

A top-down view of a lush garden filled with numerous bright yellow flowers, likely Aster sp., with dark brown centers and many thin, radiating petals. The flowers are interspersed with vibrant green, serrated leaves. The overall scene is a dense, colorful field of blooms.

the
garden
is
you

Isabel McLeish

the garden is *you*

Notes on socially engaged art and gardening
in the rural Scottish Highlands and Islands

Isabel McLeish
MA Art and Social Practice
2021



contents

beginnings	1
<i>tending</i> project	3
about Isabel	5
introduction	7
part one: embedding practice	9
the relationship is the project	10
process	11
rooting in the rural	16
rooting in the local	17
the embedded SEA practitioner soil profile	18
radical	19
time	21
care	24
knowing	29
reciprocity	30
part two: cultivating collectivity	33
social	35
a glossary for togetherness	43
eating	53
an invitation for the senses	63
part three: grounding principles	67
grounding principles for SEA practice	70
endings	75
references	76



beginnings

tending



tending project

Tending was a socially engaged art (SEA) project involving a partnership with Viewfield Garden Collective (VGC) from April - November 2021. Viewfield Garden Collective is a charity offering therapeutic gardening activities for vulnerable adults in Skye and Lochalsh to support health and wellbeing, promote citizenship and offer a friendly space to learn and educate.

The art project involved face-to-face participation with Viewfield Garden Collective volunteers, staff and trustees at the garden site. Participants engaged in workshops, creative making sessions and conversations as well as gardening. I also worked to gather ideas and input from the collective to co-design a sensory trail to develop the mindfulness aspect of the garden. The project considered how gardening and creative practice could help us to tend and care for ourselves, each other, and the land in the midst of a pandemic and climate crisis and explored how art projects in green spaces can support rural communities. The aim of the project was to encourage connection with the garden, nature and place as well as encourage sociability and creativity, and improve wellbeing.

The *tending* project has been an opportunity for moving my practice out of the studio and embedding myself into my local community and place.



people
place
plants



Self-portrait with bees (McLeish 2021)

about Isabel

I am a visual and socially engaged artist based in Lochalsh, Scottish Highlands. I am interested in exploring how art can help us feel more connected to place, nature and each other and how it can support health and wellbeing. I am also trained as a Forest Therapy Practitioner. 'Forest Bathing' or 'Shinrin-Yoku' is a social and wellness practice involving mindfulness, meditation and expressive arts activities in a woodland environment. I investigate how art can help us to develop an environmental and social ethics of care as we work towards a more regenerative and symbiotic future.



introduction

This publication is a gathering of ideas, musings and themes that have emerged through the *tending* project, through conversations with my MA peers, friends, family, locals, practitioners, researchers, artists as well as through time spent in the garden throughout 2021. Some ideas I have read about, some have been highlighted through conversation, others have come to me whilst gardening, walking or being.

Situating my artistic practice in the locale where I grew up and bedding myself into the garden alongside others has given me the time and space to explore meaningful creative engagement in the context of Skye and Lochalsh. For practitioners interested in socially engaged art (SEA) or "those ready to jump into the weeds when something seems intriguing," (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner 2020: 6-7) I hope ideas will resonate and encourage you to venture deeper into the entangled, speculative and exploratory spaces.

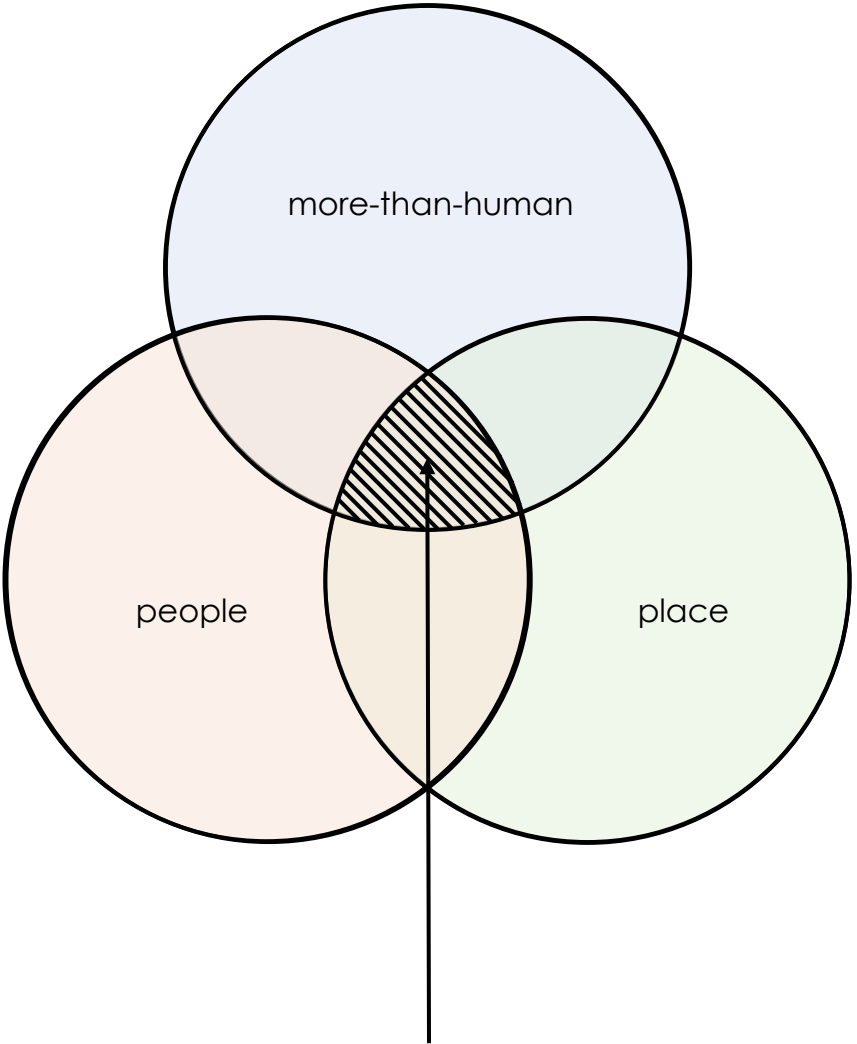
The publication is a call to expand socially engaged art (SEA) practice to include, connect, collaborate and be social with plants, more-than-human beings and the land. I believe this is vital in the ecological and climate emergency. My time in the garden has generated more questions than answers.

Jump into the weeds. Plunge your hands into the soil. Muse over ideas in the compost pile. Join me with a cup of tea as we wander through the garden.

part one



embedding practice



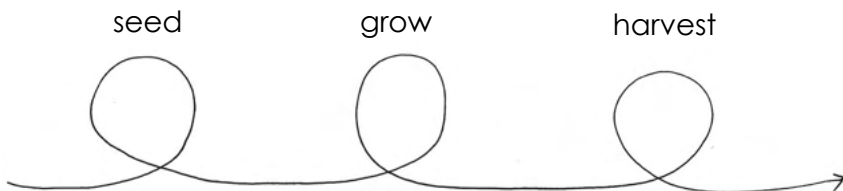
“the relationship is the project”
(Lillie *et al.* 2020)

process

What is the work? What is the medium?

For SEA, the idea of medium is unique to each practitioner. In her recent presentation, the artist Katie Paterson (2021) explains that her “medium is making ideas.” Socially engaged art focuses on “process,” (Matarasso 2019: 95) and approaches practice as “something breathing ... activated through participation ... and situated in the real world,” (Thompson cited in Sanders–Bustle 2020: 51-52).

