

WHAT KIND OF CENTRE  
SUMMER MEETING AT STÄLLBERGS GRUVA, JULY 2018



## SCHEDULE

- Mon 16 Arrival day**  
Welcome dinner  
Evening swim at lake Stora Kumlan
- Tue 17** Breakfast  
Round tour at the Ställberg mine – historical, present and futures  
Lunch  
Joint discussion led by **akcg (anna kindgren and carina gunnars)**  
Hiking in Rikkenstorp guided by **Nils Holmdahl**, researcher on the local history and owner of Rikkenstorp farm  
Dinner and presentation of Rikkenstorp by permaculture farmer **Joel Holmdahl** – historical, present and futures, followed by joint discussion.  
Sauna and bath  
Overnight Rikkenstorp
- Wed 18** Breakfast  
Haymaking at Rikkenstorp  
Lunch at Rikkenstorp  
Cleaning the house  
Drive back to Ställberg  
Joint discussion led by **Johan Forsman, Skogen**  
Dinner  
Film Screening “Nationens hjärta” by Mikael Wiström, 2017
- Thu 19** Breakfast  
Joint discussion led by **Michaela Casková, Mustarinda**  
Joint discussion led by **Ksenija Radovanovi, Marko Aksentijević, Robert Kozma, Ministry of Space**  
Lunch  
Preparations for public event  
Public dinner, public event, and party
- Fri 20** Lunch  
Cleaning the common spaces at the mine  
Joint discussion led by **Scott Springfeldt, Ort till Ort**  
Dinner  
Evening swim in nearby river followed by spa
- Sat 21 Departure Day**

This is a compilation of text and images from the summer meeting “What kind of Center” that took place at Ställbergs gruva, Ljusnarsberg, in July 2018.

Edited by Maryam Fanni and Elof Hellström

Photography by Michaela Casková

Graphic design by Maryam Fanni

The project was financed by Nordic Culture Point





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 akcg.org

**akcg (anna kindgren och carina gunnars)** is a collaborative artist. They have been engaged in not for profit art spaces and in love and devotion (ingrid eriksson, carina gunnars, karin johnson, anna kindgren). 2018 akcg is in conversation with others who live in the North; Sápmi, Norway, Finland, Canada and Sweden – but also Brasil in the south. Together akcg tries to understand, unveil and make visible colonial links as well as other flows. Finance. Climate collapse. Water. akcg have made works juxtapositioning the urban housing situation in Brazil with the neo liberal revolution in Sweden.

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 issuu.com/ministarstvoprostora

**Ministry of Space** was started 2010 and has since then through actions and site-specific installations giving attention to the privatizations of cinemas in the city center of Belgrade, transformed vacant buildings into places for cultural production and are until now running a street gallery in central Belgrade as well as a school about commons. Since the last five years they're also part of organizing protests against the megalomaniac city renewal project Belgrade on Water. These protests had a huge impact in the city as well as in Serbia and during spring 2018 they created a political entity to run for the municipal election in Belgrade.

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 skogen.pm

**Skogen** is a platform for artists and cultural workers in Gothenburg. They run a residency program and school and organize lectures, performances. Everything is always free of charge and based on donations and food is always served. Skogen is an attempt to be an alternative to cultural spaces within the mainstream cultural production logic around space, time and relations.

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 sifav.org

**SIFAV** (Söderorts Institut För Andra Visioner / South Districts Institute For Other Visions) was an interdisciplinary group based in Stockholm that existed between 2012–2018 that investigated the city through artistic methods. The group has worked with collective writing, radio, walking tours, reading groups and self-publishing to understand and challenge how privatization determine what is possible to say, think and feel. The group name came from a reaction against official steering documents and their restraining vision, and was at the same time is an attempt to point toward other possible spaces and imaginations.

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 mustarinda.fi

**Mustarinda** is situated outside of the village Hyrynsalmi in Kainuu province in the north of Finland. The association started in 2009 to foster discussions about climate change and promote the ecological rebuilding of society and strategies that could lead to a post-fossil future and culture. Mustarinda runs artist residency program, exhibitions, summer schools as well as garden and work with self-sustaining energy systems.

