

# **SPACES OF POSSIBILITY**

**Exhibition catalogue**

**9 - 11 June 2021 • Brussels (Belgium)**





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The exhibition Spaces of Possibility was organized by the RECOMS project which is financed by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 765389.

# WELCOME

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*Dear Reader,*

As part of the **Spaces of Possibility confex**, which merges a conference and exhibition into a singular event, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie (MSCA) Innovative Training Network RECOMS put together an interactive exhibition intended to stimulate **dialogue and reflection** about resilience and resourcefulness of communities in times of social and environmental uncertainty.

The goal was to put the spotlight on **community-driven transformation** and to **inspire the local neighbourhood** as well as **policy decision-makers and academia**.

The exhibition took place from the 7th until the 11th of June 2021 in the little greenhouse **Parckfarm**, situated in the Thurn and Taxis park in Brussels (Belgium).

For those that missed out on the event, this exhibition catalogue provides an **anthology of the stories** that were told and the objects that were exhibited.

It also explains the **design** of the exhibition, it sketches the **atmosphere** that was created and showcases the **local aspirations** on resilience and resourcefulness that were collected during the event.

What is more, this exhibition catalogue aims to **inspire** other researchers and practitioners that want to experiment with exhibitions.

For this reason, it includes a sneak peek into the **creative process** and **clarifies key decisions** in terms of design, location and other important parameters.

Thus, the exhibition catalogue summarizes the lessons learned about **setting up an exhibition within a research project**.

We hope to trigger your curiousness about the presence of Spaces of Possibility and to promote your eagerness to experiment with exhibitions.

Have fun!

*Kind regards,*

*The Spaces of Possibility team*

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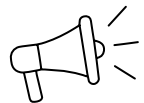


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# HOW EXHIBITION MAKING ENLIGHTENS RESEARCH

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**By dr. Nina Möllers**

[BIOTOPIA – Naturkundemuseum Bayern]

Congratulations! You've made the first step. By clicking on this online document, your curiosity has taken the better part of you. You're interested in a project that could've been yours and maybe it should have. But don't worry, it's not too late! You still have the chance to discover the transformative power of exhibition making for your research.

Big words, you may say. But what if they were true? What if you could use exhibitions as a research tool to further not just your own research, but expand it into new realms and new collaborations?

At first sight, this proposition may seem highly unlikely. Most often, when we think about exhibitions in connection to academic research, we picture collection-based exhibits: long rows of natural specimens for example that give biologists an accelerated heartbeat, but not necessarily the broader public. Or impressive machines in a museum of technology that leave us awe-inspired, but also strangely untouched.

Even historical exhibitions, filled with cultural artifacts seldom lead us to think that we as researchers could add value to our research if we turned it into an exhibition for the public.

And yet, I would challenge you to think that they do. Of course, not every research lends itself equally well towards being transformed into an exhibition. Instead, your guideline should always be this simple, but true fact: Exhibitions are exhibitions. They are not a film or an app. Most importantly, they are not a talk or a book.

Using material objects of manifold origins, composition and character and orchestrating them together with exhibition tools such as positioning, lighting, graphics, sound and color, exhibitions become three-dimensional expressions that create a truly "multi-media" experience (even if no media stations are involved).

Situated in a designed spatial arrangement, exhibitions make their arguments in space. By doing so, they create a narrative that is not linear, but synchronous and that is usually open in perception, offering a broad audience with diverse backgrounds and a range of knowledge an engaging opportunity to dive into a topic.

Quite some potential in exhibitions, if you ask me. Now you may say that it's not new to present the outcomes and findings of particular research in exhibitions. In fact, that's what every exhibition strives to do.



Curators and collection conservators are after all researchers who are often working meticulously on presenting the newest findings on the dinosaurs or Cézanne's color scheme or Curie's experiments to an inquisitive audience. But exhibitions can be more than passive showcases of research. They can be active co-creators of knowledge and transform the researchers' way of thinking, speaking and acting on their research.

Let me give you four thoughts on this idea:

1|

Firstly, **communicating your own research through exhibition tools** leads to more clarity and new insights. Trying to find objects – be they original artifacts, media material or graphics – and arranging them in space or conceptualizing a media station and developing an exhibition language together with designers requires researchers to constantly rethink their material and argument, to frame it in new ways that can be understood by non-experts, to be clear and brief. In short: to make it accessible and exciting at the same time! It requires them to turn into a curator and as such embody the prime curatorial rule: show, don't tell! When successful, researchers get the benefit of seeing and feeling the relevance of their work in a new light.

2|

Secondly and related to this, exhibitions train our **science and research communication skills**. In view of global challenges such as climate change, loss of biodiversity and pandemics as well as new media channels, growing science skepticism and fake news, it is more important than ever that scientists reach out to the people offering honest and engaging opportunities for dialog about their research including its procedural character, possible setbacks, failures and complexities. Because after all, if researchers don't do it, who will?

3|

Thirdly, exhibitions offer **opportunities for further research, new projects and collaborations** within and beyond traditional academia. Meeting and working with colleagues from other disciplines with whom you would most likely not come together to write a paper is a day-to-day reality in exhibition-making. Often this leads to **new perspectives and innovative ideas** about transdisciplinary projects, not just across academic disciplines, but also into the realm of the arts and design or civil activism. Exhibitions then have the potential to become not just disseminators of knowledge in a limited one-way system, but actually become **generators of knowledge**.

They no longer just talk to their visitors about the research, but visitors talk back. Such a multi-directional conversation not only heightens the public's understanding of research, but also feeds back into the academic community and sets research in a much-needed social and cultural context.

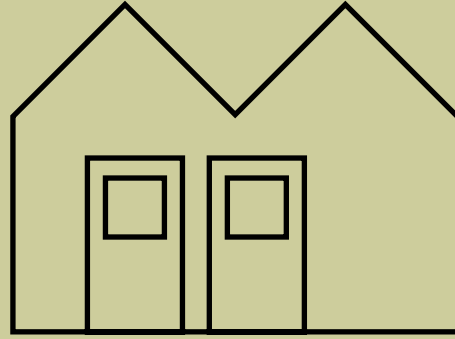
## 4|

Fourthly, exhibitions can be **objects of research themselves**. As truly interactive formats enjoyed by a generally broad audience, exhibitions can be used for diverse reception and social science research projects. Studying how exhibitions disseminate knowledge, how different social groups react to content or how citizen science fit into modern knowledge societies are just a few examples of possible angles to take on this.

Exhibitions are indeed **spaces of possibility for researchers**. They can be innovative, dialogic, controversial and playful. They can be almost anything if we dare to think freely. So ask not what you can do for your exhibition, ask what your exhibition can do for you and enjoy the freedom they give you as researcher-curator.

*Nina*





— SECTION 1 —

# **Spaces of Possibility**

# SPACES OF POSSIBILITY. 7-12 JUNE '21

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**By Imogen Humphris**

[University of Groningen]

**Sofia De la Rosa Solano**

[Coventry University and University of Groningen]

**Viola Hakkarainen**

[LUKE]

**Nohemi Ramirez Aranda**

[ILVO and Ghent University]

The exhibition 'Spaces of Possibility: communities and places in times of social and environmental uncertainty' was held from the 7th to the 12th of June 2021 at Parckfarm in Brussels (Belgium).

