

# MOBILITY NOMADISM ENGAGEMENT



The "Out of Place" conference took place during the last days of summer on Norra Grängesbergsgatan in Malmö, home of Sweden's first designated cultural sound zone; the "Kulturljudzon". As part of the European project "Alterplaces" we examine the role of independent cultural places in the development of green, fair and diverse urban ecosystems and how they can be ecologically, socially and financially sustainable.



Across Europe vital artistic and cultural spaces within cities are closing as they face increasing scrutiny from government entities and rising pressure from landowners to assist in the "revitalization" of neighborhoods. Collaboration among public, private, and grassroots organizations to resist noise reduction policies, halt residential development, secure permits for changes in property use, and establish security and surveillance measures for crowd control and alcohol sales can benefit cultural production. However, this dynamic also fosters a perception that DIY culture is being

instrumentalized, functioning as a de marketing tool for the interests of capital and local gouvernement. In this context, non-commercial alternative projects become less appealing and consequently receive insufficient support. Sustainability implies resilience and durability. Currently, it seems our consortium partners in Donetsk, Berlin, Paris, Zagreb, Malmö & Toronto are endangered more by political change and real estate development than by climate breakdown. NGBG from Malmö, Izolyatsia from Donetsk & The Long Winter from Toronto have all become nomadic as a response to these challenges .

"Out of Place" looks at surviving the loss of permanent premises and what capacity and engagement can still be sustained with nomadic solutions. This "Out of Place" situation has prompted innovative mobile and nomadic practices but has also significantly affected the working conditions and engagement of artists and creative workers in Alternative Cultural Places. As a result, we observe an increase in precarity for both workers and collectives. The workshops focused on the issues faced by ACPs and the strategies they employ to maintain their presence in gentrifying arts and cultural districts.

The workshop was designed with a variety of forms including panel discussions, interactive workshops, soundscapes and prototyping activities. Participants included artists and cultural producers, activists and community organizers, urban planners and architects, academics and students in cultural studies, and others interested in the future of alternative cultural spaces.



We explored the temporary, nomadic, and activist practices developed as creative responses to the scarcity of space and began to prototype tools that can document and explore the frontiers of alternative cultural places.

"Migration and the Infrastructural [re] production of Norra Grängesbergsgatan"  
Laleh Foroughanfar,  
Malmö University

"Out of Place:  
Whatever happened to  
NGBG?" - Iain Dace,  
Chairman of NGBG  
Förening

"Strategies of Survival  
: What next?"  
Amy Gottung of DIY  
Space Project in  
Toronto

"SoundScapes" podcast  
creation with Hugo  
Boothby, Malmö  
University



The thursday afternoon session was hosted by lecturer and researcher Hugo Boothby of Malmö University. He introduced us to his work on the EU project LISTEN! in which he works the NGBG Assosiation and the Universities of Hasselt, Belgium and Voralberg, Austria to gather strategies and tools that help strengthen the capacity to listen.



# SOUND SCAPES

The Malmö prototype uses podcasting and audio production to promote dialogue and collaboration, it considers the value of listening as a site of political action and whether listening can help facilitate the development of sustainable urban life. How can the citizens and workers of Norra Grängesbergsgatan be included in initiatives that build towards sustainable urban life in ways that avoid polarising discourse. Can careful, convivial listening and experimental media exist as tools applied in future research to build new knowledge and instigate transformative change?

Based on his research, Hugo led us through a varied and engaging interactive workshop where “Listening” is experienced as an iterative process that consists of three activities: registration, reflection and imagination.

We started with forming expedition parties and embarking on a sound safari exploring the public and semi-public spaces of the “Kulturljudzon” neighbourhood and recording short clips of interesting soundscapes on their telephones.

Group listening sessions followed back at Annelundsgården. We started with a game of guess the sound as the groups challenged each other to identify the sounds they had recorded. This led on to many other questions and discussions; What do you hear? What does it mean to you? What do others think? What does the person who recorded it say it is? What is the difference between hearing and listening?

With this as source material, Hugo then led us through the process and techniques of podcast production which resulted in the podcast we’ve linked to the title of this article.

# GATHER IN THE GARDEN

The growing pains of a community garden - Heather Oldby of Växtverket told us about their experience of gaining access to public park land and getting funding for a building and gardening playground for the local kids. Väktvärket is a group of designers, landscape architects, garden engineers and educators, who are passionate about and work for child-friendly and sustainable cities. Since the start of 2014, they have worked action-driven with a focus on participant involvement.

