

This text was commissioned by Bioart Society following Anastasia (A) Alevtin's and Elina Waage Mikalsen's contributions to *Field_Notes: Living Methodologies*: a 10-day field lab at the Kilpisjärvi Biological Station in Gilbbsjávri in September 2025, part of the *Rewilding Cultures* project. *Living Methodologies* sought to attend to how we research matters and this publication is a commitment to continuing the discourses, but more importantly, practices and ethical relations of fieldworking in the context of Gilbbsjávri.

Bioart Society is a Helsinki-based association working at the intersection of art, science and society. Established in 2008 the association has close to 200 members and participates in global networks of bioart and art & science. With a focus on biology, ecology and the life sciences, Bioart Society supports artistic and transdisciplinary work through workshops, residencies, long-term collaborative projects and public dialogue on how biosciences and biotechnology shape the social, political and ethical dimensions of life.



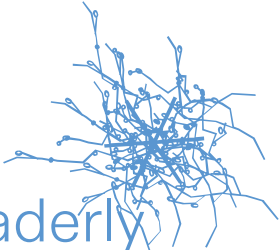
Field_Notes: Living Methodologies is part of the *Feral Labs Network* and Creative Europe project *Rewilding Cultures* 2022-2026 joining partners from eight EU countries (Austria, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Portugal, Slovenia) in their common interests in art-science-technology research and capacity building for creative communities and hubs to host process-based activities like peer learning, fieldwork, research and co-creation.

Fielding Climate Change

*A Cranky Score For
(One's Politics Of)
Curiosity*

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BIOART SOCIETY



Readerly Companion Terms

CRIP refers to a slur reclaimed by a diverse international community of disabled, debilitated, chronically sick, mad, neurodivergent people committed to doing justice work and shifting ableist material arrangements of this inflamed, unevenly unliveable world. This often happens at the level of relations between individuals and smaller communities that lack access to rights-based discourses and organising. Perhaps, even more importantly, crip justice work is left to and led by those who cannot wait and do not trust for justice to happen from above (spoiler alert: it never does and never will, for it seeks to add structurally othered bodyminds into existing, unjust knots of relations that ever so lazily, performatively shift their butts but categorically never move, because it's not in their interest). Crip is always a non-abstract doing (Heather 2025).

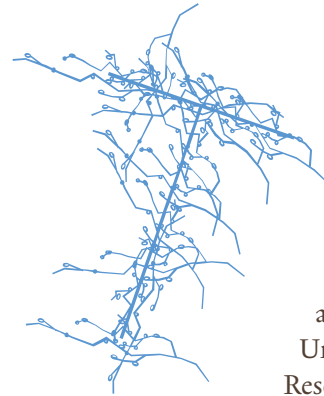
Speaking of critique from the **SÁMI PERSPECTIVE**, we specifically think with Ina Knobbblock, a Sámi and Tornedalian feminist scholar (Knobbblock 2022). We imagine the Sámi perspective as a continuous movement that weaves various knowledges together to propose singular gestures and durational practices of re-worlding; in our context, of how knowledge is woven contrary to the settler-colonial politics of interruption and fragmentation (Ibid).

ACCESS EXCLUSION is a practice of institutional and ordinary hijacking of the needs and boundaries discourse that too often prioritises the needs of more structurally privileged disabled bodyminds over that of more structurally disenfranchised ones.

ACCESS INTIMACY is “that elusive, hard to describe feeling when someone else “gets” your access needs. The kind of eerie comfort that your disabled self feels with someone on a purely access level. Sometimes it can happen with complete strangers, disabled or not, or sometimes it can be built over years. It could also be the way your body relaxes and opens up with someone when all your access needs are being met. It is not dependent on someone having a political understanding of disability, ableism or access. Some of the people I have experienced the deepest access intimacy with (especially able-bodied people) have had no education or exposure to a political understanding of disability (Mingus 2011). Elusive, requiring neither a political understanding of disability nor familiarity with political discourses, it nonetheless depends on attention work that takes place ordinarily.”

According to Critical Disability Studies Collective, **CRIP TIME** is “a concept arising from disabled experience that addresses the ways that disabled/chronically ill and neurodivergent people experience time (and space) differently than able-bodied-minded folk” (CDSC). Alison Kafer, a feminist, queer and disability studies scholar, famously put it: crip time bends the normative clock (Kafer 2013) but in a multiplicity of ways where needs for pace and rhythm are contingent on who needs and in what circumstances. In the context of slow travel, crip time challenges the idea of slowness that funding and programming institutions have, predominantly bending bodies rather than the normative clock. There is no mechanism to anticipate how slow travel should be organised, except for devoted work on liberatory access.

ACCESS THIEVERY is an ordinary form of crip resistance practised by individuals and communities for whom requesting access in various institutional environments is difficult or impossible due to other forms of systemic exclusion, including unhousedness, unemployment, incarceration, one’s undocumented status or precarious migration situation that, in the first place, exacerbates their access needs. “Access thievery becomes a way to name an alternative economy of access in which the needs generated by exclusionary institutions or institutional neglect are met in ways outside, beyond, or in addition to the access provided by those institutions” (Smilges 2023).



This score is composed as a pocket companion for your **Ars Bioarctica** residency in Gilbbsesjávri, where you will be dwelling and working at Helsinki University Biological Research Station in the heart of Sápmi, fragmented

into the settler-colonial estates of Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Russia. We (likely) have not met, yet we take liberties to imagine we know a little something about each other with certainty. First, like us, you are a living, breathing bodymind en route to, or in Gilbbsesjávri, for a Bioart Society residency. Second, you need the infrastructure of the station to facilitate your fieldwork. Third, you are committed to **climate change** (Sharpe 2016; Neimanis and Hamilton 2018; Palmer 2024): to changing the unjust—social and political, ecologically inflamed and ableist, extractive and racist, cisheteronormative and otherwise pluriver-sally dichotomous—climate (Neimanis and Hamilton 2026) right from the premises of your practice, in critical narratives that emerge from it, but also at the multi-material level of relations with others that unfold in its context. That is, like us, you are **curious** about being at the station in Gilbbsesjávri.