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 orttillort.wordpress.com

**Ort till ort** was formed in Stockholm in 2015 with the aim to connect people from different areas and knowledges coming from experiences of renovation and gentrification processes. During the spring 2018 they also worked with organizing together with refugees evicted by the municipality of Solna. They are now creating a handbook on how to act in and against renovation processes.

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 stallbergsgruva.se

**The Non-Existent Center** (TNEC) runs Ställberg Mine, an arena for contemporary art and thought in Ljusnarsberg, a rural municipality in Bergslagen. Ställberg's 28 meter high mining tower is the basis for international residences, festival and exhibitions. The arena is an interdisciplinary platform for research on the human existence in a heavily depopulated community. The critical relationships between centralised cities and the countryside play a central role, as well as the movements of "escape." The research is practical and integrated with the community, and is given form by artistic, social and political works.

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**Participants:**

Maryam Fanni (SIFAV)  
 Elof Hellström (SIFAV)  
 Carl-Oscar Sjögren (TNEC)  
 Eric Sjögren (TNEC)  
 Sara Parkman (TNEC)  
 Scott Springfieldt (Ort till Ort)  
 anna kindgren (akcg)  
 carina gunnars (akcg)  
 Johan Forsman (Skogen)  
 Ksenija Radovanović (Ministry of Space)  
 Marko Aksentijević (Ministry of Space)  
 Robert Kozma (Ministry of Space)  
 Michaela Casková (Mustarinda)  
 Kristin Bergman (TNEC/Skogen)  
 Katja Roselli, volunteer  
 Mikaela Bolin, intern



More than half of the world's population live in cities today, and urbanization does not seem to diminish neither in the Nordic region nor in the world. Not only do people move towards the metropolitan areas, but also resources and capital stay there. In a Nordic context, the term "urban norm" has begun to be used, to show how the image of the city life is both privileged and makes other ways of living invisible. Whilst such a word points out something important, in this work we want to focus on the resources to look at how artistic and collective methods can generate new knowledge and questions to the city–countryside and center–periphery dichotomies. Central questions for us are: How can resources (abandoned buildings and old infrastructure as well as natural resources) be used differently for a more sustainable future? How can artistic methods help us visualize other relations between city and the countryside? And how can we – as smaller cultural organizations – become resources for each other?

Although the dichotomy between urban–rural has in many ways played out its role, the terms are nevertheless used frequently. Not the least in fields that focus only on either urban or rural areas. Our starting point is that this opposite pair risks concealing important aspects of the relationship that it wants to point out: The countryside being closely linked with the city in many ways, through both vast networks of infrastructures as well as (lack of) regional politics, and the city off course always being dependent on rural resources.

Hoping to find other ways of

understanding these relationships, we wanted to arrange a summer meeting with certain cultural organizations. To create a space to think of possible ways of reasoning about, relating to, and organizing around built environment and resources, we wanted to bring together collectives, from different geographic locations, to a common week of conversation. The invited groups are from Sweden, Serbia and Finland, and have been in contact with SIFAV and partly with each other throughout the years in different ways, but never gathered in time and place.

The common week took place at Ställberg's mine, an abandoned mine that the cultural association and art collective The Non-Existent Center (TNEC) bought in 2012 and manages ever since as a cultural center. Our group, Söderorts Institut För Andra Visioner (SIFAV) had previously visited the mine on two occasions and participated in its activities and public programs (2016, 2017). Ställberg's mine is a resource in terms of generously equipped rooms that can accommodate large groups. There is extensive knowledge about the area and energy issues, as well as a local network. The reason for meeting at this place was, beside the mentioned facilities, that the location actualizes much of the above mentioned questions and therefore constitutes an interesting place to learn from, and a common experience to depart from in our discussions. The summer meeting was also a pilot attempt for SIFAV to arrange events on the site and formally collaborate with TNEC/Ställbergs gruva, in order to eventually contribute to the cultural center and possibly use it as a

workplace in a longer perspective.

