

Starting from this project let thought to build her own new building on the terrain. There is enough space to build apartments for these people. 'This terrain deserves to be more appreciated by others'. It could be a place where she could live in the future, better than the very expensive housing in Leidsche Rijn Centrum. But first she wants to win back some nature to the city: a little original forest, in compensation to all the organised city parks. 'The forest brings birds and little hedgehogs back. We have even moles in the ground!' Some people think moles are a problem. 'Everything that is alive is beautiful!' Thinks let.

The Farmer's House

The Commons - *Asia Komarova*

I. The Commons

Generally speaking the commons is a concept taken from ancient times and awakened lately from ecologist Garrett Hardin in his article 'The Tragedy of the Commons' in 1968. Here Hardin describes the disadvantages of abuse of all planet Earth resources, so to say, where population over abuses one of another resource of the planet, be it water, air, soil, trees etc., not taking into consideration human and non-human species or the capacity of self-regeneration of the commons.

However, the etymology of the word comes from

the office but also from abroad, consisting of director Binna Choi with the help of Yolande van de Heide, Erik UitdeBoomgaard, Rosa Paardenkooper, Staci Bu Chea, ect., the Ecosystem are all the artists, thinkers, doers, philosophers, curators, architects, writers, activists and citizens that has been part of Casco projects for the last few years. Also Casco is a member of Arts Collaboratory. Finally Casco Assembly are meetings within the Casco team and Ecosystem, that occur four times per year. 'Preliminary notes for the draft include, for example:

- Heterogeneity as a value to enrich the common resources. This requires carefulness and generosity, and includes a slow way of seeing and sensing.
- Intersectionality as a value and practice which resonates with an open aesthetic form, where materiality, composition, and context are transparent in their complexity.
- Ecological sustainability as an attitude and practice for the material production of artworks and projects.

In an interview to FRIEZE magazine about this transformation as an organisation, Vivian Sky Rehberg asked to Binna and Yolande some specific questions about the leftist agenda of Dutch Art Institutions, the anti-capitalist/non-capitalist approach and about the aesthetics, a relevant excerpt from the interview:

'VSR: Okay. Where does the aesthetic come in, then?

BC: It was a 'strategic' choice to put the words 'art' and 'institute' in the new name, not in order to have more art objects as we know them, but to nail our position within the arts while we move outside of the fields of art. It's for treating art foremost as a 'technique', a way, a tool, an approach and ongoing practice towards (un)learning, thinking and acting in an open way. With art, we don't need to be a rocket scientist to be curious of how a rocket works, and you don't only learn about how it's built, you also learn about society, politics and economy surrounding it, for instance. Art offers an endless, very malleable way of learning about and engaging with the world. I'm wondering to what extent an exhibition can function in that capacity for art to be really used.

YvdH: My work at Casco is primarily in publishing, so when we talk about reach I often

its surrounding has been dramatically changing, under the dispute between the farmer and the municipalities and making its future uncertain. The farmhouse is owned by farmer Kees Van Vuuren, and therefore family Van Vuuren. For over 50 years, the farmhouse has been owned by the Van Vuuren family. Until 2007, Hof ter Weyde operated as a dairy farm and cheesery. The farm was much larger and completely surrounded by expansive green farmlands and rows of glasshouses. The Van Vuuren's raised pigs, chickens, and dairy cows, and made dairy products such as cheese and yoghurt in the cheesemaking room located at the rear of the farmhouse. There was also a cheese store that sold milk and homemade dairy products to the local community.

After 1995, when the Leidsche Rijn Masterplan was adopted by the municipal councils of Utrecht and Vleuten-de Meern, the family sustained persistent pressures to sell their land. The purchasing of the Van Vuuren's land by the government was essential for the execution of the Masterplan which sought to construct a brand new neighbourhood of Leidsche Rijn directly on top of most of the area's farmlands...

- Excerpt from Words from the Land pamphlet ⁶

Through our occupation with the Outsiders and Casco we aimed turning it into a space for gatherings of neighbours, diverse practitioners and other beings such as animals, plants, bacteria etc., for exchange and collaboration especially towards (un)learning ecological practice.

