



31 Mar 2022

Dear Reader

March has been an eventful month for *Samlande tankar/Collecting Thoughts*. We had the second expert council meeting, hosted at the Museum of Ethnography, we had our first reading circle that focuses on collecting, collections and archives, we collaborate, on 31 March, with Stockholms Kvinnohistoriska on their first film evening and began work on the *Samlande tankar/Collecting Thoughts*'s place on the Grafikens Hus website. All these events underline that collaboration is key and integral part to the project overall and bring to my mind Mariame Kabe who said, "everything worthwhile is done with other people".¹ This feels especially true about a project like *Samlande tankar/Collecting Thoughts*, which amongst other things is also an enquiry in the role of museums today.

While the first expert council meeting was introductory, the second was centered on questioning in effort to help carve out our three-year long journey together. The line of questioning approached the different entry points into the project of each participant, how we work together in relation to our different needs, experiences and expertise and brainstorming our next steps. Something interesting that came from the discussion, when I asked what a successful project would look like, was the need to expand our thinking of success and to contemplate failure's role in success. It was great to have this discussion collectively, especially as the process leader, as it helped bring more perspective.

The film evening with Stockholms Kvinnohistoriska departs from the film LENA and through the panel discussion, with artists Sam Hultin and Francine Agbodjalou and moderator Rafaela Stålbalk Klose, asks: how do we tell another's history through archive material? Through these two artistic practices, who use archives in different ways, we learn that the relation between personal, the collective and history is always, while in flux is always alive.

Our first reading circle, organised with Kvinnohistoriska, was held in relation to the film evening with Kvinnohistoriska and approached the topic of 'subjectifying the archive'. Together we read 'Subjectifying the Archive: Jacqueline Hoàng Nguyen at the Museum of Ethnography', a chapter from *Co-creation labs : illuminating guests, artists and new voices in European museums of world culture*. This chapter was co-written by Jacqueline Hoàng Nguyen and Michael Barrett. Reading together we had discussions around interventions that disrupt the museum as objective and as the chief 'knower',



approaching the idea that often, lay people know more about the objects (and the environments they come) kept and displayed in museums. Sometimes to subjectify the archive, is to open it up time and time again to interactions with different kinds of people and to disrupt the idea that it has no relation to the contemporary (outside) world.

More is in the pipeline for the month of April. Firstly, we are currently preparing for the third expert council meeting which will take place within the week. Secondly, I am also preparing the second reading circle. For this session we will look at the history of display and museums through “The Exhibitionary Complex”, a chapter from *The Birth of the Museum: history, theory, politics* by Tony Bennett. Thirdly, we can look forward to a presentation by artist in residence Afrang Nordlöf Malekian on 27 April, kindly held at Södertälje konsthall. Finally, you can also look forward to the launch of *Samlande tankar/Collecting Thoughts* on the Grafikens Hus website!

Thank you for reading!

Until soon,

Mmabatho Thobejane

Samlande tankar/Collecting Thoughts Process leader and curator

Notes

1. Kabe, M. (2019) ‘Mariame Kaba: Everything Worthwhile Is Done With Other People’ Interview by Eve L. Ewing, *Adi Magazine*, Fall 2019.