Together with children and residents, they create and activate green learning environments and meeting places in the city and carry out valued activities in site development, urban cultivation and outdoor pedagogy.

Their focus on giving access to kids to create spontaneously mirrors NGBG’s attitude to providing open access to resources for local culture production in that the most important thing is to enable the production not the consumption of culture. To reduce the barriers to participation and provide free access to the means of cultural production.







Architect & Prototyping Consultant at SLU Alnarp - Caroline Dahl is a senior lecturer in landscape architecture at the department of landscape architecture, planning and management. Trained as an urban planner and an architect with a Ph.D. in landscape architecture her research interest deals with transforming urban landscapes and how transformation can be orchestrated through increased awareness to site, temporalities, stakeholder constellations and iterative processes.

## PROTOTYPING PERMANENCE

She led us in a workshop to seek ways of prototyping functional representations of our work in Alterplaces, this process resulted in concepts for our prototypes. A predictive and intuitive tarot card game, as a conversation start for discussions of sustainable cultures, a tiny mobile culture house to investigate the minimum capacities needed for survival and the possibilities of nomadic strategies in political ecology, non-extractive economies, and a guide to the possibilities of Guerilla Gardening and Urban Farming as functions of an Alternative Culture Place.

## WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

On the Saturday we moved to a venue with a larger capacity allowing more participants to attend our two panel discussions;

The first was "Sustainable Engagement : We're all in this together" - Our partners at Mochvara, TEH, NGBG, La Station, alongside Oliver Neate, curator at Hmwl (House Music With Love) and founder of the Love Foundation Öresund discussed the limits of voluntary engagement and unpaid staff. What is it that makes people donate time, money and resources to social and cultural organisations. How do we ensure a fair deal and prevent overwork? They were moderated by Diy Space Amy Gottung of DIY Space Project.

The second discussion was called Local Practices : Sustaining grassroot cultural movements" - Pärva von Andreasson from the Grafitti Hangar, Paul Kraus of Hypnos Theatre, Frida Trollmyr from ABF & Pierre Alatbeh of Aile House discussed the loss of cultural capacity caused by a reduction in government funding, the alternative sources of funding for grass roots culture and the ways in which the choice of funding partner effects the style of culture produced. They were moderated by Thalia Giovannelli of Trans Europe Halles.



URBAN SPREE

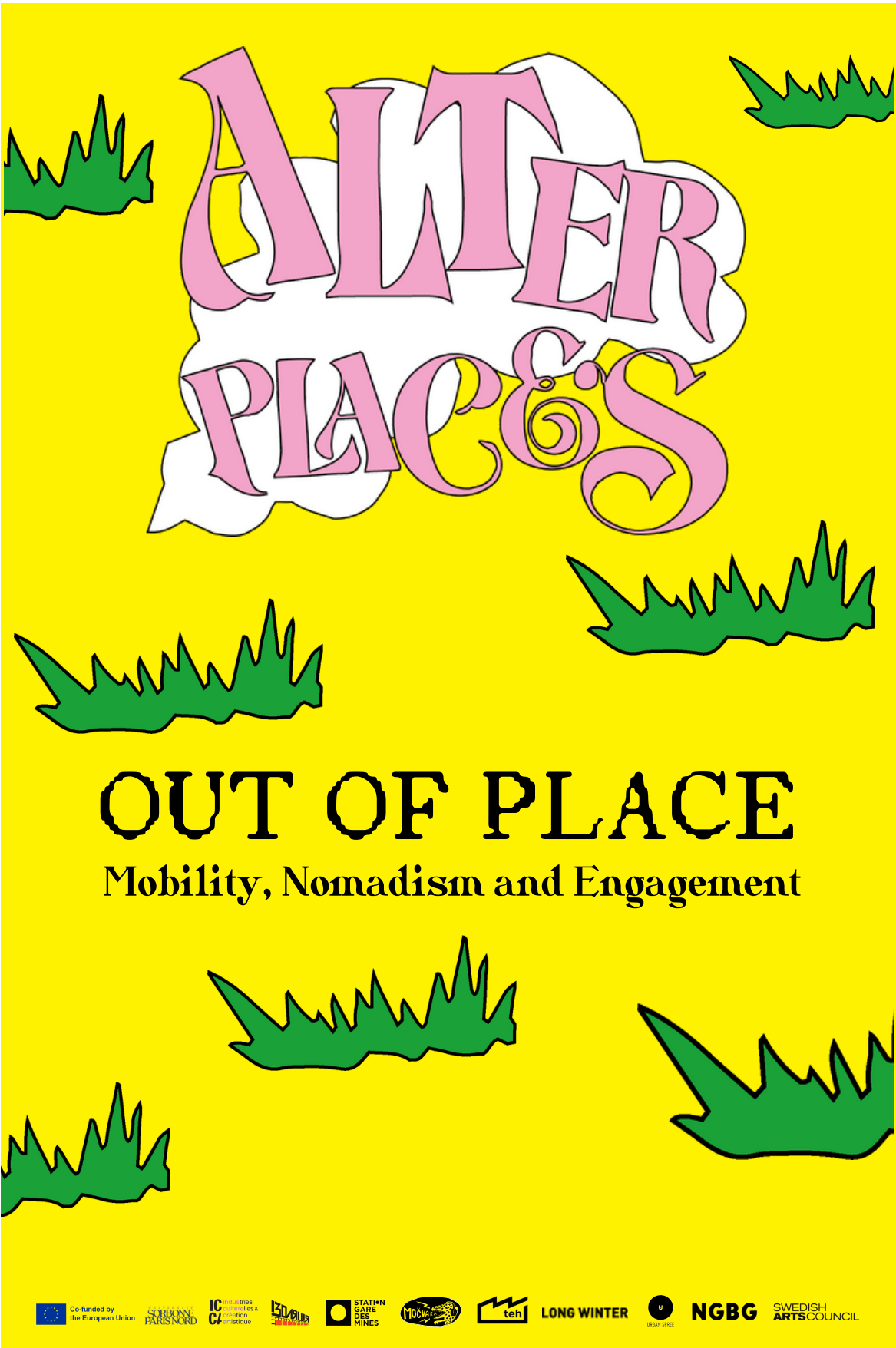
N.G.B.G.



