

(UN)LEARNING THROUGH COLLABORATION

Revolv x UnderExposed

collaboration, with a particular focus on its potential in terms of (un)learning

Member Victoria Louise Doyle has invited Under Exposed Collective to engage in a discussion in, about and around collaboration and its potential in terms of (un)learning.


Taking a bottom-up approach, in this episode of *conversations with artists* we wish to set your thoughts in motion with ours. We would like to extend the invitation for conversation to you.

When you read:

(un)learning through collaboration?

What comes to mind? What are *your* thoughts, the ones that surface in an instant and those that are slower to emerge, that linger a little longer in the depths of the mind?

Keep an eye on the Revolv IG Stories from the 28th of June until the 4th July to find out more about how to have your say, for more information about the conversation itself and of course don't miss us going Live at 7pm on the 2st of July when will be actioning your questions/thoughts/comments.



Perhaps it would be good to talk about ways in which others could 'participate' - by specifically saying google docs will be used as a way to submit ideas / ask questions and share thoughts etc... You could also add in a bit about 'bottom up' learning or an equivalent of this - the importance of giving others the opportunity and platform to lead / sway the conversation and discussion?

@revolvcollective
X
@undr_xposed

(Un)learning through Collaboration?

How to participate:

Take a look at the Reader - Writer.
A link for this can be found on the next slide.

Have a read through.
We are currently in the process of gathering all generated material so far there, and through out the week this doc will grow, adapt and develop in time with our thinking leading up to and post the Live conversation.

Add your thoughts!
The Reader - Writer is an editable doc and will be for the duration of the week. Please include your name next anything you add (we will endeavour to acknowledge all contributors).

You can also participate by via Instagram.
Tomorrow we will open up the lines of communication and you will have the opportunity to submit any thoughts, feelings, comments and or questions to us then!

WRITER
&
READER

Gathering of thoughts on the Jamboard:

https://jamboard.google.com/d/1GI_srfp7M1q_sXh3vwStNPq0MrYzgUTgOB3fktEQmZA/edit?usp=sharing

A process of thought splurging, researching, generating material, adding to the reader, inviting people to participate through submission of questions, adding to the reader, leading up to the live, but culminating in the reader.



Everything is compiled into a Reader: a tool used by literary agents and acquiring editors to neatly summarise a manuscript for those who haven't read it.

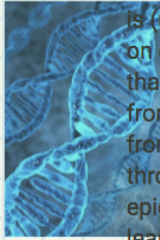
A reader, that is compiled from our conversations prior, during, and post that collects all the information generated by this interaction. Embracing creative note taking, it isn't a direct transcript but more of a between the lines.

To do:

Thinking about what this sentence brings to mind. What do you immediately think of? Record the slower to emerge thoughts.

Click the link to head over to the Jamboard where we have been manifesting our ideas:

https://jamboard.google.com/d/1GJ_srfp7M1q_sXh3vwStNPq0MrYzgUTgOB3fktEQmZA/edit?usp=sharing



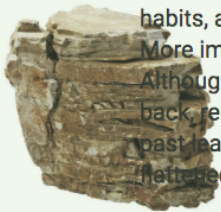
is (un)learning simply re-learning consciously, on our own terms? learning to respond rather than react?

from the moment we are born, even before, from within the womb... no, even earlier, through generations and ancestors' lives and epigenetics, we uncsciously soak in the learned behaviours and reactions of our lineage. our great-grandmother lived through a war, listening out for bombs, her body constantly alert and ready to protect her and keep her alive at any moment... and so today we feel our heart racing on a day when all is well, calm and serene, and we feel it so viscerally yet cannot understand it.

From the moment we are born we are passed on learned behaviours by those around us - parents, guardians, teachers, friends, family, neighbours - we soak it in because we know nothing else. This could be anything from racist remarks, to how to clean the dishes, to your expectations of women, to the correct way to chop an onion. Our community, chosen or not, shapes our thoughts, actions. We are creatures of habit, of comfort, we mimic to be accepted.

