Sensing Sideways: co-editors' dialogic introduction to artist-led approaches to public pedagogy in the Asia Pacific region

A conversation between special edition journal editors Ferdiansyah Thajib, Kelly Hussey-Smith, Gatari Surya Kusuma, Diwas Raja Kc, and Marnie Badham

There is a burgeoning field of artist-led pedagogic practices in the Asia Pacific region that employ forms of shared knowledge production in the public realm as a core ethical responsibility of creative and scholarly work. From community-led archives to public learning, collective studying to public art interventions, and collective approaches to art-making and knowledge production, the range of contexts from which these artist-led public pedagogies arise directly influence their form and the way they are encountered.

These artist-led forms for encounter and exchange can engage publics by challenging hegemonies, critiquing power, and engaging communities in civil dialogue about urgent local concerns. As forms of public pedagogy, these practices often value collective approaches over the individualism prevalent in Western art education (KUNCI, 2020a; Jurriens, 2020). While the relationship between socially engaged art and public pedagogy is typically positioned through Eurocentric traditions as an extension of avant-garde art movements, community arts, or popular

education (Badham, 2019; Thompson, 2012) more exciting practices and discourses have emerged in culturally attuned ways in their respective geopolitical contexts. However, these practices are often misunderstood and overlooked, due to global inequalities, colonial legacies, and persisting hierarchies in art and education.

This special issue has been co-developed to stimulate a broader dialogue between artists, researchers, and organisers who are engaged in these outlying practices of public pedagogy. Our editorial team composed of three individuals — Marnie Badham, Diwas Raja Kc, Kelly Hussey-Smith and the collective KUNCI Study Forum & Collective (represented by Gatari Surya Kusuma and Ferdiansyah Thajib) — who came together through a shared interest in practices of public pedagogy that: create sites for new questions and knowledge(s) to emerge in the public realm through artistic forms and relational pedagogical encounters (Charman & Dixon, 2021); are formed outside of institutional contexts, address social tensions, and build networks of solidarity; and are led by artists while privileging local aesthetics and community self-determination.

When preparing this special issue, we sought to gather contributions that intersected with the following questions:

- How and why do artists organise collective forms of public learning?
- How do these practices activate and nurture solidarity?
- How do artists describe and frame these practices in relation to their contexts — conceptually, politically and/or aesthetically?
- How do these practices critique and challenge the institutions of art and education?
- How do publics interact with these forms for encounter and exchange?
- How do these artist-led forms for encounter and exchange produce and circulate knowledge?

While these questions seem straightforward, the responses we received have been complex and rich in meaning. As we went through rounds of discussion to collectively make sense and make connections between the different contributions, diffracted by our different contributions (diffracted by our practices and experiences), our conversations constantly went sideways, and refused making generalisations. In order to remain faithful to the plural densities of the individual contributions as well as to do justice to the various acts and processes of collaboration that went into making this issue, we have foregone the conventional approach of offering an introductory text that produces a unified voice. We have opted instead for the following conversational route, which we hope can better attend to the questions of how diverse practitioners of artist-led public pedagogy in the region inhabit the cracks and loops of communal and institutional lives, commute between translocal entanglements and shared narratives, and traverse the permeable boundaries between theory and practice. Our conversation foregrounds ways of 'sensing sideways' and modes of creating and circulating knowledge through learning together.

Ferdi: In terms of artist-led public pedagogy, what are the ways of knowing that have emerged as a connecting thread between the different contributions to our special issue, a mapping of epistemologies perhaps?

Marnie: I think there are a lot of different ways to map 'ways of knowing'. Subjectively, we'll each bring the lens of our own practices, positionalities, and interests to this task. As a socially engaged artist but also a theorist in that space, my cartography pays attention to the relationships artists have to the 'publics' in their pedagogies, the communities or institutions they collaborate with. I see a spectrum of practices, which can be kind of broken down in more detail like the unique values or motives underpinning grassroots action or interventions or the more activist approaches bringing representations of communities into mainstream public space.

