Protocols for a Procedural Space for Failing

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Biography

Francisco Trento is a postdoctoral researcher at CERADA, The Centre for Educational Research and Academic Development in the Arts. PhD in Communication and Semiotics at Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo. Their work emphasises non-neurotypical queer modalities of perception, critically examining/analysing techniques to make the university and arts education environments less ableist.

Abstract

This article presents a glossary of protocols for dis(abling) artistic research in academic institutions to activate a forum for institutional critique. It focuses on crafting spaces that foreground non-ableist modes of existence and socialities. The protocols welcome useless failures—not feeding a neoliberal discourse of coaching. Non-normative body-minds are experts in failure. Pressured by growing productivity requirements, art education institutions standardise deadlines, the measurements of research impact and their spaces. These constant readjustments are based on flawlessly able bodies. The protocols highlight invisible disabilities, especially considering the neuroqueer subjectivities in art schools.

Keywords

Arts education, neurodiversity, radical pedagogies, artistic research

Protocols of a Procedural Space for Failing

> There is an imperative to acknowledge failure, but exclusively in terms of redemptive and teleological narratives of triumph over adversity, creating success from failure, and personal-professional growth. The triumph-over-adversity narrative is explicitly figured and coached, in these settings, as a technique for marketing oneself, lever ageing competitive advantage, securing investment, and getting ahead in corporate and entrepreneurial contexts. (Horton, 2020, p. 04)

The point of departure of this article is an excerpt of John Horton's text published in Emotion, Space and Society's special issue on "failure". The author examines how academia silences experiences of humiliation, awkwardness, vulnerability, anxiety, worry, uncertainty, marginalisation, self-doubt, and unease (Horton, 2020a). At the same time, any failure is considered a step towards building a path of resilience that ultimately will result in a story of success. Forging a prosperous path in the (arts) university requires young researchers to be read as assertive, talkative, complex but not contradictory and media trained. These implicit and explicit constraints restrict the possibilities for disabled students to forge stable careers. They suffer a process of exclusion that starts as early as undergraduate school, where the standards of "frationality, participation, independence, coherence and collegiality" (Price, 2011, p. xiii) are already used to measure how fit an individual is for academic life (cf. Dolmage, 2017).

In a recent project, I outlined protocols for an arts-education space crafted to disturb the normalcy—architectural, discursive, and curricular—of art universities. I focused on enabling slower rhythms and temporalities in the art university and on favouring non-typical, awkward

modalities of self-presentation. Body-minds unfit for normalcy are not easily converted into machines of quick academic productivity. Thinking about, and with them, I proposed a set of enabling constraints for building that space. The constraints, as understood by the processual philosophers Erin Manning and Brian Massumi (2014), " are 'enabling because in and of itself a constraint does not necessarily provoke techniques for process, and 'constraint' because in and of itself openness does not create the conditions for collaborative exploration" (p. 94).

To address these conditions, I am particularly interested in facilitating environments for non-neurotypical body-minds. Neurotypicality refers to being "neurologically typical", not belonging to the spectrum of neurodiversity, which includes several neurological configurations such as autism and Asperger's Syndrome [1] . For example, to be inclusive and safe to neuroqueer body-minds (Egner, 2018; Yergeau, 2018), a collective studio should not impose modalities of group-working that foreground frontal conversations—some people on the spectrum may feel pressured by them (Zolyomi et al., 2017). Another recommendation is to bypass the primacy of the distinctly spoken language as the sole recognition of participation and interest. I also focus on multisensorial inputs that do not rest on the primacy of the visual: materials that lure touching, smelling, and hearing. These measures aim to benefit individuals identified with so-called invisible impairments (Lingsom, 2008). Any facility also needs to be adapted to provide access to an extended range of disabilities, physical and mental.

