

**Audience and the curatorial:
Facilitating a resident-curated
booklet in Poikilo Museum.**

Praxis MFA thesis

By Florence Ria Andrews

Abstract

I explore audience participation in the curatorial role through a resident-curated exhibition at Poikilo museum in Kouvola. In this thesis, I explore the artistic interests and ideas of the residents-curators and how to use participation as a method to expand the curatorial role to involve the public. To organize the practical part of my thesis, I begin as an observer during the planning of URB 2020, an urban arts festival organized by Kiasma Theatre where 2 non-professional curators curated the festival. From my observations at the festival, I examine what the museum as an institution represents to the public and how participation can help improve the public's understanding of the museum and also the museum's understanding of the public. URB 2020 provided a good foundation to see all the factors that are to be involved when the audience is actively a part of an institution. It also helped me explore the relationship between the curator and the audience. Based on both the festival and the questions it brought up, I facilitate a method to introduce the audience to the curatorial role through the resident-curated booklet. The booklet is a compilation of five exhibitions curated by residents of Kouvola. The project was organized in Autumn-Spring 2022-2023 and was exhibited at the Poikilo Museum in Kouvola. First, I interviewed three museum workers; then I interviewed five residents who represent various key demographics of the city; finally I invited the same five residents to curate their own version of an upcoming exhibition in Poikilo Museum - Überhund - Taiteen Kiehtovat Koirat from 2nd February 2023 to 29th April 2023. The booklet was then presented during the Überhund - Taiteen Kiehtovat Koirat exhibition.

Audience and the curatorial:

Facilitating a resident-curated booklet in Poikilo Museum.

By Florence Ria Andrews

Academy of Fine Arts, University of the Arts, Helsinki

Date of Submission: 5.04.2023

Professors: Anna-Kaisa Rastenberger, Kaija Kaitavuori

Supervisors: Erja Salo, Joonas Lahtinen

Examiners: Johanna Tuukkanen, Satu Herrala



Acknowledgements

I would like to thank everybody who have been patiently listening and waiting for this thesis to be finally ready. I am especially grateful for the guidance of my supervisor Joonas. A special thanks to the support provided by my professors Anna-Kaisa and Kaija. Thank you to Erja, my supervisor for the feedback during the thesis and to Mari from Poikilo Museum. I'd like to thank Jussi and Joshua for their constant support through all the maybe's, if's and but's.

Contents

One: Introduction

Audience and the curatorial	4
My perspective	5

Two: The URB festival

URB 2020	8
Feedback from the curators	9

Three: Participation in the museum

The museum and the public	14
Audience	18
Curator	20
Participation	24
Theories of participation	24
Participatory works	27

Four: The resident-curated exhibition

Location: Kouvola	30
The museum: Poikilo Museum	30
The exhibition	33
Resident-curators	34
The booklet	41

Five: Reflections and conclusion

Reflections	44
Conclusion	45

Appendix I	48
------------	----

Appendix I	48
------------	----

Appendix III	48
--------------	----

Bibliography	48
--------------	----

One: Introduction

Audience and the curatorial

In the essay *In Museums We Trust* 2022, Yvette Mutumba sums up the grounds for this thesis—that it is impossible to work in a museum without decision-making of one sort or another. But that does not preclude being receptive to the idea of other perspectives that involve different criteria and hierarchies.¹ Positioning myself as the curator, I explore these “other perspectives” that Mutumba mentions with the audience.

In this thesis, I explore audience participation in the curatorial role through a resident-curated exhibition at Poikilo museum in Kouvola. I begin my research as an observer during the planning of URB 2020, an urban arts festival organized by Kiasma Theatre where 2 non-professional curators curated the festival. I then examine what the museum as an institution represents to the public and how participation is a method to improve the public’s understanding of the museum and also the museum’s understanding of the public. Next I discuss how the role of the audience and role of the curator position themselves in the institution and in relation to each other. Finally, I present the resident-curated booklet.

The resident-curated booklet is a compilation of five exhibitions curated by residents of Kouvola. The project was organized in Autumn-Spring 2022-2023 and was exhibited at the Poikilo Museum in Kouvola. First, I interviewed three museum workers; then I interviewed five residents who represent various key demographics of the city; finally I invited the same five residents to curate their own version of an upcoming exhibition in Poikilo Museum - *Überhund - Taiteen Kiehtovat Koirat* from 2nd February 2023 to 29th April 2023. The booklet was then presented during the *Überhund - Taiteen Kiehtovat Koirat* exhibition.

The audience/visitor is a key topic in my thesis. The more I think about the role of the visitor in an exhibition, the more questions start to pile in. How aware are residents of what is happening in the museum(s) in their city/town and what are their opinions/thoughts about it? How active and interactive is the role of the

¹ Mutumba, 2022.

curator with the audience before and after an exhibition? How can participative practices be relevant to strengthen community and museum relationships through the curator? How, more specifically, can participation be adapted into the curatorial role in order to improve the community-museum relationship?

During my studies at the Praxis programme from 2019, we explored the practice of curating, its histories, artistic histories, its developments, its nuances et al.—which provided the basis to form my own practice. The primary entities in the curatorial practice are the artist, the art, the space and the audience. But in my actual working practice, the audience seems to have become secondary in consideration. When I worked as a writer in advertising from 2016-2018, my role demanded that I constantly have the audience in mind while also catering to the client. Although the goal of advertising and curating are completely different, both practices result in audience engagement in their own respective ways. I noticed that an equal consideration of the audience was not present in my curatorial practice.

My focus is on the relationship between the audience and different factors of the art world that I encounter in my practice—the artist, the art, the museum, the gallery, artistic texts, accessibility to art, etc and most importantly to me, the curator. To sum up this thesis, I explore the relationship between curatorial role and audience. I want to understand the audiences' relationship or lack of relationship to the museum and other art spaces. While doing so, I want to help explore and develop their relationship to art as they curate their own exhibitions.

My perspective

I came across the role of the art curator towards the end of high school in 2010 when I visited the Venkatappa Art Gallery in Bangalore, India. I understood the curator as the keeper and preserver of historical artifacts and important artworks. Although we had avid painters and sculptors (none of them professionally) in my family back in India, we did not visit any gallery or museum that had works of people who were alive, so to say; museums seemed like they were a place of history and tourism. My idea of art that had any value were only

artworks by people in the past or people who had money². Only recently, in the past 7-8 years as I started exploring my future plans, did I recognize my curatorial practice.

I often find myself between the audience and the artist. My role is to create the best possible platform to present the artwork in, allowing the audience to engage and connect with the art and to an extent, the artist. Very quickly, I noticed the tendency of art being a bit more socially accessible and approachable by other artists and art workers than those not working in the art industry. These were observations made both in India and Finland. In Finland, the extent of my social life during my studies in Helsinki was limited mostly to artists and artworkers. The term artworld itself was coined by Arthur Danto in 1964 as informal groups of art-related people³. In many cases the status of the work as a work of art depends on the opinion, cooperation, and recognition in the artworld⁴. This made me question what sort of relationship does the audience, those who aren't working in the artworld, have with art and what my role, as a curator, is in it?

As a curator, I rarely interact directly with the audience while curating. This interaction perhaps only happens after the exhibition is open, through audience feedback or if the exhibition explicitly calls for it. It isn't a practice embedded in the curator's role. The role of the artist is a bit more obvious to their audience as they view their art works and other engaging parts of an exhibition including artist talks, studio visits, etc. But the role of the curator can often go by unnoticed especially to those not part of the artworld. I recall the discussions during my studies with the Praxis programme about the various responsibilities that may or may not be included in the curator's role. I say this based on how often I get asked what it is exactly that I do as curator. Perhaps transparency in the curator's role can be the starting point in how the community can understand and eventually maybe even affect the curatorial process.

² This refers to how my family says that only people who have money get into the arts. I might refer to my family as middle class.

³ Danto, 1964, 571-584.

⁴ Ursyn, 2015, 6 & 70.

I like exhibitions where the audience are comfortable enough to explore and own their space as the audience. I believe that participation can be used not just by the artist but also by the curator to create a more inclusive and caring practice. Participation has been around since the 1900s⁵, and still there is so much room for its growth. Thus, the subject of my thesis is easily formed. To execute it took a longer route.

⁵ Bishop, 2012, 1.

Two: The URB festival

URB 2020

The URB festival is an annual urban arts festival run by Kiasma Theater since 2000. It is held in various locations in Helsinki. Since its inception, Mikael Aaltonen was the festival's director, who also executed its curatorial requirements. After URB 2018, Aaltonen left their post. A new producer was brought on board to Kiasma theater for URB 2020 to be solely in charge of the URB festival. The senior producer and the marketing head of Kiasma Theatre were part of the production team. URB 2019 was organized by the in-house production team at Kiasma Theatre. During my introduction to the festival, I recall the conversations with the production team where they reminisced about how wonderful URB used to be in its heydays. The problem was that it is that same audience that they are continuing to reach out to, the audience that have since then outgrown their "youth" status. The production team expressed that they want to reach out to younger audiences as the years go by⁶. To address this issue, URB 2020 had an open call for curators as a paid position:

"URB festival is searching for young members to join the festival's programme team! Is there something missing from the Helsinki Urban culture scene that you'd like to fix? We are looking for the representatives of the new generation to share and realize their best event ideas with us."⁷

By 5th December 2019, a team consisting of Walle Kiikeri, Sasu Koivisto, Simeoni Juoperi and Niko Wearden were chosen. I was also present in the team as an observer to gather data for my thesis. Soon after, it was decided that Niko Wearden would be part of a later URB festival due to restrictions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Simeoni worked in the dance industry and had prior experience working with the production team and the URB festival. Kiikeri and Koivisto had no such previous experience of the production team or the festival. And because of that, it was decided that the two new curators could take more of a lead on the festival. Another fact to note is that Kiikeri and Koivisto knew

⁶ Sara Hirn, Sanni Paluja, Jonna Strandberg: From personal communication.