Gatari: Maybe I can start with my practice with KUNCI Study Forum & Collective. Currently, we are focused on organising The School of Improper Education which explores forms of study through collective and self-organised learning (KUNCI, 2020b). Right now, we are viewing the school not only as one of the key and ongoing programs initiated by KUNCI, but also as the ecosystem and characteristics from which we grow. I'm positioned as a facilitator for this program and am thinking a lot about 'how' to enable space for the community or public outside of the collective or institutions that have their own space. I am thinking about how we can accommodate their needs and open up space for them to learn together.

If we go back to the context of education in Indonesia, studying is associated with a sense of competitiveness. So, The School of Improper Education is a process where we unlearn that competitiveness in studying and schooling. Not by just romanticising 'togetherness', but by thinking about what we can do together, and how not only to do this as the facilitator, but how we can create the conditions in the space for participants to share, learn, communicate, and negotiate with each other.

Ferdi: Following Gatari, such competitiveness is framed by a neoliberal understanding of knowledge production, which focuses on ideas of winning or losing; for example, who gets published or authorship positions, which knowledge is valid, and which isn't. Based on my experience as an educator both in the university and community spaces, also partly related to my activities at KUNCI, I kept stumbling into such a hierarchy of knowledge. Some of the contributions that I read question this exact point: whose or what kind of knowledge is considered valuable? These dichotomies made me think about what's haunting public pedagogy projects in the region, for example, issues like evaluation and which projects are considered a success or failure.

I am also thinking about the naming of these practices as 'project'. On one hand, this points to temporality and the material conditions that produce it. A project indicates that there is an end. We are talking about funding as well as people's energy and capacities for action. On the other hand, these limitations also reveal existing tension between the intention of carving out a project as such and the normative, often institutional practices that it seeks to transgress or transform. A project is bound to end, while normative structures often outlive them.

Kelly: Yes, in many of the articles the authors don't frame their work as 'projects' *per se,* but more as ways of living and being together. In this way, they seem to be framing their work in durational terms as actions that attend critically to the conditions of the everyday. As an artist-educator-parent, I can relate to this framing of creative practice as a part of, not apart from, the conditions of the everyday because the everyday is where we live our lives. These submissions also recognised that the 'everyday' has been largely co-opted by dominant cultural values and economic interests and share a critical

desire to reclaim this through these different forms of what we are calling 'artist-led public pedagogy'.

This is particularly clear in the article *The everyday and play in improper education* by Khoiril Maqin who reflects on their involvement in KUNCI's School of Improper Education by proposing the idea of a 'Common School' as a space where learning can happen in informal and intergenerational ways. We can read this as being more 'free' from hegemonic knowledge hierarchies (KUNCI 2020a; Rancière 1987). This reclaiming of everyday life is also evident in Jacina Leong's article *Composing our Practices* which uses composting as a metaphor to describe how we might take time to notice the connection between duration and care in reclaiming creative practice from the realm of 'productivity'.

In many of the texts, I see relationality, cooperation, even friendship being used as a method. Not in this romantic way as Gatari points out, but as recognition that often knowledge is shared, or as Marnie points out, co-produced through moments of closeness or intimacy. In these spaces, knowledge feels a bit more embodied, it feels alive, integrated and full of possibilities. Of course, this is not a new idea, but one that is widely understood in many Indigenous, feminist and queer communities and discourses.

Marnie: Thinking about the everyday - life-as-practice — versus 'project', there are some rich examples that represent thinking through this lived experience; for example, through the work of Paola Balla who is a Blak feminist artist and a Wemba Wemba, Gunditjmara woman. Her contribution opens the special edition by narrating Aboriginal women's ongoing contributions as public pedagogy and activism to disrupt white dominant narratives and spaces in Australia and beyond, aka institutions. This is also my reading of Riksa Afiaty's conversation with Moelyono, in *Rekindling the spirit of resistance in Ludruk folk art*. Its collectivism is described as a performance of gags and humour, but it also has this streak of resistance against authorities. These are two individuals that make creative practice from a strong foundation of their cultural and gendered identities. It's not read necessarily as an activist project, because it is, in part, everyday life in their communities.