It is a lot to ask smaller actors in the cultural field to activate their work brains seven days in a row, in the middle of the vacations, to share their most sincere thoughts and challenges. It requires certain conditions to create a genuine space for thinking and reflection. We wanted to create a context that could provide support and inspiration for the future, rather than exhaustion, and we hoped to be able to do so by trying to allow space for reflection and recreation, and by to avoiding to put a workload on our invited guests.

In Sweden "projekttrötthet" – project tiredness – is a well known concept in the cultural field. The concept reflects the tiredness that people in foremost countryside and suburbs feel toward the top-down cultural projects that are thought to work emancipatory but become a burden and reiterated betrayal. In line with this we would like to suggest "network tiredness" among cultural associations. This was something we touched upon early in our preparing conversations with the invited parts, but also among ourselves. "What is the purpose to meet", was suddenly an urgent question to ask, and the question not only shed light on the climate aware doubts about traveling, but even more on the perfunctory cultural production blurring the value of interpersonal meetings in times of constant networking.

In line with this some of our principles for the organization of the week was 1) No use of computers or powerpoints required during the sessions 2) prioritize to meet outdoors and in the nature 3) no

requirements of preparations before the week, come as you are. The idea behind this was not least to create a forum and ways of speaking beyond reproduction of habitual narratives and roles. By establishing a form for conversation starting from the needs of the now, we hoped to be able to get to know each other and be resources for each other as colleagues and thinking bodies.

All participating collectives had been active as a group more than five years, and have practices interested in erasing the border between audience–practitioner and strive for horizontal knowledge exchange rather than teaching. Versatility here is about an increased understanding of how differences in experience should rather be seen as something relative, and not something that necessarily has to be bridged over. The ambition was never to land in unity. On the contrary, there is an interest in discovering and investigating the differences in thought and approach.

We hope that this compilation of images and texts can help keeping the memory of the summer meeting for the participating parts, and for those who were not with us perhaps it can give a notion of our experience and conversations.

Maryam Fanni and Elof Hellström  
September 2018



Capitalist realism insists on treating mental health as if it were a natural fact, like weather (but, then again, weather is no longer a natural fact so much as a political-economic effect)

Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism*

The summer 2018 is historical. The temperatures in July are the highest since the measurements were initiated in Stockholm in 1756.

Sommaren 2018 är historisk. Temperaturerna i juli är de högsta sedan mätningarna inleddes i Stockholm 1756.  
DN, august 2018

After arrivals from Belgrade, Helsinki, Gothenburg, Stockholm and Katrineholm, and a welcome dinner, we went for an evening swim in Stora Kumlan. The lake is 21 meter deep and inhabited by perches, pikes, whitefishes and a zillion smaller creatures. It's also a part of the runoff area for Norrström – the primary outlet from Mälaren to the Baltic sea.

Six of the 16 people that was part of the week came with a rented car from Kista. In Kista they passed Jan Stenbecks torg – until 2010 known as Torsnästorget. This change of name was a homage from the capital to honour Stenbecks transformation of his father's company Investment AB Kinnevik from paper and steel industries to a globalized media and telecom company.

Ställbergs mine was during a time the deepest iron ore mine in Europe

with its shaft of 1072 meters. The mine was run by Ställbergsbolagen but was 1977 shut down by the CEO Jan Stenbeck. With this money he started companies such as television channel ZTV and telecom company Comviq and became one of the biggest profiteers of the big eras of deregulations (that also coincided with growing regional gaps in Sweden).

Hotels underneath the ground, a refreshing pool in cross vaults from the 1600s and a museum under the Royal castle. Can't you handle the heat? Stay calm, we give you the names of the the places where you can escape the heat.