⁷ Taken from @urbfestivaali instagram page. Post from 25 Sept, 2019.

each other before and were friends. They were the youngest in the team at 20 and 22 years respectively.

Feedback from the curators

I received feedback from both Walle Kiikeri and Sasu Koivisto by sending them a set of questions in September 2020 regarding their experience as curators for URB 2020. They replied via email. All of the following references are from the email communication with them.

While settling into their new role as curators, I wanted to know their understanding of the role. Walle Kiikeri said that he was a little lost when it came to the art curator's role. According to him, it involves having specific knowledge and understanding of the art that is being presented. Sasu Koivisto's idea of a curator was that of a trade. A trade that 1. bring(s) individual parts of subject matter together so that a connection or coherence between these parts is also recognizable for a spectator with no curatorial capacity, and 2. create(ing) a new whole of some kind, a scheme or a frame of reference for which it is natural to present things together in a reasonable or in other way intriguing manner, but also which existence (the whole) itself is precious. I found it important when Koivisto brought in the point about the "subject matter" which was the festival, it made me feel that he was aware of his contribution to the curator's role from a spectator's point of view. "I also understood that I was expected to possess an insight in youth culture of which importance for the festival is paramount." Koivisto added.

The curators had to work with the production team at every meeting. There were no separate meetings between just the curators. I assume this was also because of the lack of experience in the role for both the curators. Sasu Koivisto said that because they worked together as one team, he found it easy and fruitful to ask for aid and to access the resources of the production team that was formed by the individuals with more working experience out of the two teams. Kiikeri also mentioned that the dynamics during the meetings were quite pleasant and there was a lot of mutual understanding. But at the same time, he also felt like they lost credibility at first because they changed their ideas often and didn't have a clear direction with the project.

Kiikeri wished that there could have been more mentoring from the production team. Perhaps also more transparency from the producers on how they opinionated his and Koivisto's performance during planning. This would have been helpful since in the end there was some dissatisfaction expressed from the production team over the implementation of the curators' ideas. "We should have had more 'homework' before coming to the (online) meetings." Kiikeri added.

Despite the adjustment to the role and establishing a smooth working relationship with the production team, the festival's programme was ready on schedule. Unfortunately the COVID-19 pandemic had just started its waves of lockdown and isolation. The URB festival has always been planned to include performances and exhibitions to be experienced in person. The unpremeditated lockdown restrictions required the whole project to be transferred online if it was to remain accessible to the public. This situation was challenging to everyone, especially the young curators. There was a lack of time to guide the curators on how to navigate such sudden situations but also since they were fairly new to the role, there was reluctance to put an overload of expectations on them too. This in turn led to the production team taking more control over the programme for the exhibition. "Lots of trust was provided in the beginning, however this changed a bit when the plans changed at April times (COVID19 lockdown). That's when I feel like our role decreased in terms of priority" commented Kiikeri on the working relationship with the production team. Even so, the curators commended the production team in being able to handle the situation smoothly. The producer Sara Hirn commented that perhaps more time in training the curators would have worked out better but that's another responsibility altogether⁸.

Towards the end of the interview, I asked the curators about their opinion of the fee that they were paid. Both the curators said that they would have probably worked with the festival even if they weren't paid for it considering the other "capital" generated like the work experience and contacts to mention a few. Koivisto added that when it comes to the field of creative working, like other

⁸ Sara Hirn's interview.

youth his age, he finds it important that the youth be paid, just as adults. It made me think of how time is valued and for whom in participatory activities, particularly in the creative field and how they are compensated. When is it necessary to compensate? For example, in psychological research some surveys offer some form of incentive to the participant. Should then all work be compensated in some manner if it requires some sort of input from participants? This of course is another research topic in itself about funding and value in the creative industry which isn't the point of this paper. But coming back on course, curating a festival is a bit more than just participative, it's definitely a job in itself.

My observations

I was present during almost all the meetings which took place between January and May 2020, both online and in person from a purely observational point of view. There was fresh, ambitious energy that was brought on from Walle Kiiikeri and Sasu Koivisto—exactly what the Kiasma theater production team was looking for. They presented new and interesting ideas almost at every meeting—building on growing on exactly what URB needed to be. The curators were presented with a budget right at the beginning. But this wasn't something that was always taken into consideration while planning by the curators. The production team was part of all meetings to give their input in regards to practicality and execution. But in the end, I felt as though the whole team worked as a team of curators would. There was no definite differentiation in the roles of producer and curator. The programme consisted of artists brought on board by both the production team and the curators. The project was challenging as it required the new curators to be introduced to their role and responsibilities. Working together with the production team seemed to be quite helpful for the curators. The curators seemed very eager and ready to make the festival a success.

In my observation, there was perhaps the excess of expectation and lack of boundaries from both the production team and the curators. It seemed that there were a lot of mixed opinions during the process of planning the festival. I strongly felt that a list of roles and responsibilities would have helped guide the new curators, as with any job undertaking even if they were professionals. My

understanding was that the producers expected the new curators to understand the nuances of the role over the first few meetings, at least to an extent. An introduction to the role in detail would have been helpful to the new curators or perhaps the new curators could have had a professional curator as a mentor. This was realized by both producer and curator as they mentioned in their interviews that some kind of training or mentorship would have helped create a more accurate understanding and execution of the role.

While discussing participation, Markus Miessen put forth a worry of both the public and the institution is that the participation of laypersons in art will be reflected with mediocrity and compromised quality of the institution.⁹ Considering that Kiasma is one of the largest contemporary art museums in Finland, I assume some concern of quality also led to the close monitoring by the production team. I also think it is part of the reason why the curators also felt comfortable working closely with the production team. My task was to find a way in which audience participation is contributing rather than jeopardizing.

URB's initial problem was that the festival had a lack of connection to the urban youth a.k.a their target audience. I wasn't too sure whether they did reach out to the audience they wanted to since the festival had to go digital, due to COVID restrictions. The data collected from the online festival showed us only how many people visited the website and from where.

From my observation, the URB 2020 reiterated the importance of the curators' role and also the contribution of the audience. My experience at the festival also emphasized the importance of defining roles and responsibilities within a working group. The festival created the basis to explore a way to make space for the audience in the curatorial process without the elimination of the professional role. It provided me with the factors to take into care while planning this resident-curated booklet—responsibilities, agency, value.

In the resident-curated booklet, I wanted the instructions to the residents to be simple, not complicated or time-consuming as a professional curators' might be. The instructions had to be easy to understand for all age groups that can

⁹ Miessen, 2011, 97.

express themselves. It had to be a method that can be repeated with ease alongside a curator's already existing role. The idea of the simple instructions were important for me also because of my limited language skills, especially in Kouvola where the resident-curated booklet takes place. Kouvola's dominant language is Finnish and people seem to be reluctant to exercise their English skills. I thought even if they weren't comfortable with an interview before the curation, I could still execute a simplified version of curating an exhibition with easy steps such as:

1. Pick 8-10 of your favorite works
2. Place them how you see best on the page.
3. Name your exhibition.

Taking all this into consideration is how I came up with the plan for the resident-curated booklet.

Three: Participation in the museum

The museum and the public

The dictionary definition of a museum is is a building where a large number of interesting and valuable objects, such as works of art or historical items, are kept, studied, and displayed to the public¹⁰. An official definition of the museum was recently released by the International Council of Museums, after 50 years since its last official definition:

“A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing.”¹¹

Although these definitions provide a very general and optimistic view on what a museum is or could be, in reality it isn't that easy to have a universal definition to describe how a museum functions. There are endless nuances in the changing global and local histories and current events and debates that reposition what a museum needs to be in society. Yvette Mutumba argues that while the idea of the museums is all very honorable, the question remains as to *why* museums deserve to be trusted¹².

Historically, collections of valued objects formed a part of the cultural accessories of power¹³. Tony Bennett further explains that in the 17th century, as opposed to using these objects to establish power among the general populace, it was intended for the popular and wealthier classes. During this time, Bennett also mentions that while the public might be welcome to the museum, it was envisaged as a place in which the working class would acquire

¹⁰ Collins Dictionary.

¹¹ ICOM, 2022.

¹² Mutumba, 2022.

¹³ Bennett, 1995, 27.

more civilized habits by imitating their betters. There has been growth from the archaic model of a museum. A more modern version of the class difference that a museum might be brought about by that of the artworld and the non-artworld. Though these traces of exclusivity thrive, the drive for museum spaces to be more inclusive still continues towards a more public's museum. It is also important to account for how the audience understands the growing and changing role of the museum. How else will the community become a user of the museum?

During the nineteenth century, education had been the prime function of the museum. The ideal museum was understood to be "the advanced school of self-instruction", and the place where teachers should "naturally go for assistance". By the 1920s this conviction, held so strongly by nineteenth-century thinkers in so many areas of intellectual and political life, was under attack. A new generation of curators was less interested in the public use of museums, and more interested in the accumulation of collections¹⁴. In current society, we have the museum educator whose focus is solely towards the museum's visitors, whereas the curator's focus is toward the museum's exhibitions and its collection.

A museum's exhibition work and audience work are often presented as separate areas of interest altogether. Repeated phrases like "a paradigm shift from collection-driven institutions to visitor-centered museums..."¹⁵ express the drive towards a public museum. But what does this mean exactly? The work with the public is usually handled by the museum educator or in the case of Poikilo Museum, the public work coordinator. This might include tours, workshops, artist talks, etc. What kind of channel is there for the audience to communicate back to the museum? How can the audience be considered during the making of the exhibition instead of only after?