This exhibition was part of a confex, a combination of a conference and an exhibition, that had the same name and that focused on the same topic.

The recent global events show the urgent need for transforming humanity's relationship with the environment. Now or never, changes in the ways we live, interact, connect and think about the world including other humans and nature, are needed.

Our message is that we can achieve these changes from the places and communities we are part of. At the small scale, we see the growth of various seeds of ideas and initiatives that can help us to respond to social and environmental uncertainty. They form the spaces of possibility from where new paths emerge through local initiatives and transformations of our daily practices.

In this exhibition, we highlighted communities across Europe, America and Asia and their unique challenges and efforts to achieve more just and sustainable futures.

The exhibition was organized under three main themes which all offer a lens to examine spaces of possibility.

These themes are:

**Systems & Structures**

**Representation & Justice**

**Material places & Embodied practices.**

Through stories and examples shared by many of the early career researchers involved in RECOMS, we offered glimpses of both achievements and losses, and embraced what we have while underlining what is still needed.

The content presented in this exhibition could only paint a fraction of the picture, while the rest was in the visitor.

We asked:

- What is your history and future?
- What is your space of possibility?



Copyright: Jente Van Loven

## SYSTEMS & STRUCTURES

Through this cross-cutting sub-theme we showed how the systems and structures, represented for example in municipalities or governments, can be slow to respond to the rapidly changing needs of neighbourhoods and communities and the urgency of transforming our lives to more sustainable ones.

Local and small-scale initiatives (such as community gardens, plant nurseries, clean-ups) can play a key role in stimulating the changes needed at the systemic and structural scales.

In this section we explored questions such as:

- How do active citizen groups navigate and negotiate with the existing bureaucratic systems?
- How far do they need to play along the rules in the time of environmental crisis?

## REPRESENTATION & JUSTICE

Environmental degradation and increasing inequality go hand in hand in the world, where a small minority have gained fortunes at the cost of other humans and nature. Representation and justice have growing importance in the formation of more sustainable futures.

Justice allows people to recognize and understand the different starting points and opportunities of individuals and communities. It also highlights the need for including humans and non-humans in shaping fair futures. Representation is concerned with the voices that are not being heard in decision making. It also creates the need for diverse and inclusive narratives that challenge the idea of “one size fits all” which overlooks the specific characteristics of people and places.

In this section, we set out to seek answers to questions such as:

- Whose voices and views shape environmental decision-making?
- How do we increase the diversity of perspectives in decision-making and in action towards sustainability?

## MATERIAL PLACES & EMBODIED PRACTICES

The discussions around equality, fairness, environment and society can easily remain in highly abstract academic spheres. However, these events are happening in daily actions of adaptation and transformation. There are “hidden jewels” that exemplify the practical work done in many places towards more sustainable communities. These actions take place in familiar locations such as in parks, streets, urban waterways, conservation areas, farms and many other everyday spaces.

In this section, we hoped to reflect upon the places and practices we believe are creating spaces of possibilities. Here, we offered an invitation to visitors to reflect on questions such as:

- How do I initiate change?
- In which kinds of places am I motivated to take action?

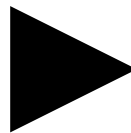






Watch the short video about 'What is Spaces of Possibility?'

*Made by Ben Cook.*



# MULTI-HEADED MONSTER

*The municipality is a multi-headed monster,  
you never know which head you are talking to.*

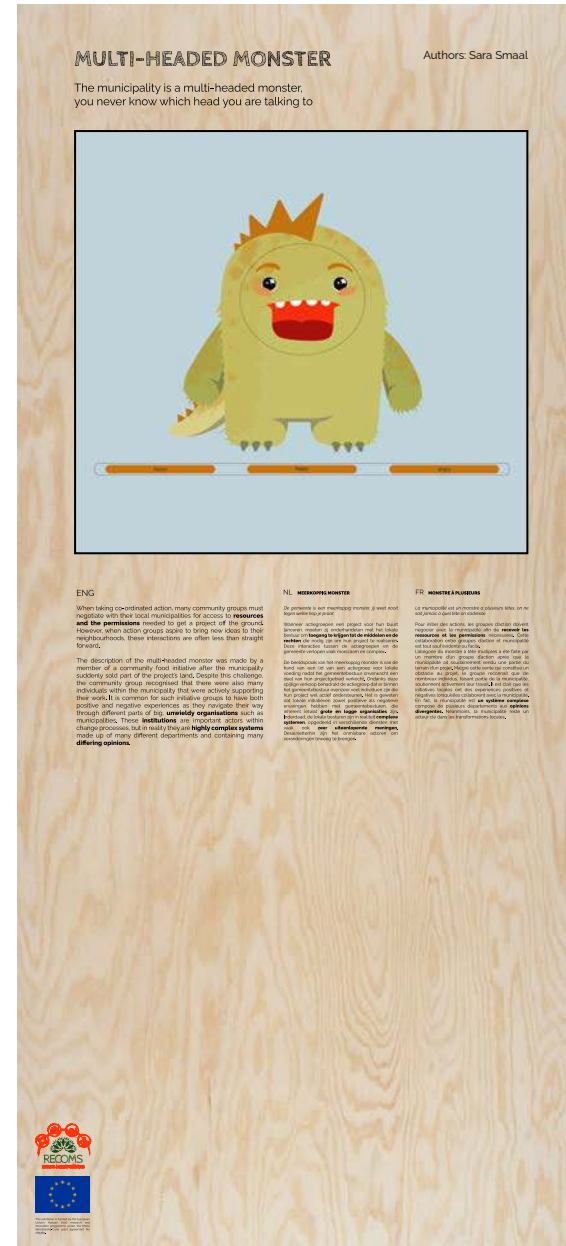
**Contribution by Sara Smaal**  
[ILVO and Ghent University]

When taking co-ordinated action, many community groups must negotiate with their local municipalities for the access to **resources** and **permissions** needed to get a project off the ground. However, when action groups aspire to bring new ideas to their neighbourhoods, these interactions are often not usually straight forward.

The description of the multi-headed monster was made by a member of a community food initiative after the municipality suddenly sold part of the project's land. Despite this challenge, the community group recognised that there were also many individuals within the municipality that were actively supporting their work.

It is common for such initiative groups to have both positive and negative experiences as they navigate their way through different parts of big, **unwieldy organisations** such as municipalities.

These **institutions** are important actors within change processes, but in reality they are **highly complex systems** made up of many different departments and containing many **differing opinions**.



happy



bored

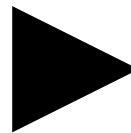


angry



Watch the short video about the Multi-headed Monster.