The concepts and activism around neurodiversity and neuroqueerness are not homogenous. Some conceptualisations of neurodiversity only include autistic body-minds; others only consider so-called 'high-functioning autistics' (Cf. Jaarsma & Welin, 2012). Others embrace conditions like brain injuries and ADHD. Steven K. Kapp (2020, p. 02) defines neurodiversity as "the 'variation in neurocognitive functioning', a broad concept that includes both neurodivergent people (those with a condition that renders their neurocognitive functioning significantly different from a 'normal' range) and neurotypical people (those within that socially acceptable

range)." This wide-ranging approach demands mechanisms to facilitate the participation of neurodiverse folks in various societal realms, problematising society's inability to be welcoming to these individuals while recognising their biological and bodily differences. The Neurodiversity movement advocates

> For the rights of neurodivergent people, applying a framework or approach that values the full spectra of differences and rights such as inclusion and autonomy. The movement arguably adopts a spectrum or dimensional concept to neurodiversity, in which people's neurocognitive differences largely have no natural boundaries (Kapp, 2020, p. 02).

There is also a growing body of literature (Egner, 2018; Yergeau, 2018) that conceptualises neurodiversity, not as a fixed identity marker, but as the (neuro)queering of normativity itself at the intersection with gender fluidity. The neuroqueer researchers Justine Egner (2018) and Melanie Yergeau (2018) criticise outdated pseudoscientific models who define autism as an extreme male brain and psychosis as the result of a severe female mind. Not to mention the sexism embedded in these discourses dated from the 1960s—still, in vogue—, they do not tackle the fluidity and the impossibility of remarkably stabilised gender identities. In this paper, I am working with a broader definition of neurodiversity, which includes anybody who self-identifies as neurodiverse[2] and also engages with some of my experiences being on the neurodiverse spectrum as well. At the same time, I acknowledge the insufficiency of identity-based frameworks for tackling the fluidity of bodily experiences. A thought-provoking topical approach that needs further exploration is taken by Robert Chapman, that considers autism as a serial collective, which is "defined in light of shared external material factors that mutually affect each member of the collective, regardless of whether they actually identify or not" (2020, p. 12).

Regardless of the abundant definitions, it is safe to assume that people experience perception

differently. Artistic-research urges its practitioners to embrace non-neurotypical modalities of perception, not only as an audience that needs representation but as concept-creators of the Crip ontologies (McRuer, 2006). The urgent need to develop concepts and artistic processes from the point of view of neurodiversity is not an issue of identity politics but a reaction to a scenario that favours the typical autism essays that aim "to situate a bunch of neurotypical readers" (Yergeau, 2009).

Concerning these non-typical modalities of perception, autistic author Anne Corwin emphasises the notion of chunking to discuss neurodiverse perception. They describe it as "the process of organising or compartmentalising the informational field into discrete, specific, and nameable chunks—objects, concepts, sensations, and so on" (Walker, 2019, p. 41-42). The speed, intensity and contours of chunking may individually vary. However, the process acts differently in neurodiverse subjects who are often subject to sensorial overload and experiencing encounters with raw/unchunked sensorial data.

There is a growing interest in building safe educational and artistic spaces that consider these urgent needs for societal change. For example, the Finnish Theatre Museum has published a guideline (Teatterimuseo, 2015) discussing issues like the possible sensory overload on their premises. Other institutions allocate specific timeslots to welcome people on the spectrum. With these measures, the visitors then do not witness the usually crowded environment of the museum. Ironically, with the ongoing pandemic, crowded spaces have become globally undesired. Initiatives like these need to be multiplied, but the efforts exposed in this paper concentrate on making art and art education institutions more neurodiverse, radical and decolonial, also content-wise. In that vein, I suggest implementing artistic research laboratories that allow individuals that do not feel welcomed in the university to socialise and produce knowledge.