As we grow older, if we are lucky, we get to choose our community more intentionally. Perhaps that is part of why we work in collectives, why we work collaboratively. We find our people, and create new definitions and habits, and accepted behaviours together. More importantly we question.

Although '(un)learning' suggests scraping back, removing, I see it more as layering. Our past learning is built upon, fading and flattened underneath the new learning.

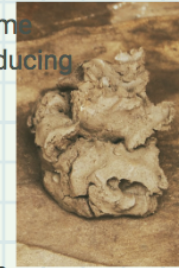


Define the terms:

- Collaboration
- (Un)learning

not participation...

participation may be a part of the work, collaboration determines the outcome co-authorship, co-producing we shape it together



collaboration is doing something/anything with someone/something outside of yourself, your own body and mind.
... i think with others, through others.



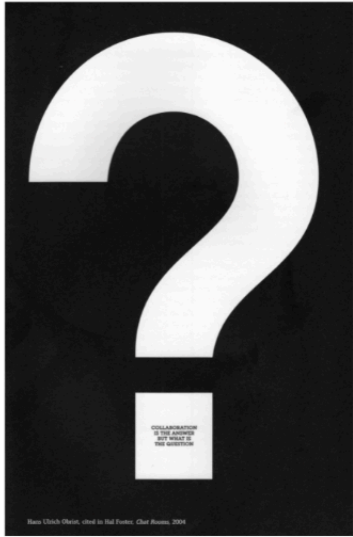
where do collaborators sit here?
where do collaborators sit here?

the term socially-engaged is meaningless.

is '(un)learning' now intrinsically linked to subverting capitalist ideology ? - https://www.dismantlingracism.org/uploads/4/3/5/7/43579015/okun_-_white_sup_culture.pdf



why does being, working, learning, discovering collaboratively seem so exceptional? it is the most natural thi



collaboration is the answer but what is the question?

collaboration is the answer but what is the question?

hans ulrich obrist

Notes from Conversation 23 June:

importance in defining terms

you cannot (un)learn alone

invisible labour (iceberg)

intentional

line between individual and collective authorship

what happens to the thing that has been learnt?

activation; authorship; community

do we automatically
form a community if we
work in collaboration?

'relational art -
an art that
takes as its
theoretical
horizon the
sphere of
human
interactions
and its social
context, rather
than the
assertion of
an
autonomous
and private
symbolic
space'

nothing is in
a vacuum

Hello again! Making this group as a point of contact and a space for discussion

17:58

[16/06/2021, 15:18:26] Victoria Doyle 𐄂 : It was during Titling Fantasy: Exercises in (Re)thinking, a workshop facilitated by Under Exposed collective that the topic for this Live was sparked. Whilst introducing myself to fellow participants I spoke of my unease with the term teacher, I talked at length about the bristling nature of this title and my discomfort about it. After my ramble, Eva and Margot (of Under Exposed) offered an alternative - that of facilitator. As I continued to ponder this term, and the connotations invoked for me, another arose, a more obvious term but one that I had yet to consider. What about collaborator? And so the provocation for this episode of conversations with artists arose: what potential does collaboration have in, upon and around (un)learning?

[16/06/2021, 15:18:46] Victoria Doyle 𐄂 : This is what I've written, I was wondering if anyone had any thoughts on a title for the talk?

[16/06/2021, 15:45:20] Margot: I like how story-like this is, suits the tone of what we were talking about :)

Maybe simply '(un)learning through collaboration'?

Or perhaps a question, as we are still working through this...

[16/06/2021, 15:48:21] Victoria Doyle 𐄂 : I think (un)learning through collaboration'? - with the ? at the end is great actually! it straddles a statement and question

[16/06/2021, 15:52:55] Eva: A straddle indeed! I like it too

[16/06/2021, 15:53:29] Eva: Also agree with Margot it's nice to offer some background to this love came about...

[16/06/2021, 15:53:37] Eva: Omg live not love !