Hotell under jorden, en avsvalkningspool i ett kryssvalv från 1600-talet och ett museum beläget under Kungliga slottet. Klarar du inte av hettan? Lugn, vi tipsar om ställen där du undkommer värmeböljan.  
Allt om Stockholm, juli 2018

The drought kills the spruce forest: "I'm forced to fell 15–20 years in advance in this forest"

Torkan dödar granskog: "Jag måste avverka 15–20 år tidigare i den här skogen".  
Nerikes Allehanda, juli 2018

Each day, one of the groups made a presentation that opened up for a joint conversation. We moved between places: Ministry of Space started in megalomaniac city renewal project along river Sava in central Belgrade while Mustarinda revolved around their residency in a former school building in the virgin forest in north of Finland. Skogen are in the middle of experimenting with the invention of a school in their space for art and performance in the inner city landscape of Gothenburg and Ort till Ort came with recent experience from organizing with migrants being evicted by Solna municipality. akcg have in recent years made recurrent travels between smaller art spaces in Sápmi while SIFAV have struggled to understand the visual language of the privatizations and gentrification processes in southern Stockholm. All this in the post-industrial and scenic landscapes in Bergslagen.

The geographies echoed in each other, and became a map over distribution of resources, movements of capital and people, and how this affects what is possible to say and and dream about during the summer of 2018. As the journalist Po Tidholm writes: “To understand territorial injustices is in fact to follow the money”. Or maybe

we came close to the paradox the poet and philosopher Édouard Glissant never stopped to struggle with: how place don't exist while at the same time being fundamental.

The conversations continued during the joint lunches and dinners made by Kristin Bergman, in which you'd often recognize ingredients reappearing in new ways as her cooking philosophy is much about avoiding waste.

Finally the summer is here! Parks are filled with happy people wanting to sunbathe and after work one ends up for a beer on the outdoor seatings. How nice? Not to speak about all colorful clothes we finally can wear... Stockholm is a completely fantastic and beautiful city, and it becomes even more beautiful when the sun is shining!

Äntligen är sommaren här! Parker fylls med glada människor som vill lapa sol och efter jobbet hamnar man på uteserveringar för en klassisk aw i värmen. Hur skönt? För att inte tala om alla snygga färgstarka plagg vi äntligen kan börja bära... Stockholm är en helt fantastisk och vacker stad, och ännu vackrare blir den när solen skiner!

Metro, may 2018

On the second day we went to Rikkenstorp, a permaculture farm and Finnish farmhouse dating from the 17 century and 16 kilometers away north of Ställberg. The place and the houses were in a very bad condition when the Holmdahl family moved here in the 1970s. A purposeful work started in order to restore the old Finn house to make it accessible to the public. Today it is a valuable representative of the forest-Finnish settlement and landscape history tradition in Sweden.

Our visit started with a historical hiking together with the local historian Nils Holmdahl who told us about the place's transformation over the centuries. Through the mires and forests, histories about migration, state racism and struggles about the resources was unfolded. To once again quote Édouard Glissant: “Our landscape is its own monument: its meaning can only be traced on the underside. It is all history”.

Rikkenstorp is also a CSA farm (community-supported agriculture) and members of the La Via Campesina International Farming Network. Being a CSA makes them more resilient in case of a drought, as happened this year, while many conventional farms run the risk of

or have to face bankruptcy. After the hike, we had a dinner with food from the farm and the day after we all helped out with raking, an activity the group had different amount of experience of. The hard work of 15 people during 2 hours resulted in hay for less than 0,5% of the needs for the winter, which gives an indication not only of the lack of skills some of us had but also of the amount of labour that is needed to run the farm.

The month of May was the driest in 200 years. Many farmers have already been affected by harvests that dried away and every fourth municipality has prohibited irrigation. The anxiety, mostly in Götaland and Svealand, is huge over income losses and eventually of too early slaughters.

Maj månad var den torraste på 200 år. Många bönder har redan drabbats av skördar som torkat bort och var fjärde kommun har bevattningsförbud. Oron, framför allt i Götaland och Svealand, är stor över inkomstbortfall och på sikt för tidig slakt.  
Lrf.se, july 2018

During one evening we screened “The heart of the Nation”, a documentary film by the local filmmaker Mikael Wiström. It takes place in Ljusnarsberg in 2015, during

## NOTES

a time when many refugees arrived to Europe and Sweden. The film features social democratic local politician Ewa-Leena, pizzabaker and asylum seeker Meerul, the migration business entrepreneur Jimmy Hoppe, and locals who often resonate in tune with nationalistic ideas. On one hand, there are lots of questions to be asked about the articulation of this documentary and how it deals with dominant narratives and power structures, on the other hand it is one on few contributions in Swedish film-making that intervenes with the topic of rural areas and the growing nationalism.