Tending focused on strengthening sociability, wellbeing and creativity and enjoying working and being together in a garden through dialogue, exchange and creative practice. *Tending* echoes artist and researcher Luci Gorrell Barnes’ *Companion Planting* (2015) allotment project in Bristol which focused on “social inclusion with gardening and creative practice as the medium,” as the *tending* project wasn’t just about the practice of gardening.

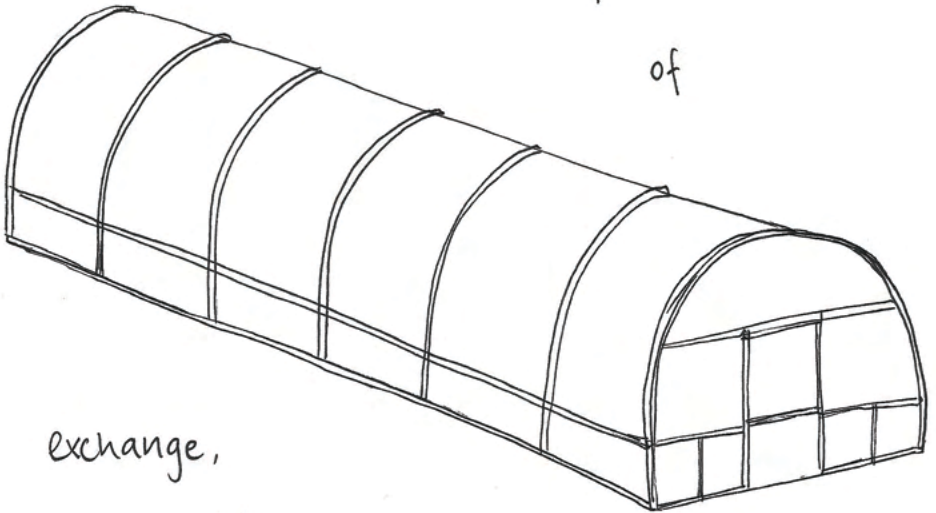


digging
sowing
seeding
planting
transplanting
thinning
weeding
covering
hoeing
mixing
picking
cutting
trimming
deadheading
pruning
watering
fertilising
mending
cleaning
burning
harvesting
selling
clearing
surveying
mapping



the polytunnel
is a place

of



exchange,

growth,

conversation

+ connection.

eard-fast

adjective

deep rooted in the earth; a stone or boulder fixed firmly in the earth

- *A Scots Dictionary of Nature*, Amanda Thomson (2018: 31)



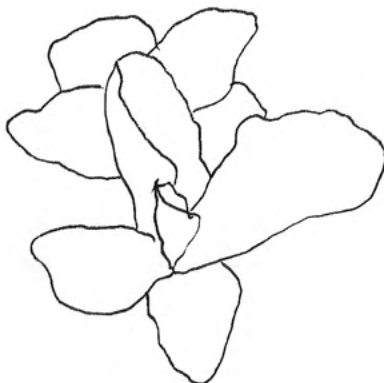
"Do people have ethical obligations towards rocks?"
(White cited in Fulton 2010: 13)



DIG WHERE
YOU STAND

rooting in the rural

“The rural is a multitude and it is dynamic, it can be attached or detached from a geography, it can be a mindset, a certain practice or a shared identity. It is a common term without being precise,” - Kathrin Böhm and Wapke Feenstra (2019: 12)



The term rural is ambiguous and it is time to move away from romanticised, parochial views of rural where places and perspectives are seen as insular or cut-off from global issues. Böhm and Feenstra (2019: 16) argue that we are constantly fed “images of the rural” which distort and shift our understanding of rural and “splits our roles into spectators and dwellers.” SEA practitioners can help to reclaim our relationship with the rural through embedding practices and activities in local communities. Practitioners may help to bridge the gap between “spectator” and “dweller” as they participate and observe, act and reflect and look both subjectively and objectively at the projects and places in which they live and work.

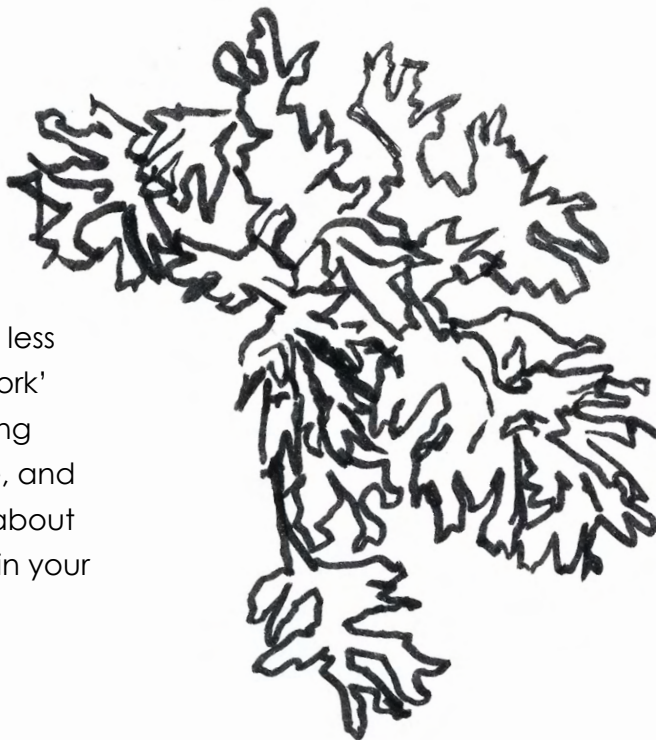


rooting in the local

“Rooting ... is about learning a deep sense of accountability to the local.” - Natasha Myers (cited in Evans 2020).

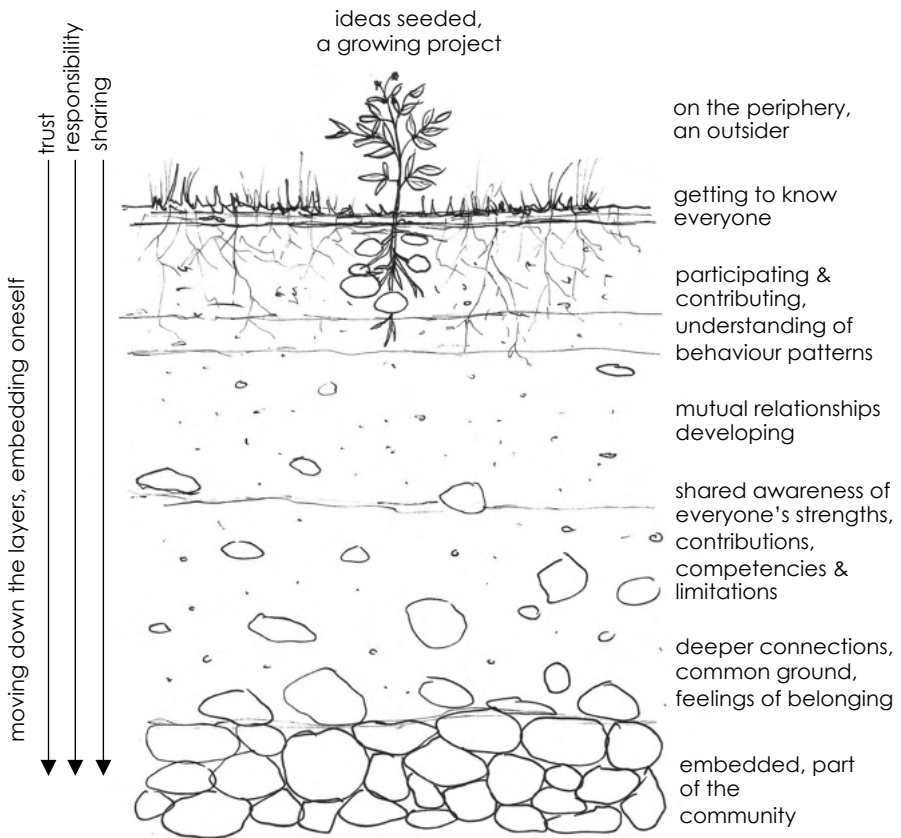
Artist and curator Elaine Speight (2013: 26) advocates for understanding the local by “place listening” achieved through “a sustained, embodied and relational approach,” where “places are experienced or ‘sensed’.” Similarly, place-based educator, Dr Sam Harrison (Farmerama Radio 2021) explains that a more inclusive and rich view of a “sense of place” is about your “actions” and “what you do living in the place that you live,” rather than about ethnicity, ancestry and the past.