From our two structurally different positions in relation to Gilbbsesjávri, bioart, fieldwork, and research (stations) but with shared—**crip** and **Sámi**—commitments to *shift material arrangements* of the world that make climate change urgent (Hamraie 2023; Öhman 2015, 2017; Öhman and Thunqvist 2016), we wish to *sit with* (Garland-Thomson 2002) the notion of curiosity. In its different enfoldings, including quieter interest, attraction, intellectual crushes, excitement or obsession, curiosity is omnipresent in the artistic and research world. We argue for curiosity’s non-innocence, or simply the politics of it, while sitting with its meanings and tending to its agential presence in our practices.

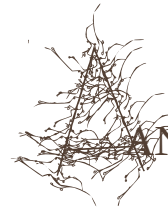
We have both been approached as fields in various research contexts. From this location, we are

viscerally and affectively aware of how curiosity directed towards you tends to feel, and of how being worked as a field might feel. Nibbled on. Unpacked. Exposed. Expected or forced to be available for extraction (of labour, ideas, concepts, and other forms of knowledge). All of this is facilitated by the colonial/imperial search anxiously and greedily obsessed with exoticised bodies or those living embodyminded differences that must be exposed for an idea of an able-embodiment subject to be re-iterated. This search seeks to discover and explore, classify and explain; the notions of *adventure*, *revealing*, *there*, and *they* (and a gesture of a pointing finger) accompany it, too, fleshing out to perpetuate structural violence and normative world-making, creating the very need to change the climate. We also make and work fields in our practices, and our curiosity is not innocent either. The score you hold (in your hands) takes this curiosity seriously and figures it as an affective political drive that moves bodies to make and work its fields in particular ways.

This score is not a prescription but an invitation we posed to each other and now extend to you—an invitation to sit with curiosity and reflect on its politics in the context of your residency with the intention of tending to your field and to you *fielding* it. It intentionally reserves generous pockets of space and provides moderate hooks to gradually revisit common imaginaries of what a field is and what it needs to field ethically. Our notes and doodles bring in generative friction and crip and Sámi crankiness (our scoring method) as scaffolding for your landing on the page. Our relevant experiences of movement in normative spacetime, or in relation to fields, labs, and work, mingle with the wisdoms of others we lean on, as we lean into curiosity for fieldworking. We sit with the understanding that nobody knows their needs in full before departures, arrivals, unpackings, and, and, and... It feels appropriate to share what we, Elina and (A), have been *fielding*, sitting with, and who we have been leaning on.

Anastasia (A) Alevtin and Elina Waage Mikalsen
June 2026





AN INCITING EVENT

Trace back when and where your curiosity began to tickle you? Or hit you? What was the force of this event?

Next, trace back and spell out when, where, how, and (why not?) with whom in your physical and social orbit, did the curiosity to arrive at Gilbbesjávri begin to thicken?

Sit with these answers, word them, but also sit and walk with them on a page with other marks. A score is, in the end, a line, groove, scratch, or notch made with/as if with a sharp instrument, such as a pen or a pencil. Since this is a score for an affective field-making drive, it might be generative to trace how curiosity sits on the page, in verbal and non-verbal ways, to speculate how it might move bodies and elements along the way, enfolding them into your field.

Clinging tight to the shared commitment to changing the unjust climate, we are alert to how [accessible](#) or, more precisely, [inhabitable](#) and [ethically worldable](#) the fields that curiosity makes and drives need to be. The way we approach accessibility emerges from our mingling crip and Sámi perspectives: for us, accessibility is a project and practice of re-worlding, of shifting ableist and intersectionally uninhabitable material arrangements of the dominant Western world. We firmly sit by the proposition that to re-world the climate, the mainstream meaning of accessibility needs serious revision. Associated with neoliberal motion

of inclusion (spoiler alert: it does not world just worlds!), this understanding often perpetuates (at the very least) [access exclusion](#). The revision is radical, but radical is prosaic; in the overwhelming number of cases, it is an ordinary, non-heroic and nonspectacular laborious doing.

What re-worlds thoroughly, as Mia Mingus, a disability justice writer, educator, and community organiser, urges, is [liberatory access](#) knotted tightly with [access intimacy](#) (Mingus 2011). She urges us not to be satisfied with justice-seeking practices solely focused on technical and logistical access (Mingus 2018) and not to simply want inclusion. An accessible climate change (yes, you might need to adjust to how to use these words) as we imagine it:

want[s] us to not only be able to be part of spaces, but for us to be able to fully engage in spaces. I don't just want us to get a seat at someone else's table, I want us to be able to build something more magnificent than a table, together with our accomplices. I want us to be able to be understood and to be able to take part in principled struggle together— [...] not just placated or politely listened to (Mingus 2018).

Thinking of this score as an attempt to gear ourselves for liberatory climate change and engaging with curiosity as a world-making force in [non-abstract](#), practically [applied](#) ways, we circle around two questions:

If one's body is a field, what does it need to sit ethically, to sit well when being a part of a curious, artistic or research encounter?

If Gilbbesjávri is a field, what does it need so as not to serve another (neo)colonial errand (Rackley 2023) that a substantial number of research and artistic practices perpetuate?

There is another curiosity that sits in the ordinary subversive shadows of extractive non-innocence: curiosity as an affective drive and political project of un/learning to know by ways of extraction, curiosity

as a [Pandora-type feminist](#) (Mulvey 1996), [paranoid](#) (Sedgwick 2003), justice-seeking practice. Think of Pandora as a feminist, justly nosy investigator who stubbornly and forensically inquires into what is hidden in that box of the dominant—resolute, yet not inviolable, but mobile and strategically motile—world, into how violence is dispersed, especially in non-apparent ways (Mulvey 1996, 53 – 55).



Think like Pandora, refusing to imagine a field as a container, as a physical geography universally available to arrivals. Think-with your body as a field composed of motile positions, responsibilities, and relations that is now en route to the residency and has already begun to rub against specific historical power relations, their currents, and will unavoidably shift them at the residency. How will it do so?



LOCATING YOURSELF

In the dominant Western imaginaries, a field is likely to be equated with a physical geography, in our case, of Sápmi, indisputably locatable on a Google map, readily available for one's arrival. This equation leads to thinking of fieldworking precisely as a (neo)colonial errand. Relatedly, it is likely that your tickets or overall itineraries do not name Gilbbsjávri as a destination due to [linguicide](#) (Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson 1994), an settler-colonial/imperial erasure of the Sápmi languages.

