Urban Lifewor(l)ds:
Footsteps, Futures, and Narrative Repair

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Abstract

This article focuses on narrative encounters between people, cities, and stories, and the narrative, material, and futuristic urban plotting. It explores how people engage with narrative heritage, its objects – not just neoliberal wet dreams and dystopias, but also speculative street theatre, participatory utopian fiction, orature, or lyrics – and the practices of co-writing, reading, and listening to ask, beyond Henri Lefebvre, not simply 'who has the right to the city', but who can *narrate* its shared pasts and futures, and how. In the paper, I treat stories and urban architecture as interwoven and co-constitutive modalities of heritage preservation, destruction, repair and futurescaping, drawing attention, after Don Mitchell and Sara Zawde, to the narrative affordances of built landscapes as 'metaphors to live by' and to the design-making force of narratives and words. The narrative heritages I center on are, therefore, not simply literary texts but diverse narrative acts, including narrators, different media, spaces, and situated rehearsals of public and collective sci-fi storytelling, writing, and listening for togetherness and less violent futures. The article meanders across several urban narrative situations: 'Society of the Future' showcases designed by students after dystopian novels and urbanscapes in Boston; speculative heritage live action role-play (LARP) in the streets of Cambridge, Massachusetts, US; 'wave writing' experiments in Trondheim/Tråante, Norway; and Søstrene Suse's *Radiokino* listening sessions in the footprints of Sámi Elsa Laula Renberg across Scandinavia. It concludes with a reflection on the archives of narrative 'repair' and urban otherworldliness as pedagogies of non-necrotic futuring.

> There are many debts that await to be paid, resolved, and the damage mended and repaired. Rather than producing more violence with futuristic plans, rather than thinking with a terminology of growth, we should think about doing less and repairing what was destroyed but persist in a painful way.
> Ariella Aïsha Azoulay, 'Ariella Aïsha Azoulay – Unlearning'[1]

> World literature [including orature], of which the postcolonial is an integral part, is our common heritage as much as the air we breathe.
> Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Globalectics: Theory and the Politics of Knowing*[2]

Urban futures and narrative heritage

This article, like this issue of *Footprint*, is an homage to marginalized but not marginal bodies, stories and breaths in urban space, all demanding space, oxygen, delight, and a 'right to co-existence.'[3] It centers on narrative heritage and people's collective footprint(s)*,* highlighting attempts to

repair the city, narrate other 'possibilities of living together' in spaces bordered by carceral structures, 'aesthetic austerity' politics, and its reductive narrative plots.[4] Architects often look up to scholars of storytelling, as if, less bound by budgets, ideology and politics, they were more daring in their narration of future justice.[5] In other words, they often reach for fiction in distress to find words for the emergent urban apocalypses, unspeakable, or yet to be named by urban studies.[6] While empathetic to this approach, I do not engage with that position without reservation. Literary scholars and narrative spatialists understand that literature, like architecture, is an ideological project. Its 'elegant technologies' – the book, which can 'fold a lot of surface area into a compact … volume', or the library, 'a temple of compression of many words' – can also 'perpetuate' spatial injustice.[7] Besides, all our unfair cities come from words – budget documents, philosophy, developmentalist fiction, or grotesque patriarchal blueprints alike – as much as steel, cement, or glass. Yet it is particular networks of narrators, capital and power, often financial speculation rather than speculative fiction, that make a story into a public or carceral space, or an idea of a nation into a children's playground or a detention center.[8] In other words, a recitation of W. H. Auden's poem on suffering at an architects' summit in Dubai, New York, Shanghai, or London will not prevent the destruction of another wetland's patch chosen for residential development. Neither will it prevent an investment in human-caging carceral industry and miraculously inject developers with urban justice and ethics.[9]

And yet, narratives *matter* and are 'spatial matters'.[10] For one, literary and architectural structures — say, the greyscale mall, whose façade walls off democratic encounters — are both ideological constructs that alter how we 'read' and relate to our sociocultural landscape and bodies around us.[11] In that, narrative erasure and spatial exclusion always go hand in hand. At the same time, reclaiming diverse communal storytelling practices and our complex narrative heritage – 'world literature', Indigenous 'orature', children's theatre, Black women's fiction, queer songs, or spoken word alike – can 'matter' urbanscapes more equitably.[12] Put differently, built landscapes are ideological scripts we are instructed to 'live by', but narrative salvaging, co-creation, refusal, and repair can transform the urban architecture of segregation and re-construct less disabling urban lifeworlds.[13] The article, therefore, takes an ecosystemic approach to built urban environments and stories as interwoven modalities of co-creation, speculation, sharing, living, preservation, and destruction. Architecture and stories are both ideologically and materially entangled, narrated, 'scripted', contested, performed, and serve equally as generative instruments of future violence and of its 'refusal' and urban 'repair'.[14] I engage then sincerely with

Azoulay's warnings about the toxicity of futuristic plots, as I center on living and peopled narrative heritage work and, specifically, the rehearsals of narrative resistance, reimagining, and repair.[15] This dialogical and narrative approach to urban space, while often neglected, is not novel, and has many predecessors and practitioners in print and in the streets.[16] The article tributes its street narrators: children and teenagers, students, feminists, migrants and Indigenous futurists, excluded in cultural heritage studies and urban spaces, while avoiding the uncritical celebration of futurity and world-building. 'We don't need other worlds', warns the sci-fi visionary Stanisław Lem, because 'we don't know what to do with [them]', and 'we are already choking on … the one world' that we have.[17] Lem urges us to look for 'mirrors' instead, and 'search for people'.[18] Similarly, Christina Sharpe highlights the importance of ongoing and collective 'acts and accounts of care' that serve 'as mass refusals of the unbearable [contemporary] life' and 'total rejections of the dead future'.[19]

'Urban Lifewor(l)ds' heeds these ideas by expanding the narrow but violently operative definitions of heritage and future, which systemically exclude ephemeral narratives, orature, spoken, or shared urban words, imaginings, and worlds, especially when these are untethered to capital but tethered to young, poor, queer, migrant, dis-abled, non-white, or otherwise marginal bodies instead.[20] In this article, urban bodies are not just urban debris, or 'texts on which powerful regimes have written their prescriptions', but narrating agents, archivists, and foundations of urban 'infrastructures' and heritage themselves.[21] They are spatio-corporeal sensors of urban exclusion as much as agents and narrators of possibility and resistance. This essay wants to linger in their company in urban places haunted by 'hateful energy', as *they* look into the 'mirrors' of the present in Boston or Scandinavian urban everywhere.[22] The article also aims to record the different rhythms of their narrative footsteps, paying attention to the toxic futures they walk towards or away from, 'imaging' first and resisting 'what exists'.[23] Therefore, it deliberately foregrounds urban bodies that know, salvage, and tell in a classroom and on stage; in a role-playing street game; a 'wave writing' communal workshop activity or recitation; and a curated decolonial listening zone, and across continents.[24] The journey that follows is about learning from such ephemeral narrative acts, neglected by planners of space, accountants of urban heritage, and apologists of disciplinary violence in order to question dominant plots of urban futures. Renegade street storytellers have much to teach practitioners of architectural foresight about heritage, future, and sharing.