SEA could be less about the ‘work’ and monetising your practice, and simply more about how you live in your community.



“Gardens ... might be apart from the world, but they are always already embedded in it. Gardens, like communities, are places. But they are processes and conversations too. And they only make sense if they're shared,” – Jon Day (2021: 52).

the embedded SEA practitioner soil profile

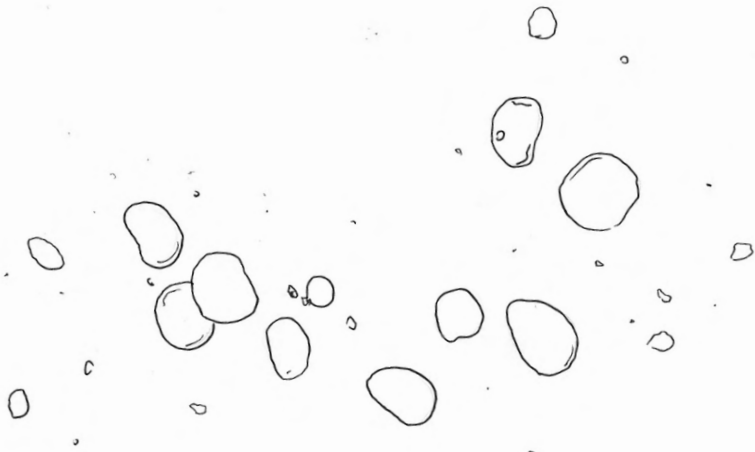


Inspired by social learning theories such as *communities of practice (CoP)* and *social learning spaces (SLS)* (Wenger 1998, Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner 2020).

radical

“Can gardens be radical places, politically, socially, otherwise? Need they be? ... Radical, of course, means to ‘address something at the roots’,” – Jon Day (2021: 52).

SEA can enable a process of excavation, digging down and unearthing layers of relation, history and complexity in a particular place. Curator and writer Laura Plant (2021) suggests that a residency is a “time to dig into a practice.” Federico Guzmán (2018: 108-109) proposes that we may need “to shift from ‘artist in residence’ to ‘artist in resistance,’ because working in a place, longevity, and responsibility are what most facilitates community,” and to develop work over a long duration that creates “not this year’s harvest, but instead a crop that bears permanent fruit.” Perhaps what makes SEA radical is this sustained commitment to practice, boots on the ground and working with a community over time to create social change.



TRUST

TAKES

TIME



time

“Gardening situates you in a different kind of time ...
Time becomes circular, not chronological,”
– Olivia Laing (2020: 126).

Gardens are slow processes and follow the rhythms of nature and the seasons. You experience time in the garden, over time. In her book *Matters of Care*, María Puig de la Bellacasa (2017: 175) suggests that “temporality” is “a lived, embodied, historically and socially situated experience,” and that we actually “make it through practices.” *Can SEA and gardening projects be a way of making temporality through an everyday practice? An everyday practice of being and digging and growing together.*

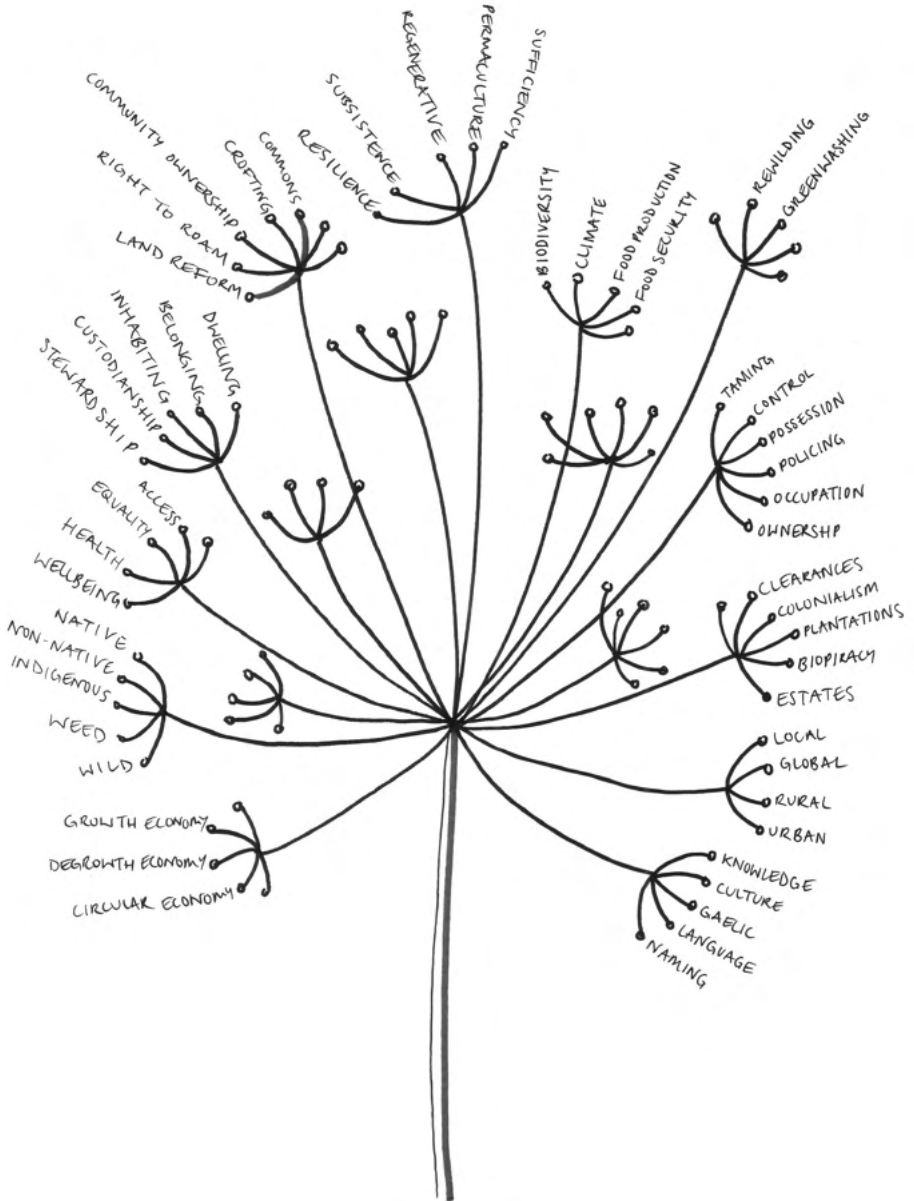
How can we reclaim our time?

How can we honour our bodies and energy better?

How can we embody cyclical time in our lives and work?

GARDEN TIME
OVER TIME





Seed head of ideas, issues and themes raised when you dig into gardens, growing and the land

care

How can we develop a social and environmental ethics of care? What does a caring arts practice look like?