Most museums receive audience feedback in some form or the other—talking to visitors during openings or at various points during the exhibition, written feedback forms, etc. But how much feedback is actually expressed by audience

¹⁴ Hooper-Greenhill, 1991, 25.

¹⁵ Anderson, 2004, 1-7.

members? The written feedback is a standard practice but unless a visitor is guided and specifically asked to fill out a feedback form, it is less likely to happen. Sometimes an easy polling format is used. In Pat Villeneuve's article *Considering Competing Values in Art Museum Exhibition Curation 2019*, she presents a generic hypothetical of how a museum deals with a problem, it is more likely that when the museum takes action in accordance to a complaint or suggestion, the museum is likely to act but without disrupting already existing systems¹⁶. Another possibility according to me is that perhaps it is a process that happens too slowly that by the time it is in practice, the goals (sometimes as short as 3 years) and needs have changed. The audience becomes an external result of the museum's exhibition. And URB decided to do just the opposite by involving the audience before the festival, giving them more agency in what is being exhibited and how.

Lorna Cruickshanks and Merel van der Vaart while exploring agency in participation put forth key questions:

“What shapes ideas of agency when it comes to involving audiences with collections research, exhibition making, conservation, or collecting? Who are the communities whose stake is valued, or that museums are willing and open to negotiate with? How might ideas of agency be influenced by the type of museum, collection, or discipline of an institution?”¹⁷

Hooper-Greenhill's volume *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge* 1997 and Stephen Weil's *Making Museums Matter* 2002 both stress on the importance of audience involvement and engagement to build value to the museum. So how do we serve a changing community and how open and accessible are the lines of communication between the community and the museum and in turn me, the curator? This kind of accessibility to the museum also comments on the value and agency of the audience.

Continuity is a key factor I take into consideration while planning the resident-curated booklet. It is important to me that the method I use can be

¹⁶ Villeneuve, 2019.

¹⁷ Cruickshanks and Van der Vaart, 2019.

easily replicated and used continuously. The process of having the residents curate provides them an insight to the workings of the museum, but it stops there. Whereas a continuous working method can initiate more long-term changes. This kind of exposure to the public would (hopefully) alter the character of internal connections and sources of expertise (in this case, on the potential audience), from tacit to more visible, and would thus intensify the impact of museums as part of a political and economic society, helping to synchronize the values between the humanistic and economic sectors¹⁸.

In the *Discussions about Museum Ethics in Finland 2016*, there is discussion on the Museum Code of Ethics published by International Council of Museums (ICOM) in which one of the statements read: Museums hold resources that provide opportunities for other public services and benefits. Satu Itkonen, the head of the public programmes in Ateneum Museum in Helsinki states that “although they have had the opportunity to be involved in many great cooperation projects between museums, the social and health sector and associations, they are short lived. Why on earth have these (participatory) projects not led to more extensive, long-term or permanent forms of co-operation?”¹⁹

Yuha Jung’s *The ignorant museum: Transforming the elitist museum into an inclusive learning place*(2014) explores a way to rethink their relationship to knowledge in order to reduce the elitist nature of museums²⁰. Jacques Rancière’s idea of equality is where everyone can be treated “in the way you respond to someone speaking to you and not to someone examining you: under the sign of equality”²¹. In *The Ignorant Art Museum: Beyond Meaning-making* 2018, Emilie Sitzia considers both Jung and Rancière when she proposes Hein’s constructivist model where the learner constructs her/his own knowledge and knowledge is created by the learner as a framework museums can adapt²². The emancipatory practices of an ignorant museum have the potential to bring about deep changes

¹⁸ Robbins, 2021, 48.

¹⁹ Itkonen, 2016.

²⁰ Jung, 2014, 272-291.

²¹ Rancière, 1991, 11.

²² Hein, 1998, 357-363.

in the relationship between art museums and the public, but also changes in society at large²³.

Participation is a method used by institutions to give more agency to the way audiences experience the museum. While here the discussion is about the need for reassessment of the museum as a whole entity to the audience, I'm looking at this thesis as a way to reassess my own relationship to the audience while allowing space for knowledge forming through expression of an exhibition. Hence I decided to divide my interactions with the residents into two parts namely the interview and the curatorial process. The interview is recorded. I chose not to record the curatorial process as an attempt to redistribute the power in their favor. When the residents curated their exhibitions, I positioned myself as a technician who was there to hang up the work for display. This also changed the way the audience engaged with me which I will discuss later in the thesis.

Audience

From the very beginning when museums were primarily spaces of collections and preservation of culture and art all the way to the recent role of museums as spaces where the community around can access and learn from curated presentations of art, the visitor is present. Who are the visitors? The other artists, the curators, art aficionados, tourists, the citizens or perhaps the person who had some free time on their hands. These are a general assumption of categories, some or all of which may be considered in different museums. Do museums have a target audience or visitor in mind whilst they build their museum programmes and structures? Out of the three interviews I had with the museum personnel at the Poikilo Museum, two of them mentioned "everyone" as a potential visitor while one of them, perhaps a bit more specific with their response, said that the target audience were families with children and older people.

Participatory art welcomed and made space for the audience to be more than just a spectator in their interaction with art. And supporters of participatory art

²³ Sitzia, 2018, 73-87.

argue that due to the “near saturation of our image repertoire...artistic practice can no longer revolve around the construction of objects to be consumed by a passive bystander.”²⁴ As a result, an increasing number of contemporary artists have been creating works that activate and engage the viewer directly in the various stages of art-making. So when thinking about the audience, I went back and forth on what to call them - audience, users, visitors, consumers, etc? Who are they? Kaija Kaitavuori discusses the same in her article *Open to the Public: The use and accessibility of the object for the benefit of the public* 2010. This made me think of the different ways that museum goers interact with the space. My interest also extends to the potential museum goers—those who don’t fall into a visitor/consumer/user category because those terms would refer to a person who already uses the space. In the Poikilo Museum, not all the residents of the town that I interview are visitors of the space. For the sake of the project, they wouldn’t need to even visit the space if they don’t want to. So I refer to them as residents. I take into consideration that Kouvola is not a touristic town, so the main audience are the town's citizens.

During co-producing audiovisual exhibits at the Laing Art Gallery, Rhiannon Mason, Christopher Whitehead and Helen Graham 2013 noted through their collaboration with members of the public that

“Social history practice—like oral history—confers expertise on people by recognizing and valorizing their involvement in, or experience of, historical contexts or events. By contrast, familiarity with art history discourse is still seen by many as a form of cultural capital only to be accessed through one’s elite social position and/or educational privilege. For the former (social history) participants are seen to be the expert on the subject of their own lives and, accordingly, this gives them a sense of authority over their story. In the latter (art history), our experience suggested participants were far less likely to be viewed or themselves feel authorized or empowered by the invitation to participate.”²⁵

The audience already have existing roles as curators both in personal and public spaces. Each space gives the audience different degrees of power based on a

²⁴ Bishop, 2012, 11.

²⁵ Mason, Whitehead, Graham, 2013, 173.

vast pool of factors like accessibility, language, education, and so on. A popular example of how people curate is digitally. People constantly curate their social media profiles, curate their newsfeed according to their interest and indirectly provide data about trends and interests of the public. This digital freedom is used by Museums too. There are exhibitions like *Click!* 2008 by the Brooklyn Museum where an online forum allowed the audience to jury an exhibition which was later installed based on results from the forum²⁶. Using this thesis as a beginning I would like to work towards a process that allows the audience to do more than be a visitor, but to contribute in the curatorial process—having more of a co-creating approach and less tokenistic.

Curator

Since I arrived in Finland in 2019, I frequently come across the Finnish term *intendentti* which is used for curator. The literal translation means intendant which according to Collins Dictionary means a person who has the direction or management of some public business, the affairs of an establishment, etc²⁷. Most larger institutions have a separate role of the *kuraattori* which translates directly to curator, but most spaces seem to use the term ‘intendentti’ for curators. Of course, some things are lost in translation. But I quite like how broad the term intendant is. Its origin is from the Latin word *intendere* meaning to direct. When it comes to especially smaller galleries and spaces, I found that this term works well – as an all-encompassing term: that is when I curate for smaller spaces with lesser fundings, I do a whole lot more work than just curating, there are so many other smaller jobs that come with the role. For example, I end up designing the poster because of lack of funding or doing marketing through social media to list a few. Even while looking through online job applications for a curator in a museum or art gallery, the roles and responsibilities required within the artworld reach various extents. I’m still navigating these roles and terms in the Finnish systems. In the Poikilo Museum, I was directed to the *intendentti* when I asked for the curator. And after a discussion from my thesis supervisor Erja Salo, I understand that an *intendentti*

²⁶ Click!, 2008.

²⁷ Collins Dictionary.

is a term popularly used for the curator's role and usually representative of a larger responsibility in the museum.

The term curator has been tried and adapted into so many different systems, a term associated with classification, class, value and exclusion. Perhaps an app that feeds you curated content, a menu at a restaurant that is curated with a background of care and value or a list of places to visit at a travel website. In this age of digital marketing, the idea to make media content as personalized as possible is key. When I tell people I am a curator, most people don't understand what it is at first. Then, when I explain how extensive it can be and sometimes how straightforward it can be, most people just smile and nod, admitting that they "sort of get it". This conveys how distant the role of curators in society is to the visitors who curators cater to (when the visitors are understood to be the general public). Catherine Thomas wrote that the curator's power was directly proportional to his/her invisibility: Historically, the curator's hand or process of selection aimed for absence from the objective display on view. This notion of an invisible practice remained intrinsically bound to the traditional concept of the museum as a rational, neutral and authoritative place of absolute truths and values²⁸. And although this sounds far from how museums position themselves in the present day, the curator is commonly invisible to the audience. Paul O'Neill explored this change for the curator. He focuses on three reasons for this change - The first is heightened visibility of the curatorial position, the second is what Mick Wilson called the "discursive turn" in curating, the practice of talking together publicly and the third reason was the newfound focus on establishing a discourse specific to the curatorial field²⁹.

