

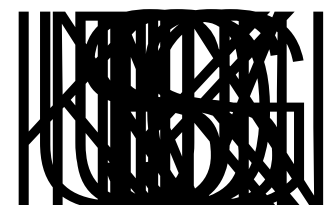
THINGS THAT MIGHT BE TRUE

Artistic Reflection

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ABSTRACT

My PhD project, ‘Things That Might Be True’, is based on Carl DiSalvo’s concept of adversarial design (DiSalvo 2012), which differentiates between ‘design for politics’ and ‘political design’. DiSalvo defines the former as design that simplifies and streamlines people’s electoral actions and interactions with municipalities, healthcare, and the government. ‘Political design’, on the other hand, sparks debate, problematises, and suggests new ways of exploring specific themes and concepts. DiSalvo’s concept is built on Chantal Mouffe’s distinction between ‘politics’ and ‘the political’.

I set out to question DiSalvo’s dichotomy. Through practical experiments, I expanded and processed adversarial design. My goal was to challenge the prevailing ideas in society on how citizens (should) connect with their inner political lives.

My project examined how visual communication design might help devise new methods and tools for the public to approach politics, and, by extension, expand the conversation about democracy on a personal as well as societal level. Through public engagement, dialogue, discussion, and introspection, I explored ways for citizens to listen to and connect with their inner political voice.

I conducted four participatory sub-projects: the lecture series ‘Things That Might Be True’; the *Voices* publication; the Inner Political Landscapes collage-making workshop; and the Political Confession workshop.

The findings of these four experiments led to the development and materialisation of a fictional new department: the Stemme Department. The department’s activities display the artistic outcome of my PhD project and illustrate how people can come together to reflect and engage in dialogue with their political selves. In early March 2024, the Stemme Department’s activities will be presented at Bergen Storsenter and Bergen Public Library during a four-day event, which will include an exhibition, a workshop, and lectures.

My project expanded the dichotomy of adversarial design by suggesting the concept adopt an additional category: ‘political, political design’. Through an ambiguous and empathetic design practice, this additional category would mirror and borrow characteristics from both design for politics and political design.

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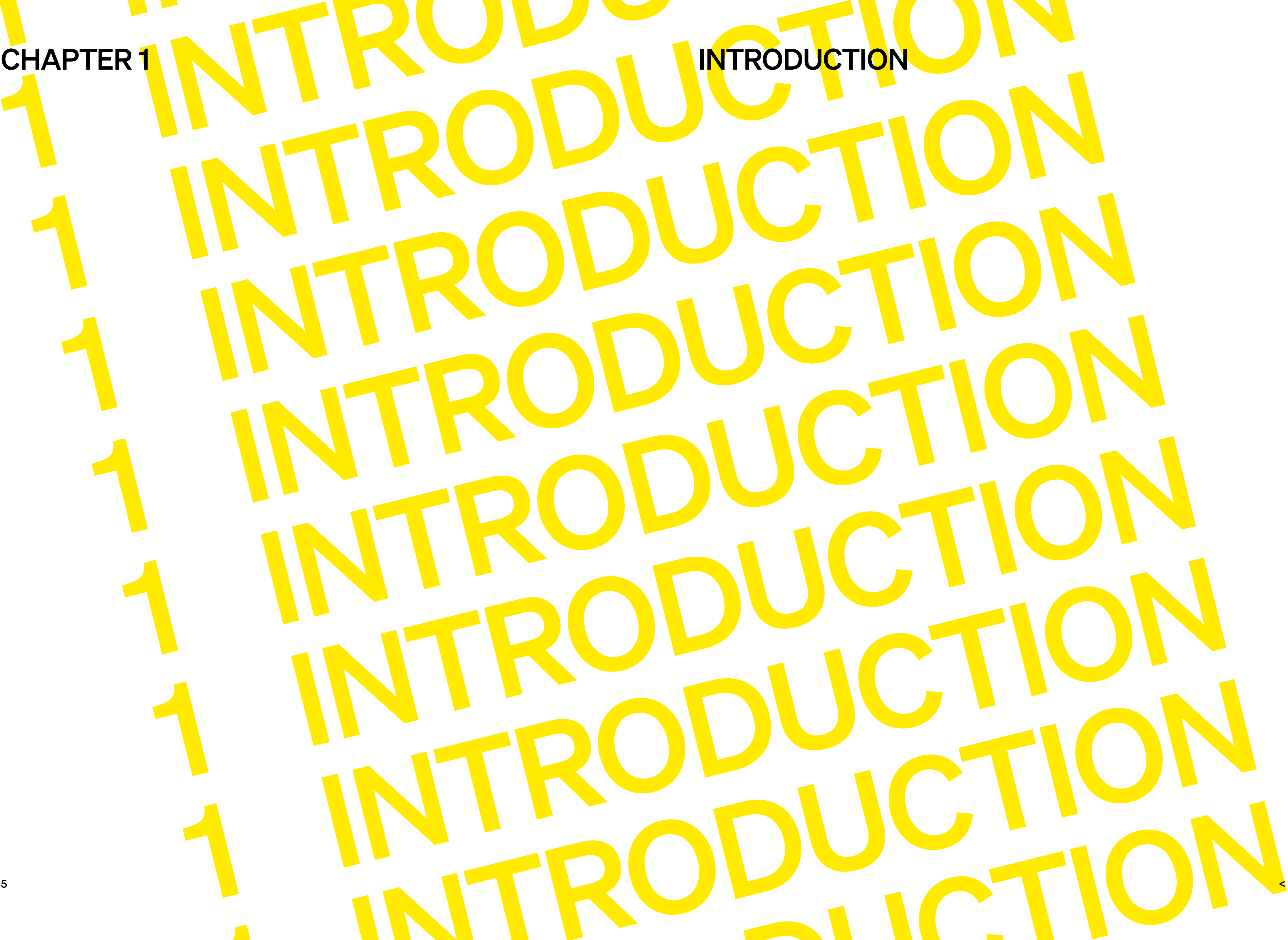
A big thank you to all participants— to all the brave citizens who shared their inner, political landscapes, dilemmas and ideas. Without participants, no project.

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

A decade ago, I made a decision to really examine my political convictions. I thought that a vote compass¹ would offer me some clarity. This was right before an election, during which all major newspapers and Norway's public service offered different digital vote compasses. Filling in the compass's questions almost felt like taking a personality assessment. I carefully ticked boxes and responded honestly and candidly. My result emerged as a diagram with two axes, along which Norway's major political parties were positioned. Seeing my own position in relation to these parties, however, I faced a dilemma: my stance appeared to fall outside the spectrum of available parties. My response hovered somewhere on the diagram, far from rigid ideologies and mainstream parties with meticulously crafted platforms. My political identity turned out to be a blend of different ideologies, with elements of both the right and left, conservative, liberal, and progressive. This revelation undoubtedly spoke volumes about myself at that time: I was politically homeless. But it also underscored the challenge of navigating one's political compass. How can citizens truly engage with political issues? Traditional avenues like news media and debates are one approach. Some find solace in discussing politics with friends or colleagues, others find it daunting to do so. Scrutinising party programmes directly is another approach. And then there are our families and cultural influences, both of which shape our perceptions of society and politics. All of these sources—news media, social circles, our family, party platforms—help us understand politics and political parties. But amid this plethora of external influences, the question remains: how can we understand our true political convictions without filtering our ideas through news, family, friends, and party programmes?

'Things That Might Be True' is an artistic research project that challenges the prevailing ideas on how we (should) engage with our personal thoughts on politics. Visual communication and graphic design have traditionally been closely intertwined with politics, through logos, colours, identities, posters, leaflets, and propaganda. But design is more than just form. It is more

than colour, more than what the eye can see, even when we talk about *visual* communication. The theme I worked with is broad. Visual communication is broad, as are the terms ‘politics’, ‘democracy’, and ‘participation’. My practice is broad as well, but despite all this breadth, I want to broaden the concept of visual communication even further—to explore the expanded field of visual communication. Traditionally, visual communication has been two-dimensional. It includes graphic design and illustration, but also animation, digital design, and interaction design. In my practice, I chose to also include a third dimension—space—and the people who can inhabit these spaces. Objects too were important in my practice; the shapes we touch, sit on, interact with, and look at.

This project was set in a Norwegian context, which is why the construction of my study demanded a certain closeness to citizens. To stimulate conversation between the actors in my project and to give those conversations the attention and understanding they deserved, a common horizon of understanding of the Norwegian political system was crucial.

Even though my study looked closely at democratic processes (the political as well as politics – (Mouffe 2000, 101), it operated neither within the field of democratic design nor that of design for democracy, but rather in the realm of agonistic pluralism. Whereas democratic design focuses primarily on improving mechanisms of participation and consensus in politics and political systems, agonistic pluralism is concerned with revealing and challenging hegemony (Disalvo 2010). Where democratic design seeks answers, agonistic pluralism embraces ambiguity, the plurality in answers and the multitude of voices.

There are seemingly obvious connections between visual communication and politics, as exemplified by propaganda. One of the most notorious examples is the branding of Hitler's Nazi movement in the 1930s and 1940s. I did not explore propaganda in my project, however: the topic is so broad that it is a field of its own, which I had neither the time nor space to study.

To eliminate any concerns and to clarify this study’s contents, I want to be transparent about my own political biases and beliefs. I personally believe in open societies that allow for free thought and free speech. In my opinion, the job of a healthy democracy is to facilitate conversation, debate, and exchanges of opinion. My belief is primarily based on the idea that the opposite would be dangerous and devastating: not being allowed to express what one believes in, especially if one goes against mainstream opinion. I am not an activist, however, at least not in the conventional sense of the word. I do not participate in demonstrations, but I do believe that the right to do so is of the utmost importance. In their book *Därför demokrati*², Åsa and Morten Wikforss write:

*If we are to protect democracy, it is crucial that we understand both what we risk losing and what danger that would pose. Part of the issue is that it matters what we do. Democracy is the only form of government that wisely places its destiny in the hands of its citizens (2021, 15, translated by Rundberg).*³

2 The title can be translated as *Therefore Democracy*.

3 The original quote in Swedish reads “Om vi ska kunna skydda demokratin är det avgörande att vi förstår både vad vi riskerar att förlora och hur farorna ser ut. För det hör till saken att det spelar roll vad vi gör. Demokratin är det enda styrelseskick som med vett och vilja lägger sitt öde i medborgarnas händer.”

Throughout this study, the idea of the inner political landscape emerged. So what does my own inner political landscape look like? What biotope do I belong to myself? I would say that my inner political landscape is quite jungle-like: tall trees that have grown strong since I was a child, planted by my parents, cast shadows. These shadows are both good and bad: they are comforting, but sometimes make for a rather dark place. Some trees I have had to cut down to liberate myself, others I leave in peace. There are also newly planted areas, with delicate grass growing along newly laid-out paths. Lecturers, friends, and colleagues that I met only recently have dug and sown seeds there. There is a lake, or perhaps a whole sea, filled with questions. Storms often rage, it is rarely calm. Several people live in my inner political landscape. Margaret Thatcher rummages through the undergrowth, jumping out and startling me

with her retorts. She likes to tell people they need to shape up! That everyone should work hard and fulfil their duty. Thatcher has a neighbour: a troublesome Christian conservative who reacts strongly and unexpectedly. This figure suddenly decided it was important to baptise my newborn daughter. This came as a surprise, both to me and those around me. And then there's a third person, a sensitive soul who's concerned about the world, who is unable to watch news reports of war and misery without crying.

This project is based on a Western (and relatively conventional) image and understanding of politics. In the society I grew up and reside in, political governance is linked to a traditional right-left scale, to parliamentarism, and to national and municipal elections every four years. As my project revolved around design, participation, and the multifaceted potential of design, my overarching design intention was to:

Challenge the prevailing ideas in society on how citizens (should) connect to their inner political life.

RESEARCH QUESTION	How can an expanded visual communication practice be used to provoke political introspection?	
AIMS	–	Contribute to the understanding of how publics and communities are constructed and gathered to engage in reflection on and dialogue about the political self
	–	Contribute to the discussion on how to examine and explore the practical use of the concept of adversarial design in artistic research
OBJECTIVES	(1)	To identify gaps in our understanding of the theoretical models of political design and adversarial design practice.
	(2)	To explore potential ways for individuals to uncover their political beliefs and values.
	(3)	To suggest and test possible settings and tools to for political introspection.

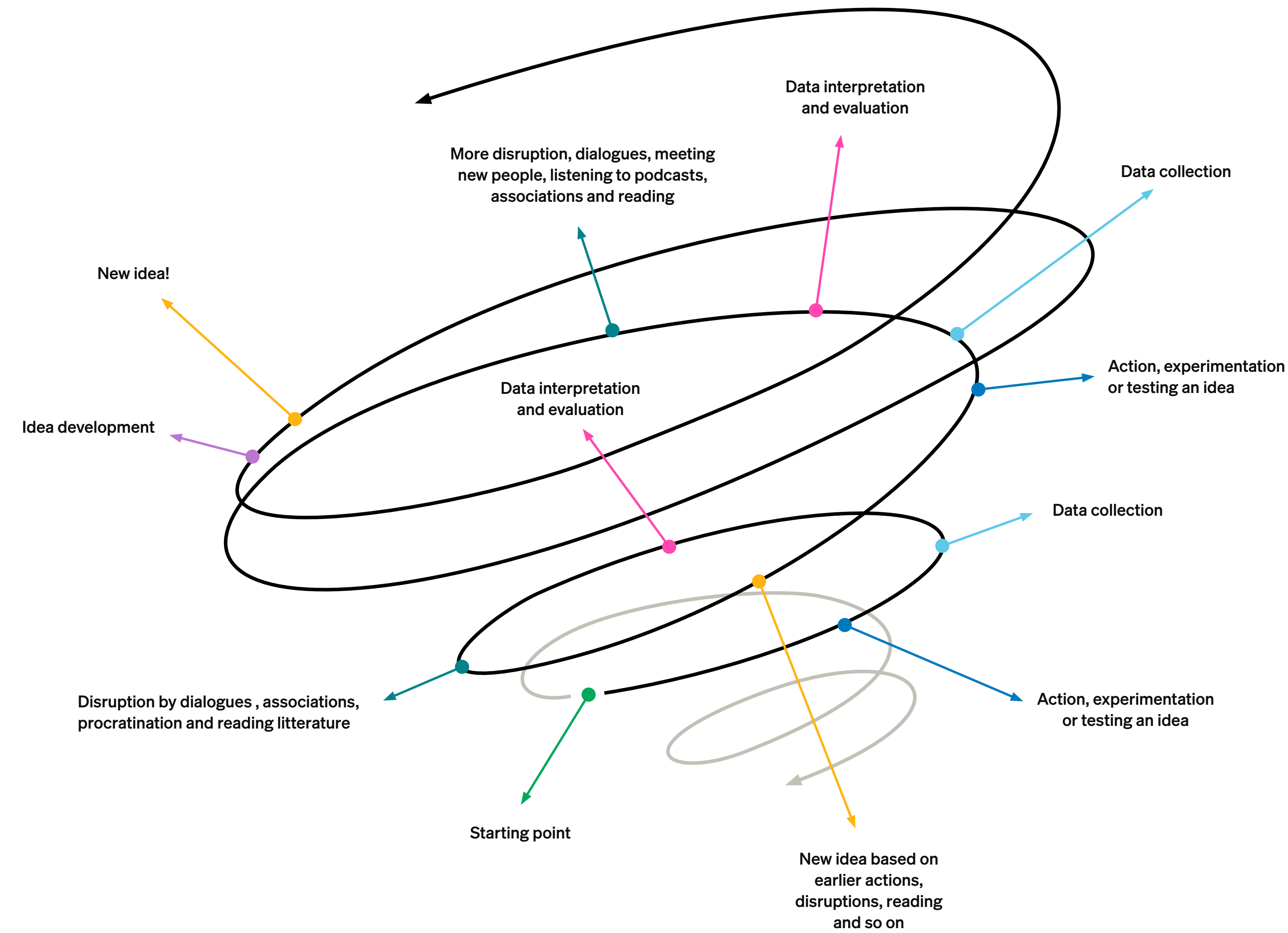
1.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
AND DESIGN PRACTICE

This is a qualitative study in artistic research, realised through design (Frayling 1993/94, 12–15)—specifically through the field of visual communication design. I will start by describing my study’s framework by its hermeneutic principles and then specify the project’s core methodology, that is: its participatory and discursive design approaches.

As a designer, a crucial part of my work is fully engaging with the materials I gather, to better understand the design context I am immersed in. During my project, I designed several practical explorations, met with participants and experts, read literature, organised workshops and discussions, collected and organised tactile objects, developed and finetuned ideas, and did hands-on design work, like drawing, printing, sewing, doing graphic design, and so on. Artistic research lets one use a wide range of methods; I would consider all of the above ‘my materials’ and the design situation of this project. A typical progression in artistic research projects is for the project to begin with an area of interest rather than a specific question (Murphy 2014, 181). In this project, the initial focus was to explore the question of why we vote as we do in political elections, using artistic research. Over time, the perspective has gradually shifted and become more specific, centring on how design empowers individuals to engage in political introspection, discussion, and conversation.

Hermeneutics is the theoretical science of interpretation. While hermeneutics initially only focused on the interpretation of text, it eventually evolved to include all types of situations that include dialogue and interpretation. The connection between hermeneutics and dialogue was mainly developed by Gadamer (Gamlund 2016, 55). Hermeneutists believed that one’s understanding of something (a text, an object, a relationship, a situation) constantly changes. The concept of the hermeneutical circle or spiral is used to visually illustrate how understanding is created from different perspectives. The interpreter’s position constantly shifts either upward or downward, as shown in figure 1.1. Our interpretation is influenced by the surrounding world, by encounters and conversations with other people, experiences, (new) lines of thought, etc. Therefore, our understanding of something is in constant movement, as we oscillate between focusing on a part or the whole (Snodgrass and Coyne 1996, 73).

Figure 1.1 The study from a hermeneutical spiral perspective, model by Ingrid Rundberg.



To understand the design situation and core of my subject, I invited people to take part in my project. Sometimes, they were participants in a conversation or discussion, answering questions and/or performing action. At other times, the people I invited were experts in a certain field, employed by a university. Still other people were simply passers-by, members of the audience, or simply people who in one way or another were interested in the theme of my study. These kinds of activities are generally referred to as ‘participatory design’. There are many theoretical definitions of participatory design. Here is Simonsen and Robertson’s:

...a process of investigating, understanding, reflecting upon, establishing, developing, and supporting mutual learning between multiple participants in collective ‘reflection-in-action’ (2013, 2).

My physical encounters with participants occurred as I conducted workshops or events—the lecture series ‘Things That Might Be True’, Multiplum!, and the Inner Political Landscapes and Political Confession workshops. My creative work moved from my studio to other venues, where it established spaces for introspection, dialogue, and discussion. By interacting with participants, new types of questions and interpretations of situations emerge. The creative practice serves as a tool to challenge individuals to interpret and decipher the actual situation of the event. My practical experiments subsequently led to new insights and new ideas to incorporate into my project.

1.3 ETHICS

The ethical issues I considered during this project fall into three main categories: (1) protecting participants’ identities, while at the same time (2) highlighting and crediting them and their valuable contributions to the study, and (3) deciding who is or isn’t allowed to participate in the project.

In Chapter 4, I will discuss a series of ethical issues related to each specific practical experiment. A sub-chapter discusses a specific incident, whereby an unknown person (the Scribbler) tried to join my project by writing on a poster. The event forced me to grapple with the dilemma of who to include or exclude in my project, which led to a discussion on how to conduct my research in a democratic manner.

In terms of participants’ anonymity, I tested two distinct approaches. In the *Voices* publication, participants’ real names are used; in the Inner Political Landscapes and Political Confession workshops, they remained anonymous.

For each experiment that required it, I also drafted and used consent forms. I asked the experts involved in my project to sign contracts, to make sure they would know exactly how I would be using their content. All consent forms and contracts (plus other physical materials produced by participants) are stored in a safe at the Faculty Administration.

1.4 WRITING

This reflective text serves multiple purposes. Firstly, it will help readers understand the process of my PhD project, the experiments I conducted and the ideas they were based on. Throughout this study new knowledge generated by through these experiments—a contribution to artistic research in the expanded field of visual communication design. The text was written according to the standard academic structure, with an introduction, summaries for each chapter, footnotes, meta-text, and a bibliography.

Perhaps, however, this reflective text does not fully reflect reality. It accurately represents how I conducted my project, sure. But confusion, uncertainty, hubris, and perhaps some of the more direct and intuitive aspects of my work have been lost as this text has been polished, rewritten, and proofread. I wrote quite a bit of text during my project, mostly on Post-it notes. I wrote down thoughts I didn’t want to forget, ideas, lists, things I saw or heard in a podcast, hastily drawn pie charts with circles and arrows to show how things, ideas, design, and society were connected. My relationship with these notes is stereotypical, but partly truthful parody of a designer. Isn’t the Post-it note the ultimate symbol of ‘a designer’? With their black T-shirts and white sneakers, designers are easy to spot. Words written by hand on notes are still writing—and there are plenty such notes in this project. They represent the repetitive and the quick. The same thoughts are thought again and again, with some ideas sprouting from a single word. Some of these words written on notes stayed with me throughout the project. I tested, discussed, changed, and tested them again, until they eventually materialised as physical and full-scale responses to a question.

In this reflective text, some parts are more personal. On these pages, the reader gets glimpses of inner characters. It is difficult for me to know if these characters are a part of me or a part of the project. What is clear is that it is the project that brought them to life. Some of these characters are welcome, while I wanted others to reside in the shadows.

This text was originally written in Swedish, after which it was translated into English. Eva Corijn then edited and proofread it. The area of design that interest me the most have all been written about exclusively in English. None of the concepts I work with—‘adversarial design’, ‘critical design’, ‘speculative design’, and ‘discursive design’—have been transferred and translated into Swedish or Norwegian so far.

1.5 PRINTING

I printed all the visual materials for my project with risograph printers—one A3 (SE 9380-e) and two A2 machines. A risograph printer is a machine that allows you to duplicate anything that is printable on paper: images, text, illustrations, photos, editorial design, etc. Outwardly, risographs resemble photocopiers, but they have a very mechanical interior. Behind the machine’s front door, there is a drum filled with ink, a paper feeder (usually with rolling rubber wheels), and a fan that pushes the paper out through a slot and into a collection basket. Risography is a type of stencil-duplicating technique. A stencil is a printing matrix which, in this case, consists of a very thin, coated paper with perforated holes, through which the drum’s ink is squeezed onto the paper. Each layer of colour is printed separately, and each colour has its own drum. To print something in three colours, for example, the paper has to pass through the printer thrice. The ink drum is replaced three times, and each drum requires its own stencil.

The first risograph as we know it today was brought on the market in 1984, by the Japanese company Riso Kagaku Corporation. Several technological breakthroughs preceded that moment. In the mid-1800s, the American company Edison unveiled its Electric Pen and Duplicating Press, followed by the Mimeograph in 1887. Around the same time, David Gestetner in Europe invented the cyclostyle technique. The process that led up to today’s risograph is chronicled in *Risomania – The New Spirit of Printing* (Komurki 2017, 17-41) and *Exploriso: Low-Tech Fine Art* (Tillack 2021, 12-15).

Risograph printing has a distinct style, and clear advantages. These include the direct and tactile expression. The risograph’s ink also contributes to the material experience. The printing process allows the designer to remain in control of their material throughout the design-to-print process—a very different experience than sending files to a printing house! Of course, the risograph also has disadvantages, including its annoyingly poor ability to achieve perfect registration, ink that never fully dries and thus smudges, and the fact that the machine’s rubber wheels can leave marks on the print if more than one layer needs to be printed (as is often the case). Learning how to manage these disadvantages is crucial if one wants to become proficient in risograph printing. Creating designs that prevent the rubber wheels from hitting the wet ink, for example, or understanding how to treat images and typography to maintain a certain crispness all require practice. As with any other craft, it will take a great deal of trial and error to truly master risograph printing.

Chapter 6 presents some of today’s best risograph printers. These past three decades, Joyce Guley and Jan Dirk de Wilde of Knust Press (Knust) In Nijmegen, the Netherlands have devoted most of their time to risographs, risograph printing, and pre-press for risography. Guley and de Wilde were the ones who performed the colour separations and printed the *Voices* publication for my project. Both are living legends. Their meticulousness and attention to detail are evident in their work on *Voices*.

I have a great deal of love for the risograph, or perhaps because of its perpetual faults and flaws. Dear risograph, all is forgiven.

1.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I established the fundamental concepts of my study. I described my personal approach to the project and my overarching definition of ‘politics’, and explained what the expanded field of visual communication entails. I also discussed how the hermeneutic approach influenced my work, a theme I will revisit at several points in the text. Additionally, I outlined my writing and printing practices, both of which are distinct crafts. Finally, I presented my research question, aims, and objectives, to clarify the direction in which this study will head.

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WORKING IN A
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02 WORKING IN A STUDIO,
TALKING TO A WALL

I do most of my work in a studio. It’s hard for me to work anywhere else, because my studio has everything I need: worktables, chairs, a computer, pens, paper, a kettle, cups, and books. My work tends to be a combination of planned and intuitive activities. During the planned parts, I work towards clear goals: I send emails, do admin, draw, create prototypes, arrange events, design and plan publications, etc. When I work more intuitively, I don’t necessarily do different things; I do, however, work at a different pace. Slower, in a more exploratory way.

My mind is quietly whirring in the background while my body carries out practical tasks. Donald Schön’s writings reinforce my belief that the creative process is inherently complex. It involves numerous variables, potential combinations, and final outcomes. What makes things so intriguing is that the artistic result will thoughtfully represent all these choices in a distinctly visible way (1991, 79). The materialisation of the artistic outcome can be traced back to work the artist did in their studio. My own studio, for example, contains the artifacts I used in the Inner Political Landscapes workshop. It is a space for collecting material and processing ideas.

The most important objects in my studio are the walls, especially one in particular. I tend to talk to this wall and with the material that is attached to it. The book *Discursive Design* contains a very broad definition of the word ‘discourse’:

Discourses are composed by ideas, values, attitudes, and beliefs that are, as mentioned above, manifested through various forms of writing, speaking, gesturing, and acting through objects and technologies (Tharp and Tharp 2018, 76).

My wall dialogue started early on in my project. My first studio was long and narrow, with one wall measuring more than seven metres. There was a window with a view: I could see the cemetery, whose trees are pruned in a way that calls to mind the sylvan silhouettes on the hills surrounding Rome. It’s a view that made me want to daydream, to escape into fantasy. I first realised how important my dialogue with this wall was when

I was asked to write about my PhD work (Rundberg 2020) for *Ymt*, an annual magazine put together by Visual Communication Design students at the Department of Design. *Ymt* is part of a research-based teaching course in Editorial Design. The title of the article I wrote was ‘All I have to do and (almost) everything I have done so far: First 6 months’.

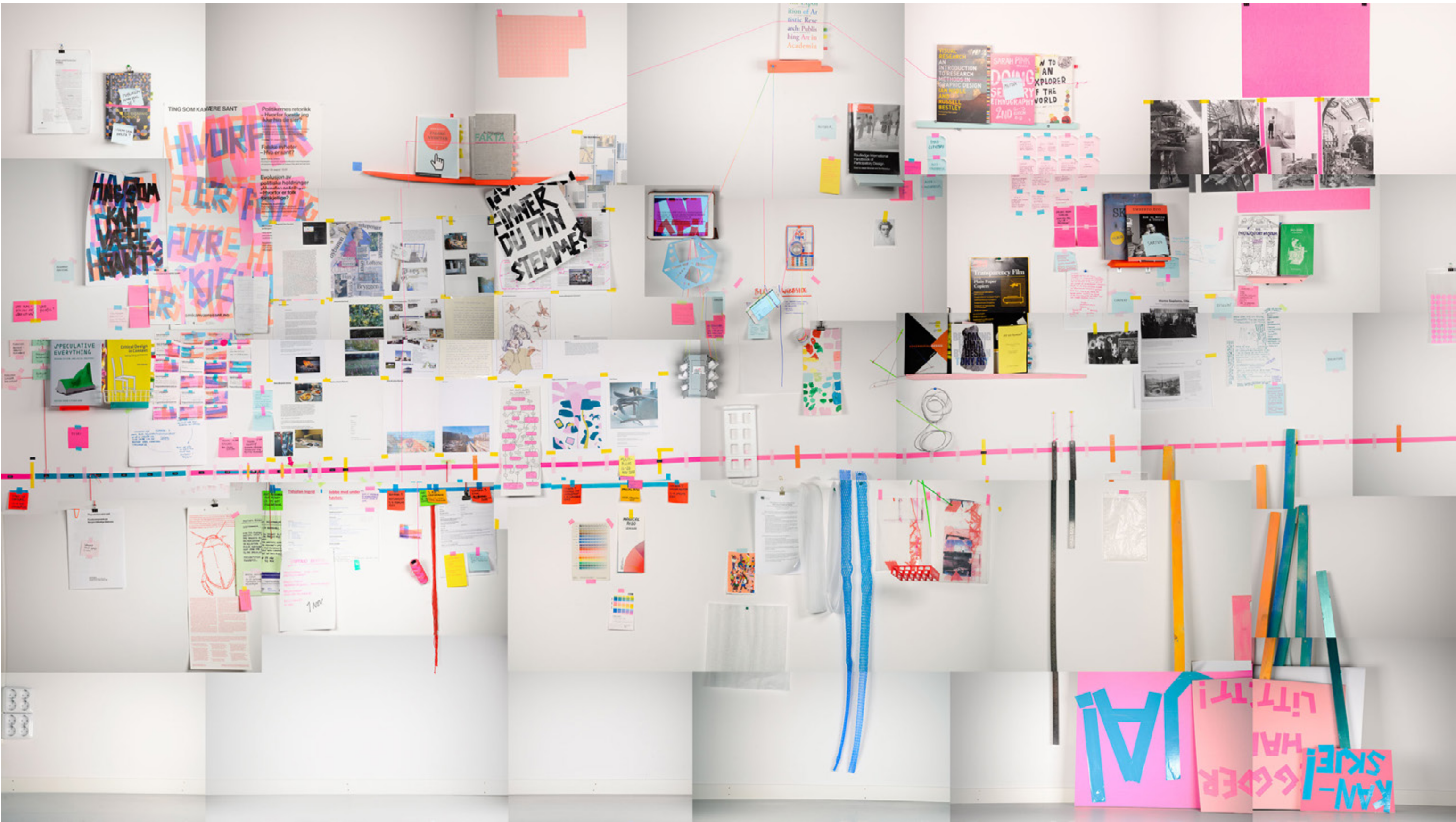


Figure 2.1 Conversation partner, 2019. Photo: Vilde Volland and Caroline Thanh Tran.

Vilde Valland and Caroline Thanh Tran, two students, photographed and documented (fig. 2.1) the wall for the magazine, while I wrote the actual article. For the article's accompanying image, I designed a matrix that was printed onto the image of the wall, where the research material was grouped, numbered, and sorted. The magazine was beautifully designed by the students in the course, and printed on transparent paper (fig. 2.2-13), which made the images and the text blend into each other.



Figure 2.2–2.13 Article: All I have to do and (almost) everything I have done so far: First 6 months’.

Photo: Øystein Klakegg

All I have to do and (almost) everything I have done (so far): first 6 months



The image that accompanied the article became a starting point for me to continue my conversation with the wall—with my notes, objects, papers, books, shelves, hand-drawn diagrams, strings, tape, etc. The wall’s main element was a timeline, with a one-month mark every ten centimetres. I often think about Karel Martens and his walls. This Dutch designer, born in 1939, also seems to have a lot of things in his studio. He’s a collector of things, of trinkets. Portraits of him are often taken in his studio, against the backdrop of his infamous walls. Martens has made a short film (Martens 2000) about the walls of his studio,⁴ with still images cut into sequences. The camera zooms in and out of old newspaper clippings, bits of plastic, colour swatches, print proofs, paper bags, patterns. A drum beats in the back-ground. Just like I do, Martens engages in dialogue with his walls and his things. He thinks about shapes, collects items. By sharing his wall-work with us, he invites us to participate in his art—a process that leaves me feeling awestruck.

The walls in my own studio (both the one I occupy now and the ones I worked from earlier on in the project) serve multiple functions. They allow me to organise my material and make sense of work through visual communication (fig. 2.14).

I am reminded of things that are out of sight, things that have disappeared into the periphery. Everything is visible at all times. I can search for things even when I’m not quite sure what I’m looking for. During my PhD project, my tutors monitored my process: I had put up portraits of them on the wall. The dialogical process helps me understand themes, contexts, situations. What have I come across here? What is the common denominator between, say, a small sculpture of a state archive and a plastic snack-bar fork? Donald Schön describes ‘reflection-in-action’:

He [the designer] shapes the situation, in accordance with his initial appreciation of it, the situation ‘talks back’, and he responds to the situation’s back-talk (1991, 79).

The walls are a filter through which a project is repeatedly refined. Over the course of my project, I had three different studios. Multiple documentations of these studios’ walls are stored in the Research Catalogue.⁵ These photos and photo montages clearly illustrate the hermeneutical process within my project: they demonstrate that my view was never static.

The first image I uploaded to the Research Catalogue (Rundberg 2019b) was the one used for *Ymt* magazine. The Research Catalogue process page (Rundberg 2022) allowed me to digitally continue my wall dialogue, even when I moved to a new studio. The archived digital versions of the walls offered me a different perspective on what I was doing, which can be difficult to achieve in an actual studio in real life. Digitalisation creates distance. I could suddenly compare previous versions of previous walls with the wall of the studio I occupied that day. When I scrolled back through these past images, I could see that some of my wall’s Post-it notes had been with me from day one, for example. The entire process was clearly ambiguous, and rarely logical or linear.

The artistic work conducted during this study fits into different categories:

The studio (as a whole), the wall—a dialogue between me, the analogue and the digital, and an outward-oriented practice.

To further delve into the Research Catalogue process page—take a look [here](#).

4 The film is also available as a book, entitled *Motion* (Martens, Peeters, and Fitzpatrick 2017).

5 The Research Catalogue is a non-commercial, searchable database of artistic research. It is owned by the Society for Artistic Research.

Figure 2.14 Conversation partner 2020.
Photo: Bjarte Bjørkum





3.1 INTRODUCTION

This Contextual Review chapter explores the context of my PhD project, by presenting an overview of the ideas of the political thinkers that the project is based on. I also introduce the project’s underlying design perspectives: discursive design and adversarial design. The former focuses on facilitating discussion and reflection and generating public debate (Tharp and Tharp 2018, 7), while the latter distinguishes between political design and design for politics (DiSalvo 2012, 8). In this chapter, I will challenge the duality of adversarial design and advocate a more nuanced concept. I present a new, additional category for DiSalvo’s theory: political, political design.

Between the first and second half of the chapter, I share my personal perspective on the design work of Nelly Ben Hayoun.

The chapter then introduces several designers with a political agenda who are currently active. I examine their distinct approaches to artistic research: there is the ‘design-as-experience’ approach (Ben-Hayoun); an approach that explores the relationship between state institutions and citizens (Ericson, Ben-Hayoun, and Herregraven); and an approach that investigates the potential of participatory design and collectively created narratives (DeVet). The chapter catalogues ideas and concepts that have influenced the study from a political and designerly perspective. In this chapter these ideas are presented through sketches, drawings, notes and through images of the wall described in Chapter 2. All these materials stem from practical work I did in my studio and/or workshops I conducted in public.

3.2 POLITICAL THEORIES

To gain a better understanding of the ideas and beliefs that underly today’s political system(s), I took a course in Political Ideologies at the University of Bergen. The course introduced me to the five overarching Western political ideologies: liberalism, conservatism, communism, socialism, and fascism. I got to know twenty political thinkers: from Socrates (°460 BC) to key historical figures like Marx, Stalin, Lenin, and Hitler, and finally philosopher and business professor Jason Brennan (°1979.) To make sense of my new knowledge (fig. 3.1), I drew portraits of these men, connected their texts and most important contributions to these portraits, and strung up the result in my studio (fig. 3.2-21, and 3.22).

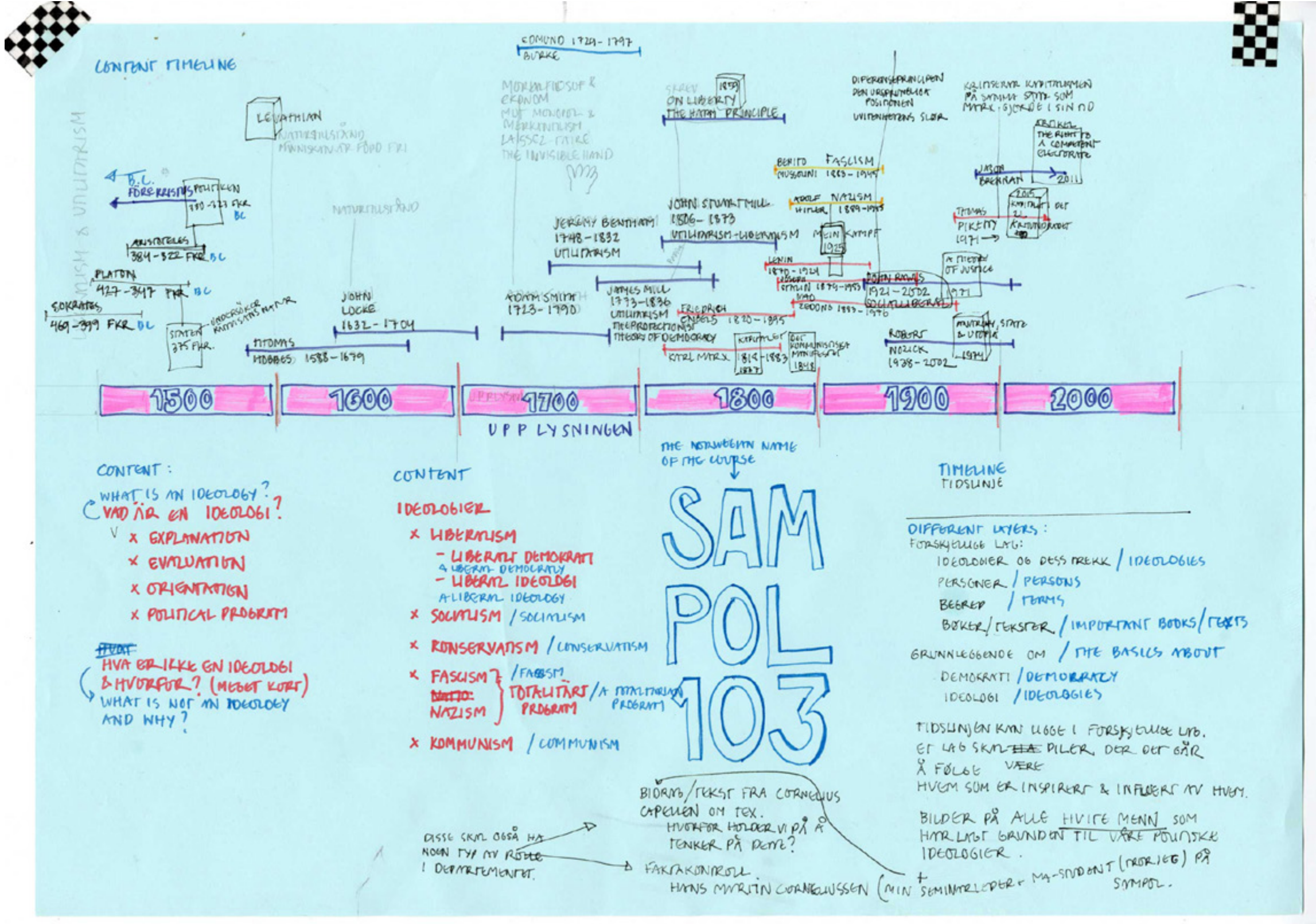


Fig. 3.1 Dealing with political philosophy, sketch.



Socrates
469 B.C.–399 B.C.

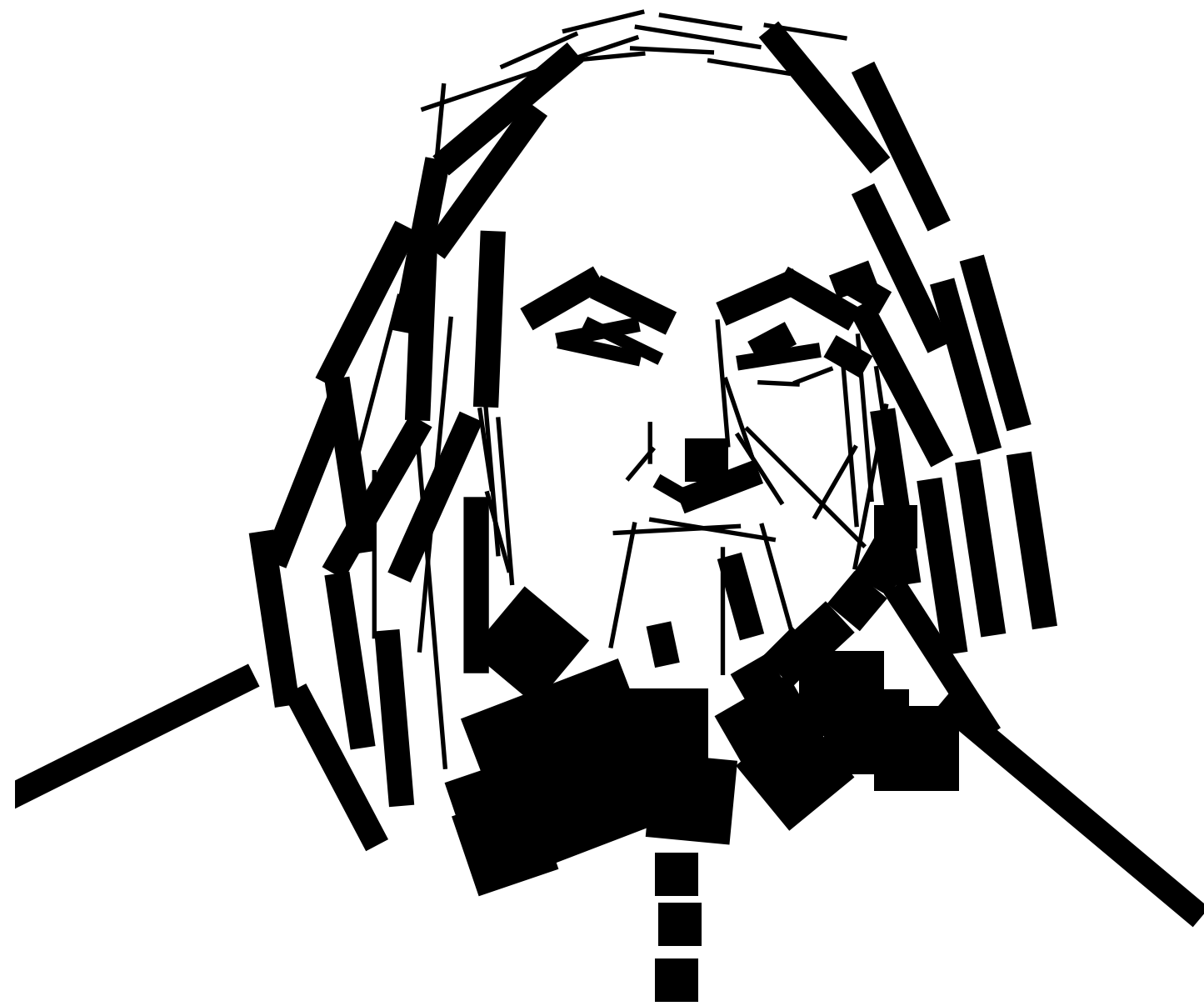


Platon
428 B.C.–347 B.C.



Aristotle
384 B.C.–322 B.C.

Fig. 3.2-4 Political thinkers, 2500 years of white men.
Portraits by Ingrid Rundberg.



Thomas Hobbes
1599–1679



John Locke
1632–1704



Adam Smith
1723–1790

Fig. 3.5-7 Political thinkers, 2500 years of white men.
Portraits by Ingrid Rundberg.



Edmund Burke
1729–1797



Jeremy Bentham
1748–1832



John Stuart Mill
1806–1873

Fig. 3.8-10 Political thinkers, 2500 years of white men.
Portraits by Ingrid Rundberg.



Karl Marx
1818–1883



Friedrich Engels
1820–1895



Vladimir Lenin
1870–1924

Fig. 3.11-13 Political thinkers, 2500 years of white men.
Portraits by Ingrid Rundberg.



Josef Stalin
1878–1953



Benito Mussolini
1883–1945



Adolf Hitler
1889–1945

Fig. 3.14-16 Political thinkers, 2500 years of white men.
Portraits by Ingrid Rundberg.



Mao Zedong
1893–1976



John Rawls
1921–2002



Robert Nozick
1938–2002

Fig. 3.17-19 Political thinkers, 2500 years of white men.
Portraits by Ingrid Rundberg.



Thomas Piketty
1971–



Jason Brennan
1979–

Fig. 3.20-21 Political thinkers, 2500 years of white men.
Portraits by Ingrid Rundberg.

One thing stood out to me during the course in Political Ideologies: I came to understand that, throughout history, some men tried to make political elections harder for others. In *The Right to a Competent Electorate*, Jason Brennan (fig. 3.21) argues that democracies should adopt “a modest epistocratic position” (2011, 701)—‘epistocracy’ meaning “rule by the knowledgeable” (Brennan 2017, 14). Brennan suggests all voters should have to pass a test to get permission to vote, because ignorance, according to Brennan, is problematic in voters:

Voters, regardless of whether they have selfish or altruistic motives, have little incentive to be well informed about politics, or even to form their political beliefs in a rational way. Voters are rationally ignorant, and perhaps even rationally irrational (2011, 710).

Personally, I find the idea that people would have to pass a test to get permission to vote highly problematic: it is both non-democratic and elitist. Who would develop such a test? Who would benefit from it, and who would lose? Brennan’s arguments hark back to Plato (fig. 3.3), who argued that the State should be governed by wise men, preferably philosophers (Cappelen and Cappelen 2020, 186).

The course also gave me insight into the foundational concepts that our collective political consciousness rests on it, the origins of ideologies and their conceptual frameworks, the cyclical recurrence of political ideas, and the fact that ideas verbalised 2,500 years ago (can) still influence us to this day.



Fig. 3.22 Political thinkers on a string, studio view (centre left).

Photo: Bjarte Bjørkum

3.3 AN INNER POLITICAL VOICE

In the runup to Norway’s parliamentary elections in 2021, Bergen’s daily newspaper *Bergens Tidende* published an Op-Ed by David Vogt, postdoctoral fellow in Philosophy at the University of Bergen. His article “Not Sure How to Vote in the Upcoming Election? Ask Your Inner Vote Compass”⁶ (Vogt 2021) introduced readers to three languages of politics: the language of liberty (spoken by libertarians), the language of civilization (spoken by conservatives), and the language of the oppressed (spoken by progressives). It was Arnold Kling who first listed these languages in *The Three Languages of Politics* (2019). In his book, which was written in an American context, Kling talks about a “three-axis model of political communication” (2019, 5). Libertarians want to protect individual choice, conservatives align themselves with civilising institutions like the Church, progressives align themselves with the oppressed (2019, 93). Kling encourages people to be mindful of their language, the words they use, and the conclusions they draw when contemplating and discussing events in the world. The three-axis model is a method to organise and structure one’s thoughts, to become conscious of one’s beliefs, and to learn how to communicate with others who speak a different political language.

The idea that there might be different languages to speak about politics intrigues me. Language is a gateway to our inner world, so we should be conscious of how we use it as a key to our political inner life. There’s something inherently sympathetic about trying to listen to and understand oneself and, by extension, others. French philosopher Julia Kristeva endorses the notion of turning inward. In an interview with the Norwegian weekly newspaper *Morgenbladet* (which is politically unaffiliated) (Lillebø 2014), Kristeva describes ‘turning towards the self’ as a revolutionary act:

To rebel today is to care about one’s inner life. To read a book, go into psychoanalysis, see a theatre performance or an exhibition of contemporary art.

Looking inside oneself can apparently be a way to rebel (Kristeva) or a way to gain understanding of one’s own and others’ political positions (Kling). These statements do not necessarily contradict each other. The link between these ideas and my project is the belief that the inner realm can serve as a path to political discussion, dialogue, and curiosity.

3.4 DESIGN THEORY

My PhD project is situated in a discursive design context. The discursive perspective focuses on design’s potential to generate discussion, raise questions, and create awareness. Tharp and Tharp see communication as the main purpose of design and the discursive practitioner:

Discursive design can either perform the way a looking glass does—better magnifying, reflecting, and revealing aspects of. Culture for its audience—or it can act like a fun-house mirror—intentionally distorting in order to emphasize, propose, speculate, instigate, or criticize (Tharp and Tharp 2018, 13).

The term ‘discursive design’ also serves as an umbrella for design theories and practices like critical design, design fiction, speculative design, anti-design and adversarial design, which all fall outside of traditional, market-oriented, mainstream ideas on how to use design (Tharp and Tharp 2018, 84). As the idea of adversarial design is central to my research, I will now discuss its main concepts in greater detail.

28 6 The Op-Ed’s original title was “Er du i tvil innfor valget? Spør valgmaten i ditt indre”.

In *Adversarial Design* (2012), Carl DiSalvo distinguishes between ‘design for politics’ and ‘political design’. DiSalvo’s theory is based on the work of Belgian political theorist Chantal Mouffe, who makes a clear distinction between ‘the political’ and ‘politics’:

By ‘the political’ I refer to the dimension of antagonism in human relations, antagonism that can take many forms and emerge in different types of social relations.

‘Politics’, on the other side, indicates the ensemble of practices, discourses and institutions which seek to establish a certain order and organize human coexistence in conditions that are always potentially conflictual because they are affected by the dimensions of ‘the political’.

(Mouffe 2000, 101)

POLITICAL DESIGN

Reveals, questions, and challenges conditions and structures [...]; it opens a space for contestation.