*Made by Ben Cook.*



# BEFORE JUSTICE

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*What we do not see  
because of the 'unspectacular'?*

## Contribution by Jingjing Guo

[University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences,  
Vienna (BOKU)]

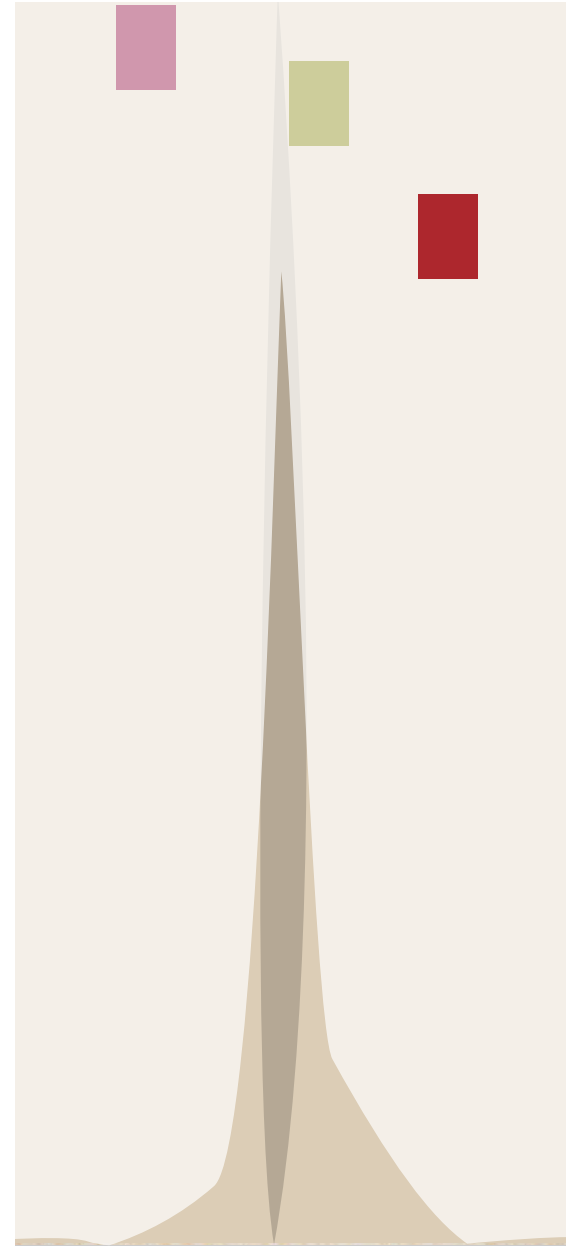
## Artwork by Jingjing Guo and Ben Cook

[The 1201 Project]

What do we miss when we are preoccupied with the spectacular? The striking, dramatic, unusual and special are the things that most commonly catch and hold onto our **attention**. What might we see if we looked into the **unspectacular** – the mundane and unrefined - instead?

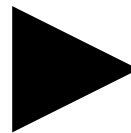
This piece is an invitation for us to contemplate just that. It is a space for us to suspend our (often well-meaning) judgements in the name of **justice**.

Through engaging with light and its lacking; sound and its absence; the stillness in an image of a **mundane scene** in an elderly Chinese rural woman's everyday life; and uttered, swallowed and repeated words in narration, the exhibition piece hopes to create a disorienting experience to trigger reflections on the meanings and manifestations of **invisibility** – at home or in fields afar.



Watch the short video about Before Justice.

*Made by Ben Cook.*



# LOCH ABSENCE

*Perhaps we cannot always  
hear every voice in our community  
but we can find traces that show us who is missing.*

**Contribution and artwork by Imogen Humphris**  
[University of Groningen]

What does it mean to include everybody? When we try to **represent** a place, even when we create space for those who are usually left out, it is impossible to fully include every voice. Some people might be too busy making ends meet, some people have no fixed address, and of course many are no longer alive with us.

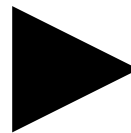
However, even when we cannot speak directly with these people, we can often find **traces** that tell us who these **missing** people might be. Perhaps they left something behind or others have **mentioned their name**.

This illustration is a record of the many groups and individuals that I could not speak with during a community research project in Glasgow, Scotland. Their **voices were absent** from the research, but I felt a responsibility to create a place for them in my records.



Watch the short video about Loch Absence.

*Made by Ben Cook.*



# ART, SENSES AND FARMING

*Our senses and bodies as gateways  
to deeply understanding the world.*

## Contribution Natalie Leung

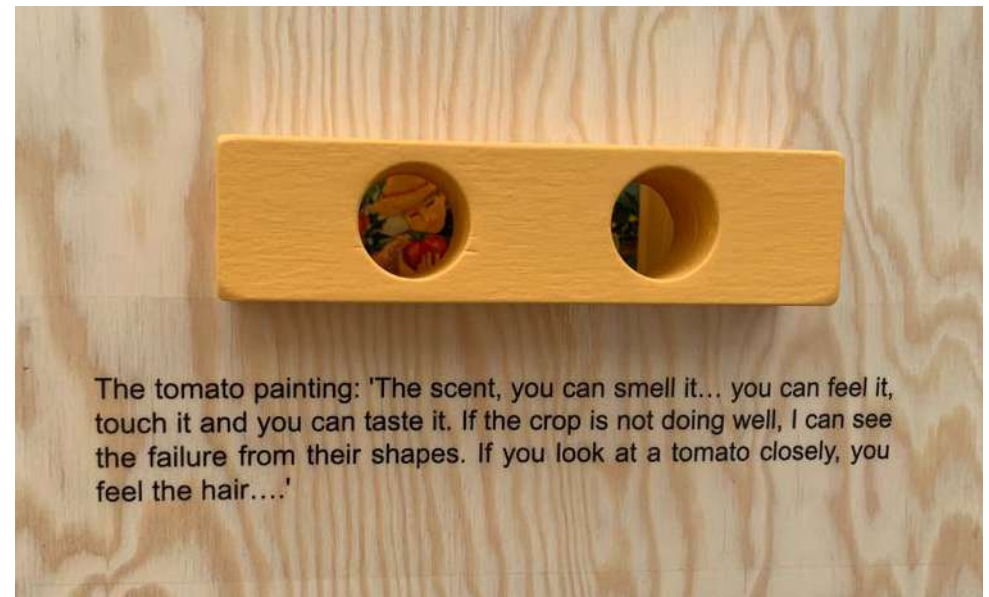
[University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU)]

## Artwork by Megumi Hirose

We tend to rely heavily on words to identify, describe and investigate the world around us. For farmers, a great deal of their farming knowledge is obtained not from words but from **interacting with non-humans** in their environments; engaging with soil, plants and animals with their **body**.

Through sensuous, embodied engagements like **touching, observing, and feeling** the plants and soil, farmers make better sense of the needs of them, and develop practices that are better suited to local agro-ecosystems. These embodied, affective interactions between farmers and non-humans are crucial to understand why some farmers transform to more environmentally sustainable farming practices. However, the interactions cannot be fully captured in words.

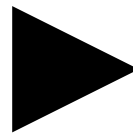
These three paintings were created to visualize the **sensitive interactions** of Japanese farmers with their plants and their **embodied knowledge** as expressed in interviews.



The tomato painting: 'The scent, you can smell it... you can feel it, touch it and you can taste it. If the crop is not doing well, I can see the failure from their shapes. If you look at a tomato closely, you feel the hair....'

Watch the short video about Art, Senses and Farming.

*Made by Ben Cook.*





# BIKE PUZZLES

*A global movement bigger than the sum of its parts.*

## Contribution Talitta Reitz

[Rachel Carson Center and LMU Munich]

**The bicycle:** since its conception, it has provided both urban and rural communities around the world with a democratic, healthy, and cheap form of transport that offers a sustainable alternative for mobility.

