Day two
MIRRORING COMMUNITIES THROUGH ART & DESIGN

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1 Mirror(ing) as representations and reflections of realitiies and cultures

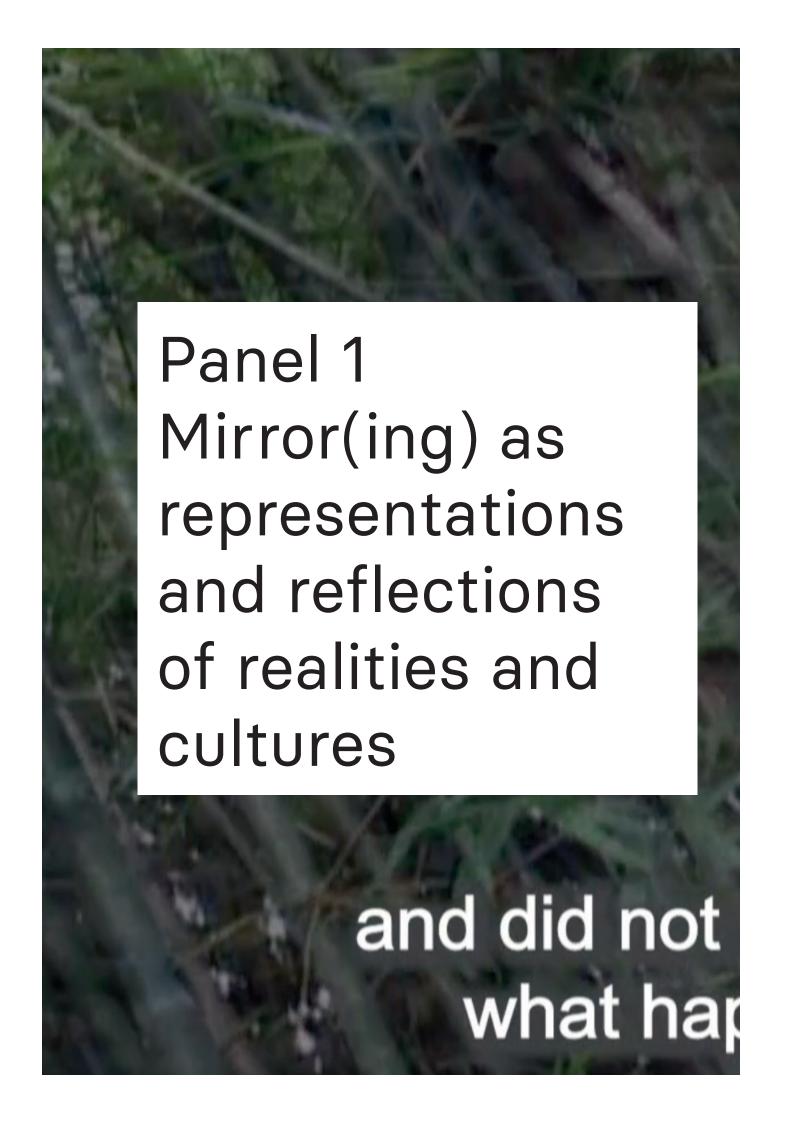2 Mirroring as care, mirroring as empathy

* Launch of SEEYouth Workshop Guide

* Reflections
– Mirroring structures and complexities in pluriversal art-based dialogues with the youth
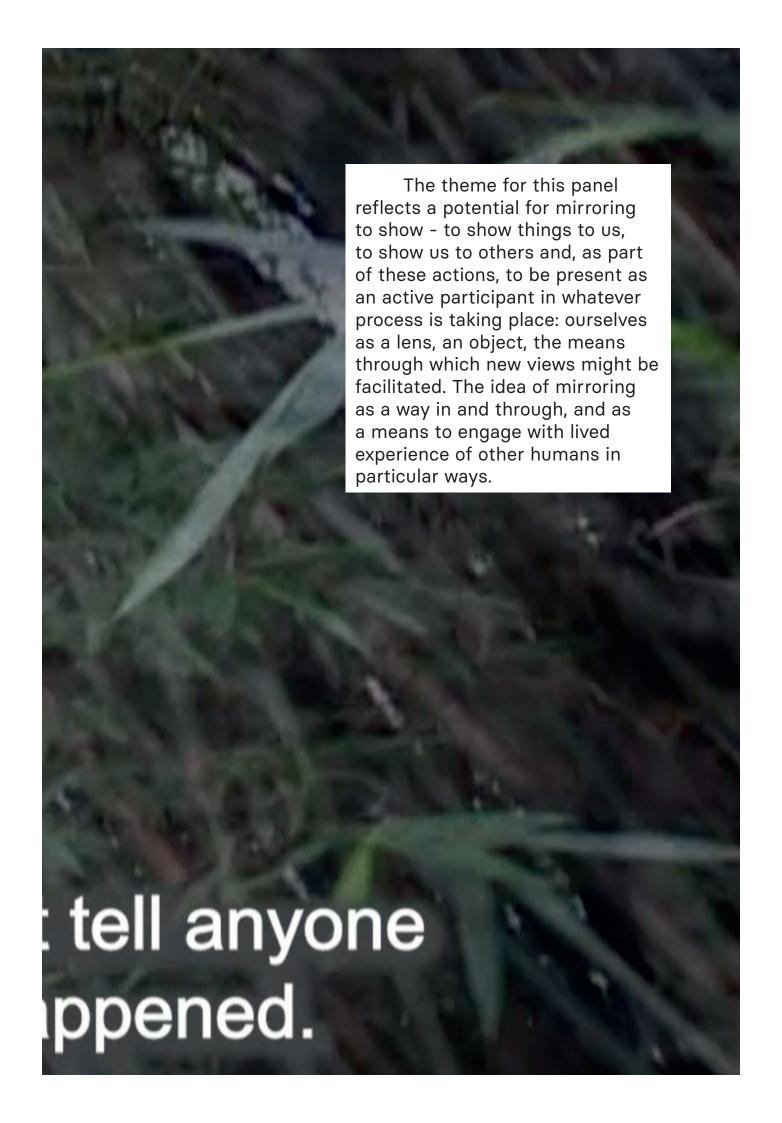
SEEYouth* is a 24-month long project (2020-2022), funded as part of the Trans-Atlantic Platform.
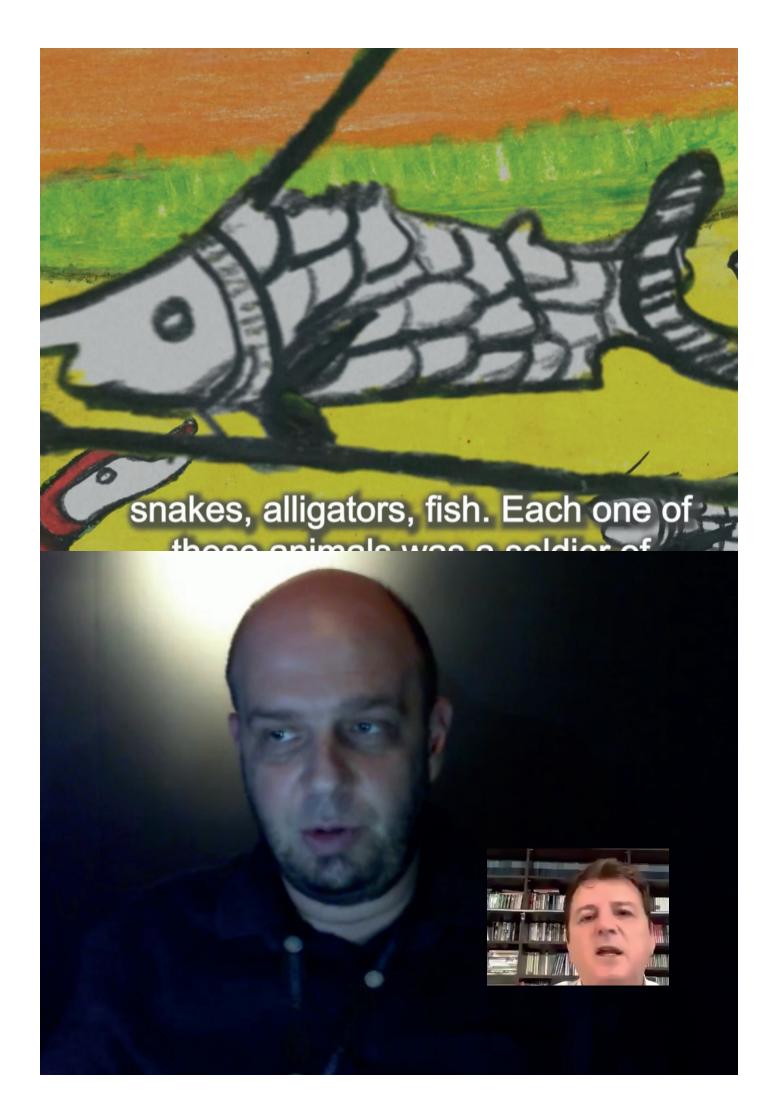
The project is a collaborative partnership developed *to enhance dialogue and innovation* among humanities and social science researchers in South America, North America and Europe.

