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Decolonizing curatorial ways: Curating from Sámi perspective.

ARTICLE ABSTRACT

The paper explores multiple perspectives on curating indigenous art and builds upon the case project of the nongraduate program for Sámi curators and its part realized in autumn 2022 at the Sámi Center for Contemporary Art in Karasjok. The curatorial ways are discussed from a threefold perspective: decolonizing curatorial practice, nonhierarchy of narratives, and pluriversal curating. The findings outline the main tools applied, such as the involvement of Sámicurators and scholars, nonindigenous scholars working with Indigenous art, the use of the lecture, presentation, and experience formats, and language use. The value of the project was in the unfolding of a broad perspective of what curating Indigenous art and research can be.

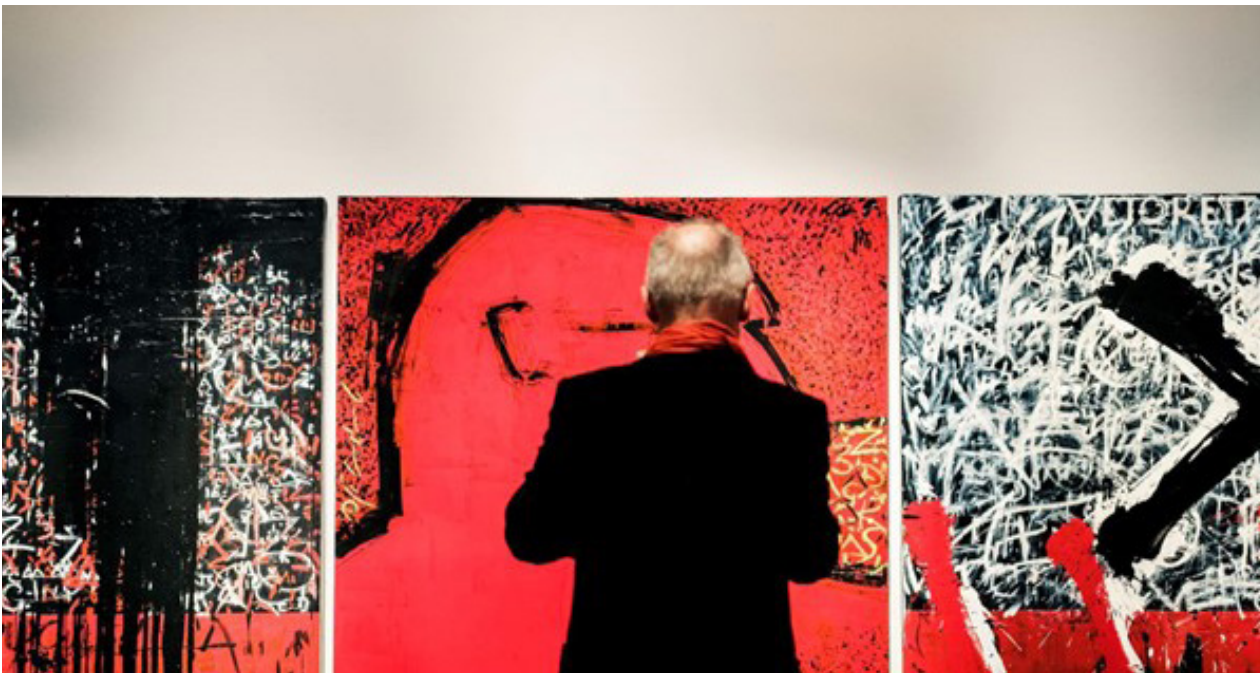
KEYWORDS

Decolonizing, narrative, pluriverse, curating, Sámi

Decolonizing curatorial ways: Curating from Sámi perspective

How can cultural and knowledge exchange between non-Sámi and Indigenous Sámi curators be useful for the enhancement of curatorial practice tools? This paper analyses the case project “Tool-kit: Curating Indigenous Art” from the perspective of the non-Sámi organizer of the project designing the educational program for the Sámi curators where the expectation lies within learning the Sámi ways of curatorial practice.