But cycling is as much about **culture** as it is about a steel frame and two wheels. Just as bicycles are made of many components, the cycling communities are formed by individual **experiences and stories** that, together, form a global movement.

This research looks into important moments in the history of cycling that have influenced our individual and collective **relationships** with the bicycle. Many of these have started locally, with one individual or group **practicing** in a particular **place**, changing behaviours and attitudes that eventually **rippled out** across the world.

Each of the bicycle parts shown here represents one story: scan the QR code to discover them.

How do these stories resonate with you and your personal experiences with bicycles?



### 6. Saddle

Dandy horse's saddle - The bicycle as we know it today results of many inventions and design improvements made by different people. The first model - popularly named "dandy horse" - had little more in common with today's bicycle than two wheels and a rudimentary saddle.

### 7. Chain

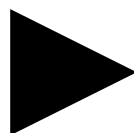
Chain Reaction - The chain transmission system allowed for the replacement of the problematic high-wheelers by the convenient safety bicycle. This was probably the most impactful technological improvement in making cycling more accessible and worldwide popular.

### 1. Flowers

A cyclist was struck here. Ghost bicycles are road memorials dedicated to cyclists killed in traffic accidents. They are also a worldwide practice of protest for safer streets.

Watch the short video about Bike Puzzles.

*Made by Ben Cook.*



# BREADCRUMBS

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Along with the fore-mentioned art installations, the Spaces of Possibility exhibition included small-scale additions to showcase the work of other RECOMS fellows. These small extras were conceived as breadcrumbs and they were originally meant to accompany the visitors along their way from the conference to the exhibition site.

As the conference moved to an online setting, due to the COVID 19 pandemic, these playful fragments were integrated within the exhibition site itself.

One such breadcrumb was 'We Love Parckfarm', a local version of the online mapping tool My Green Place that has been developed by RECOMS fellow Nohemi Ramirez Aranda.

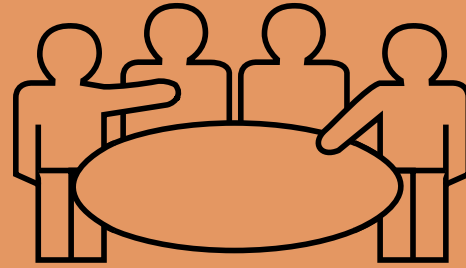
Stickers and coasters invited the visitors of the exhibition to visit the site and map their favourite spot in the Thurn & Taxis park.











## — SECTION 2 —

# **Interaction and participation at the SoP exhibition**

# ENTRY POINTS TO SPACES OF POSSIBILITY

As Nina Möllers summarizes in the intro: *“Exhibitions are exhibitions. They are not a film or an app. Most importantly, they are not a talk or a book.”*

Their audience is highly divergent and, in addition, each and every visitor explores the exhibition on his/her/their own rhythm and in his/her/their order. Likewise, the aim of Spaces of Possibility was to reach a wide range of visitors: researchers, planning-practitioners, community-builders, policy-makers, local inhabitants as well as the incidental passer-by. Rather than producing a sequencing story, the Spaces of Possibility was a collection of objects and installations that each triggered a different sense and communicated its' story in its' own way. This abundance of entry points into the exhibition was essential to engage with all target audiences.

A three-sided kiosk in front of the Parckfarm signposted the exhibition and generated curiosity with the people in the park. Each side of the kiosk targeted a different type of visitor. A text about Spaces of Possibility introduced visitors that are eager to read to the exhibition. Meanwhile, a large game attracted children to the event and taught them about cooperation as they had to work together to finish the game. Lastly, the third side awoke people's creativity as a big role of paper invited visitors to sketch their ideal world or let it be drawn by an illustrator.

The stories about community-driven transformations were showcased in the Parckfarm's greenhouse. Here, a translucent curtain was put up in order to filter the outside world and to create a sacral space. The stories were represented on wooden

standards in line with the curtain. Each story conveyed its' message in its' own way.

While the stories Loch Absence and Multi-headed Monster required visitor to use their **hands and eyes**, the story Before Justice invited them to **listen**.



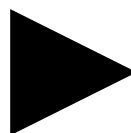






Watch the short video about the design of the exhibition.

*Made by Ben Cook.*



# 'HALF THE STORY'

Since Spaces of Possibility puts the spotlights on **community-driven transformations**, the team opted for an exhibition that would **grow throughout the event**. The stories on resilience and resourcefulness that were collected across the globe and showcased in Brussels were merely 'half the story'. Spaces of Possibility was an open canvas for **local inhabitants** to share their **aspirations for the neighbourhood, the city and the world**. Contrary to many traditional research outputs such as papers and books, the exhibition wasn't a finished product but **grew** throughout the event.

The Spaces of Possibility team invested much energy in designing ways for local inhabitants to **take part** in the exhibition. During the event, however, they needed to let loose and trust the design.

There were two ways to harvest local ideas in Spaces of Possibility. Firstly, a wooden stand with a countersunk mirror pitched the following questions to the visitors:

- What does **transformation** mean for you and your neighbourhood?
- Do you feel **included** when people talk about change?
- Why?