Dis-orientation as method: meandering, learning, refusing

'Walking,' Rebecca Solnit reminds us, 'generates a kind of [straying] rhythm of thinking'.[25] It is also a particularly carnal way of 'knowing the world through the body'.[26] As such, notes Walter Benjamin, it promises to help us read the city as an 'epic book' shaped by historical 'echoes', material spaces, and bodies and footsteps.[27] Walking, in other words, as an embodied, spatial, and epistemic activity, can reveal the city as a complex, interdependent ecosystem, a partitioned, transhistorical, often violent, storytelling lifeworld. It is thus an unruly method of 'engaging the body and the mind with the world' that can defy what Anna Tsing sees as the limitations of 'precision-nested scales' of, in this case, hegemonic urban knowing.[28] Not surprisingly, transdisciplinary scholars of urban dystopias that segregate bodies by design with asphalt highways, a redline, a xenophobic text, or a cinematic shot, urge us to reorient on pedestrian, quotidian, and disobedient urban mobilities, and on the lived and shared experiences of different bodies in the city.[29] They prompt us to recognize that 'the city' is not simply or only a pre-designed material holder for social life, nor 'a computer', or a scalable organization system for pacifying human-nonhuman diversity, homogenizing its stories and lifeworlds alike.[30]

Yet following urban footsteps is as generative as it is disorienting. Whose steps should we listen to in the cities built for able-bodied men, and how?[31] And 'what does it even mean to walk together in a city?', ponder Judith Butler, Sunaura Taylor, Johny Pitts, Jan Grue, and many other female, queer, trans, Black, migrant, teenage, undocumented or dis-abled urban residents.[32] Embodied journeys, across then and now – in wheelchairs, on foot and on skateboards, in different bodies, across material and symbolic realms, across concrete, asbestos, flesh, cancer, streets, racial violence, fentanyl, sexual trauma, and stories – stray and surprise. They may reveal not only what the city was or is but how urban space is lived, and what might be in its future's bloodstream. In this article, therefore, meandering is a metaphor and method of unruly thinking across material and textual spaces, time, and bodies. What appears below, then, are embodied urban archives of communal storytelling, learning, futuring, and listening, which call into being different plots, worlds and words, 'as common' as the air we breathe.[33] Teaching arrogant teachers and builders, author included, how to listen, and then, how to engage in the caring repairwork and non-dystopian worlds-building.

First stop: Boston. **Time**: teenage futurelessness. **Genre**: dystopian fiction. **Role**: befuddled observer. **Instructions**: hegemonic futures simulation.

The lesson that transforms one's understanding of urban futures often comes as a comet, a Benjaminian flash of illumination.[34] Mine starts as a chance encounter with schoolchildren and the dystopias they read, experienced, and then re-enacted on a public stage. It's 2013, and I am at an urban storytelling event at a diverse public school in Boston.[35] Entitled 'The Society of the Future', it showcases the school's seventh grades' semester-long group projects, performed as a speculative fiction theatrical play, a kind of civics lesson in futurity.[36] Each group spent a semester reading classic speculative literature and inventing a futuristic society, designing its econo-political system and social structure, its citizenship requirements and its anthem, as well as its aesthetic regime: 'the culture'. The event is an opportunity to share children's stories of the future as designed by them, that is, those who will live it. Kids are to perform these futures on stage in a spectacle of futuristic time travel. The auditorium is full, and we, the audience, are excited. But the showcase turns into an afternoon of horrors. All the future civilizations that young students from diverse backgrounds co-design are unbearably grim and dystopian. In these imaginary worlds, gender and racial inequality are widespread; heteronormativity is unquestioned and rigid gender roles uncontested.[37] Slavery or a slave-like system of servitude is legal, and some of the roles of servants are performed on stage by children of color. None of the future societies are democracies – most rest on monarchic, dictatorial, and imperial governance – and their social structures are as hierarchical as they are unjust.[38] Another revelation comes during the Q&A. When asked why they had all designed such dreadful visions of social futures, students say it was 'much easier' and 'more interesting'. They didn't see their projects as future fiction but as an urgent dispatch from their own contemporary urban battlefields. It is their grand lesson. Educators and urban planners routinely ignore it.

Literary and political dystopias, it occurred to me then, are perhaps the only futuristic urban lingua franca that the schoolchildren (and we) all share, and that we are all taught is possible. While we hope for urbanism to have, ultimately, an emancipatory impact on the planet's political ecology, so far predictive global urban data is unforgiving in 2023.[39] Boston kids knew it already in 2013. In the post-pandemic moment – their future – accounts of deaths and urban devastation proliferate. The 562 mass shootings in the first ten months of 2023 alone continue to terrorize the youngest urban residents, often at their schools and campuses in the US.[40] Many devastating reports come directly from Boston, the city they were futurescaping a decade earlier. In this post-pandemic metropolis, its central urban pathway, the intersection of Melnea Cass Boulevard and Massachusetts Avenue, transformed in 2022 into a tent city of unhoused victims of neoliberal devastation, the pandemic, and the

opioid crises.[41] An unscalable testimony to the failed stories we tell about what futures of urban co-existence are welcome, necessary or possible. It strikes me now, in 2024, that the young Bostonians I encountered a decade ago may not have had 'the right to the city', but they were *right about* it.[42] They were merely, narratively, bracing for impact, aware of the dystopian scripts that await them, and the expected future roles to play as urban targets of violence or as its perpetrators (urban roles are distributed across ethnic, class, and gender lines, after all). Perhaps, I reflect, those who know the city's violent DNA and its futures so viscerally are not taught how to demolish their carceral borders, but simply tasked with bearing the burden of such constructions. And, perhaps, playing with utopian genres of non-toxic urban futurology is not only an unpracticed, atrophied skill, but a dangerous one to flaunt in public. Which trans, queer, female kids, or children of color know well.

Still, in 2013, I leave the dilapidated school building with questions: How is it possible that hundreds of kids in Boston's public school cannot collectively construct a *single* narrative blueprint for egalitarian futures? What does it mean to be a twelve-year-old living in one of the most renowned academic centers in the world and a prominent cultural heritage site in the US, and not to be able to imagine one just and shared future? Or, not to know the language, the genre, with which to express a more utopian urban vision? What does it mean for children to be able to predict apocalyptic violence with great accuracy? And how can we, scholars, architects, planners, educators, move away from dystopian urban re-enactments on the page, in the classroom, and in the streets? These questions I could not answer will shape my city-scale practice in the next decade. Boston students' sense of futurelessness, exacting sense of impending dystopia, and punishing observations about narrative disenfranchisement and the exclusion from the social space they inhabit will haunt me, too, in other urban environments, storytelling acts, and classrooms around the globe.

Second stop: Cambridge, Massachusetts. **Time:** heritage futures. **Genre:** live action role-play (LARP). **Role**: pedagogical thespian. **Instructions**: collective street improvisation.

If anti-racist participatory utopias, queer and feminist manifestos, and other spatial imaginings of urban possibility beyond 'the [neoliberal] dead future' need to be modelled and rehearsed collectively, we, scholars-builders-educators, have a particular obligation to humanize and urbanize our curricula and model activities that foreground non-extractive collective narrative work in non-dystopian speculative genres.[43] For one, imagining the city's less disabling futures requires different pedagogies of urban narration and a participatory, reciprocal approach to heritage (co) creation.[44] Which is why in 2013, the entire urban narration class, including its teachers, went back to school, which was the city.[45] Using literature and mixed-media storytelling training, we began collaborative experiments with non-instrumental, utopian, and communal uses of writing and narrative arts in order to learn how my disciplinary instrument – writing – can serve as more than a 'tactical', expressive tool of 'rage' and 'disengagement' from the world, of dystopian 'placelessness' and 'despair'.[46] Together with numerous accomplices – designers, data scientists, technologists, engineers, activists, students, urban residents, and grassroots storytellers – we co-created several rounds of transdisciplinary 'Narrating the Global City' courses.[47] At Simmons College, we began with assigned poetry, novels and films set in global metropolises – Chang-rae Lee's *Native Speaker,* Alaa Al Aswany's *The Yacoubian Building,* Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis,* Samuel Delany's *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue,* Tony Gatlif's *Exils,* Tsai Ming-liang's *The Hole,* Audrey Lorde's *NY York Head Shop and Museum,* lê thi diem thúy's *The Gangster We Are All Looking For,* and many others – and with scholarship on 'the right to the city', researched on globalization and young urban residents, and on carceral architecture.[48] While we started with fictive metropolises – imaginary New York, Los Angeles, Cairo, Tehran, Taipei, Paris – soon we, and words, landed back in our city and its neighborhoods.

