

We are five students undergoing their third year of BA Curating at Goldsmiths University of London. As a collective we iterate our curatorial endeavours first and foremost as a social practice that transcends beyond the popular assumption that curation is solely a practice of aesthetic expression that lives and breathes within the corpus of a museum.

Our group is coordinated yet allows for individuality; by consistently practicing an ethics of care within our program, we endeavour to find new practices that will surge this ‘social energy’ into projects generating care outside the walls of Goldsmiths.

Producing ideas that surpass our own scholarly experiences, our work aims to form legacies that will benefit students to come. Many of these are becoming student led as opposed to tutor led through the means of collective lunches and forums created within these social environments. Our projects in and out of university combine disciplines from film screenings, curator and artist talks, designing the space in which we inhabit, and the rendering of experiences. During the summer of 2019, a product of the communal lunches was a university funded trip to the Venice Biennale as well as an excursion to La Collina cooperative in Trieste, where we discussed progressive ways to reform their current archive. In totality, our efforts work to produce an anti-hegemonic interactive corpus that spans disciplines responding to our unique identities.

As a curating course at Goldsmiths we have been invited by the Visible Awards curators Judith Wielander and Matteo Luccheti to participate in the Temporary Parliament. We noticed numerous affinities with the award’s practice as our course concentrates on how art can be employed as a transformative tool within different spheres of the public domain.

Within our course we organise our shared learning experience democratically, mirroring the organisational structure of the Award. In other words, the Temporary Parliament represents a learning experience that transforms our theoretical knowledge into a shared practice which resonated with our care practices.

When considering different modes of approaching the Award, and ways of unpacking the shortlisted projects, we decided to organise a public workshop that would invite people from different cultural backgrounds to engage in conversation. We realise that discourses about art production and engagement often sit in enclosed, elitist spaces that do not allow for interdisciplinary thinking. Maintaining the focus on the “social” aspect of these projects, we thought of the process of delving into potential reach and capacity of transformative art practices as imperative to comprise the people who might be affected by such.

Our workshop- which took place at No Format Gallery during Deptford X festival- consisted of an active group discussion and debate around all the short-listed projects for the Visible Award. People from multi-disciplinary backgrounds came along with curiosity towards the award and food to share; we sat around a table to talk through each project from different critical perspectives. Starting each examination by watching their video entry, we collectively gathered and stuck our individual notes onto a large sheet of paper and produced a cartography illustrating our dialogues and contentions.

The decision making and evaluation process at the end was formed by a few main critiques we have established throughout the sessions. One of the most important and significant points we have taken into consideration was the utilisation and urgency of the fund for the project. Working through the same questions that the Award's board of curators used to select the ten shortlisted projects, we mainly concentrated our critique around the questions of urgency, scalability, sustainability, social impact, social capital and privilege.

Whilst some of the projects seemed extremely valuable and far reaching in terms of social impact and radical thinking, others seemed rather exploitative of the communities they were engaging with, a common issue in socially engaged art practices that "utilise" a certain group of individuals as tools for art production rather than as partners engaging in a wider, more fluid collaborative project.

The documentary tool of presenting each project through a self-generated video appeared to us really effective even though it affected our judgment, producing a bias generated by video making skills, aesthetic taste and style of each artist. What kind of media that escapes aesthetic biases could be implemented in the documentation and presentation of each project?

Our participation in the Temporary Parliament was a completely new experience which strongly inspired us and allowed us to reificate our theoretical knowledge into active tools for the re-thinking of political negotiation practices within the social sphere and the art world. As a satellite group streaming live from Goldsmiths University of London, the democratic process with which the public jury organised itself was rather challenging to engage with. This indirect mode of participation challenged our role as active constituents of the debate as we had to communicate with the jury via whatsapp and could not directly participate, while we thought we would have been connected via skype call, which would have allowed a more fluid interaction, giving a fairer role and responsibility to the satellites.

Throughout the advocate's presentations of each project we thought it could have been helpful to have specific details about how the funds would be distributed among the artist and/or the communities they engage with and how they would be utilised exactly. On the other hand side, we felt quite uncomfortable with having to hierarchise such impactful and sensitive projects which deal with individual lives and affect the fragile status of certain communities. How could the award have a less meritocratic approach to the shortlisted projects and perhaps develop a system of balanced monetary and power distribution which will generate a net of care and support rather than a talent-show-like hierarchy between the winner and the losers? Moreover, how can the award diversify its outreach from a solely academic audience in order to engage in debate with those very same marginalised communities, identities and bodies which are affected by the structural violences that the projects try to unpack, transform and reverse?

We feel extremely lucky to have participated in such a radical art award, we have been and still are inspired by the democratic approach the Visible Award has towards its participants, its

audience and the wider socio-political momentum. We felt strongly passionate and often touched by the shortlisted projects which, winner or loser, we respect and support.

We would like to address a special thanks to all the advocates, the curators, the artists and the constituents of the invisible now Visible communities which made these ongoing projects possible and who are taking a responsible stand within their local and global networks.

. As curating students, seeing these artists and projects developing within their local as well as global networks, was inspiring and created a thoroughly positive experience. Hence we would like to thank everyone who has been involved with the projects as well as the award and are excited to see the progress and future of the projects.

For us this has been a wonderful first collaboration, we hope for it not to be the last one.

With a warm thank you and great appreciation,

All the best,

BA Curating; Lilian Bencze, Nasung Lee, Nina Backhouse, Emma Smith, Ginevra Naldini.