In 2012, Alan Brown and Steven Tepper wrote in a white paper *Placing the Arts at the Heart of the Creative Campus* that "the twenty-first-century curator will be called upon not only to select and organize arts programs, but to diagnose need in their communities, seek out new and unusual settings for their work, forge partnerships with a wide array of disparate stakeholders, and in some cases, cede a certain amount of artistic control in order to gain broader

²⁸ Thomas, 2002, 9.

²⁹ O'Neill, 2012, 33.

impact.”³⁰ Brown and Tepper continue to say that curators must develop practices of deep listening, including being able to navigate and understand differing values, underlying tensions and conflicts and work with different aspirations³¹.

I often find myself in a position where I am unsure of how to divide my services while curating an exhibition. Do I serve the artists or the public? Has my role changed so much over the years that my care is directed more to artists than to the public? Perhaps. To what extent are museum workers, in particular the curator, able to articulate for themselves the values, attitudes, and assumptions that underlie the exhibitions they now organize? To what degree can or ought those values, attitudes, and assumptions be articulated to the visiting public as well?³² It is also important to remember that though we can categorize audiences into various classifications, there are always individual differences. Keeping that in mind, the resident-curated booklet can only be a beginning of a practice for it to serve its purpose. And even though I have reached out to audience members who represent larger demographics, it allows the slow but sustainable process of one-on-one feedback and input. As Mary Douglas says “the observation of material changes with the environment.”³³ So it is necessary to constantly be in touch with the environment, in a museum's case it is the society. But how?

Pat Villeneuve advocates for a visitor-centric museum and notes how prevailing practice features a hierarchical organizational structure that supports a curator-centric exhibition making process which has “effectively eliminated educational and other input in the earlier stages of exhibition development, leaving the curator to function as a lone creative”³⁴. Although the curator in our museum is not a “lone creative”, the “lone” approach is that of the institution itself in a way. And for external inputs and expertise, the audience and the society bring in valuable information on how the audience-museum relationship can be more fulfilling and thus can expand to educational programs, events,

³⁰ Brown; Tepper, 2012, 4.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Weil, 2004, 77.

³³ Douglas, 2002, 10.

³⁴ Villeneuve 2019.

exhibitions and function. This audience-museum relationship also references Bishop's focus on social discourse as an ethical regime of arts³⁵.

It seemed to me that as a curator, I'm balancing between what the audience expects me to do, what the audience needs me to do and what the audience does. Which left most of my knowledge on the audience to my assumption based on personal research and feedback from museum staff, museum educators, current issues and themes, previous exhibitors, etc. As concepts and their meanings associated with museum objects are plural, cross-disciplinary, alternative and sometimes conflicting³⁶, the role of the laypeople, museum visitors and collection users should also be recognised and appreciated in the cycle of knowledge and meaning-making³⁷ This will perhaps open an avenue for me to work with a community or site-specific curatorial approach which can be seen in works like those of Liisa Roberts' and Suzanne Lacy which I discuss later in the text.

Per Huttner's *I am A Curator* was a process-based exhibition in 2003 at Chisenhale Gallery, London where people who had no experience in exhibition making curated 36 exhibitions from the works of 57 artists. A common critique to the project was that it seemed to belittle curation and exhibition-making making it seem easy. Huttner responded that "the goal of the project was to inspire a more diverse and profound discussion about the meaning of artworks, exhibitions and the role of the artist."³⁸ This made me think once more about explaining what a curator is to people. And sometimes, curating can sound so easy to explain but is an entirely different process in action. The illusion of a museum can sometimes be riddled with much mystery that the process is almost invisible. And I think this illusion can also build up the imaginary wall between the residents and the museum. Perhaps with transparency in my curatorial practice, it can help me understand the perspectives of the audience better and vice versa.

³⁵ Bishop, 2012, 39.

³⁶ Cameron, 2010, 86.

³⁷ Enqvist, 2021, 33.

³⁸ Per Huttner, 2003.

Participation

Theories of participation

In Claire Bishop's *Artificial Hells. Participatory Art and the Politics Spectatorship* 2012, she suggests that participatory art is perceived to facilitate constructive social change. She argues that participatory art has become more about social discourse than aesthetics. Art is there to reveal social conditions and the tendency of socially collaborative art is to view the aesthetic as merely visual. Bishop also suggests that the art as an “assignment of bodies” (participatory art) a communal place ensures an ethical regime of images rather than an aesthetic regime of art.³⁹ Although aesthetics isn't a central theme in my thesis, Bishop presents a critical point of change in museum history into a more contradicting discussion about participation. Even if museums have repositioned themselves as an active, community building, platform of knowledge sharing, are the audience actually aware of that?

Participation initiates a versatile space of play for power, publics, politics, space and relations. Different artworks use different aspects of participation. One of the dilemmas of participation/collaboration implies a closed system in which the options available for choice, and those who present them, cannot be challenged⁴⁰. Marianne Salgada says it is relevant to ask what is going on in the museum milieu: how are museums giving voice to the members of their community...?⁴¹. Who does the museum serve? How is institutional power shared with the public? The value and power given to the public allows the public to use the museum, giving them accessibility and space to be present.

Media and communication scholar Nico Carpentier's idea of participation means participation in decision making, and that participation and democracy are deeply connected.⁴² But in the negotiation to implement participatory practices, there is a risk of creating an illusion of shared power and democracy. This illusion can further legitimize constitutional practices instead of developing them

³⁹ Bishop, 2012, 39.

⁴⁰ Miessan, 2011, 9.

⁴¹ Salgada, 2009, 14.

⁴² Carpentier, 2011, 131.

for a better future. Which eventually tends to end up legitimizing current institutional practices instead of developing them for a better future⁴³. So how does the institution best place itself while engaging in participatory methods? How can I best place myself while engaging in participatory methods?

Nina Simon's *Participatory Museum* 2010 is repeatedly referred to as one of the more pragmatic texts written around participation. She outlines up the following conditions or values most likely required for a cultural institution to be participatory:

- Desire for the input and involvement of outside participants
- Trust in participants' abilities
- Responsiveness to participants' actions and contributions⁴⁴

I compared URB 2020 to Simon's conditions (see above) to understand the institution's (the production team) position. The desire for input is required although in what measures. The festival allowed the participants a free hand in everything that happens with complete trust in their abilities, which then had to be renegotiated as the established boundaries of where they needed guidance and when the production team should take the call. The need for setting these boundaries is also why I decided to have each resident in the booklet curate their own exhibitions and to not have a group curated exhibition. This allows each resident to express their curatorial thoughts and themes without restrictions especially since the residents didn't know each other beforehand.

Mari Viita-aho says that participation is regarded in theory and practice and it often takes shape in museums as an experimental space or an outreach practice⁴⁵. How many of these experimental practices translate into permanent practices in a museum? This speaks volumes regarding the value given to audience input. When I tried to find participatory practices to refer to that have engaged in similar projects to mine, I found more about project-based participatory art than long term participatory practices. There is power in continuity in participation. But more often than not, participatory practices are

⁴³ Viita-Aho, 2021, 329.

⁴⁴ Simon, 2010.

⁴⁵ Viita-Aho, 2021, 329.

project-based. Bernadette Lynch describes the tokenistic approach to participation as “a way to legitimize museum intentions under the guise of consensual approval”⁴⁶. This usually could be the easiest form of implementing participative practices from an institution’s side. Participatory practices can be embedded a bit deeper into the way museums function. Visitors can be part of the design process by collaborating from the very beginning of the exhibition and its concept⁴⁷.

Nina Simon talks about the varying degrees of participation in her book *Participatory museum* 2010. She explores the role of the institution in relation to the participants as being either contributory, collaborative, co-creative or hosting. Kaija Kaitavuori in her book *The Participant in Contemporary Art: Art and Social Relationships* 2018 defines participatory art as an overall concept about any kind of art that engages people actively beyond spectatorship.⁴⁸ She categorizes the type of participant along with the respective action the institution needs to provide. The variables involved in understanding the participant and the institution are always changing which makes it even more important to have a consistent and continuing relationship. Mari Viita-Aho suggests a set of goals of participation from existing theories. She proposes four points.

1. Participation is a way of improving the quality of the visitor experience
2. Participation is used to create exhibition contents collaboratively
3. Participation is changing internal museum work
4. Participation is building democratic practice, or is it?⁴⁹

Viita-Aho also mentioned that some of the contents (of the museum) must be defined by professionals and some of the decisions cannot be equally shared by everyone.⁵⁰ This was well explained in the curation of the URB 2020 project by Kiasma Theatre. Working in a participatory manner to me is to work in a manner where I provide space and value for audience input and relaying that back to the

⁴⁶ Lynch, 2014, 11.

⁴⁷ Taxén, 2004, 204-213.

⁴⁸ Kaitavuori, 2018, 1.

⁴⁹ Mari Viita-Aho, 2021, 319-325.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*

audience in some form—this could be through a co-creating environment, in the form of acknowledgement or providing information and so on.