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted growing mental health issues, health and social care inequalities and the increasing strain on those with precarious work patterns.

Artists continue to seek the balance of practicing and making a living. Looking after oneself and one's practice might be a process of learning to live and work:

"in a softer way, exploring a more tender approach ... The earth is your tool. Water, air, fire and earth are free. We are here to walk gently among the seasons and the resources she gives us ... I encourage you to engage the resources that are already around you whenever possible," – Marlee Grace (2018: 7).





"Nature brings balance to our feeling – and that balance helps keep us well," (National Trust 2020: 56).



We need to consider “**what happens to our work** when we pay attention to moments where the question of ‘**how to care?**’ is **insistent** but **not easily answerable**,” (Atkinson-Graham *et al.* cited in Puig de la Bellacasa 2017: 7).

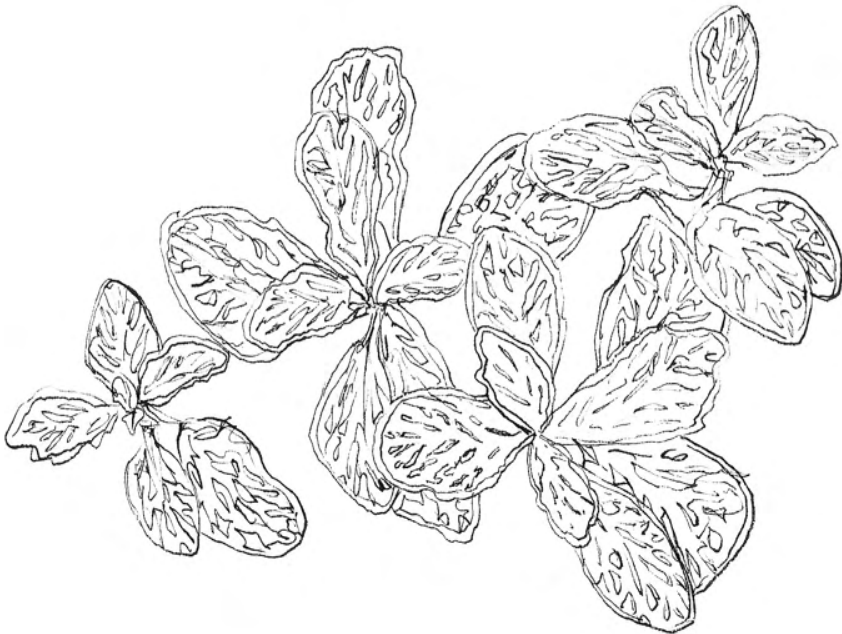




knowing

The act, process and experience of gardening is a way to know things. In her book *The Living Mountain*, Nan Shepherd suggests that the body is a “way in” (2011: 105) to sensing and knowing a place and that “to know ... is a process of living,” (Shepherd 2011: 1). Embodied knowledge “comes from being and listening in relation,” (Bulley 2021: 159-160) and activities and processes - such as those involved in gardening or creative practice - create “ways of thinking through making,” (Ingold 2013: xi).

How do we develop embodied knowledge? What role does doing and making play in thinking and learning?

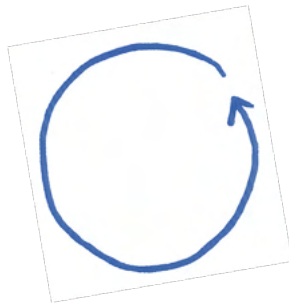


reciprocity


"I mean working in an outdoor space I always felt that the allotment was my sort of partner in the space ... there would always be something ... an offer," - Luci Gorell Barnes (2021).

Being or working outdoors, "one is companioned," (Shepherd 2011: 30-31). A garden space offers continued inspiration, ideas and knowledge through direct engagement with it. There is always something to notice and to learn from. Over time, the garden became a place I wanted to visit "merely to be with," it (Shepherd 2011: 15). Similarly, journalist Chris Mitchell (2021) recently wrote about lichen in our local paper, and explained that it was like "meeting up with old friends, and not worrying about having to wear a mask or keeping a two-metre distance."

When the garden gives to you, how do you give back?



reciprocity as return
returning back to the beginning
knowing we are part of the ecosystem

A watercolor illustration of a dense garden of ferns. The colors are primarily various shades of blue, from light sky blue to deep navy, with accents of green and purple. The brushstrokes are soft and blended, creating a textured, layered effect. The ferns are depicted with delicate, feathery fronds. The overall composition is a close-up, filling the frame with the intricate patterns of the foliage.

The
garden
is a
gift

part two



cultivating collectivity



social

“what happens to social practice, when the larger entanglements are considered?” (Sanders-Bustle 2020: 57).



Can we expand social art practice to include, connect and collaborate with plants, more-than-human beings and the land?

Gardening is a way of “being in communion with plants,” (Plant 2021) where relationships can be “nurtured between the human and plant communities,” (Borland 2021). Strangely though, through gardening, we simultaneously “distance ourselves from the non-human as it’s entitled superior” and “come closer to it, synchronising our own cycles of growth to its rhythms and altering our behaviour to act on its behalf,” (Plant 2021). We continue to be bound up in messy encounters and entanglements.

It is time to move away from the model of an artist parachuting into a community short-term, and towards artists embedding and situating their practices in communities and places where they live and work. *Does such an artist not then have a responsibility to engage with all the elements and dynamics of that particular place? From the people, to the culture, history, land, flora, fauna and all the other species that one may encounter?*

Artist Suzi Gablik (1991: 139) suggests that we need a “framework” for “an art that is accountable to the larger whole” and “contextually rooted in a living connection” with the rest of the world. Theories such as post-humanism, new materialism, flat-ontology, transhumanism and distributed intelligence aim to decentre the human and consider less hierarchical, more reciprocal relationships with the more-than-human species and beings. Lynn Sanders-Bustle (2020: 57) suggests that SEA practitioners looking at such theories “might inspire new thinking about what it means to participate or be in ‘dialogue’ with one another (human or otherwise).” Similarly, Gablik (1995: 82-83) proposed the idea “connective aesthetics” where we can consider “dialogue, as open conversation, in which one listens to and includes other voices.” Being social with the more-than-human can be considered in SEA practice at the most basic level, in terms of selecting environmentally-friendly materials which protect the land or as philosophical as seeing the more-than-human as your co-creator, or companion in the project.

In the face of a pandemic, and a climate and ecological emergency, it is vital that we “make kin in lines of inventive connection as a practice of learning to live and die well with each other in a thick present,” (Haraway 2016: 1).

Gardens “can be messy, open, companionable endeavours,” (Day 2021: 52) and as a practitioner, I am not interested in just extractive practices and engagement where humans benefit through increased contact with nature and the land. The social with the garden is not just about what I get out or from the relationship, it needs to be reciprocal. Doing and making is a process through which humans, animals, plants and the more-than-human “unfold within the weave of the world,” (Ingold 2011: 9).

I believe we cannot talk about ethical and meaningful engagement in SEA with people and place and not include the more-than-human. Decentering the human to include more-than-human voices is imperative so that we can tend to our multi and interspecies relationships and recognise our place in the cyclical web of life. Reimagining the social in SEA and looking at our material world with which we are involved and embedded may help to create ecological attunement and “animate a more ecologically sustainable public,” (Bennett 2100: 51). We need a culture that prioritises care – for self, each other and the land. SEA and gardening projects can create opportunities for unearthing layers of relation and responsibility and help us to cultivate regenerative practices for pursuing a more symbiotic future.



