

ARTS & CULTURE PROGRAMME

Erasmus University College



Erasmus

ACP really made my second year of university, I would recommend it to anyone who seeks to widen their horizon. I would do it all over again if I could.

Koen Dobbelaar

I would highly recommend this program for anyone who wants to have their ideas radically challenged about what it means to be human and how art reflects our different experiences as human beings.

Nathaniel Nichol

The Arts and Culture Programme was by far the highlight of my university experience thus far.

Zarah Cranko

The ACP allows you to retain your own interests, explore them further, get inspired by others' interests, and perhaps even inspire others the same way you were inspired. My year would not have been as rich in experience and knowledge without the ACP programme.

Arjin Elgersma

CONTENT

What is the Arts & Culture Programme? **3**

Applying for the programme **5**

ACP 2018-2019: Year Overview **7**

Student Reflections **14**

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At EUC we offer students the possibility to enrich their academic study by participating in the Arts & Culture Programme, an extra-curricular programme during which a small group of students explores the relationship between art and science.

WHAT IS THE ARTS & CULTURE PROGRAMME?

Collaborations between artists, designers and scientists happen more and more frequently, mainly as a response to the extremely complex societal problems facing humanity today (such as climate change, the refugee crisis, A.I.). The arts provide new ways of thinking, alternative methods and an incentive for interdisciplinary collaborations, which all contribute to the exploration of these complex issues and finding ways to deal with them.

Over the past few years interest (of universities, the cultural sector, governments and businesses) in art/science collaborations has grown exponentially, and at EUC we aim to be at the forefront of educating students who can answer the growing call for professionals who can collaborate across disciplines to combine different types of knowledges (scientific, artistic, societal) in order to approach challenging issues in new and creative ways.

The Arts & Culture Programme lays the groundwork for this during a one-year programme, in which students from different years and majors are exposed to several artistic disciplines (film, music, dance, literature, visual art, design), explore art/science collaborations and work on merging their own academic practices with artistic ones. In addition, participating students organize events for the EUC community, which does not only ensure the dissemination of art throughout EUC, but helps students develop their organizational and collaborative skills.

Street Art Bike Tour of Rotterdam





Performance by Codarts students during the Critival 2019

APPLYING FOR THE PROGRAMME

We aim for a small group of ten students to participate in the Arts & Culture Programme each year, in order to create a strong team spirit and enable effective and thorough collaboration. We expect participating students to have an open and curious attitude, and show high levels of motivation and enthusiasm. Additionally, students have to be able to work effectively in a team and be willing to act as ambassadors for arts and culture at EUC.

In principle the programme is open for all EUC students. However, third years should consider whether they are able to fully commit to this intensive programme.

The ACP starts in November, and continues until the end of the academic year. There is one mandatory session per week during quads, except for exam weeks. Although sometimes preparation for a session is required, this is always kept to a minimum to ensure an acceptable work load next to regular courses. The programme can only succeed with a committed group of students who attend all sessions. Students will have to leave the programme in case of insufficient attendance or lack of commitment.

WHEN AND HOW TO APPLY

The application deadline for ACP 2019-2020 is **Sunday 29th September 2019**.

Your application should contain:

1. **Your Curriculum Vitae**
2. **Video (max. 5 min.)** in which you answer the following questions:

Why do you want to be part of the ACP?

What do you expect of the programme?

What artistic expression (artwork, book, film, etc.) would you like to share with your fellow ACP students, and why?

If you could organize an ACP event for your fellow students, what would it be?

You can send the video as a file or send on the link to where we can find this video.

Please ensure that this all works, as we cannot not accept applications with no/dysfunctional videos.

Also, note that these videos are not geared at giving us an impression of your filmmaking abilities, but are aimed at giving us an impression of you. And even though we'd like to see your face in the video, feel free to use different means of communicating your answers.

Send your application to degroot@euc.eur.nl under the e-mail subject 'ACP Application'. You will hear from us within two weeks whether you have been accepted to the ACP.