Participatory works

The Human Library was one of my first projects associated directly with participation in Bangalore, India from 2017 to 2021. I facilitated the Human Library in the city with a small team as an expansion of a Danish initiative with the same name. We hosted events where readers could borrow human beings serving as open books and have conversations that they would normally not have access to. Each book represented a group in society often subjected to prejudice, stigmatization or discrimination.⁵¹ Although human libraries are held in over 85 countries, each city adjusts their books according to the direct need of the residents. For example in 2018, when India made private homosexual relations legal, we explored books that opened dialogues on sexual orientation. The library as a platform provided a space for learning and as facilitators, we⁵² were able to grow and change the knowledge sharing network as the society did. The visitors as a part of society generate the content for us and we would simply provide the human library's books accordingly.

Suzanne Lacy's *Between the Door and the Street* 2013 is a project engaging and facilitating the public to produce the "art", in this case in the form of conversations, for the public to witness, to listen. Lacy considered the preparatory work to be a key part of the project as a whole⁵³. Both these examples take place outside the museum environment. Nina Simon defined 'a participatory cultural institution as a place where visitors can create, share and connect with each other around content'⁵⁴. This helps in shifting the balance of power from the institution to the individual learner and to some measure introducing critical pedagogical practices in the museum⁵⁵.

⁵¹ Human Library, 2000.

⁵² The team in Human Library Bangalore, 2017-2021.

⁵³ Lacy, 2013.

⁵⁴ Simon, 2010.

⁵⁵ Sitzia, 2017, 73-87.

Early on in my studies, we were introduced to Liisa Roberts and her work *What's the time in Vyborg?* 2000. Roberts' approach was to facilitate the creation of a temporary community engaged in the process of solving a series of practical problems. It is an example of how there was no "outside public" because firstly, it did not take place in a museum institution but in a previously public service building - the library (from Roberts' lecture at Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki 2019). So although the project was a temporary one, it did not view the public as the outsider but the public, including professionals in their particular fields, were part of the creation and execution and the benefactors of the project - thus setting a strong sense of community to the public.

Tellervo Kalleinen and Oliver Kochta-Kalleinen's *Conversation Park* 2018–2020 was one of the long-lived projects I came across. *Conversation Park* is an action-oriented project that investigates participation, collaboration between different age groups, collective decision making, and public space. This activity actively engaged its resident participants. And even after the end of the project, the park was donated to Wihertoimi, the Rauma park services unit who will maintain it at least till 2022. It is also part of an adoption programme that allows everyone who is interested to participate in its upkeep⁵⁶. For me, the special part about this project is that it highlighted the community's ownership of the project through the idea of using a "park" as a platform. The participants were more than just co-creators of the park, they were the sole creators.

Curator Francesco Manacorda puts the idea of co-creation of the visual display at the core of his practice and comments that "if we want a museum of commons, we cannot design it to involve the public. We need to design it with the public"⁵⁷. *The Helsinki Model 2022-2024* was another example that aimed to balance out and diversify the artistic and cultural experiences offered in different neighborhoods, strengthen the sense of community between neighborhoods, improve the neighborhoods' image and increase cultural participation amongst residents⁵⁸. There is more power to the public when a

⁵⁶ Kalleinen, Kalleinen, 2018-2020.

⁵⁷ Manacorda, 2016.

⁵⁸ The Helsinki Model, 2022-2024.

museum operates beyond its physical walls. While using participatory practices in public spaces, is it possible to invite the public inside museum spaces?

Four: The resident-curated exhibition

Location: Kouvola

The resident-curated exhibition takes place in the town of Kouvola situated in the south-east of Finland in the Kymenlaakso district. It is home to a few different art centers like Taideruukki and Taidekeskus Antares that I am aware of. This project takes place in the city museum, Poikilo. Kouvola has a population of 80,483 but the actual downtown area (where the museum is located) is home to 47,391 people⁵⁹. According to statistics, Kymenlaakso citizens have less interaction with art and museums than the rest of Finland⁶⁰. The museum is located in Kouvola-talo which houses the Poikilo gallery (different space and production from Poikilo Museum), the city museum that focuses on the city's history, Kouta gallery, two auditoriums - Simelius hall and Honka hall, workshop studios, three meeting rooms, a cafe and an outdoor stage. The Poikilo museum is one of the many activities that take place in the building. When I first moved to Kouvola in 2021, I enquired about the local museums and galleries I could visit. My partner, who doesn't work in the art field, recommended Poikilo. He also admitted he doesn't remember the last time he visited the museum. And gradually I saw this trend continuing with other people I met in town, even with those who might visit museums and art galleries in other cities like Helsinki and Turku. This was interesting, but not necessarily surprising to me. I've been guilty of similar behavior when I was younger and I took the places of visit in my immediate vicinity for granted. One of the resident-curators in my project, Pekka Heinikainen lives opposite a radio museum and admits to visiting there maybe once and mostly because of his 5 year-old son.

The museum: Poikilo Museum

I chose the Poikilo Museum because it is the city museum. And with the role of being a city funded museum comes responsibilities, standards and systems on how to execute the works⁶¹. I also chose the city museum because it is a space

⁵⁹ Kouvola: Municipality in Finland.

⁶⁰ Anu Kasnio's interview.

⁶¹ Mari Lehtosalo's interview.

that is publicly known among all demographics of its residents. Even if people haven't been to Poikilo, I go on the broad assumption that almost everyone is sure that they have a town museum in their vicinity. The museum exhibits three exhibitions every year. And every 2 years they dedicate a solo exhibition to a popular artist from Kouvola. They are keen on providing a space for representing artists from the Kymenlaakso region⁶². Museum-going is a popular tourist activity, as mentioned also by some of the residents and Kouvola isn't really a touristic town. It's more of a town where people visit grandparents and relatives, or it's a town people drive through—I say this because I personally know people who refer to Kouvola as a place they used to visit in their childhood or some place their parents' parents used to live. So the museum's main audience are the town's residents which means there is no constant flow of visitors that could perhaps be expected at a more touristic town.

Irja Ahtovirta, Poikilo's public work coordinator says "visiting the museum should be easy"⁶³. So how easy is it to visit the museum? It's a bit out of the way in terms of distance. Although initially I didn't think of this as a problem, both the museum staff and the residents brought this up. But Poikilo is not in a vacuum, it is located in the Kouvola Talo building which houses various other activities as mentioned earlier. In terms of accessibility, the museum is located 1.6km from the central railway station and the central bus stop. It is also the downtown area of town. It is 2.8km from the largest mall in the area and 6.8km from the nearest village center. Although initially I didn't think of this as a problem, both the museum staff and the residents brought this up. Poikilo Museum is located in the Kouvola-talo building which provides space for the city's cultural activities and programs. So there are people who visit the space for workshops from *Kansalaisopisto*⁶⁴, for concerts, workshops, classes, and so on. Even with the people strolling in and out for other purposes, a pop by to the museum isn't on their agenda. (also mentioned in resident Anni Lapatto's interview)

⁶² Mari Lehtosalo's interview; Anu Kasnio's interview.

⁶³ Irja Ahtovirta's interview.

⁶⁴ Public open courses.

I interviewed three museum staff: Mari Lehtosalo, the *intendentti*, also introduced to me as the curator; Anu Kasnio, the museum director including the city history museum too; and Irja Ahtovirta, the public works coordinator to situate the museum further for the resident-curated works. The interviews helped establish the museum's current role in the community and the community's role in the museum. It also identified the target demographics for the next set of interviews which was the residents.

Poikilo has seen a decline in visitors over the past 10 years⁶⁵ and the recent pandemic's restrictions have not been helpful. As we have explored earlier about the importance and relevance of participatory practices, Anu Kasnio, the museum director mentions that in the past the museum hasn't explored participatory art. But the drive to make art accessible to everyone is still there. The exhibition, *PeliPoikilo*⁶⁶, that the Poikilo museum exhibited in the Autumn of 2022 exhibited almost exclusively only game art and was intended to be completely participatory which resulted in a lot of active users⁶⁷ of the exhibition. School students come in their class groups. The public works coordinator, Irja Ahtovirta said that usually around 700 students visit every year. Both Kasnio and Lehtosalo mentioned that they would like to have more families with little children. Quite often people come to the museum if it is recommended by somebody they know. Before COVID-19, there were more guided tours, artist meets and workshops. Now after social restrictions have reorientated themselves, they still continue the same. During openings there are around 50-150 people who attend depending on the exhibition.

Poikilo's curator Mari Lehtosalo also brought up another aspect of how museums function. She finds it problematic that the success of their work is measured by how many visitors there are in the museum. Although Lehtosalo would like to work with younger artists and not just the popular artists, it becomes a risk as the museum isn't sure whether the public will be interested in these new artists. So how does the interaction between artist, audience, museum and artist work in a smooth manner? This makes me reflect back on my

⁶⁵ Mari Lehtosalo's interview.

⁶⁶ PeliPoikilo, 2022.

⁶⁷ See Kaitavuori.

own practice of whom do I curate for—the audience? The artist? The gallery? The exhibition itself? Every aspect in different proportions?

Lehtosalo hopes that through the resident-curated project, the audience would understand more about the processes within the museum. And maybe then it would be easier to open channels for the residents to influence the kind of works that are on display.

The exhibition

When I met Mari Lehtosalo to introduce myself and the thesis. I requested an upcoming exhibition that I could work with for the project. After careful consideration she suggested the *Überhund – Taiteen kiehtovat koirat* exhibition that was to open at Poikilo in February, 2023. The exhibition is a touring exhibition which was first exhibited in Salo Art Museum, Veturitalli in autumn 2022. Currently it is in Kouvola from 2nd February to 23rd April, 2023. Subsequently, it will be exhibited in Jyväskylä, Mikkeli and Kuopio respectively. The resident-curated work will be present only in Kouvola. I found the topic of dogs represented in artworks was quite broad thematically. It allowed lots of space for the resident-curators to create their own dialogues and curatorial ideas. I think about how viral dogs are over social media. I, too, watch a lot of dog memes and videos. It has almost become a personality trait of whether you're a dog lover or a cat lover up to the point that people add it to even their dating profiles.

