

Practice International

Stockholm Assembly

**Iaspis
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Thursday, 14 November 2013, 10:00 – 1:00 PM

Setting: three clusters of tables are installed in the space and arranged in rows. Each is covered with white paper. Chairs are assembled around each table. In front of each place at the table lies a marker pen and a copy of the workshop protocols. A small table for playback equipment is positioned close to the participant tables. A mixer stands on this table. The mixer has stereo inputs from the facilitators' laptop and stereo outputs to two PA loudspeakers facing the tables. The space also contains a flip-chart easel with paper. Tables with food and refreshments are assembled outside of the room. The room should be quiet but allow for some ambient noise from outside.

Prior to the 10:00 am start time, members of Ultra-red greet participants as they arrive in the space.

The facilitators invite those present to take a seat at one of the tables. Once everyone is seated the doors will be closed to avoid further disruption.

The Ultra-red facilitators assume their places.

An audio recording will be made of the event.

I. INTRODUCTION

[10:00 - 10:30]

ULTRA-RED [XC] - **Good morning. Before we begin our listening session this morning we would like to invite everyone to say a few words of introduction about themselves but rather than in terms of who we are, we invite everyone to say something about how they come to be here in relation to the themes of internationalism and solidarity suggested in the context of this conference.**

[Participants and facilitators briefly introduce themselves]

ULTRA-RED [XC] - [After introductions are finished] **Now we have all said something about ourselves we would like to give a very brief introduction to Ultra-red of which we are three of twelve members. Ultra-red is an international group which works at the intersection of sound art and politics. Using pedagogical methods of listening to interrogate social conditions, struggle and other modes of collective process, our work questions given binary divisions between the aesthetic and the political. Collective listening, dialogue and reflection are political actions that can both contribute to, as well as challenge collective organising and relationships. Over the past twenty years we have worked within and across a widely distributed network of communities organising around public housing, health, education, antiracism and migration.**

Ultra-red [EP] - **This morning we invite you to take part in a process in which we will listen together, reflect upon what we hear, and discuss the themes that organise our responses to what we hear. After one hour we will take a short break and then resume our discussion with the aim of identifying specific themes that have emerged through listening together. It is Ultra-red's desire that during our brief time together in listening, dialogue and reflection that we may collectively set some of the terms and leave some themes, questions or proposals to the ongoing work beyond this conference over the next years.**

ULTRA-RED [SA] - **We encourage all participants to make contributions and listen carefully to the sound recordings and to each other. At the end of today's event there will be time set aside for everyone to choose a theme with which they identify or are drawn to. Therefore, it will be crucial for people to keep in mind their own investments and interests as well as listen to the investments of others since these will form the basis for our discussions throughout our time together.**

II. LISTENING SESSION

[10:30 - 11:30]

ULTRA-RED [XC] – **The procedure for our listening will be as follows: we will begin by reading through the protocols on the hand out in front of you. These protocols will guide our collective listening to a series of ten sound recordings. After each sound recording we will invite you to note your reflections on what you heard on the paper in front of you. We will have two minutes to do this after each sound recording. We therefore request that you only listen and not write during the playback of the recordings. Once all ten sound files have been played we will collect responses to the question “What did you hear?” We will record these word-for-word on the flipchart, once we have exhausted all of the sounds we will take a short break for refreshments and to read the contributions on the flip chart papers.**

ULTRA-RED **We will now hear the first recording.**

[Play the first recording.]

ULTRA-RED – **You now have two minutes to write on the piece of paper in front of you your responses to the question; what did you hear? Please begin. What did you hear?**

[After two minutes.] **Time.**

ULTRA-RED – **We will now hear the second recording.**

[Repeat these instructions until all ten sound recordings have been listened to.]

[After the final two minutes.] **Time. Thank you.**

ULTRA-RED – **We now invite you to share with all of us your responses to the question “What did you hear?”**

[Ultra-red facilitators record verbatim all responses until all sounds and contributions are exhausted]

[11:30 - 11:45] Break 20 minutes.

[Ultra-red fix flipchart papers to the walls]

III. GROUP ANALYSIS

[11:45 - 12:15]

ULTRA-RED [EP] – **We now have [amount of time remaining] to analyse the responses to the sound recordings and develop themes from what we have heard. At your tables we ask you firstly to organise what you heard as a group. We do not wish to prescribe how you do this, you can use any means or method you wish.**

Do any themes emerge?

A theme can be understood as a point of convergence in your reflections; what you heard in common. However, a theme can also be understood as a point of divergence; what you heard differently – even to the point of hearing opposing things. Tensions within divergent understandings are often far more useful for exploring themes than consensus in points of convergence therefore we ask that we focus on identifying the themes of divergence prompted by our question; What did you hear? We ask that one person in the group take notes of your discussions. With five minutes of this exercise remaining Ultra-red will prompt each group so that sufficient time remains for you to collectively agree on what you wish to feed back to the wider workshop. Appoint one person from the group to feed back.

[12:15 - 12:45]

Will the groups please report which themes they have identified and how?

[Ultra-red facilitate contributions and begin to assemble a list of themes and the corresponding divergences which gave rise to them.

[Synthesis or refinement may be necessary here if themes are particularly similar or some are unclear. UR facilitators should try to narrow the themes as much as possible]

When the groups have no more themes to contribute:

Is everyone happy that these are the themes you have identified?

[Make any amendments as necessary]

IV. PLANNING FOR SESSION TWO & CONCLUSION

ULTRA-RED [SA] **We would now like to invite thoughts and suggestions on how you think we might proceed from here for our second gathering on Saturday?**

[Note down responses]

To close today's workshop we would like once more to ask the question "What have you heard?" What thoughts or feedback do you have on our common experience of collective listening and the ensuing reflections and dialogue?