Central to the project is our close collaboration with partner organisations in Brazil, Canada and Finland - through which we work with youth in marginalised contexts that are specific to each country and in ways that meet the needs of these communities.

Our Trans-Atlantic Mirroring approach is a unique attempt *to cross the geographical distances and lived experiences which separate our teams*, their partners and the youth we're working with in each of the project's cases.

Panel 1
Mirror(ing) as representations and reflections of realities and cultures

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The theme for this panel reflects a potential for mirroring to show - to show things to us, to show us to others and, as part of these actions, to be present as an active participant in whatever process is taking place: ourselves as a lens, an object, the means through which new views might be facilitated. The idea of mirroring as a way in and through, and as a means to engage with lived experience of other humans in particular ways.

tell anyone

ppened.

snakes, alligators, fish. Each one of

"A shaman, from the community of our ancestors, was a warrior."

Gerson Damiani, Gustavo Grandke

The panel began with an illustrated video which related a story from the native culture of Brazil and from Brazilian folklore. It told of a snake who became familiar with humanity but suffered a form of culture shock since the snake wanted to marry the daughter of the clan's leader.

The story told the challenges that the snake had to face so it could be accepted by the whole clan and how the wisdom from these experiences was shared even after its death.

The video was produced from work on location, and explored how the native participants shared their knowledge with their whole clan so everyone wouldd be able to share their culture with the future generations as well.

The language used by indigenous participants was culturally important and they had to adapt to the needs for speaking and communicating using other language as history had developed.

It was clear that art and arts-based methods are a significant form of cultural expression for the indigenous people, that it unites them and makes it possible to find common subjects between people.

The presentation shows how cultures and forms of cultural communciation can both be preserved and also energised to enable their survival and to find other audiences - in fact the project made use of native children to re-tell these stories to non-indigenous people so that it could be shared and an understanding can be developed.

The mode of telling these stories combined spoken words and images - the images being drawn as the story is told - a unique visusalisation that is further enriched by the storyteller's cultural knowledge.

By sharing such cultural traditions and by developing new ways that stories might be told, we can see how arts- and design can contribute to social change through mutual understanding.

The Role of Internationalization in the Contemporary Context of Research and Extension in Design