*how we relate to plants
belonging, community
finding this common ground*

*community growing
a gift, not a burden
accessible, not overwhelming*

*nurturing relationships
a feeling response
bringing ideas, experience*

*rooted, local, human
slower processes
time, shared*

*doing things with people
companion planting
aligning our rhythms*

*network, pathways, routes
tending, control, naming
the policing of growing*

*ancestral connection
language shared
embodied knowledge known*

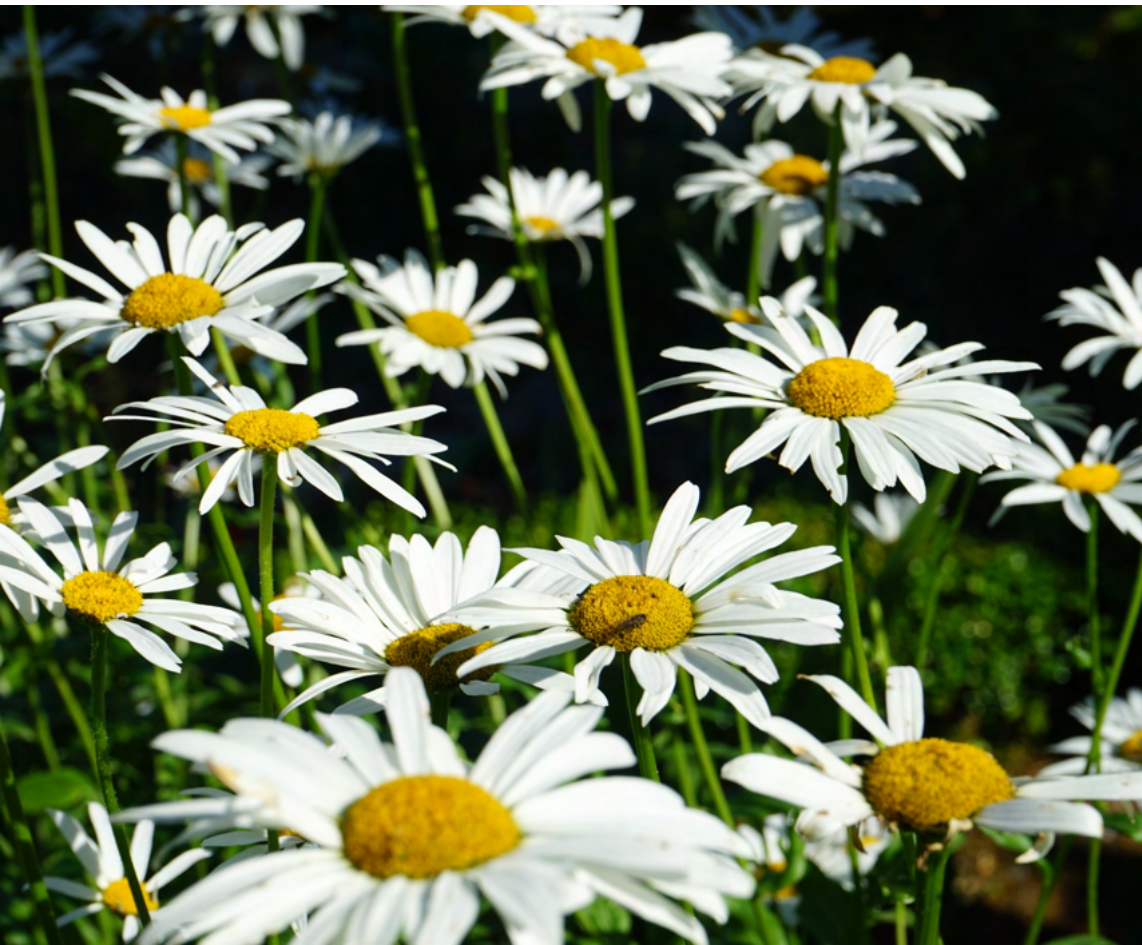
*mutualism and symbiotic speculation
agency and inclusion
a sense of place*

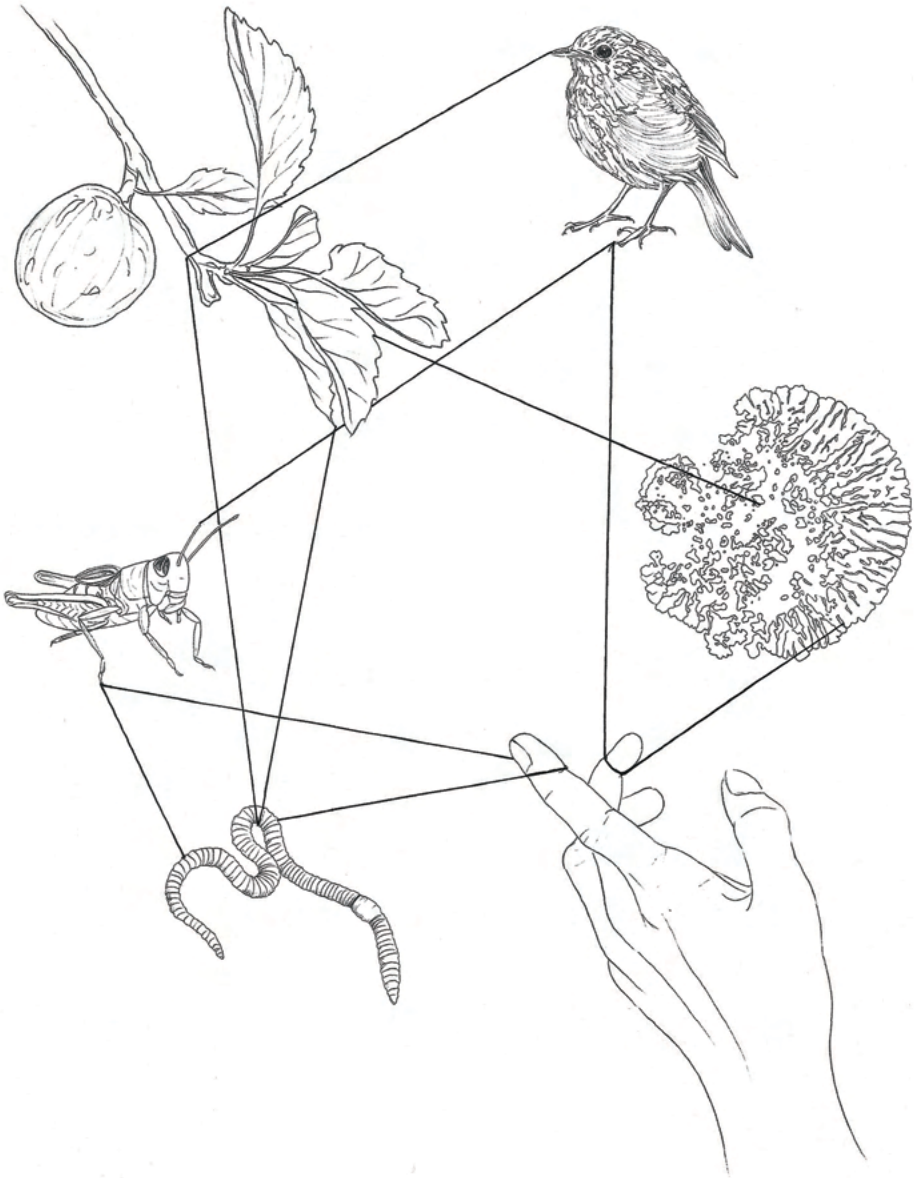
an offering.