(DiSalvo 2012, 9)

DESIGN FOR POLITICS

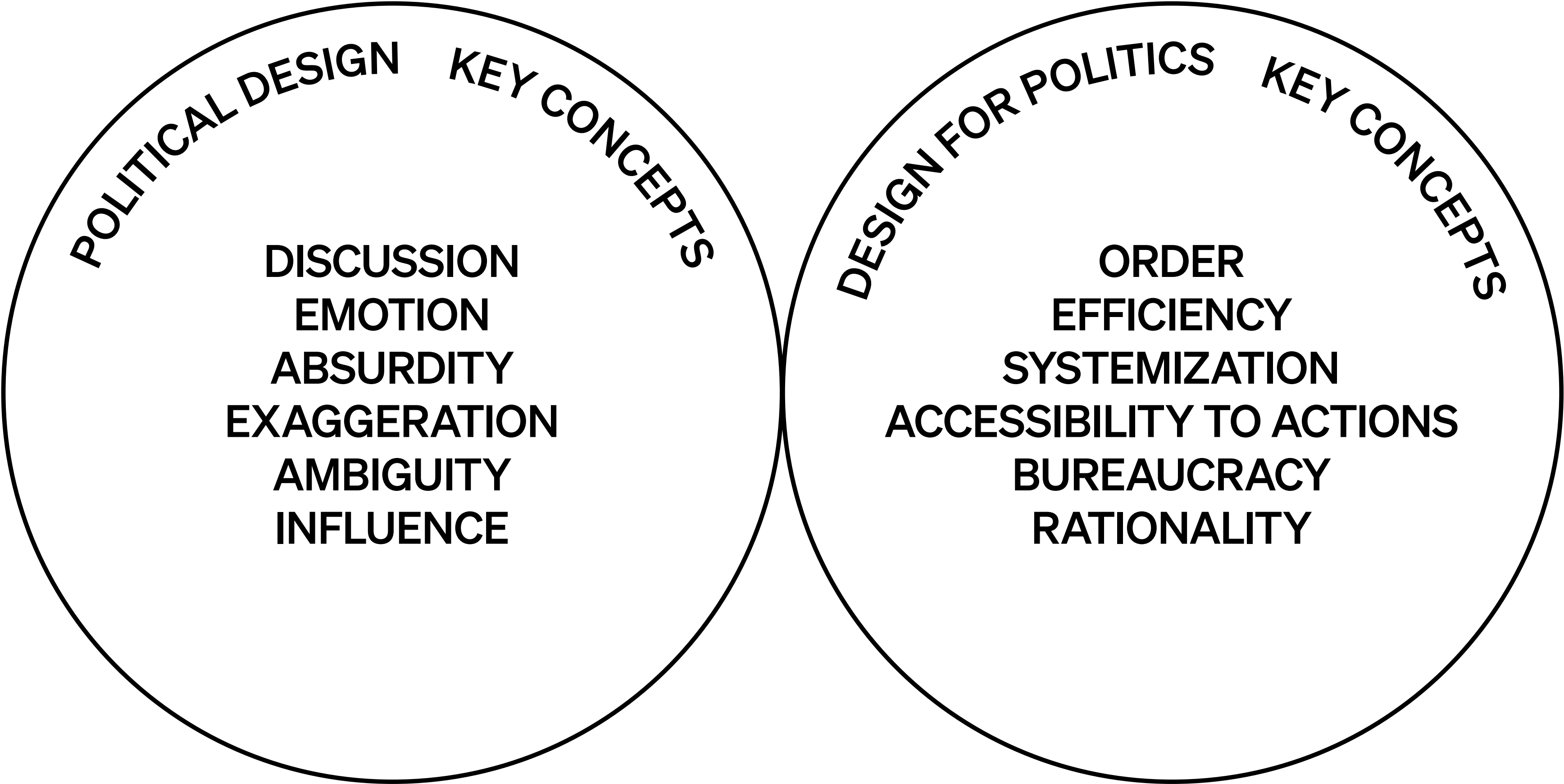
Design for politics often works to improve access to information (such as public health information regarding organizations and candidates) or to improve the access to various forms of ordered expression and action (such as petitions, balloting, and voting). As used in projects that apply design to politics.

(DiSalvo 2012, 8)

The dichotomy can be illustrated with the following model:

To sum things up, “political design evokes and engages political issues” (2012, 2), whereas design for politics is design that is applied to politics (municipalities, healthcare, government) and that facilitates actions like voting.

As mentioned earlier, my project’s design intention was to challenge the prevailing ideas in society on how citizens (should) connect with their inner political life. When my project was still in its early stages, my experiments encompassed elements of both political design and design for politics.



Initially, I perceived my project as positioned between two paradigms: one that draws from design for politics, and another that has a political design agenda. I tried to determine whether the two represented a strict dichotomy, that is: whether content always exclusively fell into one or the other group. If my project did not fall into either of the two, where should it be placed instead (fig. 3.24)?

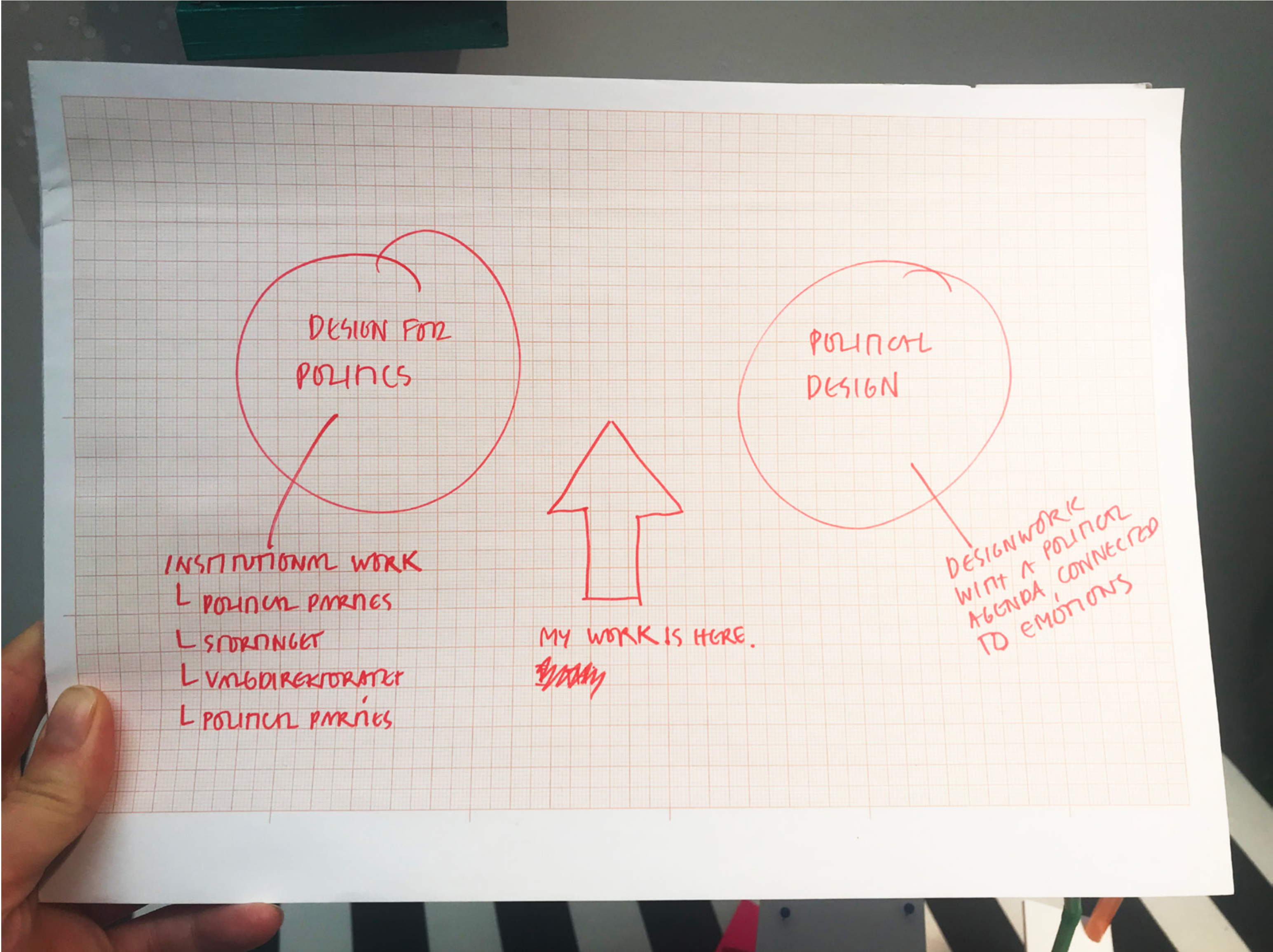


Fig. 3.24 Early sketch that related my practice to DiSalvo’s division.

My attempts to understand the division between political design and design for politics led me to yet another model, fig. 3.25, first introduced in the study in 2021. The sketch illustrates the division between political design and design for politics with examples of design as well as the connections to political theory—to Mouffe, Schmidt, Rawls and Habermas (upper right corner).

Adversarial Design

What is it, and where does it come from?

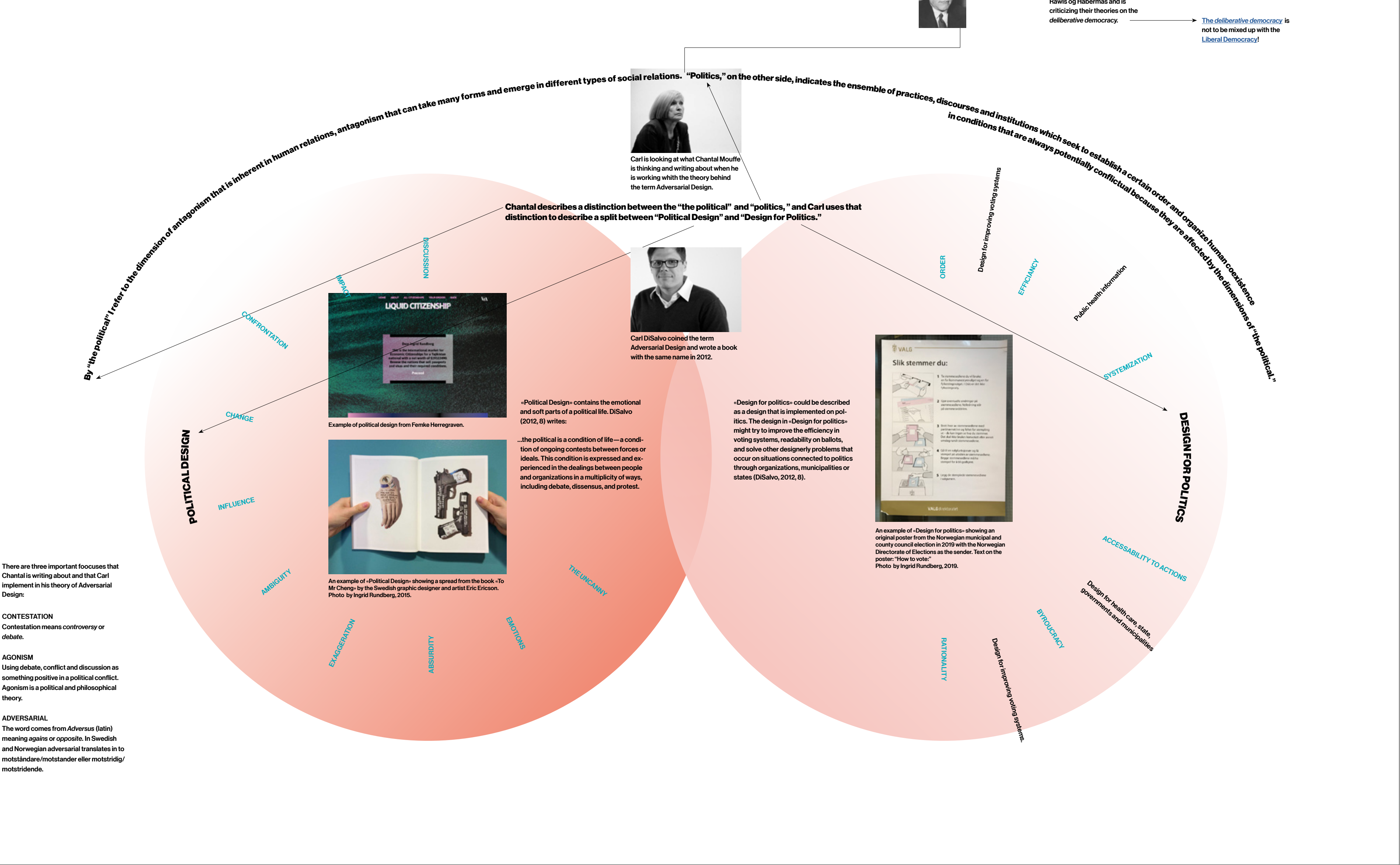


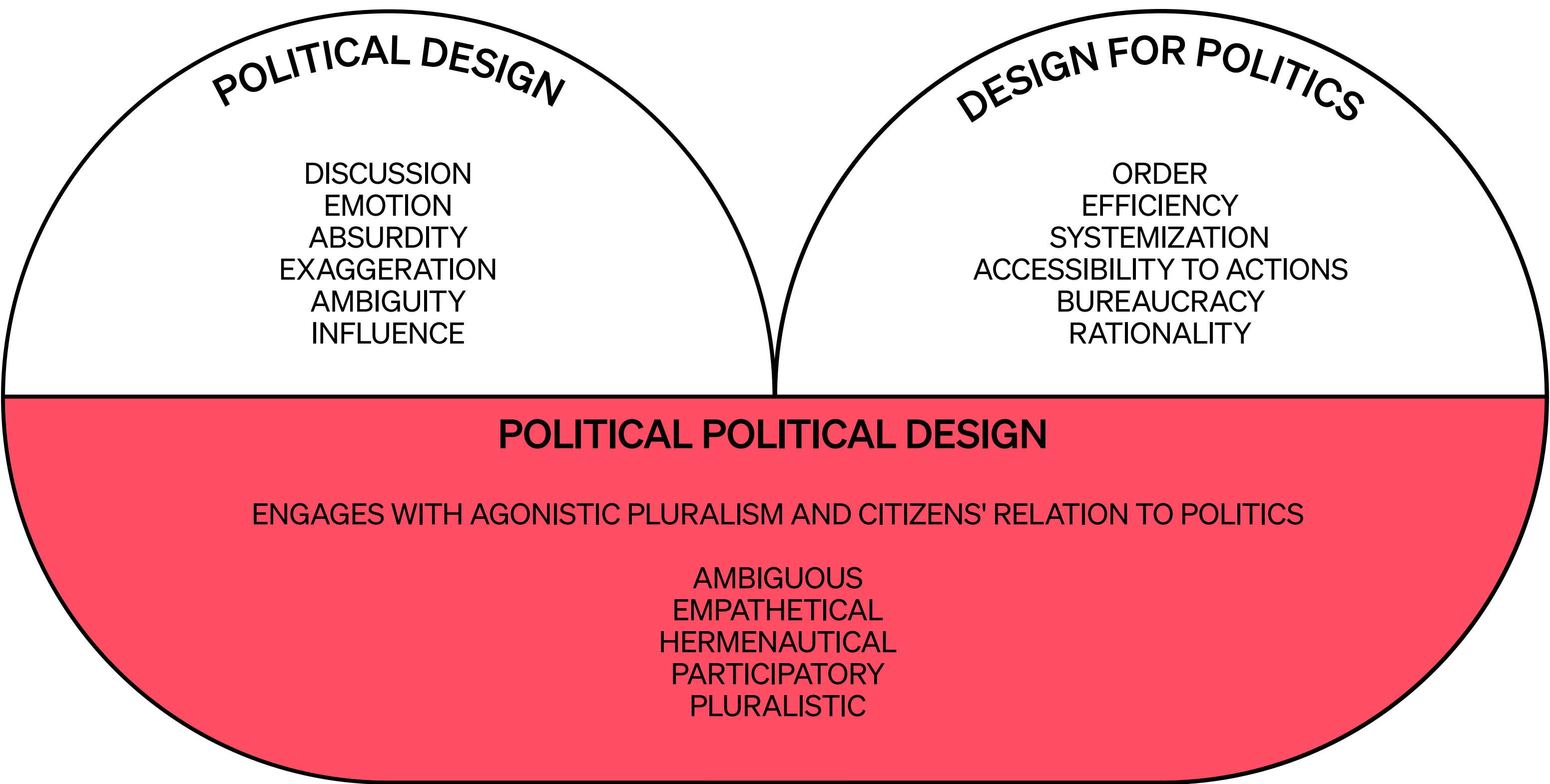
Fig 3.25 Second sketched iteration of the division between political design and design for politics, autumn 2021.

Eventually, my practical work led me to devise a third category of political design: political, political design.

This is the category in which I decided to position my own design work—in a sub-category down the rabbit hole of DiSalvo's classification, as it were (fig. 3.26).

Political, political design is closely related to both design for politics and political design, and borrows characteristics from both. Think of it as the rabbit hole that Alice in Wonderland tumbles down: things are partly recognisable, but also partly suggest a new way of looking at the political world. Political, political design views politics in a conventional way: there is a left-right spectrum, there are recognisable parliamentary elements, democratic elections, and debate. At the same time, political, political design is ambiguous. While design for politics (left-hand side) often operates within the sphere of universal design, political, political design uses exaggerations and under-statements, often even simultaneously. It is similarly to political design (right-hand side) in the sense that it too operates within a hermeneutic tradition—in contrast to design for politics, which operates within the positivist and measurable realm. There are certainly many similarities between political, political design and DiSalvo's category of political design. But very few projects engage in dialogue with political systems or with citizens' inner political world—which is precisely what political, political design is here to do.

In Chapter 4, I will describe and discuss the practical experiments I conducted as part of my study. Political, political design emerged from this practical work, and from various iterations and refinement of models. To highlight my project's contribution to the field of design, however, I decided to introduce the concept already now.



Nelly Ben Hayoun is a multi-disciplinary designer, thinker, and writer who ‘designs experiences’, as she puts it. Often, these experiences explore the role of institutions (Sacchetti 2018, 77), as in the educational project ‘The University of the Underground’. Ben Hayoun transcends different fields and different media—her work is ‘pluri-disciplinary’ (Ben Hayoun 2017, 17).

I spend a lot of time thinking about Nelly Ben Hayoun. My connection to her sprouted out of pure intuition. I saw a picture (fig. 3.27) of her seated on a sofa on a small stage. Three other women sit next to her, one of them holding a microphone. They’re conversing with an older man, also on stage but in another sofa. The four are surrounded by various objects: a red plastic telephone, plaster busts, plants, a blackboard with a drawing on it of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. Apricot-coloured draperies hang in the background. Several rugs in earthy shades cover the floor of the stage. The picture is taken from the perspective of the audience.

The scene looks very pleasant: theatrical, scientific, intimate. You can't help but wish that you were there. The picture was taken at one of the lectures that made up Hayoun's 'Homo Sapiens, I Hear You' project. For these lectures, Hayoun invited experts to discuss what it means to be human and to have basic human needs.

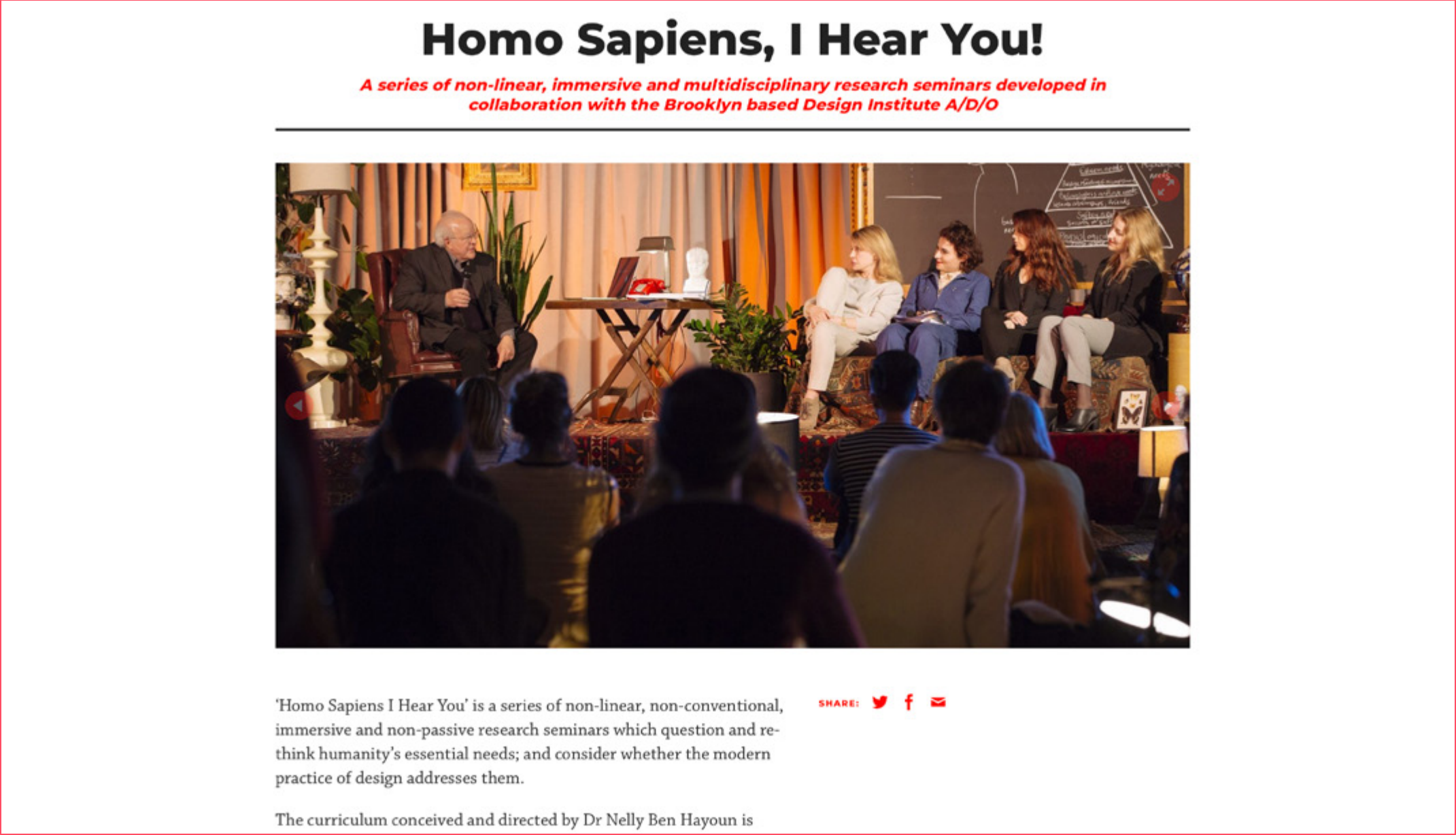


Figure 3.27 Image from Nelly Ben Hayoun's website (Ben Hayoun), screenshot taken on 30 October 2019

‘Homo Sapiens, I Hear You’ seeks to unravel new perspectives on what motivates us and explore whether the modern practice of design addresses our essential needs—from the most basic functions (eating, sleeping, etc.) to the more fulfilling (self-improvement, practicing sports) (Ben Hayoun 2018).

Topics discussed include sleep, disasters, the ultimate friendship, curiosity, bureaucracy, violence and the meal. I find myself wanting to attend the lectures, but also wanting to be Nelly Ben Hayoun: energetic, (seemingly) eccentric, uncompromising, smart. She makes it seem so easy to turn her ideas into reality: making a film, calling Noam Chomsky or some high-ranking figure at NASA to ask how everything is connected, staging an opera, founding a university, ... None of it fazes Nelly Ben Hayoun! I envy her. Everything is so fast-paced in Ben Hayoun's world, while mine is so slow. Everything is so big in Ben Hayoun's world, as she grapples with outer space, the world's largest wind tunnel, magic, large institutions. Despite major differences in the scope, scale, and reach of what I do, I feel connected to her. Or maybe attracted to her? The way she plays around with doppelgangers and alter egos of herself. Maybe what I see in her projects aren't alter egos, but

rather enhanced versions of her? Ben Hayoun in a spacesuit, with red lipstick. Ben Hayoun as a cowboy in a pair of pink leather boots. In one photograph, she's lying on her side, cigarette in hand, embodying her go-to philosopher Hanna Arendt. There's always a playfulness in her work. I envy her, I'm amazed by her, and I recognise myself in her.

In her films, Ben Hayoun gives herself a political mission: to translate policies to an audience. One example is the film 'Disaster Playground', in which she examines what the chain of command and power structures would be like if our planet would be about to collide with an asteroid (2017, 124). Ben Hayoun does so by applying strategies from Greek tragedy, Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty, and re-enactment (2017, 134). Her visual language is direct, bold, exaggerated, and humorous. In Ben Hayoun's three-dimensional worlds, she herself is the centre of everything.

3.6 DESIGN PRACTITIONERS

Not only Nelly Ben-Hayoun played an important role in my work: other designers too informed and inspired me, made me marvel at what the field of design has to offer. I will discuss two of them here: Eric Ericson and Femke Herregraven. (In Chapter 4, I will present additional designers connected to this study, such as Annelys DeVet, Masha Somik and Thomas Thwaites.) Ericson and Herregraven are relatively different from each other, but both have a distinct link with this study and my design practice, as their work too comments on/is involved in a societal or political debate.

Swedish graphic designer and artist Eric Ericson has used letter-sending (one of the most basic functions in society) as a method in several experiments. He far extends the ‘normal’ use of letters, though. In the preface to his book *Korrespondens*, Ericson writes that “the entire postal system reflects, in different ways, our society and the form of government we live under” (Ericson 2010). He suggests, for example, that the size of letterbox slots symbolises, or perhaps tells us something about, the level of a country's unease. In *To Mr Cheng* (2008) (fig. 3.28), Ericson examined how the Swedish and German postal services worked, sending various items to a fictional address in Berlin. Since the address did not actually exist, the objects were stored in cabinets at the receiving post office.

By combining simple methods (sending letters) with imagination, ambiguity, and exaggeration, Ericson tells stories about society and being a citizen, and about the relationship between the two.



Fig. 3.28 Mail passing through the Swedish and German postal service system (Ericson 2008, the book lacks pagination).



Fig. 3.29 Taxodus; Femke Herregraven stirs up debate by designing a computer game. Screen shot (Herregraven 2015).

I was also inspired by Dutch designer Femke Herregraven. She too explores societal themes like citizenship, economic and financial structures, and tax systems. Herregraven works with multiple media and her work often contains digital components. There is something intriguing about her approach: it acknowledges that design can be used as a microscope to reveal secrets. Herregraven’s curiosity and the genuine (and necessary!) questions she asks are very important. For her project ‘Taxodus’ (2015), she looked into the companies that had headquarters in Zuidas, the financial district of Amsterdam (Slegers 2014, 06:28). Herregraven discovered that there were more companies in the district than could possibly fit into the buildings, and that many companies had the word ‘oil’ in their names. From this starting point, she created the online game Taxodus (fig. 3.29), which focuses on tax evasion—mirroring what is happening in real life. Herregraven’s project began with a simple question, but resulted in intense public debate that even received media attention (Slegers 2014, 07:25).

All three designers mentioned above pursue practices with highly personal methods of investigation. Ericson sends letters, Herregraven explores who or what is registered at certain addresses, and Ben-Hayoun employs herself or doppelgängers/enhanced versions of herself in her work. All three are interested in societal issues and pose more questions than they answer, leaving ample room for the viewer to interpret

things themselves. By closely examining others’ practices, my own design practice became clearer. It became easier for me to identify differences and similarities. Just like the walls in my studios did, these designers’ practices served as a kind of filter through which to process my own project.

Ben Hayoun calls herself a designer ‘of extreme experiences’ (Porsche 2023). Her fascination with the extreme is not only evident in her visual language, but also in her approach to design. In the film ‘Disaster Playground’, Ben Hayoun deliberately challenges the people she interviews by using the ‘Theatre of Cruelty’ technique to uncover the essence of the answers she seeks (Ben Hayoun 2017, 114-115). I don’t object to such methods, but did not personally feel inclined to put any pressure on those who contributed to my project. I prefer to cultivate trust instead, to allow participants to respond to my questions with sincerity and openness. Still, participatory methods were as integral to my practice as they are to Ben Hayoun’s work. In Ericson’s practice, there are no visible participatory elements. Instead, dry and surprising humour seems to be the core of his work—which often results in rather absurd projects. As for Herregraven’s practice, it is her choice of abstract and political themes that interests me. A simple question can lead to a rich and discursive answer. Ben Hayoun has a political mission too: her practice “[aims] to generate fruitful conflicts and animated discussions that disrupt existing power structures and hierarchies” (Ben Hayoun 2017, 134).

Please note that the above section only summarily presented these three designers’ practices, with just a few examples from an otherwise broad and rich practice.

This chapter presented the context of my project. Its design (sketches, photographs of my studio, images of different objects) reflected my actual process: my dialogue the walls in my studio, the practical work I did, and the texts I read.

I presented Plato's concept of epistocracy, which Brennan has reintroduced into contemporary society. Epistocracy and the worldview behind it provoke me and raise many questions. When can we say a voter is sufficiently informed before political elections? Who decides this? And how do designers address, react, and respond to ideas like epistocracy? With Ericson, Herregraven, and Ben Hayoun in mind, as well as with the possibilities that inward journeys offer (see Kling and Kristeva), I managed to disentangle abstract concepts like epistocracy and explore them through visual communication and participatory methods. Visual communication has genuine potential to create debate and to contribute to a healthy societal dialogue and democracy.

This chapter also established a theoretical framework for my project, from a design perspective. Tharp and Tharp's ideas about discursive design were highly relevant. DiSalvo's theory of adversarial design further informed my theoretical framework. His system splits design into two groups: political design and design for politics. This categorisation was fundamental to my study, but my work did not fully fit into either group. That is why I introduced a new sub-category to DiSalvo's two, with my project placed down the rabbit hole of DiSalvo's original framework. I call this category political, political design. It is important to note that the above concepts are just a handful of concepts that exist on the axis between design and democracy, and that there are many other concepts I could have explored. This chapter simply presented the ones I discovered during and within the limitations of my project.

The chapter ended by mentioning three design practitioners connected to my project. Their design work and artistic research explores the relationship between citizens and institutions in extraordinary ways.

In Chapter 4, I will describe the process behind the practical experiments I conducted for my study. We will explore their findings and conclusions, reencounter Alice in Wonderland, and watch a new department take shape.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the five practical experiments I conducted for my PhD project and the empirical evidence that those sub-projects resulted in. I present the sub-projects chronologically, as each one built upon the findings of the previous. All five experiments were conducted in a participatory setting, in public spaces. As they differed in character, content, and degree of participatory interaction, I present each one individually. I also discuss the ethical dilemmas of each experiment.

My first sub-project was a lecture series that I conducted in partnership with the Bergen Public Library, with financial support from the Fritt Ord Foundation. Holding the lectures at a library allowed me to transcend the confines of my secluded studio and engage with a broader audience. For my second sub-project, I collected contributions for the participatory publication *Voices*. The third sub-project was the Inner Political Landscapes workshop, during which participants got to explore collage landscapes as a metaphor and possible means of listening to their inner political voice. Parallel to these experiments, the concept of the Stemme Department materialised. This fictional department took on a visual identity (a strong graphic pattern, specific furniture, a uniform), got a name, and eventually had specified tasks. Sub-project four, the Political Confession work, was conducted ‘by’ the Stemme Department. Last but not least, there was *Multiplum! (M!)*. This sub-project was conducted in collaboration with my PhD colleague Siv Lier, which is also why we co-wrote the *M!* chapter. While *M!* was a multifaceted experiment, we chose to write about just one part of it, the Design & Wine events.

The practical experiments that I conducted contributed to the insight that citizens need a space for political introspection, and that the Stemme Department can serve as that space. Both the sub-projects as well as the department's very existence prove that the dual theory of adversarial design should be expanded with a third field/area/space that accommodates the fact that design can borrow characteristics from both political design and design for politics.

My practical work helped me understand my own design process (visualised in fig. 4.1). While I did not develop the below model until later on, I wanted to present it already here, to make my reasoning clearer and show how one decision led to another.

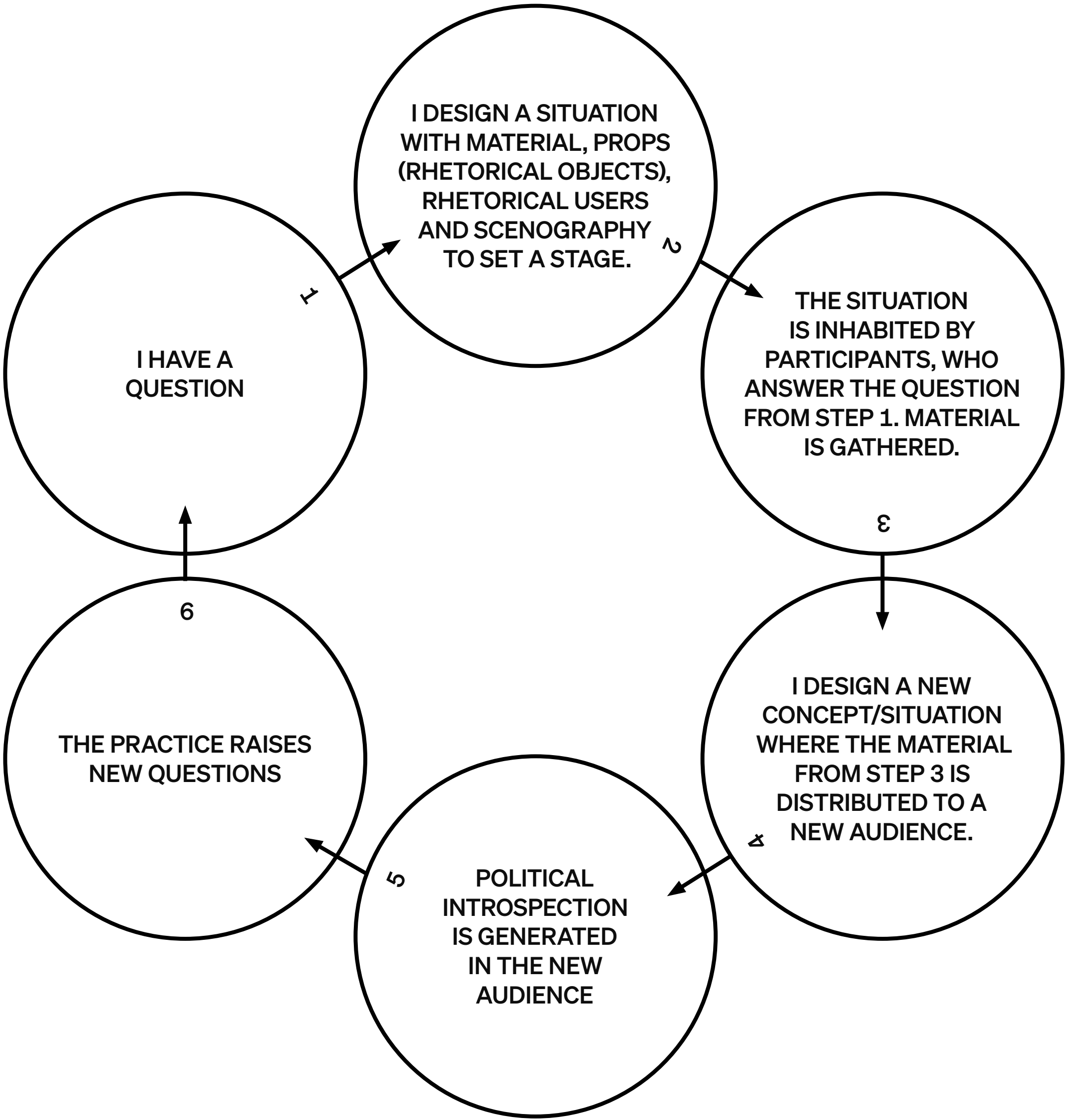


Fig. 4.1 Rational thinking process forming the design decision making practice. Model by Rundberg, 2024.

4.2 THINGS THAT MIGHT BE TRUE

This chapter describes ‘Things That Might Be True’,⁷ an exploratory series of three lectures held at Bergen Public Library in 2019, during which three lecturers each addressed a particular question. In the following pages, I will discuss the preparation behind these lectures, the speakers, my execution of the experiment, and the project’s documentation and out-comes. I also discuss the lectures’ promotional poster, which led to a surprising attempt at contact by a rather unusual citizen. This sudden encounter led to a lengthy ethical discussion and raised numerous questions. ‘Things That Might Be True’ not only answered the questions that it discussed, but also united an audience around a specific area of interest—politics and democracy. This audience was later invited to participate in the subsequent practical experiment(s) that together make up my project.

4.2.1 GOALS

At the very start of my PhD project, I organised a series of lectures at the Bergen Public library. As I did, I had three goals in mind:

- (1) To gather knowledge about the factors that influence citizens’ political opinions;
- (2) To explore public lectures as a method for dialogue and for the collective acquisition of knowledge;
- (3) To investigate how groups are formed and gather around different themes based on personal interests.

The series took place early on in my project, at a time when I was keen to learn more about the factors that influence voters. By hosting the lectures at a library, I got to explore this question in public, in the presence of an audience, rather than in my studio. The reason I opted for a library was because libraries tend to be open spaces, with a diverse visitor base (people of different ages and backgrounds) and a particular mission. One of the Bergen Public Library's goals is to be an independent meet- ing place and a venue for public conversation and debate (Folkebibliotekloven 1985/2013).⁸ This aligned with my sub-project’s second goal. As a place that facilitates public conversation and debate, the library would allow me to connect with people interested in the factors that influence citizens’ voting preferences—the sub-project’s first goal.

4.2.2 IMPLEMENTATION

The lectures were held over the course of three days, in the runup to Norway’s municipal and county council elections⁹ of 9 September 2019. They took place in the library's Amalies Hage café, at 18:00 every evening. These times, plus the public library’s central location (between the train station and the Storsenter shopping centre), enabled people to attend after work or school. Three different lecturers held one presentation each, during which they discussed a particular question. I had mentioned these questions in the events’ promotional materials (posters and online) and also presented them as I introduced the lecturer at the start of the evening. Each presentation lasted approximately 45 minutes. Afterwards, the audience got to ask the lecturer questions. The discussions were facilitated by me.

7 The lecture series and my PhD project as a whole share the same name (‘Things That Might Be True’). To avoid confusion, I only use this name in this chapter to refer to the lecture series.

8 Public Libraries Act, 1985/2013

9 In Norwegian, these elections are called ‘kommunestyre- og fylkestingsvalg’.

The lecturers were:

IDA VIKØREN ANDERSEN

“Why don't I understand what they're saying?”¹⁰
About political rhetoric

During the first lecture, Ida Vikøren Andersen introduced the basic tenets of political rhetoric and common rhetorical strategies that politicians use to deflect criticism and to avoid having to present their own arguments. Vikøren Andersen shared videos of well-known Norwegian and Swedish politicians using various rhetorical strategies in different situations. At the time of the lecture, Vikøren Andersen was a fellow at the Department of Information and Media Studies at the University of Bergen, doing research on social media, TV, and radio debates.

BENTE KALSNES

“What is true?”¹¹
About fake news

Next, Bente Kalsnes spoke about the challenges of dealing with fake news on the internet and in social media. Different meanings of the terms ‘fake news’, ‘post-truth’, and ‘alternative facts’ were discussed. Kalsnes shared tips on how to recognise fake news, and explained how fake news stories tend to be fabricated and spread. Kalsnes is Professor in Political Communication at Høyskolen Kristiania and author of the book *Falske nyheter* (Kalsnes 2019).

THOMAS H. KLEPPESTØ

“Why are people different?”¹²
About evolution and political attitudes

In the third and final lecture, Thomas H. Kleppestø spoke about how evolution has helped make certain traits—like having two eyes—universal in humans, while other traits—like personality and political beliefs—vary from person to person. Kleppestø went on to discuss how the environment, genetics, personality, and many other factors influence people’s political attitudes. At the time of the lecture, Kleppestø, who is a psychologist, was a PhD candidate at the Department of Psychology of the University of Oslo, where he conducted research on behavioural genetics and evolutionary psychology.



Fig. 4.2 Public lecture setting, Bente Kalsnes. Photo: Bente Irminger.

4.2.3 INVITATION AND AUDIENCE

I wanted to invite people to this sub-project based on their personal interests and engagement with specific issues. Parameters like participants’ age, gender, and socioeconomic status mattered less to me. The idea that a public is shaped by the questions one asks was first presented by John Dewey, in the book *The Public and its Problems* (1927). It was further developed in a design context by Carl DiSalvo in *Design and the Construction of Publics* (2009). A public can consist of people from the most diverse backgrounds and social groups, with wildly different ages and interests: it is the question that is being asked that brings them together (DiSalvo 2009, 50). By asking questions and engaging people, a project intersects with the public and starts a dialogue. Before it can act and have a voice, a public must first be formed.

Each of the three lectures was attended by approximately 45–50 people between the ages of 17 and 70 (fig. 4.2-4.4). On two occasions, secondary school students and their teachers attended. I invited people via email, Facebook, Instagram, and through the library's own information channels. The latter were monitored and managed by the library’s own staff. I also put up posters (fig. 4.5) in the centre of Bergen and created a website (tingsomkanværesant.no) (Rundberg 2019c) for the series, which was mentioned on the posters and on Facebook. (The website was created for the sole purpose of promoting the lectures and has not been updated since.)

11 “Hva er sant?” in Norwegian.
12 “Hvorfor er folk forskjellige?” in Norwegian.



Fig. 4.3 Public lecture setting, Ida Andersen Vikøren. Photo: Ingrid Rundberg.



Fig. 4.4 Public lecture setting, Thomas H. Kleppestø. Photo: Ingrid Rundberg.

To try and establish a somewhat consistent group of participants for my overall PhD project, I invited everyone who attended the lectures to also participate in my next project, the *Voices* publication.

Here are the posts I created to promote the event on Facebook:

IDA VIKØREN ANDERSEN
“Why don't I understand what they're saying?”
– About political rhetoric

BENTE KALSNES
“What is true?”
– About fake news

THOMAS H. KLEPPESTØ
“Why are people different?”
– About evolution and political attitudes



4.2.4 DESIGN AND PRINTING PROCESS

The vibrant layers of the promotional poster (fig. 4.5) contained the three questions that the lectures would be discussing: “Why don't I understand what they're saying?” (fig. 4.6), “What is true?” (fig. 4.7), and “Why are people different?” (fig. 4.8). I first created the illustrative text by forming words with black plastic tape, to evoke the characteristic aesthetics of protest signs (fig. 4.9). I then scanned and digitally processed these taped sentences, before finally adding practical info on the lectures, in black. The poster was printed using risography (fig.4.10-11). It consisted of four A3 sheets, which were taped together post-printing to form one A1 sheet.

Fig. 4.6 Digital print file, printed in Fluorescent Orange.

HVORFOR
FORSTÅR JEG
IKKE HVA
DE SIER?

Fig. 4.7 Digital print file, printed in Fluorescent Pink.

HVA
ER
SANT?

Fig. 4.8 Digital print file, printed in Aqua.

HVORFOR
ER FOLK
FOR-
SKJELLIGE?

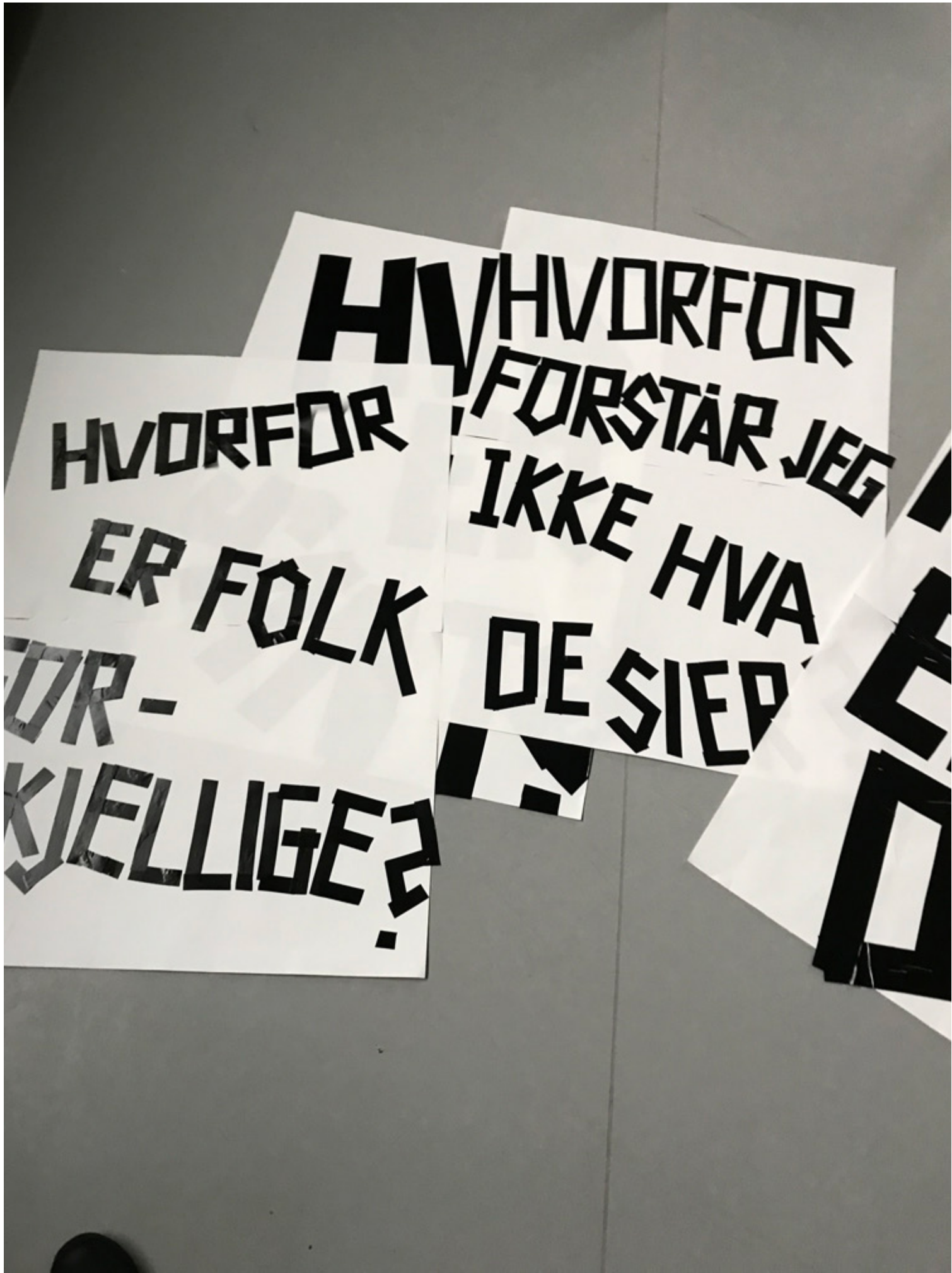


Fig. 4.9 Process, tape writing.



Fig. 4.10 Process, printing.

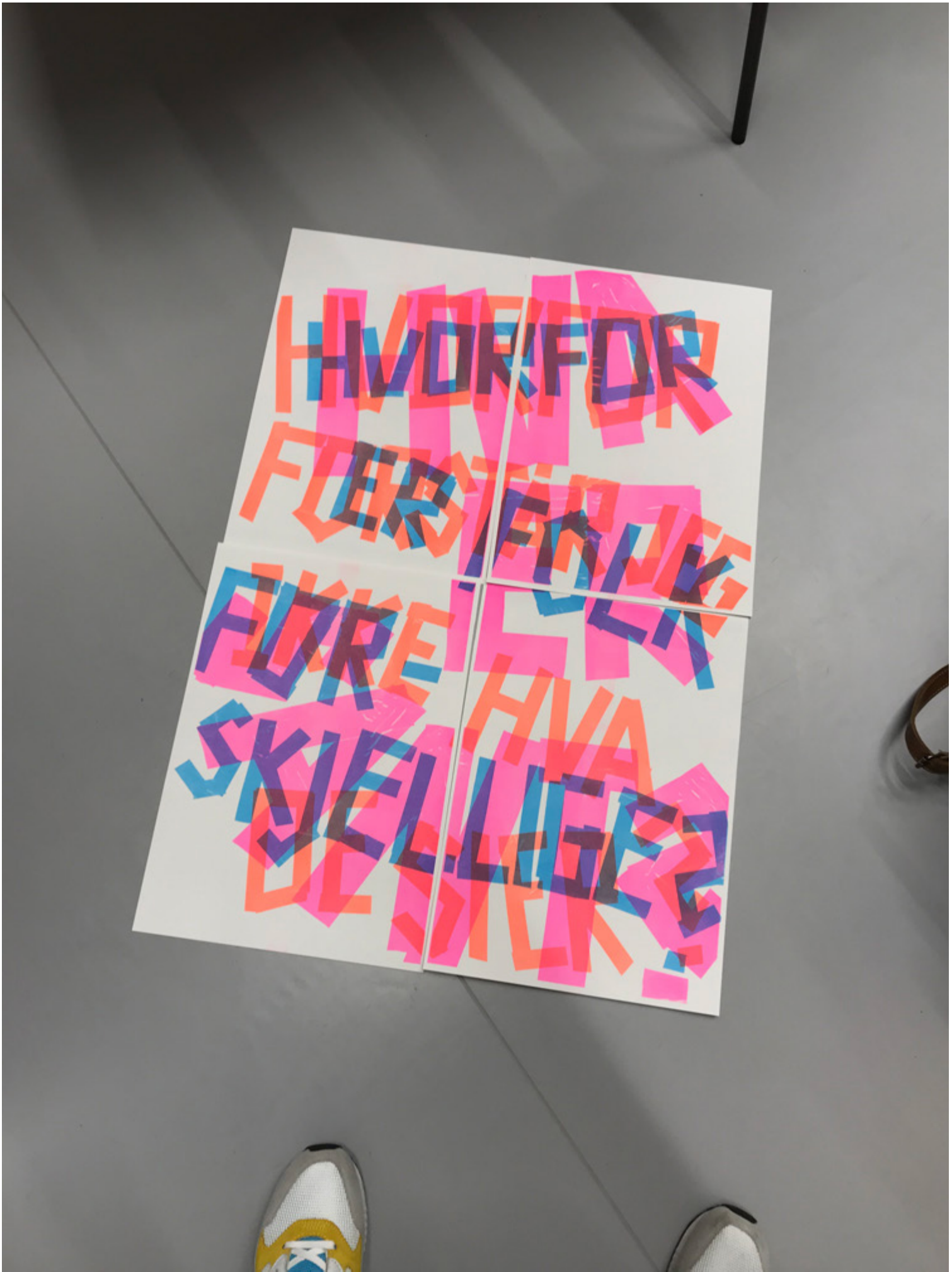


Fig. 4.11 Process, printing.

To promote the lecture series, I designed and put up a poster across Bergen. As I walked around taking pictures of the posters to document them, however, I noticed one of them had been scribbled on with a marker (fig.4.12). Even the wall behind the poster was covered in writing (fig.4.13). A new actor in the project emerged: the Scribbler. This came as a surprise to me, because people don't usually engage in such lengthy discussions with graphic objects.