[16/06/2021, 15:53:41] Eva: But also

[16/06/2021, 16:13:33] Victoria Doyle 𐄂 : I mean also the love too

[16/06/2021, 16:13:37] Victoria Doyle 𐄂 :

[16/06/2021, 16:15:40] Victoria Doyle 𐄂 : If there is anything you want to add or adjust let me know and I can do that before sending it off this evening

Collaboration

Some things that I have learnt about the relationship between the facilitator and the participant when developing a collaborative project

(A lot, A Procession, A work in progress)

1. There are roughly three kinds of collaborative project:
1. Projects initiated, made by, for and from the participants, usually with a sense of urgency from within. For example, Squatters making rules to protect their housing or Tenants Associations making films about the state of their homes to show to the council.
2. Projects initiated by outsiders invited by participants to work with them together on a specific project or issue or to share a skill or expertise. For example young people learning to use video cameras from a filmmaker or artists helping organise a community festival.
3. Projects where the person initiating the project has a prior relationship to the participants (often a community with the assumption that the chosen community would in some way benefit from their expertise or knowledge).
2. In order for these projects described as the 'outside world' to be 'effective' there must be some dialogue between how the roles of insider and outsider are defined - the participants need to develop a sense of being not simply just the subject but also the author and the facilitator/organiser needs to develop a relationship or a value to the sense of the participants.
3. The relative 'success' of a project is based on the depth of the relationship formed, by this I mean the facilitator getting to know the participants and vice versa.
4. Measures of success should be shared, along with intentions, at the start of a project. These may well change as a project develops and any changes to either of these should be made clear and communicated to the group.
5. Outcomes: If the measures of success or the intention is the creation of a tangible object a video, text, performance, sculpture, then the authorship and ownership of

this object must also be agreed upon at the start of the project.

6. Both facilitators and participants should prepare outcomes and there should be room for these to change and develop as a project progresses.
7. Measures of success should be according to the needs of individuals involved and based on a value system agreed by all participants. For example learning to use a video camera, having a conversation and a cup of tea being added once upon and listened to on camera might be equally 'valuable' depending on the needs of the individual.
8. Multiple spaces and moments for feedback should be built into any project and the forms that feedback takes should be varied, agreed collectively and sensitive to the specific needs of the participants.
9. Develop a shared language between participants and facilitators. Avoid acronyms, any terminology or key words should be made clear.
10. Time is key. The relationship between the length of time spent on a project and its efficacy are inextricably linked. Consider exit strategies and the sustainability or legacy of a project at start.

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Fig 2

skill share

(Un)Learning

Organising in a group

Individuals acting as...

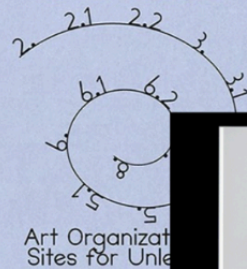


Mate Balasz

References;
Casco - Unlearning (amazing)
Unionisations (tate united etc?) Is this collectivity?

Questions:
How is collab visualised? Is it clear?
Collaboration outside of art sector? In the everyday...

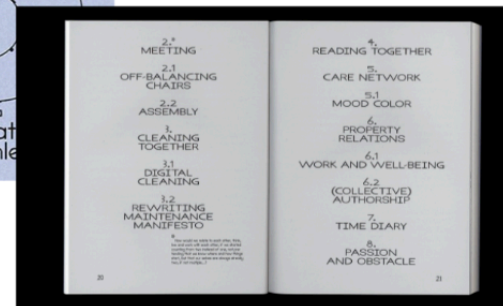
UNLEARNING EXERCISES



Art Organization Sites for Unlearning

How does unlearning come about? What are you unlearning? How 'deep' (systemic/ habit/ behaviour)

Relationship to representation / education...and ultimately awareness/ coming out of yourself?
Do you need collaboration/ collectivity to do this?



It always want to see collab / unlearning visualised / actioned / step by step - what UE do?

Key words:

>Balance
>generous/
inclusive
>actions

ELJ

Questions | Comments | Thoughts | Feelings

Collaboration

Collaboration:

The action of working with someone to produce something.

