



Becoming a Tree

Performance as Research Working Group 2021

Meetings with Remarkable and Unremarkable Trees

Annette Arlander



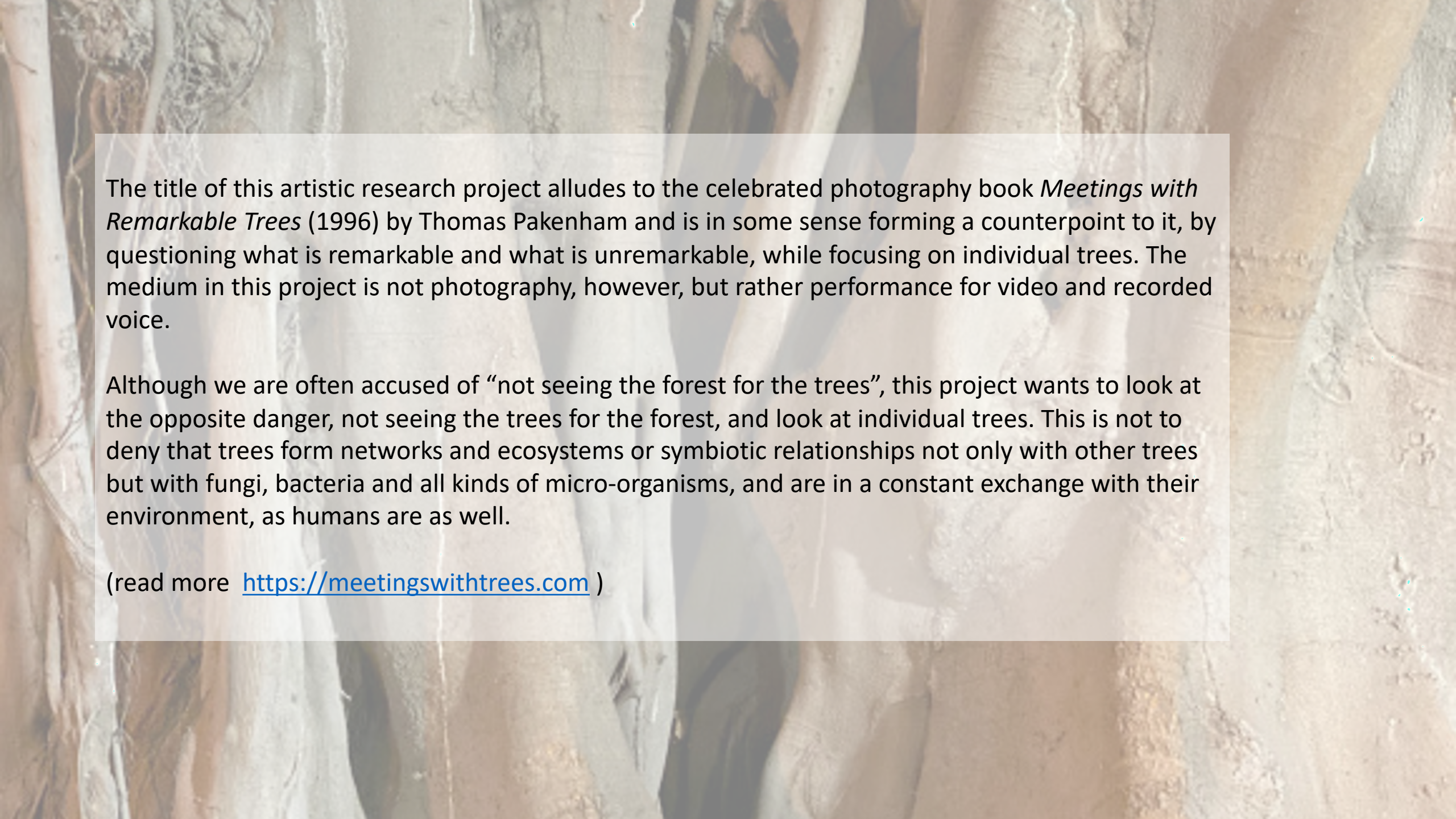
Meetings with Remarkable and Unremarkable Trees

Project blog

<https://meetingswithtrees.com>

Project archive on the Research Catalogue

<https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/761326/761327>

The background of the image is a close-up photograph of several tree trunks. The trunks are light brown and tan in color, with visible bark textures and some vertical fissures. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing text. The text is in a black, sans-serif font. The overall lighting is soft and natural, highlighting the organic textures of the wood.