You are on your trip to Gilbbsjávri, a place located in what is loosely called “Lapland.” Lapland derives from ‘lapps,’ the slur for Sámi. By extension, “Lapland” is a signpost for a systemic (settler-)colonial ignorance. As Petra Laiti, a Sámi activist, puts it bluntly (the only way it should be put):

systemic ignorance is a cycle: people who are most likely to use the English word “Lapland” are also most likely to be completely ignorant on Saami issues, while Saami issues are almost completely inaccessible in English. Hence, if you search for information on “Lapland”, almost all you will find is information about “Lapland” as a product being sold to you: “Lapland” is magical. “Lapland” has the Northern Lights. “Lapland” is the home of Santa Claus. “Lapland” is a winter wonderland. “Lapland” is where you go to ski, to take husky rides, to sleep in ice hotels and glass igloos. “Lapland” is where you go to a sauna and take a bath in a frozen lake, and eat rare Arctic delicacies at a four-star hotel. If you only know the colonial name for our lands, you’ll have a very hard time finding accurate information about Saami People, the history of Sápmi, and the status of Nordic human rights violations against the Saami People. Instead, you will learn to use a name that contains a racial slur for the people whose land you unknowingly stand on. (Laiti 2025. Note that the spelling differs between Sámi dialects)

In other words, “Lapland” is a settler-colonial curiosity destination; the proper name for our lands is Sápmi, not “wilderness,” but the land known by, worked by, spoken to by its (displaced) custodians. To call the land by its erased name is to begin a different relation with it and its peoples; to call the land by its name is to break the cycle of the (settler-)colonial curiosity. The proper name for our lands is Sápmi. Full stop.



YOUR BODY AS THAT FIELD THAT NEEDS

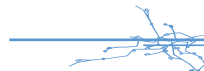
A body, as we live it, is both radically here, but also dispersed, ephemeral across all the mutually transformative touchings with other bodies, living multiple spacetimes, here and there, not readily available to being exhaustively known. Impossible! Yet its needs are specific and very precise. In this vein, it might be

good to pause and think-feel and sense-doodle about your body or bodymind as *that thing that needs*, as Johanna Hedva, a crip writer and musician, phrases it, elaborating that:

to be alive on this earth is to live in the abundance of the body's peculiarities, and to have a body is to be determined by that body's ceaseless needs, and bodies, even at their best, even if they aspire to nothing else, are so delicate and dependent that they can't get alone. I want to reckon with the twinned facts that our bodies are fragile and in need of constant care and support, but that we have built our world as if the opposite were true. [...] The definition of "the body" that I like the most is that it's anything that needs support. It's a human body that needs food, rest, sleep, shelter, care, other humans. It's a social body that needs to be propelled and maintained by a collective's aims, the tension of many convergences and disagreements coalescing into a whole. It's a body of water that needs a solid ground on which to rest and surge.

I like to truncate this definition, to make the body, especially the human kind, simply a thing that needs. Because what else would support be—but needed? (Hedva 2024).

Leaning on Johanna Hedva's words, perhaps it is an appropriate moment to check on this thing, this body, of yours that needs.



Score the page with how your body fleshes out now that you are packing or are en route to the station. Do its contours radiate (or plop down) in this moment? How to hold them well? Score because the discursive, the clumsy business of words, does not always help when it comes to bodying yourself through the thickets of the dominant world.

What pace of travel to and movement at the station might you be craving? Do you need to cancel that Zoom you agreed to do upon arrival? Maybe your bodymind needs crip time? How does it align with the Sámi temporalities? With which of the eight seasons with their rhythms of living are you in Gilbbesjávri?

Is slow travel doable? Physically? Socially? For those (very few) of us who might have the financial resources, is/ was slow travel impossible because of your work/life conditions, caregiving duties, or the price tags? Is access *thievery* possible?

What diet does your body need in the residency latitude? Where is the closest grocery shop?

Did you pack your 'they/them' pronouns pin? Who to ask about gender-neutral bathrooms and a changing room at the station sauna?

Do you know who will likely be in the same lunchrooms, labs, hillocks and ridges in Gilbbesjávri? How may you prepare to tend to the bodyminds who meet you at the station?

We are doodling this score, tapping into our movements, and approaching needs and accessibility with two straightforward questions: what might make it impossible for me to be in a space? How might I make it impossible for somebody else to share it with me?

ON CRIP AND
SAMI CRANKINESS,
OUR CURIOSITY-SCORING
METHOD
(WHICH WE ENCOURAGE)

While composing this score, we figured that our scoring method is [crankiness](#), another affect that nuances our economies of attention, informs how and what we notice (and what we do not yet!), and how we field, that is, instigate a bundle of politico-material relations with which we stay in our practices and projects.

My crip crankiness oozes from several leaky places, but first and foremost, from my experience of disabled living. For as long as I can remember, and always with several chronic illnesses ignited by environmental violence of the nuclear waste cemetery and chemical industries of the Vyatka region as well as various medical mistakes, which introduced me—in cutaneous, visceral detail—to protocols of allopathic care often equipped with and being an inseparable part of spaces and methods that bioart as a field affiliates with.

At three, I climbed my first coach at an examination ward. I remember sticking my gaze to someone dressed in crisp, innocent white and wearing white latex gloves: a gynaecologist. I remember no screams, but my teeth tightly clenched, some objects—several ceramic pots with blossoming nasturtiums, some bottles with olfaction-stinging liquids, and neat folds of sterile cloth—furiously flying away from the couch. I kicked them. I did it in silent fury. Nobody explained why this person in white needed to tease and twist my pelvic tissues with ice-cold metal clips and spatulas. The gloved touch of the silence exhibited no regard for my consent (Shildrick 1997, 65, 76); nobody spoke to me: a bodymind that undergoes corrective care of the medical-industrial complex is never permitted their knowledge. Who knows better (in a medical ward)? The one who has the power to diagnose, mistakenly or not, and is authorised to apply their knowledge as protocols of care defined by the state in the comfortable absence of rebellion (Shildrick 2002, 49).

These broken objects might have embodied my learning to refuse the systemic tight grab in the otherwise torturously silent examination ward.