The background of the entire page is a complex, abstract pattern of thin black lines. These lines are interconnected to form various geometric shapes, including triangles, squares, and larger, more irregular polygons. The overall effect is that of a dense, intricate web or a complex network of connections. The lines are set against a plain white background, which makes the black lines stand out sharply. The pattern is not uniform, with some areas being more densely packed with lines than others, creating a sense of depth and complexity.

**ARTS &
CULTURE
PROGRAMME
2018-2019**

// YEAR OVERVIEW //
// STUDENT REFLECTIONS //

YEAR REVIEW

ACP 18-19

The students who participated in the Arts & Culture Programme 2018-2019 were selected first and foremost because of their enthusiasm for the arts and intrinsic drive to expand not only their own horizons but also those of their peers.

The group consisted of first-, second- and third-year students from a diverse range of backgrounds, who often lived in several different countries while growing up. This diversity, matched with a common aim to engage more frequently and intensely with the arts, contributed to a buzzing, open-minded and close-knit community.

The group grew closer together as the year progressed, discussing the various topics that arose from cultural visits, lectures, readings and screenings, and working together to several events and a very successful festival (The Critival) for their fellow students at EUC. The following is a short overview of the activities of the Arts & Culture Programme in 2018-2019.

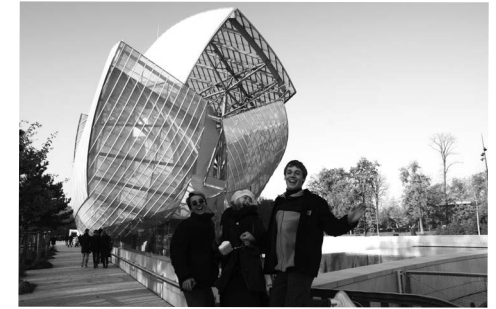
**Introductory talk by Amarantha Groen at La Monnaie de Paris
Grayson Perry exhibition**



Getting to know each other

At beginning of the second quad, the new ACP group of students was eager to get to know one another during an introductory session and Italian dinner. During the session the students and ACP team all shared an artistic work with the rest of the group. It could be any work, shared for any reason: a personal favourite, a work recently seen/read/listened to, or an inspiration. The effect of this simple exchange was enormous: it sparked enthusiasm among all the group members to enlarge their scope and to learn with and from each other about the endless possibilities of the arts.

QUAD 2



Fondation Louis Vuitton (Paris)

Field Trip: Paris

We fully immersed ourselves into arts and culture during the field trip to Paris. In preparation the group watched and discussed Jean-Luc Godard's classic *À Bout de Souffle* (Breathless) (1960), which takes place in 1960's Paris, and is one of the best examples of the experimental cinematographic movement *La Nouvelle Vague* (French New Wave).

We visited several cultural institutions in Paris, among which Palais de Tokyo, Fondation Louis Vuitton and La Monnaie de Paris, in addition to going an architectural walk and exploring artist studios in Les Frigos, an old refrigerated train depot. Students and staff engaged in critical discussions on a range of topics inspired by the exhibitions and surroundings, such as cultural appropriation, masculinity in contemporary society, urban planning and the Anthropocene.



At the Natural History Museum in Rotterdam

This reading was followed by a visit to the Natural History Museum, to experience how mankind since the Enlightenment has used specific methods of categorization and measuring to 'control' nature, enabling and reinforcing the nature vs. culture dichotomy.

After this critical perspective, we went back to the future with a screening of *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* a 1984 Japanese animated epic science fantasy adventure film directed by Hayao Miyazaki. This film centers on Nausicaä, a young princess living in an post-apocalyptic world in which the few surviving humans live in scattered semi-hospitable environments within what has become a toxic jungle.

Dr. Irene van Oorschot concluded the exploration with a talk on how our current thinking about the ecological crisis, and our inadequate response to it, are products of Enlightenment thought, and considered how we can relate to nature in different ways through insights offered by the arts.



