





Welcome to the Feminist Urban Lab!  
This project was born in 2018  
by two women enthusiastic about  
the topic - Anastasiya Halauniova  
and Fenna Smits. The manual you  
have in front of you, however,  
is a result of the work of many  
people. It is a collective endeavour  
and should be treated as such.  
Here are those people who gave this  
document life beyond the classroom  
of the University of Amsterdam:

■ Participants of the Lab  
Tania Esteves Fernandes Cardoso,  
Afra Foli, Leonie Dronkert,  
Sasha Kruger, Peter Miller,  
Anastasiya Halauniova, Fenna Smits

■ Speakers  
Jess Bier, Marguerite van den Berg,  
Bahar Sakizlioglu, Rivke Jaffe

■ Sponsors  
Centre of Urban Studies (CUS),  
Amsterdam Centre for Cultural  
Heritage and Identity (ACHI),  
Amsterdam Institute for Social  
Science Research (AISSR)

 AMSTERDAM INSTITUTE FOR  
SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

 Centre for  
Urban Studies

■ Art curator  
Sophia Tabatadze

■ Designer  
In the Shade of a Tree

We did it, so can you. This manual will allow you to do one crucial thing: to set up your own Feminist Urban Lab that will give you and your colleagues a necessary space to explore, experiment, and develop your feminist methodological toolbox. With this manual, you will explore the 'tricks of the trade,' but also work with various theories and methodologies and translate those into an artistic practice and intervention. Only if you want, of course!

# WHY SETTING UP YOUR OWN FEMINIST URBAN LAB?

Feminist Urban Lab creates a learning environment in which you will explore:

- What questions can you ask that would align with a feminist commitment to studying and engaging with cities and urban processes?
- How can you take those questions and explore them with the help of various methodological exercises?
- How to start thinking about a feminist artistic intervention and translate your research into an artistic tool?

Steps outlined in the manual in front of you will give you and your colleagues a productive lense that will allow you to ask questions about power, knowledge, urban inequalities, as well as create alternative feminist futures in collaboration with other scholars, artists, and urban practitioners.



# GETTING STARTED IN THREE STEPS

p. 9 - 17 ■ First, a syllabus needs to be compiled from which participants can jointly read and discuss feminist methodologies and practices. In part 1 of the manual, you will find the syllabus we have created. You will also develop a personalized proposal of how your individual research on various urban phenomena can be done from a feminist standpoint. Individual assignments and peer-to-peer discussions described in the manual will help you to do so.

p. 18 - 33 ■ Second, you will learn how to conduct a multisensorial 'data-walk' - a collective methodological tool we found extremely helpful for our purposes of challenging the assumptions common among conventional methodologies in urban studies. In part 2 you will find a manual on how to conduct such a 'data-walk,' and you will explore some of the outcomes of the walk we have conducted.

p. 34 - 44 ■ Third, you will also have a chance to think of translating your research into an artistic intervention in urban space. We did as follow: we granted each participant of the Lab a possibility to have three individual consultations with an appointed art curator. That helped us to develop personal routes in assembling a framework for turning our research into an artistic product.

In this manual, you will see some examples of the work participants of the Lab have done. Do not treat the works as final products. Rather, see them as drafts that can lead you into asking your own questions and making your own interventions.



# **“FEMINIST URBAN LAB” SYLLABUS**



# WHAT?

Urban research has a long-standing tradition of thinking about the unequal relationships between the researcher and the researched, the visitor and the visited, those affected by urban development agendas and those subjecting the development policies to their scrutiny and analysis. Still, the reflection produced falls short in addressing the gendered character of the relationships forming contemporary cities, as well the research epistemology in the field of urban studies. Our SIC course is a methodological intervention to question the relationships between space, subject, object of the analysis; the 'gaze' of the researcher; the 'evidence' and what counts as evidence when analysing both human relationships and urban built environment shaping and shaped by it; and finally, the very set of questions that can and might guide feminist urban research.

# HOW?

The SIC course is set up as an interdisciplinary research lab in which feminist urban research is explored. Through the usage of three situated case studies presented by invited scholars we like to open up discussion on how to do theory, methodology, and ethics from an urban feminist standpoint.

During the sessions we will also prepare you for the follow-up collaborative art-science project which will provide participants of the SIC course with the opportunity to learn how to translate scientific scholarly work into artistic dissemination through an individual meeting with a curator. With the help of reflection assignments during the SIC course we step by step consider what piece of your research you would like to work with when meeting the curator.

# CLASS 1. DREAMING UP A FEMINIST RESEARCH

For the first session we ask you to prepare a short note (around 500 words) describing an aspect of your research (an idea/insight/observation/theoretical concept/practice) that you would be interested to further explore from an urban feminist standpoint. Please provide the necessary context to situate the research project, but the whole research does not need to be covered. This is an exploratory assignment and does not require you to provide clearly outlined ideas, nor answers, it can also consist of merely asking questions.

September 08, 11:00-13:00

11:00-12:00.

Introduction & Guest presenters:

Jess Bier and Marguerite van den Berg

Text for preparation:

- Rose, G. (1997). Situating knowledges: positionality, reflexivities and other tactics. *Progress in human geography*, 21(3), 305-320.
- Van den Berg, M. (2019). Precarious masculinities and gender as pedagogy: aesthetic advice-encounters for the Dutch urban economy. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 26(5), 700-718.

12:00-13:00.

Assignment and collective discussion: 'what would be an aspect of your research that you would like to explore from an urban feminist standpoint?'