The Scribbler's writing looked hurriedly unfiltered and sprawled across the entire wall behind the poster. In a vociferous way, the Scribbler wrote about feeling excluded. He mentioned being banned from the comment fields of several national Norwegian newspapers and NRK (Norway's public broadcasting company), as well as from dodgier websites like document.no and resett.no. He called Jens Stoltenberg (the country's former prime minister and current Secretary-General of NATO) Norway's very own Epstein—a reference to Jeffrey Epstein, an

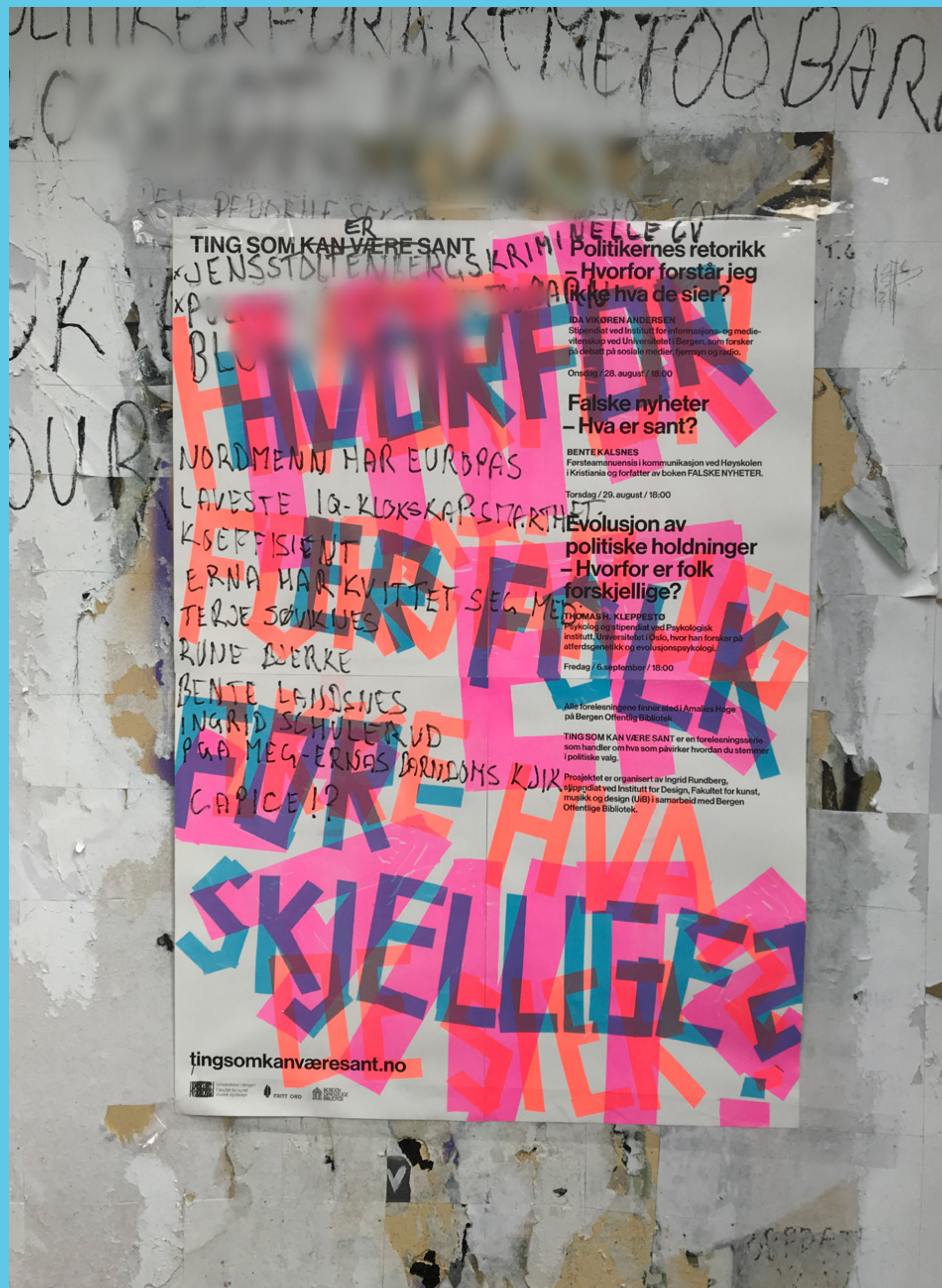


Fig. 4.12 Poster with scribbles on top. To protect the Scribbler, all web addresses are blurred.

American financier who died in detention in New York City in 2019 after being charged with sex trafficking. The Scribbler had also changed the name of the lecture series from “Things That Might Be True” to “Things That ARE True”.

After briefly browsing the internet, I managed to establish the identity of the Scribbler (whose wall scribblings contained hints on how to contact him). Should I get in touch with this man and ask him to participate in my project?

Not including the Scribbler might suggest I was biased and only wanted to work with people who wanted to have an open-minded conversation and seek answers together. People who would be used to and familiar with the rules of public lectures. People, in other words, just like myself, with a more or less similar agenda. Including this anonymous writer, on the other hand, could open doors, make my work more diverse, and help me reach participants from a broader range of cultural backgrounds. At the same time, the



Fig. 4.13 Photo montage: scribbings on the wall. To protect the Scribbler, all web addresses are blurred.

project risked becoming much harder to conduct, as we might veer off on an anti-democratic path.

I told myself that, as the person in charge of the project, I needed to protect both the project and its participants. But who was I really trying to protect? Myself, the experts, the audience, the project, or this unexpected new actor—the Scribbler?

4.2.5 ETHICS

The fact that an anonymous person—the Scribbler—wrote on one of the promotional posters for the lecture series highlighted my dilemma of who to invited to participate in the sub-project. The incident made me feel rather strong emotions. Initially, I felt ashamed at the thought that my project might not be inclusive. Then I found myself afraid of what might happen if I *did* invite the Scribbler. I was also confused, because I didn’t know how to handle the situation.

I eventually brought up the dilemma during an ethics seminar at the Norwegian Artistic Research School in October 2020. As we discussed the matter, someone in the group argued that there was a perfectly valid reason not to contact the Scribbler: inviting someone with a world view that was so completely different from mine could put the project at risk and make it veer off in a direction I was uncomfortable with.

It was only after pondering the matter for a long time that I realised my fellow scholar was right. In *Therefore Democracy*¹³, philosopher Åsa Wikforss writes that “the right to express one-self does not mean others are obliged to disseminate what one says” (2021, 312).¹⁴ This is reflected in the concept of freedom of speech and everyone's right to express their own opinions, as laid down in the Norwegian constitution § 100 (Grunnlov 1814/2023). While there is freedom of expression in Norway, my project does not need to be a mouthpiece for ideas that do not align with its core idea. Spreading conspiracy theories can even directly harm democracy.

Wikforss argues that conversation has a different role on the individual level than it has in the public sphere. In individual, private conversations, the starting point is (usually) a quest for mutual understanding. In official conversation, the starting point is argumentation (2021, 285). A PhD project is a research education; its conversation is official and revolves around arguments. The Scribbler’s writings were an example of conspiracy theories (see the comparison between Stoltenberg and Epstein, for example). My project is about how design can empower citizens to engage in political introspection, discussion, and

dialogue. I was fairly convinced the Scribbler was engaged in political introspection, but suspected that the voices he listened to consisted mainly of echoes of alternative facts and fake news—which are a threat to democracy. Giving conspiracy theories a platform without countering them with arguments would risk changing the direction of my project in an unintentional but highly significant way.

As for the ethical aspects of my interactions with the lectures’ audiences and the lecturers, everyone was informed of the fact that the lectures were part of a research project. The audience was told that the lectures would be recorded—and as the venue was relatively small, the photographer could not have escaped anyone’s attention (fig. 4.3). Audience members who did not want to be filmed or photographed were asked to sit at the back of the room.

4.2.6 DIFFERENT ROLES

As I implemented the lecture series at the Bergen Public Library, I actually took on three different roles: that of producer, of curator, and of graphic designer. As the sub-project’s producer, I successfully applied for support from the Fritt Ord (‘Free Speech’) Foundation. I planned the lectures, had them documented by a videographer, and coordinated the entire process with the library. As the series’ curator, I selected the themes to be discussed and picked the speakers. I then presented these proposals to the library's Event Coordinator for approval. Last but not least, I served as the series’ graphic designer, which meant I developed a visual identity for the lectures, did the poster’s textual graphic design, and took care of the risograph printing.

Others helped me by putting up posters in the city centre, and editing and uploading the lecture videos on YouTube. (The initial edits were done by Renato Fogliani, after which Mads Andersen made additional edits and the typesetting.)

13 The original Swedish title of the book is *Därför demokrati*.
14 In Swedish: “Rätten att uttrycka sig innebär inte att andra är tvungna att sprida vad man säger”. Translation by Eva Corijn.

4.2.7 CONCLUSION

The lecture series' first goal was to gather knowledge about the factors that influence citizens' political opinions. One issue related to this goal is the question of whether or not the dialogue that took place at the library was genuine, or whether the roles of the lecturer(s) and the audience were too static for true dialogue to take place. The audience might have been a tad passive; this wasn't participants' fault, though, but rather a consequence of the setup, whereby the audience was required to sit and listen to the expert on stage. Once the lecture had ended, the audience did get to ask questions. Still, this more active moment did not automatically transform the lecture into a dialogue or conversation between the lecturer and the audience, as the former remained the expert. Still, I see Q&As as a sign of interest, curiosity, and wonder on the part of the audience. Bringing together people based on shared interests proved effective, as evidenced by the rather diverse audience that attended the lectures. I did not strictly measure who attended, nor did I set specific parameters for attendance, but I can mention that a diverse group of men and women between the ages of 17 to 70 participated.

The second goal of the sub-project was to explore public lectures as a method for dialogue and for the collective acquisition of knowledge. As I had to both moderate and present the lectures, it was hard for me to fully engage with the lectures' actual topics in the moment.

My own learning primarily happened during the preparatory and concluding phases. Before the actual lectures, I explored which topics might be interesting and which experts might be able to present those topics. After the lectures, the video recordings helped me learn more about the themes that had been discussed. During the actual lectures themselves, my focus was on more practical aspects rather than the topics themselves. (I did not measure whether the audience gained any new knowledge from the lectures.)

The third and final goal of the sub-project was to gather people around a certain theme, based on people's personal interests. In this case, audience members and experts all met at a central location (a library). Unexpectedly, an additional person also voiced their opinion, albeit anonymously. The so-called Scribbler wrote on one of the posters I had put up in the centre of Bergen, using the poster as a space to express his thoughts, opinions, and conspiracy theories. His message (which I assume was directed at all passers-by rather than just me) made me acutely aware of who I had (not) invited to participate in the project. This raised questions about participation, democracy, and ethics. The incident made me realise that a project about democracy has to be carried out on democratic grounds. Excluding someone with a conspiratorial agenda is still a democratic act, even though it may not seem so.

4.3 STEMMER / VOICES PUBLICATION

After the lecture series at the library, I invited the audience and lecturers to participate in my next sub-project, the *Voices* publication. In this sub-project, my focus shifted from major theories in rhetoric, evolutionary psychology, and media theory to a more personal and individual narrative. I reached out to the general public, posing the question “How do you find your (political) voice?”. Participants were asked to submit their response in a printable form, as I wanted to turn the results into a publication. This chapter explains how I collected the data, describes the results, and divides the submitted contributions into different categories.

4.3.1 GOALS

I reached out to people during the autumn after the Norwegian municipal and county council elections of 2019, as my question was related to these elections.

My survey had three goals:

- (1) Create a visual archive of how eligible voters decided how to vote in the municipal and county council elections of 2019;
- (2) Establish a visual starting point for the rest of my PhD project;
- (3) Continue investigating how groups are formed and how they gather around themes based on personal interests.

NORWEGIAN	ENGLISH
Stemme (noun)	Voice
Stemmer (noun)	Votes
Stemme (verb)	Vote

I called the publication *Stemmer* to highlight this dual meaning: ‘voting’ and ‘voice’ (both the oral sounds and the body’s speech). Going forward, I will refer to the *Stemmer* publication as *Voices*, as this text is written in English.

4.3.2 PUBLICATION AS INQUIRY

Several others before me had published similar participatory books to present different people’s responses to the same question. One example is *En dag i Sverige* (‘One Day in Sweden’) (fig. 4.14), in which participants from Sweden document what they did on Tuesday 3 June 2003, through photography.



Figure 4.14 Cover: *En dag i Sverige* (Karlsson 2003).



Figure 4.15 Snapshots from everyday life (2003, 68-69).

Professional and amateur photographers feature side by side in the book. A man walks his two dogs (fig. 4.15), trains are sprayed with graffiti, children are born, someone lights a cigarette. The book is divided into chapters that follow the course of a day: night, early morning, morning, afternoon, and evening (fig. 4.16). Each image is labelled with a geographical location, the moment the photo was taken, and a brief text. Mundane, serious, humorous, and strange images converge in this simple concept, resulting in a participatory documentary photo book that also resulted in an exhibition. All the images were archived in Sweden’s state archive (Riksarkivet) (Karlsson 2003, 254).



Figure 4.16
Chapter page: KVÄLL / EVENING (2003, 200-201).

Another example of a participatory publication is the *Subjective Atlas* series ("Subjective Editions") (fig. 4.17) by Annelys de Vet. This series consists of several books that are each dedicated to a specific location, like Palestine, Brussels, the EU, or Luxembourg. The books contain personal contributions from people living in these areas, who describe the places they inhabit. Photographs reflect everyday life, showing things like windows with a particular type of curtains (de Vet 2018, 84-85) (fig. 4.18).

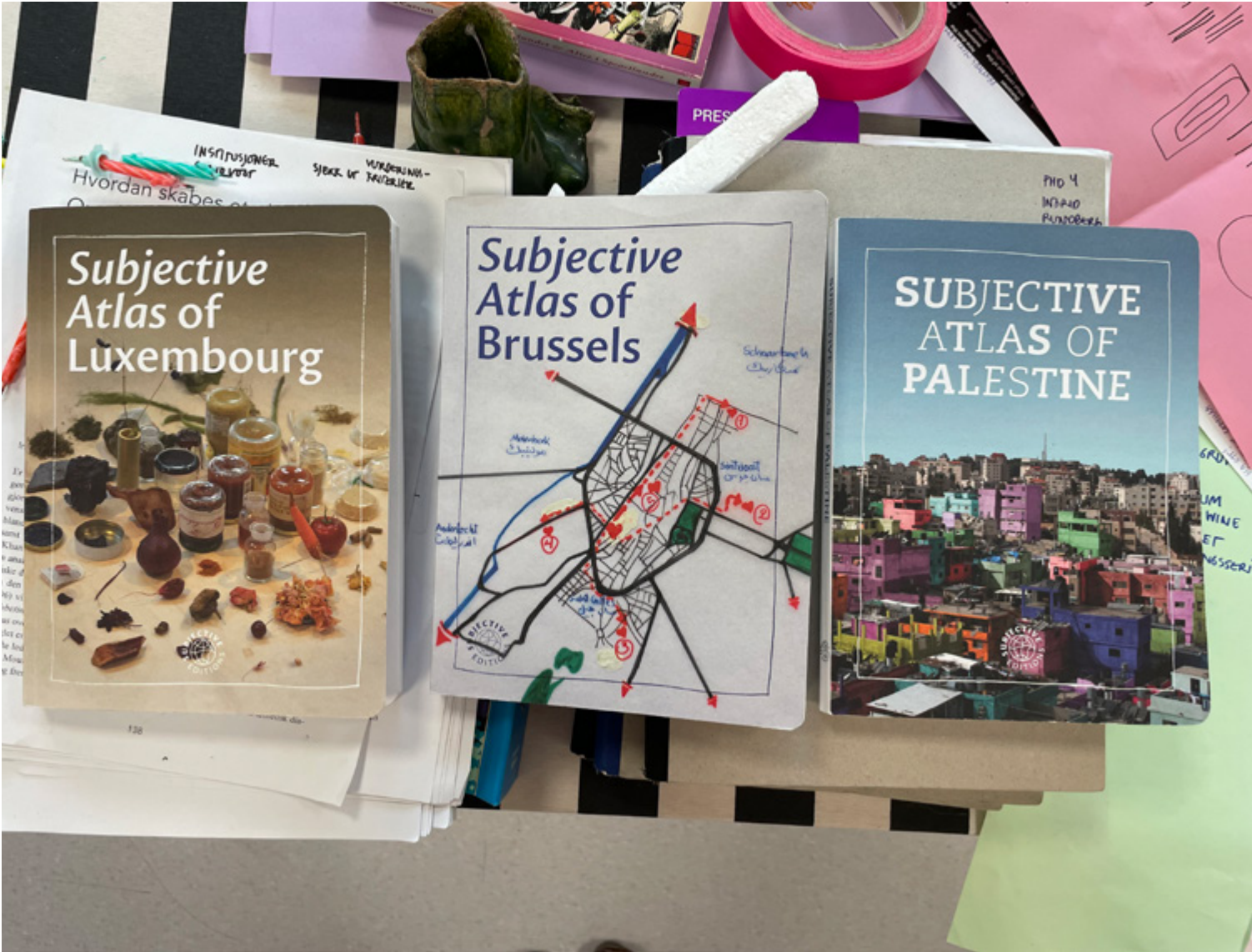


Figure 4.17 Subjective atlases of Luxembourg, Brussels, and Palestine.



Figure 4.18 Curtain stripes in Brussels (de Vet 2018, 84-85).

The Luxembourg book contains illustrations of the country's road signage system, for example (de Vet 2019a, 116-117) (fig. 4.19), and photos of people talking into their smartphones (de Vet 2019a, 134-135) (fig. 4.20). But the books also contain a political dimension. In the *Subjective Atlas of Palestine*, the Israel-Palestine conflict is evident in several participants' contributions. One section suggests architectural ways to repurpose the wall that divides Palestine and Israel, for example (de Vet 2019b, 102-103) (fig. 4.21). In the preface to the *Subjective Atlas of Luxembourg*, I read:

Maps play an important role in how we identify ourselves: they are part of the discourse, the talks that shape our world. And thus, no single map should be dominant. The identity of a given region should be based on a multitude of notions in which we as citizens, as people in and/or of the region, should have agency, at least in part. (de Vet 2019a, 6)

The series provide readers with a subjective description of places, rather than a traditional map that tries (or at least appears) to objectively visualise an area.

Both *A Day in Sweden* and the *Subjective Atlas* series served as inspiration for my idea to explore how people find their (political) voice through participatory visual material.



Figure 4.19 Infinite Detour in Luxembourg (de Vet 2019a, 116-117).

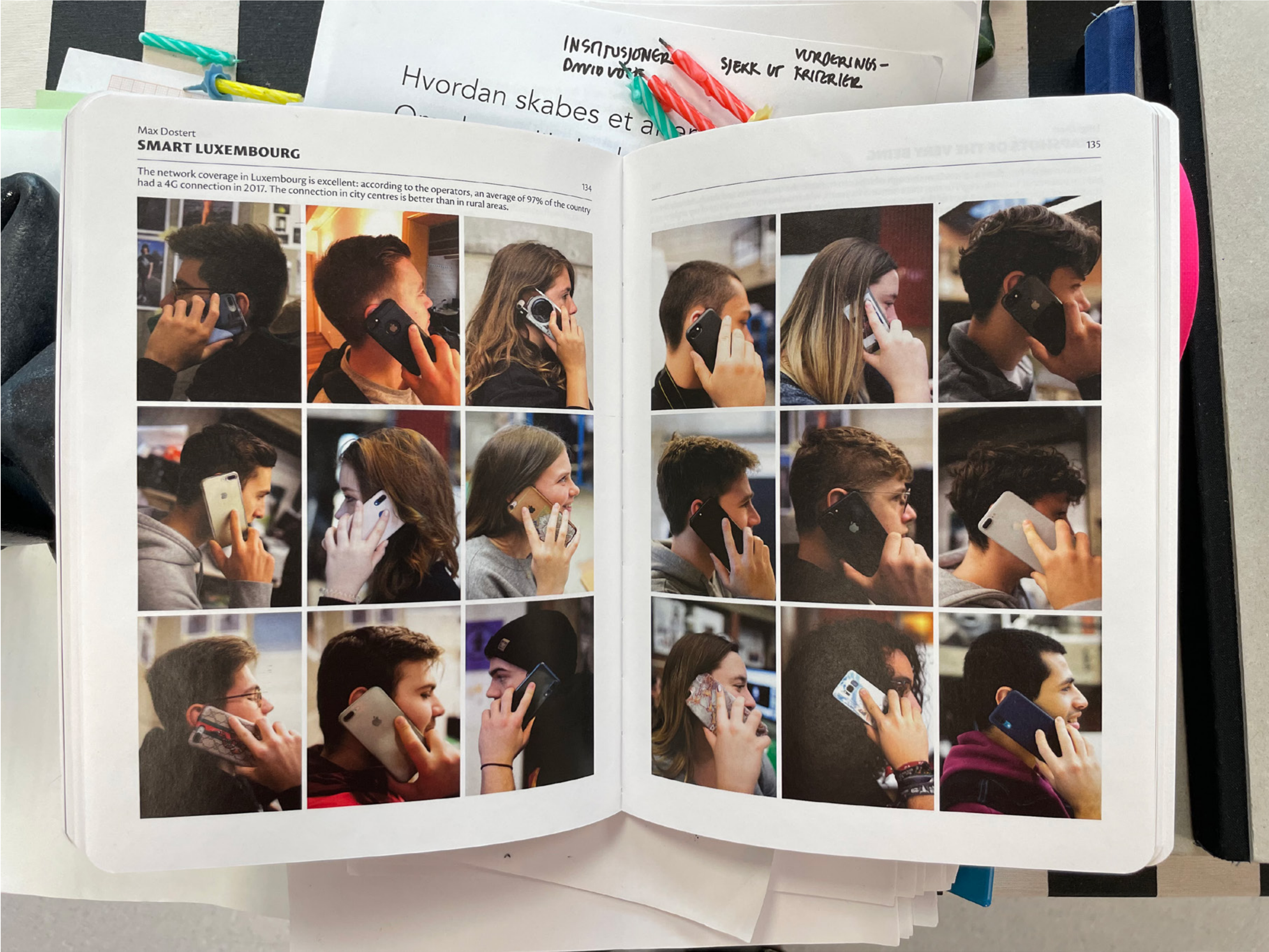


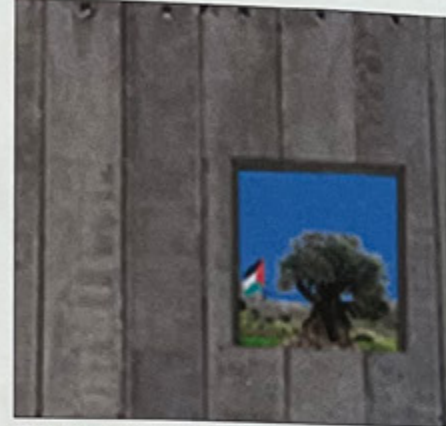
Figure 4.20 Smart Luxembourg
(de Vet 2019a, 134-135).

ARCHITECTURAL POSSIBILITIES FOR THE WALL Senan Abdelqader Architects (S.A., I.M.)

102



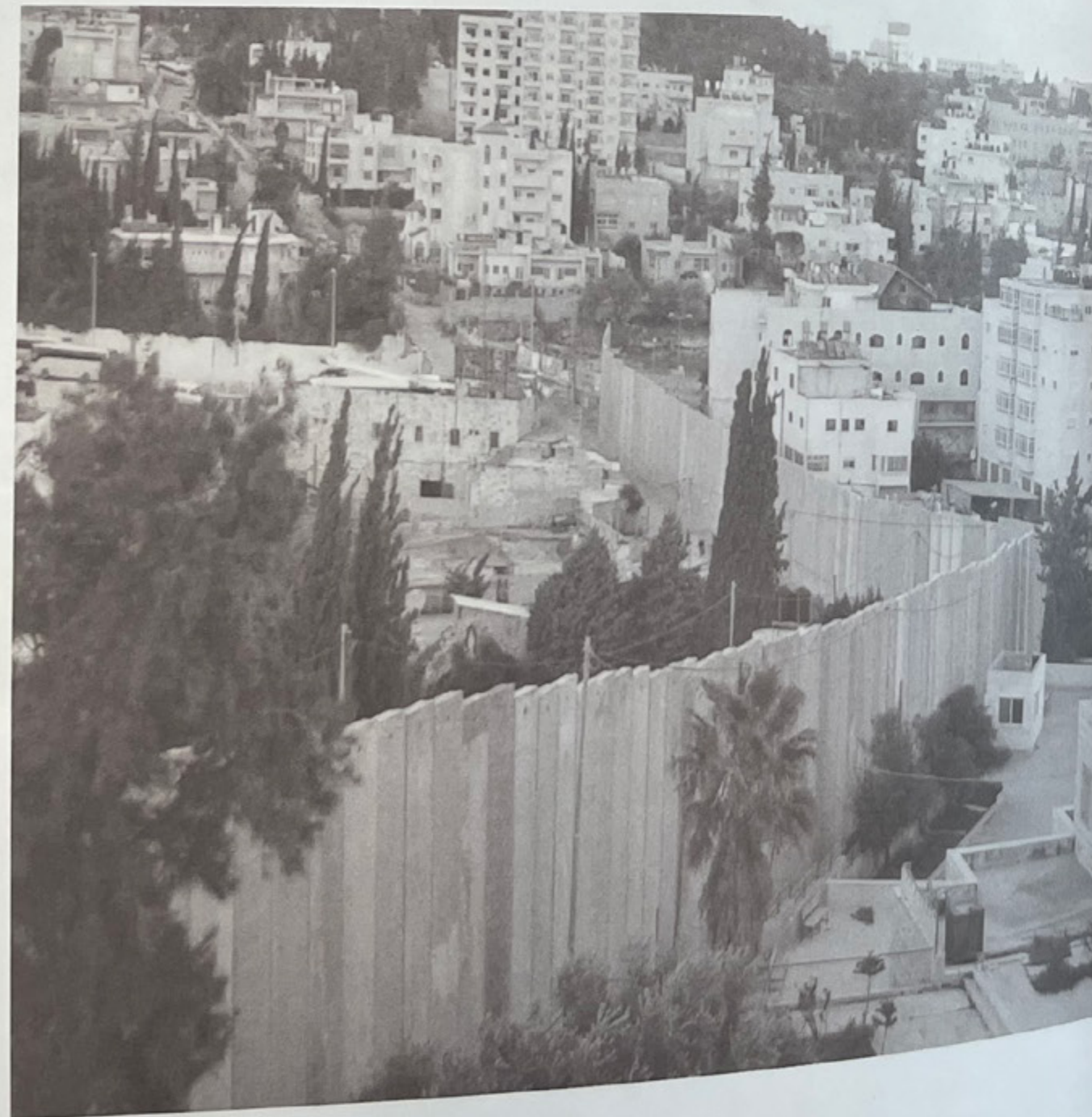
Green and beautiful



Connected in any way



We'll use their wall for our needs



ARCHITECTURAL POSSIBILITIES FOR THE WALL Senan Abdelqader Architects (S.A., I.M.)

103



Some colour would help as well



Palestinian way to the other side



Determination is what we need



Figure 4.21 Alternative use of the wall separating Palestine and Israel (de Vet 2019b, 102-103).

4.3.3 INVITATION, PARTICIPANTS, AND IMPLEMENTATION

My sub-project’s invitation explained to people that their contribution might be featured in a publication, and that each person would be allotted a full page. The invitation also specified the format for submissions, the deadline, and other practical information. I verbally invited people during the aforementioned lecture series at the Bergen Public Library (Chapter 4.2), and put printed invitation brochures (fig. 4.22) on the tables in the café where the lectures took place, along with a registration card (fig. 4.23). These cards were collected after each lecture. I also created a Facebook event (Rundberg 2019a) invited people via email, and set up a website (Rundberg 2019c), where interested participants could learn more about the project.

The question mentioned on the invitation was “How do you find your voice?”. Because this was a rather vague question, the invitation text clarified that I was asking people about their *political* voice (app. 1 ((Norwegian)) and app. 2 ((English)). Later on, during the implementation phase, I changed the question to “How do you find your (*political*) voice?” to make matters even clearer.

Eventually, 28 people responded to my call. Most submitted their answer via email; a few sent in physical responses. Even though the submission deadline was 1 October 2019, I kept receiving answers for two more months.



Figure 4.22 Information brochure.



Figure 4.23 Registration card.

4.3.4 ETHICS

In the Voices publication, all participants are mentioned by name; no one was allowed to be anonymous. I clearly mentioned this in the open invitation which all participants would have had to see to be able to register for the sub-project. There are several reasons why I chose not to allow anonymous contributions. If everyone is mentioned by name, everyone can be credited and receive the attention they deserve. Secondly, I did not want anyone to hide behind anonymity. In this particular experiment, I wanted to force participants to own up to the content they contributed. My experience with the Scribbler (see Chapter 3) taught me that a communication channel can be hijacked by conspiracy theorists. I wanted to avoid that in this publication.

The sub-project was based entirely on voluntary participation. Participants were not specifically selected; they were simply people who had happened to come across the invitation. The EU’s General Data Protection Regulation requires a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be conducted if data processing poses “a high risk” to people’s rights and freedoms:

Where a type of processing in particular using new technologies, and taking into account the nature, scope, context and purposes of the processing, is likely to result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of natural persons, the controller shall, prior to the processing, carry out an assessment of the impact of the envisaged processing operations on the protection of personal data. A single assessment may address a set of similar processing operations that present similar high risks. (General Data Protection Regulation, Article 35(1))

When I contacted the university’s Data Protection Officer Janecke Veim (email exchange on 3 November 2022), however, she assured me that a DPIA would not be necessary for this sub-project, as processing participants’ data did not pose a high risk to them.

The project was reported and documented in RETTE (Risk and Compliance in Research Projects), the University of Bergen’s internal overview and control system for the handling of personal data in research and student projects.

4.3.5 DESIGNER ROLE

My role as a designer was to be the Voices sub-project’s facilitator and a graphic designer. The facilitating role mostly involved gathering and clarifying information to ensure participants would understand their role in the project. I also collected and organised all contributions, and dealt with ethical issues, such as whether to leave out the names of third parties who were mentioned but who weren’t directly involved in the project. As a graphic designer, I took care of the publication’s layout, typography, and made decisions about the hierarchy of different elements in the publication.

4.3.6 RESULTS

The 28 participants of Voices answered my question using one or more of the following techniques: illustration, photography, poetry, text, comics, and collage. Their contributions varied significantly, both visually and in terms of content. The material is rich and diverse.

To analyse the data I received, I grouped the contributions into different categories. It turns out people can find their (political) voice through: nature, observation, dialogue, societal debate, visual wordplay, political issues, and doubt.

Nature

Siv Lier
Johanne Karlsrud
Vilde Valland

Some contributions are clearly linked to nature and people’s surroundings. I interpret these as suggesting that one can find one’s voice in, or through, nature. There are no images of environmental degradation in these nature-oriented contributions; nature is described as strong, as something to draw strength from.



Figure 4.24 Siv Lier



Figure 4.25 Johanne Karlsrud

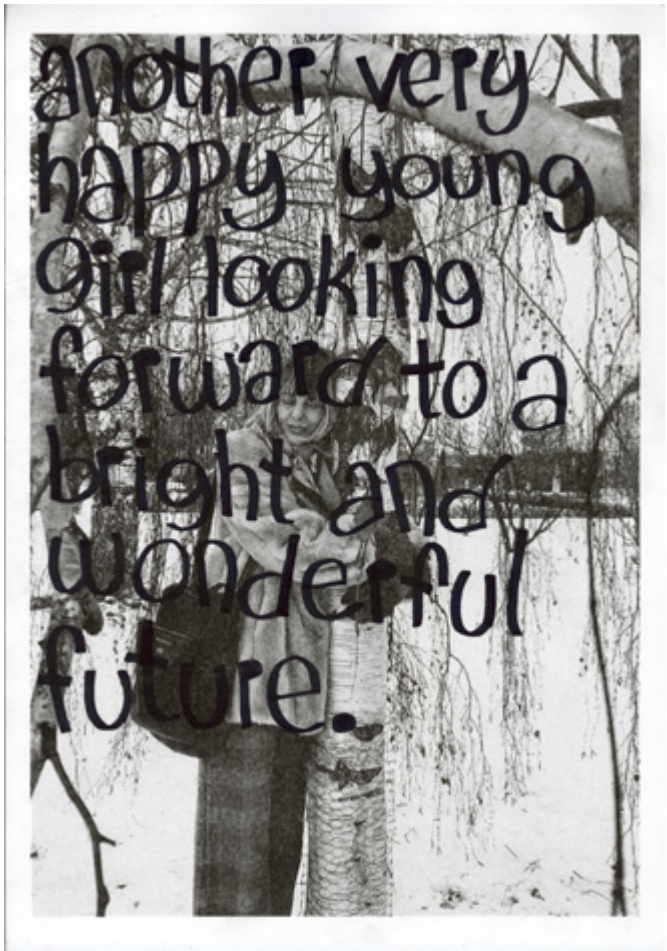


Figure 4.26 Vilde Valland

Observation

Eirik Kjelby
Kjetil Helland
Trond Tollofsen

Observation is a method of investigation: seeing something, taking a close look at it, distancing oneself from it again, analysing it, Three contributions mention finding one’s voice through observation, albeit in very different ways. One person had looked at signs in the city, others had observed themselves over time, noting a change.

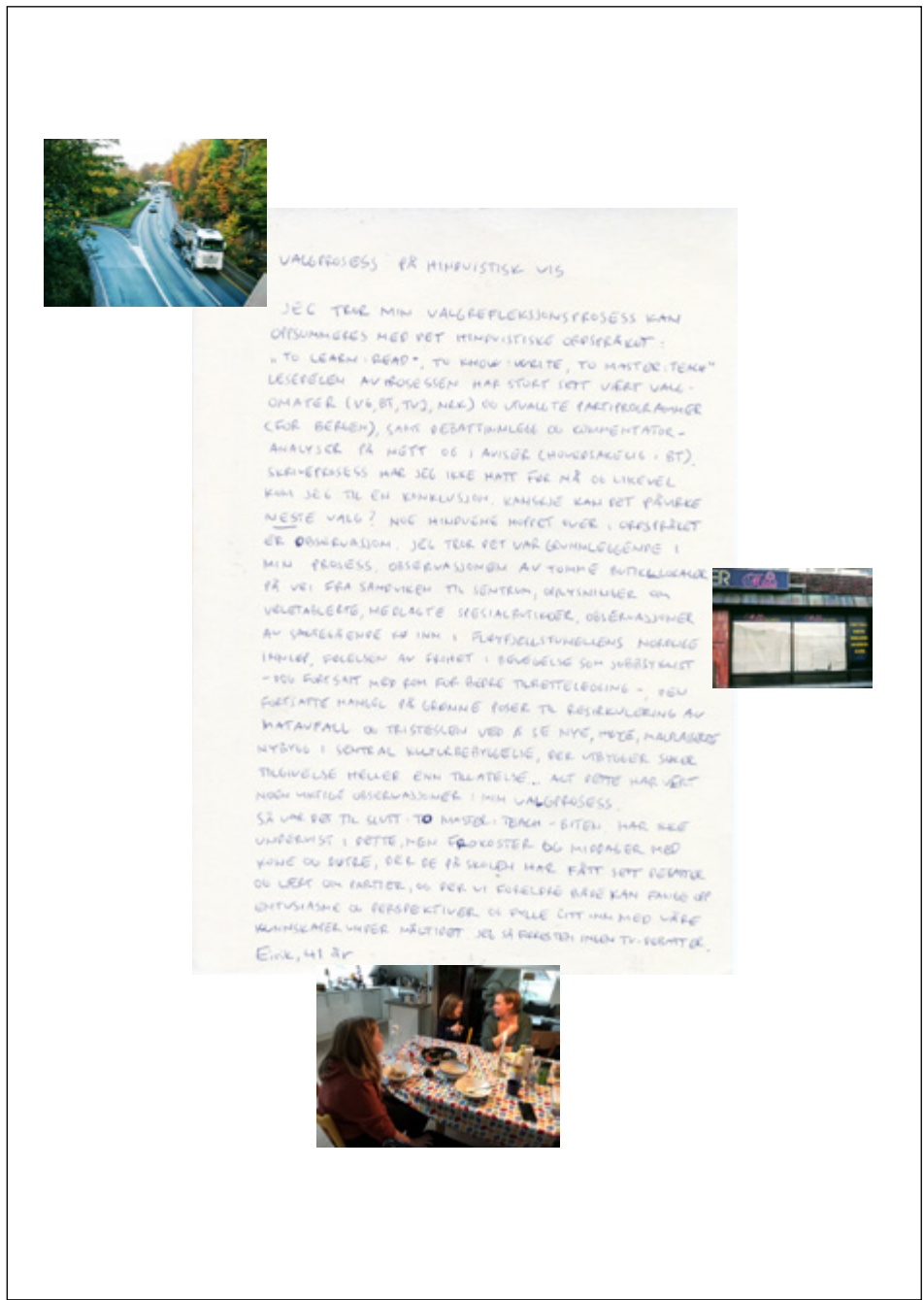


Figure 4.27 Eirik Kjelby



Figure 4.28 Kjetil Helland



Figure 4.29 Trond Tollofsen

Dialogue

Ellen Margrethe Grong
Dóra ðisleifsdóttir
Susanna Antonsson
Charles Michalsen
Kay Arne Kirkebø
Åge Petersen

Several participants said that dialogue is crucial to them—with family, children, and friends, even with themselves. These contributions focus on being part of a context and allowing conversations to take place.



Figure 4.30 Ellen Margrete Grong →
Figure 4.31 Dóra ðisleifssdottir →→

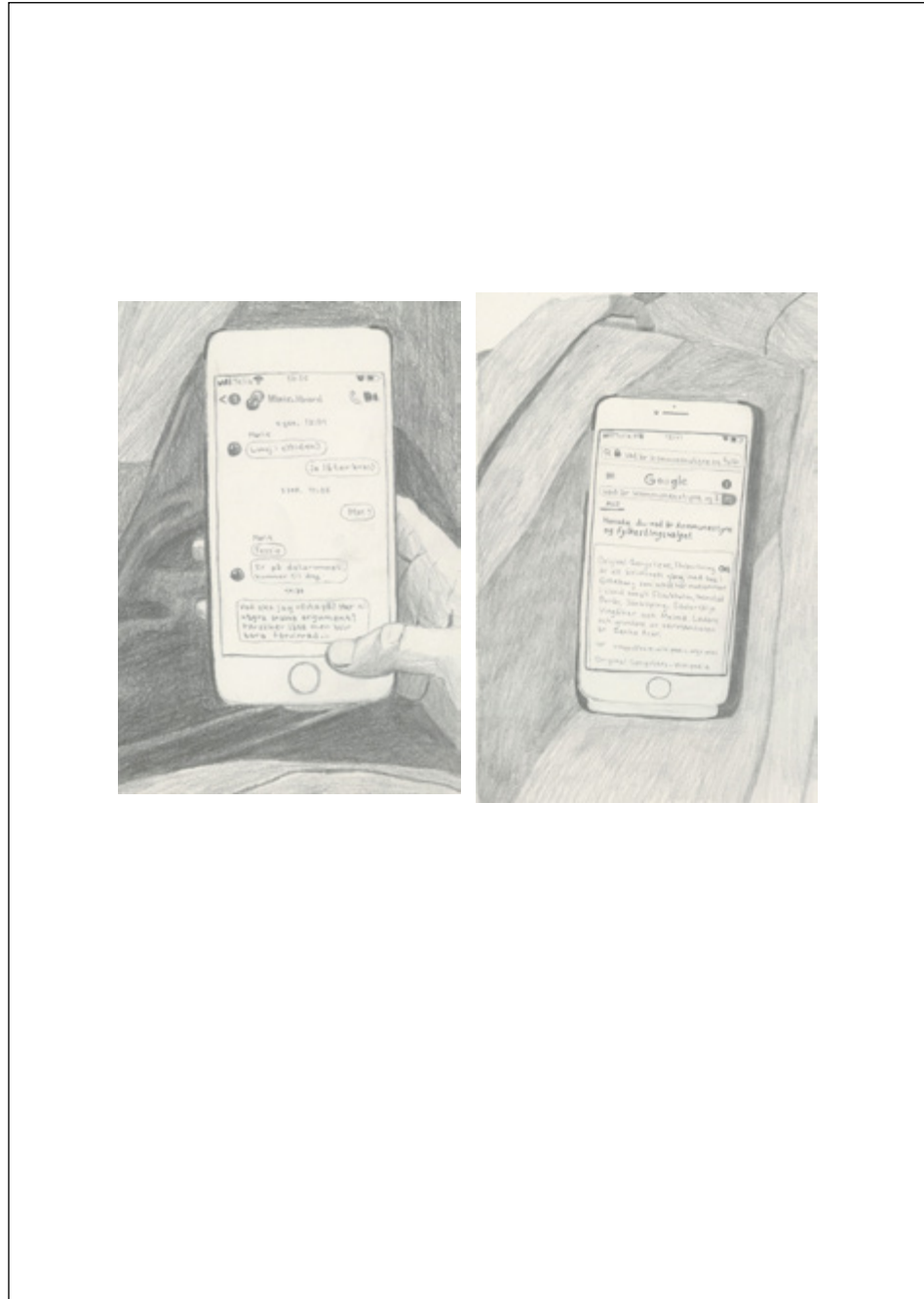


Figure 4.32 Susanna Antonsson

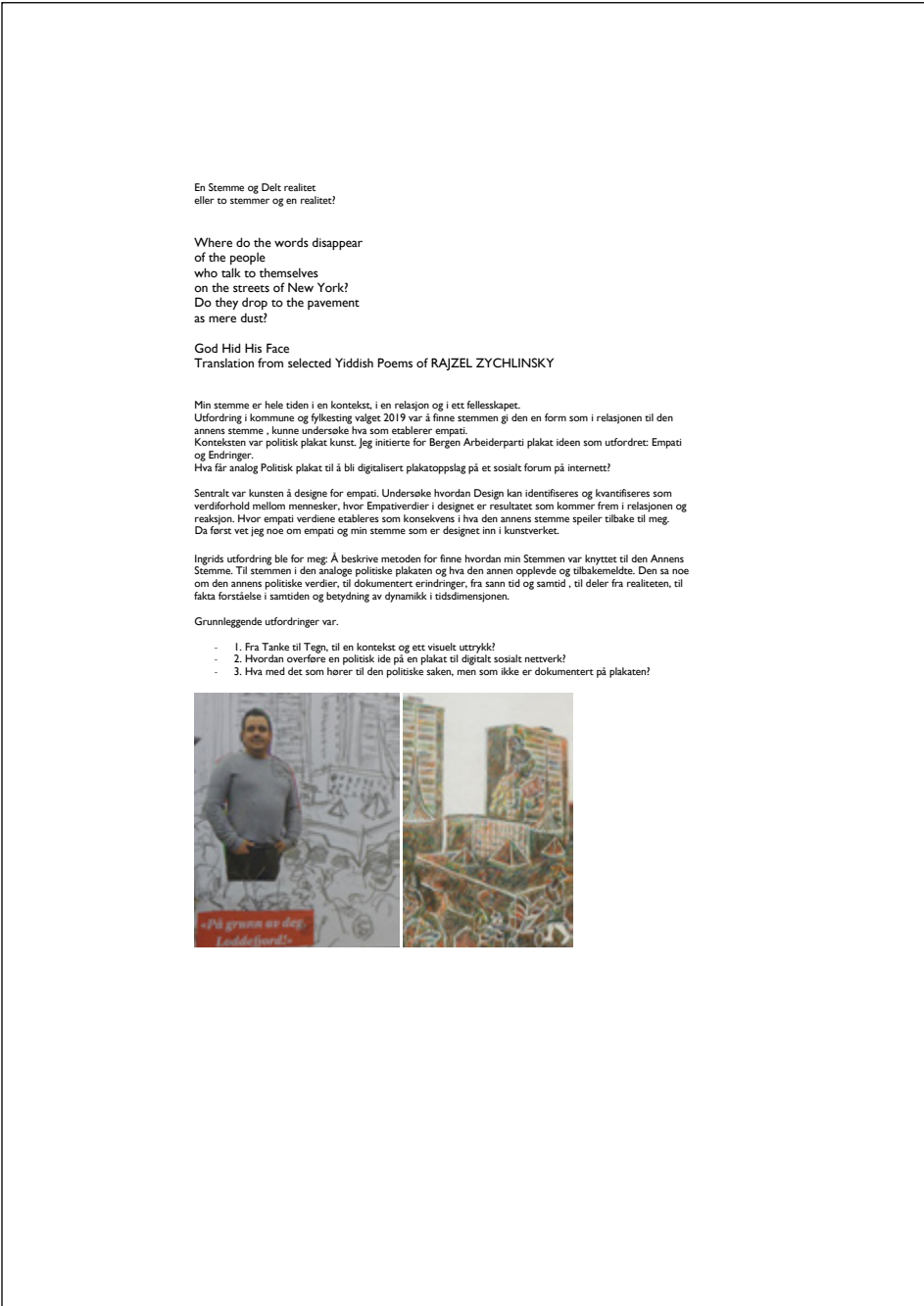


Figure 4.33 Charles Michalsen



Figure 4.34 Kay Arne Kirkebø

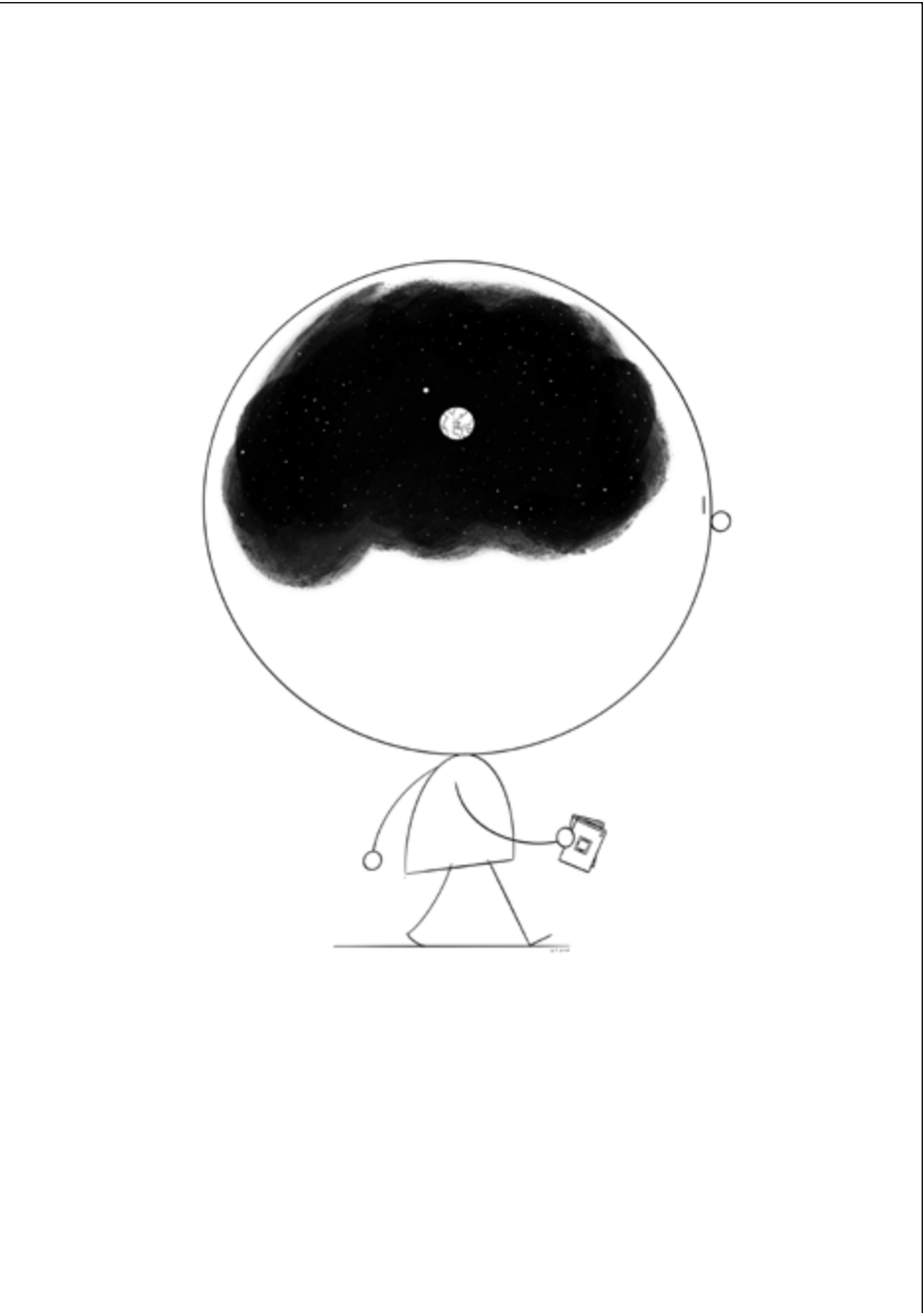


Figure 4.35 Åge Peterson

Societal Debate

Eirin Koehler Breivik
Magnhild Øen Nordahl
Gunhild Sannes Larsen



Three participants describe their relationship to, or participation in, societal debate, through channels like the Norwegian public broadcaster NRK, political party booths at Torgallmenningen (Bergen’s main square), and demonstrations. Attending a political demonstration or listening to The Political Quarter¹⁵ while playing Minecraft may seem like very different activities. But both demonstrations and this radio show are fundamental building blocks of Norway’s democracy.

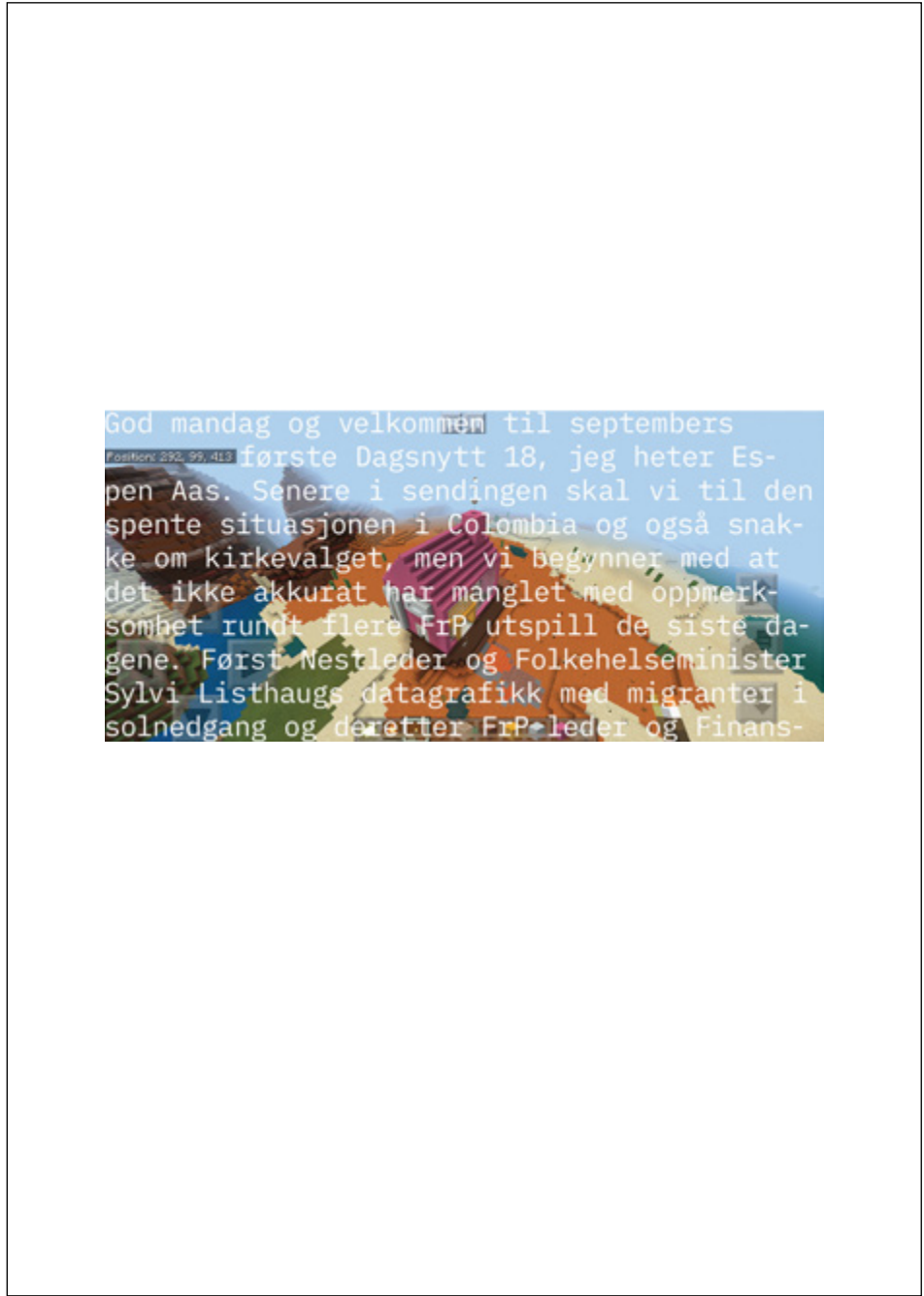


Figure 4.36 Eirin Koehler Breivik



Figure 4.37 Magnhild Øen Nordahl



Figure 4.38 Gunhild Sannes Larsen

15 The Political Quarter is a fifteen-minute radio show that airs every weekday. Produced and broadcast by NRK, it features political discussions and debate, political news, and interviews.