Crowded roof bars, leafy nature and world-class food. Stockholm is most beautiful in the summer.

Folkfyllda takbarer, lummig natur och mat i världsklass. Stockholm är som härligast på sommaren.  
Expressen, July 2018

Has your lawn become yellow or even brown this summer? You're not alone!

Har din gräsmatta blivit gul eller till och med brun i sommar? Du är inte ensam!  
Allers, 2018

The public event was in a sense a peak of the week, as any public performance invoke sharpened minds and curiosity and attendance to the audience, especially when you're on a new site and don't know who will come and what to expect. A full evening of public dinner and talk became a moment for our groups and conversations to extend, followed by a dance floor with Serbian Eurovision Song Contest hits and hip hop from the suburbs of Stockholm.

Elections are not recognized to have an immense significance by neither cultural actors nor autonomous left, who know that politics is being done every day and not only once every four years. Nevertheless, the conversations were partly characterized by elections: the regional elections in Belgrade that the Ministry of Space recently participated in, and the forthcoming Swedish parliamentary elections as an underlying worry raising many questions about the future.

By the end of the week, the sky opened up and a longed for heavy rain poured down, even through the ceiling, as the 72 at that moment ongoing forest fires in Sweden still continued.



**Public event, Thursday evening 19 July 2018, Ställbergs gruva**

**Elof to akcg:** One thing that probably connect the different collectives is that everyone works with space in some way. Either if it's about understanding place, creating place, space and pedagogy and how to think with place.

akcg, I followed your work at Konsthall C between 2012–2014 where you took these questions about place very seriously. You did, I would say, a fantastic job on how to understand and address Hökarängen. During the last years you have worked with Kapsylen, a working cooperative in Stockholm, and have also made continuous trips in northern Scandinavia between Röst, Mustarinda and other places for art and culture. I'm curious to ask you about how you perceive if there is a politics of place, and what is politics of place?

**carina:** The simple answer is that yes, there is politics in place. We have the last years worked from especially Kapsylen, that is a working cooperative that has been there for more than 40 years. We think this place has been so important to us, and we learned a lot from how they have organized during these four decades. It's so unusual that a cooperative still exists during these neoliberal times. We have started a very humble and small scale reading group within the walls of Kapsylen and we call it "Everything is in Everything at Calypso" which is in their cantina or lunch room. We got this expression everything is in everything – Allt finns i allt – from the French philosopher Jacques Rancière who wrote a book about another person that is important to us, the teacher and pedagogue Joseph Jacotot. His experiences from working with kids during mid 1800 century is that you can learn from someone who is not an educator, and that you can teach without being a teacher. You can learn from each other, always. Space and place tells so much about for example the context and the system we are living in now.

**anna:** We always said to each other that there are no neutral places, no neutral rooms. When we worked with *love and devotion* at a big art institution in Stockholm that had built a white cube inside the museum, we didn't know how to handle the situation and space so we started a big investigation about the white cube. It was presented to us as a neutral place but we were more interested in why it is accepted as a neutral place. There is a lot to say about politics of place. To get complicated, but not too complicated, we can look at the word hegemony. When the ruling class present something to us to as neutral that we, we as the ones that are ruled, should accept as neutral, we always think it's more interesting to listen to other voices. And to look into and question who has the right to define a space, place and situation, as well as interpret that.

I guess you all know about Beowulf Mining who has the concession to extract minerals from Kallak/Gällö outside Jokkmokk where there is a huge iron ore. When someone asked the CEO of the company about the people living there, he answered: 'what local people?'

We know that we as artists usually are sent out into the the world before the commercial actors come. First they send out the artists so we can lay the ground, then the rest can come. So we always said that we as artists have to be very site-sensitive and careful of what we do and how we act. Which is not always so easy.