The classes' utopian aim, a hunch perhaps, to bring diverse narrative heritage and crowd-sourced practices to re-narrate the city with storytellers excluded by the political and academic machinery of urban knowing, became more feasible after Northeastern's and MIT's Alicia Peaker, Jim McGrath, and Yves-Alexandre de Montjoye led guest workshops about archiving urban violence, Occupy Boston, digital humanities, and urban and cyber mobilities. The first narrative prototypes in Boston, wobbly as they were, were remarkable in the breadth of their transmedial imaginaries. Students produced eclectic projects drawing on a neglected and polylingual narrative heritage that they could access but that we, educators, could not. They contributed oral histories to a digital archive of migration and displacement at the University of Massachusetts Boston. Some crafted digital cartographies of resources for migrants and rewrote atlases of local necropolises, common sites of heritage neglect; others wrote petitions demanding resources, translations, and accessible trans-media remediations for residents with dis-abilities, and suggested revisions of exclusionary school curricula.[49] Their future-centric projects drew from their intimate knowledge of polylingual urban lifewor(l)ds and narrative heritages, and demonstrated a caring commitment to more equitable futures for the diverse urban communities.[50]

LARP Game 6: "An Exhibition Most Fanciful and Archaic"
by Jonathan Kindness, Shannon Moore, Phoebe Roberts, & Matthew Kamm

Scenario Description: Two important people from the future human colony on Mars, Cambridge 3, are working on an exhibit about Cambridge, MA landmarks. One is the mayor, who wants a big and flashy show, and the other is a professor from Harvard Mars Extension who wants something historically significant. Players ask passersby about their opinions on the local landmarks and history.

Character 1 – Professor Y.: The year is 2560, and Cambridge 3 is the name of a major colony on Mars where they have just perfected the first safe form of time travel. To celebrate this, the colony has decided to create a museum dedicated to significant landmarks from Cambridge, Massachusetts back on Earth. As a history professor from Harvard: Mars Extension, you have joined up with Mayor Z. of Cambridge 3 to travel back to Cambridge in 2013 and poll the residents about what they think are the local landmarks most worthy of inclusion in the museum, and why. Find and question a number of locals without giving away that you are from the future, as this could upset the timestream. Your proposal must be impressive and historically meaningful, as you are competing with MIT (Mars Institute of Technology) for the right to host and curate the exhibit.

Character 2 – Mayor Z.: The year is 2560, and Cambridge 3 is the name of a major colony on Mars where scientists have just perfected the first safe form of time travel. To celebrate this, the colony has decided to create an exhibit dedicated to significant landmarks from Cambridge 2 back on Earth (The one in the United States… you're pretty sure they called it that). Professor Y., a history professor from the Harvard Mars Extension, has asked for your endorsement for the exhibit to be hosted there, In order to be convinced, you are tagging along on a trip to sometime in the 20th or 21st century or thereabouts, You want this exhibit to be a success no matter where it's hosted, and you're sure that means only the flashiest and most exciting places should be included. While you're here, it might be fun to dazzle some of the locals with tales of what the future is like. People from the past are crazy about that stuff, right?

Fig. 1: One of the LARPing game scenarios for a futuristic 'An Exhibition Most Fanciful and Archaic' and two role prompts for passers-by in Cambridge, MA. Jonathan Kindness co-wrote the prompt with Shannon Moore, Phoebe Roberts, and Matthew Kamm.

One speculative project, a live action role-play (LARP) street action led by Jonathan Kindness, with Shannon Moore, Phoebe Roberts, and Mathew Kamm, offered an important retake opportunity of the futuristic assignment the middle schoolers on the other side of city could not complete in their theatre of urban dystopias. The LARPing game invited strangers to an improvised participatory street theatre, reimagining Cambridge from a temporal and spatial distance. The aim was to re-narrate public space in one of the notorious tourist locations near Harvard Square, by asking strangers to contribute to a futuristic exhibition about Cambridge heritage, which the game creators called 'An Exhibition Most Fanciful and Archaic'. [Fig. 1] LARPers engaged directly and playfully with imagining heritage futures by asking passers-by to teleport to year 2560 to play a part in an urban narrative scenario.

The setting of this impermanent, choreographed, and improvised sci-fi heritage game was as significant as the narrative script. While the larger Boston metro area, and the Harvard environs in particular, is an academic mecca, it is also a city of stark inequalities, of spatial, racial and economic segregation, and the city offers few, if any, unpoliced, anti-racist, queer or feminist agoras. Staging their LARPing intervention in the Cambridge colony of high-end franchises (Harvard being one of them) was no small feat. Performing and imagining urban futures live together, especially when taking up space in the streets, forced all to reflect on what and who can constitute urban heritage.[51] In public, and in a public urban space, outside of normative hierarchies and social roles, and away from the predetermined functions that segregated Boston-metro area neighborhoods play in the heritage ecosystem. It also taught us a lot about discomfort and participatory speculative practices and how they can bear on urban place-making and become an urban research method. LARPing not only encouraged diverse and random people to plot new stories together – something Boston middle school students were unable to achieve – more importantly, it literally, if only briefly, rearranged where different bodies, tourists, workers, students, migrants and residents, think and play.

Moreover, if the right to the 'knowledge of the production of space' and to 'refus[e] … to be removed from urban reality … by discriminatory and segregative organization' is one of the fundamental political rights of a city dweller, LARPers disrupted the existing segregation frameworks that gender-, class- and color-code and regulate access to public space, workplace, play-space, knowledge, and storytelling.[52] Literally, where certain stories and people go, how they disappear, and how they are (de)valued. LARPers' narrative-kinetic act of refusal to be removed from space and stories of future meant trying on, defiantly and playfully, the narrative personas denied to most of us:

as narrators, protagonists, and actor-agents of the future. Thus, what made their futurescaping work work, beyond dystopian simulation, was not simply the fact that these older college students read more sci-fi or had a better hold on utopian genres, or a better command of futuristic aesthetics. If, as Ariella Aïsha Azoulay says, we could end the 'violence' of 'futuristic plans' and focus on 'repair', LARPers did that, too.[53] They narratively repaired the unwelcoming urban square by repurposing it as an inclusive narrative agora open to all bodies. LARP seemed to break then, momentarily, the violent exclusionary hold of the carceral present on the urban space and narrative imagination, which had held younger students in a tight grip on the other side of the town. This situated intervention into sectarian urban cartography, its 'segregative' scripts and urban imaginaries, repaired the space and enabled a playful imagining of urban futures not limited by visions prescribed by dominant planners of space.[54] Such collective futures rehearsal playwork remains, invariably, one of the most needed but dismissed urban space-remaking acts. And yet, a decade later, in other cities, across continents, across research and pedagogical praxis, we continue to experiment with this generative mode of communal speculative repair work in starkly different North European urban sites.[55]

Next stop: Trondheim/Tråante (a Norwegian and South Sámi port city). **Time:** precipice of another environmental disaster. **Rehearsal:** collective 'water wave' writing. **Role:** interdependent scribe of three words. **Performance instructions:** democratic sci-fi polyphony.