**Sunniva Helland
Hanne Gabrielsen
Åshild Skjelanger
Karina Birkelund Johansen
Mattias Kiiehn Nielsen**

Figure 4.39 Sunniva Helland →



Figure 4.39 Sunniva Helland →



Figure 4.40 Hanne Gabrielsen



Figure 4.41 Åshild Skjelanger



Figure 4.42 Karina Birkelund Johansen

Figure 4.43 Mattias Kiiehn Nielsen

Political Issues

Margrethe Pedersen
Maria Nortveit
Silje-Marie Molland
Silje Løvli Lorentzen

Some participants indicate that they find their voice through one or more political issues. Most visualised this through illustrations, although two of these contributions also contain text.

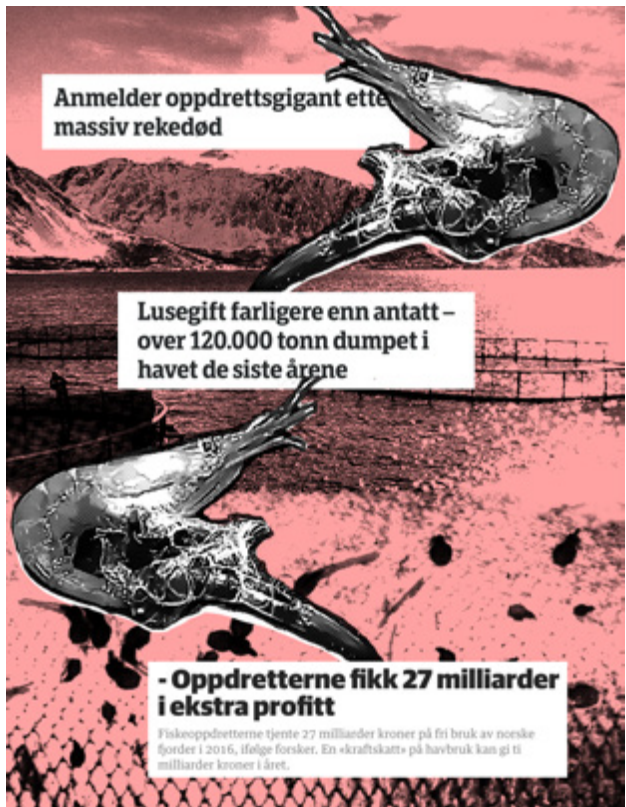


Figure 4.44 Margrethe Pedersen

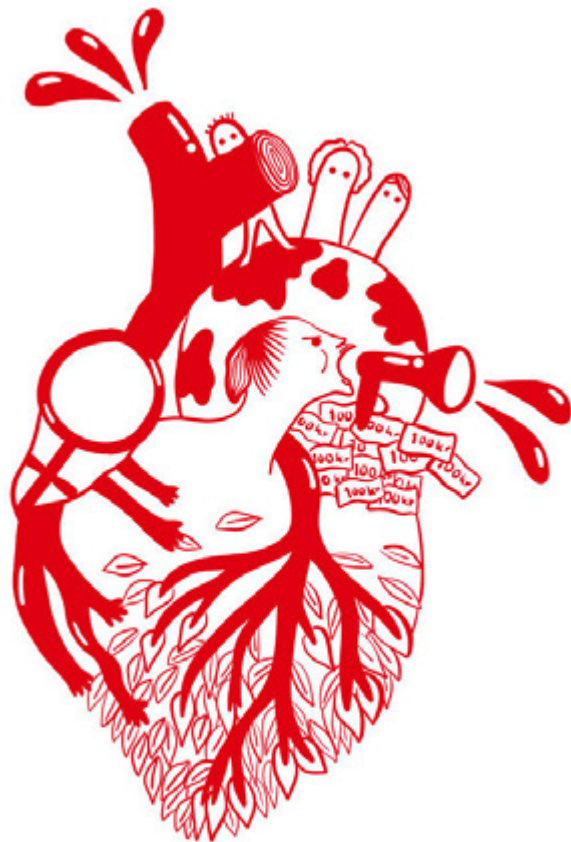


Figure 4.45 Maria Nordtveit



Figure 4.46 Silje-Marie Molland



Figure 4.47 Silje Løvli Lorentzen

Doubt

Trine Ween
Oda Engelsen Ødegård
Stein Edvardsen,
Gudrun Kvamme Brekke

Four contributions revolve around doubt. They touch upon uncertainty, not knowing, being forced to choose between two very similar alternatives. They talk about voting to fulfil one’s duty as a citizen, but not knowing how useful casting one’s vote actually is. Swedish author, linguistic virtuoso, and comedian Tage Danielsson once wrote something along the lines of “wise people know they are never any the wiser” (1974, 103). This phrase acknowledges that doubt is a powerful driving force, the foundation of progress, curiosity, and wonder.



Figure 4.48 Trine Louise Ween

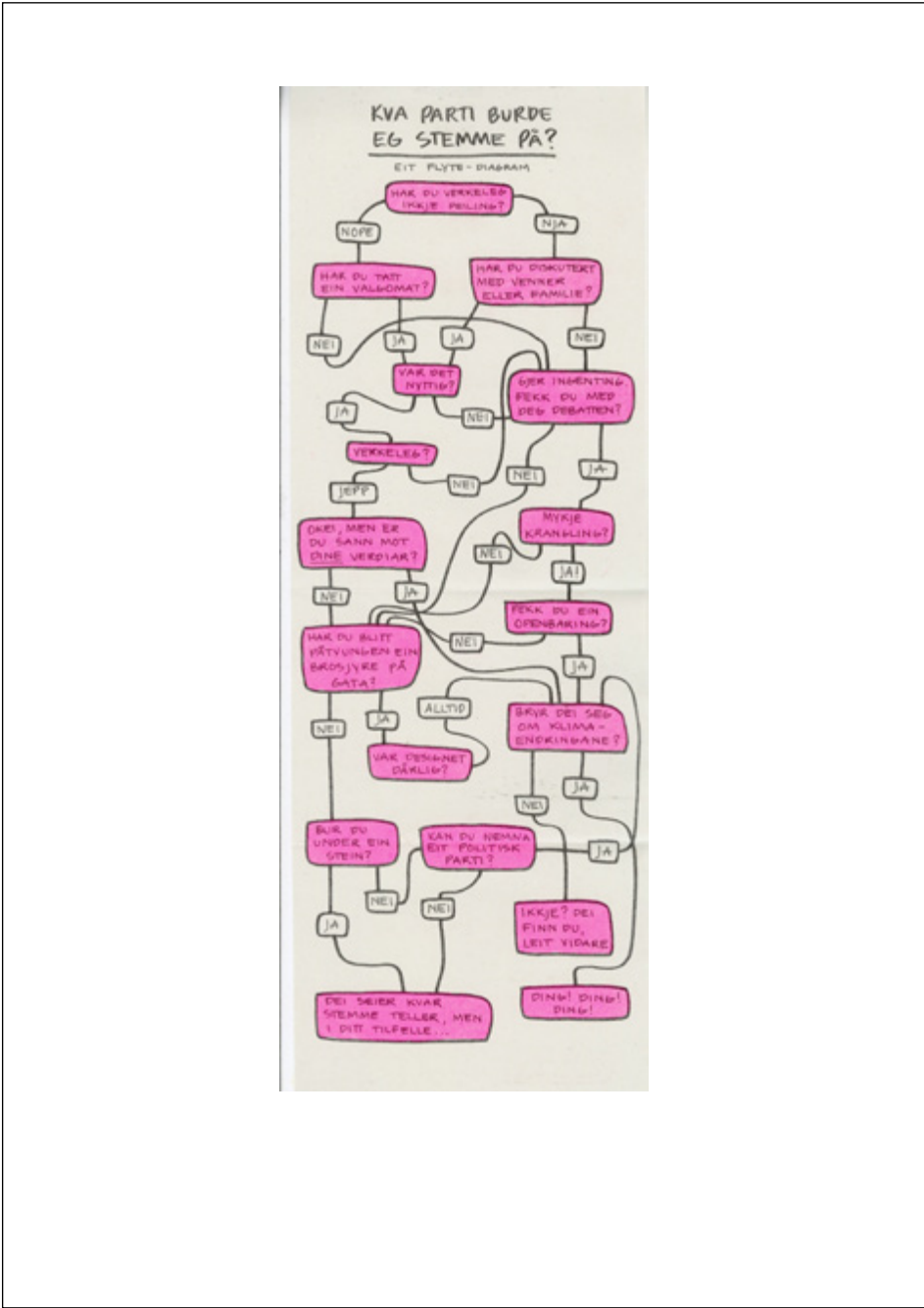


Figure 4.49 Oda Engelsen Ødegård

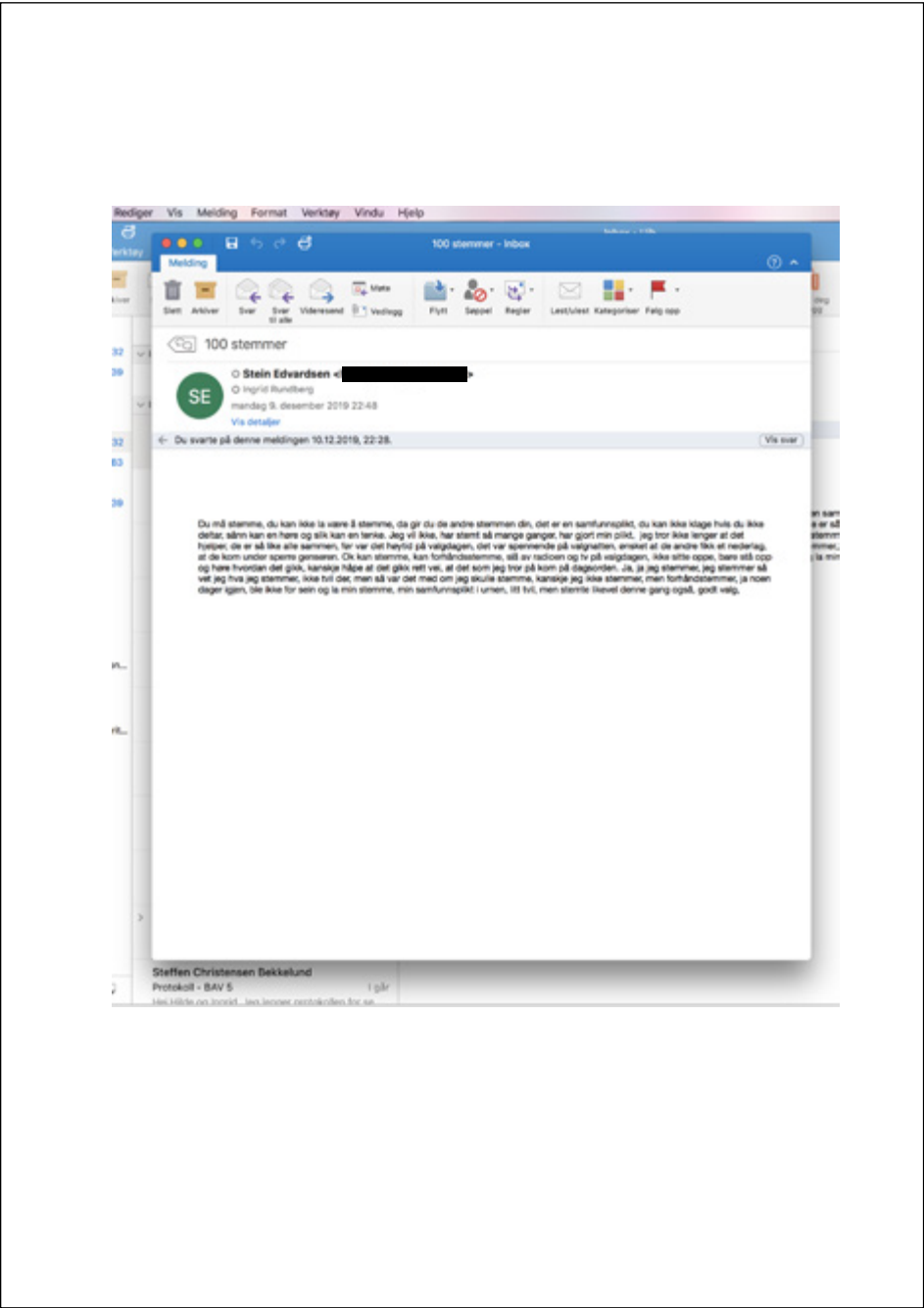


Figure 4.50 Stein Edvardsen

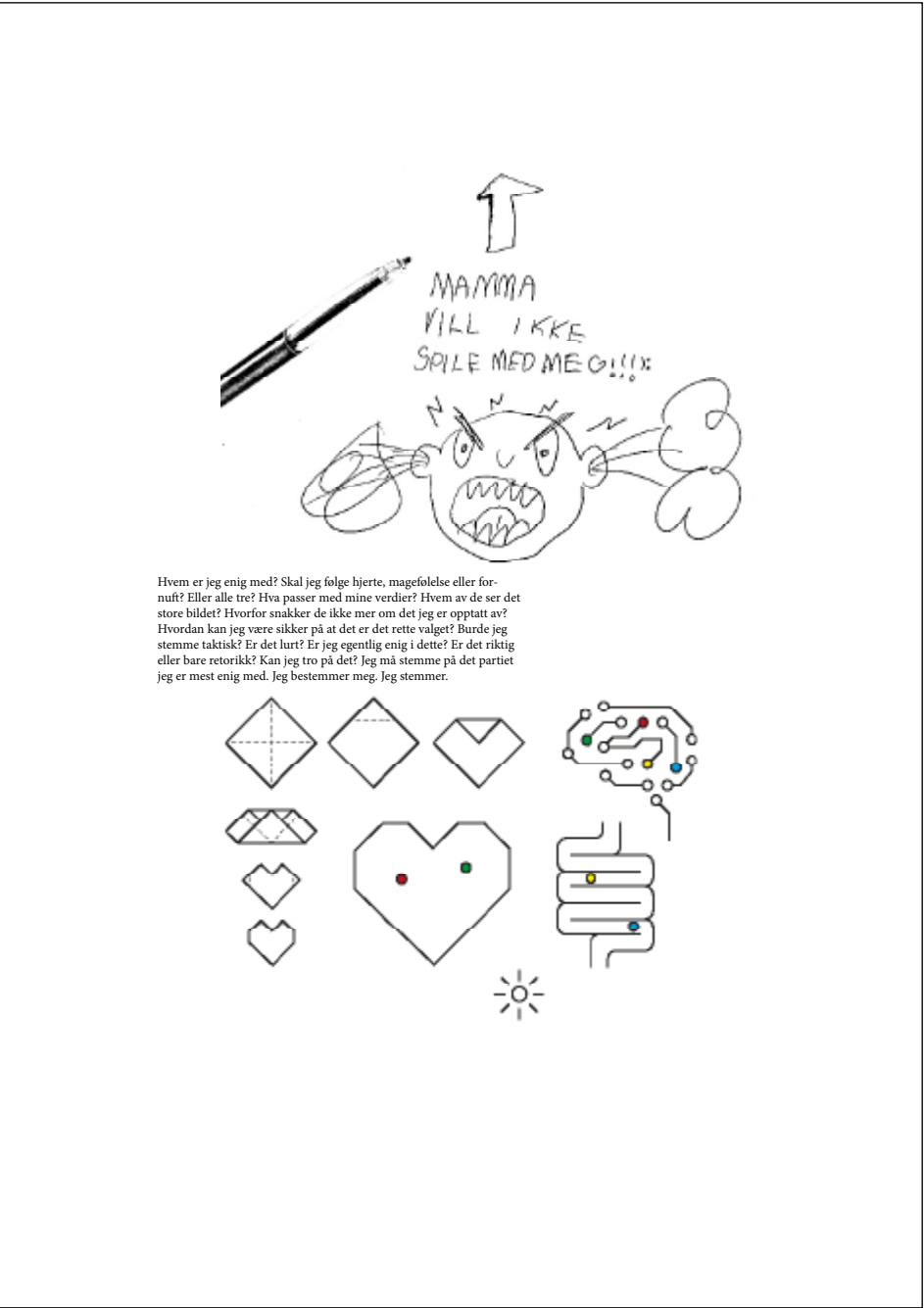


Figure 4.51 Gudrun Brekke

Of course, many contributions and many of the above categories overlap. The answers I received contain both elements that separate them, and ones that bind them together. Some are inherently temporal—retrospective, forward-looking, or anchored in the present. Some display both humour and seriousness at the same time. Vilde Valland, for example, photographed herself (fig. 4.27) holding on tight to the trunk of a birch tree. The image is accompanied by the words “another very happy young girl looking forward to a bright and wonderful future”. Nature is present in many contributions: there are images of landscapes and texts about nature's impact on the writer. Many contributions are rather complex. Åge Peterson's illustration, for example, depicts a person holding a passport on their way to the polling station. The figure's mind is filled with outer space, planet Earth, the environment, and democracy (fig. 4.36).

Whether this is a correct interpretation of Peterson's image, only Peterson himself knows. But through simple means and symbols, he manages to convey the complexity of being a voter: having to distil one's beliefs into a single vote, wondering how resources should be allocated, who should be prioritised, and, ultimately, which party should govern the country for the next four years.

4.3.7 CONCLUSION

In this sub-project, 28 people answered the question “how do you find your (political) voice?”. I asked people this question with three goals in mind: (1) creating a visual archive of how eligible voters decided how to vote in the municipal and county elections of 2019; (2) establishing a visual starting point for the entire PhD project, and (3) continuing to investigate how groups are formed and how they gather around themes based on personal interests. Participants clearly had a personal interest in the question; their responses demonstrate diversity and a desire to express themselves. I first collected all the contributions and then grouped them based on the visual resemblances between them, the themes they touch upon, and the types of answers they contained. The resulting publication, *Voices*, documents the results.

The question I asked was open-ended and broad. This resulted in highly diverse responses, both in terms of people's actual answers and the mediums they chose. I grouped the responses into different categories, based on the themes they touched upon (nature, observation, dialogue, societal debate, visual word-play, political issues, and doubt), thereby creating a visual archive

(1). Some people said that they tend to find their voice through dialogue, societal debate, and political issues. Two indicated that they seek help from NRK. Others suggested that they find their voice in nature; several contributions were photographs of nature. These photographs can be interpreted in various ways: do they mean that the participant votes for a party that focuses on environmental issues, or do they mean that the participant uses nature to contemplate politics? Several people submitted images that contained some type of wordplay. Does this indicate confusion, or do these contributions demonstrate the complexity of voting for a specific party and taking a stance? Doubt was another category. Some participants described feeling uncertain, sometimes up until the moment they step into the voting booth. For another group, dialogue was central—with one's children, with friends, with oneself. Together, the contributions form a visual archive of how 28 people found their voice in the 2019 elections (1). The publication also serves as a visual starting point for the rest of the project (2).

I believe the final publication will mean different things to different people, depending on whether or not they participated in *Voices*. For those who didn't, the sub-project's contributions may provide insight into how others think, convey new perspectives, and present stories of where and how others find their political voice. Those who participated in the sub-project, on the other hand, will hopefully feel a sense of belonging, pride, and joy at the fact that they were part of a courageous group of people who openly shared their ideas with the world, their experiences of searching for their political voice. But did this sub-project genuinely create a group (3)? Is answering a single question enough to feel one belongs to a group, or does a group only truly come into being once its members meet each other?

4.4 INNER POLITICAL LANDSCAPES WORKSHOP

In this project, I examined what political introspection might look like, and whether a workshop can be a way to collectively gather data. The most important part of the project was my investigation of whether participants were able to and wanted to create collages to reflect their inner political landscapes. The idea of the workshop came to me during an experience I had in my studio. In this chapter, I discuss concepts like ‘ambiguous objects’ and the ‘rhetorical user’, the Stemme Department takes shape and is given a voice, and the workshop space brought to life.

THE SHADOWS OF AN INNER POLITICAL LANDSCAPE PERSONAL TEXT FROM OCTOBER 2020

A few weeks ago, sitting at the table in my studio, I made some collages from plastic objects and paper cut-outs. I was looking for materials that had ‘a certain something’, without knowing what that something was. Something I could use to create a visual identity for my department, perhaps. As I sat there, moving the pieces around, turning them, and creating compositions, I saw that many resembled abstract landscapes (fig. 4.52-53). I started to think about nature. After a while, I remembered how, in the 2018 Swedish elections, the media kept talking about the way “the political map/political landscape was being redrawn”, following the landslide success of the populist, right-wing Sweden Democrats party. Back then, I felt annoyed by the media’s (mis)use of these expressions. It was like all of the different news media were using the same words all the time.



Fig. 4.52 Abstract landscape made of collage materials and cut-outs.

Maybe this could be the core of my project: ‘the Inner Political Landscape’ and ‘the Inner Political Map’? Maybe we all have to look within ourselves to find out what we believe in?

Thomas Hobbes believed that if there were no state, people would be in a state of nature. Before there was a societal organisation, all people had was nature. Unfortunately, we need a state to protect us from other humans, from being robbed or killed, and so on. Hobbes had a dark view of humanity. Later, other political thinkers also used natural metaphors to describe their political ideas. In the text *Two Treatises of Government* (1988) John Locke, for example, with Hobbes when it came to nature, but had a slightly more optimistic view of matters. Both philosophers discussed the social contract, which can roughly be defined as the idea that citizens have to give up part of their freedom in return for protection from other human beings and from nature. John Rawls too referred to nature. In *A Theory of*

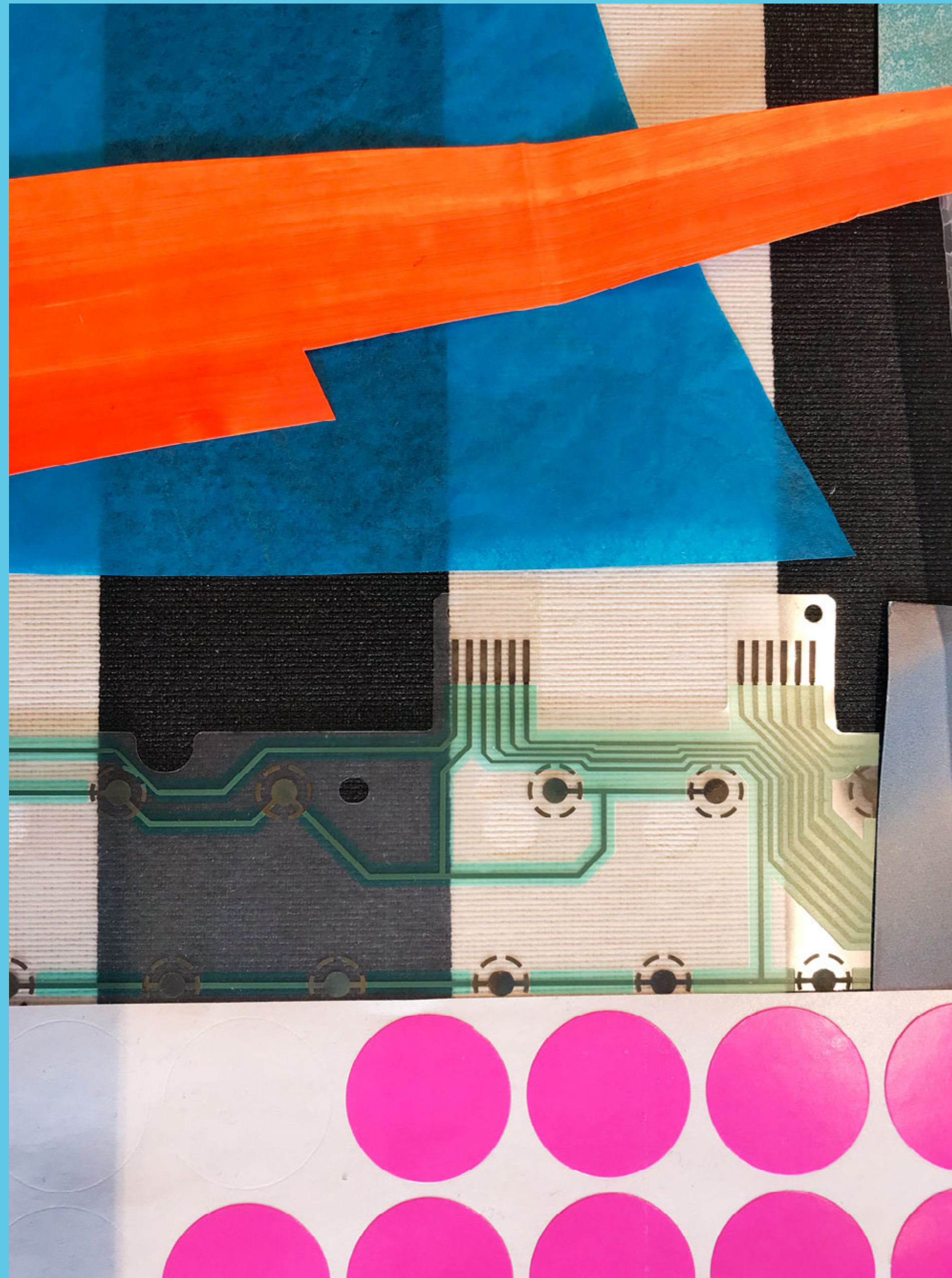


Fig. 4.53 Composition, objects.

Justice (1971), he suggested that people should be ‘in their original position’ (for example when it comes to the distribution of power). Later still, the staunch libertarian Robert Nozick wrote *Anarchy, State and Utopia* (1974), in which he argued that the state should interfere in people’s lives as little as possible, only providing basic functions such as protection against violence, theft, fraud, and so on, thereby once again echoing Hobbes.

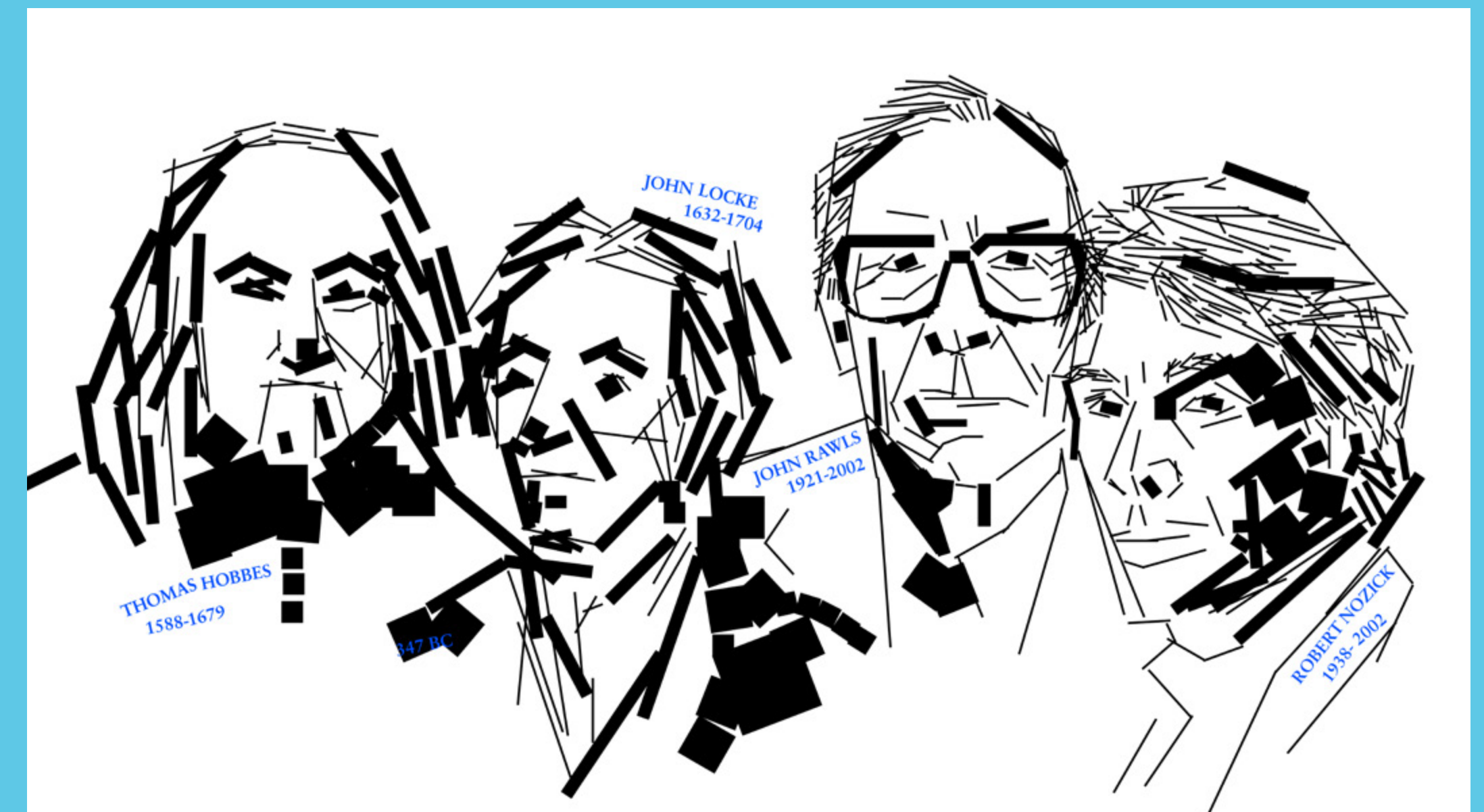


Fig. 4.54 Political philosophers using nature as a metaphor.

4.4.1 GOALS

I designed the Inner Political Landscapes workshop based on the experience I had in my studio. My goal was to explore:

- (1) Whether the representation of an inner political landscape can serve as a tool to understand and listen to one's inner political voice;
- (2) How I might practically design a situation for political introspection;
- (3) The workshop format as a method for collective data collection.

As my idea of the inner political landscape stemmed from a specific experience I had had in my studio, I focused on translating that moment into a workshop. That is why I asked participants to visualise their inner political landscape using collage techniques.

4.4.2 EVERYDAY OBJECTS

During the workshop, participants got collage materials: shapes cut out of paper, with various vibrantly coloured objects on them. The objects were the same as the ones I had used in my studio in October 2020, when I first started thinking about inner political landscapes. The collage materials stemmed from perfectly ordinary sources and included everyday plastic objects: a plastic fork from a local snack bar, the bits of plastic that hold socks together in clothing stores, a piece of tape, a drink stirrer, packaging and insulation material, a rubber band, a clip to connect an orchid stem to a flower stick, a medical blister pack, the cap of a marker pen, a foam arrow, a sheet of dot-shaped stickers, etc. Everyday design objects can be both wholly unremarkable and astonishingly rich in variation at the same time. I designed the collage materials based on three principles:

Ethics I wanted the workshop's design to be politically independent, which meant I didn't include any symbols that could represent specific parties.

Personal Protection	Each participant got the same type of materials, so their finished collages would not risk revealing their identity.
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Design The materials had to be pre-produced, because I wanted participants to encounter finished shapes at each workstation. I wanted there to be a wide variety of shapes and colours, so participants would have abundant choices when constructing their inner political landscape.

The below reference to Masha Somik's publication *What Type of Abstract Are You?* (2020) is an example of how predetermined collage materials can be presented to the reader to describe something human, albeit perhaps elusive—someone's personality. The collage material is transformed from a simple shape (fig. 4.55) to an abstract whole (fig. 4.56). Somik's publication is exemplary and inspiring, filled with wonder, curiosity, and subjectivity.

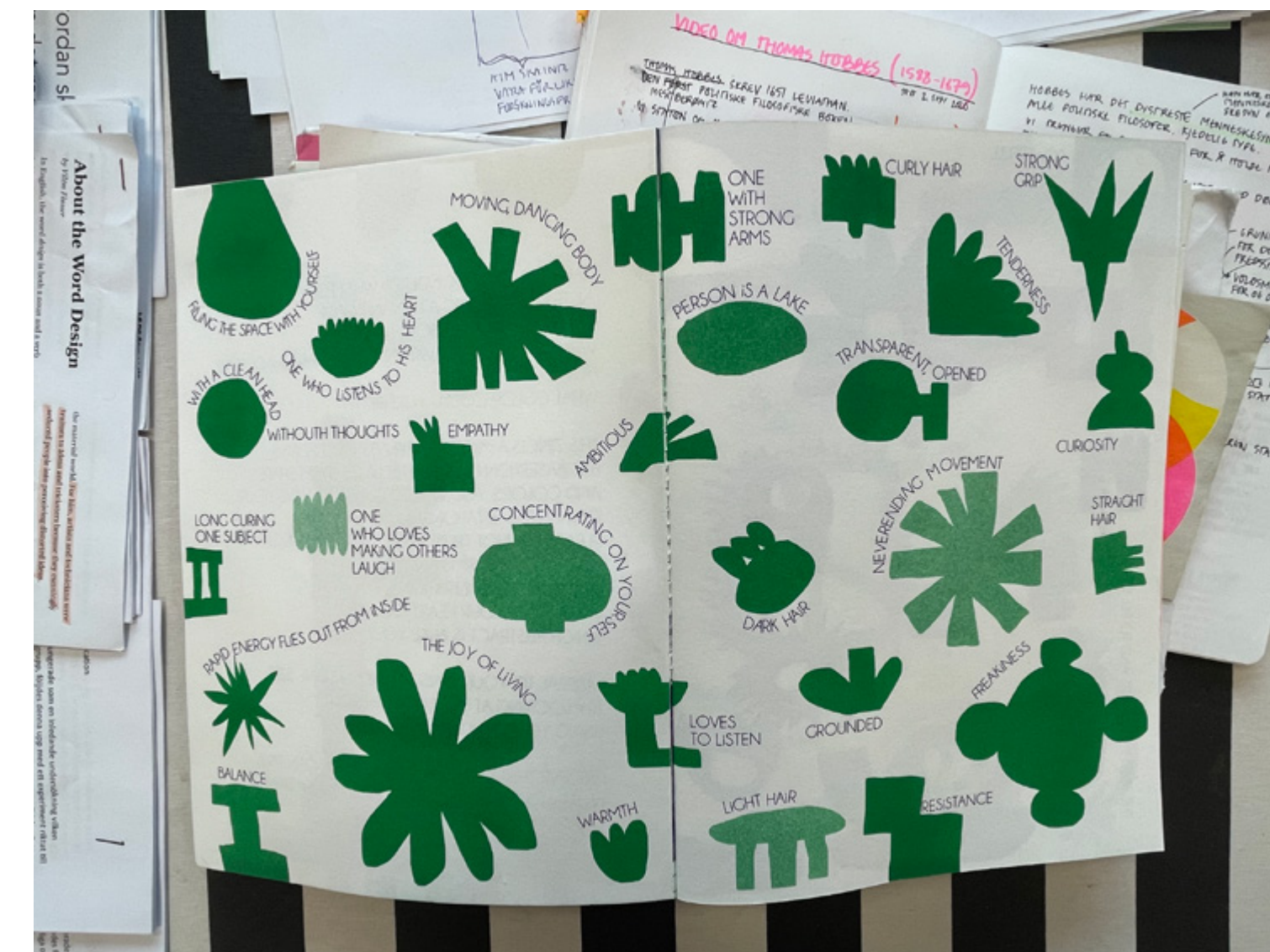


Figure 4.55 Abstract shapes with and for different personalities (Somik 2020).



Figure 4.56 The relationship between the part and the whole (personality) (Somik 2020).

In my workshop, I wanted to make participants experience this free, playful, abundant, and harmless relationship to form. The varied yet limited materials could, of course, be perceived as a constraint on participants' visual spectrum. However, the purpose of this limitation was to lower participants' level of performance anxiety: I hoped the materials' inherent level of abstraction would be transferred to the participant. Instead of worrying about their visual skills and knowledge of expression, people would be free to listen to their inner voice and focus on the content of their inner political landscape and their personal narrative.

For a detailed overview of how I transformed everyday three-dimensional into collage materials, see fig. 4.57-63.

The everyday pieces of plastic the collage material consists of have first been scanned and then laid out on a digital A3 surface in Photoshop (fig. 4.57), in order to achieve the greatest possible efficiency in printing. After this, the files have been processed once more in Adobe Photoshop to create printable files (fig. 4.58) for riso-printing (pre-press). The printed collage material consists of two series, both of which are based on the same scanned object. In the first series (fig. 4.59), the shapes have been scanned and printed and the original surface of the objects has been retained. Meaning, a form of styrofoam still carries its styrofoam pattern. This is to maintain the materiality of the object. In the second series (fig. 4.61-62) only the border of the objects has been preserved. Through the printing, the objects have been filled with a gradient consisting of two colors, e.g. pink and blue or pink and orange with several combinations. Presenting two different types of objects increases the participant's opportunity for variety. Figure 4.63 presents the cut-out objects.



Figure 4.57



Figure 4.58

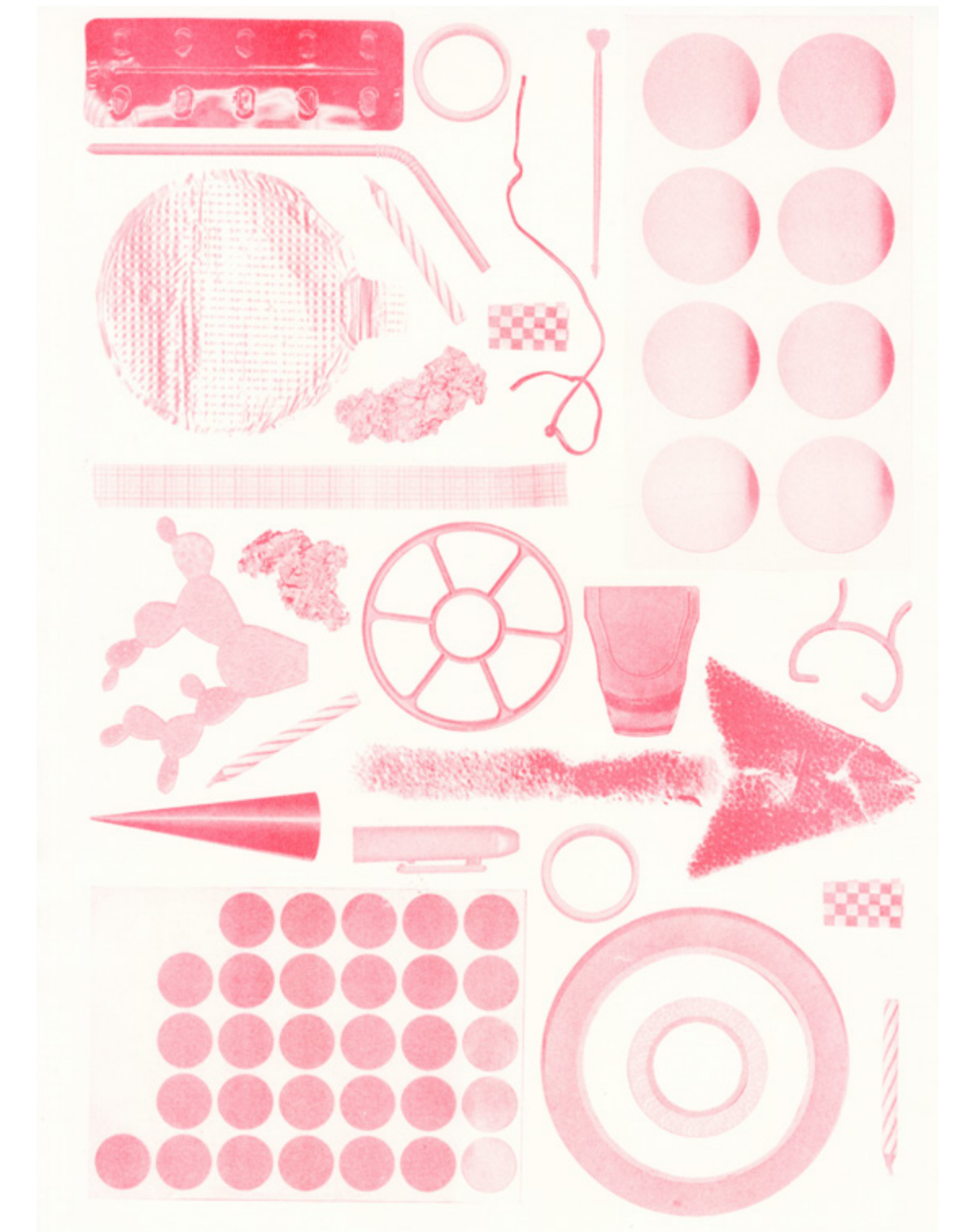


Figure 4.59



Figure 4.60

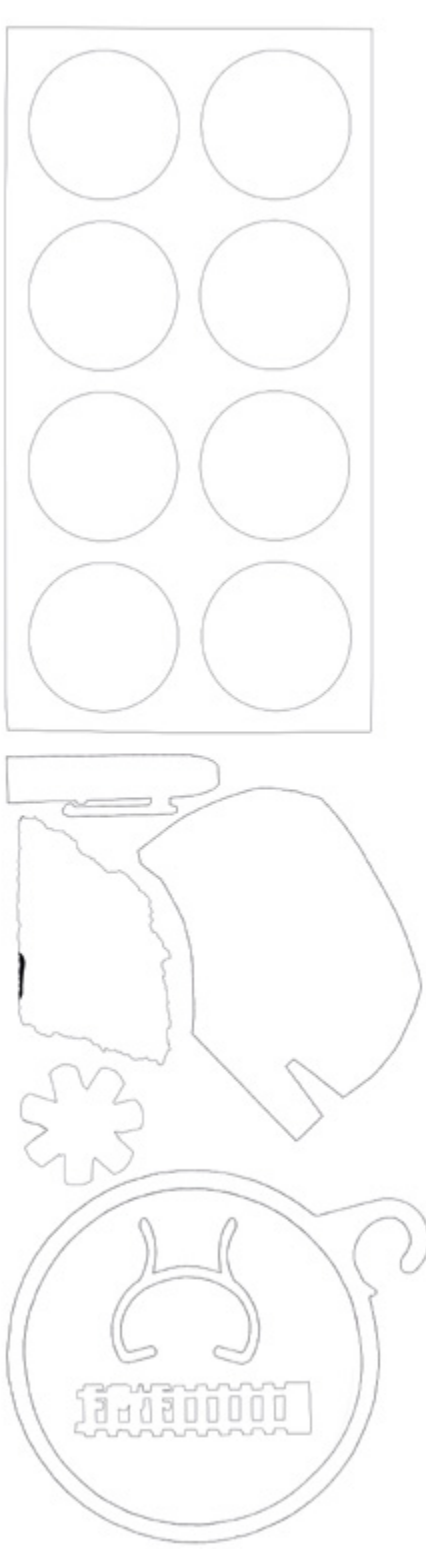


Figure 4.61

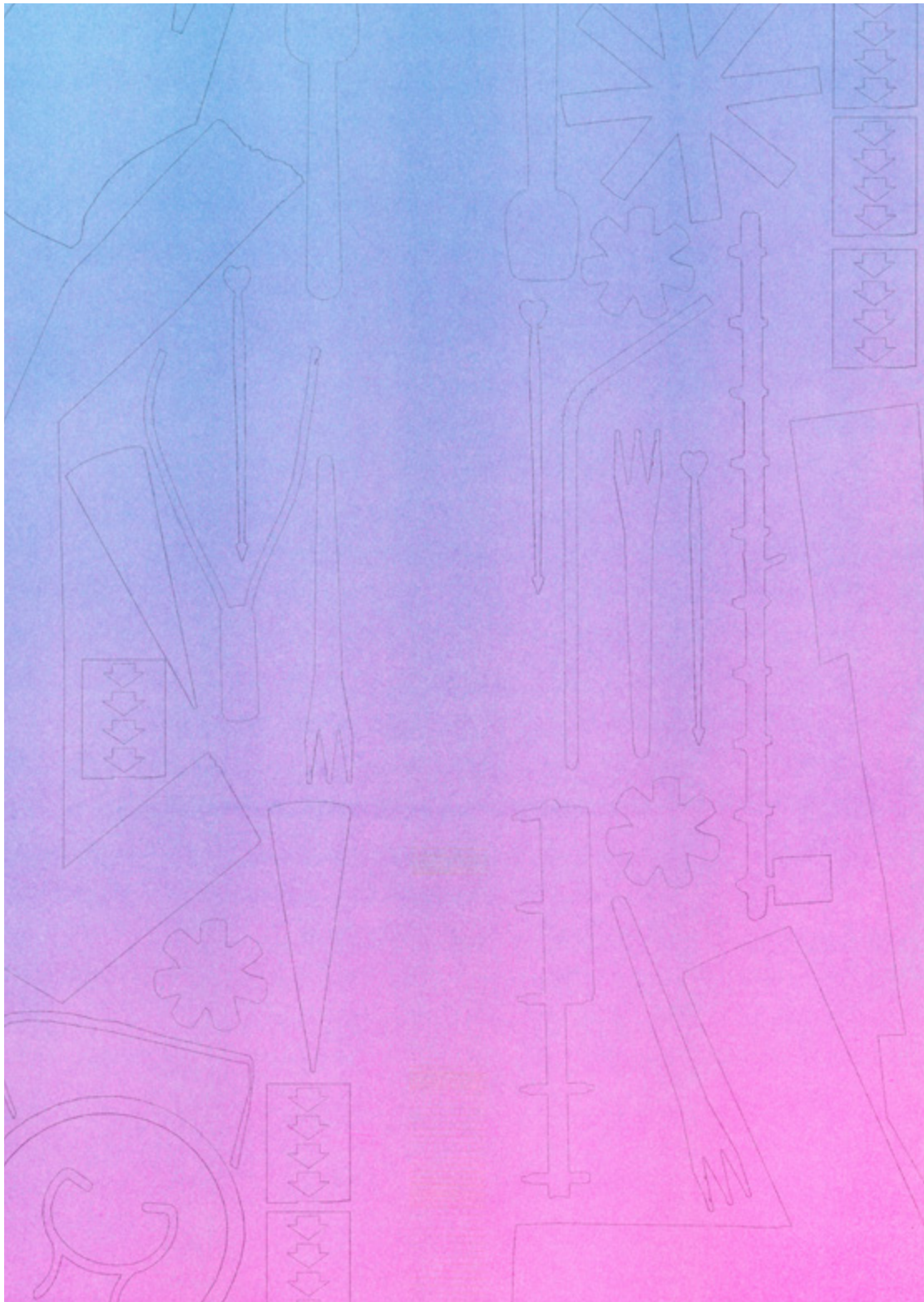


Figure 4.62



Figure 4.63

The workshop was designed to be a space for political introspection (2) and to invite the participant to engage in a thought experiment and activity beyond the ordinary ways in which people tend to explore politics for themselves. The everyday objects that were part of the collage materials were reflected in the room's scenography, on a large scale and in three dimensions. Together, the room's amalgam of elements mirrored the way participants constructed their inner political landscapes. Some of the objects were disruptive and obstructive: mirrors, a disco ball, an insulation mat. Several of the objects gathered in advance for the workshop's scenography were highly recognisable: a set of blue blinds, a rope, a wooden ladder for gardening, a coiled water hose, a soft football, purple foam boards, a hula hoop, painted wooden boards, a disco ball, etc. (fig. 4.64).

I wanted these objects to both be recognisable and have bold colours. Both their ordinariness and colours reflected the collage materials the participants were given. In the room, some colours (red, blue) could be associated with traditionally leftist or conservative perspectives. There was also green for the environmental movement, and neon pink for feminism. Most colours, however, represented something else: the uncertain, that which lies in between, blended ideologies and viewpoints.

The collage materials and the scenographic materials in the room possessed a certain ambiguity. When I browsed the internet to try and define 'ambiguous object', I found that the concept is not only used in design (my current context, which is populated by figures like Malpass, Sharp and Sharp, etc). An ambiguous object is also an artifact that has one shape in reality, but a completely different shape when held up to a mirror¹⁶ (fig. 4.65), when it may go from being, say, a three-dimensional square to a circle. The object has its own, evident ambiguity.

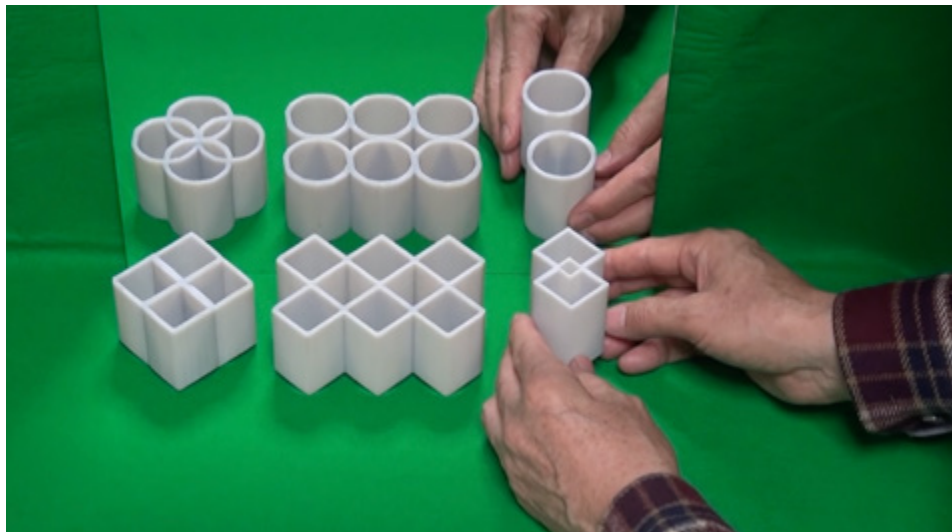


Figure 4.65 Screen shot: Objects with ambiguous traits. Image from Youtube.



Figure 4.64 Ordinary objects, before being transformed.

The objects in the Inner Political Landscapes workshop were there to tell a story—a rhetorical use of props (Malpass 2017, 47)—which means my role as a designer was that of a story-teller. Tharp and Tharp write about the strangely familiar, and how ordinary objects can create dissonance. This dissonance stems from multiple factors:

It is also possible that an ordinary object creates the dissonance, achieved by unique contextualization, which could include time, place, rhetorical user¹⁷, and audience interaction. (2018, 221)

The scenario I constructed was designed to evoke curiosity and wonder in the participant (1). We can compare it to what happens to Alice in Wonderland, when Alice chases a rabbit, tumbles down a hole, and eventually enters a world she did not know existed. This world turns out to contain a dizzying array of random objects as the story unfolds. Curious, Alice ventures further into Wonderland, led on by a sense of curiosity (Carroll, 1896). This was precisely the kind of curiosity I wanted participants of the workshop to feel.

One distinct element in the room was the striped pattern of the furniture and drapes: black and white, graphic without grayscale or uncertainty. These black-and-white stripes represented systems, order, structure, and history, while the vertical stripes on the drapes were active and energetic. This pattern was a tentative exploration of a potential visual identity for the Stemme Department (see Chapter 4.6).

Some of the objects and scenography described above were in the workshop to make sure participants would know what to do. On top of that, I myself also participated as a moderator and instructor: I welcomed participants, explained the workshop's purpose to them, and answered questions during the workshop.

4.4.3 INVITATION, EXECUTION, AND PARTICIPANTS

The Inner Political Landscape workshop took place in the Faculty of Arts, Music, and Design's gallery Room 61. This room is in the public part of the faculty, next to the library and cafeteria. The workshop spanned three days, from Thursday 9 September to Saturday 11 September 2021. The workshop had a drop-in format, meaning participants could enter whenever they wanted, as long as the gallery was open. People were invited to the workshop through posters (fig. 4.66) and Facebook (Rundberg 2021) (app. 3).

