

Countering Silence (with Silence)

Prologue

A Note from diary = mid-October, 2024

It's been a few days since my arrival, and the silence is deafening. I keep pondering on the piercing oppression of abstract fear. More the abstraction, more the fear.

During an unfolding genocide, I joined the current institute for my artistic research, intending to develop collective cinema, both in terms of making and exposition, as a counter-strategy to *precarity*. Unfortunately, my aspirations for collectivity met with an alienating silence. It felt like entering a vacuum chamber or a parallel reality where the news from certain real-time global events never arrives.

I attempted to initiate discussions, but met with censorship decorated with passivity and ignorance. Gradually, along with a few colleagues from different departments, we started a sophisticated non-disruptive sit-in. A weekly hour-long gathering, where a few people showed up. We never reached a two-digit figure, and after a semester, it fizzled out. The academicians negotiated for a structured seminar series, along with offering me a space to curate a cinema program. And the disruption was tamed, conveniently.

However, I still show up with a toolkit of resistance under my belt. I reach out to a couple of peers and take some space in the university lobby. We gather and draw — some slogans & some poetry.

Soon, I will be stepping out with these posters, spreading them across the city.

To plant the voices of solidarity in public spaces.

Taking the disruption outside the institute,
resistance outside the premises.

Abstract

Countering Silence (with Silence) is an enquiry into the performative act of resistance within an institutional setting, and its extension to other social spheres outside the premises. This presentation will offer a critical reflection on building an artistic practice in an isolating neoliberal environment, one that upholds freedom of expression, while standing up for the disenfranchised. Drawing from Moten and Harney's notion of *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study*¹ and Staal's proposal of *Assemblism*², I chronicle my ongoing intervention within the university campus, subversion of institutional logics and dissemination of its fruition.

Presentation Format

A hybrid of lecture-performance and film installation.

(I will share a more detailed description of the exposition later as the practice is ongoing)

Keywords

Resistance, Art-making, Self-Organising, Critical Pedagogy

¹ Moten, F., & Harney, S. (2004). The university and the undercommons. *Social Text*, 22(2), 101–115. https://doi.org/10.1215/01642472-22-2_79-101

² Staal, J. (2017) *Assemblism - Journal #80*. e-flux. <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/80/100465/assemblism>

Abridged CV

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Education

Junior Research Fellow (2024 - now)

Baltic Film, Media, Arts and Communication School, Tallinn, Estonia

Master of Arts in Cinematography (2019 - 2021)

Viewfinder EMJMD - Erasmus Mundus Scholarship Winner

National Film School - Institute of Art, Design, and Technology, Dun Laoghaire, Dublin, Ireland

University of Theatre and Film Arts, Budapest, Hungary

Baltic Film, Media, Arts and Communication School, Tallinn, Estonia

Bachelor of Science in Electronic Media (2015 - 2018)

Educational Multimedia Research Centre, Indore, India

Residency/Workshops

FABRICA - Artist Residency (2023 - 2024)

Baltic Analog Lab Workshop - Analogica 13, Blozano (2023)

Young Critics Program Fellow (2022)