The title of this artistic research project alludes to the celebrated photography book *Meetings with Remarkable Trees* (1996) by Thomas Pakenham and is in some sense forming a counterpoint to it, by questioning what is remarkable and what is unremarkable, while focusing on individual trees. The medium in this project is not photography, however, but rather performance for video and recorded voice.

Although we are often accused of “not seeing the forest for the trees”, this project wants to look at the opposite danger, not seeing the trees for the forest, and look at individual trees. This is not to deny that trees form networks and ecosystems or symbiotic relationships not only with other trees but with fungi, bacteria and all kinds of micro-organisms, and are in a constant exchange with their environment, as humans are as well.

(read more <https://meetingswithtrees.com>)

Becoming Tree exercise (two-legged 'tree pose' daily next to a tree, usually for a month):

The Oak on Galway Road (in Johannesburg) <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/761326/796954>

The Maple Tree in Tehtaankatu (in Helsinki) <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/761326/831532>

The Spruce of Independence (in Kaivopuisto Park) <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/761326/917581>

The Pine on the Shore on Harakka Island <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/761326/944410>

The Birch in Mustarinda <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/761326/978491>

The Pine's Apprentice (in Örö) <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/761326/1034899>

The Pine on Skifferholmen (in Helsinki) <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/761326/1102386>

Practicing with a Pine (in Hailuoto) <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/761326/1219495>

With a Maple and an Apple Tree (in Eckerö) <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/761326/1305636>

Becoming Tree exercise

With the Oak on Galway Road (14 min 47 sec)
performed daily between 13. February and 16 March 2020 with an oak on Galway Road, Johannesburg

Becoming Tree exercise

With the Maple Tree (Corona Diary (62 min 22 sec & 16 min 50 sec) performed daily between 29. March and 31. May 2020 with a maple in Tehtaankatu yard.



Becoming Tree exercise

June with the Spruce of Independence (36 min 31 sec & 15 min)
performed daily between 1. and 30. June 2020 with a spruce in Kaivopuisto Park.

Becoming Tree exercise



July with a Pine (50 min 46 sec & 16 min)
performed daily between 1. and 31. July 2020 with a pine on Harakka Island

A tall, slender birch tree stands prominently in the center of a forest. The tree has a light-colored, textured bark and a dense canopy of green leaves. In the foreground, a person is standing with their back to the camera, looking up at the tree. The forest is composed of many other trees, including several tall, dark green evergreens. The ground is covered with tall grasses and wildflowers. The sky is a clear, bright blue.


Becoming Tree exercise

The Daily Birch (September in Mustarinda) (60 min 20 sec & 14 min 10 sec)
Performed daily between 2. and 30. September 2020 with a birch near Mustarinda house.



Becoming Tree exercise

The Pine's Apprentice (53 min & 13 min 50 sec)
performed daily with a pine next to the residency house on Öro, between 2.11. and 2.12. 2020

A person is silhouetted against a large pine tree in a snowy landscape. The person has their arms raised, mimicking the branches of the tree. The background shows a vast, snow-covered field under a cloudy sky.

Becoming Tree exercise

The Pine on Skifferholmen II (35 min 38 sec and 20 min 10 sec)
performed between 1-28. February 2021 with a pine in Helsinki.

A person with long dark hair, wearing a black long-sleeved top and dark pants, stands with their back to the camera in a snowy forest. They are reaching up with both hands to touch the trunk of a large, thick tree. The ground is covered in a layer of snow, and many other trees are visible in the background. The scene is captured in a natural, slightly overcast light.

Becoming Tree exercise

*Practicing with a Pine (25 min 10 sec),
performed daily between 4 and 28 April 2021 in Hailuoto.*

Becoming Tree exercise



*With a Maple Tree in Eckerö (?? min ?? sec),
performed daily between 3 and 30 (?) July 2021 in Eckerö.*

Becoming Tree exercise



*With an Apple Tree in Eckerö (?? min ?? sec),
performed daily between 3 and 30 (?) July 2021 in Eckerö.*



Participating in online Live Art events **Be-Coming Tree**

organised by Jatun Risba, Danielle Imara and O. Pen Be

<https://becomingtree.live>

Be-coming Tree, participating with a pine in a collective online performance 1.8.2020.

And with other actions:

With a Pine, as part of *Be-coming Tree* a collective online performance 31.10.2020.

Holding Hands with a Pine in *Be-Coming Tree* Live Art Event, online 9.1.2021.

Swinging in a Pine in Hailuoto as part of *Be-Coming Tree* Spring Event, online 24.4.2021.