Monica Cristina Moura, Lucas Furio Melara

The presentation began with a video which discussed how contemporary design can be used as a tool for the development of the society, and among young people.
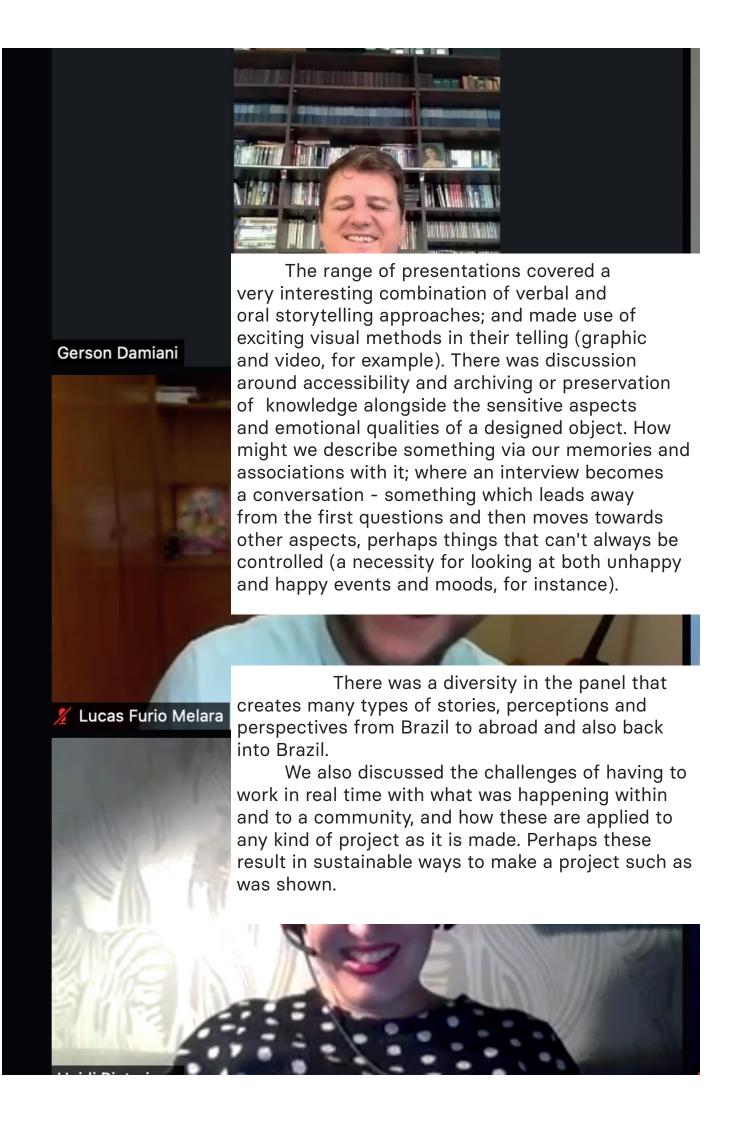
This work has the goal of show different aspects of design, the process to create something and way the ideas can leave and move beyond the surfaace of the paper or the screen. The presentation covered how a range of participants, including youth from indigenous cultures took part in the project and how their design contributed for the development of direction of the project as a whole.
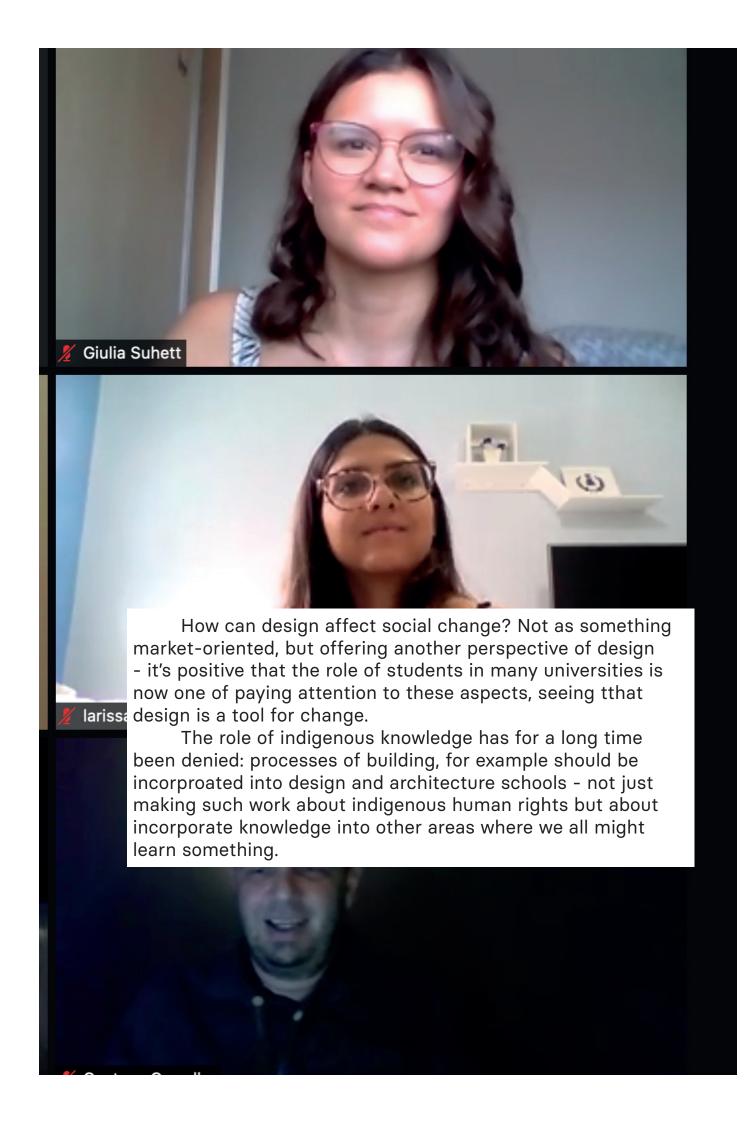
It focused on a range of poster designs dealing with a range of different social topics including the refugees situation around the world, how different cultures crossing the globe during the pandemic times and the fight of minors groups to achieve their goals.

In order to develop the work, a range of different techniques, methods and theoretical concepts were used to make the project possible.
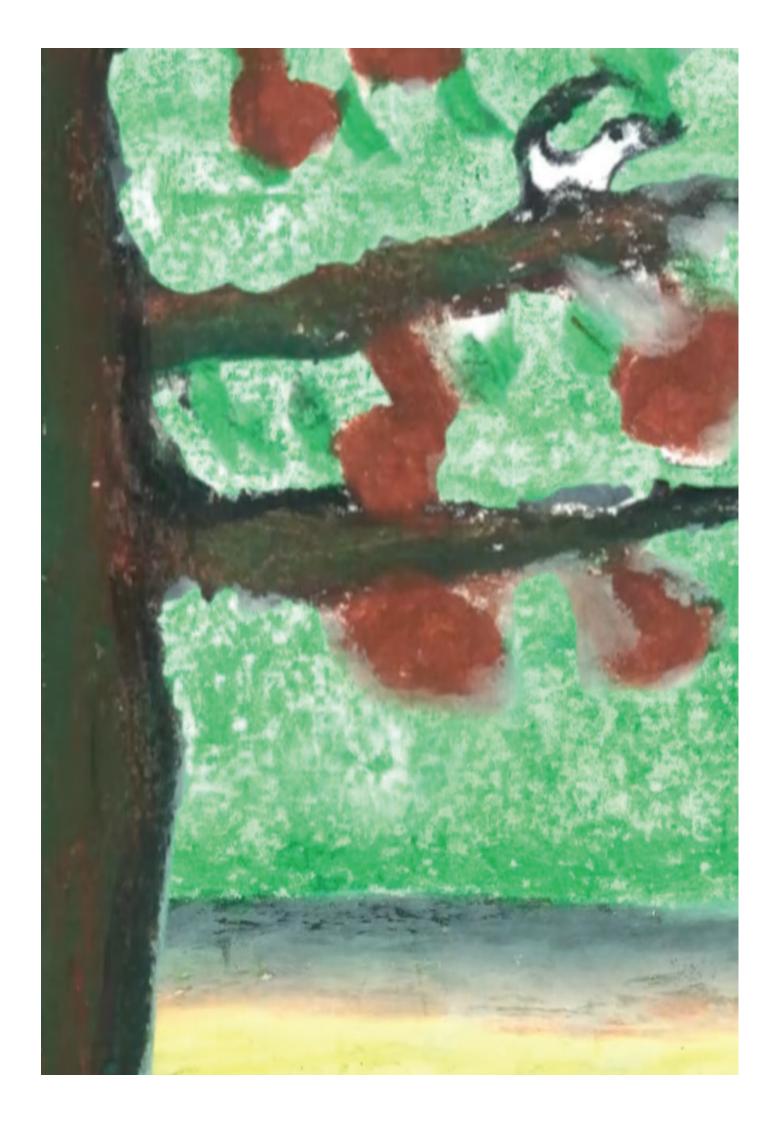
Part of the experience was a use of interviews as a form of social technology of memory so that participants were able to talk about their lives and experiences. This included a princess who had travelled to Brazil and tried to hide her identity so people wouldn't treat her differently, but in the end her brother didn't let her come as a non titled person and so she had to reveal her story to everyone.

The presentation inspired and presented a way of considering design differently, mirroring the lives of people (of everyone who has a story to tell) and how design in this way is able to make political changes in the world.