Talk by Dr. Irene van Oorschot

RPhO: Classical Concert

After returning from Paris, students visited concert hall De Doelen for an enchanting performance by the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, together with students following the EUC Aesthetics & Politics course. The concert was put in perspective by an inspiring lecture (with live cello music) at EUC.

Thematic exploration: Man vs. Nature

To conclude the first ACP Quad, we went on an exploration of the binary opposition 'Man vs. Nature', during which we attempted to critically analyse (the representation of) our relationship with nature.

Students first read *The Word for World is Forest* (1978) by acclaimed Science Fiction author Ursula K. Le Guin, in which she describes the clash between humans and a peaceful, nature-respecting people on their forest planet.

QUAD 3



Street Art Bike Tour

Thursday Night Live at Het Nieuwe Instituut: For the Record - Performing Gender

Several academics and artists examined gender roles and feminist positions in popular music videos. Iconic videos of Madonna and Prince, as well as recent releases of Sevdaliza and others, formed the basis for a debate on the articulation of gender through the cinematographic gaze and the performing body. Students from the course Representation: Analyzing Visual Culture also joined.

Moving Futures Festival

The ACP group attended the opening night of the contemporary dance festival Moving Futures Festival. To start off the evening we were introduced to the world of contemporary dance by a dramaturg, and afterwards we witnessed

three performance premieres, all radically different in atmosphere, style and experience.

Storytelling workshop

Yael van der Wouden, writer and co-founder of the feminist publishing house Chaos, gave an inspiring workshop on storytelling in academic writing. She took the students on a journey from thinking about what a story actually is, showing different examples from literature and film, to a practice session where students revised some of their academic writings by playing with the concept of storytelling.

Book Club: The Handmaid's Tale

Students read the dystopian classic *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood (1985) and attended a lecture on critical feminist dystopian fiction.

QUAD 4

Shakespeare
Beyond the Globe



Zine-Making
Workshop

STUDENT-ORGANIZED EVENTS

Zarah Cranko & Koen Dobbelaar: Street Art Bike Tour of Rotterdam

Zarah and Koen arranged an inspiring guided tour of street art in Rotterdam, and made us see the city with new eyes. The expert guide showed new perspectives on familiar places, and hidden gems not encountered before.

Daniel Xu: Shakespeare beyond the globe

Daniel introduced us to three diverse adaptations of Macbeth: Kira Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood* set in feudal Japan, Sir Patrick Stewart's Stalin-esque *Macbeth*, and *Makibefo* – a Malagasy adaptation with all roles improvised by indigenous fishermen, and we discovered how Shakespeare has inspired successive generations of film directors, allowing them to reconsider his work relevant and accessible for audiences of any time, culture, or language.

Julia Hovenier: Zine-Making Workshop at Slash Gallery Worm

Julia introduced us to the amazing world of zine making (independently or self-published booklet, often created by physically cutting and gluing text and images together). After an introductory lecture we got to work ourselves, and all participants created their own zine. Julia collaborated with Slash Gallery at Worm, where the workshop took place.

All ACP students: THE CRITIVAL

At the end of the ACP, the participating students organized the very successful CRITIVAL, during which all EUC students were invited to explore the relationship between creativity and critical thinking. The festival opened in the atrium with a musical performance by Codarts students, after Prof. dr. Frans-Willem Korsten gave an inspiring lecture on activism and art. This was followed by a panel discussion on electronic music as a political device, after which a delicious vegetarian Syrian dinner was waiting for all attendees. In the evening, the multi-functional room was transformed into an inspiring space hosting workshops on zine-making and writing a 'manifesto of the self'. During all of this, students could become part of a documentary archive of hidden histories. Throughout the day around 70 students attended the festival, who listened, created, discussed, and shared thoughts, food, and stories together.