Scandinavian cities are often touted as the apogee of humane, 'scientificities' and 'smart city'-sharing of public space, and they do a lot of admirable urban planning work not to overly limit the access different bodies have to public space.[56] And yet, the limited presence of gated communities, barbwire, AK-15s, ghettos, and systemic redlining, that is, their cosier aesthetic of human 'expulsion' and urban displacement, is not a high bar.[57] Norwegian cities also design for neglect, foreclose many non-white futures, and engage in ethnic segregation, even if their urban 'necropolitics' is in a softer tone than in the US.[58] Yet, different styles of social 'expulsion', Azoulay argues, are still 'paradigmatic act[s] of manufacturing the body politic', which *futures* different bodies onto or out of an urban and public space.[59] The exclusion of migrant residents and the poor, or segregation based on sexuality, race, ethnicity, or ability in education (teaching and administration) might seem less obvious to privileged citizens in Scandinavia. Yet they register clearly for the Norwegian, and Trøndelag region South Sámis, whose rights to sociocultural practices and even public school instruction in their own language, protected by international and domestic laws, are constantly violated.[60]
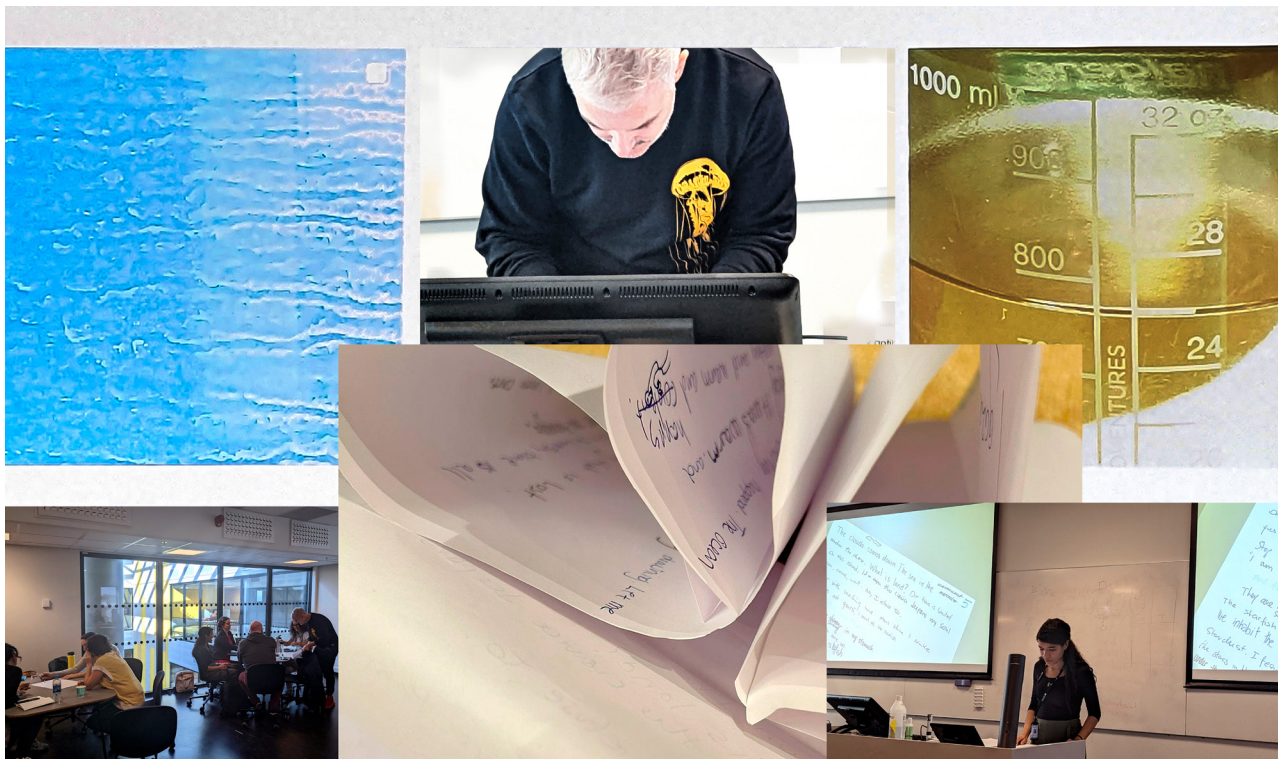
Fig. 2: Wave writing session led by Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, Parissa Chokrai, Libe García Zarranz, and other writers at work, co-written futuristic scrolls, and a recitation by Ysabel Muñoz Martínez. Photos: author and Lila Musiol Clark. Photo editing by Anna Trojanowska.

Urban exclusions are also legible to the (im)migrant poor relegated to the urban edges of manual labor, sex, or drug trade; to the undocumented, the 'Afropeans' forced to assimilate; trans and migrant children denied timely access to public health care; or environmental activists pointing out the toxic impact of extractive industries on fragile coastal environments.[61]

Narrating futures of non-extractive togetherness here needs more than experiments with futuristic genres, especially when extractivist, neo-colonial, misogynist and technocratic urban colonization solution plots already dominate public spaces and research labs alike. Katherine McKittrick reminds us that 'telling, sharing, listening to, and hearing stories are *relational* and interdisciplinary acts'; that they are performative encounters 'animated by all sorts of people, places, narrative devices, theoretical queries, plots'.[62] Reductive futuristic plots often begin with what is most obvious: hierarchical narrative relations and the exclusion of diverse narrators and their polyphonous vernaculars, aesthetics, knowledges, and dreamscapes. In other words, while limiting fictions of urban futures proliferate in every municipality, or at university leadership future strategy meetings – especially as fragile archipelagic biodiversity and coastal communities become concerns in Norwegian port cities, such as Trondheim/Tråante – more inclusive participatory storytelling of future possibilities beyond over-development does not.

A 2022 series of urban sustainability and extinction storytelling events in our port city nurtured a different narrative co-design approach. One of the narrative interventions included the 'water wave writing' workshop led by the legal scholar-poet-mixed-media-artist Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos and co-organized under the umbrella of Narrating Sustainability, itself an explicitly future-focused theme. Since artivists, community poets, scholars, educators, and humanities practitioners routinely engage the literate arts, their diverse genres, plotting techniques, and co-writing rituals, we drew on this narrative toolbox to transform hierarchical narrative relations, hoping that the communal craftwork of poetic, trans-media, and collective storytelling can be an instrument of democratic re-imagining, reflection, and sharing.[63]

To start, Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, and TransLit and Narrating Sustainability groups invited diverse participants to the 'wave writing' workshop – advanced scholars, professional writers, students, migrants, teachers, poets – to use the metaphor of water wave as a method for collaborative future writing.[64] Participants worked in groups of four or five at a table, and each writer was allowed to contribute only three words at a time to a short story written by someone else before, paying careful attention to the ethical and architectural weight of words and the textual

minutiae – protagonists and capitalizations, metaphors and periods, tone and commas, exclamation and question marks – as powerful story- and world-shaping tools. [Fig. 2] After completing a round of short story-writing waves, each group had to pass their unfinished three- to four-line story to another table, and at the same time, add to a different story from another group. After several rounds within each group and across the room, several woven stories returned, like waves, to the tables where they originated.

The wave exercise was, however, not yet complete. The next stage involved augmenting short stories visually on Instagram with site-specific liquid images, a collective recitation of all narratives and, most important, a public reflection on the wave writing process. Aside from marveling at the beauty of poetic water plots and images, we noticed how profoundly creative, democratic and awkward the collective writing process, beyond the storyline, became. For one, by allowing only three words at a time to be added, the exercise was simple and open to all – professional writers, less experienced speakers of English, migrants, students from across the globe, first-time writers, designers, educators, published stars, and polylingual urban lurkers. The process also valued each word and each contributor equally, regardless of their off-the-page place in the social hierarchy. This in itself is a rare experience in aqueous urban place-making and storytelling. Future-focused meetings in municipalities or other hegemonic narrative encounters in research labs and urban design studios rarely allow such generative and generous polyphony. Simultaneously, each narrator experienced a sense of narrative agency and responsibility. For instance, adding a full stop at the end of someone's sentence could mean a brutal, untimely end to a plot still unfolding. Adding a sudden question mark or a colon could transfix an axiomatic statement into a questioning note, or function as a syntactical passageway connecting us to other futures. What if? What now? Some writers commented on the opposite, experiencing a loss of narrative control and a state of utter narrative vulnerability. We grew attached to our future plots, speculations, metaphors, observations, protagonists we birthed and spaces we gave life to and did not like to see them vanish. Our happy endings could turn into others' grim crime fictions; our poetic incantations, wrangled into corporate dystopian extraction scripts. Yet the process was also a generous opportunity for second, third, and fourth chances, when our stories and fictive spaces returned to us, like waves, some unrecognizable, with echoes of other voices, after each circle around the room, and could be tended to, again.