- Offering, found poem created from conversations with Annie Lord, Luci Gorell Barnes and Laura Plant (2021)



When we start thinking about the more-than-human, what happens to our practices? Do we choose different materials? Do we buy less? Do we work differently? Do we take more time? Do we experience time or work differently? Do we go for more walks? Do we sit awhile? Do we 'do' or 'be' in different ways? What are some better ways of living and collaborating with the more-than-human?





Mutual Accompaniment, drawing (McLeish 2021)

Inspired by Nasser Mufti's *Multispecies Cat's Cradle* (2011) drawing
in Donna Haraway's (2016: 9) *Staying with the Trouble*

a glossary for togetherness

Conviviality: “the art of living together,” (Enough! and Centre for Human Ecology 2021: 143).

Community: “a quality of relations, a principle of cooperation and responsibility: to each other, the earth, the forests, the seas, the animals,” (Federici 2010 cited in Enough! and Centre for Human Ecology 2021).

Intra-action: a “dynamism of forces,” (Barad 2007 cited in Hickey-Moody 2020: 724) where “things” are constantly changing, exchanging, and diffracting, blending, mutating, influencing, and working inseparably,” (Hickey-Moody 2020: 724-725).

Mutual accompaniment: “The fabric of our lives is woven with that living of others, humans and other-than-humans ... Our kinship and friendship relationships draw on us and sustain us through our engagement in a flexible flow of mutual accompaniment,” (Watkins 2019: 20).

Sympoiesis: “Sympoiesis ... means ‘making-with’ ... it is a word for worlding-with, in company,” (Haraway 2016: 58).





How can we rewild and reindigenise ourselves?



"Though I did not know it then, I was learning my way
in, through my own fingers, to the secret of growth,"

– Nan Shepherd (2011: 58).

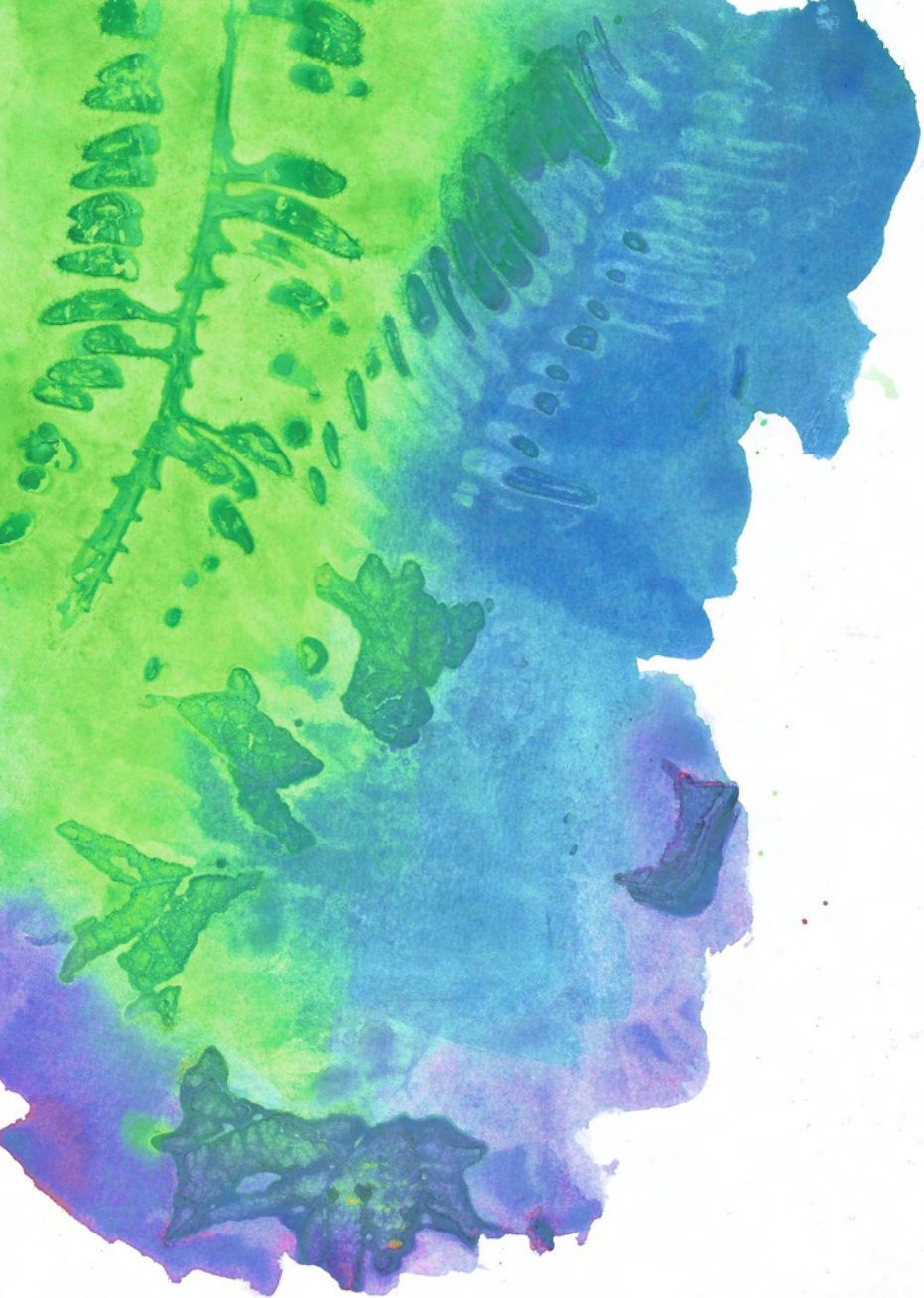


"the garden has given you the opportunity to meet new plants," – mum



“we actually share a quarter of our DNA with trees,”
– Katie Paterson (2021)

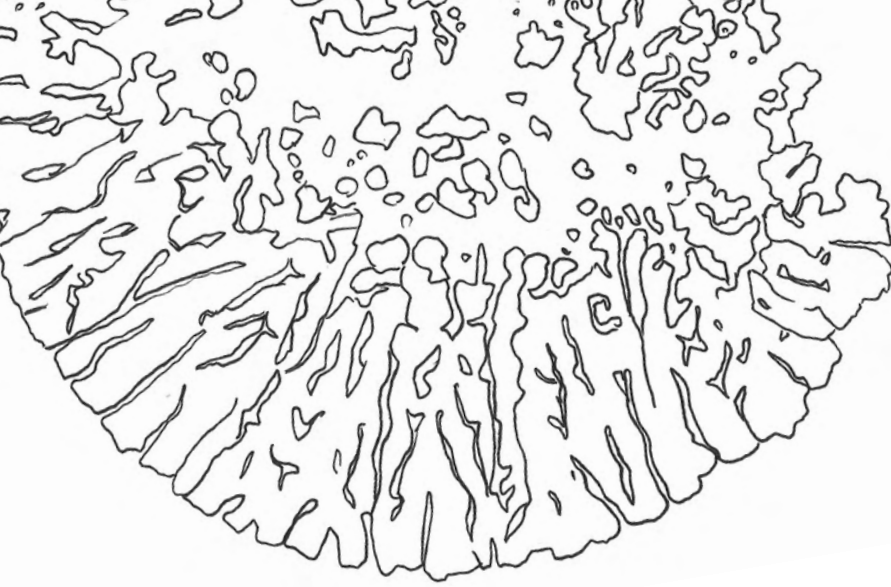




take notice.