Workshop during THE CRITIVAL



Arjin Elgersma: Screening MATANGI/MAIA/M.I.A. + Panel Discussion: The Politics of Art in Rotterdam

After watching the impressive documentary on Tamil artist M.I.A., Arjin led a panel consisting of writer and artist Malique Mohamud of Concrete Blossom, filmmaker Robin van der Haak, and poet, visual artist and photographer Fatima Jabor, to discuss activism and inclusivity in the context of Rotterdam

Tour of Blue City

Our very own student assistant Natalia Derossi organized a trip to Blue City, an incubator for circular entrepreneurs in and around Rotterdam, situated in the former Tropicana swimming pool. During the tour students found out how the entrepreneurs of Blue City are functioning as a circular economy, to see how we can build a city and economy

Visit to Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art

Students visited the exhibition *Lawrence Abu Hamdan, A Solo Exhibition*. The artist hovers between art and activism, and in his transdisciplinary works he explores the politics of sound. For example, Abu Hamdan's film *Walled Unwalled* (2018), shows the artist's ear-witness investigation into the Syrian regime prison of Saydnaya, in partnership with Amnesty International and Forensic Architecture.

CONCLUDING THE ACP 2018-2019 Amsterdam Outing & Movement Workshop

Jasper Albers and Anouk Rialan took the group to Amsterdam, for an inspiring trip to W139, contemporary art center, Mezrab House of Stories and an art/science studio.

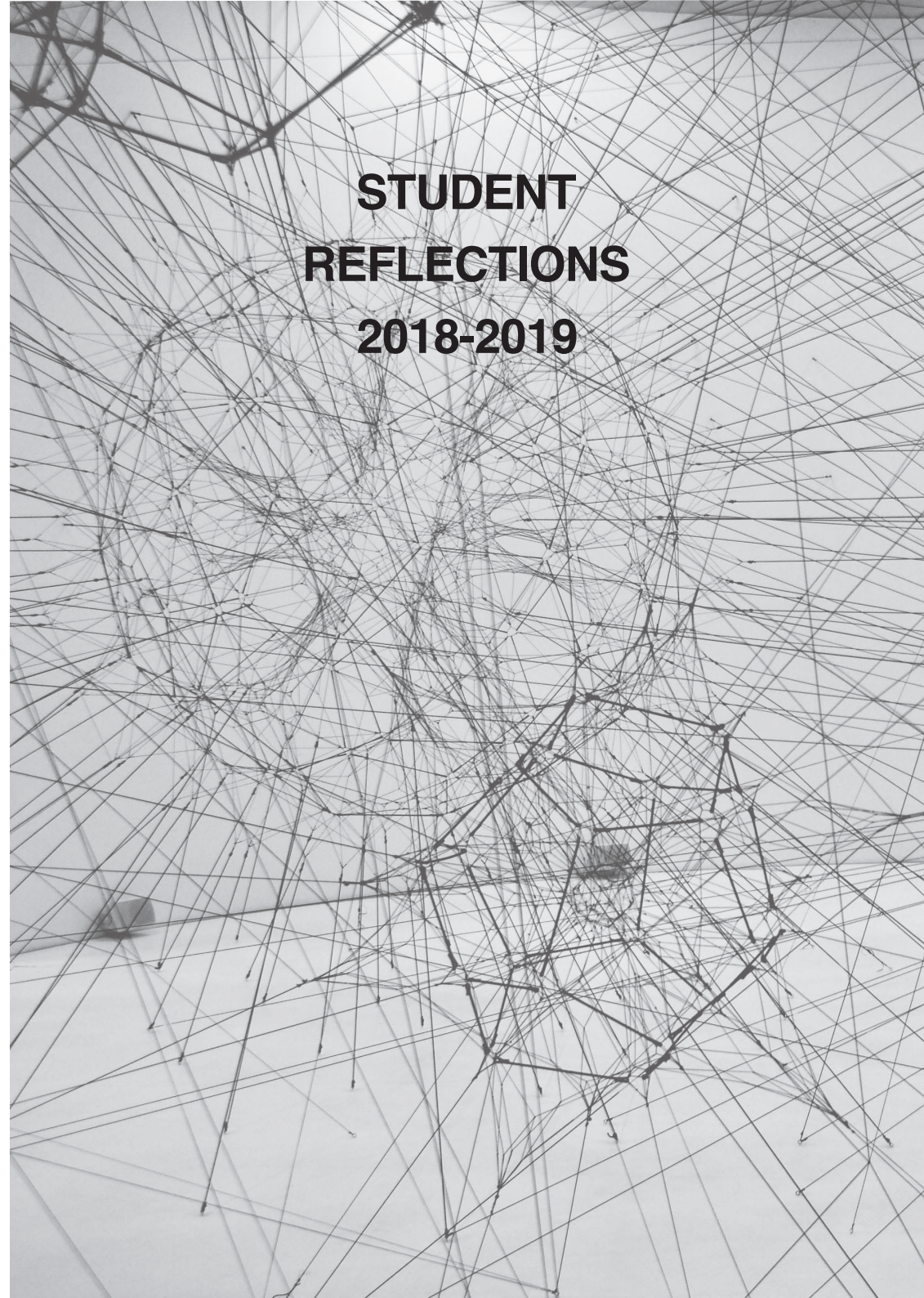
The concluding event of the year took place at Dansateliers, an independent house for contemporary dance based in Rotterdam. During an intense session, students moved through the space together, and became aware of their physical closeness.