During the workshop, participants were asked to visualise their inner political landscape using collage techniques. They were first welcomed into the room and given a brief explanation of the inner political landscape concept. The task and collage materials were presented to them, after which participants could ask questions. People were also told that the workshop was part of a larger PhD project and, as such, considered as research. Participants then got to sit at a worktable that featured collage materials and tools. Participants were also given coloured A4 sheets of paper, chequered paper in various colours, pens, scissors, and glue as a backup in case they found the materials too restrictive. They were asked to create their collage on specific A3-sized sheets of paper. The front of the paper (for the collage) was blank. The back was lined and featured a set of pre-printed questions, so participants could describe their inner political landscape in text and explain their process (app. 4). Each participant got as much time as they wanted, limited only by the gallery's opening hours. When participants felt they were finished with their collage and accompanying text, the result was hung up one of the gallery walls.

17 I interpret Tharp and Tharp's use of the concept of 'rhetorical user' as an evolution of Malpass's 'rhetorical use of props', only applied to individuals. In their text, Tharp and Tharp refer to rhetorical users (2018, 189) as people who use a prepared space/stage/location to achieve a scenario's set goal. As a counterpart, every scenario must have an audience that operates within the real dissemination context.



Figure 4.66 Poster, a four-layer risoprint.

4.4.4 RESULTS

Thirty-seven people attended the workshop and created a collage. Participants took varying amounts of time to complete the task and had different reactions to it. Some sat in quiet contemplation, while others were eager to discuss the task, not just with me but also with others in the room. Overall, the atmosphere was calm and focused. Many expressed delight at the collage materials.

The final collages (fig. 4.67-102) could be divided into different groups: landscapes or direct depictions of nature (8), maps (1), body (2), machine and technology (2), or a combination of nature and body (2). The majority were entirely abstract, however (18).

Most participants, but not all, wrote something on the back of their collage. Participants had been instructed (both verbally and in print) to describe their inner political landscape and/or the process behind it in words, considering factors like colours, composition, and personal reflections. The instruction was intentionally vague, to give people free rein to speculate about their image and approach. This vagueness led to rather varied responses. Some people wrote freely about their inner political landscape and the things they believed in. One participant (fig. 4.67), for example, wrote: “We should focus more on our inner selves and less on what everyone else is doing. We need peace and love and MUCH less focus on THINGS and STUFF that doesn't make you happy”. Others articulated their political beliefs and connected them to certain ideologies. One person called themselves an ‘etymological communist’ (fig. 4.68) and added “I started with a yellow shape, a red, and a blue. I feel that I have values that belong to many places on the political axis from left to right” (fig. 4.77). Several participants described their inner political landscape as a struggle (fig. 4.69, 4.72, 4.98). Others (fig. 4.84), directly commented on the collage-making process: “I began by looking at the cut-out shapes and picked out those that resonated with me”. Two participants didn’t write any text.



Figure 4.67



Figure 4.68

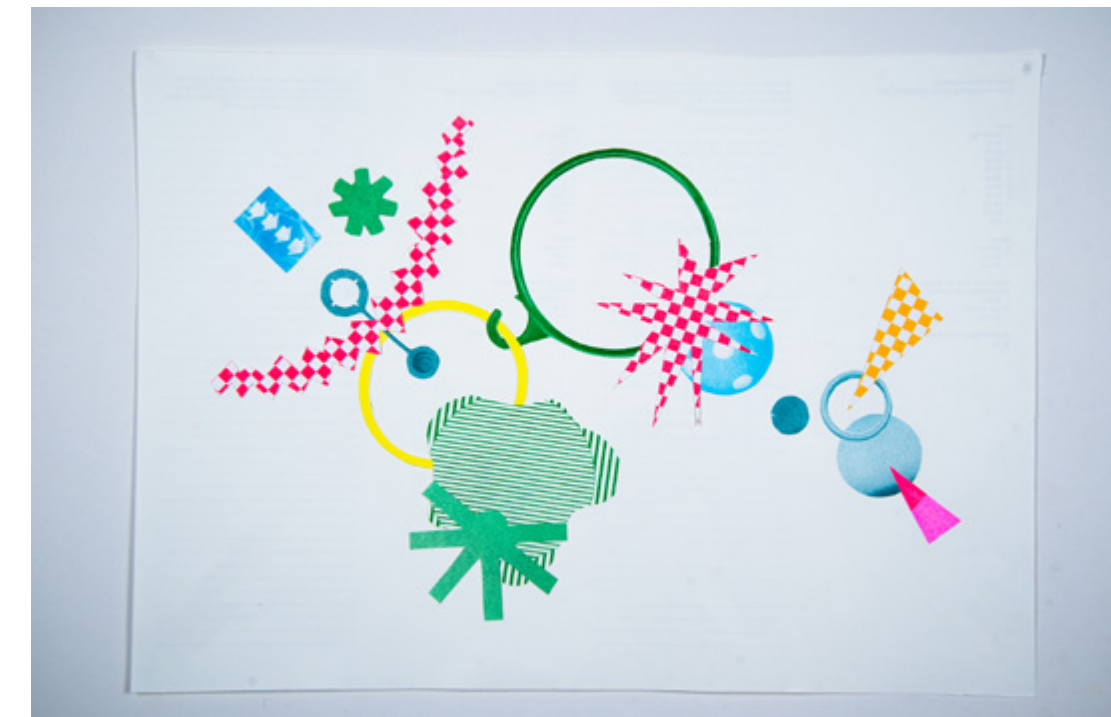


Figure 4.69



Figure 4.70



Figure 4.71



Figure 4.72



Figure 4.73

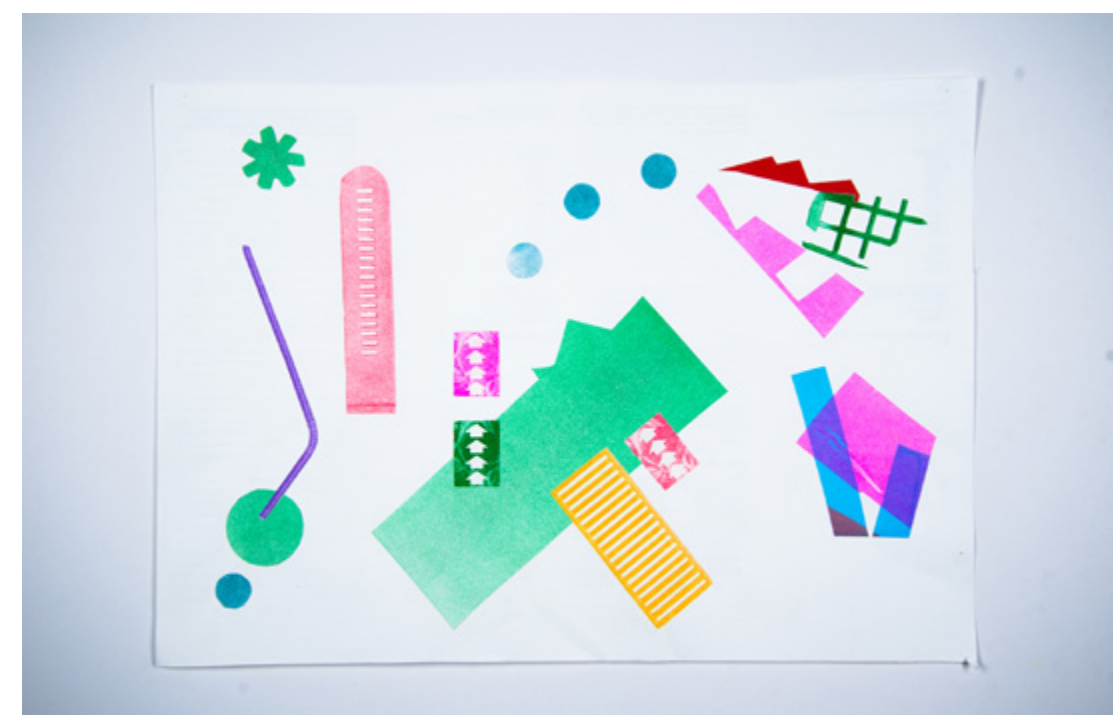


Figure 4.74



Figure 4.75



Figure 4.76

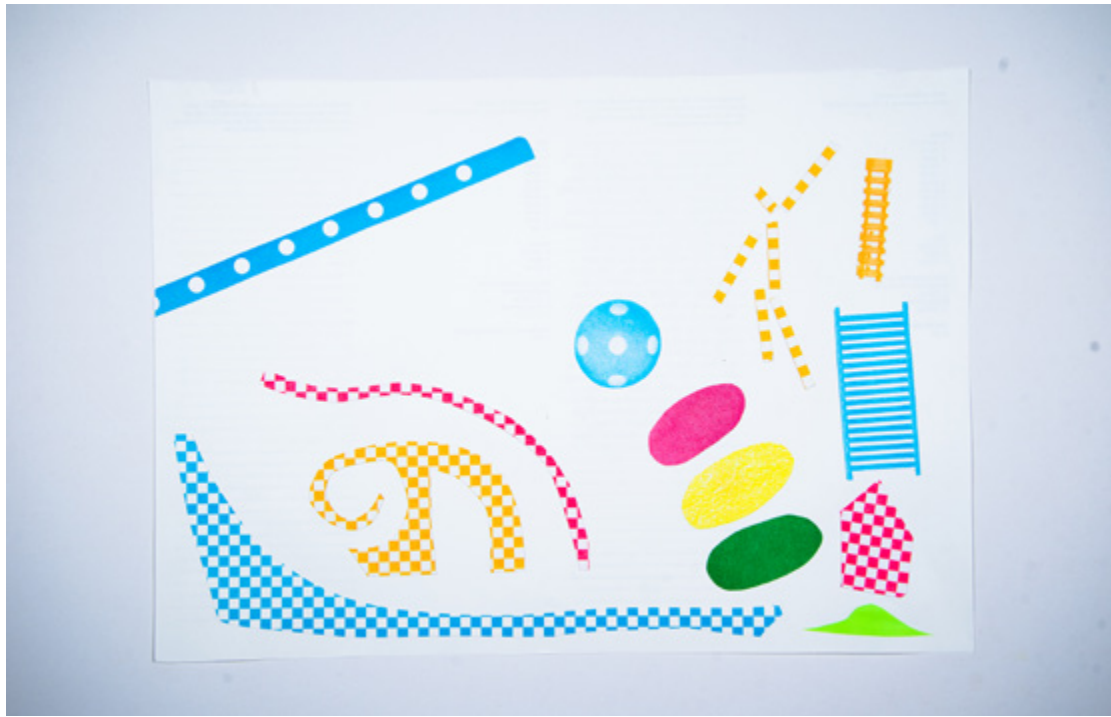


Figure 4.77



Figure 4.78



Figure 4.79



Figure 4.80

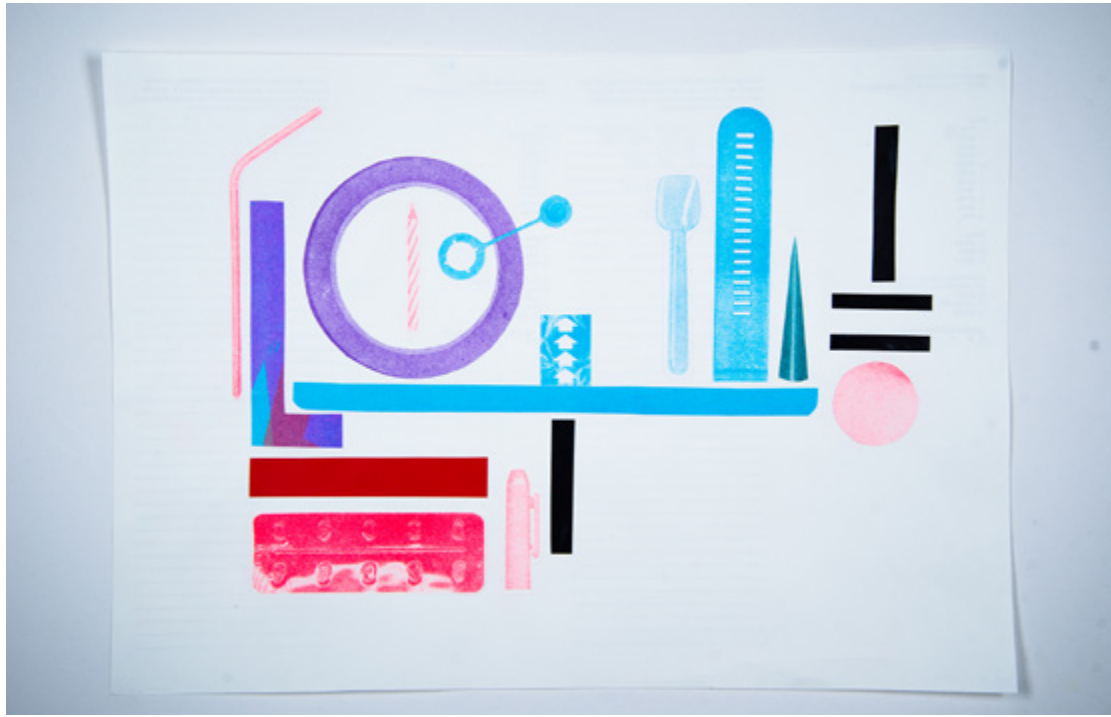


Figure 4.81



Figure 4.82



Figure 4.83



Figure 4.84



Figure 4.85



Figure 4.86



Figure 4.87



Figure 4.88



Figure 4.89



Figure 4.90

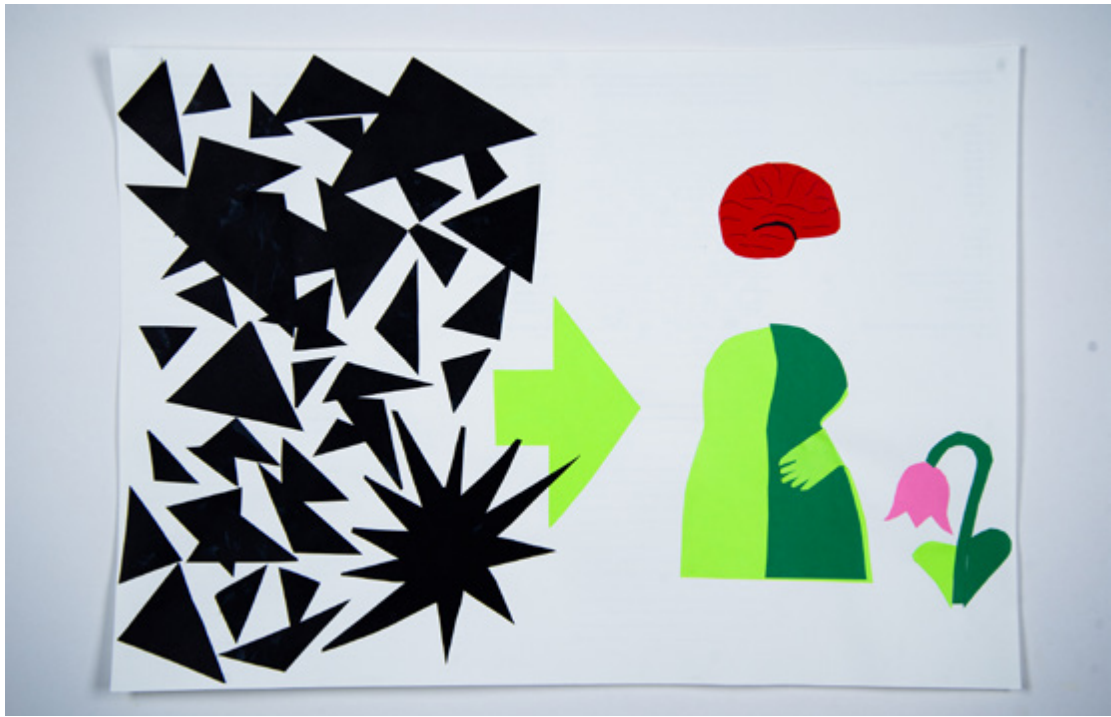


Figure 4.91



Figure 4.92

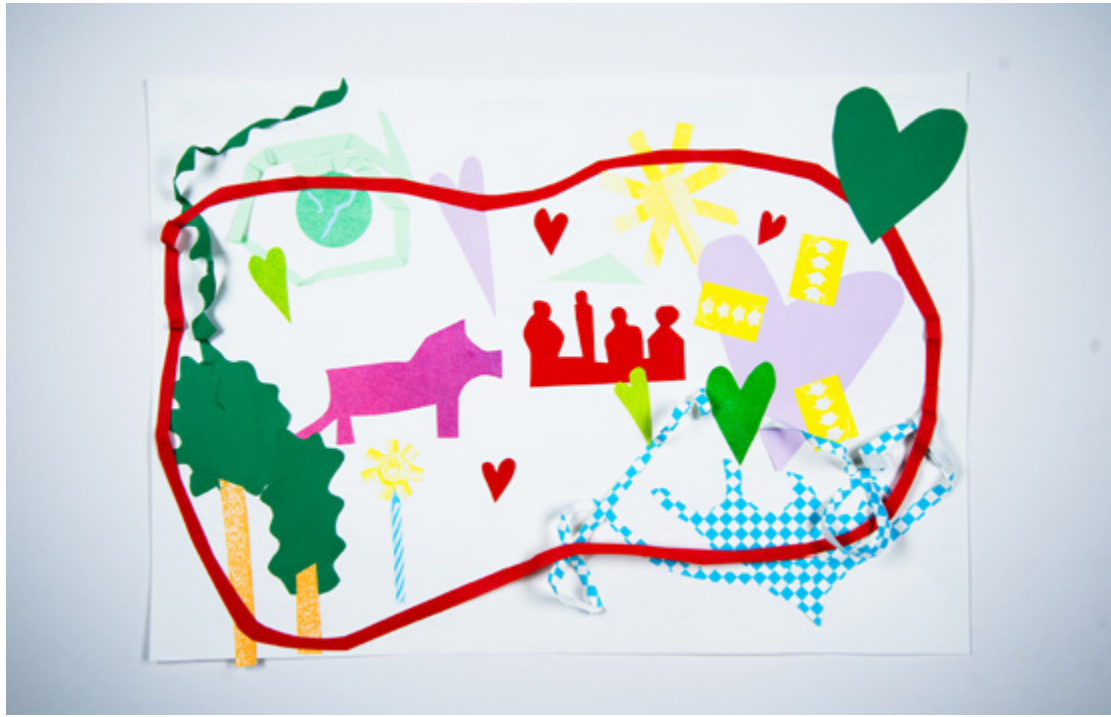


Figure 4.93

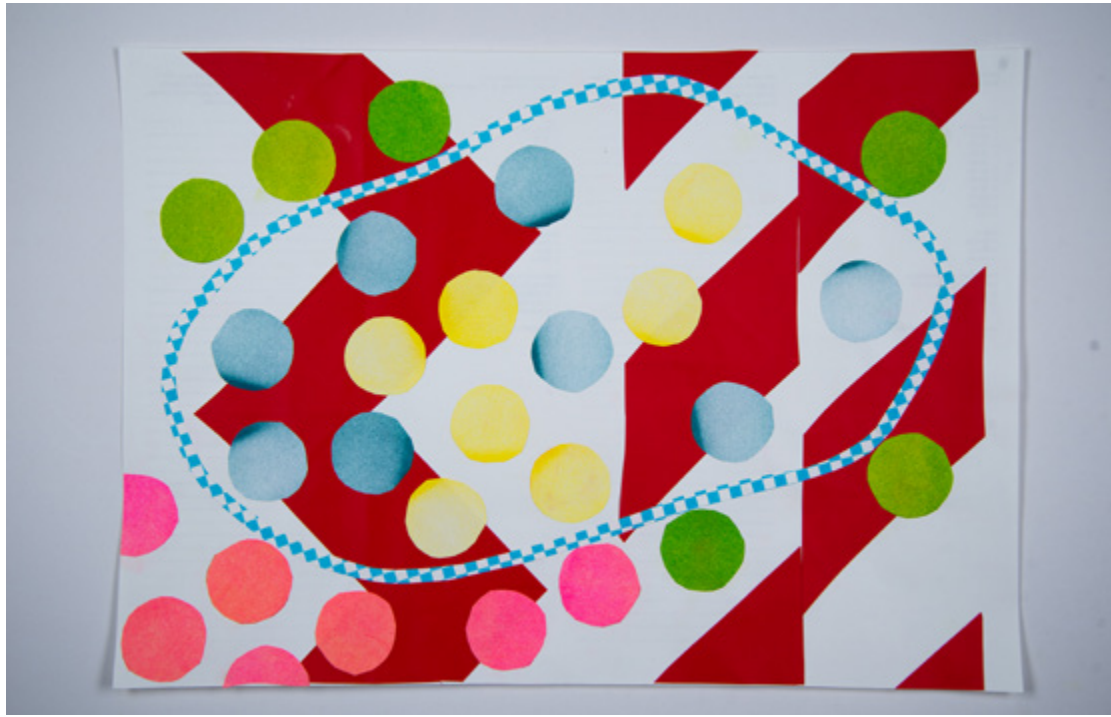


Figure 4.94

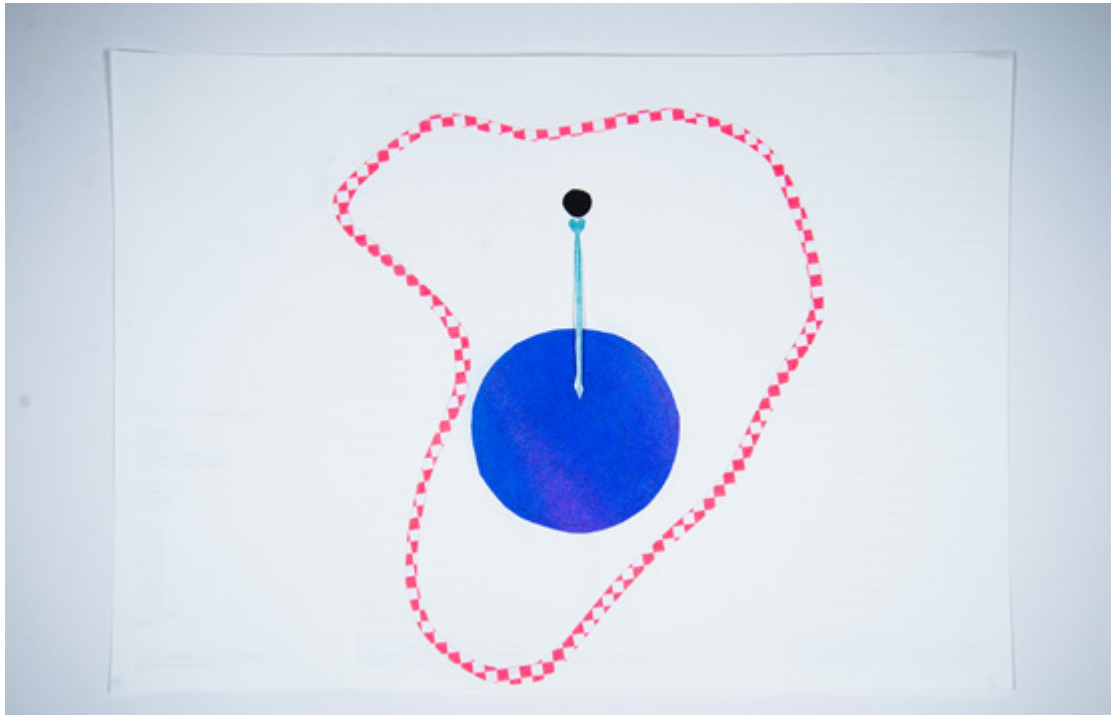


Figure 4.95



Figure 4.96



Figure 4.97

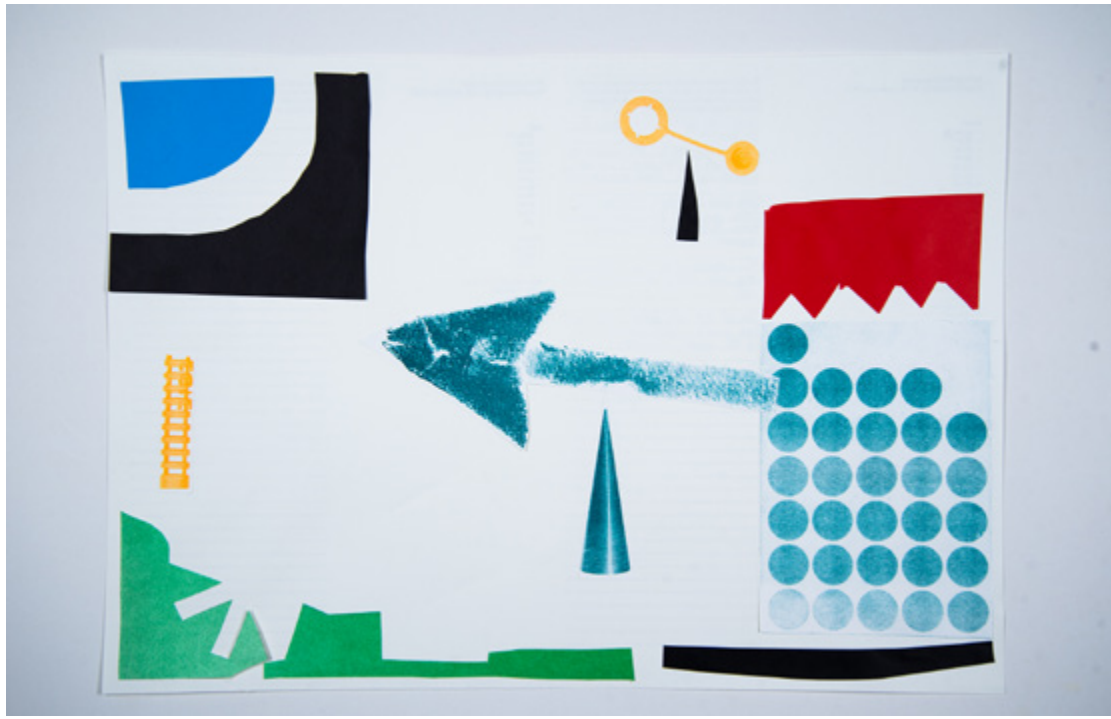


Figure 4.98

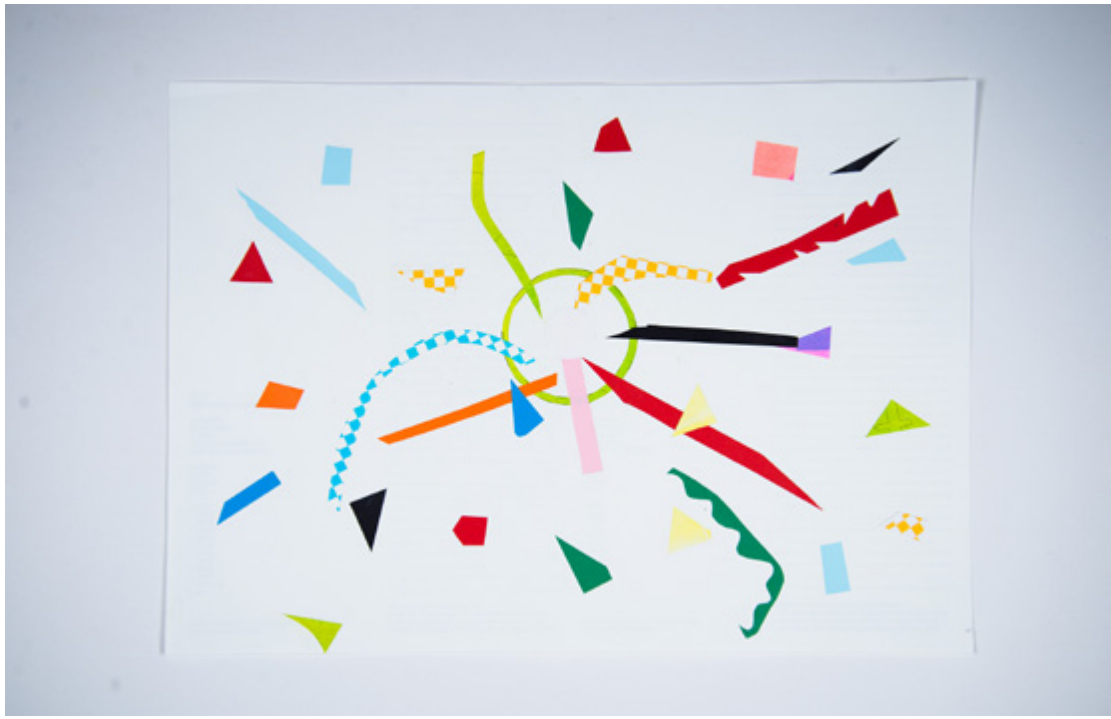


Figure 4.99

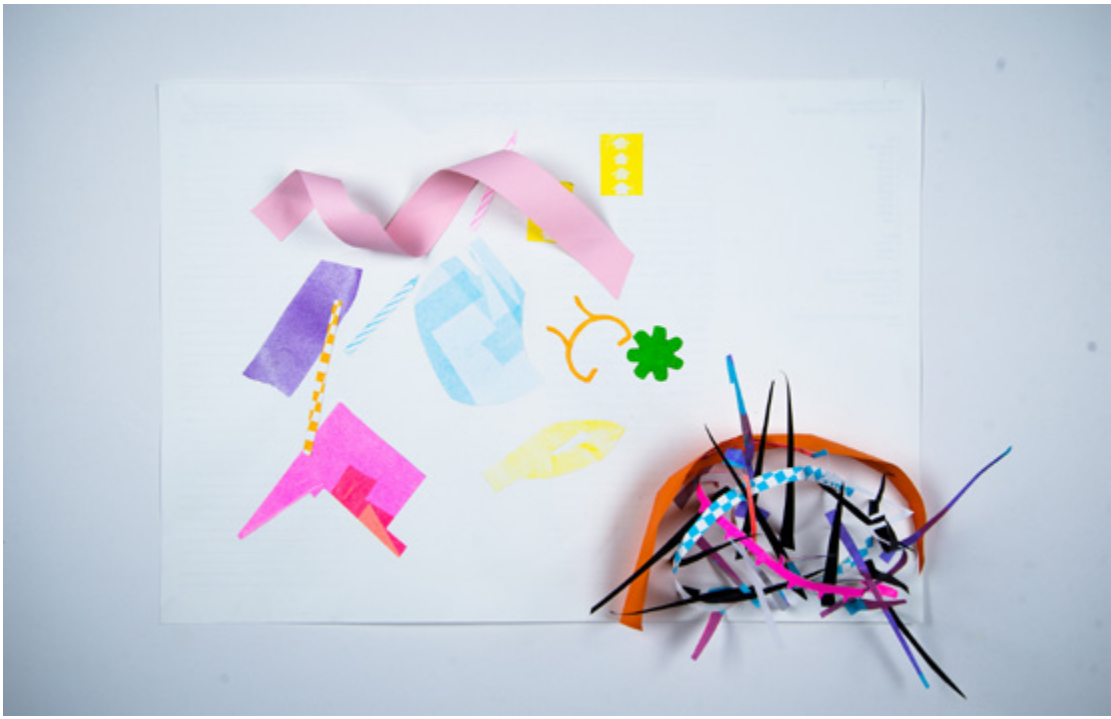


Figure 4.100



Figure 4.101



Figure 4.102



Figure 4.103

The ambiguity of everyday objects was intensified in the workshop setting. Consider the blue blinds (fig. 4.107, 4.110), for example: in an ordinary situation, like a bedroom, blinds are seen as an object that blocks out the light and/or protects those in the room from prying eyes. When an object is placed in an environment with other ambiguous objects, however, it can be interpreted politically and socially. A run-of-the-mill garden ladder becomes a career ladder (fig. 106), a square blue frame (fig. 4.108) suddenly feels like a very conservative form, etc. Everyday objects are transformed through their placement and context, and because of the setting, their range of possible interpretations and purposes broadens. For a comprehensive documentation, done by photographer Bjarte Bjørkum, of the room's design see the image series fig. 4.104-110.



Figure 4.104



Figure 4.105



Figure 4.106



Figure 4.107



Figure 4.108



Figure 4.109



Figure 4.110

Thirty-seven people in total participated, including 20 women, 13 men, one person who defined themselves as ‘other’, and three who chose not to answer the question. Most people were between 20–29 years old (12 individuals), closely followed by 11 individuals aged 30–39. Six individuals were 40–49 years old, three were 50–59 years old, and four were 60–69 years old. One person chose not to reveal their age. Participants were also asked to what extent they felt confident, somewhat unsure, or unsure about their political standpoint. This question wasn’t discussed any further with the participants during the workshop; instead, people were free to answer the question. In response, 19 people stated they felt confident, 14 somewhat unsure, and one unsure. Three chose not to answer the question. For a complete statistical overview, see fig. 4.111.

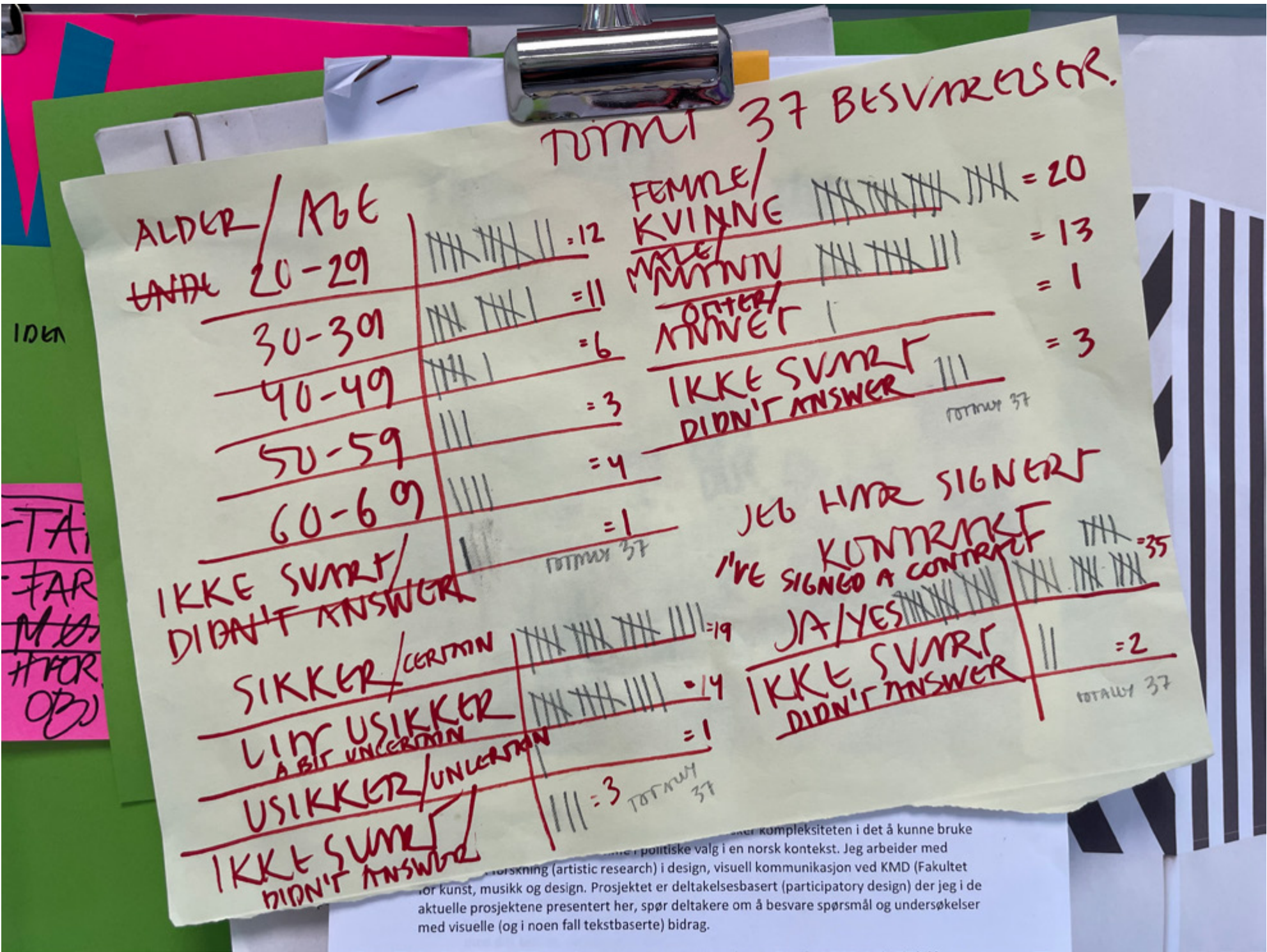


Figure 4.111 Statistical overview.

4.4.5 ETHICS

Before participants started exploring their inner political landscapes, they were told that the workshop was part of a research project. Everyone had the opportunity to ask questions. Participants signed a consent form (app. 5), which was reviewed with them in Norwegian or English (depending on their language preferences). These consent forms are now safely stored at the faculty, separate from participants' collages. Everyone's workshop contribution was anonymised. Participants wrote their texts on the back of their collages by hand. These handwritten texts were not reproduced in their original form; when referenced, they are always digitally reworked. Since the workshop was a public event during which participants got to see and meet each other, those who attended the workshop at the same time may of course recognise each other's collages. Since participants were never asked about their political affiliation, however, and because participation was entirely voluntarily, being recognised does not risk harming participants' privacy.

4.4.6 DESIGNER ROLE

My role as this project's designer was quite comprehensive. For starters, it included very practical tasks like sketching, planning, designing the dramaturgy, collecting materials, and then transforming these objects into ambiguous artifacts and collage materials. I also designed and printed a promotional poster for the workshop. The room too required practical work: building, sewing, hanging. During the workshop itself, I was present to interact with visitors and participants—answering questions, discussing the task with the participants, and serving coffee.

4.4.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter described the entire process behind the Inner Political Landscape workshop, from the moment I got the initial idea for it, to the preparations for it, the implementation, and the results and findings. I described the design of the workshop and its practical implementation through concepts like ‘rhetorical objects’ and ‘the rhetorical user’. As I prepared and executed the workshop, the fictional Stemme Department began to emerge. I gave the Stemme Department a strong visual identity, to represent strictness, regularity, order, and system. This identity contrasts sharply with the content presented in the workshop: the collage materials, the spatial scenography, and participants' personal contributions in the shape of collages.

The workshop had three purposes: to investigate whether representing an inner political landscape can serve as a tool for understanding and listening to one's inner political voice (1); to explore what a situation for political introspection might look like (2); and to explore the workshop format as a method for collective data collection (3).

The 37 voices that took part in the experiment are diverse in character: some scream, others wonder, still others are uncertain. None seem unsure how to use visual language to express themselves. This could, of course, be because of the location—a semi-public building for design and art education. Some participants had nothing to do with the university, though. Perhaps only those who didn't feel daunted by visual language could imagine participating and actually did so?

The workshop's participants were asked to visualise their inner political landscape as a collage and then reflect on their image and/or process. Some participants wrote something on the back of their collage, others didn't. In the case of the former, the image becomes easier to understand. Without accompanying text, the collages are considerably more difficult to interpret—especially since most participants' landscapes are abstract motifs. Perhaps, as exemplified by Masha Somik earlier in this chapter (fig. 4.55-56), abstract images are hard to interpret without a form-meaning overview? The image's reader is left entirely to their own devices. With text, on the other hand, we are offered another path through which to engage with the participant's work, thoughts, and visual world.

The workshop could have been conducted in a white and sterile room. Instead, participants were invited into a room whose objects and scenario were designed to make them feel curious. But the room did more than just enhancing a mood: participants' presence, their direct sharing of collages, and the fact that they could converse with each other and with me led to a sense of shared wonder. The workshop format is a robust method to collectively gather data (3): people can simultaneously share their own ideas and experience what others are doing around them in real-time. One aspect of the workshop that didn't work that well was the presentation of the collages and their texts. Because participants wrote on the back of their collages, the two could not be displayed simultaneously. This was due to both their placement on one and the same sheet of paper and the fact that the texts were handwritten, which meant they risked revealing the writer's identity.

The official actor behind the workshop was the Stemme Department. Both the poster and the Facebook invitation mentioned the Stemme Department. None of the participants really asked any questions about the alleged activities of the department; at most, they smiled at the idea, reacted with humour, or showed some interest. I should note, however, that the workshop's channels presented the Stemme Department in different ways: the poster made it very clear that the Stemme Department was the sender, while the workshop presented the department on a meta-level. Instead of greeting participants with something along the lines of “Hello and welcome to the Stemme Department's Inner Political Landscape workshop!”, I presented the department as something imaginary that could exist, but that wasn't real.

The combination of collage materials, a staged room, and participants' efforts ultimately allowed me and the participants to tune in to their inner political voices, in the shape of collages.

This chapter contributed to the project as a whole by discussing the workshop as a method, the practicalities of conducting a workshop in the form of a spatial experiment, and the transformation of ambiguous objects. The experiment provided insight into whether collaging can be a tool for political introspection, and how the workshop as a method for collective data collection can be a space for both personal reflection and political conversations.

4.5 POLITICAL CONFESSION

This chapter describes the background behind the idea of a political confession, the development and execution of the idea, and the results of the confessions. By designing both a situation and an actual political confessional, I was able to examine citizens’ political dilemmas. The design of the confessional itself was based on the voting booths used in Norwegian elections. Instead of confessing to a priest, participants conversed with a psychologist. The experiment took place in the Møllendal Pavilion near the Faculty of Fine Art, Music and Design, which is owned and operated by the municipality of Bergen. The experiment combined several concepts, including religious, political, and psychological ones. The familiar (a voting booth) was transformed into something new and mixed with the imaginary. The practical experiment was reinforced by its connection with the hermeneutic circle and conversation, and open-mindedly questioned universal design.

4.5.1 GOALS

The goal of the experiment was to examine:

- (1) The types of political conflicts and dilemmas that can exist within citizens;
- (2) How one might design a situation for political conversation and dialogue.

4.5.2 BACKGROUND

Between traditional voting booths (fig. 4.112) and traditional confessionals (fig. 4.113), there are visual as well as functional connections. The two objects are designed to uphold very specific rituals: the casting of a political vote and the Catholic confession. Both objects have multiple functions. They are meant to conceal the actions, choices, and/or emotional state of the participant, protecting the person in question from scrutiny. At the same time, the objects shield the participant from visual stimuli and disturbances in the outside world. In both the voting booth and the confessional, important matters are discussed—matters so significant that there should be no audience when these are mentioned. It is actually a human right to vote in political elections, to have one’s vote remain secret, and for elections to be conducted democratically (United Nations 1948).



Figure 4.112 A Swedish polling booth (Valmyndigheten).

CONFESSION

The Catholic tradition of confession spans centuries. The Church recommends parishioners perform it at least once a year (Olivius 1988, 28). In a conversation in Bergen’s Catholic St. Paul’s parish (19 October 2023), priest Erik Andreas Holth explained to me that confession has two dimensions: a vertical and a horizontal one (fig. 4.114). The vertical dimension is directed towards God, while the horizontal dimension focuses on the parishioner’s relationship with other members of the congregation. In the Catholic Church, it is believed that sinning distances a parishioner from God; confessing one’s sins to a priest brings the parishioner closer to God again.¹⁸ According to Holth, priests should not be too curious during confession, but can ask follow-up questions after a parishioner has confessed a sin. A priest can also intervene and correct a confessor if they accuse others in their narrative of being at fault. In a Catholic confession, confessors usually aren’t anonymous, as they tend to be members of the congregation.



Figure 4.113 A confessional in Bergen’s Catholic St. Paul’s Church.

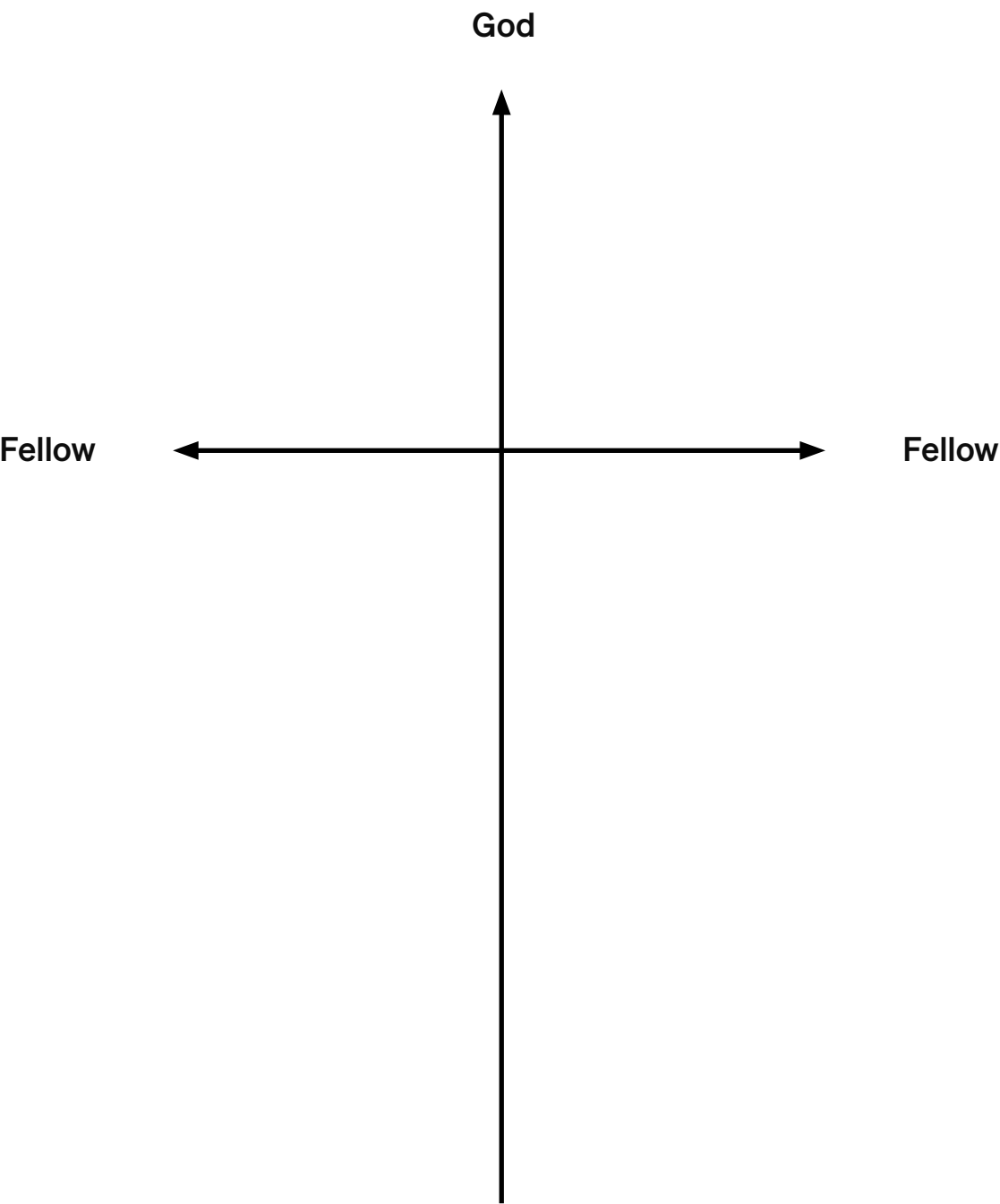


Figure 4.114 The two dimensions of a confession. Model by Ingrid Rundberg.

18 The traditional Catholic confession has additional elements that I did not copy in this project, such as the requirement for confession to include repentance and the belief that God can forgive confessors through a priest (Olivius 1988, 29). Instead, my project focused on the confessional booth as an object and on the conversation it facilitates.

THE VOTING BOOTH

The voting booth too has a long tradition, although not quite as long as the confessional booth. An example from Maryland, USA in 1924 (fig. 4.115) shows voting booths with a curtain to conceal the voter.



Figure 4.115: A Maryland polling station, 1924. Source of image: [Library of Congress/LC-DIG-NPCC-31530](#)

The voting booth used in Norway today (fig. 4.116) was designed by Øyvind Grønlie in 2008, as part of the electoral design system Blanke Ark.¹⁹ Grønlie, who at the time worked for Innovativoli (now Comte Bureau), had won the national design competition ‘Design og demokrati’, together with partners from Blueroom and Eggs Design (DOGA, 2023). The winners were charged with designing a comprehensive new voting system for all municipalities and all eligible voters in Norway. The new system had to include both visual elements, like signs and wayfinding systems, as well as a voting booth that would allow voters to either stand or sit and be shielded from view while casting their vote. Blanke Ark was piloted in select municipalities during the Norwegian parliamentary elections of 2009. During the municipal elections of 2011, it was implemented across the country (Valgutstyr).

The idea of ‘universal design’ played a key role when the Blanke Ark system was developed. Universal design can be described as design solutions that can be used by all possible users, regardless of whether they have specific needs or a disability. The Directorate of Elections’ handbook for the use of election material highlights how important universal design was when Blanke Ark was created:

Universal design forms the very basis of the profile. As many people as possible should be able to exercise their right to vote, and stigmatisation due to different functional levels should be avoided (Valgdirektoratet (2009, 4).²⁰

Grønlie’s voting booth has a minimalist and practical expression. The booth’s frame is a metal skeleton covered with white fabric on the sides. The voter can shield themselves from view by drawing a light grey curtain. The curtain has an orange rod attached to it. Inside the booth, there is a shelf with compartments for the ballots. The shelf’s lower and upper levels function as a writing desk or table. The fact that there are desks at two different heights is an example of universal design: it allows people to either stand while voting, or vote from a wheelchair without any assistance. The booth exudes minimalism and functionality and has a rather robust, institutional feel. While the object is inherently practical, one cannot help but wonder why the institutional,



Figure 4.116 Norwegian voting booth, design by Øyvind Grønlie. Image is used with a permission from Valgdirektoratet— valg.no. Photo: Tore Fjeld

19 ‘Blanke ark’ is Norwegian for ‘tabula rasa’.
20 The Norwegian original reads “Universell design utgjør selve grunnlaget for profilen. Så mange som mulig skal kunne benytte sin stemmerett og stigmatisering grunnet ulikt funksjonsnivå skal unngås”.

universal, and practical often use an anaemic colour palette... Universal design often uses starkly contrasting colours, like large white areas and black typography, to optimise functionality for the visually impaired. So why did decision-makers and designers opt for a light grey curtain instead of, say, an orange one? The following quote by the Directorate of Elections explains where the name Blanke Ark came from, and how it is connected to design:

Symbolically, elections are a time for change, and everyone with the right to vote can influence the outcome. Elections are an opportunity to start anew; therefore, the profile was inspired by the concept of ‘tabula rasa’. The concept represents a space of possibilities (Valgdirektoratet 2009, 4).²¹

In essence, this is a great quote. I interpret the voting booth’s design, with its light colour scheme and orange accent colour, as created to leave as much as most possible up to the voter. The booth represents a stable, governmental space of possibilities. It is the voter who represents action, who gets to colour the blank sheet—the tabula rasa—with their vote, thereby expressing their desire to shape the future. But why is this space of possibilities relatively devoid of opportunity and imagination? When I stand in a Norwegian voting booth, I don’t experience much enthusiasm about future possibilities, don’t feel that inspired to hope or think imaginatively. Why is universal design so cautious, practical, and lacking in character?

THE CONVERSATION

Dialogue and conversation were central in this experiment. Both the voting booth and the confessional revolve around communication. In the voting booth, voters tell the state who they think should govern the country. This is clearly one-way communication, but the state facilitates the process, provides voting booths, prints ballots, and sets up a system to ensure the ballots reach the state and are counted correctly. In the confessional, the parishioner tries to get closer to God and away from sin by conversing with a priest. In my experiment, the conversations taking place in the political confessional served as a sort of path to the political inner self. The priest was replaced by a

psychologist who guided the confessor through the conversation and asked them questions. When I asked psychologist Maria Pohl whether she thought conversation could be a path to one’s inner self, she responded with the following:

Sometimes in conversation, you can feel something arise. You can then pause and talk about it, asking questions that raise the temperature of the conversation. People often want things like that to be picked up on, to be brought into contact with their inner selves—with what wants to make itself known. You’re not fully in control and that’s a bit scary, but the contact area expands. I think we all know when we’re in contact with our inner self. You can feel, for example, that now—now I’m kind of numb or asleep. We all have moments when we feel cornered, and moments when we feel like a larger person (Personal communication with Maria Pohl, 18 August 2023).