Recently, media theorist Jussi Parikka has been discussing laboratories as spaces that enable arts-based and social-sciences research, including environments that welcome vulnerable

subjectivities. He asserts that

> furniture divides bodies and allocates a space's possibilities in different ways; it is an instrumental part of how schedules work, and how time is arranged. This is also where the institutional situation of pedagogy (whether art or theory) begins: an arrangement of time and space as a necessary condition for relations to emerge (Parikka, 2019, p. 36).

The crafting of a lab cannot be detached from the practice of institutional critique (Parikka, 2019) and my understanding is that it also needs to tackle the (occasionally hidden) imposed normalcy of the institution. The lab cannot be an isolated area where experimentation happens within a closed system. By allowing different pedagogical models and architectural settings, they leak something into the university—practices, discomfort, and unrecognised knowledge. These small spaces of experimentation must work as a catalyser of change, and they can help policymakers understand what an inclusive space means. The neoliberalisation of the university constricts its facilities, imposing upon them a maximum degree of efficiency, urging the artist-researchers to share scarce resources and spaces, generating a feeling of general vulnerability (Dimitriadis et al., 2009), which puts already-at-risk subjects in even riskier positions. For this reason, I suggest a movable prototype.

Again, this writing resonates with a project that envisions prototyping an environment to enable neurodiverse body-minds—including neurotypicality—to disseminate radical knowledge in academia. This space would be an environment where people with non-neurotypical subjectivities—including the ones working within the university, but also those who have failed to gain admission due to the reasons listed in the first paragraph—could develop a sense of commonality and create art and artistic research together. The space is inspired by Senselab's *Spaze*(Senselab, 2019[3]and Jussi Parikka's understanding of laboratory, as mentioned above.

From the institutional point of view—for instance, in the application for the usage of a room in the university facilities—somebody may ask: 'What would these body-minds do once in the space?' If the space brings people together for having lunch, chit-chat or chilling out, it has already succeeded in enabling modes of sociality that are hardly achievable for people with disabilities in "normal" academic environments. Much of the research around neurodiversity lies on a pathological discourse that privileges the investigation for curing these body-minds and making them pass as typical. This sort of discourse reflects current social policies. Eça and Balsa (2019) reaffirm the importance of useless encounters, in what they call a third space for companionship: "being together no matter what happens is the third space. Sometimes, nothing happens, and that is just fine because being together in the same space and in the same time is the beginning of communication" (p. 118). Once the conditions for the thriving of these unrecognised socialities are met, native concepts and practices will flourish.

The autistic activist Karen Buckle also describes how unpretentious spatial arrangements help the building of new socialities and create a sense of community. She speaks about the Ammerdown Centre, which hosted Autscape, an annual residential event for autistic people (Buckle in Kapp, 2020). Buckle affirms that the space provided a lounge area with a bar where neurodiverse individuals could socialise: "It had a similar feeling to a small pub, but without the background music because dealing with a room full of people talking is hard enough without music as well" (Buckle in Kapp, 2020, p. 111).

Other initiatives may gather inspiration from ongoing artistic-academic experiments in spatiality and on the rebuilding of the curriculums. As Oscar Mascareñas (2020) proposes in his *Class of Nothing,*

> *If* students took at least one hour per day as part of their curriculum to just be, to aim for nothing, perhaps to do nothing as well, then that Space would eventually emerge and manifest itself physically in space and time, and become enhanced

creativity, new knowledge and new forms of learning, making and doing. (p. 863)