Collaborator:

A person who cooperates traitorously with an enemy. → There is something in this, the idea of working against a pre-established system of learning. Being a traitor and assisting those to unlearn. Betraying yourself, in the sense of that which as learnt is embedded, in order to unlearn must one betray themselves? Betray the mind, you give information, maybe to trick the mind into unlearning? Once something has been learnt, what does it take to let go/ rewrite/ destroy the learnt thing?

Facilitator

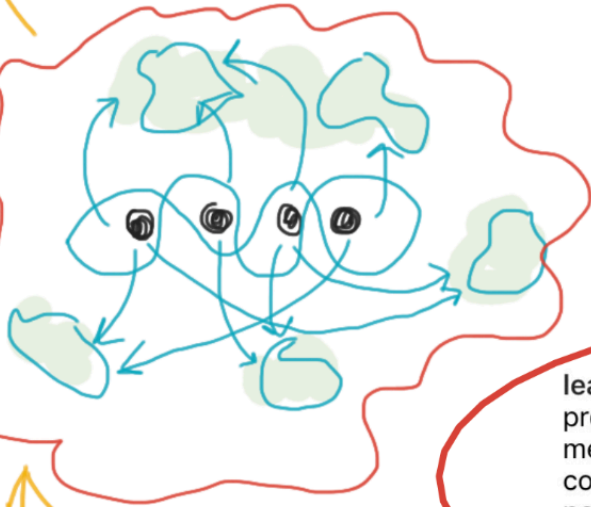
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Collaborator

leap_then_look "When learning is a constructive process the learner is recognised as the maker of meaning and the teacher as the person who constructs learning situations to make this process possible. This is not just a facilitative role but a creative and collaborative one"

Nicholas Addison

Schematic diagram of learning occurring during collaboration. Mapping the learning as a means of uncovering its potential for unlearning. Maybe a comparative analysis will assist?



Learning & Unlearning;

In order to unlearn you must first have undergone the process of learning.
Unlearning is the process of discarding (something learnt) from one's memory.

How does one go about unlearning?
What must one do in order to discard something from their memory?

I imagine it is dependant on what it is that one is seeking to unlearn.

I would presume a number of different paths to take in order to unlearn.
The first of which is retracing your steps. How did you first learn the thing you are wishing to unlearn? Assume this approach and use it as a method of undoing.
Another is assuming a completely different approach; situate yourself in another process and work through this to break the habit of the undesirable thing you wish to unlearn.

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How does learning occur when collaborating?
What does collaborative learning look like?

How can collaboration allow one to unlearn?
Can it be used as an affect methodology in terms of unlearning?

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Unlearning as a letting go of, as a rewriting, as...

Different types of discarding.

How to discard knowledge. You unlearn, undo that which was learnt?

Collaboration – Learning

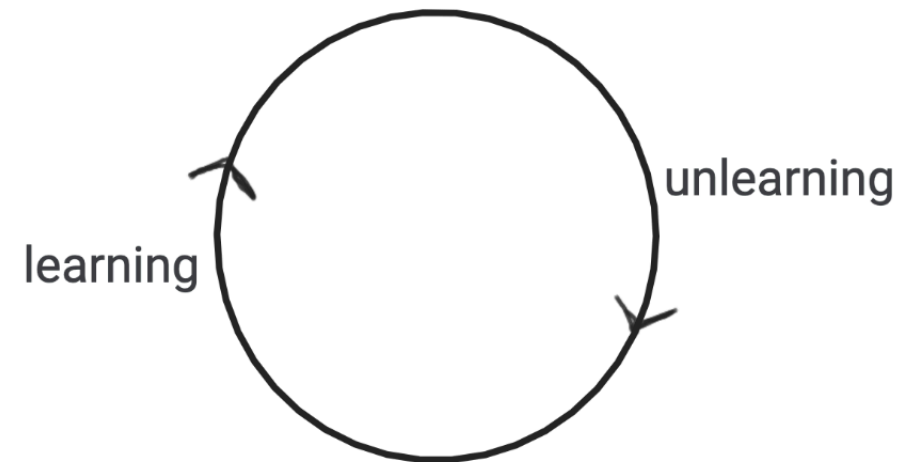
Knowledge is generated by their interaction; it is a direct product of their working together.
Due to this learning is decentralised, it occurs around and between the collaborators. Togetherness is a key element in collaborative learning.