By Marina Griniuk



Ole Lislerud at the exhibition “The Sámi Pain–Language and Identity” at the Sámi Center for Contemporary Art, 2022.

Introduction

Curatorial practice can be defined as showing respect for artists and artworks, that is, the practice of dialogue and hospitality. In addition, curatorial practice may take many directions and perspectives. Within the present study, I address curatorial practice as the societal process of integration of the non-Sámi curators into Sámi cultural contexts and Sámi curators into more cross-national work. The research question I have

explored is as follows: How can cultural and knowledge exchange between non-Sámi and Indigenous Sámi curators be useful for the enhancement of curatorial practice tools? This paper analyses the case project “Tool-kit: Curating Indigenous Art” from the perspective of the non-Sámi organizer of the project designing the educational program for the Sámi curators, where the expectation lies within learning the Sámi ways of curatorial practice. Positioning one’s own perspective on curatorial prac-

tice and redefining the strategies of work with indigenous art and artists was at the core for me as the project organizer.

The project “Tool-kit: Curating Indigenous Art” (September–November, 2022) connected curatorial practices from the Indigenous perspective, but also from that of nonindigenous curators who were working with Indigenous artists from the edges of the world, hence moving them into the extended dialogue and knowledge

Sámi Dáiddaguovddáš / Samisk Senter for Samtidskunst / Sami Center for Contemporary Art

Tool-kit: Curating Indigenous Art

27.11.2022

Gunvor Guttorm
Melanie Sarantou

Image credit: Sherrie Jones

“Tool-kit: Curating indigenous art” prošeakta iskkada mánga perspektiivva mo kurateret dáiddalaš dutkan-prošeavttaid mat fátmastit eamiálbmótdáiddáriid. Skábmamánu 27. b. ovdanbidjá “Tool-kit: Curating indigenous art” prošeakta guoktealmolaš logaldallama.

10.00—Logaldallan prof. Gunvor Guttorm bokte
14.00—Logaldallan prof. Melanie Sarantou bokte

The “Tool-kit: Curating Indigenous Art” project investigates multiple perspectives on curating artistic research projects that involve indigenous artists. On 27th November 2022, “Tool-kit: Curating Indigenous Art” will present two public lectures.

10.00—Lecture by Prof. Gunvor Guttorm
14.00—Lecture by Prof. Melanie Sarantou

Prosjektet “Tool-kit: Curating indigenous art”, undersøker flere perspektiver på å kuratere kunstneriske forskningsprosjekter som involverer urfolkunstnere. Den 27. november presenterer prosjektet “Tool-kit: Curating indigenous art”, to offentlige foredrag.

10.00—Foredrag ved prof. Gunvor Guttorm
14.00—Foredrag ved prof. Melanie Sarantou



Above: From communication materials of the project “Tool-kit: Curating Indigenous Art,” curator talk with Zoe Black.

From communication materials of the project “Tool-kit: Curating Indigenous Art,” lecture by Dr. Melanie Sarantou and Dr. Gunvor Guttorm.



exchange. The project involved a group of Sámi curators: me, as the Lithuanian artist and curator and PI (Principal Investigator) of the current study; Indigenous curators from New Zealand; and curators and scholars working with Indigenous artists from Australia/Namibia and Sapmi. The project became an arena

for various perspectives on curating Indigenous art to unfold. It took the format of workshops and lectures, along with open discussions facilitated at the Sámi Center for Contemporary Art in Karasjok, Norway, in 2022. Here, curatorial practice is seen as always a collective practice because it unfolds through the

involvement of several individuals: curators and artists in dialogue aiming at the best possible representation of an artwork. Undoing the hierarchies between the artists and curators contributes to decolonizing curatorial ways.

The current paper has aimed to

bring together many ways of curating Indigenous art into the discussion, in this way acknowledging in the same way the Western perspective of curating Indigenous Sámi art and the Indigenous Sámi perspective. The project aimed to unfold both perspectives on the horizon of curatorial and research projects. By knowing both the perspectives and tools applied, the group of curators could refine their own skills as curators. Therefore, the term decolonizing can be seen as overlapping with the term pluriverse: because decolonizing is seen as allowing for many perspectives to unfold into the discussion and awareness over the curatorial positions. In addition, because the pluriverse allows for many worlds to coexist, the decolonized curatorial ways are not closing or neglecting any viewpoints, but rather are allowing for the wide scenery of curatorial ways to unfold. Hence, decolonizing is opening the ways of seeing the curatorial work not as overtaking or designing the master narrative within the artworks, but as being aware that many narratives can take place at the same time, simultaneously.