Learn
from
Lichen





Lichen "is actually a dual plant, consisting of a fungus and an alga living in partnership," (Chinery 1977: 54). In order to truly see lichen, you must look at the relationship between the parts that make up a lichen rather than the parts themselves. Lichens "confuse our concept of identity and force us to question where one organism stops and another begins," (Sheldrake 2020: 80).





eating

Theorist Jane Bennett (2010: 112) advocates for “vibrant matter,” where we see “matter as vibrant, vital, energetic, lively.” Matter in the form of food is a perfect example of this as “eating constitutes a series of mutual transformations between human and nonhuman materials,” (Bennett 2010: 40). In a garden, you participate in the seeding, growing and caring of a plant which you then harvest from, prepare and eat. You are entangled in the whole process, in “an infinite one-anotherness,” (Bulley 2021: 159-160) with other species and beings.

Do you become part of the plant? Or does the plant become you?





digging for gold

a young wee robin came and pecked at the sole of my shoe whilst I sat eating crackers. I think that he too was looking for lunch. Socialising with us in the polytunnel over time, he visited me again just last week. He fluttered up near my hands, still hunting for morsels.





If the garden could speak, what would it say?





"Is gardening an art form? If it is, it's the kind of art I like, bedded in the material, nearly domestic, subject to happenstance and weather," – Olivia Laing (2020: 126).





is there really such a thing as a weed?



listen

sense

attune

gather

embed

nurture

remind





an invitation for the senses

I invite you to go to a forest or wooded area. Allow your body to guide you to a tree, noticing what attracts your attention.

Find a spot underneath the tree. You may wish to lean against the tree. You are welcome to take several deep breaths as you arrive in this space and noticing what is around you.

When you feel ready, you can imagine what it might be like to be a tree. You may wish to close your eyes.

Draw your attention to your feet, imaging that these are like the roots. Adjust your feet as needed, so that you feel grounded and connected to the space below you. Notice how the earth is supporting you. Next, imagine that your legs and abdomen are like the trunk and main body of the tree. Becoming aware of how strong and powerful you are in the forest. You are able to withstand high winds and storms. You may begin to raise your arms, so that you start to feel what it might be like to have branches. You may wish to sway in the breeze, or simply feel your limbs in the air. Next, you may stretch out your fingers and look up to the sky and forest canopy. You can now imagine what it may feel like to turn your leaves towards the sun. Take several deeper breaths and notice what it feels like to be a mature, grounded being that is part of the forest.

What are the trees telling you?



“a knowledge that comes from being and listening in relation; one that is earned from kinship and clan ... Gardening, then, is a practise of sustained noticing ... it is not about having a *garden*. It is not about growing food or flowers but instead about developing our sense of how ecosystems work - and working with, not against them. And since no plant necessarily needs human help to grow if the habitat is right, it seems to me that gardening is less about growing plants than it is about growing your own understanding of how they best live. In which case, the garden is you,”
– Victoria Adukwei Bulley 2021: 159-160).




part three



grounding principles

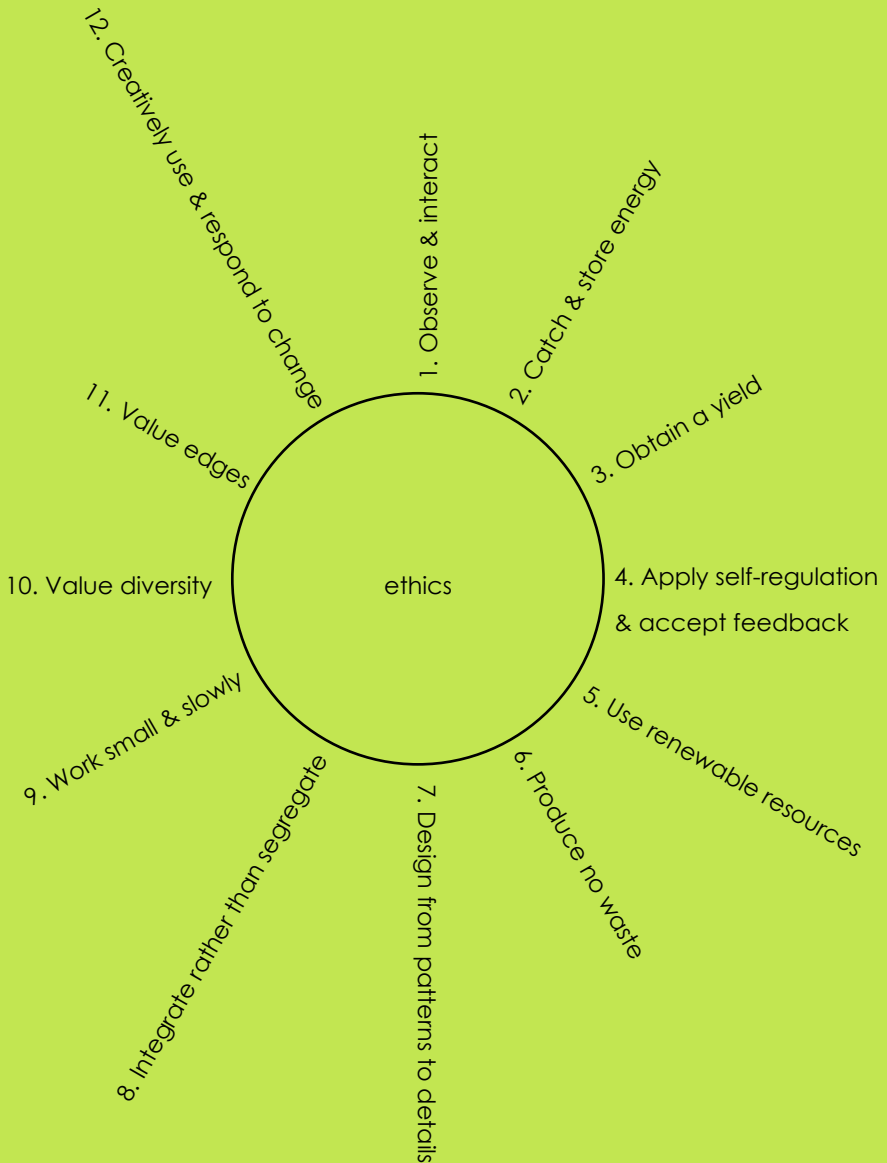




"If we want things to change,
we will need to evolve new
'ground rules' for the future,"
– Suzi Gablik (1991: 118).

grounding principles for socially engaged art practice

adapted from David Holmgren's permaculture principles (Permaculture Association 2021):



grounding principles for socially engaged art projects

adapted from David Holmgren's permaculture principles (Permaculture Association 2021):

1. Observe & interact: Listen. Ask questions. Take notice. Use all of your senses. Be curious. Look for social and natural patterns. Take notes. Draw. Write. Capture. Respond to what you discover.

2. Catch & store energy: Gather ideas and leave them to compost. Plant seeds for activities or projects further down the line. Find ways to save resources and gather ideas as they come to you. Back up your work. Build financial sources and funds for your project. Notice and honour your own energy patterns. Look after yourself to maintain your own energy and momentum for the duration of the project.

3. Obtain a yield: Focus on the quality of the process as well as the outcomes. Think about how to build community and connection. Think about what you value in a project and what you are working towards together. Consider yields such as wellbeing, creativity, social inclusion and so on.

4. Apply self-regulation & accept feedback: Reflect. Analyse. Evaluate. Notice your successes and where you can do better. Create a rough schedule. Make a plan. Communicate. Respond to feedback from those you work with. Remember the process is iterative - experiment, reflect, adapt, repeat.

5. Use renewable resources: Consider the different forms of energy you use in a project. Find ways to use tools or resources for multiple purposes. Use what nature generously provides.