Whereas some of the other projects in the edition are more working through Western frameworks of institutions of the idea of 'project', such as Jill J. Tan's engagement with Alicia Neos' artwork *Between Earth and Sky* with a community of caregivers in Singapore. Neo and their collaborators have made artworks engaging these caregivers through choreography and as an embodied practice or public pedagogy. The other example is the *Disorganising* project, a collaborative experiment between three small arts organisations located in Collingwood Yards in Naarm/Melbourne. *Disorganising* articulated an ethical impulse around working in a different way but sits strictly within institutional frameworks through paid labour structures and roles. It's a short-term externally-funded project designed to challenge certain ways of working in partnerships and institutions with aims for longer-term structural change.

Diwas: I wanted to start by noting that epistemology may not actually be the right word in the context of the articles we edited and read, partly because I think epistemology suggests systems of knowledge or systematisation of knowledge. Many of the articles in this edition seem to fight against precisely that. I think there's a very strong desire to define 'knowing' as activities that are not even associated with conventional schooling or education, or tied to prescribed methods of learning.

I think there is a strong impulse to disinherit institutionalised forms of learning in favour of other types of activities that allow daily ways of life themselves to be linked with knowledge-making. For example, in Khoiril Maqin's contribution on the School of Improper Education, I noticed they had picked up Jacques Rancière's The Ignorant Schoolmaster (1987) in order to show and justify what everyday schooling can look like. The example that they provide describes what happens in the kitchens of their common school and how cooking together itself is a model of learning.

In the case of Computational Mama, for example, you see her focusing on activities like making jokes, being friends, laughing, and generally just being together as the foundation for their learning. One of the very strong tendencies I saw was to define everyday activities themselves as learning. I think it vibes with what you were saying, Marnie, that learning becomes, in a way, synonymous with living itself.

Kelly: This was very present in the conversation I had with the Assam-based Anga Art Collective. Before formalising their work as a collective they had been sharing studios and resources, doing projects and studying together for over ten years. Their collective emerged organically from their relationships and shared curiosity for learning, rather than from a decision to become a collective. More recently they developed the framework of the kNOw school, which is more of a pedagogic and epistemological question about knowledge production and contextual learning than a 'project'. Through the school, they are literally asking, 'what does art and pedagogy look like here, in this place where we live?'

I found it interesting that almost all of the submissions we received were from collectives or collaborative initiatives, most of whom referenced the idea of plural, situated and contextual knowledge/s (Harraway, 1988). For example, Jan Brueggemeier and Neal Haslem of Commoners Press in their article *these three words* write about using the vehicle of an experimental printing press to draw attention to the conditions of knowledge production through invitations to share different understandings of place.

At the time of reading the submissions, I was reading Erin Manning's new book *Out of The Clear* (2023) which largely focuses on what Manning calls 'an obliteration of relations' left in the wake of (ongoing) settler colonialism. In this text, Manning proposes the question, how do we get out of the clear? How do we restore relations? While the contexts of the submissions were different, I sensed a shared desire to use creative practice to generate relations rather than directly influence political reform and social change. It wasn't apathy motivating this, I sensed it more as a desire to *reclaim life*. I felt many of these submissions to be reparative in the way they focused on how we might reclaim our lives beyond capitalist understandings of outputs and time. Interestingly, the politics of knowledge production and learning were right at the centre of most of these works.

Diwas: It certainly stood out to me how much the artists focused on and spoke about 'process'. This seems to be the outcome of the collaborative mode of working that Kelly spoke about already. As we mentioned, this is really present in the everyday and play in improper education but also in the work of Indonesian theatre maker Moelyono. Even though in Moelyono's process, there is a performance at the end, I think the discursive focus still tends to be on the preparations and interactions that make the performance happen. In some ways, the key parts of creating art here seem to take place well before the performance.