## CLASS 2. ENGAGING FEMINIST METHODOLOGY

For the second session we ask participants to think about how a feminist methodology (the way they perceive of it), may matter for them in researching practices. What does it allow you to make visible/articulate? How does it allow you to intervene? How does it enable you to reflect? Again, the assignment is exploratory and aiming for reflections on how to engage with a feminist methodology in your own work. To do so, we ask you to write a short note of reflection (around 500 words) on how a feminist methodology may (come to) matter for you and how you got (or are dreaming to get) to such point?

September 15, 11:00-13:00

11:00-12:00.

Guest presenter: Bahar Sakizlioglu

■ Peake, L. (2017). *Feminism and the urban. In A Research Agenda for Cities*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

12:00-13:00.

Assignment and collective discussion: 'how feminist methodology may matter for you? How did you get to that point?'

## CLASS 3. TRANSLATING FEMINIST RESEARCH

For the third session we ask you again to prepare a note of reflection (around 500 words). This time the task is to dream up the broader audience you would like to engage with in articulating your research from a feminist standpoint. What audience do you imagine? How would you like to affect a broader audience? How can we speak to this audience? How to make an insight/practice/observation/intervention interesting and accessible for a broader audience?

September 22, 11:00-13:00

11:00-12:00.

Guest presenter: Rivke Jaffe

Text for preparation:

■ Deckha, M. (2012). Toward a postcolonial, posthumanist feminist theory: Centralizing race and culture in feminist work on nonhuman animals. *Hypatia*, 27(3), 527-545.

■ Gillespie, K., & Lawson, V. (2017). 'My Dog is My Home': multispecies care and poverty politics in Los Angeles, California and Austin, Texas. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 24(6), 774-793.

12:00-13:00.

Assignment and collective discussion: 'why and how could your research be interesting for a broader audience?'

## CLASS 4. PERFORMATIVE WALK

For the fourth session we ask you to think about how the performative data walk can expand/connect to/reveal a feminist methodological standpoint. Decide on the focus, method(s) you want to explore during the walk, and material you will work with. Think about how you would like to share the results with other participants Consider what you may gain from the performative walk in the limited time frame (1 hour) and reflect on how these choices can be translated into your art project later. Don't forget, the most important part is the process and you can always repeat it.

September 29, 11:00-13:00

11:00-12:00.

Collective city walk

Assignment in preparation  
of data walk

■ [Powell, Alison. 'Alison Powell on Data Walking'. \*TMG Journal for Media History\*, edited by Eef Masson and Karin van Es, vol.21, n°2, Nov.2018, p.146-150. DOI.org \(Crossref\), doi:10.18146/2213-7653.2018.371](#)

12:00-13:00.

Lunch to prepare for meeting  
with curator

## **OCTOBER: ART – SCIENCE PROJECT: INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS WITH CURATOR**

Based on the input gathered during the course we will embark on a collaborative art–science project with a trained curator which will help us experiment with translating scientific scholarly work into artistic interventions, through which participants will learn:

- with what medium, and how, to translate their feminist urban research into an artistic intervention for the broader audience.
  - what questions to ask of your own scholarly work (and of others) in order to do this translation.
- The goal of these meetings would be to give the participants a necessary training allowing for the future collaboration with city practitioners and artists working on the issues of urban inequalities and alternative feminist futures for cities.





# **FIELDGUIDE FOR PERFORMATIVE WALKING**



# ASSIGNMENT AND COLLECTIVE DISCUSSION:

'How can the performative data walk expand/connect to/reveal a feminist methodological standpoint? Decide on the focus, method(s) you want to explore during the walk, and material you will work with. Think about how you would like to share the results with other participants Consider what you may gain from the performative walk in the limited time frame (1 hour) and reflect on how these choices can be translated into your art project later. Don't forget, the most important part is the process and you can always repeat it.'

## SUMMARY

Explore the potential of the performative walk through the city of Amsterdam to gather urban data reflecting on feminist methodologies and your own personal project.

The urban exploration through this walk allows the participants to explore alternative layers of the city through a sensory and embodied approach while engaging with both living and inanimate agents of the city.

Walking as an artistic practice allows one to explore and learn from the city while daring the participants to meaningfully engage with their surroundings, producing artistic responses initiated by this entanglement.

■ [Powell, Alison. 'Alison Powell on Data Walking'. \*TMG Journal for Media History\*, edited by Eef Masson and Karin van Es, vol.21, n°2, Nov.2018, p.146-150. DOI.org \(Crossref\), doi:10.18146/2213-7653.2018.371.](#)

■ [Walkshop Alison Powell \(5m video\) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X8NtDLufj3M - http://www.mocccguide.net/mocc-data-walkshop-in-kensington/](#)

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

- **WALK AND EXPLORE THE AREA FOR APPROXIMATELY 1 HOUR. FEEL FREE TO COME BACK TO THE AREA AFTERWARDS IF YOU WOULD LIKE. THE AIM IS TO REFLECT WHILE YOU WALK AND COLLECT USEFUL INFORMATION FOR YOUR PROJECT THROUGH THE MEDIA OR MEDIAS OF YOUR CHOICE;**
- **GATHER INFORMATION THROUGH THE CITY BASED ON YOUR SENSES (EXPLORE VISUALS, SOUNDS, SMELLS, TEXTURES, TASTES (WHY NOT?), MOVEMENTS, RHYTHMS, AND SO ON). BASED ON THE FOCUS OF YOUR PROJECT FOLLOW YOUR INTUITION AND TRUST WHAT ‘CAUGHTS YOUR EYE’;**
- **ENGAGEMENT WITH URBAN SPACE CAN ALSO TRIGGER MEMORIES, STORIES AND REFLECTIONS THAT SHOULD BE RECORDED IN THE WAY YOU SEE FIT (WRITTEN, RECORDED ON AUDIO, FILM, AND SO ON);**