Before we delve into the occupation and activation of the farm it would be smart to take a step backwards and reveal the reason why would a collaboration between the two organisations that has a basic different agenda would make of this place a fruitful artistic intervention and with which purposes?

The Outsiders, similar to Casco, is a union that implements service to people, the environment and to the society. We create sustainable alternative contexts through emergent forms of social engagement. The Outsiders believes that sustainability has no ultimate meaning. Play together in order to know best! Through public art and architecture we construct spaces in order to understand the city and it's shared existence. Learning by doing is the motto. The Outsiders intervenes, in collaboration with different organisations and citizens, on long term and

decided to make the farm function by seasons, so as it used to be, by adapting our live-styles to the ones from the past.

- Winter: December - January - February (incubation time)
- Spring: March- April - May (explosion of blooming and plantation)
- Summer: June- July- August (work)
- Autumn: September - October - November (harvest)

Winter: as an incubation moment is that moment where we start thinking about the future use of the farm, willing to make a stable program. Accepting invitations, talking to the neighbours, making proposals on the question: what do we want to happen?

Spring: it is the blossom period, here is where all the ideas we have collected start to bread and have a young life. They are full of energy and hopefully will stay during summer time, to be harvested in autumn. The soil outside has to be prepared to be used, we can start planting, who is there to help ? Summer: Let's Work !!! Little animals are born, pumpkins are blooming and there are a lot of bees around. Autumn: We have been working all summer! Now is the time to harvest, and finally after the harvest we can have a big party.

Further we questioned: Why is the farmhouse empty? Where has the farm relocated? If the farms in the area are gone, then where does the food for the residents of Leidsche Rijn comes from? Erfgoed project opened by asking the community, what are the future possibilities of this farmhouse and how can "we" in common, make it happen? An initial premise of openness is a way to investigate ecological practice that our highly urbanised and industrialised societies urgently need to engage with.

A group of artists, some local, from a nearby village and some invited by Casco to collaborate on a long term, thought an initial program where we could engage neighbours and neighbouring schools to come for a weekly visit and participate in activities related to ecology. Succeeding some departments where formed consisting of activities proposed for the children by artist and pedagogue Merel Zwarts; others for a wider public by neighbour and artist Avan Omar; an occupation of the kitchen of the farm by Kessouwa Yaboah chef and a neighbour; a second hand shop by Dounia el Ouardani, a

translate months of living together on a shared land in two rooms of approximately 60m² each. How to tell such a complicated story in two rooms? Where we didn't know the future of the farm house but at the same time needed to stop because of our schedule. What could we transmit to the public ? Our frequency and tuning as a group, the story of the place, the artwork that has been made, present the inhabitants, as insects, chickens, vegetables and flowers...but why would we be different and our story outstanding from other farms and formal rural spaces. The truth is that none of our activities would be and were very peculiar, we were just one more farm that became a cultural center.

This is in fact the sad and preoccupying story of our farms, the one we used to live in, is one in a million! It was a moment of realisation where we could tell the story talking for a wide community of farmers, the rural ones and the upcoming urban ones. If all the small farms were gradually disappearing on which nutrition products and to which companies were our salaries going when purchasing food ? The urgency to show the farmers resistance was suddenly big and willing to tell their and our stories began to flow.

We decided to work as a group, no curator show, no solo show, no group show, but actually to build up the exhibition altogether. We cleaned up the farm, trying to dismantle our activity traces and interventions and we brought as much as possible to Casco. There, in two days, we build up an exhibition, restoring the objects that we used to have previously at the farm. At the same time another artist invited by Casco team was modifying several spaces at the building of the farm by adding fungus-like sculpture. Her name is Alma Heikkilä and she is part of the Finnish collective called Mustringa, having a residency house into the deep forest.

Here is a text about the exhibition withdrawn from the official invitation:

In what ways do we [humans] imagine, think about, and interact with the interdependence of microbial life, and how might we newly encounter "knowing" in our human–non-human entanglements toward a different way of living?