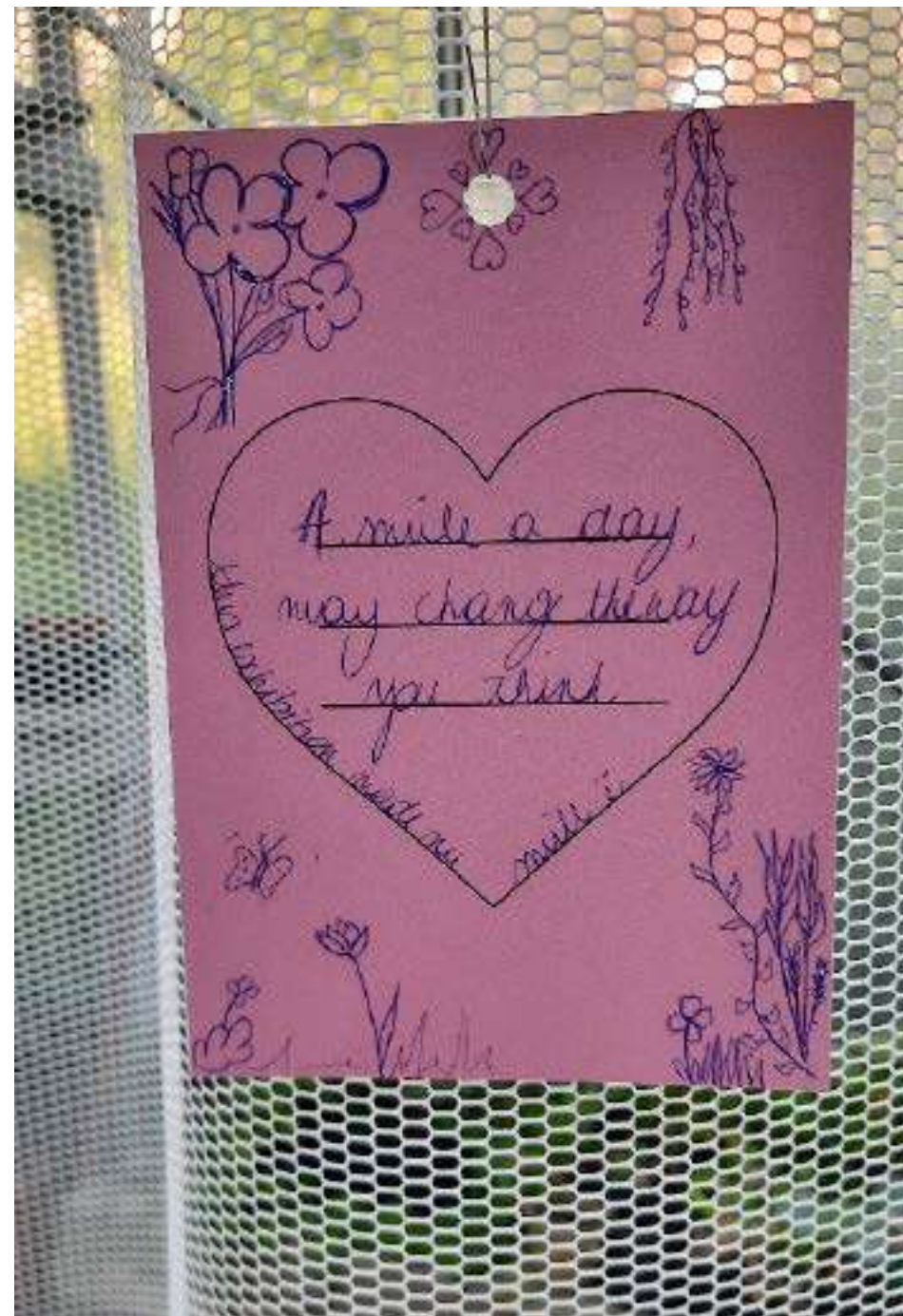
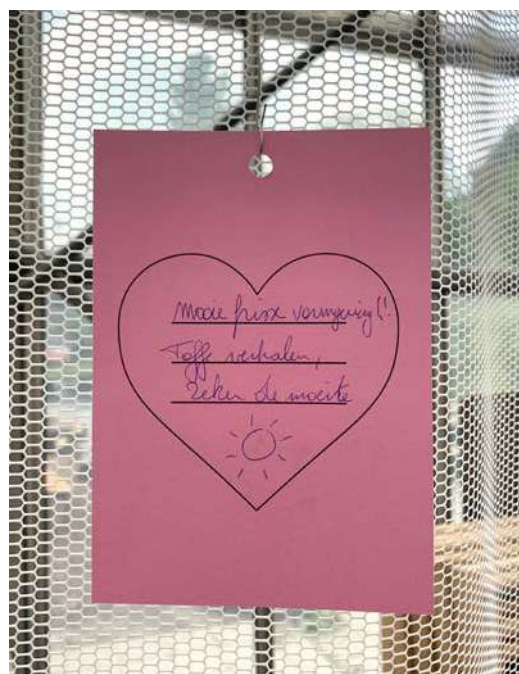
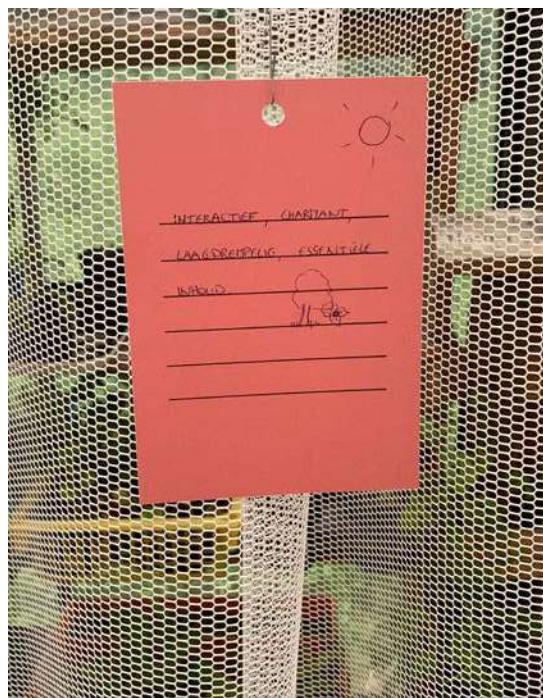
The visitors were invited to write their answers on shiny, colourful papers and hang them on the curtain that circumvented the exhibition. As the event grew throughout the days, the once blank white curtain transformed into a **colourful composition**.

Secondly, the kiosk outside of the Parckfarm comprised a drawing table and a big scroll of drawing paper. Throughout the day the visitors could **draw themselves** whilst at lunchtime and in the evenings **illustrators drew the people's ideas**.

The following pages showcase the results of this **interaction** between the illustrators and the exhibition's visitors.







Visitor's reflections that were left hanging in the curtain.



Let's have more public transport and less cars in the city. Even no cars at all!

Let's use that space to create green, open spaces throughout the city. With room for flowers and bees!

Let's have swimming ponds. And clean air!

Let's meet each other outdoors. And dine with our neighbours in the streets!



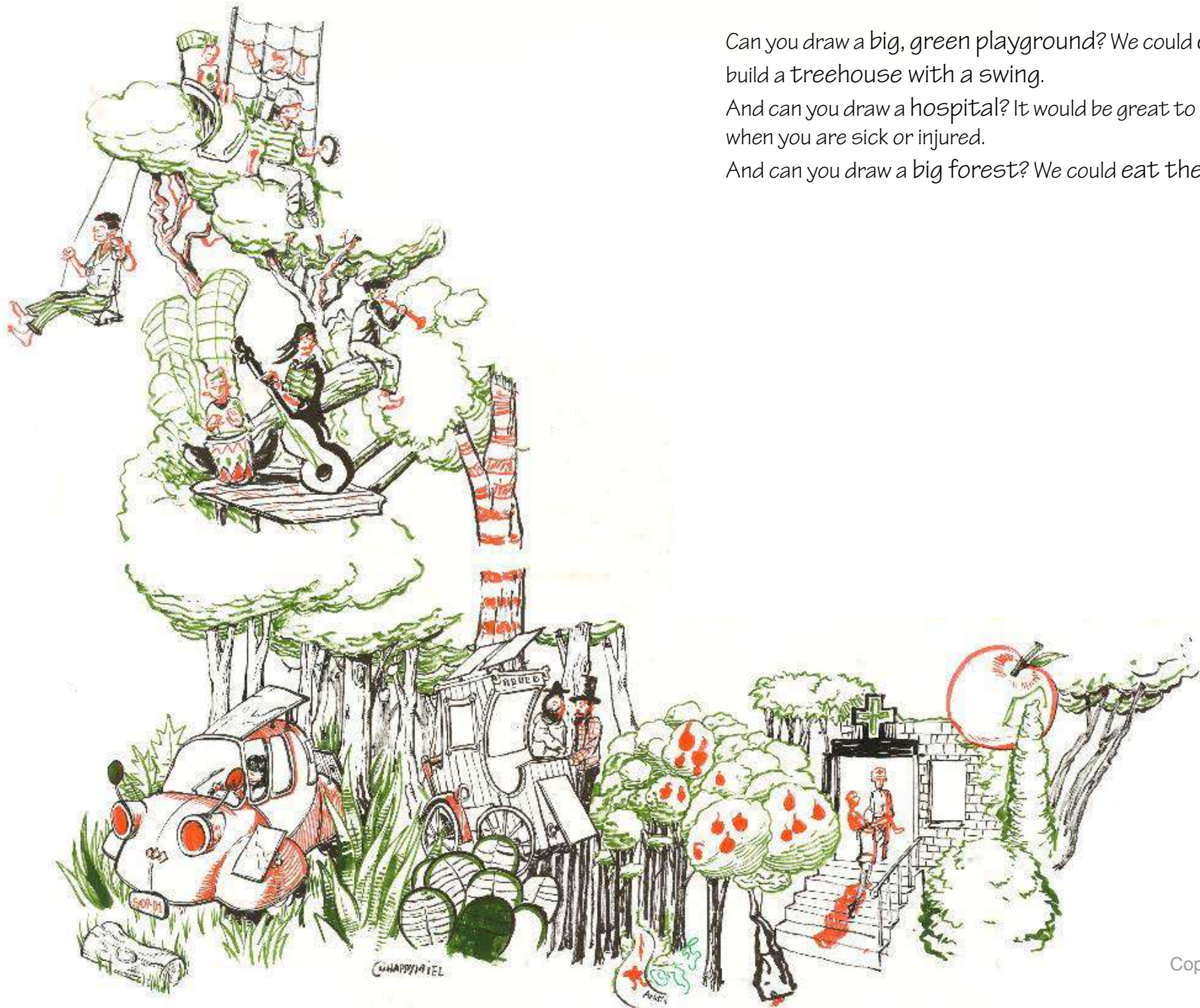
We dream of a community garden.  
A place in the city for people to harvest their vegetables.