Curatorial practice can navigate through the public discussion, but it always needs to take a dialogical perspective in avoiding miscommunication of the artworks. The present study outlines the main tools in each of these positions in moving toward the coherence of communication of indigenous art to various audiences. The findings can be interesting and useful for artists and curators working in various institutional contexts, specifically those working with indigenous art.

Literature review and terminology

The theoretical background of this study is based on three main pillars: curating, decolonizing curatorial practices, and pluriverse. Curating, as explained by Lepecki (2017) is the action of care towards art object and the experience of its encounter. Institutionalized artistic work contains the conventional cycle of creation, curation, display, perception, and valuation that dominates artistic production (Lepecki, 2017). This disruption is linked to colonial logic,

and certain objects and actions resist this economy. Lepecki (2017) emphasizes the need to decolonize curatorial imagination and challenge the current systems of objects and subjects that maintain colonialist logic. A different logic of existence is required that establishes new relationships between subjects, objects, and matters and challenges the imperial and colonial monohumanist premises. Decolonizing the curatorial approach means rethinking how the relationship is built between the viewer and the artwork and how the meeting point can address multicultural viewers. In a decolonized curatorial logic, the focus should be on things and *vivências* instead of objects (Lepecki, 2017). The story told in the exhibition space by interconnecting artwork is opening for multiplicity of interpretations, and things, instead of objects, move the viewer's imagination and creativity. The pluriverse—or pluriversal thinking—refers to the idea that there are multiple ways of understanding and engaging with the world and that these different ways can coexist and inform one another (Escobar, 2021). This approach recognizes that there is not one single “right” way to view the world and that different ways of understanding can be valuable and valid in their own right. Anyway there are as well several challenges with pluriversal thinking: one potential challenge of pluriversal thinking is that it can be difficult to reconcile the different ways of understanding and engaging with the world. For example, if we accept that there are multiple valid ways of viewing reality, it may be challenging to determine which approach to take when faced with a problem or when trying to make a decision. Another challenge is that pluriversal thinking may be read as nihilistic, since it appears to reject the idea of one single truth.

In recent years, Nordic universities have collaborated in research on contemporary Sámi art. (Aamold et al., 2017; Danbolt, 2018; Lien, 2020; Thisted, 2012) and ethno-aesthetics (Arke,

2012). The growth of interest has been noticeable (Jørgensen, 2017), especially along the Sámi Pavilion in Venice Biennale (2022). There is a

noticeable discussion on the Venice Biennale (2022) pavilion being curated not by Sámi curators and, hence, not from the Indigenous perspective. Thus, the two perspectives—the Indigenous Sámi and non indigenous Western—seem to conflict. This means that there is a need to address the framework of pluriverse, as defined by Escobar (2021)—the world where many worlds can co-exist, in this way Indigenous ways of curating and Western ways of curating, by unfolding the richness of the landscape.

Artists originating from Sapmi aesthetically approach the themes of the past, identity, and prohibition to use their own language and culture, traditions, and land of their ancestors, along with the oppression from colonizers, in the context of opening the visual discussion about colonialism (Jørgensen, 2017) and Othering (Jensen, 2011). In the artistic production, the keyword of decolonizing means opening a space where history can be discussed and where the historical image can be placed along with the contemporary one in a juxtaposition to tell one story. In this way, such artworks destabilise the hierarchy of master narrative and peripheral narrative, placing both narratives alongside each other. The theory of master and counter-narratives (Bamberg & Wipff, 2021) foregrounds the hierarchy and contest between the narratives. I suggest that the dichotomy between master and counter-narratives should be replaced by the individual, alternative, and countering narratives unfolding in parallel, which calls for awareness of the Sámi curatorial perspective, nonindigenous curatorial perspective, posthuman curatorial perspective, and all the other perspectives to unfold. Curators must be aware of their choices and perspectives within curatorial ways. In the present paper, I interconnect the theory of master and counter-narratives with decolonizing and pluriverse while suggesting that true decolonizing, as an acknowledgment of all the narratives, can come with a pluriversal take of all the worlds coexisting in parallel. This was the theoretical framework for building the educational content within the project “Tool-kit: Curating Indigenous Art” in