The *Überhund – Taiteen kiehtovat koirat* exhibition brought together artworks that present various ways in which dogs have been represented in art over the past 150 years⁶⁸. Written below is the accompanying text with the exhibition.

Visual arts feature a surprising number of portrayals of dogs, but as subjects dogs are often so everyday and ordinary that we may not really notice them. Überhund puts dogs in the main role and makes them the focus of attention. It also tells about the long history humans and dogs share as species and about the unique bond between us and dogs.

⁶⁸*Überhund – Taiteen kiehtovat koirat*, 2022.

Art portraying dogs has traditionally been associated with attributes such as protection, loyalty, companionship, assistance, and cuteness. The exhibition also calls attention to the challenges of the shared existence of humans and dogs. It asks questions such as “How do we view dogs?” and “What is our relationship with animals like?” Überhund also takes a look at the political roles assigned to dogs and at the controversial aspects of the ethics of dog breeding. On the other hand, the exhibition also revels in the materiality of the art works.⁶⁹

Resident-curators

I chose the residents for the resident-curated exhibition booklet according to the type of audience the museum staff talked about—mill worker, families, youth. I reached out to people I knew in the city to get in touch with the residents that fit the description. I added yet another criterion: that the participants don't have any professional training or experience in the arts. When I tried to find a resident who works in the nearby mill, they were reluctant and said that they did not know much about art or would not be able to converse in English, though I did offer for a translator to be present during the interview. Finally the mill worker Matti (name changed) who agreed still wanted a translator present but did warn me that he did not know much about art. The rest of the residents were easier to find.

Initially when I was gathering up the group of residents, I did not promise any sort of compensation to the residents as I wasn't sure whether I would be able to. But after conducting a few interviews, I arranged to give each of them a 30 euro gift card to a supermarket as they roughly dedicate around 1-2 hours of their time for their role in the project. I conveyed the same to them during the curatorial part of the process. Perhaps out of politeness, they all hesitated at first to accept it, but after I mentioned I had a small budget from the University of the Arts to work with, they easily accepted it.

First I held the interviews with the residents, followed by the curation part of the project. We took a little break of 10 minutes in between and had some tea while I laid out the next step. Each interview started with the question “What is

⁶⁹ Poikilo museum website, 2023.

your relationship to art and have you visited Poikilo or any other museum?”. Since each person can have varying experiences, the questions that followed depended on this first question. These interviews were to help me understand why there is some sort of invisible distance between the residents and art, if any. I’m not insisting that everyone should have an interest in art, of course not. But since they all did, after all, agree to participate in this project, I gather it isn’t something they completely avoid. More so, most of them seemed to welcome it.

In October 2022, I received the digital photo files of the artworks from the *Überhund – Taiteen kiehtovat koirat* exhibition. Some of the images I received were of low resolution, too low to be able to view the image clearly. I left those images out of the final list presented to the residents. So in the end, I had a total of 95 artworks from the exhibition at Poikilo. I told the residents that they had to curate a small exhibition based on their preferences while also keeping in mind that there will be an audience that will be able to see them during the exhibition. I simplified the term “curate”. I explained that they need to select a set of 5-10 artworks that they would like to see in an exhibition or perhaps a set of works that they think people in the town would enjoy. All the photos of the artworks had their titles visible when the residents viewed them on my computer. And if they wanted to know the names of the artists, I would share it. It was up to them how they wanted the works to be viewed within the booklet. The resident and I went through the artworks one by one at the resident’s pace. They also had to decide on how to place them on the page, how they would like the viewer to view the exhibition. I provided a few questions to help them along the process. Should the photos be categorized somehow? Or do the artworks have some sort of flow to it? Or is the question of arranging them not important to their view of their exhibition? Finally I asked them to give me a name for their exhibition in Finnish or English. Their selections would then be printed out as individual exhibitions on an open spread in the booklet which will then be present at the Poikilo museum for viewing.

The five resident-curators are Johanna Luoma, Anni Lapatto, Pekka Heinikeinen, Matti (name changed) and Niia Tynys. In the following pages I discuss their interviews and curatorial process in detail. The interviews were recorded and

the comments about the curation process included in this thesis are shared with permission from the residents.

Johanna Luoma

39 years old

Resident of Kouvola for 4 years

Lives with her partner and a 3-year old child

Profession: Environment and sustainability specialist for a shipping company

Frequency of art space visits: 10-20 times a year

Johanna Luoma was the only resident-curator who had visited the Poikilo Museum recently. She hasn't had much free time to visit more often. In her opinion the museum has a good standard of art⁷⁰. Luoma commented that unknown artists aren't too appealing to her. This is also because she has interest in purchasing art from more well-known artists and currently already owns at least 3 paintings. She complimented the architecture of the museum space and the exhibitions that she has visited in Poikilo like *Metsä-Kaakko 22/23* (2022) and *Täällä tuuli saa puhaltaa* (2021).

As a mother to a 3-year-old, Luoma expressed her interest to introduce her child to museums and galleries when they are a bit older. In turn, it would be nice if there are exhibitions planned with children in mind.

Curatorial process

As we scrolled through each of the artworks on my laptop, Luoma commented on most of them. For example *Vesla - Sarjasta One-Dog Policy* by Maija Astikainen immediately stood out to her as one of the pieces she wanted in the exhibition. It almost looked like a person. She recalled how some dogs look like their owners and vice versa. She used some of the works as examples to the kind of medium and styles she prefers. Edwin Henry Landseer's *Newfoundlandin Koira* was one such example. Dark tones and thicker strokes. Luoma was also the only resident who asked for the artists' names. When she saw Viljo Savikurki's *Sokerityttö*, she recognized it and wanted to know the

⁷⁰ Refers to Johanna Luoma's own idea of what art is.

artists' name. While I opened the artist list, she accidentally recognized Tove Jansson's name on the list too and then thought that perhaps she should include their work in her exhibition. After that she decided that she wouldn't look up artists' names as the popularity of the artists would affect her selection of works.

Luoma chose the works that seemed most interesting to her and the ones that stood out to her. She named her exhibition *Statements* as she felt that each work was a statement piece in itself. Luoma didn't provide any explicit reason for the way she arranged her works but she felt that it was the way she would like the audience to view it.

Luoma was present at the exhibition opening and immediately recognized all the artworks. She was also quick to notice the artworks I didn't show her because of their low resolution. Luoma wished that they were included as she would have included some of them in her exhibition. She also commented that some of the artworks looked very different than she expected. There was a big difference between seeing the artworks as images on a computer and seeing them in the exhibition. In particular, she referred to Tiitus Petäjaniemi's *Koira ja makkara*.

Pekka Heinikainen

47 years old

Resident of Kouvola for 37 years

Lives with his partner and his six year-old child

Profession: Technology manager

Frequency of art space visits: Once in a while

Although Pekka Heinikainen does have interest towards the arts—music, painting, sculptures, theater, movies, and so on, visiting museums is not a simple activity to him. It isn't the first thought that comes to his mind. Heinikainen recalled sometimes strolling into a gallery if he perhaps goes to the cafe or some other event that is happening at the same space. He gave an example of Pato Gallery that is located in Taideruukki, one of the art centers in town. Other than that, he has gone to a museum only twice—to Kiasma and to the National Gallery, London.

As we discussed the role of the curator, Heinikainen said he isn't too aware of their role but has heard the term used in movies, media and in school too. However, the role of the term remained unclear.

Curatorial process

Heinikainen didn't comment a lot through his curating process but seemed very sure of what he liked and didn't almost immediately as he scrolled through. He did, however, have around 4 rounds of shortlisting the works in the exhibition. I offered him time to decide on the name of the exhibition, but he was ready with a name almost immediately - *Isäntä Isännettävä. Emäntä Emännettävä*. This phrase translates to "Host, also a dog owner, to be hosted. Hostess, also a dog owner, to be hosted". The literal translation is a bit confusing for me. Perhaps the exact meaning is lost in translation. But the idea was to reference the theme and while commenting on people's amusing relationships with dogs at the same time. This was evident in a lot of the artworks in Heinikainen's curatorial process and his exhibition.

After visiting the exhibition at Poikilo, Heinikainen shares that he would have chosen his works differently, that perhaps he would have chosen some of the works he initially did not choose. His son had also liked the exhibition a lot. Heinikainen added that he should go to galleries more often.

Niia Tynys

17 years old

Resident of Kouvola for 17 years.

Lives with her parents and younger sister

Profession: Student

Frequency of art space visits: None

Tynys has visited Poikilo with her school when she was younger⁷¹. Even though she is interested in art, especially in abstract art, she doesn't really visit museums. And as our conversation continues, she talks about visiting some of the galleries in Veturi, the town's mall. For a few years, when a store shuts

⁷¹ Usually in 7th grade as mentioned in Irja Ahtovirta's interview.

down and before the new store opens, the empty store space is rented out to artists as a gallery space. She recalled visiting Taideruukki, the art center. She visited the Pato gallery which is located on Taideruukki's premises. Although Tynys doesn't remember the exhibition that was on display at the time, she remembered it to be a nice experience. She also said that perhaps her friends also might be interested in art but since nobody really talks about it, it never comes up.

Curatorial process

Tynys shared a few comments through the curating process. Elina Ruohonen's *Try me* was one of the first pieces she knew for sure that she wanted in the exhibition. And eventually chose Ruohonen's *You got the Ball*. She found the use of the color contrast was appealing. She also commented on Elina Sarlin's *Nurkka* as she found it different from the other works, the way that it played on shadow and light in parts.