Annette Arlander

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Instructions for PAR workshop / experiment:

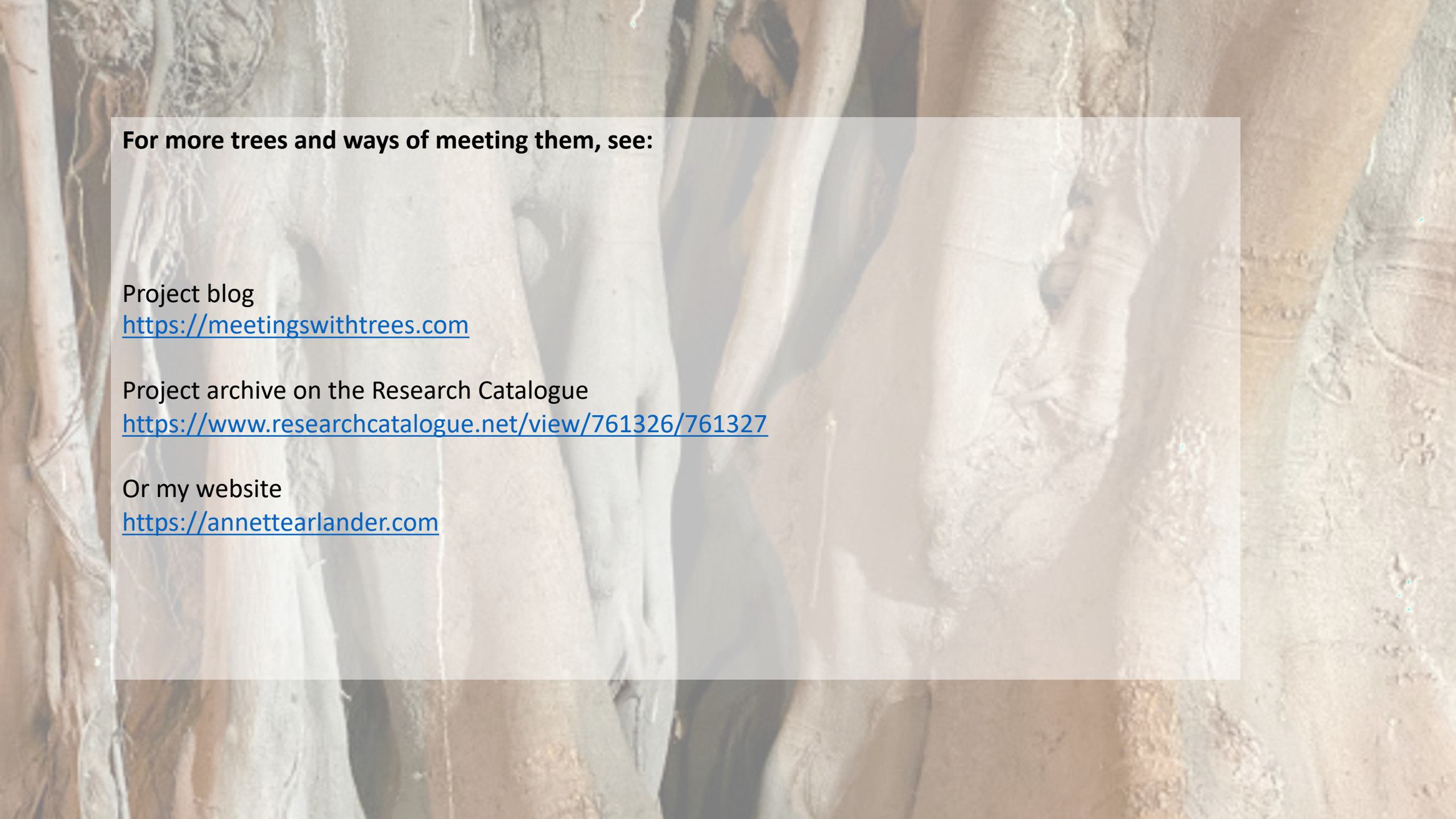
1. Choose a tree and go to it
2. Stand next to the tree, raise your arms, raise your heels, breathe
3. Take a photo of yourself and the tree (and send it to annette.arlander@uniarts.fi)

The above is a simplification of what was proposed in the abstract:

The first part, a simple balancing exercise done individually, will be done during the online session.

The second part is a challenge for each participant to choose a tree, perform the exercise with the tree, and take a photo of the exercise with the tree or a selfie with the tree and send it to me.

The third part, the documentation, is a collage of those images made on a public webpage by me and will be sent back to the participants.



For more trees and ways of meeting them, see:

Project blog


<https://meetingswithtrees.com>

Project archive on the Research Catalogue

<https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/761326/761327>

Or my website

<https://annettearlander.com>



Thank you for your attention!