**carina:** We started to say that the answer is very simple, yes there is a lot of politics in places and spaces all over the world. And there exists a lot of ways to make our minds foggy. So the learning process has to be very respectful, in every sense, as cultural actors.

**Maryam to Scott, Ort till Ort:** Talking about place I will go on asking Ort till Ort a question. You have intensively tried to find solutions for evicted families over the last years and at the same time mobilized against scum lords. One of the ideas about your organization is also to make connections between places and struggles that are going on in different kinds of places.

Ort till Ort can be translated into Neighborhood to Neighborhood but I think it's also interesting to bring up the different meanings and connotations of the word "Ort" in Swedish. We have "förort" that means suburb, "bruksort" that means mill town and "landsort" that means rural area. I guess that is also one of the thoughts with the name of the organization. So I wonder if you can elaborate on the potentials of connecting the urban and rural and how you do that, or ideally would like to work towards this kind of connection-making.

**Scott:** First of all, there are some similarities between the places where we organize in the suburbs in Stockholm and an area like where we are now. The images I will paint now is maybe overly dark but since we work with some quite critical stuff this is what I will focus on. In places like the suburbs of Stockholm you share some of the problems that a municipality like Ljusnarsberg is currently struggling with. Unemployment, closing of services and stigmatization. Since we came here earlier this week we heard that Ljusnarsberg is in the bottom of different rankings around schooling and other matrixes. These are problems you can find in many of the suburbs as well. The major difference is probably value.

Property value in a place like this is going down while in the city it is going up. This has consequences like that here. you can find ruins from older times, like this place, while the prices in Stockholm are forcing people that can't afford them away.

In our work we want to connect these areas that share

problems and characteristics but so far we haven't really been able to reach out so much to places outside Stockholm. Mainly because we are constantly occupied with day to day kind of acute situations with families ending up on the streets or really substandard living conditions.

I think a place like Ställbergs Mine is really crucial for knowledges and experiences to be shared. I also hope this can lead to that some kind of solidarity can be built up between communities like Ljusnarsberg and the suburbs in Stockholm. In media today these areas are often put against each other, and the interests of people in the suburbs are put against the people here. While I would argue they have much more in common than in opposition to each other.

**Maryam to Ministry of Space:** You are at the moment in a point of discussing of how to proceed after a kind of turbulent year. This spring you participated in the regional elections in Belgrade which was an experience you have described both as failure and success. Your result was just below the limit to enter the city hall, but at the same time you got over 20.000 votes and were also putting a lot of questions on the political agenda. But moving in to municipal politics also has its challenges, for example you are now even more public figures and this effects the rhetorics and so on. The question of moving in to mainstream politics is a question for many of us, and we wonder if you can say something about what made you take this step and what you learned from it?

**Marko:** When we got the possibility to spend time here I realized it's resemblance with where we come from, since our collective were formed around an empty industry hall in the outskirts of Belgrade. Very hastily after squatting this building, we wanted to do more, in the sense of understanding how these places end up vacant and what could be done with all of

the unused space. All of a sudden we found ourselves going around filling in this empty industrial hall with culture, and somehow preparing it for the hotels and whatever it become through processes of deindustrialization and privatization. We realised that we have to tackle the whole notion of development that displaces the work, the workers and the people to create different speculation schemes and some foggy tourism ideals.

So our main entry point into opposing this kind of development was megalomaniac project called Belgrade Waterfront that is turning 200 hectares of the very city center of Belgrade on the river bank, supposedly United Arab Emirates capital, into exclusive area with luxury apartments. Where in fact it's tax payer's money that is invested in the development on the land that is taken away from us and is now being sold to Serbian diaspora with this exclusive contents, while a third of the city lacks sewage system. There are lot of other infrastructural problems that are also not tackled and we thought it was important to address them in contrast to the national significance this waterfront development got.

When we started we were a small bunch of nerds who wanted to articulate this; anybody that wanted could join. We were printing newspapers and organized different protest actions and panel discussions. Slowly from protests of 300 people it got to the protests of 25000 people on the streets of Belgrade.