Mascareñas' inspiring project, performed in several institutions, like the University of Limerick's World Academy of Music and Dance, problematises the rigid guidelines of academic and artistic production. The student body-minds, already used to working on projects with short-term outcomes, develop critical modalities of knowledge together in a new way. In other words, "being in a space of nothing, an open space, a space of possibility and play, enables them to not only view things differently but to question what they do in a classroom (and not), what they learn (and not)" (Mascareñas, 2020, p. 866). What if, instead of having singular occurrences, the university benefited from a permanently running space for failure (or for nothing)? What if the few available areas in art universities were occupied by subjectivities that hardly adapt to the neurotypical constraints of the art university? The items in the glossary try to approach a doable and straightforward prototype for the composition of a collective material practice. Its main ingredient is also one of the scarcest resources in art academies: space. In spring of 2020, as a current situation of the pandemic crisis is ongoing, nobody is in a space except in virtual spaces. While that may give the impression of being safer for non-typical individuals, it can be particularly tricky for some neurodiverse folks because they radically break the routine and the predictability of working and communication patterns, potentially engendering anxiety episodes (Heasman, 2020). Most of the arrangements for videoconference meetings require a clear and loud expression of voice and the emulation of an eye-to-eye conversation. These requirements can be potentially troubling for many neurodiverse subjectivities. As the prognostics of post-pandemic life include more working from a distance, from now on, any prototype must consist of a backup plan for an online version.

The prototype would be populated by materials for artistic composition and research, which can be touched and reassembled. However, the failure of achieving something considered to be artistic research needs to be respected—not treated as a springboard for future successes,

neither received with a grudge. By doing that, a two-way change on the institution would be initiated: inclusiveness and the dismantling of the neurotypical onto-epistemology of artistic-research. Henceforth, when I refer to 'space' or 'prototype space', I mean a utopic, auto-managed, environment. There, artists, artist-researchers, and art students can meet and develop practices and concepts not recognised by the world of ableist high-stakes academia. It is a free space where young people can "engage with a kind of deliberative agency, sometimes an urgency, in which reciprocity is assumed, mastery of spirit, arts, the body, activism is sought, voices can be heard, and differences can be articulated; deficit models are left at the door" (Weis & Fine, 2000, p. xii as quoted in Dimitriadis et al., 2009, p. 369).

These practices, which I can vouch for being developed in this space, are not isolated. They are, instead, inseparable from other forms of marginalised knowledge. For instance, the categories of gender and neurodiversity cannot be separated or unconditionally mutually implied. The prototyping of a space oriented to non-neurotypical perception would facilitate the flexibilisation of the curriculum in the area of Arts and Humanities institutions of higher education, by learning with attention to positionality and the desires of non-typical body-minds. The laboratory needs to offer changes that mediate between the material conditions of the environment and the pedagogical methodologies. The following text drops consist of slightly reworked excerpts of grant applications submitted during autumn of 2019, and, the messiness of their heterogeneity is reflected in this text, even after some editing. One expects a list to contain entities of the same category—like a list of rodents: capybara, vole, mouse. The following list is not the case, as items like 'plan for luring participants' and 'relationality beyond neurotypicality' do not refer to similar classes of things. Nevertheless, as in most of the glossaries, the entries follow alphabetic order and are condensed texts that indicate suggestions and lead to exterior literature. The propositions shall not be strictly developed. They are points of departure for future experiments, dialogue, and criticism.

Anarchiving as a framework. The space may employ as their primary technique and concept the "anarchive" (Senselab, 2016). The anarchive is an idea that emerged from the necessity to overcome the idea of archiving a past event. It reads the register or the objects not as representations or essences in and of themselves, but instead, as ideas through whose traces we can potentially activate new propositions. The anarchive is

> not documentation of past activity. It is a feed-forward mechanism for lines of creative process, under continuing variation (...) a cross-platform phenomenon (...) between media, between verbal and material expressions, between digital and off-line archiving, (...) between all of the various archival forms it may take and the live, collaborative interactions that reactivate the anarchival traces, and in turn, create new ones (Senselab, 2016).

Briefly, anarchiving is caring with the world. It reactivates materials from previous processes and obsolete media devices.