LONG WINTER



IC industries  
culturelles &  
CA création  
artistique



# RESULTS !

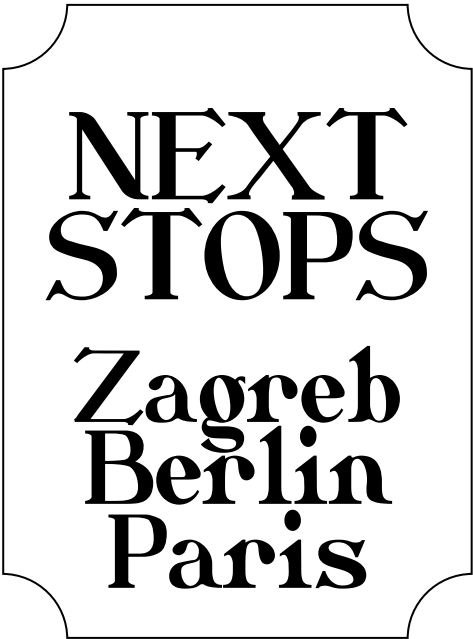
Alternative and grassroots cultural centers are vital in advancing degrowth, a socio-economic paradigm that seeks to reduce consumption and production for sustainability and equity. Operating outside mainstream capitalist systems, these centers embody community, sustainability, and resilience. They promote post-consumerist values by fostering creativity and hosting events like repair cafes and skill-sharing workshops, reducing reliance on mass production.

By supporting local economies, they prioritize local artists, makers, and even alternative currencies, fostering mutual aid over extractive global systems. Their focus on resource efficiency, such as reusing abandoned spaces and promoting low-impact lifestyles, models circular and sustainable practices.

These centers strengthen social networks, creating spaces for collaboration and mutual aid while reducing dependence on consumption-driven social validation. Their use of democratic governance, including horizontal decision-making, empowers communities to model equitable and sustainable systems.

They challenge capitalist narratives through critical discourse, art, and activism, encouraging communities to envision alternative futures. By empowering marginalized groups and ensuring affordable access, they address systemic inequalities inherent in growth-focused models.

Finally, grassroots cultural centers advocate for systemic change by pushing for local policies aligned with degrowth and fostering global solidarity. As living examples of degrowth principles, they drive the transition to more equitable and sustainable societies.