A place just like Parckfarm where people get to meet each other.  
Together we can dig in the dirt and green the city.



Copyright: Charlotte Van Hacht





Can you draw a big, green playground? We could climb the trees and build a treehouse with a swing.

And can you draw a hospital? It would be great to have some local help when you are sick or injured.

And can you draw a big forest? We could eat the apples. Mjam!





Have you ever thought about the animals in our city? Humans criss-cross this place every day by foot, bike, bus or car. But how do animals find their way through the city?

Maybe at night the deer and the badgers visit our town. And foxes and rabbits explore the parks. Then there are the ducks that follow the river.

And, of course, there is my cat who overlooks all of them from the rooftop.

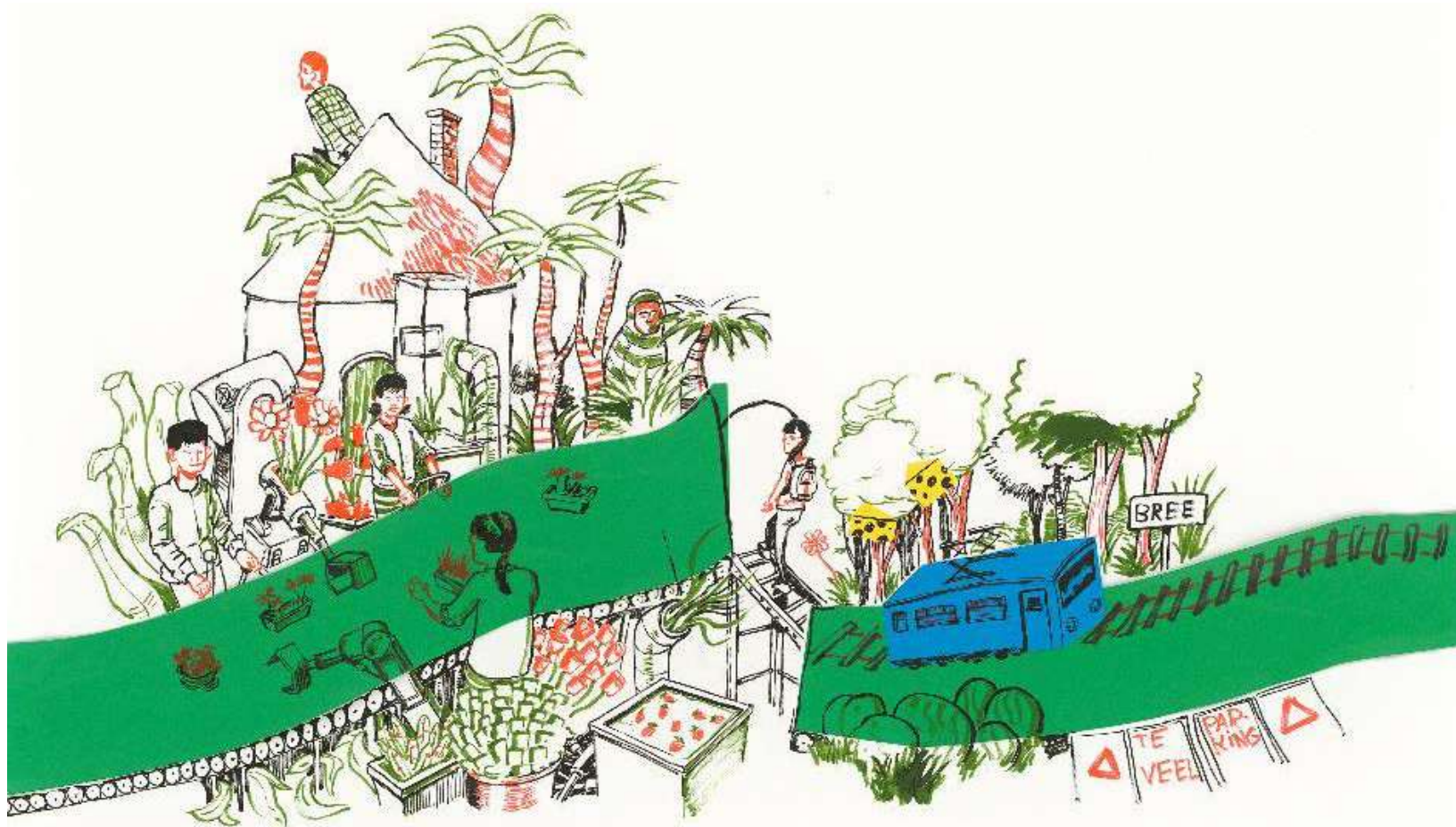


What I would change in the world? That is an easy question!

I would green our work spaces. We need to work with nature, not against it!

And for sure I would invest in more public transport.

Than all of that parking space gets to disappear.





# THE ADDED VALUE OF PARCKFARM

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Location, location, location! This popular old saying surely applies to setting up an exhibition. The venue of Spaces of Possibility was the **greenhouse Parckfarm**, located in the Thurn & Taxis park. The greenhouse houses a local NGO on community-building and its' added value for the exhibition was twofold.

Firstly, the **physical space** of Parckfarm perfectly matched Spaces of Possibility. The little greenhouse situated in one of Brussels' **most culturally diverse neighbourhoods** could accommodate stories from rural as well as urban areas. What is more, the local large-scale developments such as new houses and office buildings created an **ideal background** for an exhibition about community-drive transformations.