Although this collective narrating exercise seemed simple – what can happen in a space by adding three words at a time? – it was far from an exercise in narrative accumulation. Each moment of adding was an ethical choice in

Fig. 3: Radiokino's listening zone at the Luleå Biennial 2022, Luleå Konsthall, Sweden. Photo: Thomas Hämén.

narrative democracy, reconnection, and awkward re- and co-construction. Each writer-builder had to reposition their subjectivity, reflect on what had been written and archived on paper before, and decide how to relate their words to those of the ensemble before. In other words, futuristic plot development depended on a constant awareness of how narrative relations, not simply content, generate plot. Ultimately, wave writing gave us all a sense of plotting future tales together in a performance of repetition, co-creation, repair, dis- and reconnection, frustration and trust, narrative agency, and loss of control. Co-constructing stories collectively helped us also arc our urban plots and story spaces differently, beyond paternalistic, savior-technocratic solution narratives, or hegemonic ethno-state dreamscapes of racial purity in the company of unusual scribes. The wave scrolls, luminescent in their complexity, and filled with wit, love, difference, and wonder missing from dominant urban narrations, did not tell us what our futures hold. What they did do was make us practice relational, collective, if anonymous, storytelling and sharing of a democratic narrative urban stage.

Request stop: Scandinavian 'high colonial' urban everywhere. **Time:** present tense of colonial crises. **Role:** undecided. **Rehearsal:** collective listening for non-extractive futures. **Performance instructions:** immersive decolonial larghissimo.

Let's take a slow detour in the same urban space of 'high Nordic colonialism and extractivism' to listen to Indigenous and feminist footsteps: a transmedia *Radiokino* initiative titled 'I Elsa Laulas fotspor gjennom Sápmi' (In Elsa Laula's footsteps among the Sámis)*,* literally following Indigenous footprints in the Sápmi region in Scandinavia.[65] The project was created by the Sápmi region-/Norway-based decolonial feminist collective Søstrene Suse, as an homage to Elsa Laula Renberg, an iconic South Sámi leader of the transnational Indigenous struggle against colonial extraction, dispossession and displacement. Renberg, a co-organizer of the first transnational Sámi Assembly in the city of Tråante/Trondheim in 1917, is a crucial figure in the history of feminist and Indigenous rights in the Sápmi Nordic region, spanning Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia.[66] As part of this ongoing project, the Søstrene Suse collective resurrected the Indigenous rights feminist activist and developed *Radiokino*, a multi-episode oral storytelling, orature, a podcast-like kino-radio program devoted to Indigenous women, cultural practices, and the ongoing anticolonial resistance to extraction, animal culling, and illegal land grabs in Norway.[67] Yet their 'audio-cinema' project does not only focus on documenting oral and visual stories of Sámi 'survivance', that is Indigenous presence, survival, and resistance in the Nordic region.[68] It is dedicated both

to attending to neglected Indigenous stories and audiences in the North, and to a retraining of the colonial ear in many urban sites of the North. To this end, *Radiokino* is not just a transcript or a documentary broadcast of colonial violence, but a project that decolonizes the urban story-sharing and listening conditions.

Søstrene Suse often curate communal *Radiokino* seances, staged as listening spaces in Oslo, Tromsø, Trondheim, Luleå, and other cities of the North. In such curated 'reception spaces' for collective listening, constructed in art institutions, lecture halls, and classrooms, audiences listen together to women; to Indigenous stories of resistance, friendship, and opposition to colonial dispossession.[69] With or without accompanying visuals, people often engage with the voices alone and face each other instead of the screen. In this context, this new practice of careful listening becomes a transformative political act of solidarity, one that requires 'unlearning' colonial and 'imperial' ways of listening as much as rehearsals of listening to site-specific stories together with others.[70] Quietly, with attention to stories of those whose political investment in futurescaping differs from the accounts of inseparability of extraction from the national 'good life' and 'smart city'.

In Thomas Hämén's photo, the Søstrene Suse curated listening space in the Luleå Konsthall seems empty, abandoned, unpeopled. [Fig. 3] This eerie image may capture the narrative invisibility that continues to haunt diverse Sámi communities in the North, as they engage in the very real struggle in the streets and in national and international courts against policies of forced assimilation, environmental destruction, and 'green colonialism' of the illegal placement of wind farms on reindeer herding lands not far from Tråante/Trondheim.[71] Yet it also represents a dormant 'space of possibility'.[72] It serves as a rehearsal site that awaits listener-participants, who can hear the region's ever-replicating violent colonial pasts, sense the toxic urban futures, already lived or in the making, but also fiercely fought against on the ground. It is also a space of reflection from which we can resist the roles we are compelled to play in the extractive nationalist discourse. Not less important, the image literally anchors storytelling in the material site, whose generative role in urban storytelling should not be forgotten. Stories makes space but space narrates as well.

Coda: urban archives as pedagogies of futuring

The city, 'a linguistic cosmos', a sort of fleshy 'library', is now recognized as a justice laboratory, a spatio-material distribution site of rights on a planetary scale.[73] In that context, say, UN-Habitat's commitment to sustainable, built urban infrastructures to 'promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities' is welcome and promising.[74] But even in 2024, the cultural preservation industry

still rarely engages urban storytelling, the babel 'talk of the town' – stories of young urban residents, Indigenous radio, the polylingual chatter of urban poets, or people's street 'theatre-as-shelter … for every-body' – as a 'substantial component of the urban [futures] design ideation'.[75] And yet, it is an invaluable urban archive of pedagogies of futuring. There is no just sanctuary city without its grassroots laboratories of repair, respite, rebellion, care, and emancipatory storytelling.[76] And if diverse narrative practices are heritage and pedagogies of futuring, that is, blueprints for and building blocks of violent or utopian urbanism, we need to learn how to listen to grassroots urban storytelling, its irreverent words and worlds. To breaths, polyphony, and people. Urban heteroglossia, possessed by conflicting voices of seemingly 'unnecessary', 'un-geographic' bodies, or 'inconvenient' neighbors and guests.[77] Repairing and expanding public urban infrastructures of care may need to be anchored precisely in the neglected archives of urban possibility in stories and sites: in decolonial listening zones, kitchens, sandboxes, rave parties, libraries, parking lots, urban waste dumps, bedrooms, dark rooms, prisons, and not just design studios, boardrooms, and smart data.[78] The process requires attention to different narrative footprints; to developers, middle schoolers, as well as skaters who transform their cities by repurposing 'the useless artifacts of the technological burden' and 'the handiwork of the government/corporate structure' beyond the imagination of its 'original architects'; to Indigenous artists, migrant theorists, theorists, Black Lives Matter, and feminist activists in street and court actions; to urban planners but also drag ballers and trans ravers taking by storm a city that had no room for them, lipstick on, dancing with abandon.[79] It may mean, in other words, stringing futures together, awkwardly, three words at a time, and paying heed to kids on skateboards stepping in and flying off. 'Kick, push, kick, push, coast . . . ', remaking the possibility for love, urban togetherness, freedom, and 'looking for a place to [just] be'.[80] Breathe, 'kick, push', sweat.[81] Together. Making home in a space built on hate.

Saskia Sassen, AbdouMaliq Simone, and Theaster Gates offer additional vocabularies of urban disobedience, placemaking, and hope here. Sassen calls the city itself a 'hacker' of urban plans, infrastructures, and 'top-down desires', of neo-colonial smart urbanism, always 'foiling dominations'.[82] Simone reminds us that we, urban residents, are the conduits, lifelines for urban reimagining and repair. We are the 'hacking city', too, its 'infrastructures' and lifeways, and can glitch its violent and segregatory architectural designs.[83] Gates, on the other hand, shows how Black urban communities in the US manage to 'resacralize' violent space and turn it into 'place'.[84] This, to him, is 'the manifestation of care', and he draws a direct link between

heritage work, 'retaining objects of the past' and 'develop[ing] a muscle for [urban] caring'.