After a year of spending time together while visiting cities, cultural institutions and engaging in lively debates, the ACP students became a close-knit community, who, all together, made the year a great success and advanced the ACP at EUC.

Listening at Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art



STUDENT REFLECTIONS 2018-2019



The Arts & Culture Programme made me feel at home at Erasmus University College over the last year. One of the best decisions I made this year was to quickly write a motivation letter one hour before the ACP submission deadline, and this decision enabled me to get to know so many cool people, places and ideas.

One of the best aspects of the ACP was that it allowed me and my friends to construct our extracurricular programme to our own wishes, this engaged me with the group and the activities. The field trip to Paris and the Critival were for me the highlights of this year. This field trip created new friendships and an exchange of ideas and concepts which I believe all those involved gained from. The Critival taught us to organize, cooperate and promote a large event as a collective. This put our skills to the test and it was the greatest pleasure to see that the festival was such a success.

I am so happy with the group, their engagement and creativity, and the organisers, their open mindedness and guidance. I am very thankful to be a student at Erasmus University College because this institution makes it possible for an important programme like this to exist. ACP really made my second year of university, I would recommend it to anyone who seeks to widen their horizon and I would do it all over again if I could. The only thing there is left to say is: thank you for an amazing year of ACP!

KOEN DOBBELAAR

On Purpose

I had always held (independent of the vibrant academic debate on the matter) that art should have no express purpose other than pure aesthetic enjoyment. Indeed, this is what drew me to art in the first place. For which of humanity's other creations have no greater purpose than decadent self-indulgence – whether that be in the realistic, the expressive, or the absurd? Agriculture, money, political institutions, etc.: humanity's other creations are all ruthlessly functional. The Arts & Culture Programme forced me to undergo a deconstruction-reconstruction-expansion process of my conception of art and its purpose.

In Paris, I was exposed to the likes of Greyson Perry, who offers a deliberate commentary on the contemporary world. His art takes on the purpose of provoking the viewer to think about gender, sexuality, and the state of society. Back home in Rotterdam, we had a fantastically organised zine workshop at WORM which made me see the potential of art as a normative tool and medium for societal change. Lawrence Abu Hamdam's exhibition at the Witte de With Centre for Contemporary Art were works that could only be appreciated by attending closely to the semantic content rather than the aesthetic form. I saw art as taking on a purpose of delivering cognitive content to the viewer in such a way as to not only make a point but to instantiate it into something more experiential. In other words, by wrapping a message in the veil of art, the message becomes more than just understood; it becomes experienced.