I kept rotting, living, and growing, and later, the authority figures would shapeshift; nurses, paediatricians, and gynaecologists would become doctoral candidates and professors with newly enrolled students observing and assisting, studying the deadly cycles of chronic inflammation in my kidneys, for which somehow one must always be unconsensually disrobed. Ten, twelve, seventeen. I always knew not to scream on the pseudo-ruins of the Soviet Empire, one's body laid out on a standard examination couch in many, many examination wards, becoming a field with its extracted corpomaterial knowledge, extracted yet not enfolded back into the allopathic care models. They are never about care (that's why I might now live with an acute allergy to the word 'care').

In its uncanny way, the materiality of the political—nuclear and chemical—arms race I soaked is the very same materiality that pops in my mouth if I chew on a blueberry in Gilbbsjávri. The berry bursts with the material facticity of my inheritance that demands constant applied no-bullshit engagement with omnipresent structures of (imperial) whiteness and intention of movement, murked and complicated with my experience of queer migration lived by a rotting crip.

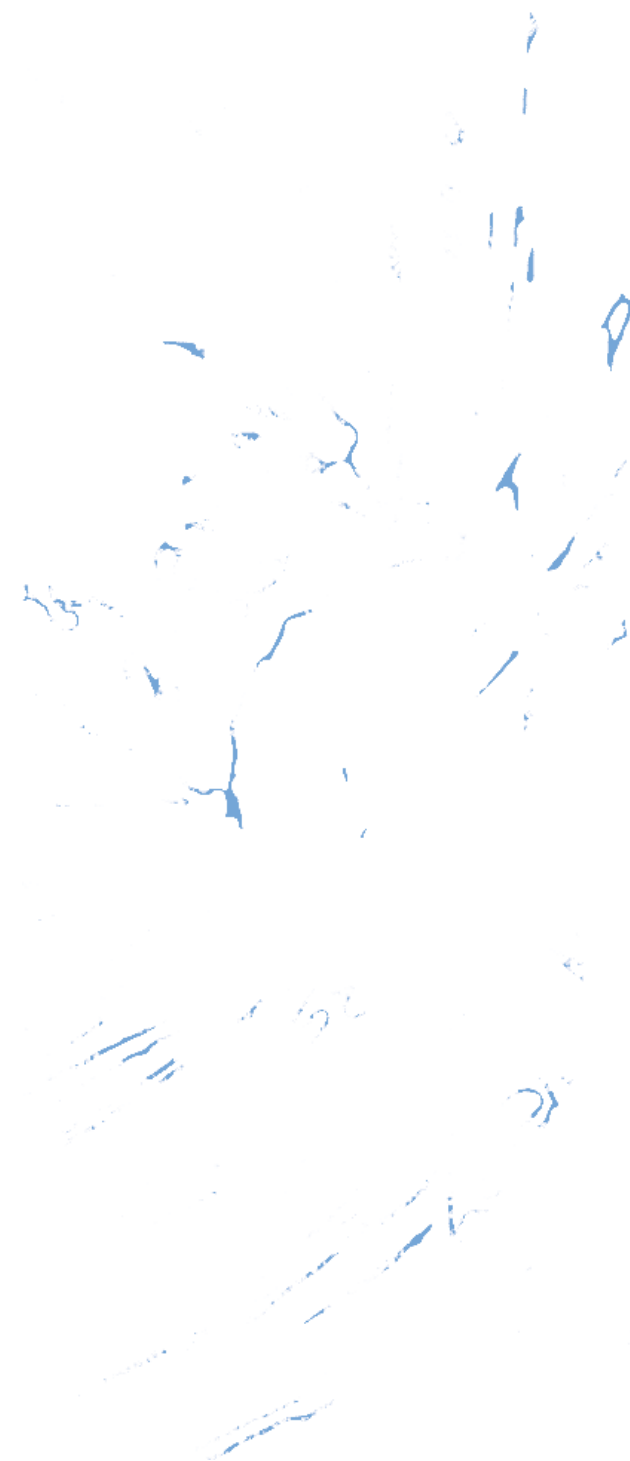
Exposure, sample, reveal, often, chasing accurate visualisation that dwells on expectations to be available, often forced with well-meaning, firmly unconsensual immobilising touch, rarely mobilised to shift disabling material conditions. It's debilitating.



Exposure, sample, reveal: it would not be an abrupt leap to say that, in many rooms, being a Sámi artist comes with the exact same string of gestures and expectations.

Being annoyed, cranky? Yes. And it's a way of keeping some things safe and sacred. The crankiness makes the boundaries and the subversive otherness clearer.

It annoys me to be in situations where the Sámi culture is so present, possibly acknowledged, yet practically tucked into invisibility.



Acknowledgements are not enough and mean nothing unless their declaration is followed by shifting what's normative in your most basic, ordinary gestures of worlding and working a field.

I drove back and forth between Tromsø and Guovdageaidnu for the past year. Between Tromsø where I live with my partner and my dog, and Guovdageaidnu, where I could live in the Sámi language as an everyday language. After a year of learning to speak, read and write in Sámi at the Sámi University of Applied Science, I felt my perspectives on what this body that needs had shifted. A stronger connection to Sámi culture and my own history, and a need for less bullshit around it, to put it bluntly.

*I now travel from Tromsø with a different eye than I would have just a few years earlier. A need to protect what I had gained. Being annoyed, cranky? Yes. Sensing an unwillingness to be part of collaborations or enfolded into situations that yet again would make me feel alienated. **Alienation**, a strong feeling that something is wrong, tiredness, and confusion. Why (again)? Alienation hits hard when I'm in a setting where I should feel at home, where I can learn and hopefully become wiser, where everything tends to be arranged to make you comfortable, but the cushions have spikes and the shower water is scorching hot, in the place repeatedly pinned with the name strange to how I know it, where your lived cosmology does not apply, where re-worlding efforts stumble.*

Yes, no. I'll not take part in this because it steals the Sámi time toward the settler-colonial one. I will rather make time to live my own culture. I will rather learn all the place-names around me and their meanings, or maybe get to know the traditional way of fishing, or how the community is organised.

Re-worlding, a laborious practice that declarative acknowledgements and liberal imaginaries of care do not nurture.

Up until my year in Guovdageaidnu, I had worked on several projects as an artist, curator and musician, often in close proximity to a Norwegian institution or

organisation. A certain tiredness followed me to the village, and it took me that year to realise it could be called institutional fatigue.