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

- **FEEL FREE TO GATHER DATA CREATIVELY IN THE CITY AND TO EXPERIMENT AS THIS METHODOLOGY AIMS FOR LEARNING THROUGH A PROCESS OF EXPERIMENTATION;**
- **AFTER THE WALK THE GATHERED DATA SHOULD BE CRITICALLY ANALYSED AS A BRIDGE FOR YOUR ART PROJECT. HOW DO YOU VISUALIZE IT IN CONCRETE FORMS AND MATERIALS? IS IT A BOOK, A SCULPTURE, A LIGHT INSTALLATION, A FILM OR A MONTAGE, A TEXTILE, A SOUNDSCAPE EXPERIENCE, A DRAWING OR A PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLAGE, A MAP?**
- **TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE AND TO SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH OTHERS.**

# TOOLS

- Tools can range from simple note taking (pen, pencil or any marking tools and paper), taking pictures (cameras, smartphones with GPS, digital counting), filming, performing, playdough and modeling clay (why not?) or any other method;
- Suggestions: Open GPS tracker ([www.opengts.org](http://www.opengts.org)); Smart Mobi Tools Voice Recorder

## EXTRA INFORMATION

To make the walk as inclusive and healthy as possible for everyone:

- Follow the respiratory etiquette guidelines determined by UvA and RIVM (stay home if you're sick, wash your hands frequently, keep 1,5m distance, sneeze and cough to your elbow, and so on);  
Alternative suggestions in case of absence:
- It is possible to visit the area in Amsterdam at another time and day of the week if you would prefer;
- Perform the walk in the vicinity of your personal neighbourhood/city considering a similar area (size and function);
- Combine both options above repeating the same methods and focus, see what happens.

Start: Oosterpark in front of Tropenmuseum.

End: Timorplein 62,  
1094 CC Amsterdam

- [David Hunter: Data Walking Research Project](http://datawalking.com/)

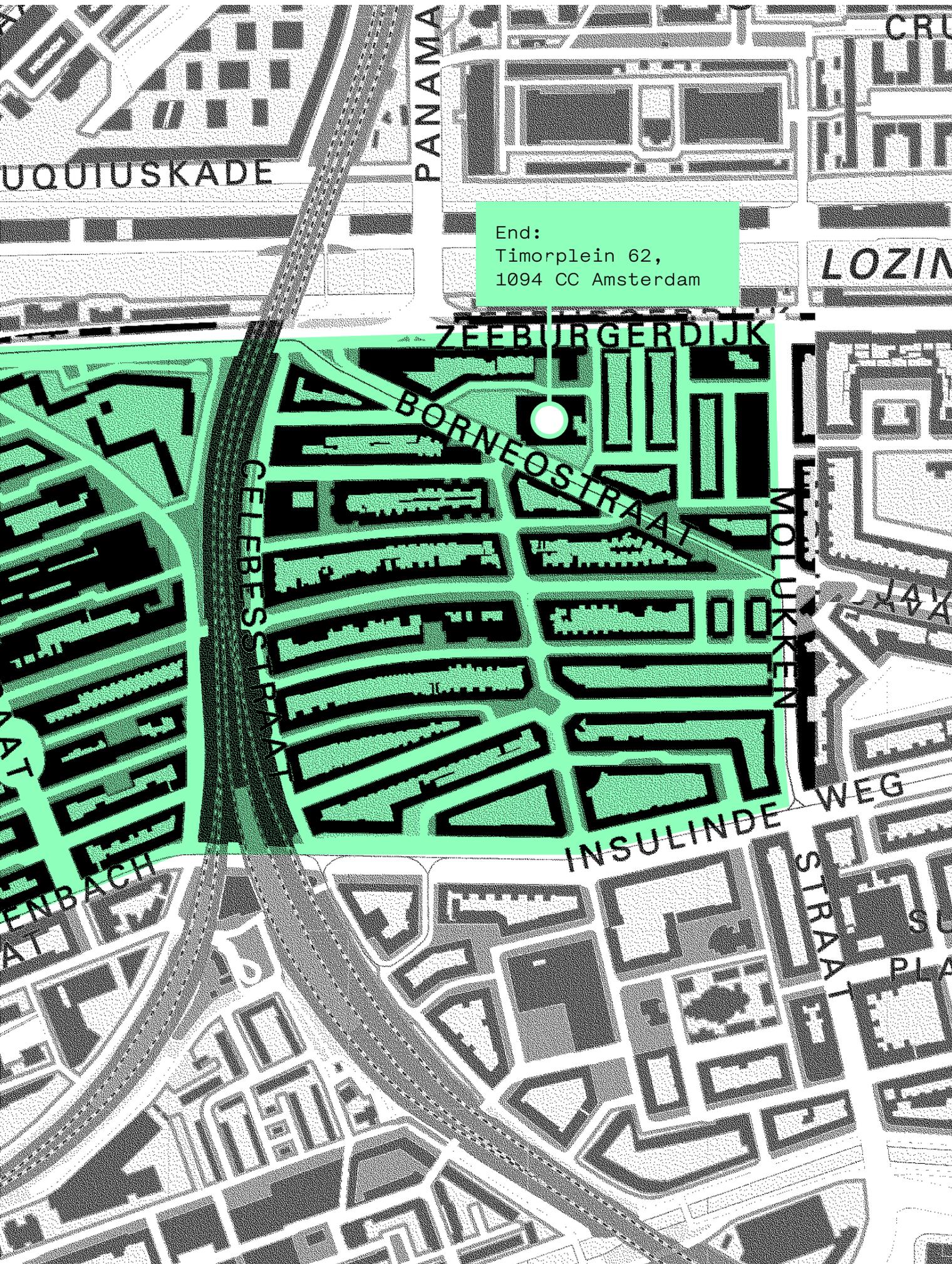
<http://datawalking.com/>

- [Sybille Neumeyer: Voicing encounters - a narrative cartography of virus](https://www.museumfuernaturkunde.berlin/en/museum/events/voicing-encounters-narrative-cartography-virus-0)