More-than-human agency. Agency cannot be understood one-directionally—as if only human agency moulds the materials available in the space. Inspired by experiments in the scope of new materialisms and pedagogy (cf. Myers, 2019), I propose for the project, materials like furniture, textiles, tape measures, acrylic tools, raw treated bamboo, paints, and cardboard. These kinds of things would be available in the room, and the participants could bring anything they think may compose with the room—and as well, take anything home—the challenge is how to assemble the materials to privilege under-recognised modalities of perception. The space proposed considers the non-human materialities and their agencies. A neurodiverse framework must recognise that human and non-human socialities are intertwined—they are indissoluble, in consonance with theories from new materialism, such as Karen Barad's (2006; 2013) agential realism. As opposed to sorting materials according to which category they belong to, I focus

on material assemblages that reorient perception and movement to the peripheries, like corners, hiding places, displaced furniture, thinking with neurodiversity, perceiving environments not according to daily normative gestures and engaging with the sensuous capabilities of each materiality.

Observation and policymaking recommendations. The anarchive (see item above) is crucial because it shows how the tendencies to build a safer space are performed through the construction of a material assemblage. My understanding of the concept of assemblage is broad. In the words of Robert Rauschenberg, an assemblage is "open-ended work of art that has the capacity to continuously transform and be transformed by its sensory environment," (as quoted in Brown, 2020, p. 287). The basic unit of the assemblage is the tendency. A tendency can be a movement, and the assemblage is the primary research data, as it registers how the materials are always (or not always) rearranged. The challenge is to translate these outputs into technical jargon to propel changes in the other spheres of the societal organisation through the intervention of well-being policymakers. To deal with this task, one must deconstruct some binarism: the able and the disabled, the neurodivergent and the neurotypical. In a framework that works with continuums, neurodiversity "means having NTs [neurotypicals] in autistic space as much as it does autistics in NT space" (Kapp, 2020, p. 04).

Plan for luring participants. The space needs mechanisms to summon people into the environment, without deliberately putting them into the spotlight—many subjects may not feel comfortable with frontal eye-to-eye conversations. As Horton (2020a, p. 03) says: "How might we create spaces that are inclusive and supportive for people who feel like that, where people shouldn't feel obliged to perform like some kind of TEDTalk superstar?". The laboratory aims to attract activities from other researchers, being a welcoming space to non-neurotypical thought and art. In the first moment, calls for collaboration in different ever-changing roles would be posted online. A function, for example, would be assigned to a group of catalysers:

individuals responsible for facilitating individual requirements and starting to compose with materials available in the space during the meetings.

Procedurality. The space needs to be procedural and contingent. Think about procedural scenarios in open-world videogames, like *Minecraft*: an algorithm generates millions of possible worlds that respect a limited number of physical laws. There is no predefined organisation, and each iteration emerges according to the material contingencies of the occasion. Usually, the player has some agency to alter the scenario, by building and decomposing the reality bricks that are put together as known or unknown objects and constructions. The point of departure for a procedural prototype is not a computer algorithm but the disposition of the last assembled material iteration—see the objects pictured in the item 'More-than-human agency' above. Ultimately, there will be certain elements that cannot be moved or taken apart. Depending on the site of the space—for instance, a room in a university—it is not possible to move the entrance door; and matters of accessibility to differently impaired body-minds need to be considered.

Prototyping[4]. On the one hand, the Oxford online dictionary defines 'prototyping' as *a first or preliminary version of a device or vehicle from which other forms are developed; the first, original, or typical form of something; an archetype; 'these objects are the prototypes of a category of rapidly spinning neutron stars'*

The social anthropologist Alberto Corsín Jiménez (2014) employs the term prototyping to discuss material practices in the arts, social sciences, and critical theory. According to him, it is an understanding of the material's assemblage configurations as *beta versions* in the same way open-source software communities use this terminology. The pieces are always procedural, as are the social relations that are constructed within the atmosphere of the pedagogical spaces. The prototyping process, as I understand, does not seek to use the failures in the assembling as steps towards a final successful objective in the form of an exhibition or a publication.