Suddenly, there were a lot of expectations from us. We managed to mobilize all these people and now they had high hopes that a new political actor could come and do things differently. It was not enough that we were successful in expressing dissatisfaction with this project or the way politics in Serbia function, someone needed to come and actually set up a different development paradigm. And all of a sudden we were left with little room for maneuver what to do next, in this sense we did not take the decision to go into mainstream politics too

deliberately, but in a way we created the atmosphere that made us have to.

For those interested of going in to mainstream politics one thing that can be taken away from our experience is how easy it actually is to become a credible actor by selecting a proper issue and working on it. Building up credibility through not addressing every single thing that happens, but rather having an area of one's own where you are not only following the agenda that is happening anyway. Try to push for the things one thinks need to happen in regarding to whatever development you're looking into. And for those hesitant about entering mainstream politics... hey, it's okay!

**Ksenija:** Marko described our beginnings as group of nerds going into every detail of Belgrade Waterfront project, doing our best to find different ways to disseminate the information about this megalomaniac project into the very narrow space left for any kind of criticism and nonexistent place for public debate. We are still the same nerds. Going through the elections did not affect our believe that what we were doing the whole time indeed was doing politics. In this sense, the decision to go into the mainstream politics wasn't a huge step for us. We strongly defend the idea that we all have the right to being openly political, but of course there are these strong forces trying to chase you away from doing politics. This turns out to be reality we share with Sweden and other "Western" countries as well. The idea is to point fingers at you as if this choice makes you a different person with hidden agenda, because politics is something only the chosen ones should do and we all know that these chosen ones end up being shady, dirty, rich people. And male. This can be really hard to deal with. There are lot of things in this process that forever change your life, your perceptions and emotions. But changing the rules of how this game is played is what we applied for. I guess the main point is

that we should not be afraid. And we should be prepared for a marathon fight.

**Robert:** On one level we just continued to taking the principles we tried to set up from the beginning. We as citizens should organize in order for our resources to remain public and be used for the citizen's needs. Because this project only symbolize what is happening all over the country where taxpayers money and public resources through different schemes very often is transferred to private pockets. While they're telling you there is no other money for services people need.

Just to give another example beside that some parts of Belgrade doesn't has sewer system some towns in Serbia doesn't has the system of drinkable water. To be a citizen is to be a critical subject and to talk about your life and how to organize.

So stepping into the elections was an inevitable moment in this type of organizing yourself not wanting to stop and pause, but wanting to take a further a step. But as Marko said it is alright not to go there. Yet, if you go, I think once the campaign started, if you use the proper rhetoric of a campaign you will succeed.

**Maryam to Michaela, Mustarinda:** Mustarinda is an organization that is largely driven by volunteers, basically what Mustarinda does is much more than financing allows.

I think the struggle for many cultural organizations today is the mix between voluntary and paid labor.

You put it so well earlier today that sometimes financial support and the transition from volunteer to employee cause so much tension that you almost want to say no to the money.

What I wanted to ask you is to elaborate on what kind of relationships Mustarinda builds and consists of.

In a previous sessions you read for us a text by Celine Condorelli that you may read again if you like, and you

brought the word friendship to the table. What does friendship mean in the context of Mustarinda and what does Mustarinda mean to you?

**Michaela:** I will start in the text.

"The reason why we're sitting together talking is also because we are friends: and we're working together at the same time. Another level has to do with friendship as a way of associating yourself with ideas or befriending issues. What Hannah Arendt called "this thinking business" (her description of the work that she and Mary McCarthy did individually and in relation to each other), is done from a position of closeness to something or someone and it requires a particular proximity that I believe is fundamental. In other words, there is intimacy in relationship to people, and also in relation to issues, that I would call friendship."

I have been thinking a lot about why I am part of the group in Mustarinda, working like hell sometimes for five years, and after all the ideas and dreams and issues we've had together what stays is the friendship. That's how I came to Mustarinda, through one friend, and that's how I got to know so many new friends who are very dear to me. And that's also why I'm here because I was invited by a friend, to meet friends.