<https://www.museumfuernaturkunde.berlin/en/museum/events/voicing-encounters-narrative-cartography-virus-0>

- <https://wellcome.ac.uk/berlin-narrative-cartography-virus>  
<http://www.sybilleneumeyer.com/works>
- [C-Rome: Art and Urban Experiences in Rome](https://c-rome.com/)  
<https://c-rome.com/>
- [The Urban Experience in Art through Time: Historical overview - 26m44s](https://www.learner.org/series/art-through-time-a-global-view-the-urban-experience/) [https://www.learner.org/series/art-through-time-a-global-view/the-urban-experience/](https://www.learner.org/series/art-through-time-a-global-view-the-urban-experience/)
- [Encountering the City: The Urban Experience in Contemporary Art](https://www.kemperartmuseum.wustl.edu/exhibitions/9951)  
<https://www.kemperartmuseum.wustl.edu/exhibitions/9951>  
<https://www.pinterest.com/kemperartmuseum/encountering-the-city-the-urban-experience-in-cont/>





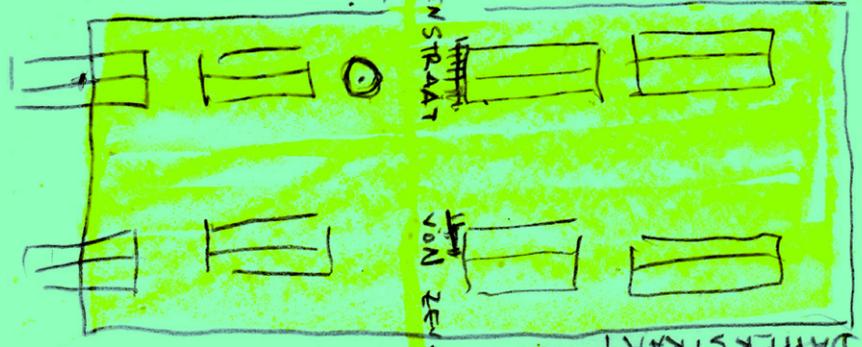
End:  
Timorplein 62,  
1094 CC Amsterdam



STARTING AT THE INSTITUTIONAL SIDE  
OF URBAN SPACE I  
SEE SOMETHING OUT  
OF PLACE. SOMETHING  
LIKE A TREE



THIS IS NOT A STOPPING POINT  
HOUSE  
IN THE  
CORNER  
OF A  
POSSIBLE  
BOUNT.  
PEOPLE  
PASS BY.  
I FEEL  
ANXIOUS.



VON ZEHN STRAAT  
DAPPER STRAAT  
WHICH  
MARKET  
IS IT?  
I FOUND  
THE MARKET!  
IT ALSO  
SEEMS OUT  
OF PLACE  
PARALLEL

PONTANUSSTRAAT TO IDAU



I FEEL SOMETHING OUT OF PLACE HERE. I CAN'T PUT MY FINGER ON. AFTER PASSING THE TRAIN IT STILL FEELS AMISS. MAYBE THIS LINE CUT THE NEIGHBORHOOD IN TWO?

CELEBESSTRAAT

UMA STRAAT IS A PETIT STANDARD STREET IF YOU ARE USED TO DRECHTAVEN

SOME THINGS ARE NOTICEABLE I SEE SOME INDICES OF GENTRIFICATION.

SMALL PARK BY THE TRAIN



I AM SINGING ON HIS BIKE  
NEED A JAVABLEN

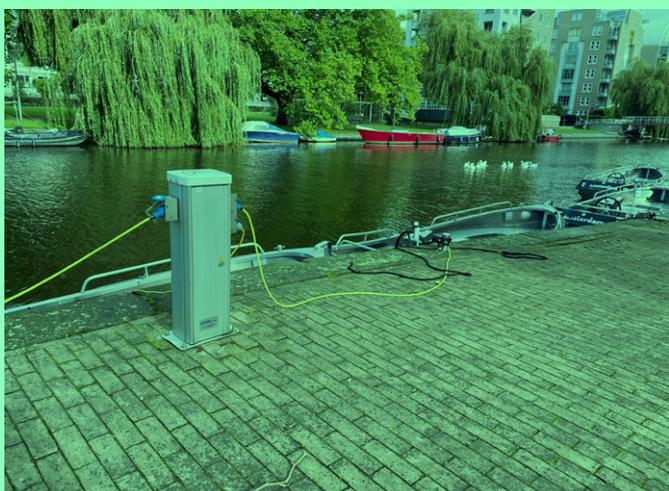
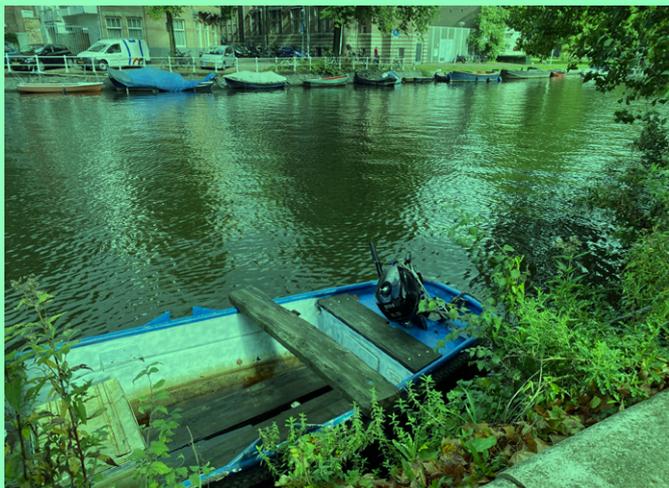