In that context, it is also important to account for the discriminatory heritage of our own disciplines, which is inseparably tied to the history of the city, to see how we, literary scholars, architects, historians, urbanists, geographers, designers of urban futures, *execute* heritage preservation – by embalming, classifying, racializing, gendering, and monumentalizing what dominates and segregates our cities – and then, reorient toward living urban archives. 'Philosophers have thought the city', expounds Henri Lefebvre, but the city is also a relational, tender, and living organism made of flesh, metal, streets, virus, love, touch, sound, data, archive, delight, capital, and desire.[85] Besides, urban philosophers are in the streets, too, and 'a space of possibility' can be made in a song.[86] It is time, as Nora N. Khan shows, to commit to 'the necessary labor of thinking with'.[87] Attending to live, situated communal space- and story-sharing practices in the company of others, in other words, may give us a glimpse into 'urban tonicity', its narratives as archives of otherworldliness, that may actually perform the spatiotemporal, poetic, urban justice magic we long for.[88] *Radiokino*, spontaneous LARPs, inclusive recitations without borders, engaging with different bodies, words, lyrics, and beyond them, in peopled urban spaces of devastation and repair, offer us inclusive models and 'storyways' to urban futures to follow.[89] Reciting poems, imagining, wave writing, learning, connecting bodies, breaths, sites across time and space are embodied archives of possibility. Metaphors and rhythms, punctuation marks and tenderness, vulnerabilities and words we understand and those we don't are building tools, too. And so are site-specific but ephemeral heritage practices that teach us how to 'repair' what is broken and bring new futures into being, for which we have no words yet and no architectural infrastructures.[90] Most important, regardless of how or where we place in the future temporalities of urban survival, we live together in this world and share its space already.[91] The task at hand is thus not to simply narrate or imagine a shared future – as we already live together, and in each other's worlds – but to create one in which the conditions of that sharing are not violent, disabling, extractive, or lethal to women, queers, Sámi activists, youth of color, dis-abled residents, the unhoused, the undocumented, the 'unnecessary', that is to those whose narrative heritage we constantly ignore and, often, destroy.[92] Ultimately, we have 'many debts that await to be paid', because we, too, live in generous narrative futures, damaged as they are, made possible by others' collective defiance and 'refusal to disappear'.[93]

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Notes

Disclaimer: The author has chosen to deviate from *Footprint*'s style guide in order to preserve the experimental nature of her article; the issue editors have granted this poetic license during the copy-editing process.

1. Filipa Lowndes Vicente and Aïsha Azoulay, 'Ariella Aïsha Azoulay – Unlearning, An interview with Ariella Aïsha Azoulay', *Análise Social* 55, no. 2 (2020): 436.

2. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Globalectics: Theory and the Politics of Knowing* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 61.

3. Brian Holmes, 'Affectivist Manifesto', *Continental Drift,* 16 November 2008, https://brianholmes.wordpress. com/2008/11/16/the-affectivist-manifesto/.

4. Johny Pitts, *Afropean: Notes from Black Europe* (London: Penguin, 2019), 1; Hanna Musiol, 'Habits of Memory', in *Remembering Places,* ed. Julia Wiedemann and Richard Nate (Würzburg: Königshausen and Neumann, 2019), 229–230; Leslie Kern, *Feminist City: Claiming Space in the Man-Made World* (London: Verso, 2021).

5. For instance, China Mieville's *The City and the City* (New York: Del Rey, 2010) often serves as an analytics for urban architecture of segregation; Ann Petry's *The Street* (New York: Mariner Books, 1998) or Ralph Ellison's *The Invisible Man* (New York: Vintage Classics, 1981), for gendered and racialized urban partitioning.

6. Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (London: Verso, 2006).

7. Rebecca Solnit, *Infinite City: A San Francisco Atlas* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2010), 4; Toni L. Griffin, 'Toni L. Griffin and Sara Zawde in Conversation', in 'A Sense of Place', special issue of *Deem* 4 (winter 2022/23): 58, 59.

8. Leslie Kern, *Feminist City: Claiming Space in the Man-Made World* (London: Verso, 2021); for transnational accounts of neo-colonial, carceral architecture, browse Leopold Lambert, *Funambulist,* https://thefunambulist.net/magazine; for the impact of writing on the fictions of community and nationalism, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2016). For the financial architecture of the US-prison landscape and detention centers caging migrant children, see both cartographic volumes of *Torn Apart/ Separados* (*Torn Apart / Separados,* Mobilized Humanities, https://xpmethod.columbia.edu/torn-apart/volume/1/ and https://xpmethod.columbia.edu/torn-apart/volume/2/).

9. For the financial ties between US research universities and the carceral industry, see volume 2 of *Torn Apart/ Separados (Torn Apart / Separados,* Mobilized Humanities, https://xpmethod. columbia.edu/torn-apart/volume/2/).

10. For work on Black women's writing, geography, and resistance, see Katherine McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2006).

11. Don Mitchell, 'Metaphors to Live By: Landscapes as Systems of Social Reproduction', in *Cultural Geography: A Critical Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000), 120–44; Henri Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities,* trans. Eleanore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1996).

12. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Globalectics,* 61. See also 'Toni L. Griffin and Sara Zawde in conversation' and the two issues of *Deem*, 'A Sense of Place', no. 4 (winter 2022/23) and 'Pedagogy for a New World', no. 2 (winter/spring 2021).

13. Mitchell, *'Metaphors to Live By'.*

14. Azoulay in Vicente and Azoulay, 'Ariella Aïsha Azoulay – Unlearning', 436; Sara Ahmed, 'Feminist Killjoys (and Other Willful Subjects)', 'Polyphonic Feminisms: Acting in Concert', *The Scholar and Feminist Online* 8, no. 3, (Summer 2010), http://sfonline.barnard.edu/polyphonic/print_ahmed.htm.

15. Stanisław Lem, *Solaris* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2012); Vicente and Azoulay, 'Ariella Aïsha Azoulay – Unlearning', 436.

16. *See* 'Toni L. Griffin and Sara Zawde in conversation' as well as the full 2021, 2022, and 2023 issues of *Deem* for a robust archive of such work; Katya García-Antón, *Art and Solidarity Reader:*

Radical Actions, Politics and Friendships (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2022); *AfroPunk*, directed by James Spooner (DVD, 2015); *United in Anger: A History of ACT UP,* directed by Jim Hubbard (DVD, 2012); Zap Mama, *Adventures in Afropea* (CD, Luaka Bop, 1993); Rebecca Solnit, *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* (New York: Penguin, 2020); Solnit, *Infinite City*; Cruz Garcia and Nathalie Frankowski's take on this entanglement in *Narrative Architecture: A Kynical Manifesto* (Rotterdam, Netherlands: nai010 publishers, 2019); and a recent doctoral dissertation, Eleni Oureidilou, 'Mediated Narratives in the Arrival Landscape: New Urban Implementations for Displaced Communities from Athens to Barcelona' (doctoral diss., Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2023).

17. Lem, *Solaris,* 118; McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds,* xi; Andrew Thacker, 'The Idea of a Critical Literary Geography', *New Formations* 2005, no. 57 (2005): 56–73; Mai Britt Utsi, 'The Indigenous Pedagogies and Methodologies' webinar, 9 February 2023.

18. Lem, *Solaris,* 118.

19. Christina Sharpe, *Ordinary Notes* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2023), 333.

20. David Gessen, *The Architecture of Disability: Buildings, Cities, and Landscapes beyond Access* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2022); Kern, *Feminist City*.

21. AbdouMaliq Simone, 'People as Infrastructure: Intersecting Fragments in Johannesburg', *Public Culture* 16, no. 3 (2004): 407–29; Kathleen Stewart, *Ordinary Affects* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007); Shannon Mattern, *A City Is Not a Computer: Other Urban Intelligences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2021); Kern, *Feminist City*; McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds;* Katherine McKittrick, *Dear Science and Other Stories* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2021).

22. *AfroPunk*; Lem, *Solaris,* 118; my translation.

23. Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, 'Michael Brown', *boundary 2* 42, no. 4 (2015): 81.

24. Silvia Federici, *Beyond the Periphery of the Skin: Rethinking, Remaking, and Reclaiming the Body in Contemporary Capitalism* (Brooklyn: Kairos, 2020), 53.