Tynys settled on the exhibition name almost a month after curating the work. She named it *Cool Dogs*. A title directly reflected on what she thought about the artworks.

Anni Lapatto

42 years old

Resident of Kouvola for 42 years.

Lives with her partner and two daughters of 14 and 17

Profession: Independent Executive Senior Sales Director

Frequency of art space visits: Once in a while

Lapatto's interest in art grew quite a bit in the last 10 years; she has made a few purchases too. She is drawn to the themes of femininity, empowerment and women. Similar to some of the other residents, Lapatto said that she finds art more accessible when it shares its space with other appealing things like little shops and cafes. She gives an example of observing the artwork in the local cafes and saunas. This would also perhaps be a more accommodating option for her daughters. She also finds the galleries in the local mall, Veturi, quite

interesting. And even though she visits Kouvola-talo for other work purposes, she still doesn't visit Poikilo.

Curatorial process

Lapatto was the only one of the residents who is a dog owner. As reflected in Lapatto's exhibition title *Emotions*, as she went through the works, she explored emotions associated with them. She was particularly drawn to Noora Schroderus's *Elefantti* series. She included four of them out of the five in the series in her exhibition expressing how they made her feel sad. She considered sadness an important emotion in her exhibition while also countering it with humor. For example with Kim Simonsson's *Kuninkaan lemmikki* and Pentti Sammallahti's photography among others.

Lapatto was also present during the opening of the exhibition. She commented on how different it was to see the artworks in the exhibition as opposed to on the screen. She viewed the exhibition with her partner and daughter.

Matti (name changed)

56 years old

Resident of Kouvola for 56 years.

Lives alone

Profession: Process manager at a pulp mill

Frequency of art space visits: Never

Matti expressed that he doesn't follow or understand anything about art nor does he think he might enjoy art either. Even when he travels, unless the artworks are part of a touristic spot, it's unlikely that he would visit a place solely for the art. He also mentioned that his little exposure to art might come from movies. But he also hinted at the possibility of visiting the museum now, by seeing this exhibition perhaps. We moved on to the curatorial process soon after.

Curatorial process

Matti made many short comments as we went through the artworks. Many of the comments were based on different emotions brought about by the artworks. Matti also considered the titles of the artworks when he commented on them. Pentti Sammallahti's *Helsinki, Snellmaninkatu, Kruunuhaka* was a favorite as he spent some time commenting on how the photograph was captured. Matti decided to arrange his works by starting works that he thought were more solemn, gradually moving onto works with humor in them, ending with Tiitus Petäjaniemi's *Koira ja Makkara*. At first he thought of naming the exhibition *Hauva*, a Finnish term used by children to refer to dogs. Then he decided to take a few days to decide and ended up calling his exhibition *Ensimäinen* meaning first, as this was his first time doing anything like this project.

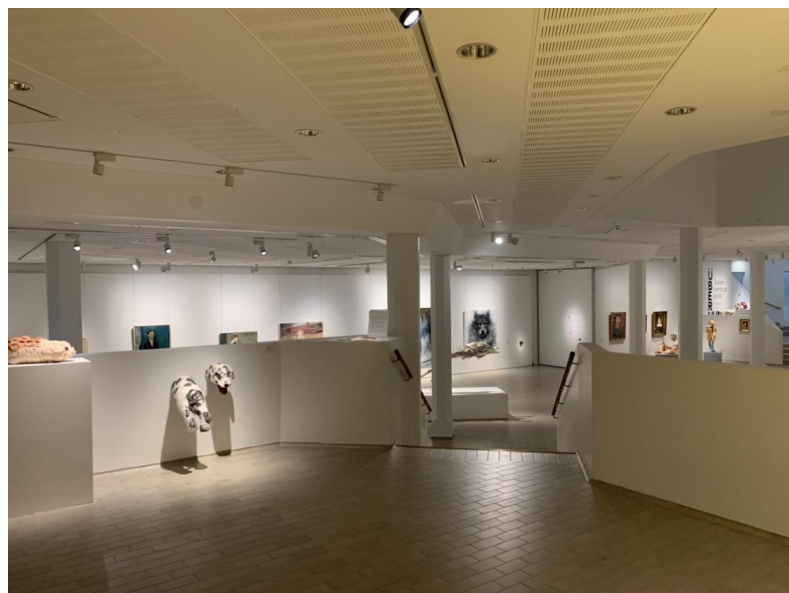
The booklet

The booklet as the exhibition platform served the purpose of being something physical and tangible, a form that the resident-curators can point to and say 'I did that'. As opposed to being only part of the hidden process as a lot of curatorial work is. I did not want the booklet to be very small like an A5 or an A4 size, that could be mistaken for a brochure perhaps and be easily passed over if it was perhaps placed in the entrance with the exhibition booklet. So I decided on designing the booklet an A3 size. A spread in an A3 booklet would be perfect to place around 10 images. After gathering the exhibitions curated by the residents, I designed a booklet with each spread consisting of each resident's exhibition. After an approval from the residents, it was sent off to the printers and to the museum. At the museum the booklet was presented alongside the following text:

Resident-curated exhibitions - BOOKLET (the same was translated into Finnish)

This project is part of Ria Andrews' Master's thesis. She invited five residents of Kouvola to curate their own unique version of the larger exhibition in the museum. Each resident has selected the works in their exhibition, arranged the works as they see fit, and named their exhibition on each spread of this booklet.

Each of us have different ideas of what art is. We make our own meanings and understandings from them. The museum curates the exhibition for the community, and in turn, we navigate the space and the works in our own individual ways. This project allowed the audience to share their perspectives using the curatorial method.





The resident-curated booklet in Poikilo Museum.

Five: Reflections and conclusion

Reflections

URB 2020 provided a good foundation to see all the factors that are to be involved when the audience is actively a part of an institution. It helped me prepare for what to expect while working with somebody who is being introduced to the curatorial role for the first time.

When I received the images of 95 artworks from the museum, I was worried whether the residents would have the patience to sit through the whole list of images and make their decisions in one meeting. Three of the residents had no active interest in the arts but were actively involved and interested in the project and so were the other two who had some previous interest in the arts. There was a shift in the residents' comfortability level after the interview as they were going through the artworks, almost like they were situating themselves into the role of the curator. Towards the end of the session, some of them started to open up about more of their small but forgotten interactions they had with the arts from before—a childhood memory or something they came across in the news, etc. This opened up discussion on some of the works that were outside the works provided for the project. Looking back, I notice how each interview with the resident-curators proved some assumptions I had about potential museum visitors right and some of them wrong. This also lets me know when I make space in my practice for the audience, there is a good chance that they will gladly take up that space. It was insightful to get first hand feedback on how the residents place art in their lives. It was interesting to observe how the resident-curators initially viewed art as something foreign almost and then to see them almost transform in the curation process into something that they were entitled to and eventually comfortable with. In the curatorial process, each resident made their exhibition their own. I liked that they owned up to their roles as curator of their exhibition. Jacques Rancière's idea of democracy is that representation entirely is not democracy but it is the paradoxical power of those

unqualified to exercise power⁷². Thomas Docherty further suggests that democracy is founded and conditioned by aesthetics in a way that it is in art and in aesthetics that we find a privileged site or a paradigm of the very potentiality of selfhood that establishes this democratic condition⁷³.

It is hard not to observe the patterns of interest in the artworks through the process. Artworks like Tiitus Petjäniemi's *Koira ja makkara* was a work that each resident spent some time with. Pentti Sammallahti's *Helsinki Snellmaninkatu, Kruunuhaka* was amusing to most of the residents. Other works by Sammallahti like *Sarkasta Venäjältä Solovki, Venäjä* and *Vuokkiniemi, Vienan Karjala* were also admired by the residents. Noora Schroderus's *Elefantti* series was commented on by all residents even if they didn't include it in their exhibition. A lot of them reflected and questioned the working process behind the work itself.

The main limitation in the resident-curated booklet was that although the resident-curators were chosen because they represented their respective demographic groups, their opinions and interests were not representative of their demographic groups. This method was carried out only to ensure that I reach out to residents across the demographic spectrum to understand different perspectives and working methods.

Conclusion

Even though there was no active prior involvement from the residents at the museum even as visitors, except for Johanna Luoma, there was promise of wanting to be involved clearly to be seen, as demonstrated by their enthusiasm during the curatorial process. Currently, the Poikilo Museum would like to connect more with their audience. The process of the resident-curated booklet presented the artistic interests and ideas of the public. Using this participatory method, it may be possible for the museum to find out to some extent what Kouvola residents are interested in, in terms of art. Furthermore, during the curatorial process, there came up insights into social tendencies and habits; something that the museum can potentially explore and build on in the future. In

⁷² Rancière, 2020, 11-12.

⁷³ Docherty, 2006, 18.

the end, all of this contributes to how the Poikilo Museum and, in my case, the curator's practice can evolve and grow.

The resident-curated booklet allowed the residents to explore art on their own terms. I noticed the importance of the space in which I present the works to the residents—inside the museum space or outside a museum space. I think about Brian O'Doherty's criticism of white cube gallery space. He says that the spatial arrangement - overdetermines - consumes the works (or if you will, statements placed within them) to a point where context becomes content⁷⁴. Perhaps if the audience viewed the same images of the artworks in the gallery space, their individual exhibitions might have been different altogether. The absence of a recording device during the curatorial process also might have given the residents more freedom in their expression of what they liked and didn't like in the artworks.

