

ACT UP! Active Citizenship through Theatre for Urban Politics

ACT UP! is an international research project at the intersection of artistic practice, education, and democracy. The project develops a performance- and theatre-based methodology for promoting active citizenship among youth and university students in Groningen (NL), Viljandi and Narva (EE), Oslo (N) and Cape Town (ZA). It demonstrates how theatre - and performance approaches can enable us to “perform” citizenship, focusing on urban space as a site for democratic expression.

Camilla Eeg-Tverbakk and Cecilie Sachs Olsen will present MA students artistic work in public space. The project address democratic participation, using artistic practice in education while exploring art in times of crisis and climate imaginaries. ACT UP! is motivated by the conviction that European political life urgently needs new practical knowledge and tools to strengthen active citizenship among young people in urban arenas. Theatre and performance offer important methods to meet these needs.

ACT UP! is an interdisciplinary research project between artistic research and social humanities. Through comparative case studies, educational exchange of teachers and students, and the implementation of theatre-based urban interventions, ACT UP! combines practical experimentation with theories and examples from around the world of performance action, art activism, active citizenship and democratic participation.

Key words: theatre, performance, public space, activist art, citizenship

Disciplinary field: performative arts/ art in public space / activist art

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Bios

Camilla Eeg-Tverbakk is a practicing dramaturg within the scope of interdisciplinary performing arts, and professor in drama and theatre at Oslo Metropolitan University. Her research interests concern new frameworks for thinking and practicing dramaturgy, staging of documentary material, applied theatre, and ethics and artistic research. She holds an MA in Performance Studies from New York University, and a PhD from Roehampton University/ London. Eeg-Tverbakk is leading the research group for Artistic Research at Institute for Art, Design and Drama at OsloMet.

Cecilie Sachs Olsen is professor of Art and Society at Oslo Metropolitan University, with a PhD in cultural geography from Queen Mary University of London. She previously held a position as a British Academy Postdoctoral Research Fellow and lecturer at the centre for the GeoHumanities at Royal Holloway University of London. Her work is practice-based and revolves around developing creative methods for urban research and exploring how artistic practice can be used as a framework to analyse and re-imagine urban development, space and politics.