In prototyping, the agency is not understood unidirectionally, as if humans moulded ma-

terials according to their intentionality. Prototyping is "what a perception of liberated and self-released social relationships may do to and through the material world; it is also what a conception of a material world 'in beta' does to social relationships" (Corsín Jiménez, 2014, p. 385).

Figure 1. Anarchival assemblage at the Senselab, Montréal. (Photo Francisco B Trento).

To discuss prototypes in art laboratories, he argues: "the fact that the layout of the arrangement may incorporate objects that lay outside the laboratory's walls has led to thinking of experiments as scale-shifting devices, capable of rendering the world 'proportionate' to new onto-epistemic frameworks" (Corsín Jiménez, 2014, p. 386). The distribution of the components into a space not conforming to neurotypical orientations helps to engender awareness of the existence of modalities of perception that are under-recognised. This is not achieved by

mimicking a disability, as Milligan (2019) explains, but rather as "a subversion of ability, a performative act at the limits of 'valid' embodiment" (p. 07). The trap, a technique or dispositive in the process of prototyping, "displays a complex repertoire of modalities of social agency, including action, subtraction and distraction" (Corsín Jiménez, 2014, p. 391). As an example, he asserts:

> A broken elevator interrupts consensual expectations indeed. Such a scenario, then, 'compels everyone to produce, to "artifactualise" themselves, in a mode which gives the issue around which they are all gathered the power to activate thinking, a thinking that belongs to no one, in which no one is right. (Corsín Jiménez, 2014, p. 391)

Events like that enable one to disidentify with oneself, in the terminology of Muñoz (2009), to step out of a routine and to make one observe and perceive an environment differently. Corsín Jiménez's proposal's goal is the crafting of new modes of sociality that put the human and the non-human at the same level.

Radical evaluation. A radical and open kind of assessment may seem utopic in the neoliberal area of the academy where "the range of what were considered successful 'outcomes' had narrowed considerably, and while young people often learned subject matter through various artistic modalities, they needed now to express it in specific and limited ways" (Dimitriadis et al., 2009, p. 362; modified). In the practices I propose for the prototypical space, any interaction with the materials available in the space should be sufficient to determine the student has fulfilled participation requirements: participation is understood beyond linguistic communication. A non-hierarchic ecology of experiences and artistic practices must be employed. Regarding the curriculum, I presuppose evaluation systems that depart from the artistic product to the process of creating relations within the field itself. Playing or staying still is participating.

Relationality beyond neurotypicality. Art educators and policymakers must not misunderstand a more-than-human relationality with the stigmatisation of neurodiversity. Autistic individuals are often considered non-relational or non-empathetic. It is common to hear from parents or friends of autistic children phrases like "they have their little world" because they may simply relate to a broader range of entities that include human and non-human materialities. As Yergeau (2018) writes, the forces at play are forms of relationality involving non-human elements, often ignored and called a-relational: "we might think of a-sociality as that which is ecologically oriented and perseverative, that which extends notions of communion and relationality beyond the human" (p. 71-72). The understanding of sociality as an event solely manifested in human gatherings reinforces an anthropocentric and ableist paradigm which considers any deviant mode of relationality as a failure, while not recognising any potential of the failure itself if it is not a path to success.

Relational spaces. By thinking about space relationally, one point is localisable only in relation to another. There is no central locality, like, for example, the teacher's table—or the teacher as the host of valuable knowledge. People with disabilities experience distances and temporality differently, as explained by Blanchard (in press, p. 01). They use the concept of Euclidean and non-Euclidean spaces when they discuss how these notions are distorted to conform to ableist standards. A space is Euclidean "if the time it takes to go from A to B is roughly proportional to the distance between them. A space will be non-Euclidean when it features discontinuities, such as boundaries (in the non-geopolitical sense)" (Blanchard, in press, p. 01). The vectorial distance from A to B is the same for everybody, but the time taken to move through it varies as there may be interruptions such as lack of enough accessible ramps and unavoidable detours. Any proposed space needs to encompass a discussion forum where these needs can be expressed with little effort—considering how the concept of the effort itself is not universal.