Gerson Damiani

The range of presentations covered a very interesting combination of verbal and oral storytelling approaches; and made use of exciting visual methods in their telling (graphic and video, for example). There was discussion around accessibility and archiving or preservation of knowledge alongside the sensitive aspects and emotional qualities of a designed object. How might we describe something via our memories and associations with it; where an interview becomes a conversation - something which leads away from the first questions and then moves towards other aspects, perhaps things that can't always be controlled (a necessity for looking at both unhappy and happy events and moods, for instance).

Lucas Furio Melara

There was a diversity in the panel that creates many types of stories, perceptions and perspectives from Brazil to abroad and also back into Brazil.

We also discussed the challenges of having to work in real time with what was happening within and to a community, and how these are applied to any kind of project as it is made. Perhaps these result in sustainable ways to make a project such as was shown.

Giulia Suhett

larissa

How can design affect social change? Not as something market-oriented, but offering another perspective of design - it's positive that the role of students in many universities is now one of paying attention to these aspects, seeing tthat design is a tool for change.

The role of indigenous knowledge has for a long time been denied: processes of building, for example should be incorproated into design and architecture schools - not just making such work about indigenous human rights but about incorporate knowledge into other areas where we all might learn something.

Panel 2
Mirroring as
care, mirroring
as empathy

Mirroring creates connections that have power and that carry the potential for engagement which makes meaning and affects change in us - mirroring can realise the intimacies of being in place, and working with others, and materialises this positionality; establishing relationships as we are placed alongside others in new and significant ways.

This panel looked to trace many instances of mirroring as care, of paying attention and taking care and of generating connections determined by a need to acknowledge the care needed both by others and ourselves.

CONSTRUINDO
DESIGN POPULAR
A PARTIR DO CUIDADO

Mayara Kise Telles Fujitani | Profa. Dra. Maria Cecília Loschiavo dos Santos
Faculdade de Arquitetura e Urbanismo | Universidade de São Paulo
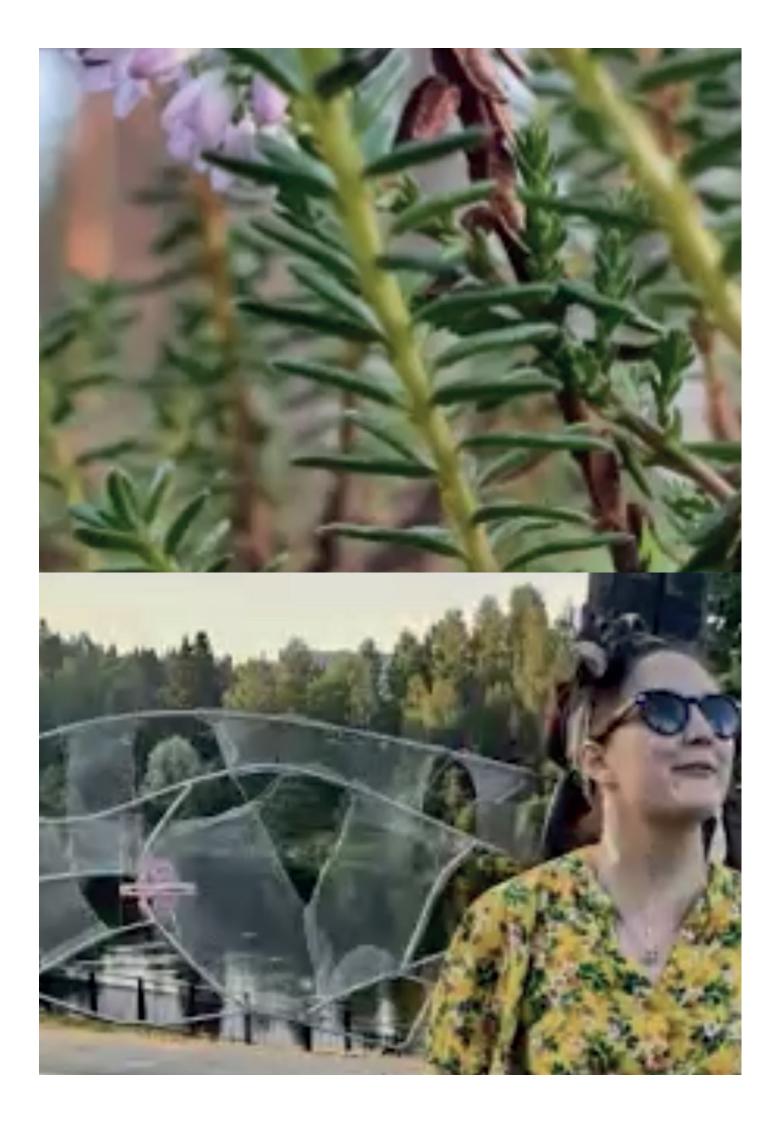
Building popular design from care

Mayara Kise Telles Fujitani

The presentation introduced ideas for how design be useful for self managed and cooperative communities and cooperative associations popular groups. In particular it centred on a value in terms of helping recognise and acknowledge ideas of identity.

However, the project also suggests another value where such activities also reflect back onto design iteself and raises questions about its identity: how designers perceive and work with other groups, the qualities of intersubjective relationships, and a need to be conscious of how we act, how we make use of social technology to demonstrate ideals of care.

This idea of care is mirrored within and outside of captalism and the systems which serve it - mirroring becomes a method which materialises in an interface with the other and in terms of the design process iteself.

Care is a key principle, therefore, and design a necessary action for human survival - through acts of solidarity and in forms of social organisation, where we recognise it as something common to us all.