As a Sámi person and artist I have often (whether I wanted it or not) had to take the role of an educator in the Sámi culture and arts in addition to what I might be busy doing professionally. I knew way too well that to be able to have the conversations that made sense to me, we needed some common understanding of the knowledges, customs and cultural aspects from the Sámi perspective. In Guovdageaidnu, there was no need for this, I was amongst the majority, amongst other Sámis sharing similar stories and experiences as me. My responsibility was to learn the language and, as much as possible, the different perspectives on Sámi life offered by my classmates.

In contrast to the responsibility to explain oneself away.

To always have to make conversation about the basics of Sámi culture and current state is really to always be forced into relation with the settler-colonial history, to being on the Sámi lands yet again telling about how Sápmi is divided by four nation state borders, to share into the void of the majoritarian society. I might be present physically, but it is impossible to be in this room, in this place, in this relation. The society of the majority is strong.

Being prolific in crip and Sámi living, crankiness is our note-taking method, indeed. Importantly, it does not mean withdrawal but rather staying with familiar relationships (typical, normative, dominant) and working them towards a more inhabitable curve. Crankiness is our “a way to feel navigation, a repulsion away from something about which we have to decide whether to tell it” (Chen, Kafer, Kim, and Minich 2023, 21); it is “pointing outward, it is also entangled with our commitment to being where we are” (Ibid., 22), and somewhere and somewhen where disability, indigenouness, displacement and migratisation do not just appear in passing, in the well-meaning (sometimes breast-beating) acknowledgements, or in the “etc,” somewhere and somewhen that is not debilitating and disabling.



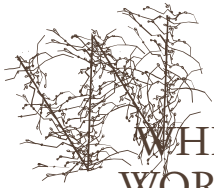


CURIOSITY OUT OF DIFFICULTY

Staying with the crankiness as a navigation tool, a repulsion away from something about which we decide to tell, we intend to tend to curiosity: not only can it be Pandora's critical forensic practice, but an affective drive that emerges *out of difficulty* (Steinbock 2019). In our context, a forensic understanding of the normative world is necessary in order to know what to fieldwork away from. However, this needs to be followed up in generative ways, in ways that shift what is ontologically imaginable and inhabitable. With rolled-up, busy sleeves, cranky curiosity serves as an affective technique for leaning into mutually transformative (*potentially* coalitional) relations borne out of difficulty. The technique is most famously proposed by Eliza Steinbock, a trans feminist media scholar, who urges turning away from stultifying relations that mark out a curious object toward a trans*feminist curiosity about the mechanisms of differencing and how they might work otherwise (Steinbock 2019, 141-142). Steinbock submits to the power for trans*-formative thinking (and we add, of crip and Sámi world-making); it is to be practised as "a participatory technology that constitutes the space and is not only about grasping the pre-formed elements of that space. [Its] perspectival mode of scanning emphasises how one's ray of attention not only connects with *but also actively creates ...*" (Steinbock 2019, 122, emphasis added; 113, 123).

Emerging out of difficulty, curiosity is an affect that scans and grasps—to hold on to because one's body is systemically drained, exhausted, dislocated, alienated. Curiosity is a *survivalist orientation* invested in surprises that are likely nonspectacular and banal, but resistively meaningful, life-reassuring, and *reparative*. It mobilises "one's own resources to assemble or 'repair' the murderous part-objects into something like a whole—though [...] not necessarily like any preexisting whole" (Sedgwick 2003, 128).

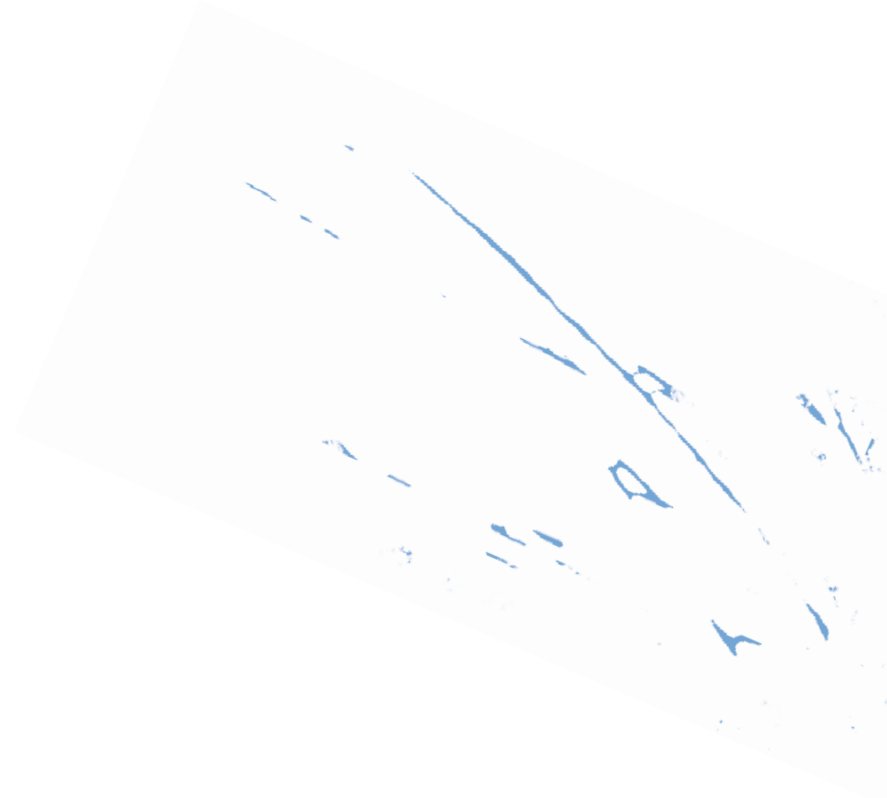
And I sense, I think, I guess that body on the other side of the conversation, not finding comfort on the carefully cushioned chair, might also be drained, exhausted, dislocated, alienated. And what if we can (re)do curiosity, this negative (how else? It's structurally induced!) affect, which can very well be joyful (Smilges 2023), to world-make together?