Collective exhibition in partnership with: The Outsiders (Txell Blanco, Asia Komarova and Leonardo Siqueira) and with contributions by: Xalil Abdullah, Maria Stijger Aramburu, Riek Bakker, Eric de Boer, Bart Broeze, Britt Dorenbosch, Malek and Fatima, Manne

absorbed by the city and we were content of giving it a revitalizing shake, bringing the urban and rural a step closer.

Translating the Farmhouse Activities and Social Life to the Exhibition - *Staci Bu Shea*



Fig3. - Exhibition documentation, *Center for Ecological Unlearning / ERFGOED 2018*, Casco Art Institute, Utrecht, 2018

While I wasn't as involved in the formidable conversations surrounding the activities at Terwijde farmhouse like others from Casco Art Institute, I did enjoy many of the events and casual gatherings that were collaboratively generated by the Casco team, The Outsiders, and the neighbors of Leidsche Rijn. I thoroughly enjoyed the bike tour through the town to learn more about how it was dreamed, planned, and developed in the 1990s.

Art as Social
Experiment:
Culture Commons to
design Cultural Goods
- *Janna Reinsma*

The Garden

The Durability of Blossoming - *Merel Zwarts*

From seeding time to harvest season 2018 I was part of a wonderful team maintaining an old farmhouse in Utrecht. As being an artist with an interest in using alternative pedagogical methods and as a person maintaining a low environmental impact, I felt immediately intrigued by the concept of the Terwijde Farmhouse to use as a centre for the neighbourhood where collective gatherings and actions regarding ecology, farming and sustainability could take place. This common space with its rich history and relationship with rapid urban transformations seems like the ideal location for people from the neighbourhood to gather. Relating to the context of both the transformation from farmland to residential area as to the demographic inhabitants of the area, namely families, I initiated a special 'children's department' within this Centre of Ecological Unlearning: De Groeiafdeling (The Growth Department). I felt especially drawn to work with children in this particular context because I grew up in the opposite 'rural'/village area (east) side around Utrecht, namely: Rhijnauwen and Bunnik. I have warm memories of growing up on the border between neighbourhood streets and rural lands.

My wish was to work with children from the neighbourhood to explore how they, as the new generation, look at their relationship with their surroundings in a conscious way. To be honest, letting children participating in the project didn't go effortless. Parents didn't come that easily as they couldn't find their way to the farmhouse yet. It was through other institutions and organizations that groups of children came to know about the farmhouse and its activities. So even within this open structure for common use, I felt pushed into

neighbourhood. Eventually, I would like to take more lead in actively constructing new objects, models or actions instead of merely depending on the participation of the neighbours. Working together in common still is a core element, but if people see what's already being done or how is responded to their needs, it's perhaps easier to hop on. In other words, I wouldn't host and sell workshops per se. I would take on a more explorative and flexible approach.

Apart from the Centre of Ecological Unlearning, I will continue to have conversations with next generations about food, the environment and nature. Things as recent protests from high schoolers playing truant demanding politicians and corporations to take action for climate change makes me feel hopeful for future generations. I see it as my task as an artist with a pedagogical practice to help children and youngsters to make new imaginative and critical models visible, without losing a sense of playfulness. Let's exchange, let's play, let's grow.

Farm Life - *Ali Authman*

Live in a farm is obviously in direct contact for humans with nature or natural environment. Not only because of the beginning of the farming period in history and hard work on the farm in the past, but life in the farm, still is a memory of natural ways, being together, seeing things growing in front of your eyes, live with animals and so on...

Today we are witnessing how humans are getting more and more far from the natural ways of living. The body of the farmhouse we occupied in Terwijde, that today is surrounded by busy new housing and markets, was a good way for me to work through. I have experienced both ways and I think there is no need to compare but rather build things on what we have and live in today's live.

I like to work with children, as I have a chance to have them in the farm and use today regular objects that was not usual 100 years ago, like plastic bottles. With those children we gave another function to throwing things and worked hard again to build playful musical objects out of those plastic bottles. So through sound, we made new musical objects to play, enjoy, learn, and make contact with each other and the environment around us.

Fig4. - Picture taken during the workshops of 'contemporary archaeology, make your own fossil' by Merel Zwarts and the children of the workshop. Utrecht, 2018

The Chicken's Shelter