Thanks to the Arts & Culture Programme, no longer do I only see the arbitrariness, the detached-from-reality purposelessness of art. Indeed, with this change in mind-set and through the Arts & Culture Programme, I've been able to embark on my own artistic project with a purpose – a video documentary of EUC students that aims to challenge their stereotypes and self-conceptions.

ARJIN ELGERSMA

The year I spent in the Arts & Culture Programme, really opened me up to many new movements, ways of expressing myself and seeing the outside world. All the places we have visited, whether it was in Paris, Amsterdam or Rotterdam, made me significantly grow as a person. I must say that our group made it a very alternative year, as I have never seen so many small galleries, squats, and weird concerts and movies before. Moreover, with Tamara's help, we surrounded ourselves with an interesting mix of more classical and alternative art.

My personal favourite was an exhibition called On Air in Palais de Tokyo in Paris. It was about the power of webs and networks, looked at from a very interdisciplinary perspective. It started with art visualisations of spider web, glowing in the darkness of museum halls. Later it went on to show how people also create webs and networks. It touched upon the climate crisis, urbanization and the beauties of our civilization. I later bought two of many books that the exhibition was based on. Not only because I fancy the concept of interdisciplinary art, but also because I later realized how the Arts & Culture Programme broadens my thinking.

We danced, we moved, we painted and made collages. We played music, wrote poetry, we even got to see the insides of the abandoned Tropicana in Rotterdam that is now made into a circular economy of the Blue City. All that in an awesome environment, with many new friends from the programme that will hopefully stay in my life forever. I consider this programme one of the most valuable experiences that I have ever had.

For students wanting to remain disengaged with their surroundings, closed in by the walls of their university campus and apartment, I definitely do not suggest the Arts & Culture Programme. For those who want to explore artistic and cultural contexts which are never far from them; to experience from a new perspective what a city like Rotterdam has to offer; to come into contact with unthinkable new interests and passions, the Arts & Culture Programme is definitely recommended.

The galleries and plethora of other spaces we have been able to see are ones which will stay with me for the rest of my university experience. Next to this, being able to get inspired by the surrounding of an eclectic and creative group of people all the while making friends made the experience even more worthwhile. Nowadays in traditional universities the arts are not seen as significant to the development of a university students experience. Other more positivist qualities are seen as more desirable.

EUC provides for such a program which allows you to stray away from the traditional in a way which is eye opening, pro-active, and reciprocal towards the EUC community. It allows you to retain your own interests, explore them further, get inspired by others' interests, and perhaps even inspire others the same way you were inspired. My year would not have been as rich in experience and knowledge without the ACP.

ALICJA WOCJIK

If you could picture sherbet
You know that powdery sugar substance?
Usually deliciously sour
So that it sets your whole body to
Electric
Yeah that's how it felt
That first time
Knowing I was surrounded
By kind spirits
An unlikely meeting
Rather informal
That would permeate through my whole year
With pure joy
And discovery

Zarah ZK Cranko
June 2019



The Arts & Culture Programme this year was by far the highlight of my university experience thus far. It allowed for an open and encouraging space of discovery and learning. We were exposed to plenty of art and experiences that would encourage us to think creatively. I have been struggling to find inspiration recently and ACP was one of the only things that made me feel that spark again. It introduced me to interesting and interested people who I grew closer to through the course of the programme. Personally, I think that arts and culture are an essential part of life and learning and an invaluable element of my education. I hope everyone gets this kind of opportunity in their lifetime. Peace xx

**ZARAH
CRANKO**

JULIA HOVENIER

The Arts & Culture Programme immerses its participants in a great diversity of activities and events. The art that we came across and experienced created a spectrum from political to purely aesthetic, from reality-based to fiction-based, from personal to collective, implicating all senses. It made me question the definition of art a lot. Does something become art as soon as someone considers it as so? Should there be a communal approval? Is it meant to be shared? Should art be political at all?