WHERE CAN I ENTER? WORK OF STRUCTURAL POSITIONING

The sum of structures that compose the dominant social order is motile, omnipresent and intra-connected; they are unevenly on the tips of everyone's fingers, in one's lungs, in one's habits of relation. We, that is, a sum of bodies that the dominant world is obsessed with, are all implicated in the dominance that shapes the specific politico-material ecology of Gilbbsjávri. From this sitpoint, we think of [curiosity out of difficulty](#) as a laborious, boringly ordinary practice of locating oneself in relation to the interplay of power, privilege, and systemic marginalisation. Through this repeated (exhausting!) work of orientation, one engages in situated subversive world-making and changing climate in the field and, as fields, shifts uninhabitable material arrangements from specific positions of structural difficulty. We think of uninhabitability through [ableism](#), specifically, in attunement to how Talila A. Lewis, a community multitasker, encourages us to define it as:

a system of assigning value to people's bodies and minds based on societally constructed ideas of normalcy, productivity, desirability, intelligence, excellence, and fitness. These constructed ideas are deeply rooted in eugenics, anti-Blackness, misogyny, colonialism, imperialism, and capitalism. This systemic oppression leads to people and society determining people's value based on their culture, age, language, appearance, religion, birth or living place, "health/wellness," and/or their ability to



satisfactorily re/produce, “excel,” and “behave.”
(Lewis 2022)

Crucially, “you do not have to be disabled to experience ableism” (Ibid.) or, by extension, to do anti-ableist work, and, in the specific context where we score, to contribute to the climate-changing, life-reassuring re-wordling of material arrangements that instigate difficulties which might not be immediately yours but are inherent to the premises of your fieldworking. That is, curiosity out of difficulty is potentially coalitional (and it better be!) *if* our individual identities and structural locations are politicised beyond their immediate structural concerns. You do not need to be a Sámi artist to do anti- and decolonial work, you simply need to want to do justice work. Curiosity out of difficulty is a (coalitional) doing-in-common (Neimanis 2012) for which structural positioning and locating in relation to Gilbbsjávri are essential, where one's identities and backgrounds are not to be taken for granted or essentialised but politicised in generative (eventually, less individually exhausting!) ways. With these aspirations, we might have a tricky task at hand here, but this is the (field)work, and climate change, to which we must commit!



Return to the inciting event you
doodled earlier in this score.

Position yourself in relation to that thing you wish to know, the way you wish the field would respond to your curiosity. What structural inheritances and vulnerabilities clearly surface in it? Which structural difficulty informs your fieldworking? If your immediate response is none, where can you enter the field ethically?

Unpacking in Gilbbsjávri, I felt unsure-footed. It might have meant that my joints were on fire, that the feet didn't listen, or that I was nauseous, stung by sensory overload from the travel with a new group. It certainly

was unsure-footedness contingent on arrival in any new place where I did not have an ultimate, life-supporting necessity to be.

My practice does not require fieldworking in its classic sense; I often begin to work autoethnographically, from the sitpoint perspective and with corpomateriality and corpo-affectivities that do not fail to book tight to larger structural experiences of marginalisation that I am after and that can be very well storied from one's immediate orbit. Gradually, this fulcrum of my practice solidified into a principle: “dig where you stand (or sit).” I might have overheard this phrase from my friend Rowan Lear, a gardening artist and writer, who said it in passing while talking about the inaccessibility of land for precarious communities (possibly, specifically migrant), economic precarity and food sovereignty (for other genealogies of dig where you stand principle see Lindqvist 1987). To dig where you stand is to always dig in the dominant politico-material constrictions that are omnipresent and firmly arranged (luckily not in a one-world-it-is neoliberal way!) with borders that hypocritically re-map all they want and mobilise occupation, displacement, geno- and ecocides to facilitate the project of white economic benefit.

By ways of the Soviet and Russian inheritance, I am a structural and benefiting particle of the politico-material constraints that instigate the urgent need to change the climate. Here, unsure-footedness is a trained affective response to an encounter with every new place, a matter-of-factly task and praxis to politicise it as a quadruplet feeling foregrounded by my privilege to move across many borders and now be in Gilbbsjávri, specific implicatedness in the Finnish neocolonial currents, a queer necessity to migrate, and inflamed crip movement. When unsure-footedness is approached this way, it calls in the forensic Pandora curiosity that might mean you should not dig at all, in the context of fieldworking and pursuing residencies overall, as a refusal to follow dominant scripts of digging.

My genealogy of the feeling and the praxis of the dig where you stand principle are specific; specific to a social encounter that creates a situated knot of power relations, as with everyone else's implications in the regimes of white(r)ness, “degrees of proximity to



whiteness, proportional to the exercise of political power” (Lambert 2023, 20) and consequent applied world-making away from its structural operation.

By ways of the very same Soviet and Russian politico-material inheritance, the inflamed dominance is otherwise materially and acutely in my tissues, gradually doing its deadly work that urges me never to take movement for granted: the chronically inflamed joints, among endless enfleshments of being poisoned with the nuclear waste leakages and chemical industries that take turns enriching for the nuclear industries and producing agricultural chemicals, often make it impossible for me to walk, breathe or sense as expected within able-bodyminded normativities.

The very same joints are also queer and restricted in their movement through the cisheteronormative world, facilitated by state ideologies and the status quo of border regimes, with the dig where you stand being a different kind of necessity.

I likely overheard Rowan’s encouragement to dig from where one stands during one of my collaborative research visits to Glasgow in 2024–2025. At that time, recovering from burnout and lulling the blazing flames of inflammatory chronic illnesses in my interstitium that joined the hustle, I craved to work again and could only imagine working with what I acutely knew and had always already been doing—dormancy. In public perception, dormancy appears to be a passive process, but a chronically sick body, a gardener, an artist or microbiologists at the Biological Research Station know that dormancy is a complex kind of individual and communal labour; dormancy needs careful tending. What kinds was my question?

Beginning to approach dormancy on my renewed crip time, I felt a strong itch to visit the sites where inflammation soaked into my tissues and where I learned some of the grandmotherly anti-inflammatory gardening wisdoms. The urge to visit the garden, the industrial sites, and the medical archives of the Vyatka region, where I was born, stems from the region’s long history of radiating not only physical emissions but also, as I conceptualise them, specific wavelets of [social inflammation](#) since the late 1930s. First tasked with the production of calcium

carbide, later, in the aftermath of World War II, with producing uranium hexafluoride for uranium enrichment for nuclear reactions, and then readjusted to manufacture agrochemicals in the 1970s, these industries have tirelessly dispersed their effects into the social and corpomaterial atmospheres of the region and beyond. The visit is impossible. However, not the fieldwork itself: the field pulsates right in my tissues, joints, sensorium, and affects, and very well equips to story the power relations but also their subversion starting from the dig where you stand: not burrowing into the earthly and historical archives but connecting them to where one sits and finding ordinary and applied ways to query the very ideas of a field actually is.