**Get rid of
(someone or
something) as
no longer
useful or
desirable.**

How to get
"rid"
of something

'to clear'

Learning
as a
constructive
process



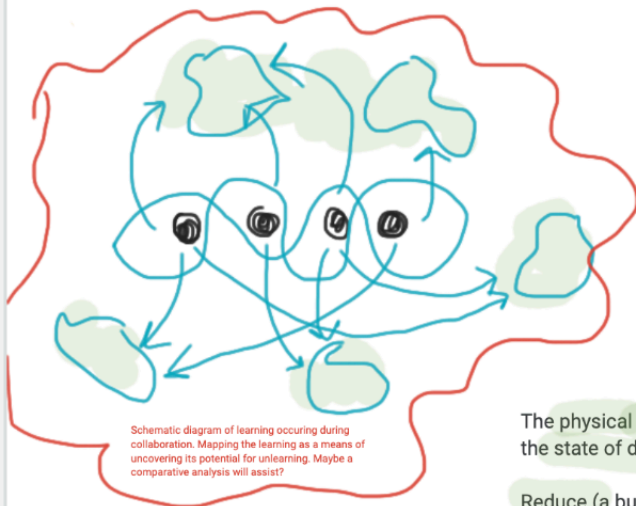
(un)learning
as both learning and unlearning

Collaboration

The action of working with someone to produce something.

Collaborator

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leap_then_look "When learning is a constructive process the learner is recognised as the maker of meaning and the teacher as the person who constructs learning situations to make this process possible. This is not just a facilitative role but a creative and collaborative one"

Nicholas Addison

destructive = unlearning?

The action or process of causing so much damage to something that it no longer exists or cannot be repaired.

The action or process of killing or being killed.

A cause of someone's ruin.

Unlearning as a destructive act, as a maker of ruins, ready for learning to occur.

'heap together'

TEACHER

- ideas or principles taught by an authority.
- impart knowledge to or instruct (someone) as to how to do something.
- give information about or instruction in (a subject or skill).
- cause (someone) to learn or understand something by example or experience.
- encourage someone to accept (something) as a fact or principle.

What happens to learning when you are designated the role "Teacher"?

The physical destruction or disintegration of something or the state of disintegrating or being destroyed.

Reduce (a building or place) to a state of decay, collapse, or disintegration.

Collaboration the framework in which the collaborator occupies a certain state of being.

could occupy a state, it could be tapped into?

learning to follow \neq learning to lead

Power dynamics shift the potential for learning. The learning is situated around the "Teacher" rather than the learner being at the centre of their own learning.

An approach to learning: discouraging someone to accept something. Pushing counter to acceptance, encouraging questions, doubts, independent thinking from the person "Teaching".

Collaboration

Exchange of knowledge / accountability

Collaboration as a pertinent alternative strategy that critiques the single artist or the curator genius which is still prevalent in the art institutions and art markets.

Curatorial groups — such as What, How & for Whom) — consider collectivity as a political stance. In case of collective/ collaborative curating, their curatorial vision is likewise formed by multiple voices, and, hence, co-authorship. Where decision-making and responsibility are accentuated during the realisation of the project.

learn unlearn relearn

"Learning to Unlearn"

"What do we mean by "thinking decolonially"? And, how does it relate to the title, Learning to Unlearn? Is it an expression parallel to many already existing ones: thinking philosophically, thinking economically, or thinking politically, where invariably, an action is invoked ("thinking") and a field in which the act of thinking is performed (economy, philosophy, politics)?"

W. Mignolo & M. Tlostanova

(Un)learning — reflecting and criticising the resources from where the knowledge is received and what forms our individual/collective opinions.

