



Collective  
Rhythms

We came together to think about what it means to professionally make and share art in an increasingly uneven and uncertain world. Collaboration and art production is getting harder. **To sustain ourselves and our ecosystems, do we need to adopt new rhythms?** As a group, we are linked by little threads. We come from different places, and have separate practices, but face shared needs, desires, and problems. **If we followed these connections, would they allow us to find new routes to one another?**

At first, our focus was to look outwards, exploring ways others had approached sustainable and regenerative practices in their work. We quickly found that our examples—from 40 or 100-year plans, community economies, or making art as a closed loop system—are so complex. **As cultural workers, nowadays, we are constantly having to respond to social, political, economic, and ecological ruptures. The idea of a 40-year plan is a beautiful dream, but comes from a place of rootedness and privilege that is out of reach for a lot of people.**

“How can we fund our projects and livelihoods in a different way where we don’t have to rely on the whims of the state? States are incredibly depleted, or we are in spaces where things can turn around very quickly, things that were relatively stable can turn so fast, and pushes us into doing whatever we need to survive, for many people that is about giving up on making art, which is reasonable. One of the biggest lessons I ever had came from a conversation with a Brisbane-based artist—a descendant of the Bidjara, Ghungalu, and Garingbal peoples of Central Queensland—who asked me, does anyone else in your family make art? He was like my cousin makes bags, the other plays guitar. It is just a human activity. As we spoke, he made me rethink how I thought of ‘being an artist’, detaching the idea of making money from art.”

We carried on, committed to continually listening, speaking and sharing with one another.

Each session began with reflections. We learnt about the volatile, complex and ambiguous challenges we faced in our lives. **Negotiating creative censorship and political protests, applying for visas and the right to remain, coping with unhealthy and sick bodies, trying to make low-income and precarious work, managing tense and transactional work relationships, living through breakups, and caring commitments.** Initially, these conversations were part of our monthly check ins before our work exploring art in the Climate and Nature Emergency. **But** every time we came together these chats took up more of our focus, becoming the heart of our conversation. **These day-to-day realities—connecting to the emotional, spiritual, social, physical and personal parts of our lives—impacted on our mobility, safety, security, and capacity to make art.**

After further discussion we began to understand that these conversations were a way of describing the intangible climate change impacts we faced as a group. These are harder to articulate than the material effects of climate breakdown—railway lines splitting because of the heat, inflation changing the costs of our project, austerity and cost of living crisis due to broken supply chains—but they interrupted and bled into the emotional agility and stamina we needed to find ways of reviving and restoring our praxis. **Importantly, articulating our own experiences happened as part of a wider conversation about the severe climate change shocks many face globally; drought, famine, war, flood.**

These discussions showed us that the intangible impacts were not separate to our New Rhythms collaboration, but key to moving forward together.



“I was delayed because the rail infrastructure isn’t built for such heats.

At a certain temperature something happens to the metal in the track, the temperatures are increasing more and more, and it creates a gap in the track.

It comes back to our conversations about a seasonal response. **If we are led by ecological seasons, that has implications for planning, and how you organise and plan for things, getting somewhere not in the time frame that you imagine.** How you

plan and operate changes how you do stuff. We have spoken before about the huge rise in suicide on railway tracks.

Is helping others more important a climate change action than stopping flying? **There is not another manifesto that is at the core of it, in action, there is something more necessary in these other business models, about sustaining ourselves, figuring out for [Sunlight Liberation Network] and for each of our contexts.”**

In the Autumn, we visited Northern Ireland. We met with artists, cultural and tourism workers, and learnt about how they balance creative lives with little investment in the arts, and how community and affordability make it possible. Learning how this place is changing, and how people adapted and kept going in the long shadow of civil war, a response to what was happening politically, spoke to us on personal and professional levels in our journey to understand art and our roles in climate breakdown.



Committed to loving acts of interaction we made doughnuts from locally foraged ingredients with an artist Philip McCrilly, who adapts and blends their practice between cheffing and art. **We played and ate in cooperative alleyways and learnt how they are political platforms for community art in a place where there is little to no mobility in land ownership. We found out about the people gathering nearly lost cheese-making knowledge, and another sourcing indigenous apple tree seeds across the entire country, only collectable by making informal, marginal relationships in the back of pubs, fields, and farms.** We kayaked in a loch, ate seaweed straight from the sea, and convened with Irish seals. We cooked local ingredients bought from food supply chains that will never see a shop or a supermarket, and we traced violent and segregationist histories and realities in barbed wire, murals, ghettoed communities, and walls.

We connected our experiences to a new set of examples, such as Brazil's Samba School tradition, Mutualism (Horowitz, 2021), and through methods and actions like recipe-mapping workshops, and stories of long-lost ingredients, such as silphium.

“In a samba school, you can be a member, and you can pay a certain amount. If you are outside of the community you pay for your costume, if you are within the community there is a complex economy of presence, communal meals like feijoada, people who can sew and who can build, like an actual school.”