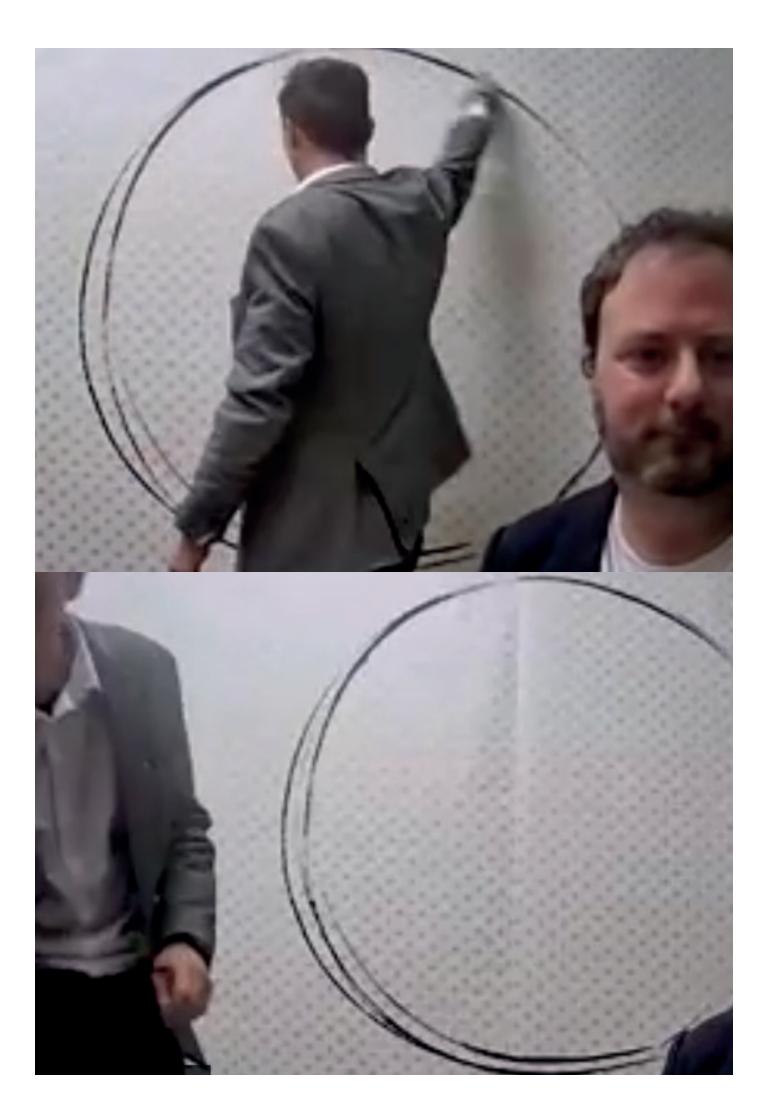# Try flying with my wings

Nina Luostarinen

The presentation began by showing a video describing a process of collaborative photography and place-based art which shifted the perception and mindset of human particiipants from ego-centric to eco-centric: mirrorring existence from human to a non-human species - in this case, the bee.

The project was grounded in ideas of metamorphosis, seeding an empathy for fragile and a species under threat. It challenged us to change perspective to one that's a powerful idea of collaboration - the beehive. This made possible a reflection on how wicked problems can be dealt with in a fun and in a playful way.

The main theme of the work was to experience shapeshifting into a bumblebee, to transform our perspective from human to pollinator so that we appreciate and understand things in ways we usually wouldn't. An important aspiration was the altering of an all-too human approach of considering ourselves at the centre of the world - so the shift from ego-centric to mosaic-centric, and then to eco-centric perspective is a critical one in working to achieve any kind of change and transformation.

Finally, this project showed a way to engage and create an impact on sustainability in the simplest of ways - showing connections between humans and the others with we share this world.

Independent action

Martin Bálaz

The presentation began by asking audience members to identify the significance of the black square on a screen, and to consider marginalised communities of students who are represented often only by the black squares and as empty spaces.

Such experiences of distancing and alienation, and a recognitition of the impacts of conditions which separate us, and which place objects between us has been key in the period of Covid.

A choice is open, therefore - through art and as a portal to another world where mirrorinig helps in a process of self-reflection - helps to perform actions, allowing for a plasticity, of moving and integrating many things and of co-creating possibilities and compatabilities with another world.

Through meeting, discussion and consultation, the presentation demonstrated that even when we are at home we ar also dis-located and so it is important to explore methods for compatable communication which are open.

This open attitude and interaction of humans across technologies is valuable as a tool that is beneficial, authentic, open and simple as a means of gaining understanding of each other.

The presentation set out a model for how design education can occupy a position using media and technologies of communications as a starting-point, a philosophical approach that also has application in industry as action research and design methodology; utilising performance / kinaesthetic design as a way for testing the limits of the flat spaces of the monitor.

Mirroring as reflections on youth's dwelling-places in the world: conversations, imagination, and arts-based methods as correspondence

