyst and Professor of Psychosocial Theory at Birkbeck, University of London (UK). Baraitser's research focuses on time and care, drawing in discussions of gender, sexuality and motherhood from the fields of feminist theory, psychoanalysis, and philosophies of ethics, affect, and event.

Clare Butcher is a curator and educator from Zimbabwe who cooks and collaborates as part of her practice. She is currently the Curator of Public Programming and Learning for the Toronto Biennial of Art (CA). Clare is wondering what the future of gathering and learning together might be, and how art education could transform the curriculum.

G is an artist and Death Doula, born in the United Kingdom and currently residing at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam (NL).

Nathalie Hartjes studied Art History and Archeology at Leiden University (NL). She has been director of MAMA, a platform for visual culture and young talent in Rotterdam since 2015.

MAMA is one of the pioneering institutions in the area of talent development in the Netherlands, working in a participatory manner with a large group of budding professionals in their twenties (Team MAMA).

larose larose was born in Montréal (CA) and holds an MFA from the Dutch Art Institute (NL). They currently live in Porto (PT). Their work in video, performance and installation seeks to counter the contamination of queer imaginaries by heteronormative politics, global capitalism and imperialist pop culture.

Sekai Makoni is an artist, podcaster, writer and workshop facilitator. Her work explores Blackness, particularly centring the voices of Black women in Europe, through her podcast *Between OurseIves*. As the artist in residence at Hotel Maria Kapel, her work explored notions of rest, slowing down and guilt as it pertains to Black womanhood in her podcast *Black Women & Rest*.

Thato Mogotsi is a Johannesburg-based independent arts practitioner with a practice that spans the curatorial, photography and archival research. She was a curatorial recipient of the Thami Mnyele Foundation's Residency Award, Amsterdam in early 2019.

Harriet Rose Morley is a multi-disciplinary artist and educator. She works across the disciplines of public art, sculpture, architectural spaces, furniture design and urban planning. Her work and projects often challenge our conceptions of the function of public art, urban objects and space.

Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka is founder of the U-jazdowski residency programme in Warsaw (PL) and member of the Programme Council of Akademie Schloss Solitude (DE). Her research interests centre on the significance of residencies within the fields of artistic and institutional practice. Her projects often focus on social change and alternative models of social development.

Miriam Wistreich is a curator, educator, occasional writer and, until recently, Creative Director at Hotel Maria Kapel, a residency and exhibition space in Hoorn, Noord-Holland. Wistreich is now director of UKS, Young Artists Society in Oslo (NO).

Claudia Zeiske is the founder of Deveron Projects, an international residency programme in the market town of Huntly in North-East Scotland. With a focus on the rural, Zeiske has a unique curatorial approach balancing artistic criticality and community involvement through developing projects with artists from across the globe.

THE INITIATORS

Hotel Maria Kapel is an artist-in-residence and exhibition space for contemporary visual arts in the city centre of Hoorn. HMK aims to support early practice artists in the production of new work and to promote exchanges between national and international artists, cultural institutions and the public.

Kunsthuis SYB is a residency in Beersterzwaag, Friesland run by Josine Sibum Siderius. At SYB, contemporary artists and curators are invited to develop their work through focused research, experiments and new collaborations. Kunsthuis SYB offers them the space, time and support as needed.

TransArtists | AiR Platform NL, in the person of Heidi Vogels, organises together with other AiR organisations and their partners meetings and programmes for mutual exchange of knowledge and experience, while building on the outcomes of previous meetings, research and symposia such as *Working on the Margins* (2018) in cooperation with Kunstloc in Tilburg (NL).

LINKS (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

[On Affecting Change Through
Artist-in-Residencies](#)

[Hotel Maria Kapel](#)

[Kunsthuis SYB](#)

[TransArtists | AiR Platform NL](#)

[AiR Checklist #2 Practical Matters](#)

Fair Practice Code for the arts sector
[Download pdf](#)

Mores Disclosure office for undesirable
behaviour in the performing arts, film
and television sectors, art education and
all museums

*Nuno Sacramento, The Practice of
Interruption. Shadow Curator and the
Contested Countryside*

Claudia Zeiske, Nuno Sacramento,
ARTtocracy. *Curator and Shadow Curator*
A handbook for curatorial practice
[Download pdf](#)

[Acces Docs for Artists](#)

[Diary as tool | *Slow Burn: Diary Of A
Changing Institution*](#)

[NVC Non-violent communication](#)

[Socratic Dialogue \(how to use\)](#)

Peer networks

[TransArtists](#)

[AiR Platform NL](#)

[AiR Platform Brabant](#)

[Res Artis](#)

COLOPHON

On Affecting Change Through Artist-in-Residencies,
an online symposium by Hotel Maria Kapel,
Kunsthuis SYB and TransArtists | AiR Platform NL,
initiated and conceived by Miriam Wistreich,
Josine Sibum Siderius and Heidi Vogels.

Program and production

Heidi Vogels
Josine Sibum Siderius
Miriam Wistreich

Speakers

Clare Butcher
Thato Mogotsi
Nathalie Hartjes
Miriam Wistreich

Workshops

Ika Sienkiewicz-Novacka
Claudia Zeiske
Anika Mariam Ahmed

Artistic contributions

Sekai Makoni and G
larose larose
Harriet Rose Morley

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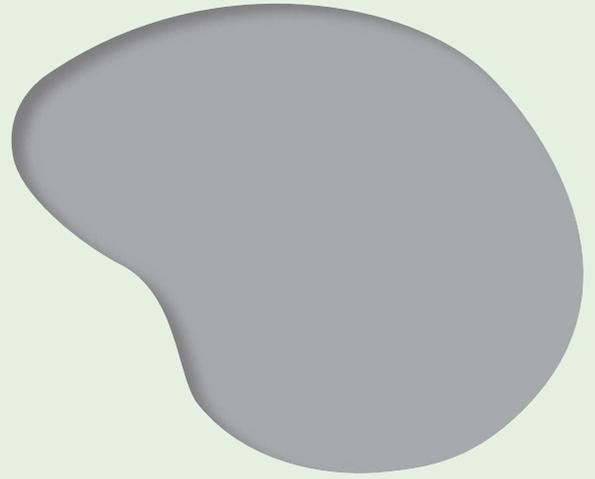
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The symposium provided us with useful tools to rethink some aspects of the social and community bond of our airWG program, like the care of the artist and the team of volunteers. To recognize and return to the practice of essential values such as solidarity, will, honesty, empathy, work ethic, is essential to face the precariousness and instability of the shared world.

Hugo Palmar, Artist, airWG Team, Amsterdam (NL)

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ONLINE SYMPOSIUM
DEC 2020 & JAN 2021