October–November 2022 (see Image 1 and Image 2) and for bringing in a group of Sámi curators, Sámi scholars, Indigenous curators and nonindigenous scholars and curators working with indigenous artists together in one space of discourse.

In addition to formal lectures, Prof. Ole Lislerud shared his perspective as an international artist working with the theme of Sapmi in the exhibition “The SámiPain” at the Sámi Center for Contemporary Art. (see Image 4). Clearly seeing the parallels with Apartheid, which he witnessed while living in South Africa, he saw his creative work as a call for equality and decolonial thinking.

Furthermore, the curators experienced an art-walk in the cityscape of Karasjok. Through this event, the idea was to bring back live storytelling of the sculptures in the city’s various public spaces. This explored the connectedness of the artworks to nature and the historical facts connected to the cityscape of Karasjok. As the weather conditions allowed, with the outdoor temperature being -10 Celsius, such a walk could only take one hour. The matter of experiencing the severe Arctic nature while seeing artworks and talking about history was at the core of this novel experience.

As presented above, the importance of the project “Tool-kit: Curating Indigenous Art” was to bring many perspectives together into the pluriversal space of discussion. Being non-Sami but Lithuanian, my perspective was of the nonindigenous artist and curator organizing and leading the project, and this impacted the project being oriented toward a pluriverse, not only the Sámi curatorial and research community.

Analysis

The project “Tool-kit: Curating Indigenous Art” is analyzed from the threefold perspective, answering the following questions: How does such a project contribute to decolonizing curatorial methods? How can it contribute to the nonhierarchy of the project’s narratives? How does the pluriversal approach to curating indigenous art unfold?

Decolonizing curatorial ways

In Nordic art academies and universities, teaching programs have broadly been built upon theories and cases representing artists from the Global North. In my studies, in many art academies in the period 2012–2020, including Jutland Art Academy, Malmø Art Academy, the Royal Academy of Arts in Copenhagen and Konstfack, only in the latter were indigenous narratives involved, in printmaking classes by the Sámi artist Tomas Colbengtson. In a sense, the nongraduate program in curating Sámi art from the Sámi perspective in 2022 fed into the part-time program project “Tool-kit: Curating Indigenous Art” as a pre-study for getting an overview of what such a program, if included into the art academy curriculum, could be. Decolonizing curating first spotlighted the necessity of having multi-perspective knowledge while working with Indigenous art, moving the program to being the first step toward flipping the scenery around in the aim of having equality within the narratives, not domination of the Western narratives of curatorial history and contemporary ones. This would call for detachment from the knowledge we have and listening to the particular cases of work as presented by the invited scholars while finding space for learning, as well as for critique of the projects being discussed. In a way, this makes an environment of equality between the learners and presenters, and the space becomes a dynamic knowledge exchange arena. This idea reflects Rancièrè’s (1991) argument for a more equality-based approach to education, where the teacher’s role is to facilitate the student’s learning and to spotlight that the student’s own knowledge and experience are of value. Hence, in the process of decolonization, there was a clear environment of unlearning, accepting all the historical backgrounds as the past, and building on the fresh thoughts brought about by the presenting individuals. We cannot undo the history, but maybe we can speed up the processes in educational institutions by shaking up the backgrounds for artistic learning. In a way, what is done by the Sámi Pavilion (2022) in Venice

Biennale. Visitors started to look up the Arctic North and Sapmi when discussing contemporary art. The decolonization of curatorial ways was not aimed to close any avenues but to expand and understand that curating can happen also in the different perspective, allowing this perspective to take position alongside Western institutional ways. So decolonizing, in this sense, is the decolonizing of one’s own mind and understanding the broadness of the curatorial field.