Working as friends means you don't compete, well you do compete with friends sometimes but not as in trying to get someone off the way. You support each other and care. And when I think in this way it really changes my working environment.

**Carl-Oscar to Johan, Skogen:** The non Existent Center has their winter office at Skogen and I am in a daily dialogue with

Johan and the people working at Skogen. It has been very helpful to think about organization and how can a culture space be relevant today and what should we do. I have followed Skogen since 2012 and we, TNEC, started the same year.

From being a platform in performing arts mainly it has developed to be a school. Johan, why is this change important for you and what are your thoughts about it?

**Johan:** First I want to clarify that we still do art. When we talk about a school, it is not a school with exams and tests. It is rather about transforming the space and the resources from production into learning.

For me it is important because I wanted to learn something. I wanted to acknowledge that the tools we usually have when running a venue, theater or a museum today are the tools that we have learned from a (post-?)industrial modern economy, and if we aim at something else we should learn another thinking and another vocabulary. So one reason to start a school is also to say that "I don't know". Most of the time a director and artistic leader is someone who is supposed to know, a position that I find impossible.

One other way to think about it is that the school is an attempt to change focus from productions to relations. Usually cultural venues are based on consumption, you go there and see paintings or a play presented to you by someone, and I think it is an invisible humiliation in being reduced to this consumer. So I was interested to see if we can change that.

Instead of being forced into roles of managers, consumers and producer, we think of the space as a space where we work together. Rather than putting the artwork in the center we focus on the working together around art. There are no tickets and there is always food at our events, for donation. Some of the budget that would normally be used for production, we put in the foyer, a kind of decentralization.

One important thing that happened this year is that I got to know my audience.

**Carl-Oscar to Joel, Rikkenstorp:** What is organization for you?

**Joel:** Organization is for me the way we build society, how we co-exist, how we go forward. We can organize in a way to move progressively to a better state or we can do it in a negative way. And one of the debates that I usually work with is related to farming and natural resources. Who has access, who has ownership, that's the organization of resources and capital in how we build society. We have this book from the 20s, between the world wars, that is called "Freden med jorden", "Peace with the earth", written by Elin Wägner, which argues that the private ownership of farmland is the basis of conflict. And we haven't gotten anywhere since then. We are not even at that point in the discussion, we are two steps behind.

It runs like a red thread through all of the inputs that we've heard so far, that some interests are looking for profit which stands in conflict with us as humans. It can be flats in the city where owners of the flats looking for profit and don't care about the people living there. The people living there think of the flat as their lives, it's the human value that is their interest. And there we have a sharp conflict.

We see the same thing in the rural areas. Take Ludvika municipality for instance, almost all of the area is covered with woods, super expensive resource. And it is more than 90 percent owned by one company, Bergvik, which is in turn owned by Stora Enso. They are using the profit from the forest in Ludvika, not to support public services or infrastructure, but to exploit the Amazon forest in Brazil. And we see this flow of capital and how it affects us.

I think what all of you are talking about is the conflict

## CONVERSATION

between the values of us as humans, or to see us as consumers, and how the capital wants us to build relationships based on money. The human relationship doesn't make profit. When you're suggesting that we should work together as friends, already there you are in conflict with someone who does not want you to work as friends. They want you to work as professional workers to make an efficient production that makes money for someone who owns capital. It's a revolutionary step to say 'fuck that, we are working as friends'.

We are also trying to do this in our food production at the farm. We are not working as producers and consumers, we are saying we want to split the risk, and the beauty if it's a good year. We do not want to just sell our cabbage as they sell cabbage in the store, we want to sell it to someone who knows us so that we can have a discussion about cabbage. Do we even want cabbage? Or do we want to produce cabbage and make sure that they buy it anyway?

We have this draught in Sweden right now and we can see how farms are private capital in Sweden, that's how food production is organized. The draught now, is it a private issue? Of course it's not a private issue, that's an issue for us in the society. But if you organize as private capital then the risk is private. If they fail, it's a private issue. We need to organize it as the communal issue it should be.