BAKSTRAT  
I FOUND AN ORGAN GARDEN

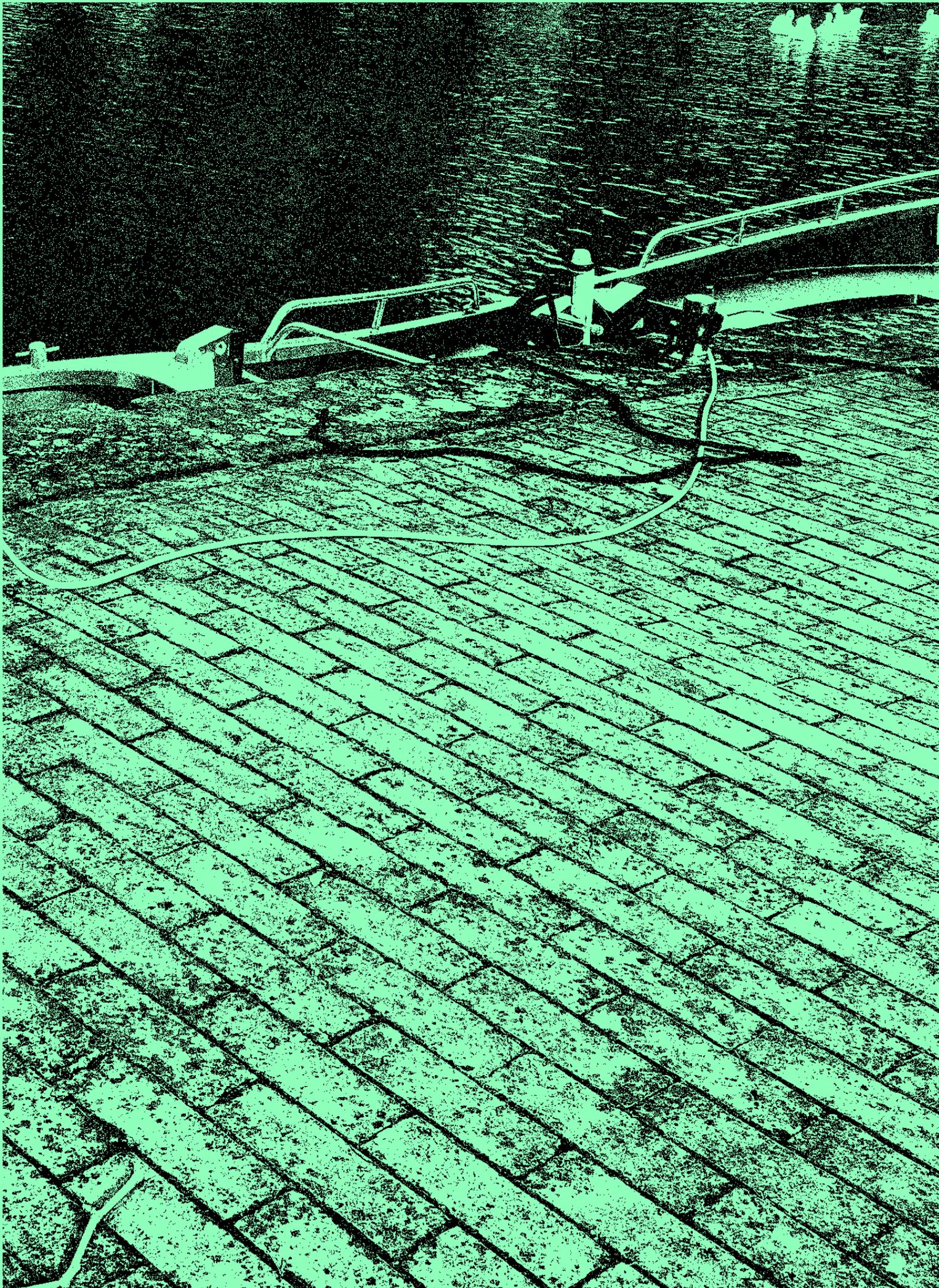




Afra, *Data walk*, 18.01.2021







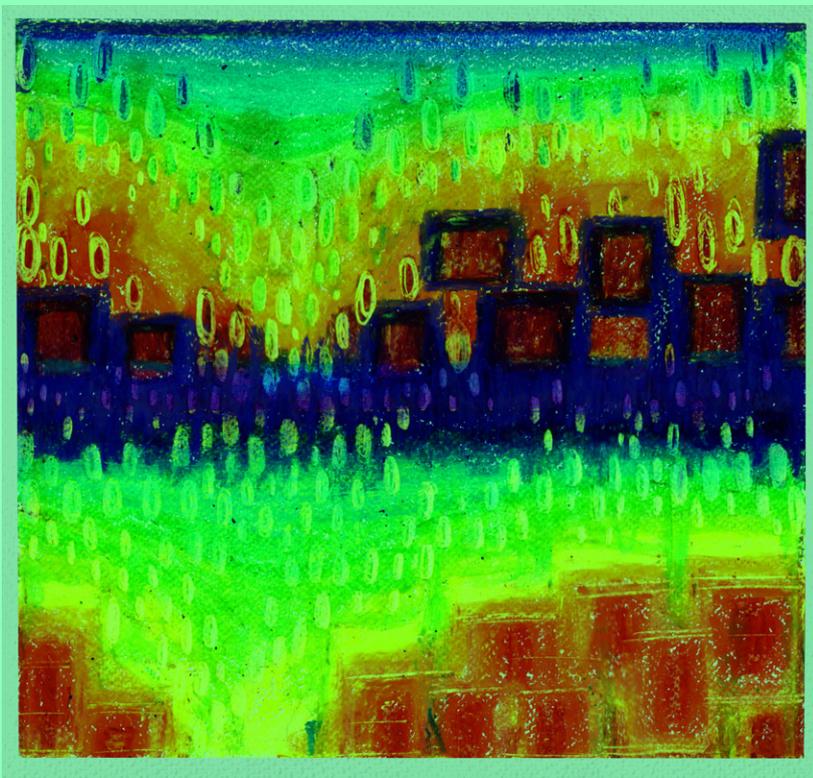
# **DOING & LEARNING ART**

# I AM MY OWN LANDSCAPE: BELONGING OUT OF PLACE BY TANIA ESTEVES FERNANDES CARDOSO



Walking through the city streets, do I belong? The urban landscape is never neutral - it invites as much as it intimidates. To reflect on this question, I collected urban objects and sensations by wayfinding, conversation with participants and illustration. The immediate responses were fast and messy, sectioned and superficial, the writing disconnected. Characterized by the tension between outside and inside, movement and stillness urban experience reflects ambiguity. The illustrator as a mediator between sensation, participants (herself included) and urban space skilfully portrays this ambiguity. The result is a process in which every illustration is a complex entity without a definite author. - (this experiment should be signed Tânia A. Cardoso, Carla Carriço, Cristina Silva, José Aerts, and Patrícia Pinheiro de Sousa)

By asking questions about sensations in urban space, I created illustrations that relied on the participants' constant feedback while also building on my own urban experience. The resulting illustrations are as much my products as