Nonhierarchy of the narratives

Similarly, when discussing these narratives, I refer back to my learning experience at various art academies. To draw the scenery of the nonhierarchy of the narratives, various individual stories of curating and research were included by those individual voices and by the experience of the participating curator group; hence, it was possible to draw the outlines of what can be seen as an ethical and coherent way of curating. For example, the poster, which was designed for the Ole Lislerud exhibition, was deeply discussed (see Image 5).

The poster contained racist expressions used throughout history connected to the Sámi people and people in South Africa. The poster was placed in various places in Karasjok to promote the exhibition, and because the Sámi Center for Contemporary Art is on the other side of the road from the Karasjok church, people going to the church could not avoid seeing the poster belonging to the exhibition. Those two target audiences were very different, and for people who did not have enough knowledge about contemporary art and this particular exhibition, the poster could be seen as offensive. Maybe this would invite those people into the exhibition and would contribute to the knowledge that contemporary art can be a tool to shape the dialogue and societal discourse. These two narratives have flowed in parallel, as communicated by one poster. This particular case of discussion about the many narratives promoted by one poster was an example of many truths coming into the same educational space, and



The images in the background were used for the exhibition poster.

each of these truths was of great value.

Despite the potential benefits of using controversial or provocative artwork as a means of promoting dialogue and societal discourse, there can also be risks involved. In the case of the poster containing racist expressions, it was placed in a location where it was likely to be seen by a diverse range of people, including those who may not have sufficient knowledge of contemporary art or the exhibition. For some, the poster may have been offensive or triggering, and it is not clear whether it would have been effective in promoting education or understanding in all cases. This raises the question of how to balance the need to promote diverse narratives and the ways of telling stories with the need to consider the potential impact on different audiences. Ultimately, it may be necessary to carefully consider the specific context and audience when deciding how to present and discuss controversial or provocative artwork.

This conversation highlights the complexity of decolonizing curatorial practices and the importance of considering the impact of different

ways of understanding and engaging with the world.

Pluriversal takes on curating Indigenous art

Escobar (2020) noted that works within a pluriverse fit many worlds and truths into the same space. In the project “Tool-kit: Curating Indigenous Art,” the aim was to open the discussion on what perspectives in curating Indigenous art can be, rather than closing the discussion only on the Sámi perspective. The limitation of this is that we are still in the process of defining the Sámi ways of curating, but maybe, while putting together various perspectives, the definition can be made clearer as well. Instead of being a comparative study, it became one of unfolding the scenery, seeing the many paths possible to take and many potential actors to co-operate and work with.

By embracing pluriversal thinking, we can create a more inclusive and dynamic environment for understanding and engaging with Indigenous art. However, there is a potential risk of two or more different perspectives colliding or being opposed. This is particularly relevant in the space of spectatorship, where

diverse backgrounds and experiences converge, resulting in conflicting interpretations of the same artwork. Similarly, in educational settings, where multiple experiences converge, it is important to keep the discussion space open rather than closing it. This requires skilled moderation or facilitation by the moderator or facilitator. Pluriversal thinking needs to be carefully navigated in public spaces and requires thoughtful moderation or facilitation in pedagogical and communication contexts.

The process of decolonization in the art world is ongoing and complex, involving a range of approaches and perspectives. One aspect of this process is the incorporation of pluriversal thinking, or the idea that there are multiple, valid ways of understanding the world. This approach can help promote greater inclusivity and respect within the art world while also leading to more innovative and creative solutions to problems.

However, it is important to approach pluriversal thinking with an open and critical mindset, and to consider the potential costs and implications for our understanding of the nature of reality. Sámi art and culture can be interpreted as pluriversal due to the interdisciplinary nature of artistic practices: often, practitioners are involved in multiple disciplines such as visual art, literature, music, choreography, and more. Therefore, if a creative individual identifies as a visual artist, it does not exclude identification as a writer or choreographer, for example. Additionally, Sámi art is often manifested through the national identity and belonging of the creators, as well as their political standpoint. The complexity of these artworks needs to be effectively communicated to both local and multicultural audiences, encouraging a representative art world that better reflects the diversity of experiences and perspectives that exist within society. One can say that such a multidisciplinary approach contrasts the Nordic art education and art funding system, since the artistic work is often interpreted by institutions as discipline-based.