Gatari: I have one point to add that might be interesting to ask in this context because it's a bit contradictory with the way other collectives are creating a space or using collective theories. It's about the submission, *Fugitive Bakery's Un-Recipe-Like Recipe Book*. The Fugitive Bakery is a concept bakery initiated by two artists working between Singapore and Jakarta. Unlike many of the other projects, it is not about creating space for outsiders to learn, instead, they have created the bakery as a way to learn themselves. They are effectively exploring how they can create connectivity with people that they cannot reach without the bakery. Because the artists didn't have backgrounds in art, they started working in a gallery to learn more about how to create art. Through this frame of the bakery, they approach people who they want to learn from and offer to bake them a cake in exchange for references. The collaborators don't pay for the cake from the bakery but instead, send the artists relevant texts or share the references influencing their art. So, it's interesting to see how these notions of collectivity and learning together influence the topics and tools of the collective. And in this case, how they are using the bakery not only as their methodology but also as a tool to create space to learn.

Diwas: I just wanted to add something related to Gatari's point and also to the earlier question about the insider-outsider dynamic. In many of the articles, there is a strong emphasis on belonging to a particular community, even when the artist comes with an outsider's profile. In order to enter community spaces, I noticed artists mobilising not their identities per se but emphasising the labour of building relationships. And it is the quality of that labour that seems to be the measure of defining who becomes an insider and who an outsider. I found it interesting that the way communities are envisioned here are not a reflection of identity politics as it has come to dominate our political landscapes in recent decades but rely rather on the more basic premise of keeping good relations.

There is also a lot of focus on inclusivity. All the artists and authors speak about this in some way. In my opinion, these persistent expressions on inclusion ruffle the unsettled connections and contrasts between the concept of the public and the concept of community. Community, in a way, continues to suggest monolithic existence — in terms of values espoused if no longer in terms of cultural, ethnic, or racial identities. Even in the articles here, it is possible to read community-building expressed as adoption of similar values and desires. Publics, on the other hand, are not like that. The concept of the public, if anything, underscores the sharing of a platform beyond our own specific interests and values. It is fundamentally about encounters with people with other values. If what we are seeing is a concerted move towards communitarian forms, which seems to involve devaluing public institutions, the legacies and lessons of the idea of the public in terms of managing diverse identities and expectations are also reflected in the ways artists talk about community in the articles. I wanted to underscore that I see some kind of persistence in the concept of the public, even when we are turning to a communitarian language.

But maybe this is an unresolved dialectic. To me, it is clear from the examples here that communities are built when they are close-knit and enable a sort of one-on-one relationship. Communities imply the performance of caring relations with others who one shares the community with. The assumed scale is small and relations tight. Publics, on the contrary, are large and consist of people who you do not have direct relationship with but you are nevertheless associated with. The articles here are certainly thought-provoking when you consider what might be the future of the public..

Ferdi: Thanks, Diwas, let's continue with the question that you and Kelly raised. How do the different contributors understand the public? Is it public or publics? How is it tied to their

understanding of 'community'? If we consider public(s) as a community of strangers, what forms of engagement are emerging? I can start maybe with my own understanding of practice. Oftentimes we do what we do without purposely aiming for the community or the public. You mentioned reclaiming life through care, Kelly. It reminds me of Manning's idea of art as an "intuitive process of activating the relational composition that is life-living" (2016, p. 51). I am also thinking about how some of the contributors' pedagogical practices are mainly about living everyday lives together with others. If a community is formed out of these relationships, often it is one that is emergent, and so is the consideration of a constitutive outside, i.e the (external) public. It is as if concentric circles are formed around such practices that involve the self, the other, the community and publics, and what a lot of the contributors have been doing is connecting these different layers, or perhaps making the boundaries between them more permeable.

Kelly: As Diwas previously raised in our editorial conversations, it felt like there was a turn away from general publics and institutional reform, to other ways of organising and working. A moving sideways, rather than moving towards some kind of collective political aim or goal. In particular, the emphasis on non-extractive approaches to learning stood out for me as did their quietness. It was interesting to me that none of the submissions articulated a direct relationship to social change. And this doesn't mean that social change is not present, but perhaps the goal was more about reclaiming the conditions and textures of everyday life, than more public forms of protest. Of course, many of the practices featured in this edition are related to activism in the form of community learning, duration, relationality and care, but the processes and the goals seemed to be moving in a different direction.