6. Produce no waste: Reduce, reuse, repair, recycle, compost. Invest in quality materials. Think about the full life cycles of materials and objects.

7. Design from patterns to details: Think about the bigger picture. Think holistically. Consider the patterns of how you and others work. Explore patterns you may wish to change.

8. Integrate rather than segregate: Consider how elements and factors of a project support and impact each other. Create networks and connections between different groups and organisations in the places you are working in. Consider how to benefit and support one another. Remember the relationships between individuals are just as vital as the individuals themselves. Remember that co-operation and collaboration can achieve a lot.

9. Work small & slowly: Give yourself as much time as possible. Start small. One step at a time. Don't take on too much initially. Learnt to trust the process. Be patient. Working small enables you to respond to local needs. Working slowly enables you to see the results and effects of decisions play out.

10. Value diversity: Consider that everyone and everything has something to contribute. Know that a variety of experiences, perspectives and backgrounds are vital to a project.. Choose polyculture over monoculture. Promote and value diversity Remember that diversity helps with resilience and flexibility.

11. Value edges: Remember that the edge can be the most productive and magical terrain. Think outside the box. Consider the edges as spaces where things come together. Explore the edges of your own practice and where you can collaborate with others.

12. Creatively use & respond to change: Work together to plan for change. Take notice. Be flexible and adaptable. Accept that things are going to keep changing. Consider how what you do now can change the future.





endings

references

Bennett, J. (2010) *Vibrant Matter: a political ecology of things*. United States: Duke University Press

Bishop, C. (2012) *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*. London: Verso

Böhm, K. and Feenstra, W. (2019) 'Introduction // Rural Art is...'. In *The Rural*. ed. by Myvillages. London: Whitechapel Gallery and The MIT Press, 12-19

Borland, C. (2021) *In Relation to Linum* [online]. Available from <<https://www.patricia-fleming.com/christine-borland-in-relation-to-linum>> [22 November 2021]

Bulley, V. A. (2021) 'What we know, what we grow at the end of the world'. In *In the Garden: Essays on Nature and Growing*. London: Daunt Books, 149-160

Chinery, M. (1977) *The Natural History of the Garden*. Glasgow: Fontana

Day, J. (2021) 'Companion Planting'. In *In the Garden: Essays on Nature and Growing*. London: Daunt Books, 43-52

Enough! and Centre for Human Ecology (2021) *Degrowth in Scotland: Degrowing the economy, Regrowing our lives*. Course Handbook. Available from <https://www.enough.scot/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/562_Degrowth_Course_Booklet_DI_GITAL.pdf> [04 November 2021]

Evans, M. (2020) *Becoming Sensor in the Planthropocene: An interview with Natasha Myers* [online]. Available from <<https://culanth.org/fieldsights/becoming-sensor-an-interview-with-natasha-myers>> [05 November 2021]

Farmerama Radio (2021) *Farmerama* [podcast]. Episode 2 'Landed Part 2: Re-storying the Landscape'. Available from <<https://farmerama.co/episode/landed-part2/>> [04 November 2021].

Fulton, H. (2010) *Mountain Time Human Time*. Milano: Edizioni Charta

Gablik, S. (1991) *The Reenchantment of Art*. London: Thames and Hudson

Gablik, S. (1995) 'Connective Aesthetics'. In *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*, Lacy, S. (ed.) (1995). Washington: Bay Press

Gorell Barnes, L. (2015) *Companion planting the allotment project* [online]. Available from <<http://www.lucigorellbarnes.co.uk/companion-planting-continuing-the-allotment-project/>> [13 March 2021]

Gorell Barnes, L. (2021) *Companion Planting* [interview by I. McLeish] Online, 25 September 2021

Grace, M. (2018) *How to Not Always Be Working: A toolkit for creativity and radical self-care*. New York: HarperCollins

Guzmán, F. (2018) 'Interview with Federico Guzmán' In *Impossible Glossary*. Collaborative Arts Partnership Programme: Hablarenarte, 104-109.

Haraway, D. (2016) *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. United States: Duke University Press

Hickey-Moody, A. C. (2020) 'New Materialism, Ethnography, and Socially Engaged Practice: Space-Time Folds and the Agency of Matter'. *Qualitative Inquiry* 26 (7), 724-732

Ingold, T. (2011) *Being Alive: Essays on Movement, Knowledge and Description*. Oxon: Routledge

Ingold, T. (2013) *Making: Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture*. Oxon: Routledge

Laing, O. (2020) *Funny Weather: Art in an Emergency*. London: Picador

Lillie, J. et al. (2020) *The Relationship is the Project: Working with Communities*. Australia: Brow Books

Lord, A. (2021) *The Neighbouring Orchard* [interview by I. McLeish] Online, 24 September 2021

Matarasso, F. (2019) *A Restless Art*. London: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

Mitchell, C. (2021) 'Breaking out of lockdown'. *West Highland Free Press* 15 October 2021

National Trust (2020) *Noticing Nature Report* [online]. Available from <<https://nt.global.ssl.fastly.net/documents/noticing-nature-report-feb-2020.pdf>> [27 November 2021]

Paterson, K. (2021) *Katie Paterson for SAIC's Visiting Artists Program*. Presentation delivered online for School of the Art Institute of Chicago on 28 September 2021. Recording available online <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-rdSR8lwEE&list=PLdKqJ2L7B-y3kUJRDgy9vCyeEAifjIVtJ&index=3&t=325s>> [06 November 2021]

Permaculture Association (2021) *Permaculture Principles* [online]. Available from <<https://knowledgebase.permaculture.org.uk/principles>> [21 November 2021]

Plant, L. (2021) *Tending the Shy Weed* [interview by I. McLeish] Online, 05 November 2021

Plant, L. (2021) *On Comfort* [online]. Available from <<https://www.socialartlibrary.org/library/to-change-75ntb-ffibj-n5b7h-hw3zw-tp5gp-z3s6z-yzn8s-m45cy-ds54y-az7ms-9d99f-dx35b-tgssx-r58yl-3cwxc-np3zf?rq=garden>> [07 November 2021]

Puig de la Bellacasa, M. (2017) *Matters of Care: Speculative Ethics in More Than Human Worlds*. USA: University of Minnesota Press

Sanders-Bustle, L. (2020). 'Social Practice as Arts-based Methodology: Exploring Participation, Multiplicity, and Collective Action as Elements of Inquiry.' *Art/Research International: A Transdisciplinary Journal*, 5 (1), 47–70

Sheldrake, M. (2020) *Entangled Life: How Funghi make our worlds, change our minds, and shape our futures*. London: The Bodley Head, Penguin Random House

Shepherd, N. (2011) *The Living Mountain*. Edinburgh: Canongate Books

Speight, E. (2013) 'How dare you rubbish my town!: place listening as an approach to socially engaged art within the uk urban regeneration contexts'. *Open Arts Journal* 1, 25-35

Thomson, A. (2018) *A Scots Dictionary of Nature*. Glasgow: Saraband

Watkins, M. (2019) *Mutual accompaniment and the creations of the Commons*. United States: Yale

Wenger, E. (1998) *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Wenger-Trayner, E. and Wenger-Trayner, B. (2020) *Learning to Make a Difference: Value Creation in Social Learning Spaces*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

figures and illustrations

All photographs, drawings, figures and illustrations were created by Isabel McLeish (2021). Notes are included under figures and illustrations where appropriate.





Thank you to all who supported,
participated and engaged

Special thanks to
Viewfield Garden Collective
for welcoming me to their garden



www.isabelmcleish.com

@isabelmcleishart

thank you