Findings

The main findings of the project are listed in Table 1.

Decolonizing	Nonhierarchy of narratives	Pluriverse
<p>Involvement of Sámi and non-Sámi curators and scholars working with Indigenous art</p>	<p>Language use and teaching in language, but also in English for outreach to local and global teachers, learners and audiences</p>	<p>Many narratives are equal in the same time, in the same space</p>
<p>Discussions toward equality of narratives</p>	<p>Active listening and involvement of all experiences and knowledge within the group</p>	<p>Openness for new narratives to arrive</p>
<p>Awareness over the necessity of change for educational programs in art academies and universities—more equality between the Western and Indigenous learning materials</p>	<p>The presenters are the teachers and learners; all the discussion takes a nonhierarchical shape within the group</p>	<p>Openness to the dialogue with the new actors and communities</p>
<p>Necessity of establishing curatorial programs, graduate and nongraduate. Centered around multiple perspectives on curating Indigenous art</p>	<p>Focus on ethical curating of Indigenous art, and ethical production of artistic content around Indigenous themes, be it from the Sámi or non-Sámi perspective</p>	<p>Western perspective on curating does not exclude Indigenous perspective on curating. Indigenous perspective on curating does not exclude the Western perspective on curating. The pluriverse is the world where many worlds co-exist and are equal. Equal here is understood as having the same value. Perception of value builds on equality of value.</p>

Table 1. Main findings of the study.

These findings are directed toward more openness and mutual understanding between the indigenous and nonindigenous communities; they promote greater visibility of the issues within Indigenous communities. The communicators of those issues and the aesthetic produc-

tions should be Indigenous artists and curators but also the curators and artists without indigenous backgrounds who have sufficient knowledge and interest in working with Indigenous communities and Indigenous themes. Ethics, accuracy, and care are the key issues in both cases.

Discussion

We can ask if this way was correct to go about the project or if Sámi curatorial ways should have been defined only within the Sámi artistic community. Can and should non-Sámi curators work with Sámi art, or myself, as a nonindigenous researcher working with the theme

of curating Indigenous art? Do non-Sámi artists have the right to work with Sámi themes? These questions are all directed at closing back on what was attempted to open by the project “Tool-kit: Curating Indigenous Art.” If Sámi curatorial ways are to be defined only within Sámi or only within the Indigenous community, we are coming back into one master narrative, now the Indigenous master narrative. As a curator and researcher, I am convinced that the better ways of understanding each other—non-othering and instead being together—is having many narratives in parallel, that is, having a pluriversal approach to art and curating. This would lead to the next question: if the program of Indigenous curating or curating Indigenous art would open at any university of art academy, much like the program of Indigenous Journalism at Sámi University of Applied Sciences, would such a program be taught only in Sámi and only for Sámi curators? This question is even more uneasy. During the “Tool-kit: Curating Indigenous Art” program, all the groups communicated in the Sámi language. Part of the lectures were in English, and all the communication with me was in English. Is this the way to teach curating? Are these the languages to use? The Sámi community is a small one, and the necessity of using the Sámi language is at the core, but English is the language of outreach to many communities globally.

One potential solution to this issue could be to offer the program in both Sámi and English or to provide language support for those who may be more comfortable using one language over the other. This could involve offering translation services or providing materials in multiple languages. Another option could be to focus on developing curricula that are inclusive and relevant to a range of indigenous communities rather than targeting the program specifically to Sámi curators. By considering the needs and experiences of a diverse range of communities, the program could be more inclusive and relevant to a wider audience. Ultimately, the approach taken will depend on the specific goals and needs of the program, as well as the

resources and expertise available. It will be important to carefully consider these factors to create a program that is effective, inclusive, and respectful of the diverse communities it serves.