URBAN SPREE



This AlterPlaces  
Workshop was  
hosted by:

# .N.G.B.G.



NGBG itself is currently involved in a sustained experiment in nomadism. Relationships between the commercial, civic and voluntary partners that organise the NGBG Gatufest fractured causing a change of venue for “Out of Place” from Annelundsgården at the northern end of NGBG to Augustenborgstorget at its most southern tip.

The benefits of nomadism were apparent in the opportunity to visit almost all the other culture houses in the Kulturljudzon, including Hypnos Theatre, Ailé House, Ljudgården, Kulturfabriken, Graffiti Hangaren and Växtväcket.

NGBG's new premises at Augustenborgstorget are illustrated here with one of the live sketches that Linnea Lidegran made for us.

## Special Guests & Links

### Alterplaces

Amanda Pina - Urban Spree (Berlin, Germany)

Gaspard Bourgeois, Manon Lebeau - La Station (Paris, France)

Natalia Bodalilla - LabEx ICCA (Paris, France)

Amy Gottung - The Long Winter (Toronto)

Mykhailo Glubokyi, Elizaveta Chernova - Izolyatsia (Ukraine)

Vanessa Matošević, Maja Rogulj - Mochvara (Zagreb)

Iain Dace, Pia Lindroth, NGBG Members & Volunteers - NGBG (Malmö)

Thalia Giovannelli, Mieke Renders - Trans Europe Halles

and...

Caroline Dahl - SLU Alnarp

Students at SLU - SLU Alnarp

HUGO BOOTHBY Listen project - Malmö University

LALEH FOROUGHANFAR - Institute for Urban Studies

HEATHER OLDBY - Växtväcket

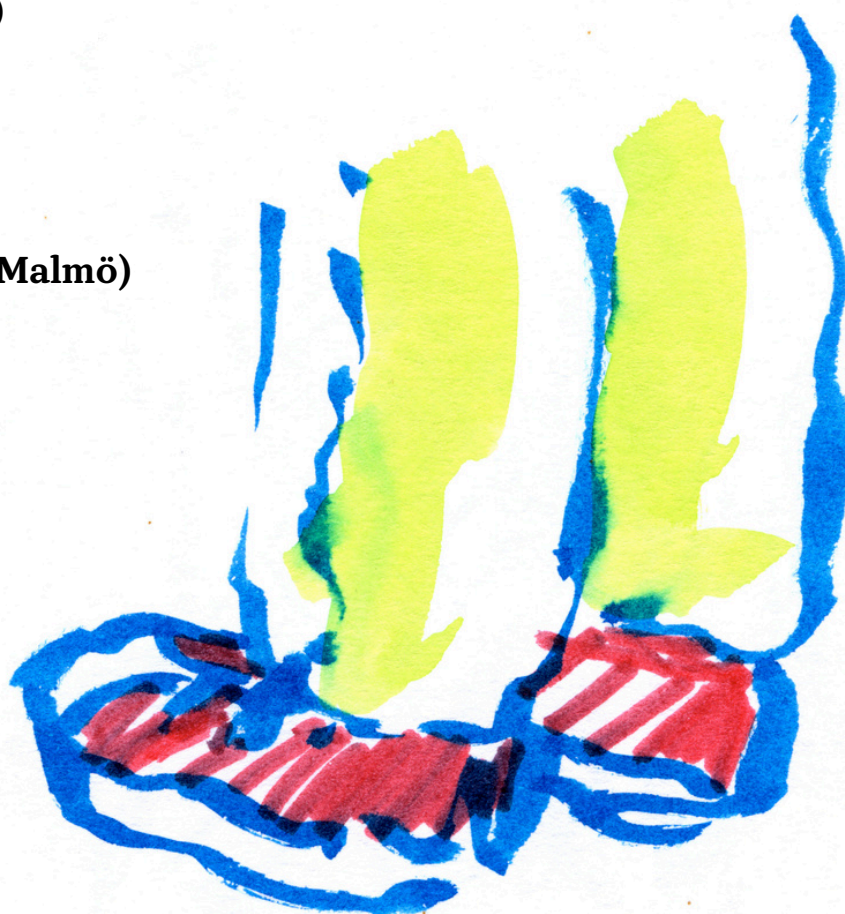
PÄRRA VON ANDREASSON - Urban Konsthall

OLIVER NEATE - Love Foundation

PIERRE ALATBEH - Ailé House

FRIDA TROLLMYR - Abf

PAUL KRAUS - Hypnos Theatre



This workshop would not have been possible without the remarkable effort of NGBG förening's members and volunteers