Thinking of a field as immobile and clearly defined physical geography, one would need to categorise this exact itch to fieldwork, resulting in a failure. However, if fields are politico-material relations and we field them to investigate how power organises the dominant world, their materialities stretch and transmogrify, are always available and offer an opportunity *to re-enter*. Every re- is an initiation of a new relation, a new field (inseparable from the rest), a new spacetime that materially matters for those committed to world it ethically, to world it for their ordinary climate change. *There are different ways to be from a place; there are endless ways to go to a place.*

Committed to the climate change, to the change of the climate, I interpret unsure-footedness in all of its complexities and situated zigzags as you must dig wherever you stand. This climate is politically and materially omnipresent. Yet, as enormous and monstrous as it may seem, it can be diffused by means of small, ordinary weathers one ordinarily and stubbornly digs –why not by planting an anti-inflammatory garden on the lands that are tended to as an ecology of social relations rather than a passive piece of physical geography, on the lands that can be a windowsill, by gardening one chronically sick self into existence when the dominant climate brackets the sick out.

Where can you enter? Right when you sit, given that you are precise about your location and situatedness you create.



Where can you enter?



UPON ARRIVAL

We have been clear from the beginning of this score about our intention to divest from thinking of fields as exclusively and passively physical geographies. However, fields of your making certainly dwell with/in porous material worlds with communities tending to them, thereby so is Gilbbesjávri. Rather pragmatically and non-abstractly, how do you ask for [permission](#) to enter, that is, to begin a relation with these material worlds from your contextually relevant position and that place of structural difficulty that you invest in? The concept of [permission](#) is instrumental.



Not in declarative (or new-agey) ways, but pragmatically:

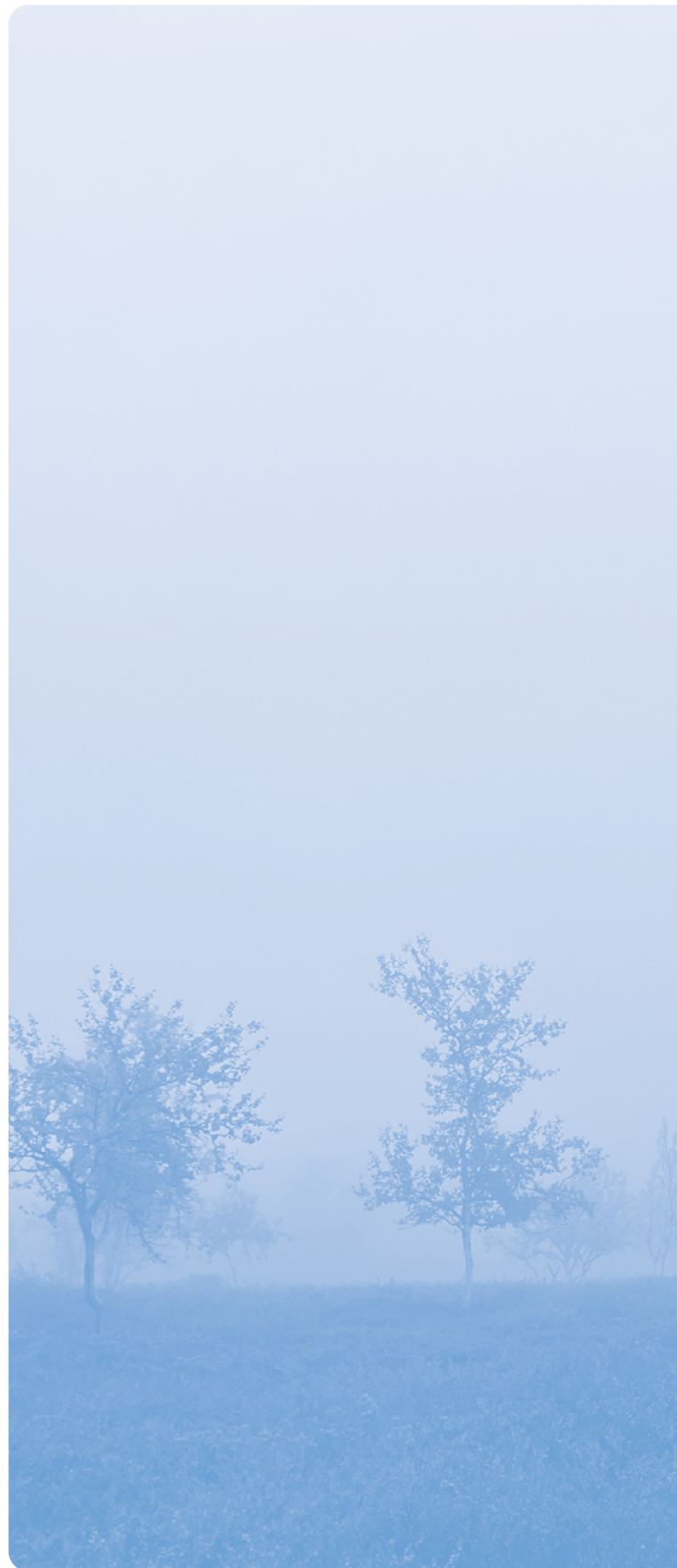
Who grants permission in Gilbbesjávri?
Do you know who to ask? How do you
know you received it? When to renew it?
Are you ready to take no for an answer?

Across dynamic politico-material worlds and working in larger constellations of many parties that each need to ask, to hold, and to host, in our case, an Ars Bioarctica artist or researcher dwelling at the Helsinki University Biological Research Station, how to make sure the permissions are granted and are in continuous alignment with the community-custodian of the lands upon which your field-making builds?