The importance of language in the process of decolonization and in the promotion of pluriversal thinking cannot be overstated. Language is a keyway in which we understand and communicate with the world, and the use of certain languages can have significant cultural and political implications. For Indigenous communities, the use of their own languages can be a way of reclaiming and valuing their cultural heritage and traditions while also being a means of resistance against assimilation and oppression. At the same time, the use of English and other global languages can provide a means of reaching a wider audience and fostering a greater understanding and exchange between different communities.

As such, it is important to consider the role of language in the process of decolonization and the promotion of pluriversal thinking. This may involve finding ways to incorporate and value Indigenous languages while also recognizing the importance of global languages in fostering greater understanding and exchange. By carefully considering the role of language in these processes, we can work toward creating a more inclusive and respectful art world that can better reflect the diversity of experiences and perspectives that exist within society. So the answer to many questions and thoughts leads to the triangle of decolonization, nonhierarchy of narratives and pluriverse, at least for now, for the project “Tool-kit: Curating Indigenous Art.”

Conclusion

One of the goals of decolonizing curatorial methods is to promote greater equality and inclusivity within the art world. By acknowledging and valuing different perspectives and ways of understanding, we can create a more diverse and representative environment. This can be especially important for Indigenous

communities, whose art and ways of understanding the world may have been marginalized or overlooked in the past. By rethinking the system of value as the perception of value, we can work towards lessening and eventually erasing the barriers between what is currently considered mainstream and marginalized. This approach can contribute to a more equitable and inclusive society over time.

However, it is important to approach the process of decolonization with care and consideration. This can involve actively seeking out diverse voices and perspectives, as well as being open to criticism and self-reflection. It may also involve acknowledging and addressing the ways in which one's own background and experiences may have shaped one's understanding of the world. By approaching decolonization in this way, we can work toward creating a more inclusive and representative art world that can better reflect the diversity of experiences and perspectives that exist within society.

Curatorial practice as the practice of dialogue and hospitality needs awareness of many ways to curate and communicate the artworks to audiences. The present study has been based on the case of the nongraduate program for Sámi curators, in particular the part of the program designed over October–November 2022. The content of the study program focused on curating research from the Sámi perspective, but also from the perspective of nonindigenous curators and researchers working with Indigenous artists. The value of the projects was in acknowledging the necessity to decolonize the curatorial ways and unfold the curatorial practice in the threefold perspective: decolonization, nonhierarchy of narratives, and the pluriverse. The future aim of the project is to create knowledge that would define what is curating from the Sámi perspective and how such curating can benefit the artistic experiences of the various audiences, along with examining the accuracy of storytelling within the artworks of Indigenous artists.

One of the key challenges in the

process of decolonizing curatorial practices is the need to consider multiple perspectives and experiences. This can involve acknowledging and addressing the ways in which dominant narratives and practices may have marginalized or excluded certain communities while working to create a more inclusive and equitable environment. Pluriversal thinking, or the idea that there are multiple valid ways of understanding the world, can be an important aspect of this process because it allows for the consideration of multiple viewpoints and can foster greater understanding and respect between different communities.

In the case of the study program for Sámi curators, the focus on decolonization, the nonhierarchy of narratives, and pluriversal thinking was intended to create a more inclusive and representative environment for the discussion of curation and the art world more broadly. By considering these issues, the program aimed to create knowledge that could help define what curation looks like from a Sámi perspective and how it can enhance the artistic experiences of various audiences, as well as the authenticity of storytelling within

the artworks of Indigenous artists. By continuing to explore these ideas and work toward creating a more inclusive and representative art world, we can move toward a more equitable and understanding society.

One of the challenges of the program was finding ways to incorporate multiple perspectives and ways of understanding within a single space. This involved finding ways to balance the importance of the Sámi language and culture with the need for global outreach and understanding. It also involved acknowledging the diverse experiences and backgrounds of the participants while working to create an environment of mutual respect and dialogue.

Another challenge was the need to decolonize traditional ways of understanding and curating art. This process involved unlearning and letting go of preconceived notions while being open to new and diverse perspectives. It also involved acknowledging the ways in which our own backgrounds and experiences may have shaped our understanding of the world, hence being open to critique and self-reflection.

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