Marnie: I like both what Ferdi and Kelly were sharing because we see public pedagogies here not just as resistance or an impulse for change, which is a very different practice than say, a lot of socially engaged art or institutional kind of social inclusion work. The idea of public pedagogies is that there are certain centres and certain peripheries, right? But these authors and these practices haven't placed themselves in relation (resistance, critique, or intervention) to these sorts of mainstream publics or institutions. So even while many of these papers and other representations of artist-led public pedagogies take care in the way they are written and try to be multivalent not to be 'in relation to' but to actually be 'in relations with'? Where this power lies is in relations with community, or self, or proximity with those who are active in the collective group of people that are learning or unlearning together.

Diwas: I had a slightly different reading, perhaps because my conversation with Computational Mama is still fresh in my mind. What seemed to me to be important for Computational Mama was that she be seen as very much part of the anti-patriarchy feminist movement. She quite actively articulates an activist mode of working and wants her practice to be legible as a feminist intervention. What I would say on the point of action is – and I believe Kelly already noted this – that there is a tendency to put premium value on an altogether different set of actions and activities than what may be generally familiar as, say, feminist activism. Making friends, for instance, in her coding practice would count as activist work. Occupying the coding world, foregrounding play, pointing to histories written out of the narrative of both the STEM departments as well as the feminist and art spaces – all these are examples of actions that appear different than what we may recognise as protest. But I do not think these amount in any degree to the abandonment of the activist mode.

Ferdi: It's a kind of activism that commutes between political and ethical practice. How to make feminist spaces in an embodied way, in this sense theorising is not abstracted from life, but always already embedded in the body and cultivated through everyday intimacy and relationality. Rethinking ethics is also something that the article on the artist-led residency program: Writers Immersion and Cultural Exchange (WrICE) addresses. There the co-authors articulate how in holding spaces of encounter and exchange like the residency program, ethics needs to be developed as it emerges through the process rather than predetermined as a fixed set of rules. The ways in which this operates involve, as they describe, "an attentiveness to trust, respect, acknowledgment of the other and/or difference, and the embracing of mistake or 'failure' or rupture" (Thim et al., 2023.

Kelly: This kind of gentle activism and ethical work is also care work, which is also labour. I think this framing of care as labour helps us move beyond romantic and essentialist notions of care as benevolent action. Framing care as labour — which we know is often unpaid and undervalued but crucial to our flourishing and survival — opens up interesting reflections on process. I didn't read a lot of reflection on care and labour but understood that it was implicit in many of the articles. I'm curious if that came out for anyone else because so many of the methodologies shared in this special edition deal with care in different ways.

Marnie: It was present in Jill J. Tran's reading of Alicia Neo's work with the community of caregivers. And it actually reminds me of some of Kelly's photographic and curatorial work. This sort of paying attention to the aesthetic value of that work. In the conversation with Moelyono, he is described as both a theatre maker and 'community worker' — there's a lot of conversation around making collectivism happen. So, there is that labour there. And then back into the *Disorganizing* article written by Channon Goodwin, Joel Stern, and Amelia Wallin, that was very much the intention, I believe, of the work was to sort of care for our workers in these neoliberal times, in a way that institutions can't do.

Gatari: Jacina Leong's *Composting our Practices* also deals with this. It was really interesting how they are using composting as a metaphor for their understanding of collective creative practices. They describe the time taken to digest or harvest. And one of the participants also describes how when they started cooking together, no one really knew what role to take in the kitchen. But slowly, they made sense of their own respective roles in the process. Their contribution also highlights how time must be made for people to become involved. It's also the way that we can put care into the collective works. Reading the articles made me think about the ways in which the artists and collectives are reflecting on their working methods. I'm curious about how artists and collectives are using deductions of writing as a way to reflect or create a distance from their practice. Did you see this in the texts that you read — specifically reflections on the relationship between writing as a reflective method?