Rosana Vasques, Rafael Szafir Goldstein, Maria Cecilia Loschiavo dos Santos

This presentation focused on an experience of the SEEYouth project during the Covid pandemic. Working with youth at the margins, sharing knowledge and learning from them made possible a way of thinking about a transatlantic mirroring method: art and design as an instrument of healing.
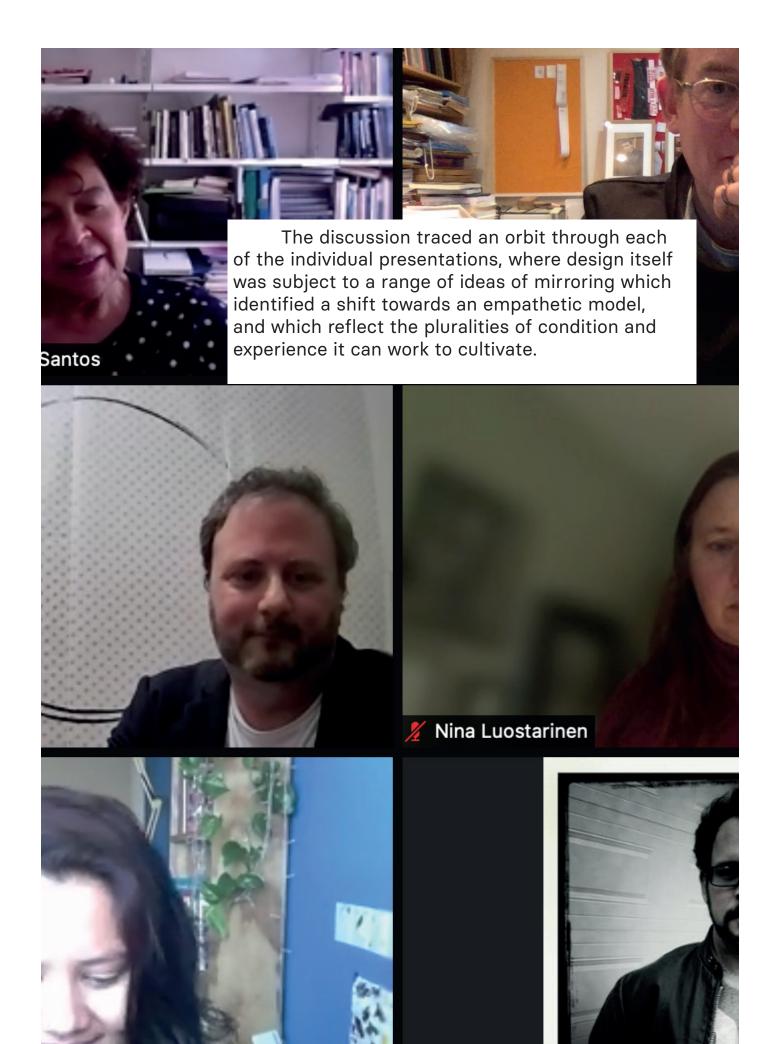
The article looked towards and made use of a method of active reflection: on both youth and their condition. Researchers and young people found themselves locked in by the Covid pandemic and so the transatlantic mirroring method emerged as a suggestion to cross borders based on an empathetic attitude where crossing borders can mean entering another space in memory, other places and homes.
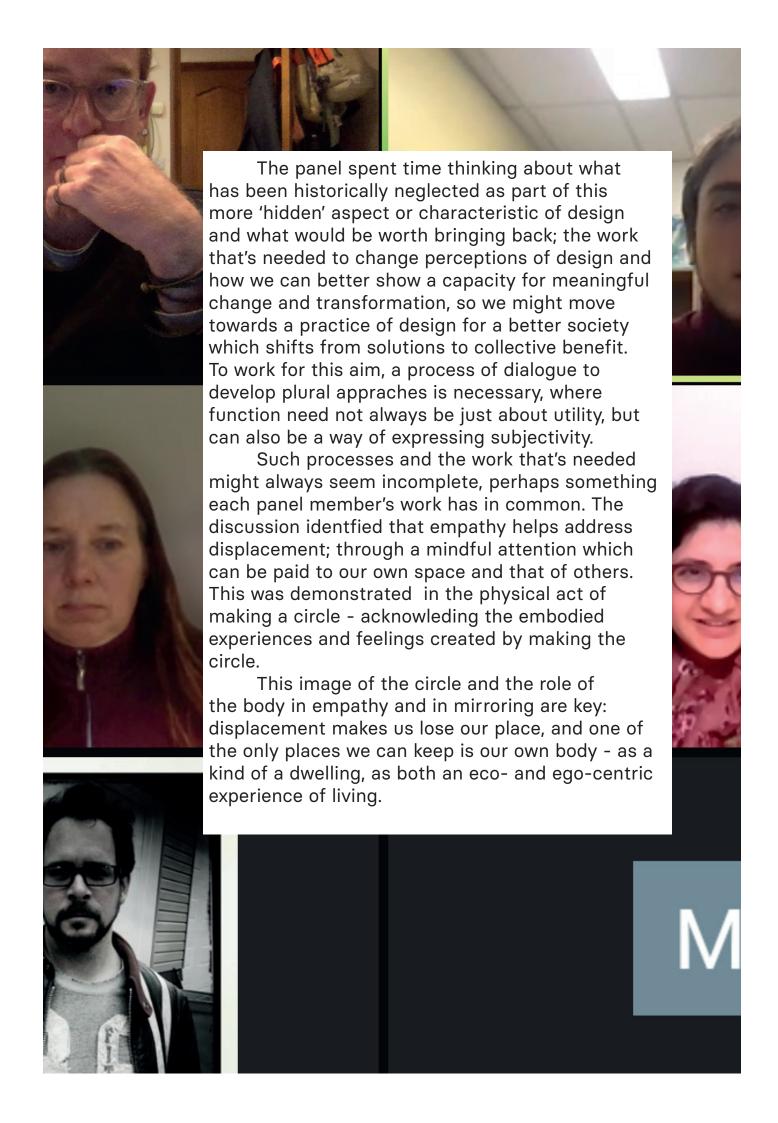
Further considering the youth situation of homelesness and refugees, it is clear that Covid negatively impacted youth at the margins. How then can we work to help dream about the future in a global nightmare condition? How might imagination and art-based methods be used as instruments of healing?
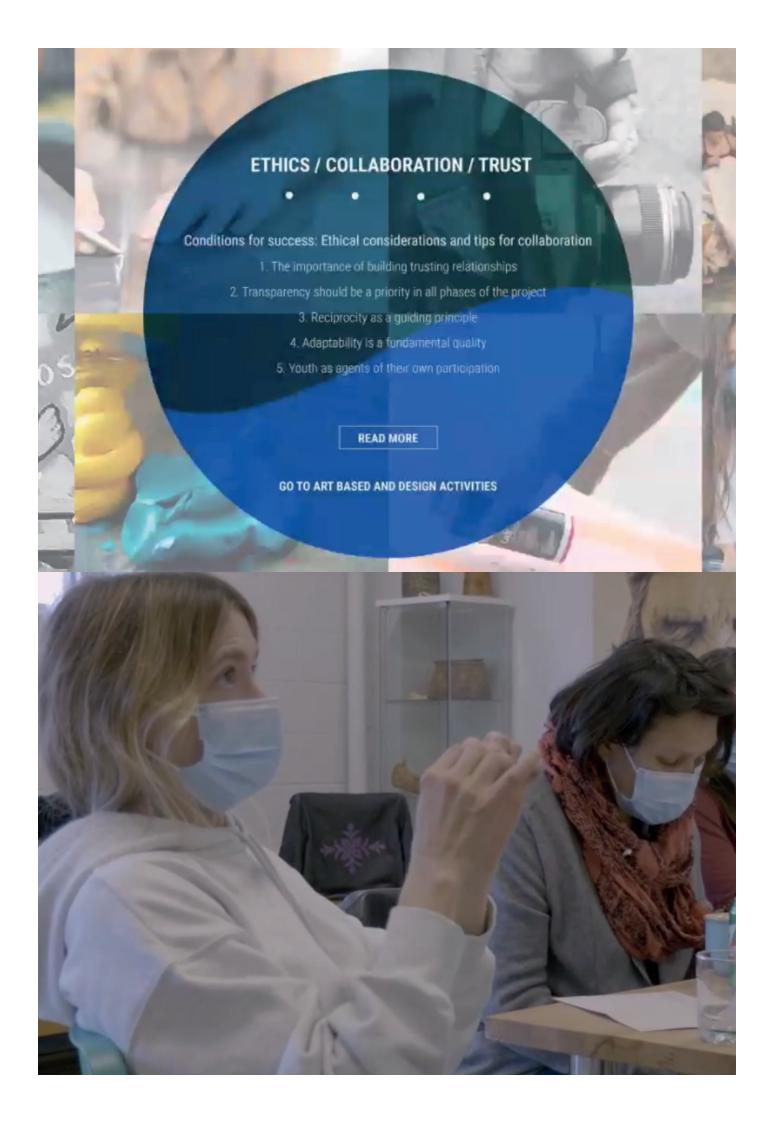
The concept of the house shows us a way - it protects their dream. It is a place for youth to dream about the future. It calls attention to the homeless for a period, a momentous period in their lives. Not having a home means difficulty in conquering a range of activities. Imagination, therefore, is essential as a strategy of survival. Art, bricolage, elements of decoration may give a sense of home, and this was observed in images of homeless people's personal items.

It was important to see and reflect on the results of the projects made before the Covid-19. And also to acknowledge the condition of being locked in our houses, imagining how we might heal ourselves and also heal the youth in worse conditions. Art and arts-based methods could be an important instrument to help work through these difficulties.

Empathy is a concept that has worked to underline the whole project, and the presentation showed the importance of a relationship between design, empathy and art.

Santos

The discussion traced an orbit through each of the individual presentations, where design itself was subject to a range of ideas of mirroring which identified a shift towards an empathetic model, and which reflect the pluralities of condition and experience it can work to cultivate.

Nina Luostarinen

The panel spent time thinking about what has been historically neglected as part of this more 'hidden' aspect or characteristic of design and what would be worth bringing back; the work that's needed to change perceptions of design and how we can better show a capacity for meaningful change and transformation, so we might move towards a practice of design for a better society which shifts from solutions to collective benefit. To work for this aim, a process of dialogue to develop plural appraches is necessary, where function need not always be just about utility, but can also be a way of expressing subjectivity.

Such processes and the work that's needed might always seem incomplete, perhaps something each panel member's work has in common. The discussion identfied that empathy helps address displacement; through a mindful attention which can be paid to our own space and that of others. This was demonstrated in the physical act of making a circle - acknowleding the embodied experiences and feelings created by making the circle.

