

SITE FOR UNLEARNING

How can we actively practice a commons-based approach in our daily work?

What is the role of an artist in all of this?

What is the relationship between an art institution's vision and engagement in cultural production and its day-to-day workings that inform an administrative and managerial ethos?

Site for Unlearning (Art Organization) is an ongoing, collaborative research project for unlearning specific art organizational habits, normative behaviors, and ways of thinking in light of the value of the commons. Begun in Spring 2014 and co-developed by the Casco team and artist Annette Krauss, the project takes Casco as a concrete site for research and subject for change, while placing emphasis on unlearning, however impossible, as integral to learning something new.

So far the central thing we have been unlearning is "busyness," the familiar state and prevalent mode of "business." Running a business, in particular the business of an art institution, is irrevocably tied up with our feeling of

constantly "being busy," loaded with stress and anxiety. This sense of busyness stems from our habit of undervaluing certain reproductive tasks such as (digital) cleaning, cooking, and hosting, as well as non-public administrative work, maintenance work, organizational tasks, and relations. The Casco team and Krauss have together been analyzing features and characteristics of "being busy" and its cause, while coming up with proposals for ways to "unlearn" them. This compilation shares some of those proposals as "unlearning exercises" with our peer organizations and other communities who might have the same problems and desire to unlearn them.

Why are we always so busy?

What does being productive mean to us?

How does this particular feeling of responsibility affect our bodies and minds, all the while knowing that without productive work our institution would not exist?

How can we unlearn this habit of following a form of productivity that feeds on business?

How can we value reproductive labor as an essential part of productivity and dismantle the rushed feeling of always being too busy?

(art organization)

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3. Cleaning Together

Unlearning Exercise

We clean our office together every Monday morning after the team meeting. We divide the tasks, put on music (sometimes), and set the time for around 30 minutes. It's important to begin cleaning together and feel we are collectively responsible.



What to Unlearn

Undervaluing reproductive labor; hierarchies and unequal division in domestic labor in terms of who does what; and making reproductive labor the last priority and not finding any satisfaction in it.

Transcription

6 October 2014
Annette, Binna, Björn, Ester,
Jason, Lara, Sanne, Suzanne,
Ying, Yolande

YI

So, we have cleaned collectively a few times, because we would like to unlearn undervaluing reproductive labor. Through collective cleaning, do we try to revalue it? How has it worked?

E

It hasn't. I already value cleaning a lot, so it didn't change anything for me.

SU

Well, for me I think I value that we did it collectively. It was a team effort.

L

It depends. Okay, as an intern, I clean when you do the important stuff. That's when this labor starts to make no sense to me. I think it's a really powerful thing to do this together.

YI

That points to the collective aspect of it, which is crucial to revaluing it. I agree that maybe, individually, I feel the same about cleaning as a job, or cleaning in general. But doing it collectively does something to the implications of the work of cleaning within an institution.

YO

Yeah, I also think we are forgetting that. We're trying to think about the things that we internalize, because even if I value cleaning as an activity, I still make it a last priority.

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Annette Krauss

Unlearning to Relate

How to approach processes of unlearning physically, intellectually, and collaboratively? This question has been at the core of my study and practice of unlearning in different constellations at the intersections of art, everyday life and (institutionalized) normalization processes with the aim of reconsidering a politics of relating. I will elaborate specifically on 'un/learning institutional habits', the theme of a long-term collaboration with the team of the art space Casco in Utrecht.

Excerpt from the series *Unlearning Exercises* and installation view. The *Unlearning Exercises* are a result of an ongoing collaboration between the team at Casco and artist Annette Krauss since 2013. The tear pads were created for Casco's exhibition and study program, *We Are the Time Machine: Time and Tools for Commoning* (2015-2016).

Biographies

Annette Krauss, Utrecht/Vienna. Artist and researcher. Has (co-)initiated various long-term collaborative practices: <http://hiddencurriculum.info>, <http://read-in.info>, <http://siteforunlearning.tumblr.com>

Casco – Office for Art, Design and Theory in Utrecht is an open and public space for artistic research and experiments that are cross-disciplinary, open to collaboration, and process-driven. <http://www.cascoprojects.org>

Zuordnungen entüben_verlernen

Wie können wir Prozesse des Entübens physisch, intellektuell und gemeinsam angehen? Dies ist die Kernfrage meiner theoretischen wie praktischen Auseinandersetzung mit Verlernen in unterschiedlichen Gruppen an den Schnittstellen von Kunst, Alltag und (institutionalisierten) Normalisierungsprozessen. Ziel ist eine Politik der Zuordnung zu überdenken. Ich richte den Blick speziell auf das «Entüben institutioneller Gewohnheiten», ein gemeinsames Langzeitprojekt mit dem Team des Kunstraums Casco in Utrecht.

Auszug der Serie *Prozesse des Entübens* und Ausstellungsansicht. Die *Prozesse des Entübens* sind Ergebnis einer seit 2013 andauernden Zusammenarbeit des Casco-Teams mit der Künstlerin Annette Krauss. Die Abreiss-Blöcke wurden für das Ausstellungs- und Forschungsprogramm von Casco, *We Are the Time Machine: Time and Tools for Commoning* (2015-2016) entworfen.

Biografien

Annette Krauss, Künstlerin und Forschende, Utrecht/Wien. Sie hat zahlreiche kollaborative Langzeitprojekte mitinitiiert: <http://hiddencurriculum.info>, <http://read-in.info>, <http://siteforunlearning.tumblr.com>

Casco – Office for Art, Design and Theory in Utrecht ist ein offener und öffentlicher Raum künstlerischer Forschungen und Experimente, die cross-disziplinär, für Zusammenarbeit offen und prozessorientiert sind. <http://www.cascoprojects.org>