**Often conversations about climate and precarity are framed in negative or difficult terms, can it be more nourishing?** Instead of climate drudgery, in what ways can we weave prefigurative change, (ways of acting differently), in the form of joyful small actions?

Luiza told us about the story of silphium, the first plant thought to be lost because of the effects of climate change. As people moved and migrated, the silphium seeds went with them, dropping along their migration routes, only to be found growing in the wild many centuries later. **As silphium became less accessible people didn't stop cooking the meals of their ancestors, they found other ways of doing it, supplementing ingredients and processes to restore well-known flavours in unfamiliar landscapes.**

“In Samba Schools, feijoada, a black bean stew, is cooked in large amounts. There are so many layers to this stew. **Historical layers, that materialises historical processes as the recipe changes over time. Traditionally, we cook parts of the pig that would be discarded.** Snout, the hoof, the ears, are used to flavour the stew, and this reflects what you can make. What can we do with what we have and how can we adapt? **Stews are like that as well. You make what you can of what is left over and edible.**

In *New Rhythms*, we found that—  
categorically—privilege, stability  
and security make transitioning from  
extractive, high-energy and wasteful  
systems to lighter, fairer and circular  
practices much, much easier. **As**  
large parts of the world continue to  
experience multiple crises, austere  
spending cuts, and closed borders,  
divisions in power and opportunity  
deepen. **Humanity’s ability to act**  
**is being threatened by the Climate**  
**and Nature Emergency. Amongst**  
**sacrificial landscapes and fracturing**  
**worlds, many of us cannot solely rely**  
**on stable authors and their climate**  
**solution ideas, we have to adapt**  
**and find our own way of moving and**  
**exploring, implementing our own**  
**strategies and fully participating in**  
**our futures.**

We also learnt that conversations around constant crises shifts how someone perceives their liveability. We began to see the threads, but rather than this being overwhelming, it showed us how we are moving into different ways of thinking about change. **Working relationally doesn't only require a lens to examine how the world around us works, this type of work asks us to pivot and use a mirror to look inside of ourselves. This is not a quick fix, it is an embodied process where we face our fears, insecurities, and dreams.** Yet, when we practice self-reflection and introspection honestly and vulnerably, we also can affirm our connections with others and the world around us to make better decisions.

Now at the end of our funding, our plan is to grow our working group, slowly, building on our relationships of integrity (Stein, 2018). **As we grow, we are finding ways to collaborate across regions, continuing to find a collective rhythm. We all need to survive in many ways.** This looks different for each of us, even though there is a commonality across our shared problems. **How can we incorporate liveability into our praxis? Do we have protection about what livability means for us and our rights in that space? To accommodate for this, shifting from New to Collective Rhythms, together, we ask—can we make art that supports a liveable future for all?**



Collective

Rhythms

Divination for  
Climate Adaptability

The cards were made using photographs and quotes from our research trip and sessions across the year, and have been turned into watercolour paintings by artist, Luiza Prado. As our working group grows, so will the deck, and we plan to release another four arcana in a year's time. **We chose the number four as it frequently appears in natural phenomena, cultural symbolism, and mathematical structures, representing completeness, stability, the seasons, and the fundamental aspects of the universe.** There are also four of us. The arcana can be used at the start or end of your day, when you are at a crossroads, or in a moment of wayfinding. **They are a tool for returning focus back on how to incorporate liveability into your practice. To remember, restore, and find energy for revival.**

Cut out the cards from the zine.

The cards are meant as an instrument for self-reflection and intuition. Trust your gut feelings and interpretations.

To start a reading, focus on a question you want answered or the situation you want to explore.

For example you may want to ask, what insights do I need to know about this situation? What is the current energy around this?

Mentally connect with the cards as you shuffle, visualising your question or the situation you're exploring.

Follow your intuition, draw one or two cards, letting the cards come to you.

Scan the cards and note your initial reactions to the images, colours, and symbols. If you have more than one card you can read them in combination.

Read the accompanying question. How does this apply to your situation? Where could that question lead you in your own thoughts and actions?



We each have different contexts and daily needs but commonality in challenges we are facing. What strengthens us as a group?





In-between spaces. An alleyway that becomes a sphere to connect people and beings. It is an intimate space with no hesitation, it is natural - they do it a lot. How can we use what we've got?

The garden cannot be unplanted

~~Phat~~

- Scallion Flat Bread ) M
- ~~Make dough~~
- Cook bread

- Curgette + coconut yoghurt
- ~~Making yoghurt etc~~
- Prep curgette
- ~~B B milk~~
- Prep coriander, nuts ) Ph

What is the long tail of the recipe? What is swapped out? What moves with us?





A body of water is a connector. It is a repository and an archive. It shows us different histories, the archives that they become, the sediment.

What stories does the seaweed tell us?



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