25. Solnit, *Wanderlust, 6, 9.*

26. Ibid., 33, 31.

27. Walter Benjamin, 'The Return of the Flaneur', in *Selected Writings, Vol. 2 (1927–1934)*, trans. Rodney Livingstone et al. (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), 262.

28. Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project,* trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), 533, 840; Solnit, *Wanderlust*, 31; Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, 'On Nonscalability: The Living World Is Not Amenable to Precision-Nested Scales', *Common Knowledge* 18 (2012): 505.

29. Redlining is a discriminatory practice of denying financial services to non-white residents. The term was coined by John McKnight to describe a practice of marking off areas with non-white populations with a red line on urban maps, in order to deny insurance, mortgages or other loans, based on ethnicity or race. As such, redlining constructed racially segregated urban futures and created landscapes of urban decay and underinvestment in the US and beyond; on race and urban placemaking, see Robert D. Bullard, ed., *The Black Metropolis in the Twenty-First Century: Race, Power, and Politics of Place* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007); for discussion about a redlined foreclosure area in Southside Chicago and Amanda Williams's repainting of Englewood's soon-to-be-demolished houses in a color palette co-created with members of the Black neighbourhood, see Amanda Williams, 'Why I Turned Chicago's Abandoned Homes into Art', 2018, TED video, 13:21, https://www.ted.com/talks/amanda_williams_why_i_turned_chicago_s_abandoned_homes_into_art; on the architecture of urban exclusion, see Davis, *City of Quartz*; for urban segregation across Europe, see Pitts, *Afropean*; for accounts of global and grassroots urban resistance, see David Harvey, *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution* (New York: Verso, 2012); and also Pitts, *Afropean*.

30. Mattern, *The City Is Not a Computer*; Tsing, 'On Nonscalability'; Hanna Musiol and Pablo DeSoto, '*Place by Co-Design*: Industry, Postcolony, and Disobedient Storytelling', *ASAP/J* (29 June 2022), https://asapjournal.com/node/becoming-undisciplined-place-by-co-design-industry-postcolony-and-environmental-storytelling-hanna-musiol-and-pablo-desoto/; Pitts, *Afropean*; Harvey, *Rebel Cities.*

31. Kern, *Feminist City.*

32. Sunaura Taylor and Judith Butler, in *Examined Life,* directed by Astra Taylor (Zeitgeist Films, 2008); Pitts, *Afropean,* 1; Jan Grue, 'The High Cost of Living in a Disabling World', *The Guardian*, 4 November 2021.

33. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Globalectics,* 61.

34. Walter Benjamin, 'Theses on the Philosophy of History', in *Walter Benjamin Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, Harcourt, 2019), 198; Harney and Moten, 'Michael Brown', 81.

35. The name of the school has been anonymised to protect the identity of the students and educators.

36. The school has approximately 420 students in grade 7 (source anonymized).

37. Interestingly, none predicted the impact of the passage of the Marriage Equality Act in 2004 in their own state, and in 2015 across the US, or the Affordable Care Act in 2010.

38. We also learned that in the future, educators will continue to earn a fraction of bankers' and soldiers' wages – a prescient prediction that did not escape notice.

39. While most people live in cities now, nobody yet resides in a 'feminist city' designed to redress patriarchal, heteronormative structural violence that displaces and disenfranchises woman-identifying urban subjects, urban poor, migrants, LGBTQI+

communities, and ethnic minorities with ferocity and at shocking rates. Kern, *Feminist City*.

40. Gun Violence Archive, 'Mass Shootings in 2023', https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/reports/mass-shooting.

41. Deborah Becker, 'As City Clears Tents from "Mass, and Cass", Some Say They Still Have Nowhere to Go', *WBUR,* 13 January 2022, https://www.wbur.org/news/2022/01/12/boston-mass-cass-homelessness-tents-clearing-out.

42. Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities,* 61; Cindi Katz, *Growing Up Global: Economic Restructuring and Children's Everyday Lives* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014); Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in an Era of Colorblindness* (New York: New Press, 2010).

43. Christina Sharpe, *Ordinary Notes*, 333.

44. *Deem,* 'Pedagogy for a New World', no. 2 (Winter/Spring 2021).

45. These experiments were linked to graduate and undergraduate writing, literary and cultural studies courses at Simmons College and University of Massachusetts Boston (2012–14). For full syllabi and reading lists, please contact the author.

46. Richard E. Miller, *Writing at the End of the World* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), 25–26. See his chapter 'The Dark Night of the Soul'.

47. García-Antón, *Art and Solidarity Reader,* 315.

48. Foundations came from the work of David Harvey, Michelle Alexander, Henri Lefebvre, Cindi Katz and Mike Davis, and from Tracey Skelton, 'Children's Geographies/Geographies of Children: Play, Work, Mobilities and Migration', *Geography Compass* 3, no. 4 (2009): 1430–48.

49. The now-defunded archive was housed at http://immigrantexperience.omeka.net/. For more information about this community project, contact the author.

50. I think here of the 'ties' that Rita Felski writes about in *Hooked: Art and Attachment* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2020), which are not simply individual but modes of public affect and methods of knowledge-making, based on proximity, not distance, or alienation.

51. Despite its spontaneity, the project required careful logistical planning and a city permit to avoid fines.

52. Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities,* 195.

53. Quoted in Vicente and Azoulay, 'Ariella Aïsha Azoulay – Unlearning', 436.

54. Ibid.

55. I have co-organized and taught numerous narrating futures writing and design workshops, community storytelling acts, and interventions: the Futurescapes alternative reality game (ARG) design workshop led by Kari Kraus (2015); speculative poetic and theory prototyping work in Critical Theory, Environmental Humanities, and *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet* courses (2016, 2017, 2018); 'wave' public writing workshop led by Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos and co-organized by Libe García Zarranz in Trondheim in 2022; environmental science speculative work led by Divya Gupta, as part of the Environmentally Just Futures at SUNY Binghamton (2022); and the ongoing transcontinental global *Atlas of the Other Worlds* for the Occupy Climate Change! network led by Marco Armiero, 15 March 2022, https://occupyclimatechange.net/launch/.

56. Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities*, 156.

57. Ibid.; Azoulay, quoted in Vicente and Azoulay, 'Ariella Aïsha Azoulay – Unlearning', 433; Tobin Siebers, *Disability Aesthetics* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), 21; Shahram Khosravi and Mahmoud Keshavarz, 'The Magic of the Border', *e-flux,* May 2020; Hanna Musiol, 'Cartographic Storytelling, Migration, and Reception Environments', *Environment, Space, Place* 12, no. 2 (2020): 1–30.

58. Achille Mbembe, *Necropolitics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019).

59. Quoted in Vicente and Azoulay, 'Ariella Aïsha Azoulay – Unlearning', 433.

60. Ashifa Kassam, 'Demonstration in Oslo Seeks Removal of Windfarms in Indigenous Region', *The Guardian,* 11 October 2023, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/11/demonstration-in-oslo-seeks-removal-of-windfarms-in-indigenous-region.

61. At a high school education registration orientation, parents of recent migrants were coached into steering their children into school programs preparing them for manual and service labor, regardless of their skills or intentions, because, as parents were told, migrant students 'wouldn't make it into the competitive medical or law programs in Norway' (personal communication with presenters, winter, 2015). This message was conveyed by many simultaneous interpreters, at a considerable cost to the Trondheim Municipality, to make sure all immigrant parents speaking different languages got it. The Black Lives Matter protests in Norway, and in Trondheim in particular, gathered thousands of demonstrators in 2019, not simply to express solidarity with activists protesting racial profiling in the US in the aftermath of the murder of Freddie Gray, but also to express despair about and defiance against systemic Nordic racism. Four years later, in 2023, the largest university in Norway adopted a provision prohibiting hiring in university management positions applicants without the knowledge of two 'white' Norwegian national languages, Nynorsk and Bokmål; knowledge of the local Indigenous national Sámi languages was not required. The racist and xenophobic implications of this decision are clear. This provision excludes recent migrants from holding high-level administrative positions where they could intervene in common practices of discrimination and exclusion.