Transductive data. The assemblages continuously built in the space will configure the research data for the register of the tendencies that occur in the ever-shifting material that composes the room itself. They resonate with the movements and the tendencies performed in the environment. Data has agency; and its traces trigger other activities, like writing, collective publishing and the organisation of events. In times where measures of social distancing need to be taken, I urge for the consideration of thinking about how these spaces can resonate in online environments.

Obstacles for the Implementation of the Protocols

Such heterogeneous protocols, which are merely suggestions or fabulations, are not easily welcomed in environments suffering from an increased level of control, intensified by the situation of the current pandemic when a high number of variables must be controlled for to avoid possible microbial contamination. Some common obstacles to the protocols may be:

a) Commonly, universities lack the research premises necessary for the development of diverse artistic activities—even for the most typical propositions, like personal studios for art students. Gentrification makes the spaces exponentially costly, and students and researchers often need to share small rooms. In the context of spatial scarcity, the prototypical spaces must become mobile, not restricted to a specific environment but transferrable.
b) The ever-accelerating requirements for publishing results of an experiment. The results may need to be adapted into a typical academic language to be accepted, and the prototyping works with resonation instead of a representation of the disabilities. How costly would this translation process be in terms of the emotional distress caused for the neurodiverse artists/researchers? How can we preserve the inventiveness even after the translation to avoid the risks of creating neurotypical understandings of neurodiversity?

c) The projectification of the university (Horton, 2020): research must be compressed into three or five-year schedules to fulfil external funding contracts. Considering that, should the space be prepared for a finite (and potentially short) amount of time? d) How should we quantify the impact of the research? How can we quantify—and qualify—failure? Can it even be qualified?

The items above reflect a few of the numerous obstacles to developing spaces that would enable artistic-research and arts education through a radically inclusive pedagogy. However, several initiatives can work as inspirational seeds for future instalments and projects. The propositions developed here were inspired by several arts education experiments on self-organisation, like the *Spazz* at Senselab in Montreal and the *Walking Lab* in Toronto (Springgay & Truman, 2018). I also mention activist spaces like Loukko[5] , a centre for subcultures in Helsinki, which recently hosted the self-organised *First Ever Slow Academy Conference*. There, the expositors exchanged ideas about how to develop artistic-research at a slower pace, alerting the education and funding institutions to the urgency of these questions.

It was during an Erin Manning class at Senselab that I first watched Mel Baggs' video *In My Language* in which an understanding of movement and language beyond the talkative neurotypical rhetoric is expressed. Baggs criticises the typicality embedded in most institutions for psychiatric care. *In My Language* was an act of solidarity with a girl with cerebral palsy whose parents mutilated her, not a statement about autism. I told CNN this. They edited it out, replaced with something I never said" (Baggs in Kapp, 2020, p. 85). Donna Williams anticipated the neurodiversity movement (Pripas-Kapit in Kapp, 2020)—she vouched for an understanding of behaviour as a modality of communication, by de-mystifying the non-typical traits and social scripts. Furthermore, we should advocate for spaces, where these traits can be not only performed but encouraged and understood as a form of valid and radical knowledge.

At first glance, it may seem contradictory that an open space for doing nothing could also be

a place where "youth engage with a kind of deliberative agency, sometimes an urgency, in which reciprocity is assumed, mastery of spirit, arts, the body, activism is sought, voices can be heard, and differences can be articulated; deficit models are left at the door'" (Weis & Fine, 2000, p. xii as quoted in Dimitriadis et al., 2009, p. 369). As written in the item 'procedurality', one iteration of a prototype space can grow from a sparsely populated environment to become an assemblage filled with all sorts of materialities, as if it is the anarchival iteration that resonates with the entanglement between the human and non-objects that happen there. A space for nothing and an environment filled with different materialities can both disturb the spatial and discursive arrangements of the arts university. The former may act through an apparent lack of events—intra-actions are still ongoing—in the fast-paced neoliberal institution. The latter reassembles the materialities at hand, by profaning the objects, making them operate according to their potential agential capability and not necessarily by their nominal functions.