Thank you

[1:00]

CLOSE

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Thursday, 14 November 2013 End of Session One (1:00pm)

PRODUCED THEMATICS: GROUP ONE

- SOUNDS OF STRUGGLE - Why this interests us and how do we use it? What is our identification of / with struggles (our own struggles or others struggles)? Is there an instrumentalisation of struggles by artists? What of the aesthetisation of sound?
- PUBLIC SPACE - Types of recordings, street, daily life / interviews, one to ones etc.
- INDIVIDUAL / COLLECTIVE - What is the relation between these? How is this also gendered?
- EXPERIENCE OF MATERIALITY IN RELATION TO CONTENT

PRODUCED THEMATICS: GROUP TWO

- POTENTIAL OF IMMATERIAL SPACES - More potential than concrete
- HOW TO ORGANISE CONTRADICTION - How to produce a contra / diction? Sound vs language as a contradiction
- LEARN OR UNLEARN TO LISTEN

PRODUCED THEMATICS: GROUP THREE

- AMBIGUITY OF PUBLIC SPACE - How to negotiate the public within the private? And vice versa?
- TONE OF VOICE - How people respond to tones of voice and what do they mean? Judgement, hierarchy, translation and language, space of enunciation.

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Saturday, 16 November 2013, 10:00 – 1:00 PM

Setting: a semi-circle of chairs is installed in the space facing a wall. On the wall are three annotated flipchart papers from Workshop One. Prior to the 10:00am start time members of Ultra-red greet participants as they arrive in the space. Each participant is handed a copy of the protocol for the workshop.

Around the room are other tables, pens, flipchart paper for later use.

The facilitators invite those present to take a seat at one of the chairs. Once everyone is seated the doors will be closed to avoid further disruption.

The Ultra-red facilitators assume their places.

I. INTRODUCTION

[10:00 - 10:15]

ULTRA-RED - **Introductions and welcome.**

II. RESTATING, RE-NEGOTIATING THEMES

[10:15 - 10:45]

ULTRA-RED - To begin, can we take a short moment to refamiliarise ourselves with what we have produced together in the first workshop?

Can we see any repetition of themes or places where themes can be condensed or collapsed into each other? Are we happy that these themes are the ones that we will take forward in this workshop? Do we need to eliminate some of these themes to aid that process?

Much has been heard over the last two days both in the context of our workshop and the wider conference. The question has been asked; *what kind of listening have we performed together?*

Is there anything else that you have heard from these processes of listening that now need to be added as themes to those that we have already identified?

Ultra-red writes on flipchart paper the final agreed themes.

III. SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS TO PROCESS THEMATICS

[10:45 - 11:45]

ULTRA-RED - From this selection of themes, please choose one and group yourself together with others who have chosen the same theme as you.

Ultra-red, through conversation based on what we have heard, proposes the following five questions:

- 1) Is it possible to conceive of a static internationalism, one that is a practice not dependent on the movement of agents throughout the global art world?
- 2) 'Who are your people'? (Ella Baker)
- 3) How can art contribute to understanding globalisation and how can it go beyond connection to create agency?
- 4) Who is making friends with who?
- 5) Whose fucking pussy is it? (Deize Tigrana, 'A Buceta É Minha')

Ultra-red asks that each group reflects upon the above questions and uses them to interrogate your chosen themes towards a series of statements, questions, tensions, contradictions, problematics etc.

Break [11:45 - 12:00]

IV. PRODUCE, CIRCULATE

[12:00 - 1:00]

To finalise this process, we propose that we commit our common reflections to paper in the form of a record which speaks both to the ongoing questions and processes of Practice International and our own investments outside of this gathering.

We ask that each group now organises itself to write up a document that contains the group's responses to its interrogation of its chosen theme.

We propose that this statement of record be printed and given out to all participants at the conclusion of this workshop. We will include in this statement copies of the Protocols from Workshops One and Two.

Ultra-red collates, prints and distributes compiled responses and protocols.

Thank you

[1:00]

CLOSE

(4) **Practice International** Session Two

Reflected Upon Themes

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Saturday, 16 November 2013, 11.30pm

**WORKSHOP TWO: REFLECTED UPON THEMES FROM SESSION
ONE FOR GROUP WORK**

Unlearning + Learning + Re-learning

/Formats/

Public Space / Governmentality / Occlusion

Tone of Voice +

Contradiction / Contra-diction

Aesthetisation of Sound + Struggle

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Saturday, 16 November 2013, End Of Session (1:00pm)

THEMATIC GROUP: Unlearning

Art is a language for learning and un-learning, not necessarily in that order.
Or necessarily in that order?

What are the conditions for learning?

A: Interdependence? (you cannot do it alone)

B. Realizing the horror of the ego?

What are the conditions to unlearn?

A: Taking on the negative?

Art as a tool for learning and unlearning

Art as a tool for finding one's struggle, finding one's capacity.

We need to care a lot about the professional field: i.e., share some similarities and difference in the professional field...

Two points resonate...to unlearn to be an artist means to connect to everyday life, second point: internationalism and where it comes from means to identify classes and one's group or constituency...what is the relation to those who are not artists. It's not easy.

Denial of (base) desires is an opportunity to unlearn or relearn. John Cage and the idea of ego-reduction, desire, and taste.

Doing with less.

THEMATIC GROUP: Contra-diction

Local & internationalism

International & -''-

Presence & Absence

Why are we making friends?

Listening for the antagonistic

Silence as an addition / contribution

Time & No-time

THEMATIC GROUP: **Tone Of Voice** (Performed Response)