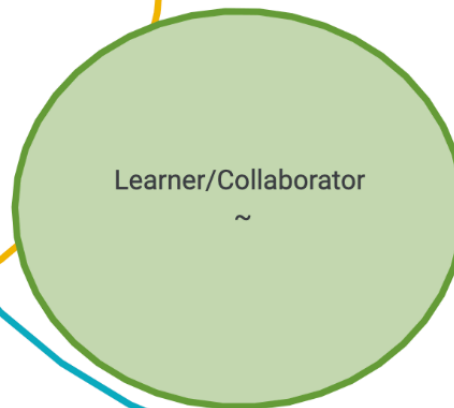
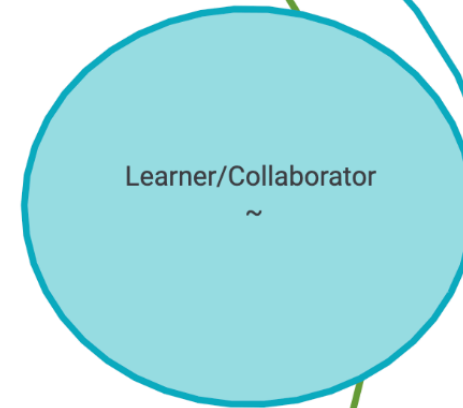
Being critical towards structures within which we developed / grown.

B. Latour "An Attempt at a "Compositionist Manifesto" —
Composing / Decomposing --> it's about sustainable living, human development, thinking and critique towards modernist ideals (that is built on colonialism and neoliberal logic)
(I am however critical of his writing, because he does not acknowledge/reference resources that inform his theories and when he does, they are (most famous) European/American scholars and philosophers)

Decentralisation of
knowledge production.

"we interpret the world
depending on what we
read"

Each Learner/Collaborator contributes to knowledge generation by the process of working WITH. Learning occurs between, around and outside of all Learner/Collaborator. Learning then, is dependant on everyone.



So after our conversation I was browsing and looking for critical texts towards socially engaged and collective practices by having in mind a few questions in mind. One of them "is socially engaged" term is outdated/meaningful? The second "does socially engaged art or collective practices challenge neoliberal logic actually are the products of it?"

23:39

I thought that this short read raises every question and points finger into many issues that exist within the formed model (if one exists at all) of socially engaged art. Some of them Margo and I had a conversation about a while ago. It was about the instrumentalisation of the artist and art to make social change, while it should be the responsibility of a social worker or rather a government.

23:45

But these are just a few thoughts. Also, I was reading a bit about Learning Unlearning and Relearning and how decolonial thinkers embody it.

23:50

Questions | Comments | Thoughts | Feelings

I envision we will meet three times via video call before the event itself.

The first call can be utilised to talk through the topic (collaboration, with a particular focus on its potential in terms of (un)learning) in a loose way. It is my hope that this will illuminate key areas of interest, which we can then use to generate workable parameters. This will also enable us to collectively define key terms such as collaboration, (un)learning, and any others that may arise! By doing this we will set up a fixed framework in which we can operate and the conversation can develop.

The second call would give us an opportunity to discuss things further and allow us to firm up what we would collectively like to focus on during the conversation. The third call would be to again discuss the conversation more, problem solve and test out the technical side of things - if necessary!

As already mentioned the conversation will unfold over Instagram Live. I propose it appropriates the format of a round table, although I am open to alternative suggestions. I imagine we will engage in a free flowing conversation that can be gently guided along by questions, prompts, and provocations. These will most likely be balanced between the predetermined and spontaneous.

As for the structure of the Live, I was thinking introductions, both to the Collective and the participants, plus a short intro to the conversation itself; this is where we can relay the framework. Then the conversation will occur, and towards the end we can move to questions from the audience. I was thinking that we could have an opened ended conclusion. Rather than a destination it could act as a point of departure - I would love to hear your thoughts on this and discuss it with you all.

Thank you for all this detail, we really look forward to discussing the details, conversation topics, etc, of our Instagram live in more depth with you. It would be great to discuss the format of the live as we love the idea of leaving it open, as much of our work is participatory, there is definitely something in ending with an audience member's question/ idea/ response to some of the areas/themes we discuss. Again, let's chat more on this via zoom.

This Reader was compiled by the following contributors of *(Un)learning through Collaboration?*

[illegible]

conversations with artists
Revolv Collective X Under Exposed
28th of June - 4th of July 2021