Snodgrass and Coyne write about Socratic dialogue, which they say involves a recognition and assimilation of the unfamiliar. In authentic dialogue, the positions of both partners are transformed (1996, 77). Political confession is a staged situation in which the conversation has rigid boundaries, similar to actual therapy conversations. All participants know in advance where to meet, at what time, and how long the conversation will last. In this case, even the topic of the conversation was predetermined, and the confessor was told how to prepare for the conversation. The relationship between the psychologist and the confessor was not an equal one, and both parties entered the dialogue with different intentions. Despite, or perhaps because of, these restrictions, I am fairly certain that both parties in the experiment were influenced by the conversation’s existence and execution.

21 The Norwegian original reads “Symbolsk er valg en tid for forandring og alle med stemmerett kan være med å påvirke utfallet. Valg er anledningen til å begynne på nytt, derfor er profilen inspirert av begrepet «blanke ark». Konseptet representerer mulighetens rom”.

4.5.3 DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDEA

On the walls of my studio and in my notebooks, there are various traces of ideas that are related to the confessional as an object and to the act of confessing. Initially, I envisaged a kind of mobile room that could be rolled around and used where needed the most (fig. 4.117). I also imagined striped curtains to reflect the visual identity of the Stemme Department (fig. 4.118). Throughout the ideation process, the foundation remained the same: a room divided by a wall (fig. 4.119). In one part of the room, there'd be someone wanting to make a confession about political matters, in the other part there'd be a conversation partner who would listen to the confession and asks questions. The initial ideation phase (fig. 4.120) resulted in a simple design based on Swedish voting booths (fig. 4.121), which was presented at the project's mid-term evaluation on 15 November 2021.

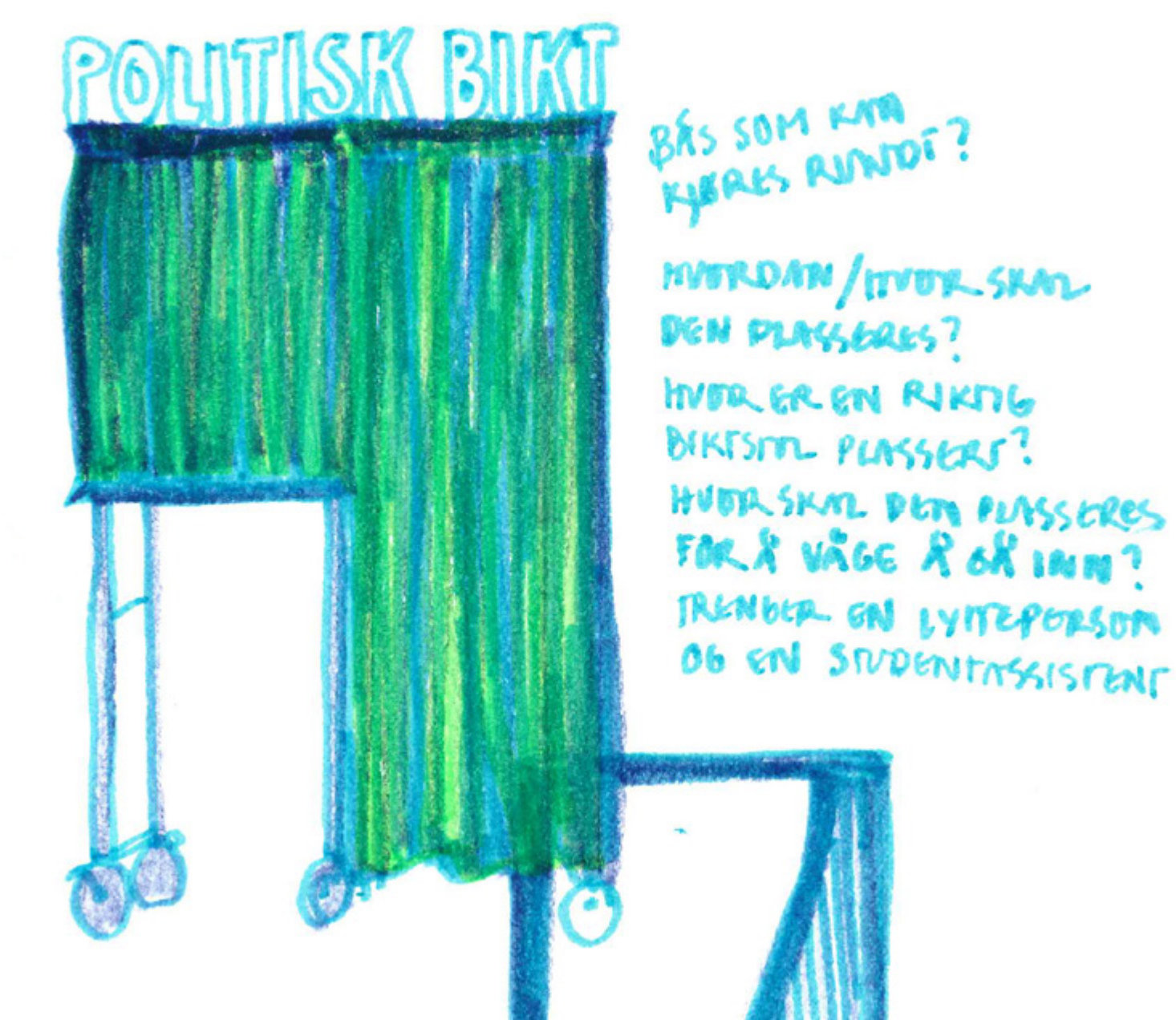


Figure 4.117 Sketch, June 2021.

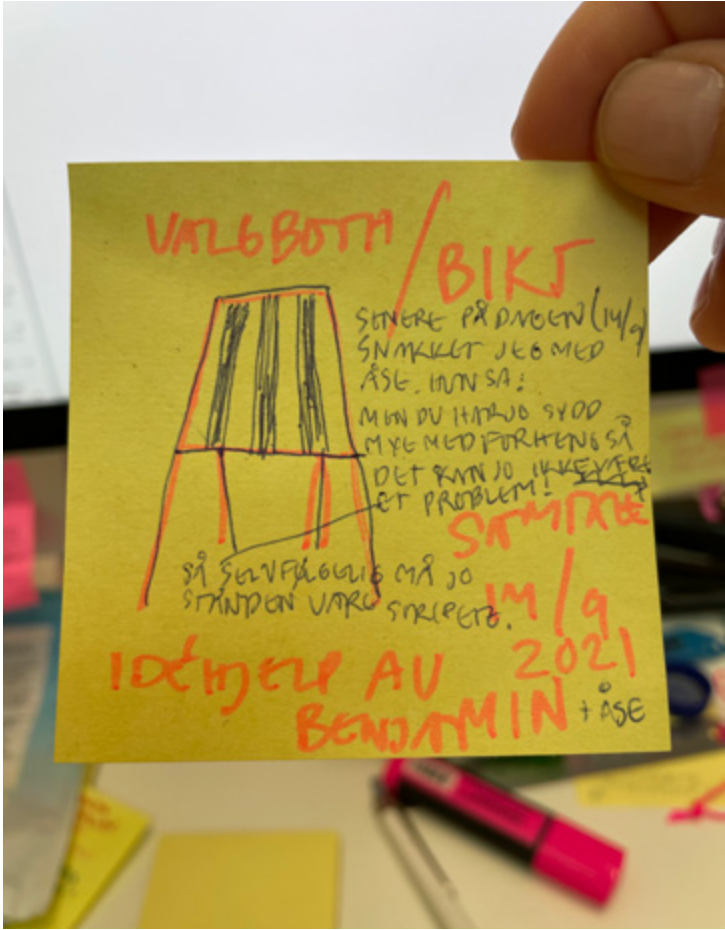


Figure 4.118 Sketch, September 2021.

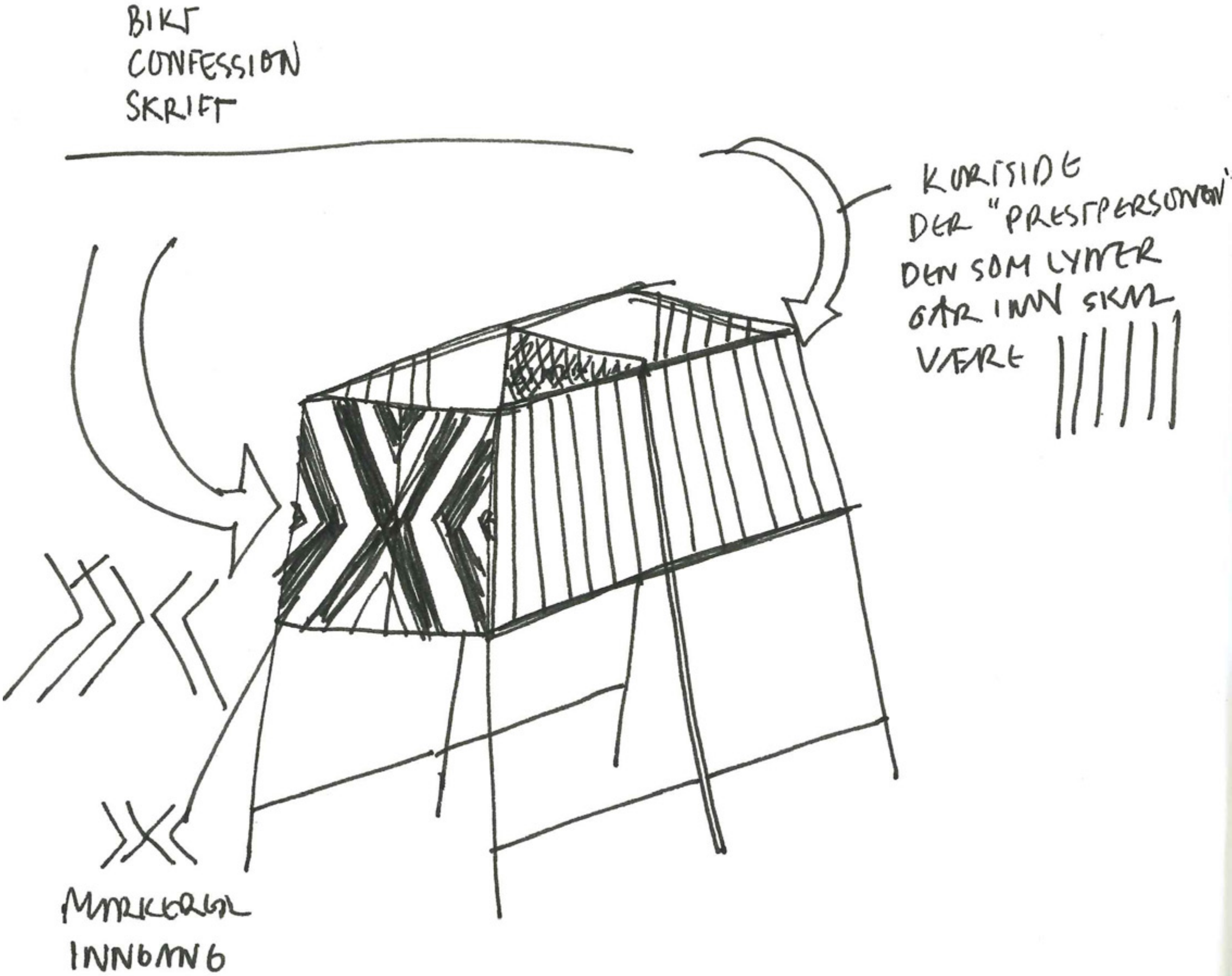


Figure 4.119 Sketch, November 2021.



Figure 4.120 Sketch/3D visualization by Svein-Petter Knudsen November 2021.

To avoid any misunderstandings about the project or the object itself, I refined the design of the confessional and adapted it to a Norwegian context. In a sense, my political confessional was inherently ambiguous: it carried connotations of both elections and Catholic confessions. To help participants recognise those links, I had to make sure my confessional had a clear connection with objects that the participants would recognise. The rhetorical user (the psychologist) and the users (the participants) had to share a ‘horizon of understanding’, in other words. As a concept, ‘horizon of understanding’ stems from hermeneutic epistemology, in which understanding is seen as a circular or spiral movement. In the anthology *The Philosophy of Understanding: Selected Hermeneutic Writings*²² Gadamer writes:

Hermeneutics must proceed on the assumption that the one who wants to understand is connected with the thing that is expressed through tradition and has or acquires an affiliation with the tradition that speaks from the transmission (2003, 41).

To achieve an understanding of the object, a participant must understand both its context (the whole) and the object itself (the part) (Snodgrass and Coyne 1996, 72).

The final design of my political confessional (fig. 4.122) replicated Øyvind Grønlie's voting booth, but with a striped instead of a grey curtain (fig. 4.116), to mirror the Stemme Department's overall identity. I asked Svein-Petter Knudsen for advice about how to use and construct the confessional, which was then built by Tobias Liland. Because the theological textbook *Handbook for Pastoral Care and Confession*²³ suggests confessionals should always be furnished to facilitate personal conversations (Olivius 1988, 28), I also placed identical chairs in my confessional for the psychologist and confessor to sit on. These were separated from each other by a screen, which meant neither party could see the other.

Figure 4.121 Sketches Ingrid left side, by Svein-Petter Knudsen (right side), October, 2023.



Figure 4.122 The Political Confessional materialized, November 2023. Photo: Bjarte Bjørkum.

The initial idea was that the conversation partner would be a priest. An alternative could be an actor who simply plays the role of a conversation partner. However, both the actor and the priest would bring dilemmas into the project: the priest with the religious connotations associated with the priesthood, and the actor with the obvious fact that they are playing a role. As the experiment's conversation partner, I chose psychologist Maria Pohl, who graduated from the University of Gothenburg in 2016. The reason why I opted to partner with a psychologist was because psychologists tend to have undergone thorough training and have extensive experience of conversing with people, listening to and interpreting different voices, asking questions, and understanding when something is significant for someone.

22 The Norwegian original title: *Forståelsens filosofi: utvalgte hermeneutiske skrifter*

23 The Swedish original title is *Handbok för själavård och bikt*.

4.5.4 INVITATION

I invited people to the political confession experiment through posters, Instagram, and email. I emailed both those who had previously participated in one of the sub-projects, as well as faculty members of the Institute of Design.

The posters, which were put up in the centre of Bergen (fig. 4.123-125), featured a QR code to a [webpage](#) with more details about the project. The posters’ (fig. 4.126) typographic layout was simple; colour was the main form of expression. I based the posters’ colours on objects that had been part of my project and that could easily be linked to other sub-projects, like the Inner Political Landscape workshop. In total, I printed 170 posters in seven different colours using risograph, all in A2 format. This was the first time I used stripes—part of the Stemme Department’s emerging visual identity—as an identifying element, at the bottom of the poster. The stripes reoccurred on the confessional’s curtains and on the coats worn by the experiment’s assistant and psychologist (fig. 4.127).



Figure 4.126 Poster design.



Figure 4.123 Posters in use. Photo: Hedda Halvorsen.



Figure 4.124 Posters in use.
Photo: Hedda Halvorsen.



Figure 4.125 Posters in use.
Photo: Hedda Halvorsen.

Participants could sign up for the experiment via email. I personally handled all registrations, managed appointments, disseminated the necessary information, and responded to questions participants had. After signing up, people received a confirmation via email, and then a second email with more details. Attached to this second email was an information letter, which covered both the project as a whole and the Political Confession sub-project, including its purpose, goals, funding, and implementation. It also contained a consent form (app. 7, Norwegian, app. 8, English).

4.5.5 IMPLEMENTATION

The political confessions were conducted at the Møllendal pavilion (fig. 4.128), a community space that citizens of Bergen can book for all kinds of events. Upon arrival at the pavilion, the participant would meet Hedda Halvorsen (the experiment’s assistant) and Maria Pohl (their conversation partner). Halvorsen went through the abovementioned information letter and consent form with the informants, who was asked to sign the form. Each participant received a printed copy of the information letter to take home. After this more formal part of the meeting, the participant was introduced to Pohl, who escorted them to the political confession booth and invited them to sit down. Once Pohl had taken her place, the conversation could begin. As it unfolded, Pohl made notes (raw data). Twenty minutes were set aside for each conversation.

Afterwards, Pohl went through her notes and turned them into a more legible text. All pronouns relating to the confessor were replaced with the Swedish gender-neutral pronoun ‘hen’ (translated in English as ‘ze/hir’, see footnote below). All participants were also assigned a letter rather than a fictional name. Once Pohl had processed her notes, this data was destroyed; only the finished texts were shared with me. We also made some final linguistic adjustments and typographic corrections, and gave each text a title.



Figure 4.127 Psychologist Pohl and assistant Halvorsen wearing uniforms. Photo: Bjarte Bjørkum.

4.5.6 ETHICS

As participants in this sub-project were asked to talk about matters that can be deeply personal or reveal political views or affiliations, I spent quite a bit of time considering the ethical implications of this experiment. I regularly referred to the General Guidelines for Research Ethics (The Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees 2014) whenever an ethical issue occurred. The guidelines’ paragraphs on quality (3), voluntary informed consent (4), and confidentiality (5) were particularly helpful.

My role in the Political Confession experiment was just to design and facilitate the proceedings. Once participants had expressed an interest in taking part and had been assigned a time, I was no longer involved in any way in collecting and processing data. The experiment was executed entirely by Halvorsen and Pohl. I designed everything in such a way that I would not be able to know who had said what. At first, I didn’t even want to know who had signed up to participate. Having someone else act as a contact person would have made it harder for me to protect people’s privacy, though. Luckily, Janecke Veim, Senior Advisor and Data Protection Officer at the University of Bergen (personal communication, 30 October 2023) assured me that my knowing participants’ names did not have to be problematic, as long as I didn’t also know who actually said what.

I purposefully chose to cooperate with a psychologist for this sub-project. Psychologists are trained to take notes during conversations and know how to handle such notes in a way that is compliant with relevant laws and data storage regulations. Psychologists are also bound by confidentiality laws (Helsepersonelloven, §21, 1999), but this responsibility can be waived, if the person sharing confidential information agrees to it (Helsepersonelloven, § 22, 1999). The information letter that participants received explained that Pohl’s confidentiality would be waived once they signed the consent form. All signed consent forms are stored in a safe at the Faculty of Fine Art, Music and Design.

The information letter also set out the participant's right to withdraw from the experiment (without having to provide a reason), up until the moment that their narrative would be processed and anonymised by Pohl. The withdrawal deadline was 1 December 2023, two weeks after the confessions had taken place. On that day, participants’ raw data was destroyed. Once the participants’ narratives had been anonymised, specific stories could no longer be linked to concrete individuals. None of the participants chose to leave the study.

In this sub-project, the confessors were defined as informants, while Pohl (the psychologist and conversation partner) was a contributor. One could call Pohl a collaborator, because her task was to collect data; because she also processed this data (by re-writing the texts), however, she went from being a collaborator to a contributor.

The project was reported to RETTE—the University of Bergen's system for the overview and control of the processing of personal information in research and student projects.

4.5.7 RESULTS

The ten political confession slots that I offered were quickly booked. All participants used the full 20 minutes that had been allocated to them. In a conversation I had with Pohl after the confessions had taken place, she told me that she had had to adjust the way she tends to converse in conventional therapy sessions, because the screen prevented her from looking participants in the eye. Pohl mentioned that several participants had been deeply moved and that some had cried. The confessions resulted in the following ten texts, written by Pohl:

1. A GAP

As a child, O noticed that some people had more, while others had less. O’s mother treated everyone the same, though, regardless of their social background. She had an innate sense of respect for people—a trait O inherited. The family didn’t discuss party politics, but as an adult, O understands which party hir parents voted for. O’s father sometimes viewed things in black and white, and O disagreed with him on many issues. There was no point discussing politics with him, O felt. They did agree on certain values, though, and shared a fondness for nature.

These days when O discusses politics, it is mainly with hir partner and hir mother. O feels troubled by the those in key positions in the parties ze could have imagined voting for. O doesn’t have any faith in them, which in turn makes O doubt hir choices. It’s like there’s a gap between parties’ platforms and the actual opinions of their leading figures. O follows political debates to try and get a sense of who to trust. ‘Who would I feel comfortable representing me?’, O asks herself.

O’s main message is that ze feels there is a gap between parties and their leading figures. O is sure of hir values, but unsure which party best embodies those values.

2. KIND REGARDS, ANONYMOUS

L's new year's resolution was to get involved in politics or contribute to society in some other way. Now, L is wondering how to do so in practice.

L is a member of Arbeiderpartiet*, but careful not to get too involved. L wants to be able to affect the party's course, but doesn't want the party to force hir into taking on an official role or espousing clear-cut views. Political debates on TV make L feel nauseous. L is disturbed by the way the participants never talk with each other, only with some third party who's not even in the room.

L often discussed politics with a freethinking friend back in upper-secondary school. Together, they would dream up new worlds and ways of living their lives. L misses that kind of interaction, that openness and bravery. Ze has a distinct memory of hir friend visiting hir at home one day and discussing abortion with hir family.

Many in L's family members have strong opinions. L often feels ze needs to bite hir tongue around them. But L's friend broached the topic—a loaded one in L's family—from a philosophical point of view. When hir friend mentioned he didn't necessarily disagree with anti-abortionists, L was sure all hell would break loose. Hir friend said he would happily carry a sign saying 'pro-choice—but let's not make it a habit' at an abortion rally, and then methodically explained why he felt that way. To L's surprise, hir sibling responded with 'hear ye, hear ye!', and everyone seemed quite happy. L felt proud of hir cool friend, but also jealous because he had managed to stand up to L's family.

L would have liked to have been able to engage in politics anonymously. Like in this instance; Political confessions, this kind of setting suits L. L is considering setting up a hotline for people who'd like to discuss politics with strangers. Anonymity has a bad rep, L says. People associate it with online trolls and paedophiles. But wanting to be anonymous doesn't necessarily mean a person has something to hide. Instead, it's about the freedom to think without having to worry about conflict or people disagreeing with you. L tends to change hir mind depending on who ze's talking to, and has a tendency to agree with whoever gets the last say. 'Where can people talk to each other without being influenced by or wanting to influence others?', L wonders.

* Ap, Norway's Labour party

STRENGTH IN KNOWING WHAT ONE STANDS FOR

A first became interested in the Israel-Palestine conflict in hir early teens. At school, ze liked History and had strong views on religion. A remembers getting into heated discussions with classmates. One teacher actually made room for debate, and another asked the students challenging questions to help them come up with good arguments. A often ended up in frenzied conversations with one particular friend. The two were very similar and both enjoyed debating, but had different views: A sided with Palestine, while hir friend was more sympathetic to Israel's cause.

Since those days as a cocksure teenager, A's views have become more nuanced. Especially in terms of religion. A has read a lot over the years and discovered more takes on the matter and a greater complexity. Some issues are infinitely complicated. That also makes them rather exhausting to consider, though.

As events unfolded in the Middle East this autumn, A's uncertainty reached new heights. A still sympathises with Palestine, but no longer finds hirself able to feel solidarity with a single people or country. This new point of view—siding with whoever's vulnerable—feels both natural and dull.

Having a point of view was always important to A. There's a kind of strength in knowing what one stands for. Now, not having a clear-cut opinion makes A feel confused and sad. A no longer watches the news and refrains from discussing the matter with friends.

What A wants to confess is that ze no longer understands hirself and that ze has realised that, as people age, they become more knowledgeable, more insightful, and more aware of the fact that the world is a complex place. Having such an obvious opinion makes A feel dull.

4. COVER YOUR BACK

B worries about the way people feel forced to say or refrain from saying certain things these days when it comes to politics. Language has become a barrier and an enemy, B feels. If you don't carefully weigh your words and formulate yourself correctly, you're judged straight away. Debates are over before they've even begun. B think people lack openness, that they too rarely interpret each other's words in a charitable way. This is especially true of other generations, B feels. Some members of B's family sometimes say 'negro', for example, instead of the more offensive N-word. B himself knows the word has a different connotation these days, but feels we need to give people who were born in a different time and age some leeway. "You can't say 'dark-skinned' any longer either," B adds.

To decry Israel's violence against Palestine, you first need to condemn Hamas's own attack. Otherwise, people might think you're an antisemite. Something in all of this bothers B; the fact that you always need to cover your back. To B, this is an instrument of power, a cynical game. The goal seems to be to make people who want to say something afraid: afraid that they'll be misunderstood and become an outcast.

When B feels ze won't be able afford a misstep, ze prefers to refrain from talking about politics at all. B doesn't want to proselytise, but also no longer has the energy to try and understand others' point of view. The gap between people has become too wide for them to be able to keep talking.

M feels a kind of political shame for not doing more, like getting involved in local politics, or volunteering for certain roles in various organisations or a local nursery school. Before M became a parent, ze took part in demonstrations, something ze misses doing.

M has young children. The bubble of parenthood has made it hard to get involved in anything other than family life. These days, however, M's children are old enough for M to start considering changing that. Maybe now ze has the time to contribute to society.

M has noticed how many people ze knows voice their opinions on social media. M is reluctant to do so hirself, as ze is in two minds about this kind of behaviour. M doesn't have a large platform, for one. But hir hesitation is about more than just that. M doesn't want hir opinions to define hir, or for speaking out to be some kind of 'personal branding'. Sometimes, M feels people voice an opinion for their own sake. M uses words like 'fake', 'selfie', and 'slick'.

Even though ze is sure that being politically active on social media isn't for hir, M is afraid of not doing anything, of not writing anything. Because when you don't take a stand, you're a traitor to the cause. 'How can you help others without making it all about yourself?' M wonders.

The written word has become more dangerous since the advent of cancel culture. People's views can change over time, so sometimes you find yourself feeling ashamed for something you once said or believed. Not saying anything, however, is also a stance. The dilemma preoccupies M. What will ze say when hir children one days ask 'What did you do?'.

A QUEST FOR UNCERTAINTY AND NUANCE

N wants to be modern and progressive, but feels old-fashioned when ze thinks about the ease with which people nowadays change their gender or use assisted reproduction to get pregnant. N believes everyone should be able to do what they want. At the same time, people shouldn't be able to change their gender until they've become an adult.

When N was young, ze sympathised with the right. Gradually, N became more centrist. These days, ze labels hirself as just left of centre. While N used to focus on individual issues, ze now views politics more holistically. N doesn't identify with one party in particular.

N tries to challenge hirself by reading things that don't align with hir own view of the world. N calls hirself conflict-averse and carefully chooses who to share hir political views with.

As N has aged, ze has noticed how ze is rather conservative after all, even though ze rarely views hirself as such. The conservatism of N's childhood keeps rearing its head again. N can't recall anyone being homosexual when ze grew up. Things are different these days. It is only right and reasonable that people should be able to marry whoever they want, N feels. But when it comes to other issues, like surrogacy and homosexual couples adopting children, N finds it harder to know what's right. By this, N means that ze hasn't yet made up hir mind, that things aren't that straightforward. That's something N feels is missing in public debate these days: uncertainty and nuance.

7. A KIND OF ENTERTAINMENT

Y harbours a growing sense of disquiet about politics. It has become hard to have any faith in the political landscape. Debates are heavily influenced by tactics and other factors that have nothing to do with politics. Basically, politics has become a kind of entertainment.

After a debate, the media will report on any disagreements that occurred just to make headlines. It's depressing and dumbs things down.

The most frightening development of all, Y feels, was when Trump managed to be democratically elected as president of the US. During the past two elections, Y wasn't even sure whether ze wanted to vote at all. In the end, ze did—for the sake of democracy.

You've got two choices, Y reasons: either you choose to defend democracy, or you conclude that everybody's an idiot. Y wants to opt for the former but doesn't know how, with democracy in the state that it's in today. There used to be more clarity and courage. You used to know what politicians stood for.

Y wonders how ze can help steer society in the right direction. But ze doesn't know how to remain an optimist when everything keeps getting worse...

8. EIGHT HOURS A DAY

A few years ago, K joined Socialistisk Venstreparti*. Ze doesn't feel particularly loyal to the party, though. When elections are coming up, K always looks into what all the different parties actually plan on doing.

K is not afraid to tell people who ze votes for. Ze is married to someone with similar values—that was important to K when choosing hir partner. K didn't constantly want to have to quarrel and disagree with hir partner. K has a friend with different political views, though—something K finds very frustrating.

K cares most about poverty. Everyone has innate value, K feels, regardless of how productive they are. K used to live in the US, where ze got to witness inequality first hand. Preventing the same from happening in Norway is important to K.

When asked to pick three words to describe himself as a politically active individual, K says 'radical', 'future-focused', and 'people-centric'. K's radical side manifests itself in the fact that K thinks the monarchy should be abolished, that there should be a universal basic income, and that Norwegian politicians' insistence that everyone should work is unrealistic. K doesn't worry too much about historical events or the way things used to be: new problems call for new solutions.

The more K learnt about how things work, the more ze started to enjoy politics. As a teenager and young adult, K hesitated to engage in any debates because ze felt ze lacked the knowledge to do so. K didn't want anyone to find out about the gaps in hir knowledge. When K started studying, ze became more confident. Now, K feels ze has well-founded opinions.

K thinks about politics a lot: "probably eight hours a day, really, if you'd care to count". Ze currently studies Politics and is involved in politics in hir spare time. K is happy with hir level of involvement: ze doesn't want to spend any less time on politics, while more would be too much.

* SV, a left-wing democratic socialist party in Norway

9. STRATEGY AND SPONTANEITY

In H's family, everyone votes along the same lines. H's friends are more leftist, though; sometimes, H feels pressured to be more radical. Over time, H decided to vote on the leading party in the block ze votes for (the left block), to support those who shoulder the greatest responsibility. H wants to vote strategically. The issues that matter most to hir are the environment and public transport. As for the much-debated Bybanen*, H has read a great deal about the arguments of the other side and listened to hours of podcasts about the matter.

H grew up in a working-class environment and believes hir political views are rooted in hir childhood. Ze is unsure which party hir parents and siblings vote on, but doesn't think they would refrain from telling hir if ze would ask.

H believes hir political views are consistent. The only issue ze's changed hir mind on is the EU. When H was younger, it seemed important for Norway to stay out of the EU. These days, H can see the benefits of international partnership and solidarity. "Everything has its pros and cons", H says. In terms of the EU, the pros may have started to outweigh the cons.

The disadvantages remain the same: the EU would have a bigger effect on Norway than the other way round. H doesn't want to call himself a nationalist, but feels Norway is a pretty good country.

H alternately casts hir vote on the handful of parties that appeal to hir. It would have been nice to always vote for the same party and be happy with that. But H is proud of the fact that ze makes the effort to read up on different parties and stay up to date. Still, sometimes H will experience a sudden burst of spontaneity on election day and cast an unexpected vote.

* Debate concerning the Bergen Light Rails new route.

10. THE NEOLIBERAL MINDSET OF THE EIGHTIES

Following an extended period of doubt, P has begun the process of switching to another party. P joined Arbeiderpartiet* as a teenager. Now, ze is considering joining Social Venstreparti**. P has always been part of Ap's leftist wing. Others in the party often jokingly suggested ze would be more at home in SV instead. When P announced ze actually considered switching parties, however, this still came as a shock for many Ap'ers. Some wanted P to explain hir reasons. When they realised ze hadn't made the decision light-heartedly, however, they were alright with it.

Being on the outskirts of a political party and trying to shift the rest of the members towards that side can be tiring. For P, it always felt like an inner struggle. In the end, P no longer felt able to defend hir being in Ap to hirself. Ze was no longer happy with the party and didn't want to be a part of it anymore.

P still has a formal role in Ap, but is looking forward to joining and getting involved in SV. The issue P cares most about is the environment. Since ze saw Al Gore's film about the climate crisis, P has had an acute sense of its severity. P believes social conditions and international justice are linked to the environment. The switch to greener politics is something that needs to take place in each and every one of us, on a deep, philosophical level. The eighties gave birth to a kind of neoliberal mindset, P believes, which continues to play a role to this day. But New Public Management destroys people's trust in society and clashes with the green transformation. P refers to the philosopher Arne Næss' conviction that there is space for people to think ecologically. P's interest in the environment actually led to hir studying Biology.

Since this is a political confession, P decides to take to opportunity to confess that ze tried psychedelics a while ago. The experience was both beautiful and transformative. It made P even more dedicated to the struggle for a more sustainable society. Something P had previously understood on a rational level was transformed into a kind of intuitive, bodily knowledge. Now, P truly feels their opinions and the severity of the situation. "Humankind is a prisoner of a system that doesn't benefit it," P concludes.

* Ap, Norway's Labour party

** SV, a left-wing democratic socialist party in Norway

These texts will be presented to the public when the project's artistic results are presented on 5–8 March 2024.

4.5.8 CONCLUSION

In essence, my study was a qualitative conversation—a relatively common research method. I added several elements to the Political Confession experiment, though. Participants were recruited through a poster campaign, for example, which was designed based on a few striking core ideas (simple typography on coloured paper, stripes as a graphic element) that were part of an overarching identity. The experiment was situated within the fictional Stemme Department, and a scenography was constructed in the space in which the experiment took place. The sub-project borrowed elements from other fields (the religious and the psychological) to create a safe space and to put the participant in an open state of mind. I wanted my political confession booth to be a secure place, but also wanted its design and placement to evoke a desire to express oneself, to search for one's inner political voice and to take that process seriously.

The texts produced by the experiment lead me to conclude that the participants took the situation very seriously indeed. Everyone accepted the staging of the political confession and seemed well prepared for it. In hindsight, this is rather impressive: up until 15 November 2023, the concept of a ‘political confession’ had been entirely imaginary and new to all participants. And yet, people opened up and confided in a complete

stranger about deeply human matters, political dilemmas, and inner conflicts (1). Some participants realised they weren’t who they wanted to be. Some worried about the limits of personal expression these days and said they try to avoid conflict and bad vibes when discussing politics with the people in their life. Others wondered whether it is possible to engage in politics without making that engagement part of one’s personal ‘brand’. Several participants were moved to tears during the conversation—whether out of relief or worry, I don’t know. A person’s inner political voice can take on all kinds of forms; sometimes, that form is a confession.

Implementing this project revealed that design can indeed be a way to offer new spaces and situations (2) for political conversation and dialogue. “True dialogue is the opposite of argument,” Snodgrass and Coyne write in *Is Design Hermeneutical?* (1996, 77). Perhaps, it is more important than ever to have more ways to talk politics than just the traditional and argumentative. This project not only showed that it is possible to find new ways of having political conversations, but also demonstrated people’s interest in such conversations. The fact that participants eagerly signed up for this experiment proves that there is a need among citizens for various types of situations in which political conversations can take place.

4.6 STEMMEDEPARTEMENTET

This chapter compiles the scattered discoveries I made through my practical experiments that led to the development of the Stemme Department. I did not set any specific goals for the development of the Stemme Department: instead, the organisation evolved dynamically and parallel to the experiments described earlier in this chapter. Here, I provide a linear overview of how the Stemme Department materialised.

The Stemme Department started out as an idea of an overarching organisation, one that would be capable of investigating citizens' inner political voices. The idea then evolved to encompass specific tasks (creating tools, archiving, and public education²⁵) related to people's inner political voices. The Stemme Department eventually took shape through a visual identity and a graphic pattern. It acquired employees and positioned itself as the sender of several publicly conducted explorations.

4.6.1 TIMELINE OF FINDINGS
 THROUGH DESIGN EXPERIMENTS

In the first two experiments I conducted for this project (the lecture series ‘Things That Might Be True’ and the publication *Voices*), there was no direct reference to the Stemme Department. I hadn’t yet come up with the idea of consolidating everything related to the experiments into a single overarching concept. (The word ‘voices’ was already present early on in the project, though.) The idea of having a department as the project’s cohesive unit first emerged in the spring of 2020, during a conversation with my partner in our kitchen. Using a departmental structure to gather a theme was not a new idea: several other designers, like Julia Lohmann, had already done so by her Department of Seaweed (2017).

25 The term used for *public education* in Norwegian is *folkeopplysning*. *Folk* meaning *people*, and *opplysning* meaning *information*. There can be slightly different understanding of the word in the different languages, but this seems as the closest translation.

26 The Artistic Research Forum is a Norwegian conference on artistic research, organised by HK-dir, the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills.

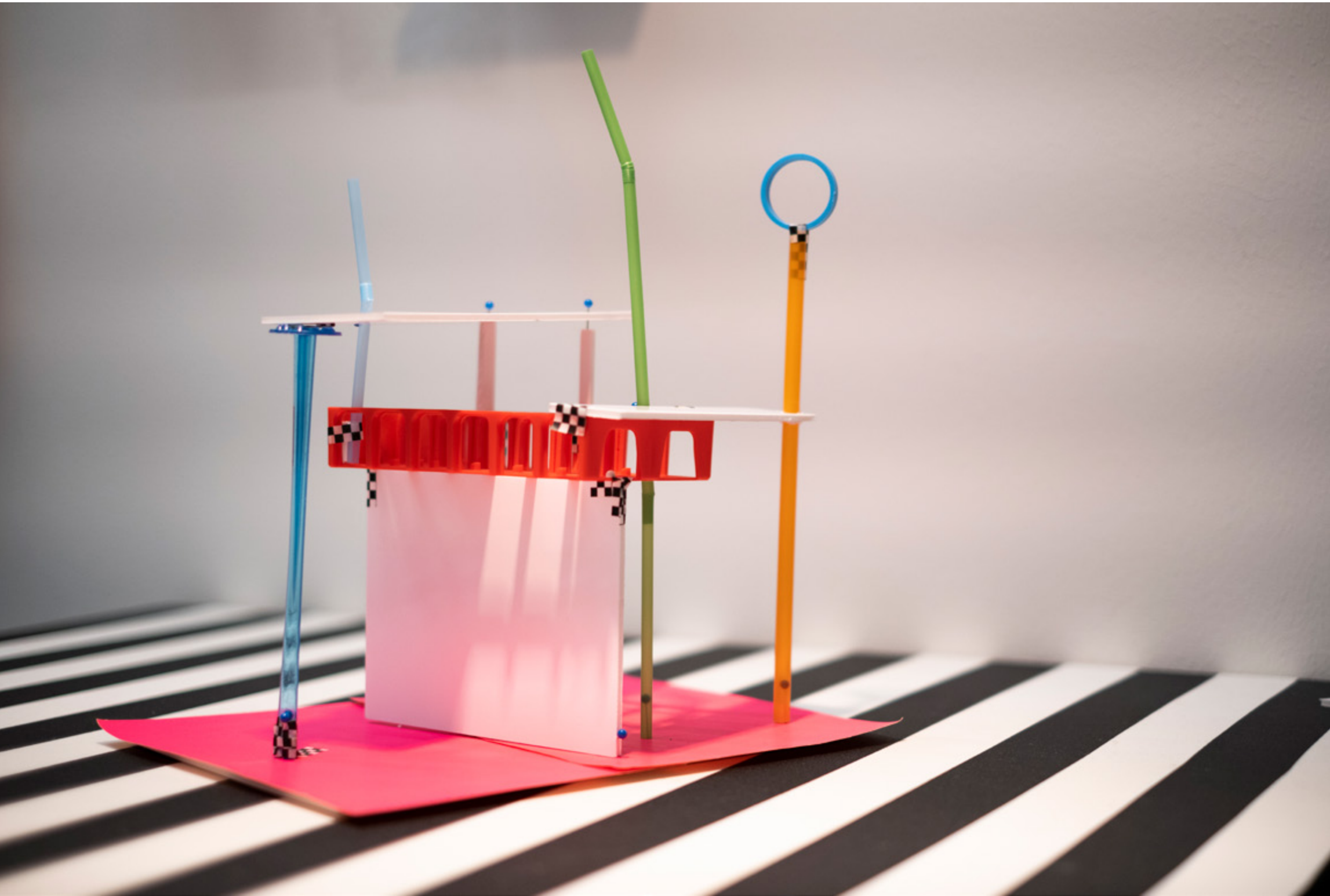


Figure 4.129 First model of the department.

In a meeting with my two supervisors in May 2020, I presented an overview of the advantages of using a departmental structure: [link here](#).

A few months later, I provided an overview of the activities and missions of the Norwegian Department of Culture: [link here](#).

During my presentation at the Artistic Research Forum²⁶ in April 2021, I mentioned a tentatively named new department: The Sixteenth Department. I said it would be a place for the ‘politically homeless’, a term introduced by Thomas Kleppestø during his lecture at the Bergen Public Library in 2019 (see Chapter 4.2). I also presented a sketch of how the department could materialise (fig. 4.129).

In my abstract for the conference, I wrote:

By establishing and adding a new department to the fifteen already existing in the Norwegian Parliament, I am hoping to uncover what the inner political landscape might look like. How is it shaped? How do we get in touch with our political inner thoughts? And what tools do we need to translate our personal political convictions into a corresponding political party programme?

At the conference, I also presented the core values of the department: playfulness, security, structure, and knowledge.

The Stemme Department was the official ‘sender’ mentioned on the promotional poster for my third experiment, the Inner Political Landscapes workshop (fig. 4.66). As I prepared the room that the workshop would be held in, I used black-and-white textiles and sharp stripes for the first time—a representation of the department’s system, order, structure, and history. During the workshop, I also began to develop an alter ego for myself. I wore a black-and-white striped shirt (fig. 4.130) and a pair of sporty slippers with the same pattern. Wearing these garments, my alter ego embodied the department.

The next time the Stemme Department became visible was during my project’s midway evaluation. I used the same scenography as the one I had created for the Inner Political Landscapes workshop. This time, however, my alter ego had a uniform: a classic doctor’s coat (fig. 4.131) with broad black-and-white stripes. During the evaluation, I presented the three tasks I felt the Stemme Department should have:

- (1) Providing citizens with tools to explore their inner political voices;
- (2) Archiving the outcomes generated by the use of these tools and disseminating the archived material to the public;
- (3) Offering popular education.



Figure 4.130 Starting point for a uniform. Photo: Unknown.



Figure 4.131 Upgraded uniform.
Photo: Bjarte Bjørkum.

These tasks had arisen from the experiments I had conducted earlier in the project. During the Political Confession workshop, there were several tools: the confessional, the staging of the experiment, and the collection of participants' answers/contributions. When I assembled the collected material into a publication, this became an archive. Readers could then use this archive/publication as a tool to connect with their inner political voice. In the Inner Political Landscapes workshop, the tools were the question that was asked, and the staging of the workshop with its props and materials. Exhibiting participants' collages created an archive. Lastly, the lecture series 'Things That Might Be True' was a way to conduct popular education.

By the time I organised the Political Confession workshop, the Stemme Department's identity had been strengthened and further implemented. The political confessional had a black-and-white striped curtain (fig. 4.122), while the department's employees wore uniforms (fig. 4.127). The workshop's promotional poster, which mentioned the Stemme Department as the workshop's sender, featured the same striped element (fig. 4.126).

As I developed the department, I came up with several different names for it. First, I considered calling it 'the Sixteenth Department', a reference to the fifteen departments that make up Norway's Parliament. Then, I came up with 'Meningsministeriet', 'the Ministry of Opinions'. The compound word was pleasant to pronounce, contained an alliteration, and was thunderously rhythmic. Unfortunately, though, the name would have been difficult to translate into English: 'mening' would become 'opinion', which meant the alliteration would disappear. As time went by, the department also seemed to become less about opinions and more about the search for one's political inner voice. Eventually, I decided on 'Stemmedepartementet' or 'the Stemme Department': a name based on the same wordplay between 'stemme' ('voice') and 'stemme' ('vote') behind the *Stemmer/Voices* publication.

4.6.2 CONCLUSION

My conclusion of this linear review is that the Stemme Department is no longer imaginary. The practical work of designing the department helped me acquire more knowledge and come to a greater understanding of the department. The Stemme Department gradually materialised in the real world, over a period of time. Its identity developed dynamically, it acquired clear tasks, conducted an independent investigation (the Political Confession workshop), and gained employees (a psychologist and an assistant) who wore a striped uniform and who served as the rhetorical users in the staging of the department's experiment.

The practical explorations that gave birth to the Stemme Department revealed citizens' need to tune into their inner political voice and, by extension, for the department's services: to be provided with tools, to have certain materials archived, and to be offered opportunities for popular education.

The Department is a play on a government organisation, a fictional world that reflects a real organisational model, albeit greatly simplified. In this play, the departmental structure, which in reality feels authoritarian and hierarchical, becomes a participatory laboratory—perhaps for the politically homeless, the curious, the passers-by, or those who have something to confess?

4.7 MULTIPLUM

Multiplum! (M!) was a collaborative project between myself, Ingrid, and my PhD colleague and designer Siv Lier. Together, we explored critical design practices. A rich project, M! emerged out of sheer joy and curiosity, based on our view of design as a collective process of sharing, learning, and exploring. Based on the idea that design is a verb, we focused on activities and created playful and informal settings in which discussions around design practices and theory could unfold. While we came up with many different ideas, Design & Wine (D & W) was our most important activity. In this chapter, we describe the Design & Wine activity and its background and briefly outline how Multiplum! influenced our overall PhD projects work. We also mention our main takeaways: thoughts on design as play, power structures, and whether working anti-hierarchically in a design project like this is even possible.

We collaborated closely, which is why we chose to write this text together. For more information about Multiplum! (Lier and Rundberg 2023), see this [project overview](#).

4.7.1 INTENTION

The word ‘multiplum’ comes from the Norwegian expression ‘minste felles multiplum’, or ‘lowest common denominator’. Multiplum is a brilliant word: in Norwegian, it has a lively and charming quality, with something rhythmic and elastic about it. The M! team didn’t have any problems generating ideas and content. Over the years, we tested a lot of different concepts and mediums, such as podcasts, and public information videos. Our primary activity, however, was the concept D & W, a series of evenings during which we brought together design students and colleagues for informal conversations on design. We wanted to design a situation in which things could unfold dynamically, and that would facilitate conversation and mutual learning. According to Carl DiSalvo, “publics arise from, and in response to, issues that are qualified by the context in which they are experienced” (2009, 50). The context of D & W was design education, but several traditional elements of design education were subverted. D & W took place in the evening, and participants were offered crisps and wine (non-alcoholic alternatives were available). Participation was entirely voluntary, and the topics for the evenings tended to be loosely defined. All of this allowed for dynamic conversation and facilitated learning.

I would consider M! a side-project in the study, compared to the earlier described projects in Chapter 4 (defined as sub-projects), as the M! project doesn’t have the same type of political introspective intention, but more focused on testing out how to create communities.

4.7.2 DESIGN & WINE

The name ‘Design & Wine’ more or less to the letter describes what the activity was about: discussing design while drinking wine. We invited Bachelor's, Master's, and PhD students as well as colleagues and other peers from our networks who might be interested in talking design while sipping wine. Three D & W evenings in total were held, each with a different topic and outcome. Here is a brief description of the three events:

DESIGN & WINE #1

CREATING A COMMUNITY BY SHARING

The first event had no set theme, but we asked people to bring a book that meant something to their design practice. When people had sat down with a glass of wine and some snacks, we asked everyone to discuss their book and the reason they had chosen it. The conversations unfolded spontaneously. Some talked about inspiration, others about philosophy, the fictional narrative, and criticism. Even though almost 25 people were present, discussions were still intimate and personal. We are convinced this evening was the bravest of the three, because the form was free and no one was an expert. As the evening drew to a close at midnight, most participants practically had to be chased out of the venue, as an alarm would otherwise have gone off! A successful event, in other words.



Figure 4. 132 Poster design Design & Wine #1.

INVITING THE FAMOUS

For our second D & W evening, we invited Thomas Thwaites to talk about his practice. Thwaites is known for his playful, curious, and intelligent approach to design and speculation. Both of us consider him a bit of a rock star, known for works like *The Toaster Project* (2011) and *The Goat Man* (2016). Both of us were rather starstruck when he agreed to participate. Thwaites presented his practice via Zoom. The fact that he wasn't physically present affected the dynamic, as it was harder for participants to actively interact with Thwaites. Some did ask questions, but this evening was more traditionally hierarchical than the first one, in the sense that an expert addressed an audience that just sat and listened. This was our most traditional and formal D & W event.

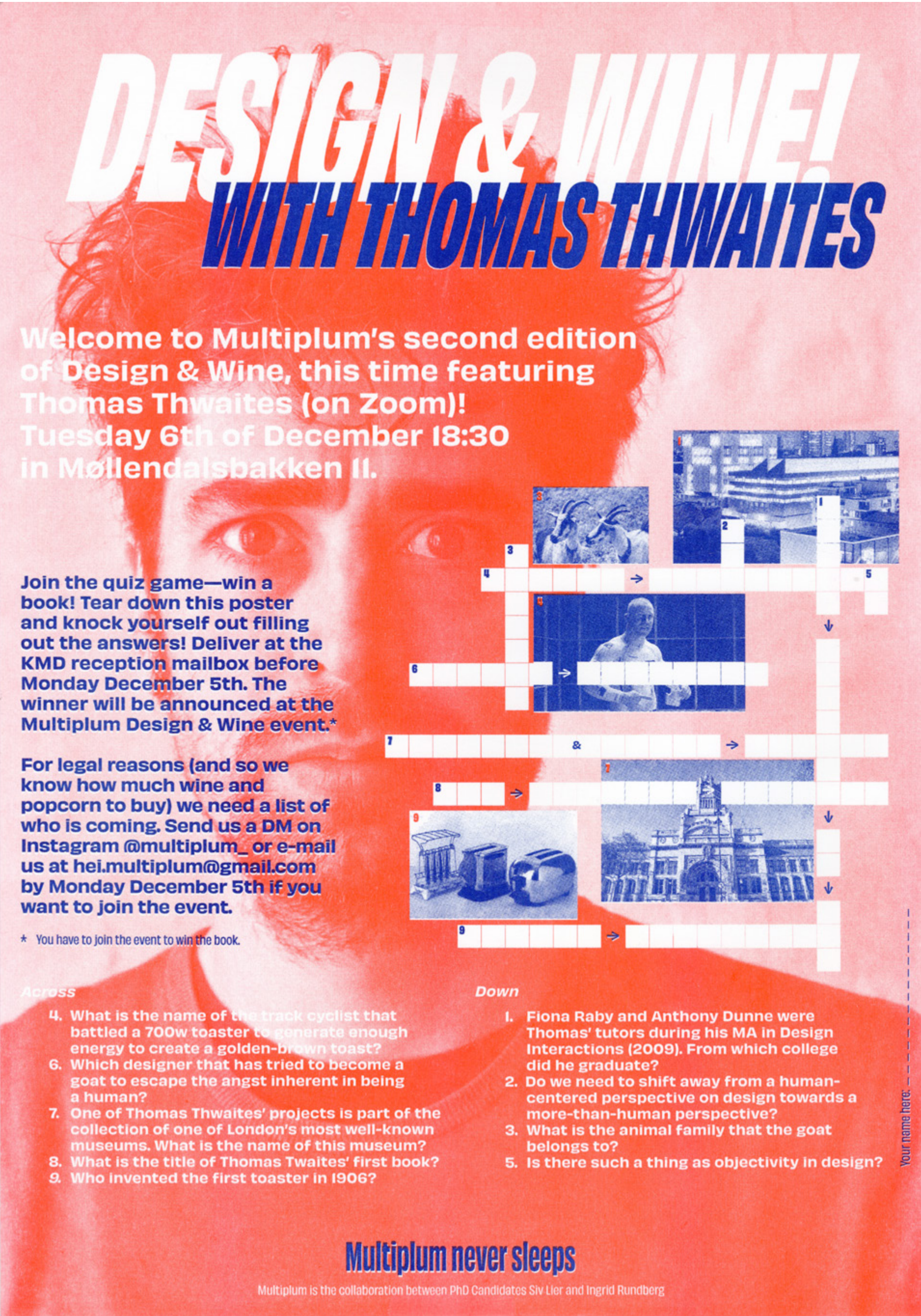


Figure 4. 133 Inviting Thomas Thwaites, Design & Wine #2.