This image of the circle and the role of the body in empathy and in mirroring are key: displacement makes us lose our place, and one of the only places we can keep is our own body - as a kind of a dwelling, as both an eco- and ego-centric experience of living.

ETHICS / COLLABORATION / TRUST

• • • •

Conditions for success: Ethical considerations and tips for collaboration

1. The importance of building trusting relationships

2. Transparency should be a priority in all phases of the project

3. Reciprocity as a guiding principle

4. Adaptability is a fundamental quality

5. Youth as agents of their own participation

READ MORE

GO TO ART BASED AND DESIGN ACTIVITIES

SEEYouth Workshop Guide

The SEEYouth Workshop Guide is a practical tool for working with marginalised communities and has been developed and designed to be useful for community activists, workshop facilitators and 'trainers' working with youth in contexts of need and recognises there are specific needs when working within and between design and people in their own contexts.
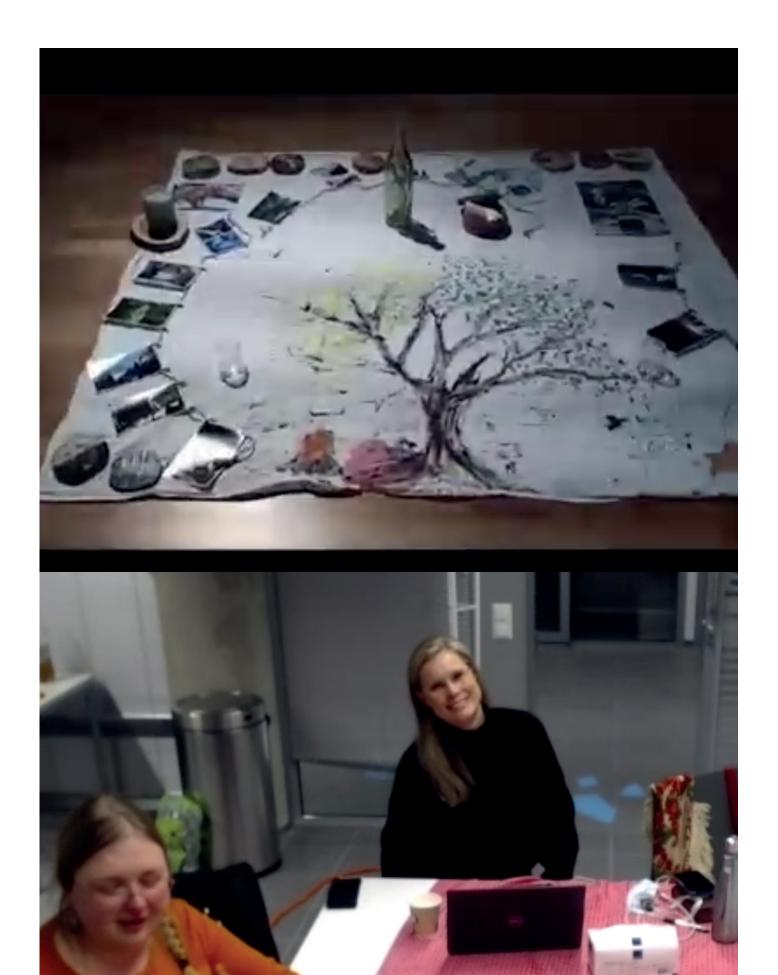
Because of Covid, this aspect of the project shifted focus to become more of a reflective collection of best practices - developed as an inspirational set of activities that show a range of work carried out previously in a range of projects undedrtaken by members of the SEEYouth research community.

There were three sets of activities for data collection processes which shaped the content: a process of article analysis for the identification of exemplary models of practice; a series of webinar presentations and discussion so that colleagues could discuss their in-depth experiences of working in the field, creativley and in collaboration with youth participants, and an ethics and trust workshop programme to uncover and develop insights from experiential knowledge to generate ideas of successful and unsuccessful collaborations, scenarios, key tools and themes for inclusion in the Guide.

A process of co-design focused on discussing the needs of the trainers who would be doing the work and further identified the issues of trust and ethics and helped identify a set of concrete activities which were be used to develop a set of programmes to be followed through the Guide.

This session ended with an overview of the SEEYouth Guide website* - which opens with a clear statement around ethics, collaboration and trust as its starting point and outlines five conditions for success and as principles for meaningful collaboration, leading to a detailed review of the most important approaches to take or to be considered during the processes of participation and collaboration which have shaped its content.
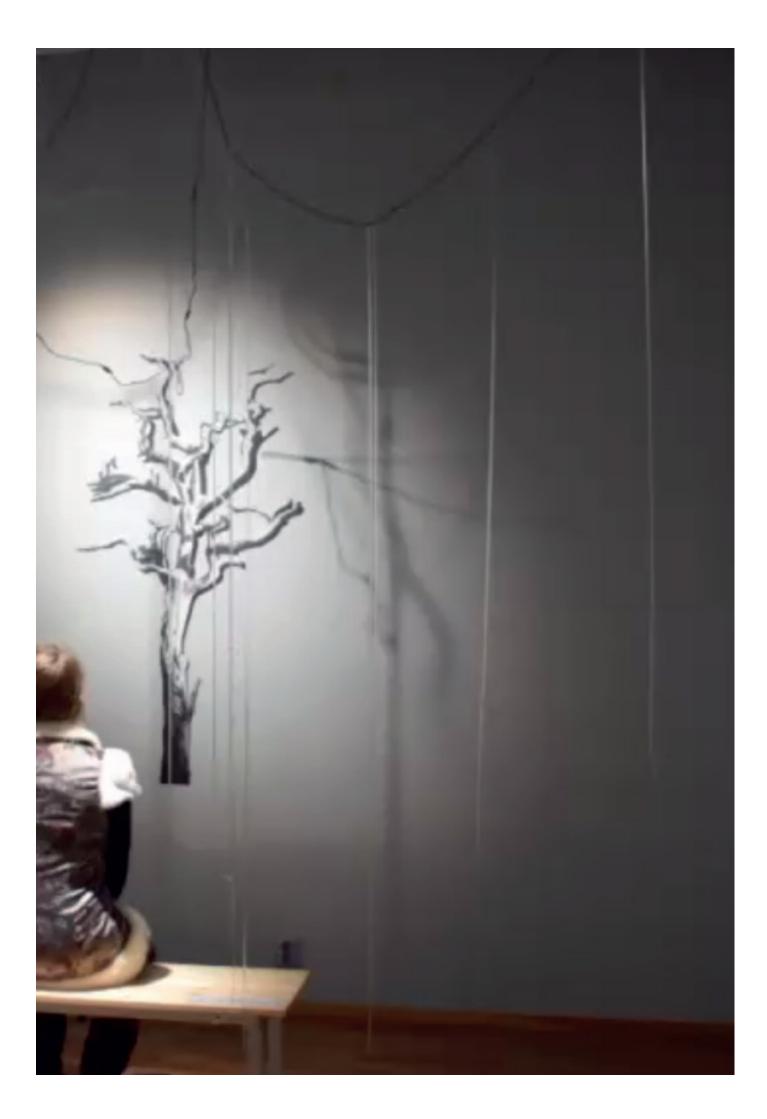
*seeyouth.net