As the greenhouse is the home base of manifold activities, it is inherently **messy and vibrant**. This look and feel of the place was important to create a very **accessible** exhibition rather than a high-brow event.

Secondly, the DNA of the Parckfarm fitted within the objective to create a **participatory exhibition**. And the other way around. As the team prepared for an exhibition, questions arouse if and how researchers could achieve its' goals. Can a one-time event that is limited to 5 days truly reach the local inhabitants? Can researchers without any ties to the neighbourhood connect with this target audience?

Here, the Parckfarm proved invaluable. Through years and years of community-building, the greenhouse has become

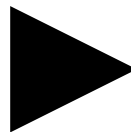
a **familiar and trusted place** and the Parckfarm volunteers know many local inhabitants by name. They **actively invited** local inhabitants -some of whom had never visited an exhibition before- into Spaces of Possibility and helped to translate the exhibited stories from around the world to the local context.

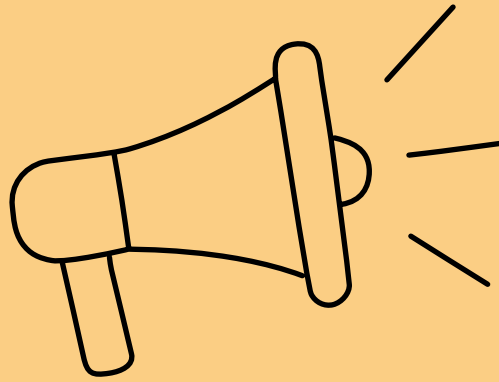
*Thank you Parckfarm!*



Watch the short video about the added value of Parckfarm.

*Made by Ben Cook.*





**— SECTION 3 —**

**How the SoP exhibition  
came to be**

# FROM PAPER TO PARCKFARM

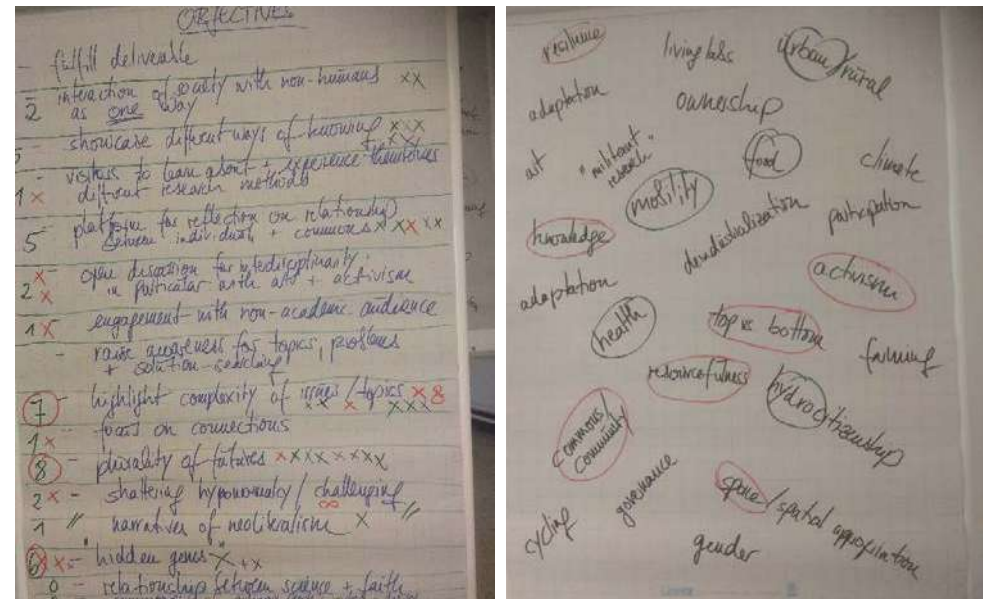
The route from the first brainstorm to the final event was long and unpredictable. The design of the exhibition is a highly creative process that is inherently erratic and fickle. It is the inverse of a research process that is -in most cases- planned consistently and highly methodological.

Hence, the Spaces of Possibility team needed to learn to cut their darlings and throw the occasional curve ball.

To illustrate the erratic creative process, we showcase some of the ideas for Spaces of Possibility.

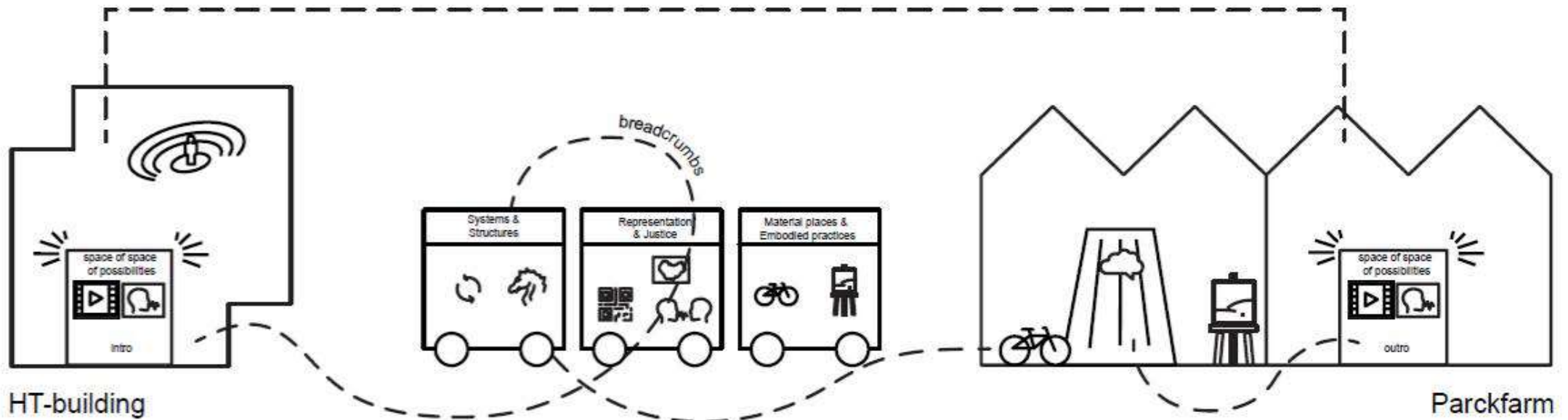
In some cases some suggestions from previous drafts were abandoned as they did not fit in with the final exhibition design. In other cases random ideas were bounced off in brainstorm and they grew throughout the development process.

Eventually, a fine-tuned version of the original idea made it to the final event.



These photos show the very first suggestions for the exhibition. At the very first brainstorm the discussion was still wide open but the premise(s) of Spaces of Possibility can be traced back to it. From the very start, the exhibition team attributed great importance to the engagement of the audience and the showcasing of 'hidden gems'.





As a confex merges a conference and an exhibition into a singular event, much design work concentrated on connecting the conference and exhibition sites.