DESIGN & WINE #3

A Q&A WITH DESIGN THEORISTS
AND PRACTITIONERS

For the third edition of D & W, we invited Stephanie and Bruce Tharp, authors of the book *Discursive Design: Critical, Speculative, and Alternative Things* (2018). There was also a third, secret guest: Julia Lohmann, the founder of and designer behind the *Department of Seaweed* (Lohmann 2017). To strike a balance between keeping the audience engaged without pressuring anyone, we designed a handheld question basket. Members of the audience could put questions in the basket to submit them to Lohmann and the Tharps. The evening was presented as a Q&A, not just for the audience but also for the Tharps, who could ask audience members questions in turn. The rather informal event touched upon everything from complicated theoretical matters to more direct questions like why designers always wear black.



Figure 4. 134 An everyday situation for Stephanie and Bruce Tharp. Design & Wine #3.

As we organised this third and final evening, we were assisted by a fourth person, Amy van den Hooven.²⁷

Participation increased with every D & W event. The first evening was attended by 25 people; by the third evening, that figure had gone up to 40. Several of the same people attended all three events.

4.7.3 INVITATION AND VISUAL IDENTITY

We primarily used posters and social media to invite people to D & W. Multiplum!’s communication style was welcoming and innocuous, disarming and upbeat. To directly communicate with participants, two out of three posters included a crossword puzzle. Those who had correctly filled in the puzzle could win a prize. The first poster referred to multiple design theoretical perspectives, but in a playful way. The same happened on the poster for the third evening, which portrayed the Tharps in the everyday act of taking out the bins.

In general, Multiplum! (and the D & W events) had a maximalist attitude to visual language. We built a simple, zero-budget interior in the room in which the D & Ws took place. D & W had its own bar and branded beverage packaging. To break up the traditional hierarchy and setup of a lecture room, we opted for a small room. With two dozen participants sitting closely together, the room felt pleasantly crowded. The atmosphere was intimate, and people seemed truly present in the moment.

4.7.4 CONCLUSION

M! was a play: with words, concepts, hierarchy, objects, patterns, uniforms, identity, and communication. D & W turned into a kind of salon, where students, colleagues, and acquaintances could gather to discuss design in an informal, personal, and direct way. As organisers, we wanted all participants to feel welcome and to dare to comment and ask questions, regardless of their status (student or part of the faculty). Our goal was to encourage participatory and collective learning. As an investigative project, D & W led to new experiences and knowledge at the intersection of design, community-building, and design education. Anja Groten writes that while organising an event isn’t a typical design practice, its importance lies in creating an understanding of the inter-social dimensions of a design practice (Groten 2020). This is reflected in the way Multiplum! operated and the ways we organised and hosted the D & W evenings. M! was consistently anti-hierarchical, an approach we implemented at all three D & W evenings. Our practice showed us how traditional ways of teaching (with students listening to an expert lecturer) can be dissolved. At the same time, we also learnt how easy it is to slip back into this traditional lecture form. This became evident at the D & W with Thomas Thwaites, during which participants clearly grouped themselves in a conventional way. Another question we take with us to our overarching PhD projects is whether D & W was as harmless and inviting as we want to believe it was. Perhaps a disarming and inviting approach is intimidating for some? Both of us are interested in design theory and reading; perhaps that interest radiates power?

27 At the time, Amy was our colleague and worked as a research assistant; in January 2024, she became a PhD candidate.

4.8 PARTICIPATORY EXPLORATIONS
IN PUBLIC – CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the four sub-projects I conducted for my PhD project: the ‘Things That Might Be True’ lecture series, the Voices publication, the Inner Political Landscapes workshop, and the Political Confession workshop, plus the side-project; the Design & Wine evenings I co-organised with Siv Lier as part of Multiplum!. As I implemented these sub-projects, the Stemme Department materialised and conducted its first-ever study (the Political Confession workshop).

A common goal of the experiments was to gather an audience around thematic questions and the desire to listen to one’s inner political voice. One method I used to target and gather individuals interested in these issues was to collect knowledge together with participants, on location as a compliment to studio work. The location I chose was the Bergen Public Library, where participants of varying ages gathered for the ‘Things That Might Be True’ lectures. I then invited this group to take part in my next sub-project. The group was never closed to newcomers; over time, some people left while new people joined. A core number did faithfully participate in all experiments. This group was clearly interested in the themes we were working with, and kept showing up.

My colleague Siv Lier and I used a similar method for Multiplum!’s Design & Wine activity, but the dynamic of the group that attended these evenings was completely different. D & W participants more or less already knew each other, for example, since they were all either studying or working at the Department of Design, or related to it. This made their entry point different from that of the participants of the other four experiments, who were members of the general public.

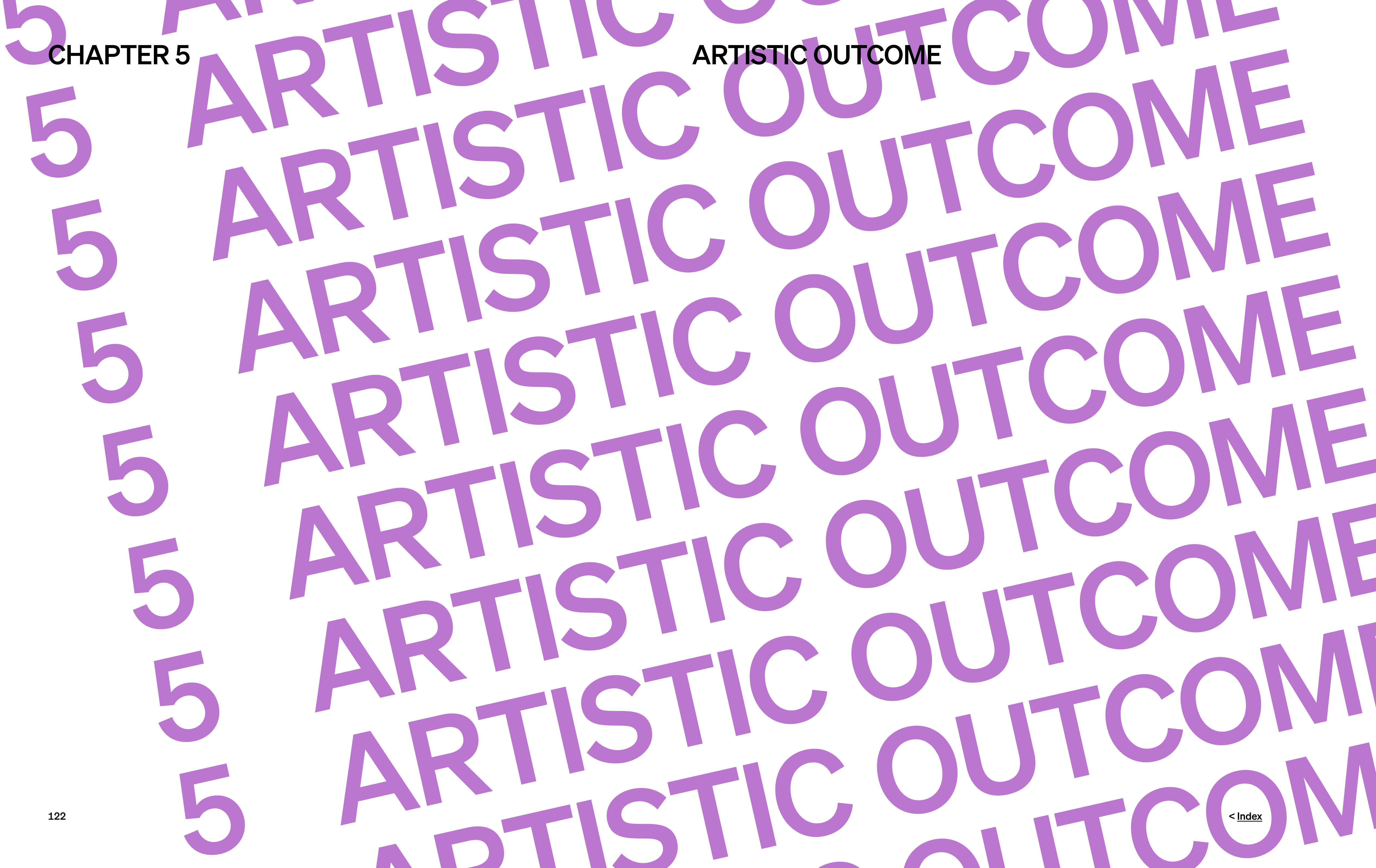
The spaces of the Inner Political Landscapes workshop and the Political Confession workshop were activated through rhetorical props, and ambiguous objects. Such objects help create a certain atmosphere and reinforce the activity that will take place in the space. In addition, rhetorical users who play a certain role can enhance participants’ experience. During the Inner Political Landscapes workshop, I began to develop an alter ego for myself as the leader of the workshop. The rhetorical user personas I had developed were improved during the Political Confession workshop: an assistant and a psychologist performed certain tasks, dressed in the uniform of the Stemme Department.

This chapter also discussed ethical issues related to the above sub-projects. The Scribbler was a trigger that forced me to reconsider the bases on which I excluded or included participants in my project from a democratic perspective. Excluding someone may seem undemocratic; on closer examination, it turns out that doing so can actually be highly democratic. This insight helped me justify and understand the participation boundaries I set for my project. I realised, for example, that I had the right to ask people not to disrupt other workshop participants or express conspiratorial ideas during a lecture, and that it was up to me to decide whether to include or exclude contributions from a publication.

The practical design work I engaged in made my own process very clear—see fig. 4.1. I always started with a question, and then designed a situation to encourage participants to answer that question. The situation materialised, filled with ambiguous objects and rhetorical users, and a scenography was constructed. I then invited participants and asked them to answer the question. Once participants had contributed their answers, I designed a channel or a concept to disseminate these answers, so they could meet a new audience.

One thing that surprised me as I conducted the experiments, was participants’ level of engagement. People invested quite a bit of time in participating in my experiments, reflecting, expressing themselves through images and text, and sharing their thoughts with me and with others. After the Political Confession workshop, psychologist Maria Pohl also told me that some participants had been very moved. I felt very humbled by that commitment.

I conclude that through my experiments new ways of discussing, encountering, and exploring politics emerged. The overarching organisation behind my experiments, the Stemme Department, dynamically evolved to meet a need that clearly exists among citizens: the need to look inward to visualise and express one’s thoughts on politics, political dilemmas, and paths to casting one’s vote during elections.



5.1 INTRODUCTION

The artistic outcome of my PhD project ‘Things That Might Be True’ will showcase the Stemme Department and will exemplify how design can engage an audience. The Stemme Department is the new government department that I invented, and my project’s overarching organisation that materialised through a workshop, publications, installations, and a lecture evening.

In this chapter, I will present my trajectory to the final outcome and the way I processed the findings of my practical experiments, so they could be disseminated to the public. I explain how I improved the Stemme Department’s overarching identity, for the sake of cohesion and to clarify the connection between the various parts of the exhibition. This chapter also describes how I collaborated on the exhibition with others, and where the artistic result of my project will be presented (the Bergen Storsenter shopping centre and the Bergen Public Library).

Please note that I wrote this chapter ahead of the dissemination of my project’s artistic result. I have tried to carefully plan every part of the process, but things can of course still change.

5.2 VENUES

I will present the artistic outcome of my PhD project from 5 to 8 March 2024, at Bergen Storsenter and the Bergen Public Library. I chose these two locations because of the Stemme Department’s role and tasks. As mentioned earlier, the department has three tasks:

- (1) providing citizens with tools to explore their inner political voices,
- (2) archiving the outcomes of these tools being used, and
- (3) offering popular education.

To perform these tasks, the department has to be located somewhere that is open to the public, easily accessible, and inviting to a broad and diverse audience. Bergen Storsenter sees high numbers of visitors every day and is the library’s closest neighbour. Despite these two institutions’ geographic proximity, however, they have very different agendas. While the library carries out a task on behalf of the state, Bergen Storsenter's activities are trade and commerce. Still, both places welcome visitors from a broad spectrum of different ages, genders, socioeconomic backgrounds, and ethnicities. Bergen Storsenter also serves as a bus station and meeting place. My project had a similarly broad audience; the only thing I was certain all participants had in common was their interest in exploring their inner political voice. By exhibiting my artistic result at two locations that are close by each other, the exhibition’s audience will be able to find its way to the Stemme Department from two directions—both physically and through the various ideas that will be presented in the exhibition.

Bergen Storsenter and the library are very different in terms of atmosphere, sound, movement, and visitors’ expectations. That is why I chose to disseminate the results of some sub-projects at one location, and other results at the other. At the library, I will use the main hall as an exhibition room for the Stemme Department's activities. In a side room off the main hall, I will organise a lecture evening. At Bergen Storsenter, I will exhibit my results right next to the main entrance. This space is relatively small, but open all the way up to the inner glass ceiling three floors up.

5.3 THE STEMME DEPARTMENT

The Stemme Department will tie the entire exhibition together. The latter is a manifestation of the former, as it were, with Bergen Storsenter and the library a stage for the department to carry out its activities. The department’s visual identity will be clearly visible in the exhibition, from the project’s publications to the uniforms of the department’s employees (striped coats, shoes, and socks, plus black trousers and a white t-shirt).

I decided to use the Söhne typeface rather than Neue Haas Grotesk²⁸ as the department’s official typeface. The latter was designed by Max Miedinger and released in 1957 by Haas’sche Schriftgiesserei (Müller 2007, 33). The well-known typeface Helvetica is based on Neue Haas Grotesk, which itself was based on the Akzidenz Grotesk from the 1890s (Müller 2007,

23). In 2019, Klim Type Foundry released an updated version of Akzidenz Grotesk called Söhne, designed by Kris Sowersby. The new version is a real workhorse: it is functional, robust, and flexible, and exudes confidence and clarity. A perfect fit for the Stemme Department, in other words.

5.4 INNER POLITICAL LANDSCAPES
WORKSHOP

I will organise a second round of the Inner Political Landscapes workshop at Bergen Storsenter, to give members of the public an opportunity to explore their inner political voice. The workshop primarily fulfils the first and second tasks of the Stemme Department: using collage and text as tools (1) for political introspection, and (2) archiving the outcomes of that process.

The new workshop largely follows the same procedure as the one in 2021 (see Chapter 4.4), with some changes. During the first workshop, participants got pre-made materials to create a collage. If they wanted to, they could write down their thoughts on the back of their collage. This time, there will be even more collage materials, so can create more diverse collages. Just like during the first workshop, an employee of the Stemme Department will go through an informational letter about the study with each participant. The participant will then be asked to sign a consent form. This time, I will use updated/improved versions of the informational letter and consent form.

To effectively convey the Stemme Department's activities and the exhibition's context and components to the audience, I developed a manuscript during a workshop with my assistants Hedda Halvorsen and Linda Løvheim. We wanted to truly clarify the essence of the Stemme Department's work, the content of the Inner Political Landscapes workshop, and the things participants can get out of it. Halvorsen and Løvheim will serve as informants and facilitators during the workshop at the shopping centre, to make it a comprehensive and enriching experience for everyone involved. They will also part of the design as rhetorical users.

The exhibition area at Bergen Storsenter is narrow but tall—and

the Stemme Department will take whatever space it is given. To make the most of the space and create the environment that the Inner Political Landscapes workshop requires, an installation was built. It is about 6 metres tall, with a 2.4 x 2.4 metre base.

5.5 POLITICAL CONFESSION
– THE PUBLICATION AND INSTALLATION

The political confessional will contain the outcomes of the Political Confession workshop I conducted in November 2023 (see Chapter 4_5). The confessional will be exhibited at the library, to stimulate political engagement in citizens. It will feature the ten texts that were produced after the workshop (a direct link to the original participants), to spark political introspection. The booth's texts were published by the Stemme Department and have their own ISBN number. They were first written in Swedish by psychologist Maria Pohl and then translated into Norwegian by myself and Mads Andersen and into English by Eva Corijn. In the exhibition, visitors will be able to sit in the booth to read the confessions, and take a copy with them if they like. The texts have been printed on loose sheets, folded and put into an envelope. The booth embodies the first and second tasks of the Stemme Department: creating tools (1) and archiving the outcomes of the use of these tools (2 – the printed texts/publication/installation).

I made some minor changes to the political confessional to prepare it for the upcoming exhibition. The wooden panels that previously served as a small table for the psychologist/confessor have been replaced with compartments, to display the ten texts. The design of these compartments is based on the design of Norway's official voting booth, with some modifications.

5.6 VOICES PUBLICATION

The *Voices* publication will be displayed in the exhibition. It was printed at the Knust risograph printing studio in Nijmegen, Netherlands, which is run by Joyce Guley and Jan Dirk de Wilde. They are true craftspeople, who executed the printing and colour separations with great precision. I opted for Knust because I had faith the team would deliver a publication of the highest quality, and I wanted the participants' contributions to be treated with the greatest care. I personally participated in the printing process at Knust, but only considered myself an assistant. I did use my skills as a graphic designer: making

28 See the book *Helvetica Forever: Story of a Typeface* for a detailed overview of the evolution from Akzidenz Grotesk to Neue Haas Grotesk to Helvetica.

decisions about the publication’s paper, format, binding technique, and wrapping. Seventy copies of *Voices* were printed in early February 2024.

The final publication not only features the 28 contributions, but also one additional commissioned work. David Vogt, a postdoctoral fellow in Philosophy at the University of Bergen and commentator at local newspaper *Bergen Tidende*,²⁹ wrote an introduction to *Voices*. His text is a contribution in and of itself, as it ties the publication together and situates it within a broader societal context. In appendix 9 you will find an English translation of the texts published in the *Voices* publication.

5.7 LECTURE EVENING

On Thursday 7 March, during the exhibition period, a series of talks will be held at the Bergen Public Library. Lecturers will include Azza Rajhi (Tunisia/France) and Benjamin Hickethier (Germany/Norway). Both practicing designers, they will introduce their practices to the public. Professor of Graphic Design Johanna Lewengaard (Sweden/Norway) will moderate the event. Everyone who participated in the ‘Things That Might Be True’ PhD project will be personally invited to the lecture evening, but the event will also be open to the general public. The evening is linked to the Stemme Department’s third task of creating public information (3) and will demonstrate how the department brings people together through public lectures. Arranging the event at the library felt fitting: my PhD project began at the library and will conclude there.

5.8 COOPERATION

As I will present my artistic outcome, I will be playing various roles. Tharp and Tharp have listed the many roles that designers can perform in discursive projects like this:

Frequently, in addition to acting as playwright, set designer, prop maker, wardrobe designer, lighting designer, director, theater manager, usher, playbill copywriter and designer, concessions provider, and custodian, the discursive designer also acts as promoter and event organizer. She logistically needs to get the show in front of an audience of real people (2018, 189).

I can only agree with Tharp and Tharp: the above list matches my current reality. At the same time, I have to ensure everything is in place, securely fastened, and that everything functions at all times, but also make sure that the project is clearly communicated to an audience and that the project is communicated to all other involved parties.

Naturally, however, arranging an exhibition and major presentation is hard without collaborating with others. Tore Andersen, Catharina Rundberg, and employees of Bergen Storsenter and the Bergen Public Library have all been assisting me.

The installation at Bergen Storsenter is basically a scaffolding structure, adorned with cardboard tubes covered in striped fabric. The structure was made by scaffolding expert Tore Andersen. Together, we discussed countless sketches, with me presenting ideas that Andersen then turned into a feasible structure. Together, we also conducted on-site inspections. All fabrics for the workshop were sewn by Catharina Rundberg, who translated my ideas and designs into functional forms, based on sketches I drew and conversations we had. Both Bergen Storsenter and the Bergen Public Library have been very interested in and supportive of my project. My contact persons have been Odd Rune Bjørge (Director of Bergen Storsenter) and Charlotte Myrbråten (Event Coordinator at the library).

Lastly, I am planning a release party to coincide with the opening of the exhibition, to celebrate the publication of *Voices* and the release of the political confession texts. All those who participated in any of my sub-projects will be invited: the party will be an opportunity to thank everyone and show them the appreciation they truly deserve. Members of the public will be welcome too: they will play an equally important role in the Stemme Department.

125 29 Chapter 3.3 also refers to Vogt and the Op-Ed he wrote for *Bergen Tidende* about listening to one’s own political language.

5.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I presented the final part of my project ‘Things That Might Be True’ and explained how the Stemme Department will soon meet its new audience. The last step of the process is currently taking place. What began as a question has materialised into a situation through props and scenography, re-encountering participants who answered that very first question. Their responses have been meticulously reimaged and will soon encounter a fresh audience. Perhaps this new audience will engage in political introspection. Perhaps I myself will delve deeper into new inquiries. My personal design process has become clearer through iterations, the development of workshops, and through meetings and conversations with participants, supervisors, colleagues, literature, objects, and conversations with my studio wall.

I listed everyone I collaborated with at this final stage to clarify my own role as a designer. I also provided an overview of the places where I will disseminate my results. My choice of venues may be somewhat unexpected; usually, artistic results are presented in more traditional exhibition spaces. But the locations I picked strengthen my project's multifaceted role: to propose new paths for citizens to encounter politics; to contribute to our understanding of how publics and communities are constructed to reflect on and engage in dialogue about the political self through design; and to explore the wonderland down the rabbit hole of political design, that is: political, political design.

In my project ‘Things That Might Be True’, I explored how an expanded visual communication design practice can be used to provoke political introspection. I conducted my experiments through visual communication design, in collaboration with many participants. My main discoveries were the materialisation of the Stemme Department and its activities, and the construction of a sub-category—political, political design—down the rabbit hole of political design and adversarial design practices.

My practice allowed me to fully explore the potential of visual communication. The perspective of artistic research meant that practical design work constituted the core of my experiments. I learnt a great deal about ethics, collaboration, precision, and about the intuitive versus the planned. Through repetitions of ideas, conversations, and reflection, I eventually managed to articulate precisely how I work, what I do, and why, and what I need in terms of materials, expertise, locations, and participants to conduct

my research in a satisfactory way. It turned out I actually need quite a bit—especially participants who are ready and willing to share their innermost thoughts on political ideas, dilemmas, and their inner political landscape.

During my project, I connected with a range of thinkers and practitioners who have considered or are working with these same issues: Plato, Gadamer, Dewey, DiSalvo, Schön, Mouffe, Kristeva, Kling, Snodgrass, Coyne, and Tharp and Tharp. Some of these started paving the way for my project thousands of years ago. Others continue to explore these questions to this day. Many are known around the world. There are also a number of designers—including Ben Hayoun, Ericson, Herregraven, Miediger, DeVet, Huus, Malpass, Lier, Rajhi, and Hickethier—who experimented, sketched, tried, asked experts for advice, materialised, and wondered both long before my time and alongside me.

In the realm of imagination, the familiar figure of Alice in Wonderland emerged. Having tumbled down a rabbit hole, Alice marvels at what she sees and discovers. She was my companion, told me not to be afraid, encouraged me to make everything a little bigger, a little more colourful (including with bolder stripes!), a little more of everything, quite simply. In visual communication, almost anything is allowed within the limits of ethics. But from the perspective of universal design, visual communication design can sometimes feel rather meagre, tight, and restrained. Still, Alice observes, encourages, enlarges, laughs, and invites one to play.

As I engaged with the fictional, the Stemme Department materialised. Its activities show us that the path to the future requires introspection. The department challenges the prevailing ideas of how citizens (should) connect to their inner political life by offering new and collective ways of exploring our inner political lives. Designers can imagine for themselves and for others what does not yet exist, what no one has yet seen.

All of these things are
‘Things That Might Be True’.

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3. SEP. 2019 KL. 14:00–17. SEP. 2019 KL. 14:00

100 Stemmer – bli med i en publikasjon! – OPEN CALL

OmDiskusjon

InviterRediger

Detaljer

50 personer har svart

Arrangement av Ingrid Rundberg

Norge

Varighet: 14 dager

Offentlig · Alle på eller utenfor Facebook

Jeg ønsker herved å invitere deg til å delta i publikasjonen «100 STEMME»!

Vil du lever i et demokrati og har dermed rett til å stemme i politiske valg, men dette kan være vanskelig. Er du den som søker informasjon på nett, snakker med kollegaer, finner ut, tenker og tenker, kanskje går tilbake i filosofien for å finne svar, klikker inn på Aftenposten sin valgomat og til slutt finner frem hvordan du skal stemme?

Det jeg ønsker å invitere deg inn i er en publikasjon der spørsmålet, som jeg sammen med dere som ønsker å delta skal besvare, er «Hvordan finner du din stemme?», og enda mer spesifikt: «Hvordan finner du ut hva du skal stemme på i Kommune- og Fylkestingsvalget 2019?».

Ditt bidrag blir én side i publikasjonen. Det kan for eksempel være en selfie fra sofakroken mens du ser på politisk debatt eller nyheter, en tekst med dine tanker om valget, en liste med utsagn fra debatten, en tekst om hva du tenker rundt det å stemme, bilder av en samling objekter som har hjulpet deg å finne din stemme, et dikt, en illustrasjon, et fotografi eller en serie bilder. Eller hvorfor ikke en bildeserie som du laget da du tegnet til TV- eller radiodebattere? Det viktigste er at det du bidrar med sier noe om hvordan du finner din stemme i Kommune- og Fylkestingsvalget 2019. Innholdet kommer både til å trykkes i en bok og publiseres på en nettside knyttet opp mot mitt stipendiatprosjekt. Som takk for ditt bidrag får du gå på slippefest med alle andre bidragsytere, og så får du så klart et eksemplar av boken.

Viktig i prosjektet er at det IKKE skal fremgå HVA du stemmer på men HVORDAN du har funnet veien frem til din stemme. Ditt navn kommer til å presenteres sammen med ditt bidrag, du kan altså ikke være anonym.

serie bilder. Eller hvorfor ikke en bildeserie som du laget da du tegnet til TV- eller radiodebattene? Det viktigste er at det du bidrar med sier noe om hvordan du finner din stemme i Kommune- og Fylkestingsvalget 2019. Innholdet kommer både til å trykkes i en bok og publiseres på en nettside knyttet opp mot mitt stipendiatprosjekt. Som takk for ditt bidrag får du gå på slippefest med alle andre bidragsytere, og så får du så klart et eksemplar av boken.

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Hvis du har en idé om hva du ønsker å uttrykke, men ikke helt vet hvordan, er du varmt velkommen til å ta kontakt med meg via e-post.

For å delta i prosjektet må du være stemmeberettiget i Kommune- og Fylkestingsvalget.

Publikasjonen 100 STEMME kommer til å bli et visuelt arkiv som dokumenterer hvordan vi finner en stemme i Kommune- og Fylkestingsvalget 2019.

Praktisk informasjon

Deadline for påmeldingen: søndag 15. september, meld deg på her <http://www.xn--tingsomkanvresant-1rb.no/> eller via e-post ingrid.rundberg@uib.no

Deadline for innlevering: 1. oktober

Formater ved innlevering: jpg, word, pdf, tiff. Oppløsning minimum 300 dpi.

Lever inn her: ingrid.rundberg@uib.no

Du kan også levere inn fysiske format (originaler), send da en e-post til ingrid.rundberg@uib.no for å få informasjon om hvordan du sender inn ditt bidrag.


«100 STEMMER» er et delprosjekt i stipendiatprosjektet «Ting som kan være sant». Prosjektet er organisert av meg, Ingrid Rundberg, som er stipendiat ved Institutt for design, ved Universitetet i Bergen. I prosjektet undersøker jeg, ved hjelp av design, hvor våre personlige holdninger i politiske valg kommer fra. For hvem er du? Hvilken type person ønsker du egentlig å være? Og hva er det som gjør det så vanskelig å stemme?

Mer informasjon om prosjektet finner du her: <http://www.xn--tingsomkanvresant-1rb.no/>

Dette er en publikasjon:
Publikasjon, offentliggjørelse; utgivelse av et skrift; utgitt skrift (uansett størrelse, innbinding o.l.).
Hentet fra Store norske leksikon, <https://snl.no/publikasjon> Se mindre

Lærdalsøyri

Møt arrangøren



Ingrid Rundberg
16 tidligere arrangementer

Se

Appendix 2
Invitation text translated to English
for the Stemmer/Voices project

2019

I hereby wish to invite you to participate in the publication *100 VOICES*!

We live in a democracy and therefore have the right to vote in political elections, but this can be challenging. Are you the one who seeks information online, talks to colleagues, figures things out, reflects deeply, perhaps delves into philosophy to find answers, clicks on Aftenposten's election tool, and finally figures out how to vote?

What I want to invite you to is a publication where the question, which I and those of you who wish to participate will answer, is "How do you find your voice?" and even more specifically: "How do you determine what to vote for in the Municipal and County Council Elections of 2019?"

Your contribution will be one page in the publication. It could, for example, be a selfie from your couch while watching a political debate or news, a text with your thoughts on the election, a list of statements from the debate, a text about what you think about voting, pictures of a collection of objects that have helped you find your voice, a poem, an illustration, a photograph, or a series of images. Or why not a series of images you created while sketching during TV or radio debates? The most important thing is that what you contribute says something about how you find your voice in the Municipal and County Council Elections of 2019. The content will be both printed in a book and published on a website linked to my doctoral project. As a thank you for your contribution, you get to attend a release party with all the other contributors, and of course, you will receive a copy of the book.

Important in the project is that it should NOT reveal WHAT you vote for but HOW you have found your way to your voice. Your name will be presented alongside your contribution, so you cannot be anonymous. If you have an idea of what you want to express but don't quite know how, you are warmly welcome to contact me via email. To participate in the project, you must be eligible to vote in the Municipal and County Council Elections. The publication "100 VOICES" will become a visual archive documenting how we find our voice in the Municipal and County Council Elections of 2019.

Practical Information: Deadline for registration: Sunday, September 15, sign up here [link] or via email ingrid.rundberg@uib.no
Deadline for submission: October 1
Formats for submission: jpg, word, pdf, tiff. Resolution minimum 300 dpi.
Submit here: <https://www.xn--tingsomkanvresant-1rb.no/>

You can also submit physical formats (originals); in that case, send an email to ingrid.rundberg@uib.no to receive information on how to submit your contribution. "100 VOICES" is a subproject in the doctoral project "Things that can be true." The project is organized by me, Ingrid Rundberg, a doctoral candidate at the Department of Design at the University of Bergen. In the project, I investigate, through design, where our personal attitudes in political elections come from. Who are you? What kind of person do you really want to be? And what makes it so difficult to vote? More information about the project can be found here: <http://www.xn--tingsomkanvresant-1rb.no/>

This is a publication:
Publication, disclosure; release of a written work; published writing (regardless of size, binding, etc.). Retrieved from Store norske leksikon, <https://snl.no/publikasjon>

9.

9. SEP. 2021 KL. 10:00–11. SEP. 2021 KL. 16:00

Indre politiske landskap – drop-in workshop

Fakultet for kunst, musikk og design, Rom 61

OmDiskusjon

InviterRediger

Detaljer

51 personer har svart

Arrangement av Ingrid Rundberg

Fakultet for kunst, musikk og design, Rom 61

Varighet: 3 dager

Offentlig · Alle på eller utenfor Facebook

Indre politiske landskap – kom på workshop!
(English below)

Når du lytter til din indre politiske stemme – hva sier den da?
I denne drop-in workshopen skal du vende blikket inn mot deg selv, for å finne ut hvordan ditt indre politiske landskap ser ut. Glem valgomaten, den viktige enkeltsaken som står fornuften din nær, eller hva dine omgivelser og venner har påvirket deg til å tro på. Hva er det i deg selv som får deg til å stemme som du gjør? I det indre kan man finne mange ting, kanskje er det kaotiske ting, skremmende ting, eller kanskje beroligende og hverdagslige ting. Det kan være en fortid, eller en fremtid du skuer mot. Du kan bevege deg mellom avgrunnen og åpne sletter – det kjente og det ukjente.
Bli med på en 20-60 minutters drop-in workshop i Rom 61, og se deg rundt i ditt indre politiske landskap! Ditt bidrag vil bli en del av prosjektet Stemmedepartementet, som er utviklet av Ingrid Rundberg, stipendiat ved Fakultetet for kunst, musikk og design (KMD), Institutt for design.
ENG
When listening to your inner political voice, what does it tell you?

Fakultet for kunst, musikk og design, Rom 61

Møllendalsveien 61, 5009 Bergen, Norge

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When listening to your inner political voice, what does it tell you?


In this drop-in workshop you will turn your gaze inward to yourself, to find out what your inner political landscape looks like. Forget the Valgomat, the important single issue that is close to your common sense, or what your environment and friends have influenced you to believe. What is it inside you that makes you vote like you do? When turning to your inner self you can find chaotic things, terrifying things, or maybe comforting and everyday things. It can be a past, or a future you are looking towards. You can move between the abyss and the open plains, the known and the unknown.

Come join a 20-60 minute workshop in Rom 61, and take a stroll through your inner political landscape! Your contribution will be a part of the project Stemmedepartementet (Ministry of votes, developed by Ingrid Rundberg, Ph.D fellow at Faculty of Fine Art, Music and Design (KMD), Department of Design.

Se mindre


Bergen, Hordaland

Møt arrangøren



Ingrid Rundberg

16 tidligere arrangementer

 Se

Send meldinger til venner

Appendix 4

Inner Political Landscape backside

Norwegian/English

Indre politiske landskap
Drop-in workshop, 9.–11. september 2021

Alder

- ☐ **Under 18**
- ☐ **18-20**
- ☐ **20-29**
- ☐ **30-39**
- ☐ **40-49**
- ☐ **50-59**
- ☐ **60-69**
- ☐ **70-79**
- ☐ **80-89**
- ☐ **90-99**
- ☐ **100**

Kjønn

☐ Kvinne

☐ Mann

☐ Annet

Hvor sikker føler du deg på ditt politiske standpunkt?

- ☐ Sikker
- ☐ Litt usikker
- ☐ Usikker

Jeg har signert en kontrakt med Ingrid

☐ **Ja**

Vennligst beskriv ditt indre landskap med ord og hvordan du gikk frem når du laget det. Hvordan tenkte du? Hvor startet du? Du kan tenke på f.eks. farger, komposisjon, dine personlige refleksjoner osv.

Inner political landscape
Drop-in workshop, 9.–11. september 2021

Age

- ☐ Under 18
- ☐ 18-20
- ☐ 20-29
- ☐ 30-39
- ☐ 40-49
- ☐ 50-59
- ☐ 60-69
- ☐ 70-79
- ☐ 80-89
- ☐ 90-99
- ☐ 100

Gender

☐ **Female**

☐ **Male**

☐ **Other**

How sure are you of your political stance?

- ☐ **Confident**
- ☐ **A bit uncertain**
- ☐ **Uncertain**

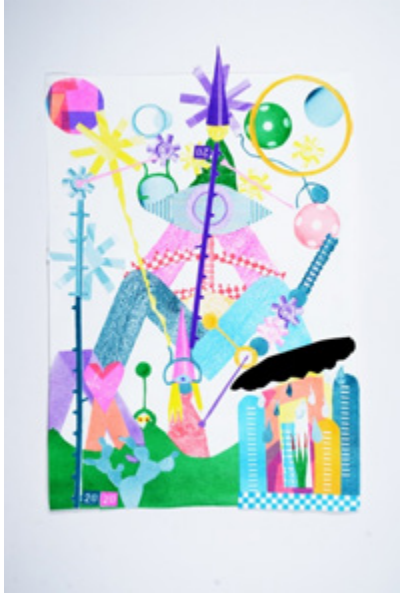
I've signed a contract with Ingrid

☐ **Yes**

Please describe your thoughts when creating your inner political landscape and how you approached it. How did you think? What did you start with? You can think of colors, composition, your personal reflections etc.

4.4.8 Resultat
Totalt deltog 37 personer (fig. 4.4.XX). Här presenteras bilder på alla collage tillsammans med tillhörande texter:

4.4.8 Results
A total of 37 individuals participated (fig. 4.4.XX). Presented below are images of all the collages along with their accompanying texts:



01.

Det er mange her i verden som har behov for makt & styre andres liv... Noen gjør det for lyset og andre for mørket. Du må passe på hvem du stoler på og egentlig er det kun Du som vet best i din (ikke lesbar) & energi. Vi Skal være fri spre kjærlighet & komme i mer kontakt med naturen igjen. Jeg vil at vi skal gå vekk fra Bokser, (ikke lesbar) & teknologi som går raskere enn vi klarer å reflektere. Mindre urbant mer natur. Mindre frykt, mer love! Vi må fokusere mer innover oss selv og mindre på hva alle andre gjør. Vi trenger fred & kjærlighet og MYE mindre fokus på TING & TANG som ikke gjør deg lykkelig. Som feks hvor mange som døde på gamle hjemmet i går eller hvor mange som tok en PCR test onsdag morgen. Verden har så mye mer å by på. Open your h(ear)t. Listen to the universe and u will get it all.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION
There are many in this world who have a need for power & control over others' lives... Some do it for the light and others for the darkness. You must be careful whom you trust, and really, it is only You who knows best in your (not readable) & energy. We should be free to spread love & reconnect with nature. I want us to move away from Boxes, (not readable) & technology that moves faster than we can reflect. Less urban, more nature. Less fear, more love! We must focus more inward on ourselves and less on what everyone else is doing. We need peace & love and MUCH less focus on THINGS & STUFF that don't make you happy. Such as how many died in the nursing home yesterday or how many took a PCR test Wednesday morning. The world has so much more to offer. Open your h(ear)t. Listen to the universe and you will get it all.



02.

For meg kan et politisk landskap aldri være noe rent indre. Ordet politikk kommer fra gresk Polis, som betyr by, samfunn, befolkning. «Greek *polis*, *ptolis* 2citade, fort, city, one's city: the state, community, citizens". (Etymology inline). Om mitt indre landskap I denne sammenheng skulle speiles i det ytre vil jeg betegne med som 'etymologisk kommunist'. Det betyr at jeg ikke synes 'kommunismen' har vært realisert på en virkelig god måte, noe sted ennå, historisk sett. Og jeg tror heller ikke at Marx teorier bare enkelt kan omsettes til en kommunistisk praksis, selv om Marx analyser har vært veldig viktig på mange måter. Ordet kommunisme vil etymologisk sett handle om det som er felles ('Common'), og det tangerer ordet 'Polis' i betydningen 'Community'. Vi finner det også på norsk i ordet 'kommune'. Den største svøpen for et samfunn som kunne være preget av fellesskap, bærekraft, mening og rettferdighet, er kapitalismen. Dvs. penger som den bærende måleenhet for verdi, og ikke minst tanken om profitt, der noen tjener penger på (ofte) andres arbeid. Den viktigste av alle verdier i denne sammenheng er for meg arbeid. Ved hjelp av arbeid, enten utført av mennesker eller maskiner, eller i en kombinasjon, har menneskeheten i teorien enorme muligheter til å skape verdier som gavner helheten, fellesskapet, kommer alle til gode. Om man erstatter kapitalismen og profitt med en annen form for organisering tror jeg alle ville kunne ha mulighet til å arbeide, og skape seg gode livsopphold, men arbeidet mindre, og fått mer tid til studier, vitenskap, kunst, natur, fritid. Dette er anno 2021 nokså utopisk, og dermed ennå kun et indre politisk landskap...

ENGLISH TRANSLATION
"For me, a political landscape can never be purely internal. The word politics comes from the Greek Polis, which means city, community, population. 'Greek polis, ptolis 2citade, fort, city, one's city: the state, community, citizens' (Etymology inline). If my inner landscape in this context were to be reflected in the external, I would describe it as 'etymological communist'. This means that I don't believe 'communism' has been realized in a truly good way anywhere yet, historically speaking. And I also don't believe that Marx's theories can simply be translated into communist practice, even though Marx's analyses have been very important in many ways. Etymologically, the word communism would be about what is common ('Common'), and it touches on the word 'Polis' in the sense of 'Community'. We also find it in Norwegian in the word 'kommune' (municipality). The greatest scourge for a society that could be characterized by community, sustainability, meaning, and justice is capitalism. That is, money as the primary unit of value, and especially the idea of profit, where some make money from (often) others' labor. The most important of all values in this context is work for me. Through work, whether performed by humans or machines, or in combination, humanity theoretically has enormous opportunities to create values that benefit the whole, the community, benefit everyone. If capitalism and profit were replaced with another form of organization, I believe everyone would have the opportunity to work and create good livelihoods for themselves, work less, and have more time for studies, science, art, nature, leisure. This is somewhat utopian in 2021, and therefore still only an internal political landscape..."



03.

Jeg valgte ut former som for meg symboliserer de partiene jeg frykter/håper kan ende opp med å samarbeide/danne regjering. Komposisjonen forteller litt om mine tanker og valgets kvaler rundt hvem jeg skal stemme på. Jeg veksler litt fortsatt mellom to partier, og vil gjerne stemme på det som kan få best gjennomslag mtp. Miljø, klima og natur. Grønt forbinder jeg med mine hjertesaker. Blått, det som kjemper imot og er for fortsatt oljeleting og -utvinning.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION
I selected shapes that, for me, symbolize the parties I fear/hope could end up cooperating/forming a government. The composition reflects a bit about my thoughts and the dilemma of whom to vote for. I still oscillate between two parties and would like to vote for the one that can have the most impact regarding environment, climate, and nature. Green is associated with my core issues. Blue represents those who resist and still support oil exploration and extraction.



04.

I was thinking of a solid base, history, background from your genes. Disturbing it, rethinking, and remolding. Chewing, thinking, and feeling what is right for me. It was something completely different. It is right for me.



05.

Eg startet med å skisse en motsetning mellom to parter nederst og midterst i bildet. Så la eg eit «teppe» over som symboliserer tid og rom og alt det politikere ikkje veit. Det er folk som gjer så godt dei kan og så er dei egoistiske på sin måte. Utenfor teppet er verdensrommet og dei virkelig lange linjene. Men må handle nå og samtidig så betyr ingenting noken ting kanskje.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
I started by sketching a contrast between two parties at the bottom and in the middle of the picture. Then I laid a 'carpet' over it, symbolizing time and space and all the things' politicians don't know. There are people doing the best they can and then they are selfish in their own way. Outside the carpet is space and the really long lines. But we have to act now, and at the same time, maybe nothing really matters."



06.

Jeg tok umiddelbart tak i rødt fordi jeg er sint over politikk og synes altfor ofte alt går feil med hensyn til rettferdighet og rettfærdige rettigheter, Jeg tåler ikke *computer says no* mentalitet som preger politiske landskapet i verden. Men jeg gjør hva jeg kan for å roe meg ned og forstå hvorfor endring til det bedre for flertallet er svært vanskelig mens endring til _____ kan gå så fort og se ut som de er lette og _____ liker å gå gal.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
I immediately grabbed onto red because I'm angry about politics and often feel that justice and fair rights go awry far too often. I can't stand the 'computer says no' mentality that pervades the political landscape in the world. But I do what I can to calm down and understand why change for the better for the majority is very difficult while changes to [blank] can happen so quickly and seem easy and [blank] like to go wrong.



07.

I am hoping the society that everyone can live more freely. Without any limits (age, gender, nationality, income etc...) and hierarchy. So, I expressed "freedom world" with flowers/plants using a lot of different colors and shapes. Each flowers/plant has different colors/shapes/hight, it means everyone is "different".



08.

Først gikk jeg for farger som jeg likte, men innså at det ble feil i mitt landskap. Jeg gikk deretter alt for bokstavelig og omorganiserte hele landskapet igjen. Jeg valgte til slutt å lage et landskap hvor jeg tenkte mye på fargevalg og komposisjon. En «battle» mellom følelser, fordommer, kontraster og oksymoron (motsetning). Å på en måte føle en vei, men på en annen side føle noe annet. Speoler ogse det skyldfølelse for hva en bør føle, livssituasjon og samhold. Også i forhold til hvilket ansvar man har som menneske i verden kontra — lille verden. Speiler også mye på hvem jeg er, hvem jeg ønsker å være og hvor jeg finner meg selv skyldig eller bestemt.

Med en sterk hjerne med store motsettinger, finnes det også mange ønsker om å være et bedre menneske, ha de «riktige» meningene. Er jeg god nok feminist? Kjemper jeg hardt nok mot fattigdom? Hva gjør jeg for klima? Er dette nok?

Nøkkelord: kjerneverdier, skyld, oksymoron, riktig, bedre, ansvar, et edre menneske, kontrast, fordom.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
At first, I went for colors that I liked, but I realized it was wrong in my landscape. Then I went too literal and reorganized the whole landscape again. Finally, I chose to create a landscape where I thought a lot about color choice and composition. A 'battle' between emotions, prejudices, contrasts, and oxymorons (contradictions). Feeling one way, but on the other hand, feeling something else. Also reflecting guilt for what one should feel, life situations, and solidarity. Also, in relation to the responsibility one has as a human in the world versus [blank] the small world. It also reflects a lot on who I am, who I want to be, and where I find myself guilty or determined.

With a strong mind filled with significant contradictions, there are also many desires to be a better person, to have the 'right' opinions. Am I a good enough feminist? Am I fighting poverty hard enough? What am I doing for the climate? Is this sufficient?

Keywords: core values, guilt, oxymoron, right, better, responsibility, being a better person, contrast, prejudice.



09.

I think that people with collaboration of each other with researchers can overcome some serious challenges of today's society. By taking care of the sustainability and mental health each person can become and have the role of efficient citizen and by collaborating with others they can have a better



10.

Jeg følte meget på at siden dette skal vise midt indre politiske landskap, føler jeg at det ydre (indflytelser, hvordan jeg vil opfattes) spiller en stor rolle i det. På den måde er min collage delt op i den mere «flashy», opmærksomhedskrævende del (høyre side) od en mere rolige del, som er fleksibelt og 3D. Det var svært ikke at føle mig indskrænket af farvebinærene af blå = konservativ og rød = socialistisk, men i sidste ende prøvede jeg at bruge mine værdier så som klima. Jeg prøvede også at vise min usikkerhed, mit imposter syndrome indenfor politik i de elementer som bukter ud fra papiret. Det føles som om der er lidt gatekeeping indenfor snak om politik, hvor jeg ikke altid tør at sige noget, fordi jeg ikke føler at jeg ved nok. Derfor har jeg lavede buer, som nogle gange er åbne og fleksible, andre gange lukkede og rigide. Generelt har jeg prøvet at visualisere min indre splittelse, men om måden at interagere med politik på.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
I felt very strongly that since this is supposed to represent my inner political landscape, I feel that the external influences, how I will be perceived, play a big role in it. In that way, my collage is divided into the 'flashier', attention-seeking part (right side) and a more calm part, which is flexible and 3D. It was difficult not to feel constrained by the color binaries of blue = conservative and red = socialist, but ultimately, I tried to use my values such as climate. I also tried to show my insecurity, my imposter syndrome within politics in the elements that curve out from the paper. It feels like there is a bit of gatekeeping in political discussions, where I don't always dare to say something because I don't feel like I know enough. Therefore, I have created arches, which are sometimes open and flexible, other times closed and rigid. Overall, I have tried to visualize my inner conflict, but in the way of interacting with politics.



11.

Jeg startet med en gul form, en rød og en blå. Jeg føler at jeg har verdier som høyrer til mange steder på den politiske aksen fra venstre til høyre. Jeg føler at det gir mest mening å plassere det gule menneskelige i midten, båret og beskyttet av henholdsvis høyre- og venstresiden. Det føles også som vi forsøker å klatre opp til himmelen med våre mislykkede politiske initiativer. Og med våre vellykkede politiske initiativer. Nå ser det ut som at vi med kapitalismen har klart å sende en stor ball med en

katapult som holder på rase ned alt vi har bygget opp i vår relativt stabile del av verden. Jeg er litt spent på hvordan det vil gå med alle klimaflyktningene som kommer etter hvert. Så har jeg prøvd å illustrere våre partimessige forsøk å stoppe denne blå ballen som potensielt kan ødelegge stigen vi har bygget opp.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
I started with a yellow shape, a red one, and a blue one. I feel that I have values that belong to many places on the political spectrum from left to right. I feel that it makes the most sense to place the yellow human in the middle, carried and protected respectively by the right and left sides. It also feels like we are trying to climb up to heaven with our failed political initiatives. And with our successful political initiatives. Now it looks like with capitalism, we have managed to send a large ball with a catapult that is about to race down everything we have built up in our relatively stable part of the world. I'm a bit curious about how it will go with all the climate refugees that will come eventually. Then I have tried to illustrate our party attempts to stop this blue ball that potentially can destroy the ladders we have built up.



12.

This is about the bureaucratic machine coming together with the last decades’ social democracies in Europe, feeding sometimes onto more rightist ideas or popular topics such as ecology or progresses while the machine actually cares about being financially aompetitive and healthy amongst the liberal market, but built in a collectivity (this ____ pre-cut pieces).

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
This is about the bureaucratic machine aligning with the social democracies of the last decades in Europe, sometimes leaning towards more right-wing ideas or popular topics such as ecology or progressiveness while the machine actually cares about being financially competitive and healthy within the liberal market, but built collectively (these [blank] pre-cut pieces).



13.

Jeg lette mest etter avrundede former, og former som har en «innside» (L-formen f. eks.). Jeg har en spiss stjerneform med for å inkludere kontrasten til det milde og vennlig, og den helt nødvendige konflikten som vi behøver i politikken, særlig for å få til en endring. Resten handler om miljø, utenforskap, inkludering, LHBTQ+. Pilene handler for meg om fremgang. De store formene «favner om» de mindre. Mitt indre politiske landskap handler i stor grad om å se de som er utenfor, og om å gjøre plass til dem. Å ta vare på hverandre, inkludert planeten og andre levende vesener. Å stemme for dem som har større behov for støtte, hjelp og inkludering enn meg.

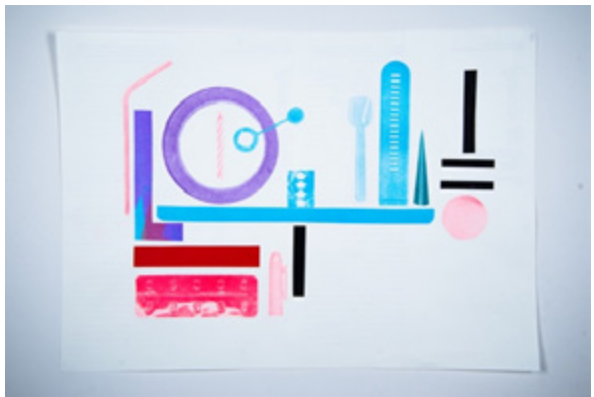
ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
I mainly searched for rounded shapes and shapes with an 'inner' (like the L-shape, for example). I have a pointed star shape to include the contrast to the mild and friendly, and the necessary conflict that we need in politics, especially to effect change. The rest is about the environment, marginalization, inclusion, LGBTQ+. The arrows represent progress to me. The larger shapes 'embrace' the smaller ones. My inner political landscape is largely about seeing those who are on the outskirts and making room for them. Taking care of each other, including the planet and other living beings. Voting for those who need more support, help, and inclusion than me.