Through discussions and debates within the ACP group, and with all the artists we came to encounter, I came to at least one definition that I seem to approve. It is the very proof of identities. It can take the form of individual expression or can contribute to group identity as well as a cultural one. To me, this is crucial. In a world where globalisation has led to an increasing homogenisation, pure forms of expression that distinguish individuals are something to celebrate. Art, whatever form it takes, is a manifestation of peoples' identities. It can show tastes, opinions, abilities, visions, etc... Art might be the only space for freedom of expression, and thus for freedom to be one's self. Our capitalist society seems to alienate people from many aspects of life in the search for money and material comfort. Art becomes a key to reconnect people to themselves, to others, to political struggles, or to aesthetics, thus enabling one to not simply exist but to feel and live.

If there's one thing that I'll take away from the program this year, it's that art is a million times more powerful than we believe it to be. I think to fully grasp that, I needed to redefine what art could mean, and thankfully ACP gave me the opportunity to do exactly that. Art and culture are not created in vacuums. They're both the products and influences of different disciplines. They're shared connections and meanings between individuals and groups. They're tools to create alternate realities, better realities. In today's political and literal climate, these realities hold so much value. They're necessary to inspire the hope, anger, and solution-finding drive needed to take action against injustice.

Admittedly, I initially joined ACP to find people with similar interests at EUC and get to know the artistic side of my new city, and although I certainly achieved both of these goals I was not anticipating the following: a new vernacular that includes the word "binary" a lot, a comprehensive knowledge on the history of zines in Rotterdam, and a wonderful memory of an entire night spent dissing Kant.

But I think the aspect of the program that I most enjoyed and was least expected, was the empowerment of organizing and actualizing an abstract idea. To have an idea, work together with others, and see it come to life is amazing. I believe now more than ever it's necessary to realize and trust our own capacity to achieve things as a collective of individuals. We're so often made to feel idle and incapable of coming up with creative solutions. But this is not the case, we're equally capable as our tutors to share our knowledge with our peers and challenge norms.

Thanks to the ACP, I'll be continuing these practices I learned in the last year and continue collaborating with WORM to put on monthly workshops with their zine club. This opportunity never would've been possible if not for the resources and opportunity ACP gave me to reach out and form those connections, and for that I'm grateful.

In the class room every day we rely on empirical evidence, when it comes to the study of arts and culture however, this reliance on empirical evidence I find can take away some of the magic and power. This programme gave me the opportunity to experience the human side of art and culture and the real power both have. And with this group of people especially, to understand how the political becomes art and vice versa.

I joined thinking it would be more of an academic programme connecting culture with art but was pleasantly surprised to find it was as much about exposure and drawing connections between all varieties of art, rather than anything involving art history. As I move on from EUC to study engineering, something that is both more explicitly creative and inventive but also more defined and limited, this experience will stick with me. The people, so much as the radical ideas I was confronted with, have had an impact on me, encouraging less abstract thought and comfort with uncertainty.

I would highly recommend this program for anyone who wants to have their ideas radically challenged about what it means to be human and how art reflects our different experiences as human beings. But also for those who desire deep discussion about social issues with passionate engaged people about what culture means, how cultures interact/clash, and how these clashes should be and are managed (some particular discussions between Julia and Jasper come to mind!).

I was recently reading the Nobel speech of Alexandr Solzhenitsyn, a Russian writer who won the Nobel prize for Literature in 1970, in which he argues that art, literature specifically, serves as a bridge, to bring people together across different value scales by establishing a common humanity and shared understanding of good, bad, truth, justice, etc.

To close, I would like to put forth two quotes from his speech which I think sum up in broad strokes what I have taken from this year.

“Art inflames even a frozen, darkened soul to a high spiritual experience.”

“Art, Literature. They possess a wonderful ability: beyond distinctions of language, custom, social structure, they can convey the life experience of one whole nation to another.”

NATHANIAL NICHOL

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Questions?

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