they are theirs. The combination of text and illustration was loosely based on a variation of 'I Ching' method as developed by John Cage. Stepping away from observation drawing and moving closer to metaphorical illustration allowed for entanglement between invisible sensations and urban objects.



# JE MAINTIENDRAI NEDERLAND AWARDS\*

## BY FENNA SMITS



'After the revolution, who is going to pick up the garbage on Monday morning?' Mierle Laderman Ukeles, 1969. *Manifesto of Maintenance art*

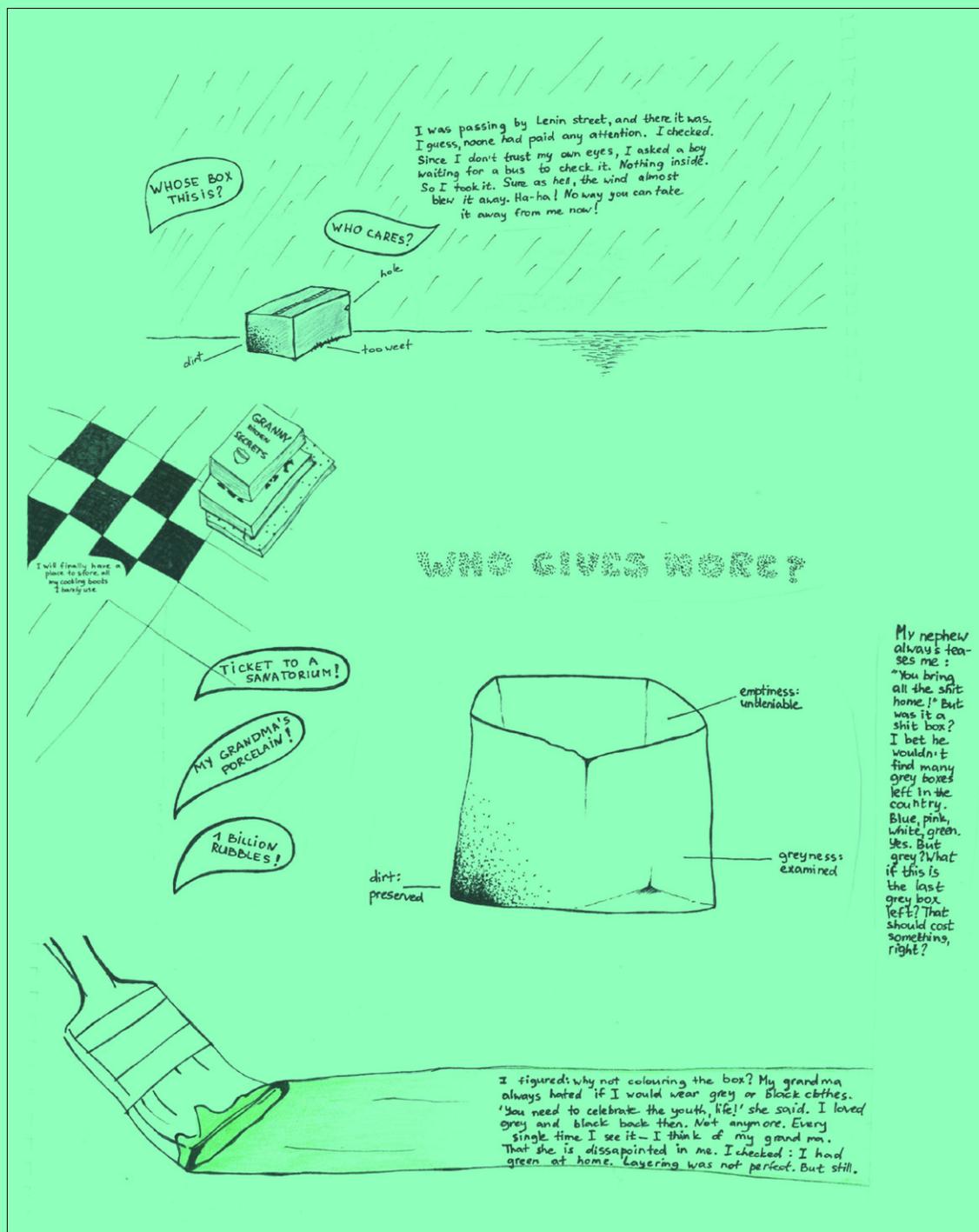
*Je Maintiendrai Nederland* is an alternative award series to make visible the everyday care and maintenance work on the Dutch welfare state carried out by its citizens. Maintenance work is often forgotten when the welfare initiatives of citizens are praised as sustainable solutions for a shrinking welfare state. The citizen initiative is celebrated as democratic innovation and the citizen as a noble volunteer. But for welfare infrastructure to endure, it requires structural maintenance after innovation. *Je Maintiendrai Nederland* dismantles the fantasy of «spontaneous», effortless and self-sufficient citizen welfare infrastructures, by revealing the required commitment, the recurring work and structural labour of care and maintenance. This work may be priceless, but not without price.