62. McKittrick, *Dear Science,* 6 (my emphasis).

63. Trondheim's Mangfoldshuset (House of Diversity) is a space open to such bottom-up initiatives. See also Musiol, 'Cartographic Storytelling'.

64. The workshop was co-organised by Narrating Sustainability, TransLit, and Literature for Inclusion on 8 September 2022 at NTNU.

65. Lars Kiel Bertelsen, quoted in Pia Arke, *Ethno-Aesthetics/ Etnoæstetik* (Copenhagen: Ark, 2010): 9; Hanna Musiol, 'Postcolonial Environmental Fiction, Media, and Pedagogy in the North of the Global North', in *Teaching Postcolonial Environmental Literature and Media,* ed. Cajetan Iheka (New York, NY: Modern Language Association of America, 2022), 286; Søstrene Suse, I Elsa Laulas fotspor gjennom Sápmi, https://elsalaulasfotspor.com/om-prosjektet/. The Søstrene Suse collective includes Eva Maria Fjellheim, Susanne Normann, Ingrid Fadnes, Astrid Fadnes, and Kjersti Kanestrøm Lie.

66. See Stine H. Bang Svendsen, 'Saami Women at the Threshold of Disappearance: Elsa Laula Renberg (1877–1931) and Karin Stenberg's (1884–1969) Challenges to Nordic Feminism', in *Feminisms in the Nordic Region: Neoliberalism, Nationalism and Decolonial Critique,* ed. Suvi Keskinen, Pauline Stoltz and Diama Mulinari (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).

67. Ep. 1: '400 reinskaller, 400 kulehull' (400 reindeer skulls, 400 bullet holes); ep. 2: 'Et bilde kan forandre' (A picture can change); ep. 3: 'Baajh vaeride årrodh! La fjella leve' (Let the mountains live); and ep. 4: 'Delvieh' (They reappear), https://elsalaulasfotspor.com/__trashed/. Supreme Court of Norway, 'Licenses for Wind Power Development on Fosen Ruled Invalid as the Construction Violates Sami Reindeer Herders' Right to Enjoy Their Own Culture', 11 October 2021, https://www.domstol.no/en/supremecourt/rulings/2021/supreme-court-civil-cases/hr-2021-1975-s/.

68. Gerald Viznor, *Survivance: Narratives of Native Presence* (Lincoln: Nebraska University Press, 2008).

69. For more on the politics and aesthetics of reception, see Musiol, 'Cartographic Storytelling'.

70. Ariella Aïsha Azoulay, *Potential History: Unlearning Imperialism* (London: Verso, 2019); also quoted in Vicente and Azoulay, 'Ariella Aïsha Azoulay – Unlearning', 436.

71. See the 2023 film *Elmie*, directed by Sissel Bergh (incoporated & unlimited, part of the knowhowknow series), video, 28 min.

72. Pitts, *Afropean,* 1; Zap Mama, *Adventures in Afropea*.

73. Benjamin, *Arcades Project,* 533, 840; Solnit, *Infinite City*, 4; According to the United Nations, '68% of the world population' will live in cities by 2050. '68% of the World Population Projected to Live in Urban Areas by 2050, says UN', 16 May 2018, https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/population/2018-revision-of-world-urbanization-prospects.html; yet, over 1 billion urban residents are currently living in slums and this number is to double within the next 30 years, according to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Statistics, 'Sustainable Development Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities.' https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2023/goal-11/; see also Igor Calzada, 'Emerging Digital Citizenship Regimes: Pandemic, Algorithmic, Liquid, Metropolitan, and Stateless Citizenships', *Citizenship Studies* 27, no. 2 (2022): 160–88.

74. UN-Habitat, 'About Us', https://unhabtat.org/about-us.

75. Kasia Lech, 'Theatre as Shelter: On Artists' in Ukraine (and Beyond) Response to the Russian Invasion', *Theatre Times*, 29 March 2022, https://thetheatretimes.com/theatre-as-shelter-on-artists-in-ukraine-response-to-the-russian-invasion/; Sara Zawde in 'Toni L Griffin and Sara Zawde in Conversation', 58, 59.

76. Gessen, *The Architecture of Disability*; Grue, 'High Cost'; Kern, *Feminist City.*

77. McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds,* 86; Rabih Alameddine, *An Unnecessary Woman* (New York: Grove Press, 2013); Lauren Berlant, *On the Inconvenience of Other People* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2022).

78. See Toni L. Griffin's important comments about narratives revealing that 'vacant lots' seen by urban planners or architects as devalued space are 'assets' to Black urban residents, in 'Toni L. Griffin and Sara Zawde in Conversation': 58, 59.

79. Craig Stecyk, in *Dogtown and Z-Boys*, directed by Stacy Peralta, video (Sony Pictures Classics, 2001); Søstrene Suse, *I Elsa Laulas fotspor gjennom Sápmi*; Elmie; McKenzie Wark, *Raving* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2023); *Paris Is Burning,* directed by Jennie Livingston, video (Miramax, 1991).

80. Lupe Fiasco, 'Kick, Push', *Food & Liquor*, CD (Atlantic Records, 2006).

81. Ibid.

82. Saskia Sassen, KUNO conference keynote lecture, NTNU, Trondheim, 21 October 2016; Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities*, 117.

83. Simone, 'People as Infrastructure'; Musiol and DeSoto, '"Place by Co-Design"'.

84. Theaster Gates et al., 'Sacralized Space: Theaster Gates on the Practice of Placemaking', *Deem 4* (Winter 2022/23): 9, 17, 16.

85. Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities,* 117.

86. Across the diasporic soundscapes, Zap Mama will create such a lyrical urban utopia, Afropea, 'as a space of blackness' and 'a possibility of living with more than one idea: Africa, and Europe, or by extension, the Global South and the West', Pitts, *Afropean,* 1; Zap Mama, *Adventures in Afropea.*

87. Nora N. Khan, 'On the Necessary Labor of Thinking With', in 'Pedagogy for a New World', a special issue of *Deem* 2 (2021): 30–35.

88. Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities,* 116.

89. Warren Cariou, 'Indigenous Methodologies' webinar, organized by NTNU and OsloMet, 9 February 2023.

90. Azoulay quoted in Vicente and Azoulay, 'Ariella Aïsha Azoulay – Unlearning', 436; Kern, *Feminist City*; Siebers, *Disability Aesthetics.*

91. Kyle Powys Whyte, 'Our Ancestors' Dystopia Now: Indigenous Conservation and the Anthropocene', in *The Routledge Companion to the Environmental Humanities,* ed. Ursula

K. Heise, Jon Christensen and Michelle Niemann (New York: Routledge, 2016), 206–15; Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004).

92. Alameddine, *Unnecessary Woman*; Whyte, 'Our Ancestors' Dystopia Now'.

93. Azoulay quoted in Vicente and Azoualy, 'Ariella Aïsha Azoulay – Unlearning', 436; Tara Betts, *Refuse to Disappear* (Washington, DC: The World Works, 2022); Whyte, 'Our Ancestors' Dystopia Now'. Note that walking in the streets together, in demonstrations for women's suffrage, antiracism, LGBTQI+, ACT UP, or labour rights, but also cruising or skating in public and privatized urban spaces, remade the urban spaces in the cites we reside in.

Biography

Hanna Musiol (PhD, Northeastern) is Professor of Modern and Contemporary Literature and Merited Academic Educator at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, and an affiliated faculty of the Human Rights Institute at State University of New York at Binghamton. Her interests include literary and transmedia aesthetics, justice, and critical pedagogy, with emphasis on migration, political ecology, and environmental and human rights. Her research and teaching practice centers on site-specific and community storytelling, and she regularly co-organizes city-scale curatorial, art, and civic engagement initiatives. Beyond transnational research networks, Musiol collaborates actively with grassroots storytelling ensembles such as Literature for Inclusion and Poetry without Borders.