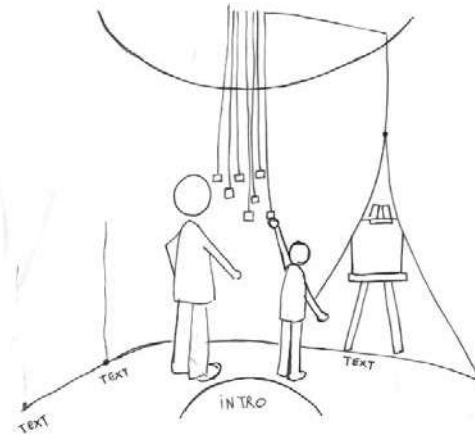
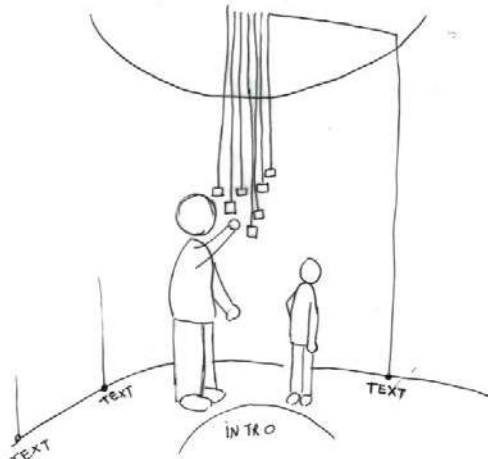
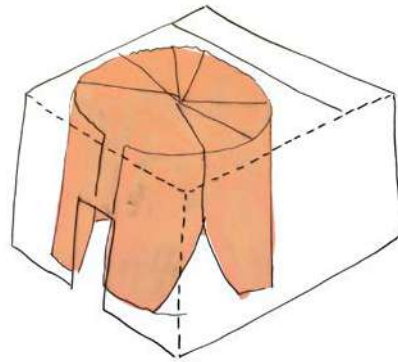
Direct footage from the Parckfarm was to be projected in the conference room during breaks, thus triggering the researchers and practitioners to visit the exhibition.

Moreover, the so-called 'breadcrumbs', including QR-codes spray-painted on the pavement, would lead the way from the conference to the exhibition, and the other way around.

Due to COVID the conference was held online and these ideas were cancelled.



One idea was to print out the stories collected in the Recoms project on small papers and to showcase them in one big wall. Visitors could then tear off those stories that inspired them and take them home. This idea didn't make the final cut.



At first the idea was to create a big wooden box in the Thurn & Taxis park that would house the various objects and stories. Due to practical issues, e.g. night time vandalism and planning permission, the box moved to the interior of the greenhouse. Here, the wooden structure was replaced by a white curtain. Objects were to be hidden behind the opaque curtain and visitors would need to lift up the curtain by pulling a rope. Many brainstorm later this fragile and complicated system was swapped for a square white space with wooden standards in front of the curtain. Finally the curtain designer proposed a different type of curtain, partly transparent. She argued such curtain would create a breezy space with a filtered background. Moreover, the curiosity of passers-by is triggered as they vaguely see the exhibition inside the greenhouse.





# CURATOR. DESIGNER. ORGANISER. RESEARCHER?

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Why do we set-up an exhibition? Oh why?!

For researchers the process of designing an exhibition is **unfamiliar and bewildering** at times. The exhibition involves a **multitude of actors**: the curators, the designers, the organisers and, in this case, the researchers that showcase their work. The exhibition requires **collaboration**, yet each of them is also driven by his/her own **goals and creative ideas**. As a result, the process can be a bit 'bumpy' and tensions between the actors are sometimes inevitable.

The continuous back-and-forth between curators, designers, organisers and researchers are **key to a successful exhibition** and herein lies the added value of exhibitions for research. Just as the review process in academic writing, the **input** of each actor propels the researcher's entry to the exhibition to the next level.

Most notably the many eyes and ears help to fine-tune the story and as a researcher goes through the rattles of an exhibition design, his or her communication skills are polished.

- What is the core of your message?
- Does this summarize your findings?

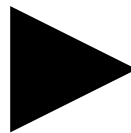
In addition, the back-and-forth enriches the story and feeds back to the researcher.

- Have you thought about...?
- Does this also come into play?



Watch the short video about researchers in exhibition processes.

*Made by Ben Cook.*



# THE AFTERLIFE OF SPACES OF POSSIBILITY

Spaces of Possibility was a **one-time exhibition** that was limited to just **five days**. To make the most out of the resources that were pooled for the event, the **afterlife of the exhibition was an integral part of the design**. To maximise the **recycling** of the exhibition, many of the composing parts were designed with a **second, alternative use** in mind.

The team actively looked at the exhibition's design could help address some of Parckfarm's **current and future needs**.

During hot summer days the greenhouse overheats and, for this reason, the **curtain was donated** to the Parckfarm. The curtain's hanging system was designed in such a way that it could be **easily dismantled and re-assembled** elsewhere in the greenhouse. Moreover, the Parckfarm lacks furniture that is easily moved and, as a result, setting up workshops in the park is a lot of hassle. For this reason, the team designed a **cart** that serves multiple purposes. During the event the cart was the **reception desk and bar** of Spaces of Possibility. After the event the Parckfarm uses the cart as a **mobile workshop station**.

Other parts of the exhibition were re-used in the **pop-up café** of Flanders' Research Institute for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (ILVO) in the summer of 2021. At ILVO Systems Thinking is currently applied to **re-imagine** the future of ILVO's research infrastructure and its' accompanying agricultural land. Suggestions and ideas on the IARL were collected via some of the exhibition's participatory installations.



# COLOPHON

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Editors: Jeroen De Waegemaeker (ILVO) - Alex Franklin (Coventry University) - Tsveti Bandakova (Coventry University)

Layout: Roos Gellynck - Elke Vochten (OMGEVING)

Videos: Benjamin Cook (The 1201 Project)

The exhibition 'Spaces of Possibility' was organized by the RECOMS project, financed by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 765389.

The exhibition was curated by Sofia De la Rosa Solano (University of Groningen) - Jeroen De Waegemaeker (ILVO) - Alex Franklin (Coventry University) - Viola Hakkarainen (LUKE) - Imogen Humphris (University of Groningen) - Nohemi Ramirez Aranda (ILVO/Ghent University). Designed by Björn Bracke - Roos Gellynck - Daphné Roels (OMGEVING).

Spaces of Possibility exposed stories and objects by Sara Smaal (ILVO and Ghent University) - Jingjing Guo (BOKU) - Ben Cook (The 1201 Project) - Imogen Humphris (University of Groningen) - Natalie Leung (BOKU) - Megumi Hirose - Talitta Reitz (Rachel Carson Center and LMU Munich) - Nohemi Ramirez Aranda (ILVO and Ghent University).

The exhibition took place from the 7th until the 11th of June 2021 in Brussels, Belgium. It was accommodated and supported by Parckfarm. The contractors for the exhibition were Des-Arch (woodwork) and Flore Fockedeij (curtain design).

The illustrators Charlotte Van Hacht, Jente Van Loven and Miel Vandepitte engaged with the public and drew their dreams about the local community.

The RECOMS consortium comprises BOKU (Austria), Coventry University (UK), ILVO (Belgium), Rachel Carson Centre – LMU (Germany), Rijkswaterstaat (Netherlands) and University of Groningen (Netherlands). RECOMS non-academic Partners are Bavarian Forest National Park (Germany), Green City Experience (Germany), PeergrouP (the Netherlands) and Shared Assets (UK).







# SPACES OF POSSIBILITY!

7 > 11 June 2021 in Brussels