Marnie: My motive in co-editing the journal with you all and developing the call for papers was to contribute to theorising this burgeoning field but also was, in part, to create space for people to think more about their own creative and pedagogic practices. I think a lot of us who work in these ways don't always have the time or resources to critically reflect on the work, as this knowledge is often

tacit, embodied knowledge. I don't know if the process has created a distance, but maybe it's created more opportunities for knowing and learning together.

But I think the challenge in the form of writing is that it is often a singular voice and linear. It's sort of a monologue, and it doesn't always hold the multivalency of these really rich practices. However, this form doesn't actually lend itself to speak of the frictions or dissent that happened in this work within a group. As Kelly said earlier, this is sometimes where learning happens, you know, the shifts and the sharing often happen in friction and feelings of uncertainty. So, I'll ask the rest of you, were there moments in the writings that you read that were able to reflect any of those more difficult feelings and times in public pedagogies?

Ferdi: The challenge in reflectively writing about these kinds of projects is how to not get into the trap of a mode of reporting or evaluating, highlighting the 'success stories' only due to the habit of valuing 'projects' as such which is predominantly reinforced by institutionalised notions of accountability.

Diwas: I don't know if I have any particular insights about the writing process itself. But what was striking for me, was what kind of theories the artists were engaging with. I think that definitely comes through, especially with *The Common School.* We've mentioned Ranciere already, but I think even de Certeau (2004). It felt like the group was kind of reading him and trying to make sense of their own practice with that set of theories. With Computational Mama, I think you can also see the influences of Haraway.

Kelly: I think this is a great question, what is the point of this kind of reflection for artists and collectives? I appreciated the way that local knowledges and contexts, critical theories, and creative processes came through in much of the writing. I'm thinking of the way the self-described anti-capitalist and anti-academic collaboration *Fugitive Bakery* in their *Un-recipe-like Recipe Book* used the aesthetics and conventions of metrics and graphs to express their distaste for the knowledge hierarchies produced by academia and the gatekeeping of information. By including these illustrations as part of the text, they were able to share their practice and process through their interventions into academic conventions. Many of the papers attempted to bring the liveliness of creative practice to the page. It's not easy though, and it does involve some risk.

Marnie: But maybe these are two threads. One is about reflecting on practice and employing critical theory and another thread is about authors trying to come to conclusions about their work that might actually generate theory, rather than simply contextualising or framing the work. Some submissions are more practice-based and may have very little kind of interest in scholarly content. They're not uneven — it's simply different ways of knowing, doing, and being — as numerous Indigenous scholars have discussed. I think our critical questions in the framing offered this idea that there isn't a tidy bow around all of these practices and projects and that the authors are welcome to take the prompt of artist-led pedagogy in very different ways. And our intention is not to theorise it all in one way, but to allow it to become a porous framework for different ways of understanding and knowing. Going back to some of our first conversations, even before we read the papers, we were asking each other "is there a shared understanding of artist-led pedagogy for the region?" It's quite a broad framework with many, many geo-political conditions and contexts.

Ferdi: Notably, and maybe it's kind of cliche to say, this experience is also a learning process because I don't think there are that many avenues for representing or writing about practice. Speaking as a practitioner, it is sometimes hard to create that distance to reflect. And if we do create that distance, it can feel forced. At the same time, I think we are also kind of nervous about the readership. This question of understanding is important — will the message come across? How do we know the audience understands our work? What might be lost in the translating of practice into text? That's why I think some practitioners tend to revert to this more convenient and linear form of storytelling. I mean, this is also what we've been trying to explore by making this editorial introduction more of an active and open conversation between the five co-editors. There are so many different ways of articulating experience, and I think a lot about the possibility of being misunderstood. For example, in a conversation like this, as soon as the word 'art' itself enters the discussion, the obvious question is "Where's the art or where's the aesthetic?" This is echoed further using the frame of artist-led public pedagogy. "Where is the pedagogy and what's the result?"