14.

Jeg begynte veldig tilfeldig med å klippe former som representerte min politiske side – rød. Det utviklet seg til tannhjul og brutte former som en sol som brenner. Jeg føler mye på faren for arbeidere i fremtiden.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
I started very randomly by cutting shapes that represented my political side - red. It evolved into gears and broken shapes like a sun burning. I feel a lot about the danger for workers in the future.



15.

Politisk vektet landskap.
Noen vil ha mest.
Mange vil ha litt.
Menneske verdi.
Griskhet – Rettigheter
Verdier – Empati
Frihet – Styring

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
Politically weighted landscape.
Some want the most.
Many want a little.
Human value.
Greed - Rights
Values - Empathy
Freedom - Control



16.

Naturen som eget individ, naturen och människan i samarbete istället för i krig och maktduell. Allt kretsar kring naturen. Solidaritet, mjukt, varmt, rött, rosa. Frustration, rädsla, hopp. Stress, ovetskap. Rädsla för att göra fel, vilja att göra rätt. Trippa på tå, längtan efter uttryckande av starka, modiga åsikter.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
Nature as its own entity, nature, and humans in collaboration instead of in war and power struggle. Everything revolves around nature. Solidarity, soft, warm, red, pink. Frustration, fear, hope. Stress, uncertainty. Fear of making mistakes, desire to do right. Tiptoeing, longing to express strong, brave opinions.



17.

No text



18.

Jeg begynte med å se på de utklippede formene og plukket ut de som stemte med meg. Fant kjapt ut at jeg måtte klippe ute et hjerte fordi mitt indre politiske landskap er dominert av mitt hjerte. Jeg tenker at politikk er flette inn i nesten alle deler av livet på ulike måter, og at et jeg kjenner føles riktig helt inn i hjertet er viktig. Jeg er en idealist og for meg er det viktig å tenke på de store tingene, jeg blir litt provosert over at prisen på alkohol og bompenger kan få folk til å ofre velferd og miljø, for eksempel.

Mitt indre (politiske) landskap består av grønne bølger/gress fordi natur og miljø er superviktig. Plastbestikk og annet avfall er med både fordi de representerer store problemer i samfunnet, og også

fordi jeg er opptatt av hvordan ting som sees på som avfall kan brukes som resurser. Det er bevegelse og farger i landskapet fordi det handler om ting som endrer seg og også er gøy.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
I started by looking at the cut-out shapes and selected those that resonated with me. Quickly, I realized that I had to cut out a heart because my inner political landscape is dominated by my heart. I believe that politics is intertwined in almost every aspect of life in various ways, and what feels right deep in my heart is important to me. I'm an idealist, and for me, it's important to think about the big things. I get a bit provoked by how the price of alcohol and toll charges can make people sacrifice welfare and the environment, for example.

My inner (political) landscape consists of green waves/grass because nature and the environment are super important to me. Plastic cutlery and other waste are included because they represent significant problems in society, and also because I'm interested in how things considered waste can be used as resources. There is movement and color in the landscape because it's about things that change and are also fun.



19.

My political landscape is filled with my own country's struggle with another country's long-lasting act to annex my country. The collage is an intuitive response to such a struggle that the majority of my country have been confronted with for decades.



20.

When I think about my inner political landscape, I visualize it as a very serious and intimate act. The act of voting. Is intimate in a way that is very private. When you go voting is behind curtains, is secret and everything that you stand for, you values, your desires, your wishes for the future goes into that you do in secret behind curtains.

It resembles the intimate act of making love, having sex, or just fuck. From there it can create life. The life that you wish for. This is represented by the composition (centred) and colors represent the variety of propositions that I want them to grow and to be strengthened.

21.



Fully
Automated
Luxury
Gay
Space
Communism

Red is important, obviously.
Space Habitants
Fully automated factories
Resources belongs to all
Gender relations are deeply rooted in economics
Why poison and despoil the earth when it’s all up there?

We have enough for all...if it is accessed and organized properly.



22.

The landscape is angry. It’s shouting, crying, insulting – asking for attention. It is me and the world outside, around me. I cannot differentiate any longer what is observation of what is happening and my own personal reaction to it.

Nature is raging and punching us, I am raging and want to punch those holding the strings. I started with thinking about my values and who I stand up for. Along that path I recognized/observed emotions coming up. Started with finding the right shapes. For me the symbolism of round as soft and inclusive, as edges as provoking, harsh...Was too rooted as that I could just neglect it. That is why my inner political landscape can be, must be understood intuitively.

(I don’t know if there are people, societies that have different connotations) the same colours – I could not see beyond its effect on me. The pastel colours did not speak to me, where others did more.

23.



My political landscape is bendy. It is like yoga. I have to refold myself over and over to see what my values are.

I try not to spend too many spoons on folding too much.
I feel my core is still there, and politics bend around me, in waves and in folds.
I can vote, and I vote.

I grab the chance to change something.



24.

Jeg valgte å lage en klo-maskin som representerer illusjon av kontroll. Det å stemme kan føles som stemmen forsvinner ut i verden, men egentlig ikke blir hørt. Det er vanskelig å føle at min stemme betyr noe.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
I chose to create a claw machine that represents the illusion of control. Voting can feel like your voice disappears into the world, but it’s actually not heard. It’s difficult to feel like my voice matters.



25.

Muligens litt overtydelig. Men det er avgjørende for meg at det er minst mulig av det mørke i samfunnet, som jo alltid truer med å vokse, og at det er vesentlig politisk å legge til rette for bevaring av kloden og det humanistiske. Samtidig som at vårt viktigste organ – hjernen (er mennesket), bidrar med å sy det hele godt og hensynsfullt sammen. I mitt landskap er både symbol- og fargebruk overtydelig.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
Perhaps a bit too obvious, but it's crucial for me that there's as little of the darkness in society as possible, which always threatens to grow, and that it's essential politically to facilitate the preservation of the planet and humanism. At the same time, the brain - our most important organ - contributes to stitching it all together well and considerately. In my landscape, both symbolism and color usage are overly evident.



26.

I min komposisjon finnes det blålige, rødlig, gule, litt grønne, og litt sorte farger

Jeg har søkt former som er runde, gjerne sirkler – men også enkelte piler og skarpere former

Har ønsket å få frem at jeg søker en politikk som leter (etter) og ser sammenheng i ting
Ikke bare detaljer og kortsiktige mål, men noe som kan bygges over tid

Miljøkamp på reelle og nødvendige endringer, og mindre forbruk, der hver enkelt kan bidra

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
In my composition, there are shades of blue, red, yellow, some green, and some black colors. I have chosen shapes that are round, preferably circles – but also incorporating some arrows and sharper forms.

I wanted to convey that I am seeking a politics that searches for and sees connections in things. Not just details and short-term goals, but something that can be built over time.

An environmental fight for real and necessary changes, and less consumption, where everyone can contribute.



27.

Jeg startet med det som ser ut som et dyr, kanskje en gris? Helt tilfeldig, den var blitt til av det som var igjen etter at andre hadde klippet ut ting. Det er kanskje litt tilfeldigheter i det indre politiske landskapet, erfaringer, menneske... osv., men det gir oss et sted å starte.
Vi har bare en klode og den må vi bruke sirkulært, bærekraftig. Det gir også nye muligheter i produksjon, økonomi. Det store hjertet symboliserer det gode, kjærligheten – til mennesker, til verden, den må vi la renne fritt ut i alt vi gjør. Havet er uforutsigbart og an være rufsete og skremmende, men

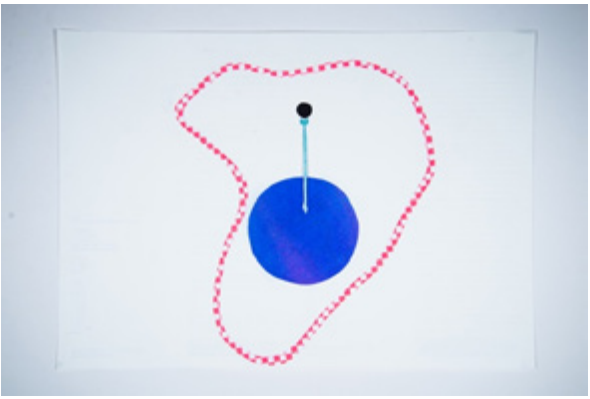
det gir også ro og er en konstant. Derfor må vi forvalte kloden og høste av det naturen gir oss. Trærne representerer det grønne og naturen som er utgangspunktet for alt liv. Menneskene står sammen og løftes i felleskapet vårt ytterste mål er tilhørighet og likeverd. Menneskene har retning mot det som er en skimrende skikkelse, abstrakt men godt, vi kjemper for å forstå hva det er. Lyset står for håp og lysende fremtid med gode idéer, som gir lys og varme. Det er en rød tråd gjennom alt. Det politiske landskapet må ses som en helhet.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
I started with what looks like an animal, perhaps a pig? Completely randomly, it had been formed from what was left after others had cut out things. There may be some randomness in the inner political landscape, experiences, human... etc., but it gives us a place to start. We only have one planet, and we must use it circularly, sustainably. This also opens new opportunities in production, economics. The large heart symbolizes the good, love – for people, for the world, we must let it flow freely into everything we do. The sea is unpredictable and can be rough and scary, but it also provides peace and is a constant. Therefore, we must manage the planet and harvest what nature gives us. The trees represent the green and nature that is the basis for all life. People stand together and are lifted in our community; our ultimate goal is belonging and equality. People are heading towards what is a shimmering figure, abstract but good, we fight to understand what it is. The light symbolizes hope and a bright future with good ideas, providing light and warmth. It's a common thread through everything. The political landscape must be seen as a whole.



28.

No text.



29.

Liten – men ikke ubetydelig i det store bildet. Alle stemmer teller.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
Small – but not insignificant in the big picture. Every vote counts.



30.

Mitt indre politiske landskap er et spill. Som et stigespill. Et spill som må spilles på nytt – om og om igjen – for å være sikre på at alle brikkene ligger i esken, og at alle reglene fortsatt er de samme. Jeg vinner sjeldent, men det er betryggende å vite at jeg alltid har muligheten til å spille. Det viktigste er å delta i spillet mitt.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
My inner political landscape is a game. Like a game of snakes and ladders. A game that must be played again and again - to make sure all the pieces are in the box, and that all the rules are still the same. I rarely win, but it's reassuring to know that I always have the opportunity to play. The most important thing is to participate in my game.



31.

Jeg startet ganske konkret med oppdaget raskt at jeg ikke hadde gode nok skills på detalj-klipping. Etter hvert utviklet det seg til en intuitiv lek med former og farger, men bevisstheten på at det var en politisk undersøkelse lå nok som en vibrasjon jeg gikk inn og ut av. Om det var mer tid hadde det blitt mer av rødt og enda mer av grønne innslag. Det røde hadde nok vokst ut av formatet og overtatt de tomme flatene.

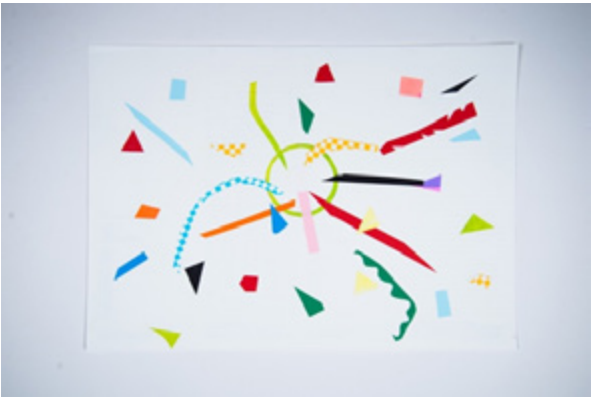
ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
I started quite concretely but quickly discovered that I didn't have good enough skills for detailed cutting. Eventually, it evolved into an intuitive play with shapes and colors, but the awareness that it was a political exploration lay as a vibration I entered and exited. If there was more time, there would have been more red and even more green elements. The red would probably have grown out of the format and taken over the empty spaces.



32.

Verden står ved et skille og nå er det alvor. Overbefolkning og vår jordklode holder på å «bikke over» på den mørke siden. Rødt faresignal! Våre valg er svært viktig nå MEN en må påvirke personer som holder igjen på gamle tanker. Min utfordring er mitt tradisjonelle syn men en må tørre nå. Tro på alle våre flinke mennesker (og gode) – det kommer til å bli godt til slutt. For våre barn og barnebarn. Det vil gå bra <3

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
The world is at a crossroads and now it's serious. Overpopulation and our planet are on the verge of tipping over to the dark side. Red warning signal! Our choices are very important now, BUT we must influence people who hold back on old thoughts. My challenge is my traditional view, but one must dare now. Believe in all our capable (and good) people - it will turn out well in the end. For our children and grandchildren. It will be okay <3



33.

Mitt indre landskap er optimistisk. Lite er statisk med det eksisterer et vedvarende ønske om å bevege seg i en retning som er til alles beste. Noen mennesker er svært langt i fra hverandre i avstand og tanke, men jeg tror vi kan bevege oss mot et felles mål uavhengig av hvor vi starter. Veien mot fellesskap er ulike, noen har en rett vei, andre mer kronglete og noen når aldri helt frem. Veien til et fellesskap rever at alle må gi avkall. Vi må dele, og vi må skape felles rom der det er plass til alle ulike stemmer. De ulike fargene og formene representerer i sin enkelhet ulikheter. Fellesskapet er omsluttet av en barriere. Denne er grønn, en optimistisk farge. Uten en optimisme om at felles løsninger er mulige vil det ikke være mulig å samarbeide. Sentrum i kollagen skal representere et felles initiativ. Det er hvitt. Fargen er valgt for sin —tomhet. Hva vi velger å forene oss om er i stadig endring, og er i seg selv et tomt mål. Protesten til fellesskapet er hvor vi deler og utvikler politiske idealer, så vel som praktisk enighet.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
My inner landscape is optimistic. Little is static as there exists a persistent desire to move in a direction that is for the good of all. Some people are very far apart in distance and thought, but I believe we can move towards a common goal regardless of where we start. The path to community is different, some have a straight path, others more winding, and some never quite make it. The path to community requires sacrifices from everyone. We must share, and we must create common spaces where there is room for all different voices. The different colors and shapes represent, in their simplicity, differences. The community is surrounded by a barrier. This is green, an optimistic color. Without optimism that common solutions are possible, cooperation will not be possible. The center of the collage is meant to represent a common initiative. It is white. The color is chosen for its emptiness. What we choose to unite around is constantly changing and is itself an empty goal. The protest of the community is where we share and develop political ideals, as well as practical agreement.



34.

Tenkte på at de gode sakene politikk egentlig burde handle om – fremgang og utvikling, må vike for stygg miljøpolitikk. Vi må stoppe opp og fikse noe som burde være selvsagt – og stoppe alt for å redde jorden fremfor videreutvikling. Skulle ønske det var fikset for lenge siden slik at vi kunne leve godt uten å skade naturen – og gi plass til de gode sakene som handler om mennesket i positiv forstand.

(PS: ble skrevet med et hoppende barn ved siden av.)
URO i mitt indre politiske landskap! :s

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
I was thinking about how the good causes politics should really be about – progress and development, must give way to ugly environmental policies. We need to stop and fix something that should be obvious – and stop everything to save the earth rather than further development. I wish it had been fixed long ago so that we could live well without harming nature – and make room for the good causes that are about humanity in a positive sense.

(PS: was written with a jumping child next to me.) UNEASE in my inner political landscape!



35.

Eit fungerende samfunn må bygge på eit sterkt fundament av sosiale goder og trygghet. Ut frå dette kan vokse frem frihet og velstand. Men i dag blir dette sterkt truet av flere sterke krefter, som for eksempel kommersielle interesser og forurensing. Slik som det politiske landskapet ser ut i dag så er jeg pessimistisk for fremtida.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
A functioning society must be built on a strong foundation of social goods and security. From this, freedom and prosperity can emerge. But today, this is strongly threatened by several powerful forces, such as commercial interests and pollution. As the political landscape looks today, I am pessimistic about the future.



36.

Mitt politiske landskap heter *Lykkelig hykleri*. Det grønne rektangelet representerer natur og grønn energi og en fremtid miljøpartiene lover oss. De sorte strekene som overlappes rektangelet representerer olje; gamle verdier fra den industrielle revolusjonen. Oljen, som samtidig har skapt innovasjon og velferd på bekostning av planeten vi bor på. Jeg er en selverklært miljøforkjemper som bor og lever minimalistisk. Likevel lager jeg store karbonavtrykk når jeg i hverdagen kommer over noe jeg ønsker eller vil oppnå. Og det tror jeg mange gjør.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
My political landscape is called 'Happy Hypocrisy.' The green rectangle represents nature and green energy, and the future promised by the environmental parties. The black lines overlapping the rectangle represent oil; old values from the industrial revolution. Oil, which has simultaneously created innovation and prosperity at the expense of the planet we live on. I am a self-proclaimed environmentalist who lives a minimalist lifestyle. However, I leave a significant carbon footprint when I encounter something I want or wish to achieve in my everyday life. And I believe many others do the same.



37.

Laget i samarbeid med min datter (3 år). Vi snakket om at vi skulle bruke farger og former for å vise hva vi tenker rundt hva vi vil dele med andre, hva man skal ha selv, hvem vi skal hjelpe og hvordan. Hva bør vi gjøre for at alle skal ha det så bra som mulig?

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:
Created in collaboration with my daughter (3 years old). We talked about using colors and shapes to show what we think about what we want to share with others, what we should keep for ourselves, who we should help, and how. What should we do so that everyone can have the best possible life?

Indre politiske landskap
Drop-in workshop, 9.–11. september 2021

Jeg har blitt informert om at den collage jeg lager i workshopen kan bli publisert i artikler, tekster, på web, skjerm og/eller i print.
☐ Ja

Jeg har blitt informert om at den refleksjon jeg har skrevet, utsnitt av eller som helhet, kan bli publisert i artikler og tekster, på web, skjerm og/eller i print.
☐ Ja

Jeg forstår at mitt indre politiske landskap med dette vil bli en del av forskningsprosjektet *Stemmedepartementet* men at min identitet vil forbli anonym for publikum gjennom hele prosjektet.
☐ Ja

Jeg vil ha oppdateringer om prosjektet og deler derfor min e-post adresse (dette er frivillig):

Bergen, ____ . september 2021

Inner political landscape
Drop-in workshop, 9.–11. september 2021

I've been informed that the collage I make in the work-shop might be published in articles, texts, on the web, on screen, and/or in print.
☐ Yes

I've been informed that the reflection I've written, as an excerpt or as a whole, might be published in articles, texts, on the web, on screen, and/or in print.
☐ Yes

I understand that my inner political landscape will be part of the research project *The Ministry of Voting*, but that my identity will remain anonymous to the public throughout the project.
☐ Yes

I want updates about the project and therefore share my email address (this is optional):

Bergen, ____ . september 2021

Indre politiske landskap er en drop-in workshop arrangert av Ingrid Rundberg, stipendiat ved Fakultet for kunst, musikk og design (KMD), Institutt for design. Workshopen er en del av prosjektet *Stemmedepartementet*.

Inner political landscape is a drop-in workshop organized by Ingrid Rundberg, Ph.D fellow at Faculty of Fine Art, Music and Design (KMD), Department of Design. The workshop is a part of the project *Ministry of Votes*.

DEL 1 INFORMASJONSSKRIV
Politisk Skriftemål

Hva er dette?
Politisk Skriftemål er et av flere delprosjekt i det overordnede Ph.D-prosjektet *Saker som kan vara sant*, som ledes av Ph.D-kandidat Ingrid Rundberg. I prosjektet *Politisk skriftemål* ønsker Rundberg å undersøke hvilke politiske konflikter som kan eksistere i oss (stemmeberettigede). Politisk skriftemål organiseres av det imaginære departementet *Stemmedepartementet*. Dette departementet har tre oppgaver:
(1) Utvikle verktøy for politisk introspeksjon
(2) Dele og formidle det som kommuniseres gjennom disse verktøyene og
(3) Folkeopplysning.
Politisk skriftemål er et av flere verktøy for introspeksjon som blitt utviklet i prosjektet *Saker som kan vara sant*.

Finansiering
Prosjektet finansieres av Institutt for design, Fakultet for kunst, musikk og design (KMD) ved Universitetet i Bergen (UiB). Ingrid Rundberg er stipendiat i design, ansatt ved Institutt for design, og leder prosjektet *Saker som kan vara sant* med underprosjekter. Ph.D-prosjektet forventes avsluttet med visning av de kunstneriske resultatet 5–8 mars 2024 på Bergen Storsenter og Bergen offentlige bibliotek, med mulig disputas cirka 5 måneder senere.

Hvorfor gjennomføres denne undersøkelsen?
Delprosjektet *Politisk Skriftemål* er et av flere underprosjekter hvor den *indre politiske stemmen* hos stemmeberettigede undersøkes. Hensikten med prosjektet er å avdekke hvilke mulige indre dilemmaer vi som stemmeberettigede kan bære på.

Som deltaker i prosjektet *Politisk Skriftemål* er du en *informant*. Informantens rolle er å bidra med en personlig erfaring av politiske dilemmaer.

Hvordan skal det foregå?
Samtale:
Det skriftemålet du gir, i form av en samtale, dokumenteres gjennom at samtalepartner Maria Pohl skriver notater. Disse notatene er *rådata* i prosjektet. Samtalen pågår maksimum i 20 minutter.

Samtalepartneren
Maria Pohl er din samtalepartner i ditt skriftemål. Hun er utdannet psykolog fra Göteborgs Universitet i januar i 2016. Å velge en psykolog som samtalepartner for denne undersøkelsen har sin begrunnelse i denne yrkesgruppen sin grundige trening og utdanning i å samtale med mennesker. Psykologer har i sitt virke taushetsplikt, men denne taushetsplikten kan oppheves gjennom signert samtykkeskjema.

Bearbeidelse av råmaterialet:
Maria bearbeider notatene til en mer lesbar tekst. Informantene aidentifiseres slik at alle som deltar i undersøkelsen blir anonymisert. Den bearbeidede teksten blir designet og tilgjengeliggjort for allmenheten i Ph.D-prosjektets sluttutstilling 5.-8. mars 2024 på Bergen

offentlige bibliotek. Tekstene kommer til å inngå i en bok-installasjon/skulptur med eget ISBN-nummer, og kan også å være tilgjengelig for besøkende å ta med hjem fra utstillingen.

Rom:
Samtalen foregår i Møllendals paviljong, 15. november, 2023 i en, for denne undersøkelsen, spesialdesignet skriftestol.

Antall informanter:
10 st.

Hva innebærer dette for deg som informant?
Fri vilje:
Som informant stiller du av fri vilje som informant i prosjektet. Du har rett å forlate samtalen uten å oppgi grunn for dette, og du kan unngå å svare på spørsmål i samtalen hvis dette er ønskelig.

Anonymitet:
Du stiller som anonym i dette prosjektet, men det er dog ikke mulig å oppnå *total* anonymitet. Noen kan muligens kunne kjenne deg igjen av utseende ved stedet for samtalen, og du kan muligens kjenne igjen andre. Notatene som blir skrevet i forbindelse med din samtale regnes som rådata, og skal bearbeides slik at dette råmaterialet ikke skal kunne knyttes til deg som person.

Samtykke kan trekkes tilbake
Som informant har du, uten å oppgi en spesifikk grunn, rett å forlate prosjektet frem til det tidspunkt der rådata slettes. Etter dette tidspunktet er alle i undersøkelsen anonymisert til den grad at det ikke lenger er mulig å finne frem til en spesifikk person. Hvis du ønsker å trekke deg etter at samtalen er avsluttet, men før rådataen slettes gjør du det gjennom å sende en e-post til Ingrid (ingrid.rundberg@uib.no).

Lagring av data:
Signert samtykkeskjema fra informant oppbevares separat og legges i safe og oppbevares for kontrollformål for å kunne verifisere at et anonymt «politisk skriftemål» har funnet sted, og inntil ph.d.-prosjektet er ferdig (etter disputas).

Rådataene slettes 1. desember 2023.

- Del 2
- SAMTYKKE TIL DELTAKELSE I FORSKNINGSPROSJEKT
- Jeg er kjent med hva det gis samtykke til og i hvilken forbindelse samtykket benyttes
 - Jeg bidrar frivillig i prosjektet ved å gi et anonymt politisk skriftemål til en samtalepartner
 - Jeg er kjent med hvordan skriftemålet skal foregå
 - Jeg er kjent med hvordan opplysningene i skriftemålet skal brukes
 - Jeg er kjent med hvordan samtykke oppbevares og at det slettes/makuleres når prosjektet er ferdig
 - Jeg er kjent med at jeg kan trekke tilbake mitt samtykke (innen ...) og hvordan det gjøres
 - Jeg gir mitt samtykke frivillig
 - Jeg gir samtykke til at anonymiserte og bearbeidete notater fra samtalen kan offentliggjøres.

Navn på ansvarlig for prosjektet: Åse Huus, Førstemanuensis

Navn på ph.d.-kandidat: Ingrid Rundberg

Underskrift til ph.d.-kandidat:

Fullt navn på den som gir samtykke:

Epost til samtykker:

Underskrift til samtykker:

Dato for signering:

Hvis informanten har spørsmål, kan informanten kontakte
Ingrid Rundberg på e-post ingrid.rundberg@uib.no

PART 1 INFORMATION LETTER
Political Confession

What is this?
Political Confession is one of several sub-projects within the overarching Ph.D. project *Things That Might Be True*, led by Ph.D. candidate Ingrid Rundberg. In the *Political Confession* project, Rundberg aims to investigate which political conflicts can exist within us (eligible voters). *Political Confession* is organized by the imaginary department, the *Stemme Department*. This department has three tasks:

- (1) Develop tools for political introspection
- (2) Share and convey what is communicated through these tools, and
- (3) Popular education

Political Confession is one of several tools for introspection that have been developed in the project *Things That Might Be True*.

Funding
The project is funded by the Department of Design, Faculty of Art, Music, and Design (KMD) at the University of Bergen (UiB). Ingrid Rundberg is a PhD candidate in design, employed at the Department of Design, and leads the project *Things That Might Be True*, with sub-projects. The PhD project is expected to conclude with the presentation of the artistic results on March 5-8, 2024, at Bergen Storsenter and Bergen Public Library, with a possible dissertation defense approximately 5 months later.

Why is this investigation being conducted?
The sub-project *Political Confession* is one of several sub-projects where the *inner political voice* of eligible voters is examined. The purpose of the project is to uncover the possible inner dilemmas that we as eligible voters may carry.
As a participant in the *Political Confession* project, you are an informant. The informant's role is to contribute with a personal experience of political dilemmas.

How will it proceed?
Conversation:
The confession you provide, in the form of a conversation, will be documented through notes written by conversation partner Maria Pohl. These notes are *raw data* in the project. The conversation lasts a maximum of 20 minutes.

The conversation partner:
Maria Pohl is your conversation partner in your confession. She graduated as a psychologist from the University of Gothenburg in January 2016. Choosing a psychologist as a conversation partner for this investigation is grounded in the thorough training and education of this professional group in conversing with people. Psychologists are bound by confidentiality in their work, but this confidentiality can be waived through a signed consent form.

Processing of the raw material:
Maria processes the notes into a more readable text. The informants are de-identified so that everyone participating in the investigation remains anonymous. The processed text will be designed and made available to the public in the final exhibition of the Ph.D. project on March 5-8, 2024, at Bergen Public Library. The texts will be incorporated into a book installation/sculpture with its own ISBN number and may also be available for visitors to take home from the exhibition.

Venue:
The conversation takes place in Møllendals Pavilion, on November 15, 2023, in a confessional specially designed for this investigation.

Number of informants:
10 participants

What does this mean for you as an informant?
Free will:
As an informant, you participate voluntarily in the project. You have the right to leave the conversation without stating a reason, and you can choose not to answer questions if you prefer not to.

Anonymity:
You participate anonymously in this project, although total anonymity may not be achievable. Some individuals might recognize you based on appearance at the conversation location, and you might recognize others. The notes taken during your conversation are considered raw data and will be processed in a way that prevents this raw material from being linked to you as an individual.

Consent can be withdrawn
As an informant, you have the right to leave the project without specifying a reason until the point where the raw data is deleted. After this point, all participants in the investigation are anonymized to the extent that it is no longer possible to identify a specific individual. If you wish to withdraw after the conversation is concluded but before the raw data is deleted, you do so by sending an email to Ingrid (ingrid.rundberg@uib.no).

Data storage
The signed consent form from the informant is stored separately, placed in a safe, and kept for control purposes to verify that an anonymous "political confession" has taken place, and until the Ph.D. project is completed (after the dissertation defense).

The raw data will be deleted on December 1, 2023.

- Part 2** **CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH PROJECT**
- I am aware of what the consent is given for and in what context the consent is used
 - I voluntarily contribute to the project by providing an anonymous political confession to a conversation partner
 - I am aware of how the confession will proceed
 - I am aware of how the information in the confession will be used
 - I am aware of how consent is stored and that it is deleted/destroyed when the project is finished
 - I am aware that I can withdraw my consent (within ...) and how to do so
 - I give my consent voluntarily
 - I consent to the publication of anonymized and processed notes from the conversation.

Name of the project leader: Åse Huus, Associate Professor

Name of the Ph.D. candidate: Ingrid Rundberg

Signature of the Ph.D. candidate:

Full name of the consenting individual:

Email of the consenter:

Signature of the consenter:

Date: _____

If the informant has questions, they can contact Ingrid Rundberg via email at ingrid.rundberg@uib.no

Voices Publication
English translations
of texts

Colophon
The publication *Voices* is part of the PhD project Things that can be true. During late summer and autumn 2019, an open call was sent out where the general public was invited to answer the question *How do you find your (political) voice?* The question was asked in connection with the relevant Municipal Council and County Council elections in September of the same year. 28 brave people answered this question through the technique of their choice, which resulted in text, photo, illustration, collage, poem, cartoon and a flowchart. Some have turned to family to find answers, others to nature. One group addresses the public debate, to NRK. With other participants, the dialogue is at the center, the dialogue with oneself or with the family. Here you will find ideologies, bike rides, the *Political Quarter*, *Climate Roar*, fear, gratitude and doubt. But in the desire to express oneself there is no uncertainty. There is strength and courage.

To bind this publication together, David Vogt, postdoctoral fellow in philosophy at the University of Bergen and writer, has written a text. A true tribute to democracy, with some of its underlying difficulties simmering in the shadows.

Thank you to all participants – fearless citizens – who were so open-hearted have shared their reflections.

Is what you are voting for correct?
Or are you simply voting wrong?

David Vogt

I know several people who wear their suits when they are going to the polling station on election day. When they then leave the room, high-pitched and fresh-voiced, they think with pride that they have done their civic duty, which is not a sour duty, but a joy and a privilege for citizens in a democracy. They have had a hand in deciding. They have supported the policies they themselves believe will make the world better, and less unfair (why else would they have chosen the party they chose?).

But since this is happening in Norway, where none of the parties is close to getting a majority of the population's votes, it follows that my friends in suits – and everyone else who votes in the election – are in a strong minority in their choice. If you vote for one party, you can be sure that most others think that another party is better and fairer. And then the thought should occur to anyone and everyone: Am I or the others, right? If most other people think differently than I do, maybe I should humbly reconsider my view?

"Yes absolutely!" someone answers. The vast majority should reconsider their view, they say, because the majority is wrong about which party stands for the best and fairest policy. That's how it is with logical necessity. No party has a majority behind it, and thus the party that has the best and fairest policy does not have a majority behind it either (whichever party it may be). Most voters should therefore reconsider their view and try to arrive at what the best choice is.

The problem, according to those who think this way, is that a lot of people either do not bother to familiarize themselves with what is the best policy, or they lack the ability to figure it out. And since their votes count as much as the votes of the "enlightened" voters, the result is a worse and less fair policy than we could have had if those who had the most know-how was in control of the voting.

This is how those who call themselves "epistocrats" think. An epistocracy is a government of knowledge, as opposed to a people's government. Ever since Plato, some political philosophers have allowed themselves to be blinded by the idea that the knowledgeable should be allowed to decide the development of society.

Society is like a ship, said Plato. And who do you really want to steer the ship? The skipper who can navigate by the stars, or the deck boys and engineers who have no clue of how to navigate a ship?

"Well, when you put it that way, I'll pick the skipper," you might think. But the problem is that the analogy is bad. Society is not like a ship, which has only one course to navigate. Society is extremely complex, and politics must therefore have innumerable different purposes that are partly contradictory.

For that reason, the epistocrats are wrong: there is no one who is an expert on all aspects of politics. We are all dilettantes in many areas of politics. An expert in economics may be hopeless at criminal policy. An expert in agriculture can be an idiot when it comes to integration.

But even more important: Politics is not primarily about knowledge. Politics is about making good and fair decisions. There are no experts for that. This concerns a choice of values, where different values must be weighed and weighted against each other.

If we understand politics as a choice of values, then it becomes easier to understand why some political groupings stand for one policy, while others stand for another, and it doesn't mean that one or the other is wrong. There can be different perceptions of which value is most important in a certain case, and it can rarely be said that there is a definitive answer or solution for exactly that case.

When different political groupings talk about a topic, they often frame the topic in language that emphasizes the value they think is most important. Of these "political languages", there are three main types, as described in Arnold Kling's little book "Three Languages of Politics" from 2017: That is the "language of order", the "language of freedom" and the "language of oppression".

Conservatives are mostly concerned with order in a society. Chaos is what they fear the most. Liberals are most concerned with freedom from interference. Progressives, or the left, are most concerned with preventing oppression.

Almost all political conflicts can be described using these three languages. Take drug policy as an example. Conservatives will be concerned with order: "Decriminalization will lead to hordes of drug addicts and society will become unsafe!" Liberals will be concerned with freedom of choice: "People should be able to decide for themselves whether they want to use drugs!" Progressives will be concerned that the penal system shouldn't be used against society's outcasts: "We should not punish tired drug addicts!"

It is not at all easy to say which of these values, order, freedom, or justice, is the right one. On the contrary, all three are good values, which the policy should rightly protect. Most of us think it is good if society is both ordered and free and fair. In that sense, all three political languages speak to all of us. We just prioritize them slightly differently.

This way of thinking (as opposed to the epistocratic) invites humility towards the voters' choice. No one votes "wrong" in a Norwegian election (after all, we have no Nazi parties on the ballot – if we did, one could say that such a vote would be wrong!). No one votes "wrong", because there is not a single correct answer to what is the right balance of political values. The best we can hope for is that we find this balance together. Each vote is an equal contribution to this collective balancing act.

This is really all about likeness and equality. The electoral system is systematized equality! When you go to the ballot box, you express your equality as a citizen. No matter how you vote.

That is worth celebrating! Wear your suit on election day!

Stemmedepartementet



Stemmer / Voices

ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

p. 1 Voices

How do you find your (political) voice?

p. 5 Voice change
Kjetil Helland

An eighties Friday afternoon, weekend trip with a friend and his father, in a car queue out of town, with U2 and "The Joshua Tree" on the car stereo, cages with meowing cats, shoved between bags of clothes, a rattling toolbox on every bump, shopping bags with food for a week, fishing rods, a new toilet and many unnecessary things on a trip to a cabin, in a windy place with a floating jetty, salty taste and gutting far too many piles in white plastic boxes.

Saturday morning, my friend's father is renovating the bathroom, with a new toilet for installation, and the old curved ceramic with a creaking seat and a notch in the frame, on its way out after several decades of shipping solid and floating, ordered relaxed on the sea, yes as far out as possible, by us boys, with change of voice, full gas tank and hope for fish.

Two dutiful boys in a fourteen-foot open boat with nine point nine tame horses, turned up to fifteen wild ones, a place with swells from the sea, out past islets with heather, with a partly trussed roof and a challenged balance between tufts and oars, with the toilet tilting on the boat's rake, before a very last flush through the bowl. First a violent splash, then the sound of ten pulls on the string and straight to the bottom. Turn from free to full throttle, maximum speed in a shaking plastic boat on small and large ripples, past coves, rocks and islets, with sea spray in the face, white beam astern and the roar of the wild fifteen. One hundred and fifty kroner with petrol, and the tank is empty.

Saturday afternoon, happy father in the cabin with a newly installed toilet, well into the process of collecting yellowed pine planks, cracked rubber strips, snake-patterned linoleum, and other resilient materials from the old cabin, for burning a fire on the rock below. Black smoke, brown smoke, gray smoke, as thick as the carpet slowly turning to ash.

Sunday afternoon, on the way to town, car full of meowing cats in cages, frozen fish in bags, toolbox rattling on every bumpy bump, bags of dirty laundry and things that weren't used.

Remains of burnt carpet. Empty gas tank.
Toilet on the bottom. Voice change.

p. 7 poLOLitikk
Mattias Kliehn Nielsen

Environment.
Tolls.
Immigration.
Welfare.
Abortion.
Economy.
Feminism.
Fascism.

Important? That's possible.
I only Voted For tHoSE WITH tHE PRettiesT LeADER.

p. 8 Ellen Margrete Grong

It is important to me to use the right to vote. It's almost more important than what I'm going to vote for. I'm getting tired of all the election brochures that come in the mail - which I think I have to read. The pile is there in the pile of mail, together with the newspaper with all the debate entries which I also intend to go through. I should watch election shows on TV, but it's so tiring. National politicians who serve polished electoral meat in all channels and travel around the municipalities have as much influence on me as door-to-door salesmen. Thanks, but no thanks! So I'd rather ask my teenagers at the dinner table. "What do you think are important issues I should think about when I vote?"

"Climate", I get the answer. "And public transport". Public transport is good, I think. I take the bus every day. The offer should be improved here in the district. Should I only vote for what concerns me?

"But what about school, then? And health? Isn't that important?", I ask.

"Yes, but without climate, nothing else will function", say the young people.

p. 9 Gudrun Brekke

Who do I agree with? Should I follow my heart, gut feeling or reason? Or all three? What fits with my values? Which of them sees the big picture? Why don't they talk more about what I care about? How can I be sure it is the right choice? Should I vote tactically? Is that smart? Do I actually agree with this? Is it true or just rhetoric? Can I believe it? I must vote for the party I most agree with. I decide.

I vote.

p. 10 Trine Louise Ween

Based on your answers, you can choose from the following parties. SV (socialist left party), Red party. But which one should I choose? A yellow button, whirr whirr vap.

p. 11 Stein Edvardsen

You have to vote, you can't refrain from voting, then you give the others your vote, it's a social duty, you can't complain if you don't participate, that's how one can hear and that's how one can think. I don't want to, I've voted so many times, I've done my duty, I don't think it helps anymore, they're all so alike, before it was a holiday on election day, it was exciting on election night, I wanted the others to be defeated, that they came under the blocking limit. Ok can vote, can pre-vote, turn off the radio and TV on election day, don't sit up, just get up and hear how it went, maybe hope that it went the right way, that what I believe in got on the agenda. Yes, yes I vote, I vote, I know what I'm voting for, don't doubt it, but then it was about whether I was going to vote, maybe I don't vote, but advance voting, yes a few days left, I wasn't too late and cast my vote, my civic duty in the ballot box, a bit doubtful, but still voted this time too, good election.

p. 12 Dóra Ísleifsdóttir

To decide what to vote for in the 2019 election, I asked my daughters for help. They learned about the political parties at school. They analyzed the difference between politicians' words and their deeds. I also asked for help from my compatriots who live in the region. It didn't help much, because the conversation always turned to politics in the home country. So I basically did what my daughters told me to do. I think they were right, at least they agreed on where my vote should go. They had researched local politics. They know me. They know a lot about the challenges facing people and the world. They are concerned with how miserable politicians turn out to be in the context.

So am I, as their father; I we, vote for their future.

p. 13 Margrethe Pedersen

Reports farming giant after massive shrimp die-off.

Lice poison more dangerous than thought - over 120,000 tonnes dumped into the sea in recent years.

The breeders received 27 billion in extra profit. Fish farmers earned NOK 27 billion from using Norwegian fjords in 2016, according to a researcher. A "power tax" on aquaculture could yield ten billion kroner a year.

p. 14 My vote in the County and Municipal elections 2019
Trond Tollefsen

My vote in the county and municipal elections was not based on individual issues or specific politicians, but rather on which party generally works for the overall issues that I believe are most important. And even if I don't agree with everything the party I voted for stands for, I think it is important with the signaling effect of this party getting votes. It was the first time I voted for this party in the local elections, but I voted for the same party at the previous parliamentary election.

The overarching political issues that are important to me have developed over time through reading books, education, discussions with friends and many mountain hikes. Although I still think much of the same as I have done my entire adult life, the priorities of matters have changed in recent years. There are several reasons for this, but an important one is that I have changed my view of how quickly society changes. Previously, I saw the world as static and stable. After all, I hadn't noticed any significant changes during my life. Changes, I thought, were something that happened over a long period of time in the old days, and today we had reached a stable point in history. But today, with a little more life experience and far more knowledge of history, I think that the world is always changing. And it is our responsibility to make sure that this change is for the better. That is why I believe today that it is important to think long-term at the ballot box. The broad lines and long-term consequences have far greater priority for me today than ten years ago.

In addition, my trust in many political parties has changed. Before, I had to take the politicians at their word. But after following politics for many years, I see that what is said and what is done do not always agree. I have possibly also acquired a more cynical approach to the political game, where I think that a lot is said without there being anything more behind it than an attempt to collect votes. Perhaps that is why I am not so concerned with individual matters, but rather try to see what the party generally prioritizes in its political work. The way politics works, in my understanding, individual cases often have to be traded away in political horse-trading. Therefore, I think that the most important thing is to have an idea of what the party will prioritize if they find themselves in a negotiating position.

So that's why I chose the way I did:
On a party with a long-term perspective and which I think I will work for what I think is most important.

p. 15 Karina Birkelund Johansen

I do the typesetting of the debate pages in BT every day. Here, there are submitters who express their opinions and I often end up getting a whole bunch of corrections after typesetting. Now, the last day before the weekend, I will typeset the Saturday, Sunday and Monday pages before the election. By reading through the debate every day to extract quotes and the like, I have gained good insight into everything from the cruise industry and the toll issue to children submitting texts worrying about the future. It's nice to hear what is most important to people. And as a twenty-something at work, it is difficult to put the matters of the heart completely in place. I think a lot about who my vote should help. Older? Children? Youth? Rich men in Kalfaret?

p. 22 Magnhild Øen Nordahl

After the summer I was going to make some new sculptures in aluminum, a material I had hardly worked with before. It ended up being an enormous amount of plastering work, and I was standing in the studio doing this for about a month straight. I thought I should download some good podcasts or listen to Marte Johnslie's YouTube channel where she collects interesting lectures with exactly this intended listening situation. But I managed to spill liquids on my new Mac, and the speakers stopped working. I was never able to get the speakers from home, so I ended up listening to the radio throughout the work. P2 is the channel I like the best, especially programs such as Ekko and Verdbørsen. But now it was Arendal Week and all the politicians were gathered there, so both before, during and after this there were mostly long debates and interviews with the politicians and the issues that were relevant for the municipality and county council elections in September.

I brought everything with me, at least once. P2 has quite a lot of replays, or "rehears" as they call it, that's the thing I like least about P2. But they had something that I hadn't heard before, namely "Party leader's lecture" where they had invited all the party leaders to talk uninterrupted for an hour about their political platform, or actually they had to answer some questions such as "What is the biggest challenge of our time" and "What are we going to live on today" and maybe something more I can't think of. In any case, for the first time I got a good understanding of what the various parties stand for, by listening to what they talked about and what they didn't talk about without anyone interrupting them, accusing them or trying to make them apologize for something. The election day still came a bit too soon and of course it was planning day at the kindergarten on the same day, so I had to go to Nordreshallen to vote with Una in the pram. We had been to the aquarium, and she hadn't fallen asleep yet like I thought she would. When I stood there, I realized that I was not as well prepared as I had thought, because even though I had an understanding of the various ideological frameworks of the party, I had not really understood the local matters at county level very well, other than the dumping of mining waste in Førdefjorden. I also hadn't tested out the choice food as I had thought. And I didn't understand well enough who the various politicians were to give personal votes. So, my choice was ideologically based, but not so issue or person-based. At the next municipal and county council elections, I will follow local politics more closely.

p. 23 Siv Lier

Here I find my voice — in the middle of nature. Where man's absurd desire to dominate and tame is answered with nature's roar of laughter. The wave power plant at Sotra which is destroyed by the power of the waves.

p. 24 The popular uprising against the climate
hysteria against the popular uprising against
the popular uprising against the climate
hysteria (Or the art of standing alone)
Kay Arne Kirkebe

The time for discussion is over, at least as I interpret it i from the latest initiatives from the two groups. For one a little while ago we liked to say that those who shout the loudest are those who are heard, in a kind of despair over them the absurdities that were shouted out in political debates.

Now we are at the point where the side of a disagreement or opinion with the most followers is the one who wins, at least they themselves think. Which echo chamber has the most votes?

We live in a time where we have stopped listening, stopped thinking about what information we take in and where it comes from. We fill our heads with crap just to pass the time. We scroll past silence and boredom. There is no break in everyday life, everyone wants to be heard but almost no one has anything to say. But as long as you are on the right team, it will probably go well.

Isn't it nice to have someone to hate, sang Michael Krohn in Ragarockers in 1990, and it is. Having someone who makes you think better of yourself. That your attitudes are better, that here someone is wrong and you are right. You will also find others who think the same, because you can't be absolutely sure, maybe there was something in what that person said that made you question your own opinion. Something stuck. You need confirmation.

But yes, after consulting with others, you were right, because he and she with whom you consulted are healthy and just as valuable as you. You are not alone in your opinion. You win.

Ibsen wrote in En Folkefiende: "The thing is, you see, that the strongest man in the world is the one who stands most alone." We all need to stand alone more. To not allow ourselves to be led by populist trends and pressure from professional groups and groups of friends.

To walk in ourselves. What basis do I have for saying what I think should be a question we all ask ourselves. Why and what do I really mean?

Together we are stronger, yes. But together about hostile attitudes, together about weak arguments, together about blindness to facts, together about something that is popular at the moment?

And we must all dare to change our minds.

But then you lose credibility, and what do others want think about you? Because it is not the case that you acquire knowledge and understanding about one topic over time, and that the opinions you had have become obsolete, that you have become smarter from talking to others who have others opinions than you about something.

Maybe you sat in a cafe or in a debate programme and listened to each other, gave each other time to express something, and then try to understand what your counterpart is trying to convey. And maybe something was said that made sense, and you acknowledge it. Yes, you have a point. That can't happen, can it? Or?

We have a globe that is going crazy, but is more concerned with arguing with those who are worried about what all the climate measures will do to their everyday life, all the changes. Argue with those who don't have time to read up on climate reports because they have two children they have to support alone and a job that takes their toll. Argue with those who do everything in their power to live a greener life, take measures that may not isolate major changes, but may provide other tracks to give in. And argue with those who are afraid that their future children will not have a world worth living in.

We have to start over.
And we need to start talking.

p. 26 Its supposed to be good to sing in a choir together
Gunhild Sannes Larsen

This year I will watch election debates, I thought. I didn't watch any election debates this year either. But at least I can get some political quarters on P2, I thought. The only problem was that they were so fussy. Like all the other times I've tried to listen to it. Often I think the presenter is the worst of them, they don't let him get any warm light. There is so little humanity. Imagine if one politician could say to the other: "such an exciting perspective, I haven't thought of that before". It would most likely get both my ears.

I showed up at Klimabråleat, it was only a few days before the election, but I hadn't made up my mind. I had not voted in advance, I wanted to go to the polling stations on the day itself, feel the atmosphere, and with the hope of seeing some elderly men in suits. I hadn't made up my mind and I showed up at Klimabråleat despite the rain and despite the fact that I thought it was rather small to stand and roar with lots of other people. The idealist in me likes the idea, in a collectivist way of thinking. I also think it is good for the psyche, it is said that it should be good to sing in a choir together, let the voice be part of a mass, understand on a subconscious and bodily level that we belong. And to scream and feel it rip in the guts, scream out all the powerlessness in the face of a world that is decaying. In the face of people with power who allow themselves to be misled by the glitter of money. It was a party I had hoped to see there, at Klimabråleat. They had been somewhat disappointing, but now I was open to letting them convince me. Afterwards I planned to go to Festplassen, find a recruiter from the party and shake out my frustration and despair - why on earth weren't you there?

When I vote, I try to rank. Some things are more important than others. And what makes some things more important is about feeling, I guess. And to try to live in other people's life situations. What would I say about tolls if I had a car? Or about school meals if I had children? There are lots of different people and lots of different life situations. Everyone can't get. I'm very glad I'm not a politician, it's so hard to say that not everyone can have it. I also suffer from a need to be liked. And if a politician acts out of a need to be liked, there will be a lot of mess. But I'm glad I have the right to vote, then. I find it hard to believe that my voice has anything special to say, but it has just as much to say as the voice of Norway's richest man, I find that exciting. I made it to Festplassen, but I didn't make it to the party that wasn't roaring. Instead, I let another recruiter stop me, one from the party I voted for last time, and he said so many good things that I forgot about everything else and went home happy.

s. 28 A Voice and shared reality or
two voices and one reality?
Charles Michalsen

My voice is always in a context, in a relationship and in one community.

The challenge in the 2019 municipal and county council elections was to find the voice, give it a form that, in relation to the other person's voice, could examine what establishes empathy. The context was political poster art. I initiated the poster idea for Bergen Arbeiderparti, which challenged empathy and change. How to turn an analogue political poster into a digitized poster posting on a social forum on the internet?

Central was the art of designing for empathy. Investigate how design can be identified and quantified as a value relationship between people, where empathy values in the design are the result that emerges in the relationship and reaction. Where empathy values are established as a consequence of what the other person's voice reflects back to me. Only then do I know something about empathy and my voice that is designed into the artwork.

Ingrid's challenge was for me: To describe the method for finding how my voice was linked to the voice of the other. To the voice in the analogue political poster and what the other experienced and reported back. It said something about the other's political values, to documented recollections, from real time and contemporary, to parts from reality, to contemporary understanding of facts and the importance of dynamics in the time dimension.

Basic challenges were:

From thought to sign, to a context and a visual expression? How to transfer a political idea on a poster to digital social network? What about what belongs to the political issue, but which is not documented on the poster?

Local elections 2019.08.19
Jan Rune, social democratic candidate for the Labor Party in Bergen, for Loddefjord and Laksevåg electoral district. Socialization and social democratic values in the public space.

I chose to use key words related to proximity, to the original (local), to socialist idea and practice without classic propaganda phrases such as Stø kurs. The focus was to highlight values of respect. Do not attack, but praise the important value choices. What it is about in reality that is linked to socialist idea and practice. Method practice was based on an active and clear closeness to the original.

From thought to text.

In order to find what was important and topical in the last week before the election, I collaborated with local AUFers to find issues. With input from Bergen AUFene and dialogue with AP candidate Jan Rune, I was left with: 5017 Unity. A reality; Loddefjord's postcode and a political value — Unity.

Materialization of idea
Found seven people from Loddefjord who wanted to vote for AP Loddefjord's candidate and could accept being portrayed on the poster.

It was a four-colour screen print of a drawn motif. Hand drawn in true poster size. Split document for screen printing and offset. Stable paper quality for posters, 300 gr.

Hand drawn background with motif from constituency of people. Chaotic use of colour, where color follows form. Portrait was digital photo in offset printing over screen printing in two rooms for portrait of the candidate and the voter was spared.

Document and documented memory from the project
Printed for exhibition, report, gift. Sketches and hand drawings and digital works as part of documented memory. The selfie and the resulting copy were then posted on digital social networks.