\* Feminist methods used:  
Re-inscribing citizen initiatives as labour (using FTE)/Turn the slogans around (celebrating maintenance not volunteer work)/Use their aesthetics and methods (certificates)/Putting yourself out there as a body of work (performance)



# WHEN WILL YOU FINALLY FALL APART?

BY ANASTASIYA HALAUNIOVA



The story presented here is a reflection on the everyday care that residents of post-socialist cities do for their built environments. In these settings, mass housing estates erected during the socialist epoch are deemed ugly and deficient. A narrative of a woman who intimately bonds with a grey box – a common metaphor used

to devalue socialist architecture – it is likewise an investigation into how things resist change. What if things – buildings – do not want to disappear or transform regardless of how state bureaucrats and real estate developers desire them to?

I woke up (on Monday)  
and the color

was gone.

I colored it

once again.

But morning ...

comes: grey.

Greyer and greyer.

# THE FEMINIST URBAN EDITS

## BY LEONIE

Participating in the Feminist Urban Lab (or the Feminist Urban Throat-Singers as my partner likes to call us), I was able to reflect and work on a creative collaboration that is part of my ethnographic research project on the access to care for people with mild intellectual disabilities (MID).

For over a year now, I have been working together with O - a 64 year old artist and filmmaker with MID. Together, we are trying to realize O's dream of making an independent Science-Fiction movie with himself as the director and main character of the movie.

The main question I wanted to explore during this course is how film can be both a means of collaboration, an ethnographic method, and an outcome of scientific research. I did not find the answer to these big questions yet. Instead, this Lab inspired me to edit short the video clips that hope to give more insight into the movie project.

Opening scene

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dNLuw4JVBqI&feature=youtu.be&ab\\_channel=LeonieDronkert](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dNLuw4JVBqI&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=LeonieDronkert)



In this video, we see O's feet walking down the stairs of his house in Amsterdam. As he approaches his front door, we see O looking out into the street from his mailbox. The first shot of this clip was filmed by O before I met him, but we decided to use it for the opening scene for our collaborative film project.

While many collaborative projects with people with intellectual disabilities try to involve participants in "our" academic goals and practices, this project tried to make quite the opposite move. This move was not deliberate but rather was an fortunate consequence of learning about O's talent for film-making, and his dreams of making a great Science-Fiction movie.

## The Story of the Movie

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1-GY1LFAac&feature=youtu.be&ab\\_channel=LeonieDronkert](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1-GY1LFAac&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=LeonieDronkert)



In this video, we see O explaining a part of the story he thought up for the movie. Below you find the full, neatly written version. While the plot of the movie appears very organized on this page, the conversations that formed its shape were chaotic and messy.

O

*It is early in the morning and O is cycling his way to work. Then, suddenly, an Unidentified Flying Object (UFO) lands in the meadow right next to him. Two aliens come out of the ship and make contact with O. After overcoming human-alien communication problems, the aliens invite O inside the ship and ask him to be their captain. The aliens explain that they are on a mission to offer their Super Advanced Technology (SAT) to the human kind as a gift and a friendly invitation to planetary collaboration. As they do not know the workings of the human world, the aliens ask O to be their human guide in this process. With O as their new captain, the crew flies off to visit the United Nations, the European Union, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to negotiate contact and possible collaboration between the aliens and the humans. Unfortunately, these institutions refuse to work together with captain O and the aliens for different reasons. At the UN, the people are too busy to open the door for alien visitors. At the EU, the people are too scared of the aliens to even start a conversation. At NASA, the organization is open to a meeting with the aliens at first - but then refuse O as a guest to this meeting because he is considered to be too under educated to attend a meeting of such great importance. As their beloved captain is rejected, the aliens refuse to come to the NASA meeting as an act of protest. The group has had it with all the complicated human rules and bureaucracies and decide to go on a world trip together instead.*

The End

The story that O made up for the movie has a strong connection with my research on the access to care. It is a story about institutional rejection, a story that represents the lack of access people with intellectual disabilities have to the world of the able-minded.

As we try and make this movie together, I am not only learning so much about film making, but also about O's life, how he looks at the world and what kind of access he has to it.