We find a fulcrum in a discussion between AM Kanngieser, a white German geographer and sound artist speaking from the unceded lands of the Boonwurrung and Woiwurrung people, the Kulin nations in Naarm, Melbourne, with Zoe Todd, a Métis anthropologist and researcher-artist speaking from

an unceded Snaw'naw'as and Qualicum First Nations' territories, and Suzanne Kite, an Oglála Lakḥóta artist, composer, and academic, as they position themselves. Working in the art and research fields that historically are structurally uninterested in permissions, AM Kanngieser shares:

I never felt like it's right to go somewhere and just be like, "I'm going to take you now." Everything that I did, I had to wait for a while to see if it was okay to be there or not, ... like Zoe was saying at the beginning [...]. It's like going into someone else's home. You just don't go in somewhere and just steal people's stuff. It just always felt wrong to be somewhere, and then not have an attunement with the place before doing anything. And so then Zoe and I started talking a lot about... well, [what does it mean to ask permission?](#) And one of the things that I've realized in recording for so long, is it's not something that is a method where you're like, "I'm just going to do these things and then I'm done and then I can do whatever I want." A lot of times, I don't feel like I have permission, and so then I have to go away. Even if it costs me thousands of dollars to get somewhere, if it doesn't feel right, it's not right. [...] whenever I get somewhere, I introduce myself. I say, "This is what my intentions are. This is what this is for. This is how I take care of this. This is where it's going to live." All of these sorts of things and other times, I feel nothing for ages. So then I just have to keep waiting and waiting and sometimes that takes weeks. Sometimes, it's taken months where I have to keep going back and seeing, and I feel nothing, then I do nothing. Sometimes, I feel straight away like, "No, get out of here." This is bad, and so that's why it's kind of hard to really articulate to people as a method, because no one wants to hear that, because it's so uncertain and it's so contingent and it's so mutable. It can change from one day to the next. I've been in situations where I've asked permission of the elders of a place and everyone's like, "Absolutely. Go for it." But then the place itself doesn't want me, and so it's not even necessarily



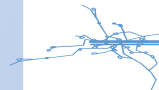
a human consent, it's literally a conversation with a place." (Kanngieser, Todd & Kite 2023, 4-5; see also Kanngieser 2021).

Do ask the land and waters by their name, but also do ask the elders, the youngsters, anybody who dwells on the lands and waters where you intend to arrive.



WORKING A FIELD: CURIOUS ECONOMIES OF TOUCH

We have established that our curiosity generates a field and shapes its specific situation through a series of non-abstract, materially consequential gestures. What if we think of them through a figure of touch that makes interventions in shape-shifting the normative field-working more immediately available for practising, that can undo the colonial/imperial curiosity right where you are digging.



Think about literal touch: what is in your repertoire of touchings that create a field? Which bodies and what types of touchings weave the field? And what touch are you exposing yourself to?

Will you be walking, burrowing, digging, pressing upon, drilling, photographing, enclosing, containing, watching?

Is there enough data and knowledge available in the lab archives, or do you still need to touch me (with your gloved hand), to sample me (for your speculative practice)? How will these samples shift the politico-material conditions of my living?

It might be helpful to return to the discussion among AM Kanngieser, Zoe Todd and Suzanne Kite and

consider practices that do not immediately appear tactile but involve other forms of touch that also impact the field.

Will you be listening, audio recording,
or asking questions?



*No, I refuse this, no, I won't take this sample here, yes,
I'll not take part in this. I can't because it'll hurt me,
my bones and bonds to my own people and lands.*



LEAVING A FIELD

*As a Sámi artist, I often feel what I want to call **institutional fatigue**, which in different contexts, takes specific forms, including a research one. It emerges in the mingling of a need for clarity about who the uninvited guest researchers and artists are, what they do in my home, and what knowledge they gather, with another need to not be bothered by them, to not be expected to be available.*

The fatigue exhausts me because I keep thinking, do the research results come back to the communities after the research is complete? Who takes care of the results, or how are they enfolded into larger, historically extractive bodies of knowledge? Does the community even want the results back? It might be an idle (yes, also just!) thought to bring the research back to the research field, a place and its people. However, can it also mean extra labour for them?

How should the research be organised in ways that do not keep re-iterating the binary of us/them, but re-world it in the thematic context (s) one is working with?

When leaving a field, we need to check our bags: what am I packing and taking away? Regardless of one's medium, you are taking something with you, some kind of (material) knowledge.

What knowledge tends to be gendered into inferior,

disinfranchised categories? For example, Sápmi cosmologies tend to be feminised and, as with crip knowledge, too, are generally only considered valid when processed by an institution or an artist working for one.

Relatedly, if a field is a bundle of ever-unfolding relations, you never leave it, which also means you can and should keep tending.

You might, just might be eager to return. However, what would your return look like if, in the first place, you could never leave your field or never received permission to arrive?



There is a strong drive for giving back in practices that engage in field-working, including bioart practices. What forms may giving back take?

Was all the knowledge that you gathered offered to you and yours, or to you only? What should stay with you only, and what may be shared further? How can one, in applied, non-abstract ways, avoid reinforcing the (neo)colonial errand and contributing to the realm of extractive economy in which one capitalises on making another place's or people's knowledge public?

(And, to circle back and to always remember your needs as a field!), how about your own labour of embodying the knowledge? In what ways—ethical towards yourself while not reproducing damage-centred cravings of the normative publics—may this knowledge be shared, away from the (narrative) mechanisms of exposure, reveal, of being available?

 AUTHORS
(in alphabetic order)

Anastasia (A) Alevtin composes this notebook as a Helsinki-based theorist and artist working across spoken-word performance, screenwriting, media art, and collective reading. Drawing on their background in Gender Studies, they work with bodies, their ambivalence and material brilliance, affect and crip theory for inquiries into how huge structures and histories (which are always currents) flesh out in our queercrip and migrant/migratised guts, senses, sensations, and capacities to affect and be affected. (A) inquires into how power shapes our ordinary living and how we may press back upon it right from where we sit. This way, they seek to notice and amplify quiet and non-apparent subversions (Schalk 2018, 124; Dokumaci 2023, 253) of various Western and colonial/imperial bodily normativities, which complement all the other (louder) organised resistive efforts.

Elina Waage Mikalsen joins (A) as a Sámi artist and musician living in Romssa, Tromsø, in the northern Norwegian side of Sápmi. She works across many media and materials, including textiles, video, performance, text, and installation, with a core interest in sound. Sound is the material and the philosophical topic Elina keeps coming back to. She runs Šuvva, a platform for experimental music, sound, and listening from a Sámi perspective. Through this platform, she creates meeting places for listening, performing and discussing sound. Elina's work is about creating lines between dots, connecting stories and tales she has heard and looking into archives of different kinds. It's often about the body, land, and song, and how they're connected.

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