It is important to note the difference in curating for a booklet and in curating a physical exhibition. This is observed when some of the residents commented they might have chosen differently after seeing the actual works in the Poikilo. The resident's curatorial process would need to be much more extensive when curating a physical exhibition and they would need to be compensated accordingly. For a resident curating a physical exhibition, I believe that there is need for close guidance from a professional curator in terms of establishing a structure to their curatorial role. The focus of their participation should lie in their opinion and interest in the art itself which then eventually reflects in the exhibitions presented by the museum. Thus making the public a part of the exhibition process and not a result of the process.

Since at the moment, I do not work for the Poikilo Museum or any other museum, I want to work towards incorporating audience participation in my independent practice. Dobbs and Eisner define the (museum)educator as 'the advocate of the viewer' and the curator as 'the advocate of the work of art'⁷⁵. Perhaps the practice I want to exercise is a mix of the two roles in such a way that each role answers to the other. I would like to introduce the visitor to the

⁷⁴ Sheik, 2009.

⁷⁵ Dobbs and Eisner, 1987, 77-86.

curatorial role as a continuous activity that runs alongside main exhibitions, while allowing the curator to bring and share their expertise. Just as people outside the museum are consulted for professional opinions of their fields of expertise, the public should be brought in as a continuous input of value for their field of expertise—being the visitor.

Appendix I

List of interviews

Sara Hirn's interview, July 9th, 2020
Mari Lehtosalo's interview, June 22nd, 2022
Johanna Luoma's interview, August 17th, 2022
Anu Kasnio's interview, August 23rd, 2022
Irja Ahtovirta's interview, August 31st, 2022
Anni Lapatto's interview, August 31st, 2022
Niia Tynys's interview, December 18th, 2022
Matti's interview, December 27th, 2022
Pekka Heinikainen's interview, December 28th, 2022

Appendix I

List of email communication

Walle Kiikeri: 'Answers for questions Walle' Private email message 14/10/2020
Sasu Koivisto: 'URB:Interview questions' Private email message 25/10/2020

Appendix III

Resident-curated booklet

Bibliography

Anderson, Gail. *Reinventing the museum: Historical and contemporary perspectives on the paradigm shift*. AltaMira Press, 2004.

Bennett, Tony. *The birth of the museum: history, theory, politics*. Routledge, 1995.

Between the Door and the Street, Suzanne Lacy 2013

<http://suzannelacy.com/between-the-door-and-the-street>. Accessed 11 October 2022.

Bishop, Claire. *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*. Verso Books, 2012.

Brown, Alan S. and Tepper, Steven J. *Placing the Arts at the Heart of the Creative Campus*. Association of Performing Arts Presenters, 2012
https://ah.sonoma.edu/sites/ah/files/placing_the_arts_at_the_heart_of_the_creative_campus.pdf. Accessed 12 March 2023.

Cameron, Fiona. *Museums in a Digital Age*, Routledge, 2010. Accessed 15 March 2023.

Carpentier, Nico. Media and Participation: A site of ideological-democratic struggle. *OAPEN*, 2011,
<https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/32743/606390.pdf?sequence=1>. Accessed 20 March 2023.

Click! A Crowd-Curated Exhibition. Brooklyn Museum,
<https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/click>. Accessed 2 March 2023.

Cruikshanks, Lorna, and Merel van der Vaart. "Understanding Audience Participation Through Positionality: Agency, Authority, and Urgency." *Stedelijk Studies*
<https://stedelijkstudies.com/journal/understanding-audience-participation-through-positionality-agency-authority-and-urgency/>. Accessed 2 January 2023.

Danto, Arthur. "The Artworld." *The Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 61, no. 19, 1964. *JSTOR*,
<https://doi.org/10.2307/2022937>. Accessed 15 March 2023.

Dobbs, Mark Stephen, and Elliot W. Eisner. *The Uncertain Profession: Educators in American Art Museums*. University of Illinois Press, 1987.

Docherty, Thomas. *Aesthetic democracy*. Stanford University Press, 2006.

Douglas, Mary. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concept of Pollution and Taboo*. Routledge, 2002.

Hein, George E. *Learning in the museum*. Routledge, 1998.

Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean. *Museum and gallery education*. Leicester University Press, 1991.

Human Library. Unjudge someone - The Human Library Organization,
<https://humanlibrary.org>. Accessed 15 March 2023.

I am a Curator. Per Hüttner, 14 December 2003,
<http://www.perhuttner.com/projects/i-am-a-curator/>. Accessed 1 March 2023.

Intendant definition and meaning | Collins English Dictionary. *Collins Dictionary*, <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/intendant>. Accessed 23 March 2023.

Itkonen, Satu; et al. *Discussions about Museum Ethics in Finland*. ICOM Finland, <https://icomfinland.fi/app/uploads/2022/05/Discussion-About-Museum-Ethics-in-Finland-3.pdf>. Accessed 8 December 2022.

Jung, Yuha The ignorant museum: Transforming the elitist museum into an inclusive learning place. In N. Abery (Ed.), *The new museum community: Audiences, challenges, benefits* (pp. 272–291). Edinburgh: MuseumsEtc. 2010.

Kaitavuori, Kaija. *The Participator in Contemporary Art: Art and Social Relationships*. Bloomsbury Academic, 2018.

Kochta-Kalleinen, Kochta-Kalleinen, and Tellervo Kalleinen. *keskustelu puisto.fi – a public space game*, <http://keskustelu puisto.fi>. Accessed 15 March 2023.

Kouvola (Municipality, Finland) - Population Statistics, Charts, Map and Location. *City Population*, 2022, https://www.citypopulation.de/en/finland/admin/kymenlaakso/286__kouvola/. Accessed 15 March 2023.

Lynch, Bernadette T. Whose cake is it anyway?: museums, civil society and the changing reality of public engagement, In Gouriévidis, L (ed.) *Museums and migration. History, memory and politics.*, Routledge, 2014.

Manacorda, Francesco. “For Whom Do We Write Exhibitions? Towards a Museum as Commons.” *Stedelijk Studies*, 2016, <https://stedelijkstudies.com/journal/for-whom-do-we-write-exhibitions/>. Accessed 2 February 2023.

Mason, Rhiannon, et al. One Voice to Many Voices? Displaying Polyvocality in an Art Museum. *Museums and Communities: Curators, Collections and Collaboration*, edited by Viv Golding and Wayne Modest, Bloomsbury Academic, 2013.

Miessen, Markus. *The Nightmare of Participation*. Edited by Markus Miessen, Sternberg Press, 2011.

Museum Definition - International Council of Museums. *International Council of Museums*, 24 August 2022,
<https://icom.museum/en/resources/standards-guidelines/museum-definition/>. Accessed 2 January 2023.

Museum definition and meaning | Collins English Dictionary. *Collins Dictionary*,
<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/museum>. Accessed 23 March 2023.

Mutumba, Yvette. *In Museums We Trust*. Amsterdam, Stedelijk Studies, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, 2022,
https://stedelijkstudies.com/in-museums-we-trust-yvette-mutumba-lecture/#av_section_2. Accessed 2 March 2023.

O'Neill, Paul. *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Culture (s)*. MIT Press, 2012.

O'Neill, Paul; Wilson, Mick editors. *Curating and the Educational Turn*. Open Editions, 2010.

Pelipoikilo - Poikilo. *Poikilo-museot*,
<https://www.poikilo.fi/nayttelyt/nayttelyarkisto/pelipoikilo/>. Accessed 16 March 2023.

Rancière, Jacques. *The Ignorant Schoolmaster : Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation*. Stanford University Press, 1991.

Rancière, Jacques. *What Times Are We Living In? A Conversation with Eric Hazan*. Translated by Steve Corcoran, Wiley, 2020.

Salgado, Mariana. *Designing for an Open Museum: An Exploration of Content Creation and Sharing Through Interactive Pieces*. University of Art and Design Helsinki, 2009.

Sheikh, Simon. "Positively White Cube Revisited - Journal #3 February 2009." *e-flux*, 3 February 2009,
<https://www.e-flux.com/journal/03/68545/positively-white-cube-revisited/>. Accessed 16 March 2023.

Simon, Nina. *The Participatory Museum*. Museum 2.0, 2010.

Sitzia, Emilie The ignorant art museum: beyond meaning-making, *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 2017

Sitzia, Emilie; Elffers, Anna A. Defining Participation: Practices in the Dutch artworld. In J. Kavanagh, & K. McSweeney (Eds.) *Museum Participation: New Directions for Audience Collaboration* (pp. 39-67). MuseumsEtc Ltd. 2016.

Taxén, Gustav *Introducing participatory design in museums*. pp. 204-213. 2004

The Helsinki Model | City of Helsinki, 2022,
https://www.hel.fi/kulttuurin-ja-vapaa-ajan-toimiala/en/about_us/culture-division/helsinki-model/. Accessed 15 March 2023.

Thomas, Catherine, editor. *The Edge of Everything: Reflections on Curatorial Practice*. Banff Centre Press, 2002.

Ursyn, Anna, editor. *Handbook of Research on Maximizing Cognitive Learning Through Knowledge Visualization*. IGI Global, 2015.

Viita-aho, Mari; Robbins, Nina; Thomas, Suzie; Tuominen, Minna; Wessman, Anna. *Museum Studies: Bridging Theory and Practice*. ICOFOM, 2021.

Villeneuve, Pat. Considering Competing Values in Art Museum Exhibition Curation. *Stedelijk Studies*,
<https://stedelijkstudies.com/journal/considering-competing-values-in-art-museum-exhibition-curation/>. Accessed 8 December 2022.

Überhund – the Fascinating Dogs in Art - Poikilo, Poikilo Museum, 5 December 2022,
<https://www.poikilo.fi/en/home/exhibitions/uberhund-the-fascinating-dogs-in-art/>. Accessed 15 March 2023.

Überhund. Parvs Publishing, 2022, <https://parvs.fi/en/books/uberhund/>. Accessed 15 March 2023.