Last, there is a general understanding of activism that carries sharp ableist contours (Barnes Leetal, 2019) and that rejects the failure—to resist, one must be strong and able. One must either be physically being into demonstrations or develop a persona that puts oneself into a spot, including in the online environments. Both situations can be extremely undesirable for specific persons with physical or mental disabilities, as they may generate stress and anxiety since "most demonstrations or marches require participants to deal with crowds, pushing, yelling, and the being observed" (Barnes Leetal, 2019, p. 49). I believe the opening of such spaces can provide safer environments that are no less radical than the central activist tropes, by actively undoing the physical and epistemological ableist foundations at the heart of the arts education guidelines.

As you may have noted, this article poses more queries than solutions. Nevertheless, propositions are always subject to failure: they may actualise or not, and a non-actualised proposition must not be seen exclusively as a propeller for eventual success. The right to failure, which disabled body-minds are expert in, must be urgently assessed and noted by the institutions that

support arts education and artistic research.

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Notes

[1]"Neurotypical syndrome is a neurobiological disorder characterized by preoccupation with social concerns, delusions of superiority, and obsession with conformity. Neurotypical individuals often assume that their experience of the world is either the only one, or the only correct one. NTs find it difficult to be alone. NTs are often intolerant of seemingly minor differences in others. When in groups NTs are socially and behaviourally rigid, and frequently insist upon the performance of dysfunctional, destructive, and even impossible rituals as a way of maintaining group identity. NTs find it difficult to communicate directly and have a much higher incidence of lying as compared to persons on the autistic spectrum." (Autistics.org, 2002)

[2]It may look repetitive to explain in every publication the nuances of neurodiversity as a concept and as a movement; and identity-based categories may be problematic, especially when I tackle theoretical frameworks that engage in disidentification as the motor of queerness. In fact, I usually catch myself policing my repetitions. Repetition and treats often read as obsessive behaviour are categorised as undesirable actions, contrary to productivity, for repetition is understood as incapable of generating novelty at the pace required by neoliberal societies. A common understanding puts echolalia - the repetition of gestures, words or sounds—on the opposite spectrum of novelty. The "characteristic kind of language use among autistics, in which they repeat stock words and phrases verbatim that they have heard other speakers use" (Heiker & Yergeau, 2011, p. 490) is "described as not meaningful. However, I recognise that the understanding of and the access to autism and other conditions' diagnosis varies in different countries, ethnicities and economic classes. Employing the approach focusing on the identification as neurodiverse helps the readers to catch these nuances. Also, considering the singularities of each of the conditions and their necessities is not incompatible with the criticism of a common denominator: the problems with the compulsory normalcy.

[3]The Spaze asks: "What kinds of affordances allow nervous-systems to be calm enough to do their work? What luminosities facilitate this, and for whom? What kinds of corners can be created to facilitate the hiding of those who prefer not to be seen? What makes a scurrying to those corners possible? Does a colour do a particular kind of

work at a certain juncture? What about the tight twirl of a spring? Or the spread of a plush figure? What happens when the blankets become islands and the hammocks hold the plants? Does anything shift when the orientation is more toward the vertical?" (Senselab, 2019).

[4]This entry and the image are reproduced from a presentation at the TUTKE Spring Days, at the University of The Arts Helsinki. Parts of the presentation, PROTOTYPING AND NEUROQUEER SPACES, will be published in the Research Catalogue as a multimodal exposition.

[5]Please check https://www.kulttuuriloukko.fi/loukko/loukko-in-english/ for more information about the institution