Kelly: I think the opportunity offered through this editorial process has been to imagine and create space for conversations beyond some of the circular debates we may have been in, become tired of, or even become stuck in. It's not that these questions and debates have no value, they absolutely do. The hope was more that the submissions would stimulate our thinking beyond these debates, allow a sideways conversation to emerge, and present an opportunity to record these practices in some small way — even if writing about them doesn't capture the fullness of the practice.

Diwas: It does seem necessary, though, to have some kind of comment about where we stand on the question of art. What *is* the art in these projects? And what have we learned about these projects? That seems somehow necessary. I'm just tossing it up as a question for the group to reflect on.

Marnie: Maybe when I say it out loud, I'll change my mind… But I feel quite strongly that we weren't directly looking for art, we were actually interested in methodologies that artists use for public pedagogy, which is not necessarily about making art. But there seem to be shared ethics and values that underpin their diverse aesthetic approaches to the work. So, we could talk about this as pushing the boundaries of what artists and pedagogy are, without having to define it. Because, again, back to what Ferdi was saying, the readership may completely misunderstand our intention because as practitioners, some of these frameworks are assumed.

Diwas: I think for my part I do want to speak to aesthetics. Not in the sense that Claire Bishop, for instance, calls on in Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship (2004). But I think that pedagogy alone may not provide all the necessary framing in terms of comprehending what the artists themselves are doing. I mean if we are called to understand education and knowledge as a turn away from institutionalised or systematic forms of learning and a turn to life in general, what we are calling practices of life are really better put as sensibilities of living, which are about ways of sensing, feeling, and emoting. That, to me, is entering the domain of aesthetics. If knowledge is no longer to be thought of in terms of the traditions of Western epistemology and research, I cannot see it happening without opening ourselves to what that same tradition has cast aside as aesthetics and what I think the artists represented in the articles also harness. I am not sure

if by speaking about aesthetics one is also necessarily speaking about art. But I certainly think this too is a question we must examine in our pursuit of new pedagogies.

Biographies

Ferdiansyah Thajib is a social and cultural anthropologist and community educator whose life work is situated in the intersections of theory and praxis, with specific research interests on queer modes of endurance and forms of affective entanglement in everyday life. Ferdi is a member of KUNCI Study Forum & Collective, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. KUNCI is a non-disciplinary research collective which since its founding in 1999 has been experimenting on modes of producing and sharing knowledge through studying together. Currently he is a Senior Lecturer at the Elite Graduate Program "Standards of Decision-making Across Cultures," Friedrich-Alexander University, Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany.

Kelly Hussey-Smith is an artist, researcher and educator focused on photography as a social practice, the politics of representation, and community-oriented art education She is interested in the different ways that documentary and other social practices can contribute to civil dialogue and partnerships. She is a Senior Lecturer in photography at the School of Art at RMIT University in Naarm/Melbourne.

Gatari Surya Kusuma is a researcher, curator, and cultural organiser based in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. She is working collectively with KUNCI Study Forum & Collective to practise critical art pedagogy and with Bakudapan Food Study Group to explore various methods on researching food. She is part of Struggles for Sovereignty to enable a digital space for socio-ecological practitioners to share the precarity, practices, thoughts, struggles, and cultivate solidarity.

Diwas Raja KC is currently the Head of Research & Archives at Nepal Picture Library, where his work has focused on engendering a research-based approach to art, archival and curatorial practice. His curatorial show and subsequent photobook Dalit: A Quest for Dignity (2016) explored ways of witnessing Dalit pasts in Nepal. His co-curated exhibition The Public Life of Women (2018) monumentalized feminist pasts in Nepal as an intervention in public memory. He also works as a documentary film editor.

Marnie Badham, with a 25-year history of art and justice practice in both Canada and Australia, her creative and critical research sits at the intersection of socially engaged art practice, participatory methodologies, and the politics of cultural measurement. Through aesthetic and dialogic forms of encounter and exchange, Marnie's collaborative social practices bring together disparate groups of people (artists, communities, industry, local government) in dialogue to examine and affect local issues. Marnie is Associate Professor at the School of Art, RMIT University in Naarm/Melbourne.

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