## The Process

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJiurhdoSVw&feature=youtu.be&ab\\_channel=LeonieDronkert](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJiurhdoSVw&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=LeonieDronkert)



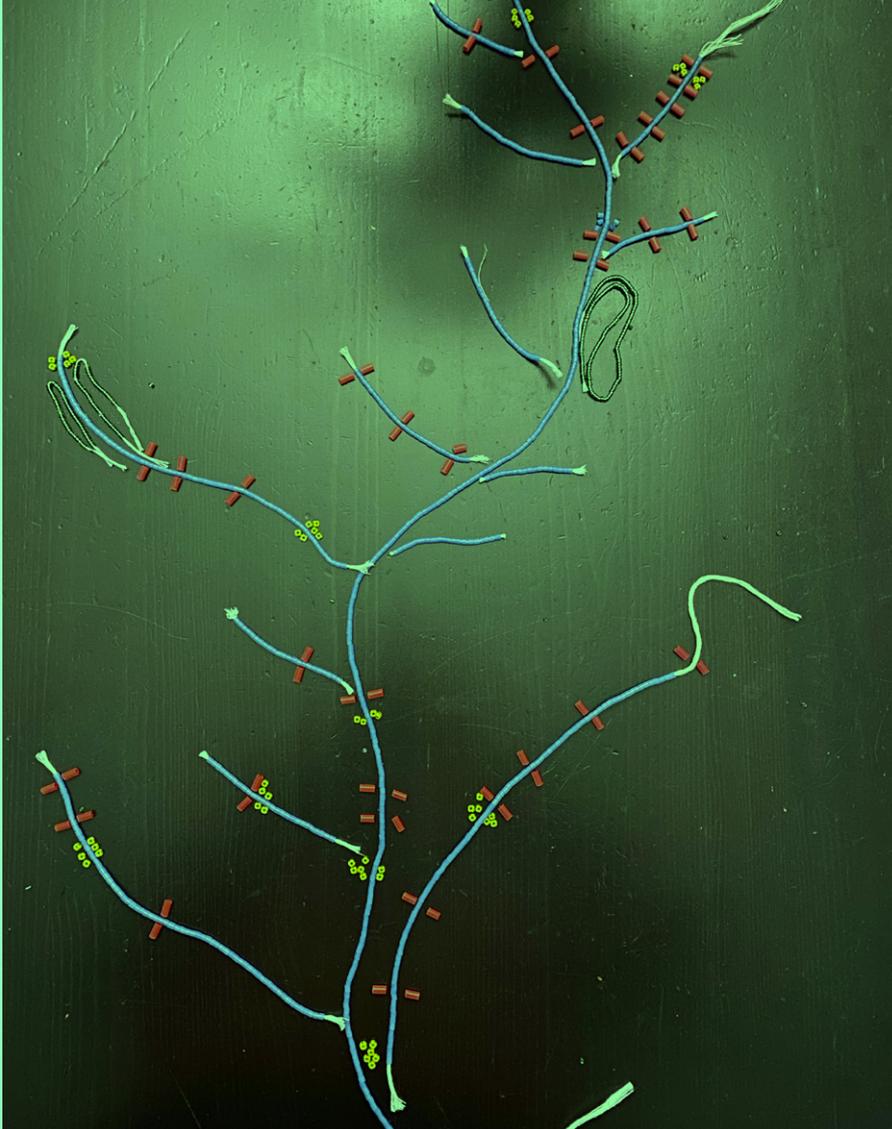
In terms of access to the world of film-making, the help of one enthusiastic anthropologist is sometimes not enough. As both O and myself are very inexperienced, we both have to learn a lot. The most important lesson that we learnt so far is that we cannot do it by ourselves. That's why we asked artist and filmmaker Sjuul Joossen to help us in our creative process.

This video shows how Sjuul helps us making the UFO that will star in our movie. As our collaborative process is central to the ethnographic lessons I learned from this project, this material will be used for a documentary about the making of the movie.

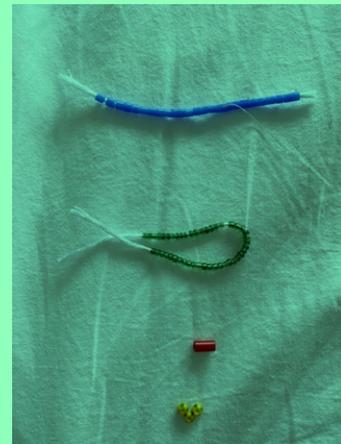
For now, we are far from finishing anything and our dreams might turn out to be too big to realize. But as I learned from our Feminist Troat-Singers, valuing the unfinished and learning from failures is very important in feminist experiments.

To be continued!

# THE RIVER THAT CAME TO BE INFRASTRUCTURE BY AFRA



- WATERWAY (blue)
- BUFFERZONE (green)
- BRIDGE (red)
- DREDGING (yellow)



My fieldwork in Accra had me following a drain, all 11+ kilometers of it. I observed, I interviewed people, I took photos. At the end of it all I felt almost overwhelmed with impressions from fieldwork, and determined to do justice to everything I had learned. The Feminist Urban Lab was an opportunity to pay heed to the insights that weren't directly about INFRASTRUCTURE. Thinking through the artistic expression with Sophia was a delightful experience. We jumped from thought to thought and allowed each realization to trigger another.

I decided to recreate the drain with beads. I had multiple strands of waist beads from Accra with which to experiment. While the end result was far from artistic, the process was fruitful, allowing to rethink materiality and the processual nature of infrastructural development.



Feel free to challenge this document:  
it has no authority over you.