

Report from the residency

Date: July 1 – July 10 2023

Venue: CO.LABS, Brno

Project: Managers' residency of KRA – Kunst Rom Arbeit

Participants: Eduardo Scaramuzza, Ingvild Thingnes, Anna Klungre

OBJECTIVE OF THE RESIDENCY

Our main objectives for the residency have been to revisit the core values of our organisation and to draw out different potential scenarios for the future, aligning with our intention of facilitating collaborative work methods, and within the limitations of our resources, as well as researching our overlapping roles as artists and cultural managers.

Additionally we wanted to visit and connect to similar work spaces in Brno, to get a better understanding of how they are run, to build connections and collaborations to bring back to Stavanger and collect data for our own research of collaborative artistic environments (with the goal of a future publication).

CONTENT AND PROGRESS OF THE RESIDENCY

The first half of the residency was spent workshoping a series of topics connected to KRA's current position/identity and future development. Our residency studio became an excavation site for digging into the core of our organisation and our role as (artistic) managers: Day by day the walls were covered with papers, notes, thoughts, questions and ideas, simultaneously widening our perspective and understanding.

Aiming to keep the artistic practices alive in the room and deepening the research of artistic and cultural collaboration, we engaged in improvisation sessions researching the co-existence and co-creation of music and dance. As the residency unfolded, these sessions appeared less relevant, as we realised our artistic practices and collaborative approaches were already implemented in the way we were structuring and following through with our research.

We were pleased to get a better understanding of how CO.LABS are functioning as a workspace, residency arena and performance stage, as well as getting to visit spaces such as Káznice and Industria – which has added valuable insight into how we can further develop and adapt our own space to make it more sustainable and add value for the users of our space. It has been especially relevant to experience the vibrant artistic initiatives happening in a smaller city in the Czech Republic, seeing as KRA is also dealing with the struggles of being located in a city outside of the capital.

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The second half of the residency the focus mainly shifted towards how to take action and work towards the goals and visions we imagined for our organisation – setting action plans, defining limitations and possibilities, and adjusting the plans to what is possible. Seeing as one of our main challenges has been our economical situation (having less funds allocated to administrative work), it became important to work on how to increase our income and funding to better improve our working conditions and capacity. For the past years we have been funded by the municipality and county of Stavanger/Rogaland, which has covered our basic expenses and allowed us to manage a space that is affordable and accessible for local artists, but left us with a minimum of funds allocated to the administrative work of managing and further developing the space.

Re-visiting our business plan, and aligning it with our goals and visions, we decided to make some essential changes to our organisation which will enable us to apply for funding from the national cultural funds. This means building a more curated program, as well as focusing more on public events and audience building. We were happy to be able to get some insight into how both CO.LABS and Káznice were doing this work.

OUTCOMES AND FUTURE VISION

Setting up a workshop-room in CO.LABS to dive into the essence and future of our organisation and work-space allowed us to put our full attention to the matter, without having to deal with day-to-day management tasks at KRA, and while being in a space that is sharing our values as well as providing input and inspiration for how to further develop our own arena.

One of the main outcomes from the residency has been sketching out our 1-year and 5-year plan, which will bring KRA on a slightly different direction. Up until now we have resisted the pressure of becoming a "performance arena", seeing as the main local need for Stavanger-based artists has been a place to work in between productions, rather than to perform or exhibit already produced work. This has unfortunately excluded us from some of the national funds, further pressing our economical situation and therefore limiting our possibilities of expanding and further developing our organisation.

Identifying the overlaps of our organisations' values, identity and resources with the potential of doing a more curated artistic program of exhibitions and performances, has allowed us to build a program on our own terms, which will continue to support the needs of the artists in our target-group – as well as opening up for more public events.

Our future plans are definitely inspired by the experiences in CO.LABS and Brno, which has been extremely valuable for our work. Hopefully we will enter a more structured work situation, an extended residency and performance program, public opening hours and expanded premises within the next few years (or just some of those things).

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Being granted this residency also allowed us to experience the value of (artist) residencies as a working format which can be adapted to different areas of artistic and cultural work. As an artist-run organisation, we are constantly researching the borders and overlaps of our artistic and facilitating/management practices. Adapting the residency format to our management work has allowed us to draw from our artistic working methods into our work with KRA and cultural management. This has been an important and valuable research for us as artists and cultural workers.

8. 8. 2023

Ingvild Maria Thingnes



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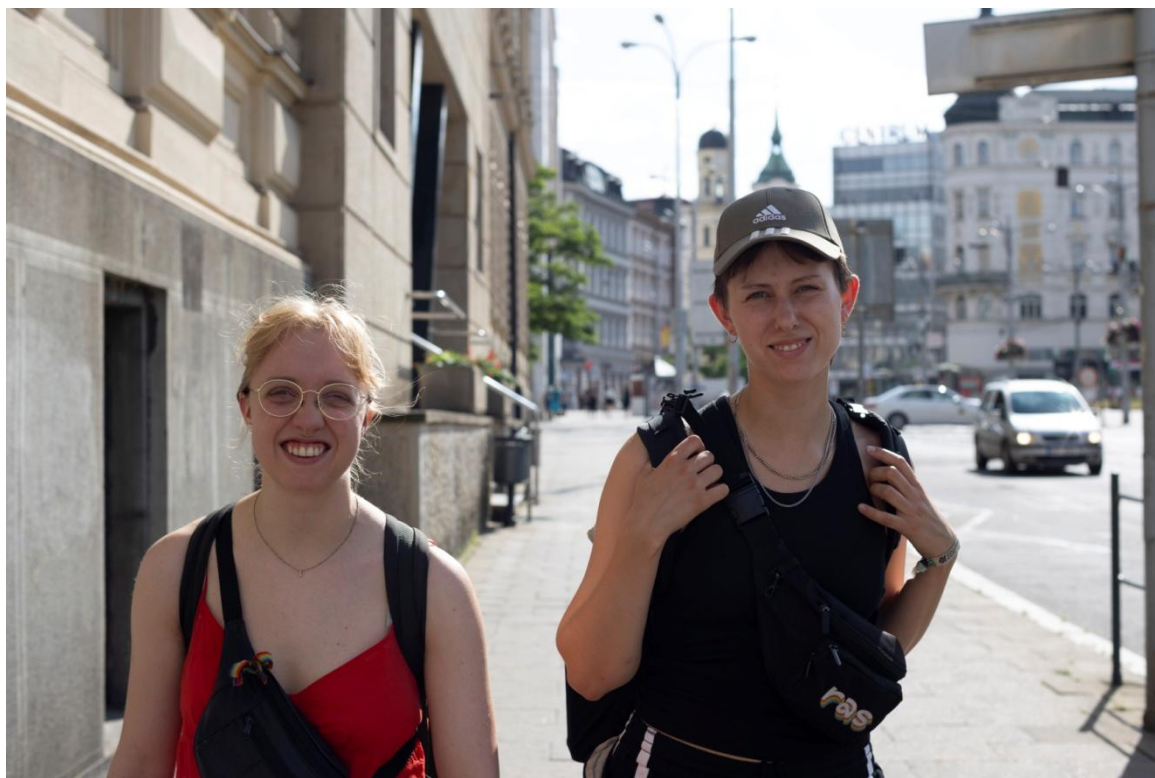


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