Reflections – Mirroring Structures and Complexities in pluriversal art-based dialogues with the youth
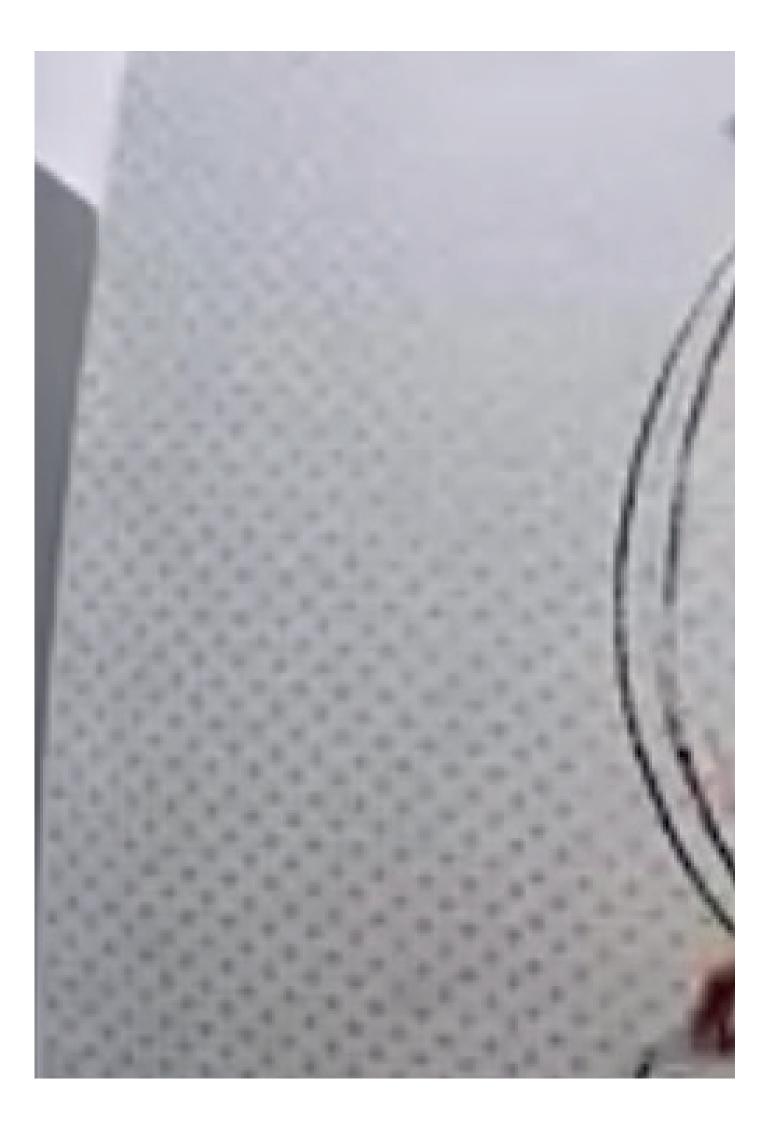
Artwork produced by youth and by researchers in the SEEYouth project is currently being exhibited in three different galleries at the University of Lapland and it maps a variety of encounters snd transatlantic collaborations with young people over the course of the two-year journey of the project.
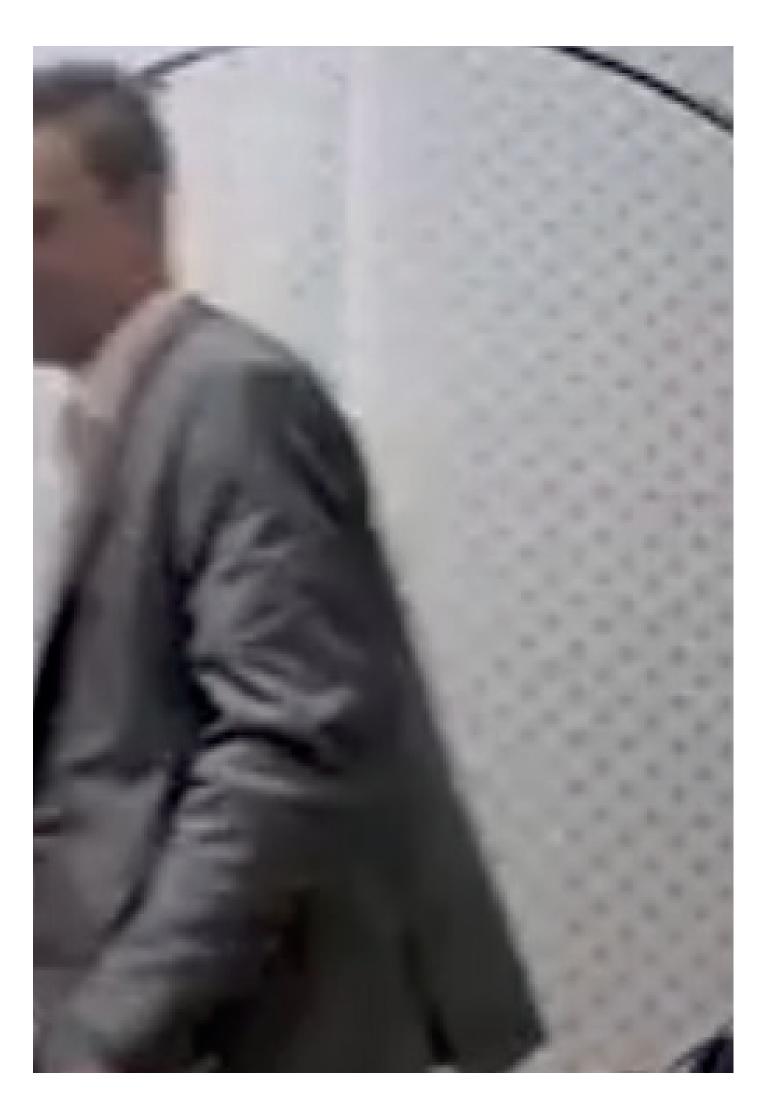
We were guided through a range of work, including videos of the installation as well as seeing the exhibition in situ. Rooms have been transformed so that they are actively telling stories of the journeys made together with young people and documenting the variety of creative material produced in a number of workshops.

The exhibition contains a range of work which addresses key project themes and explores the very important aspect of a relationship with nature and opening our senses to capture this: with and between humans and each entangled as part of the world.

We witness a range of types of human communication and visual messages, graphic images relocating language and visual culture into new places and projects which pose fundamental questions regarding human life and creativity.

We are encouraged to see this work from positions all over the world, and to carry on disseminating it and its messages further.

CONNECTIONS TAKE MANY FORMS.

SEEYouth project 2021

www.ulapland.fi/EN/Events-University-of-Lapland/SEEYouth-2021
www.seeyouth.substack.com

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