



Activity Report 2022

7 January 2023

iozw SQRIDGE
Oedenkovenstraat 57
2140 Borgerhout
Belgium

info@sqrige.org
<http://www.sqrige.com>



The statutes of SQRIDGE were deposited at the Belgian registry on 26 August 2019, and published on 28 August 2019 in the Belgian legal journal, thus legally establishing the NGO as an “internationale vereniging zonder winstoogmerk” (iuvzw, or an international non-profit organization), regulated by the Belgian law of 23 March 2019 establishing a code of companies and associations.

SQRIDGE has the following aims:

- a) promoting, enabling and performing artistic research and scientific research, and research that is located at its intersections;**
- b) actively engaging in international scientific research, in the broadest possible range of academic fields and disciplines;**
- c) actively engaging in and supporting the production, the display and the distribution of creative practices, at the international level, in the different artistic domains;**
- d) stimulating international collaborations, dialogues, debates and reflections in relation to arts, science and their intersecting domains.**

SQRIDGE currently has two directors, Nico Carpentier and Vaia Doudaki.

This document reports on the activities of SQRIDGE, for the third full year of its existence, from 1 January until 31 December 2022.



Sqridgings

Two large projects were (further) developed in this period, which are: (1) Wolf Talks, and (2) the Iconoclastic Controversies 2 (“Mirror of Conflict”) project.

Moreover, the Artist-in-residence programme started, in collaboration with the Mistra Environmental Communication Research Programme, and the Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism in Prague. SQRIDGE was mainly active in supporting the Prague Artist-in-residency.

SQRIDGE continued its support for audio-visual work, in 2022, this support was related to the films “New Modes of Environmental Communication: Four Street Art Experiments” and “Conceptualization of Change”.

Finally, a new project was started, on the memorialization of WWII Estonia.



1

Sqridging 1: Wolf Talks Nico Carpentier

The organisation of the Wolf Talks exhibitions continued, with the following three iterations:

- University of Okara, AMCAP-UO-2022 International Media Conference (2-3 February 2022)
- University of the Punjab, English Institute (8-13 February 2022)
- Uppsala (24 October - 5 November 2022)

Wolf Talks is an arts-based research project, created by Nico Carpentier (as part of the Silencing/Unsilencing Nature project), that questions the power dynamics of the discursive-material relationships between human and non-human animals. For each photograph, you can listen to a Wolf Talks sound fragment (connected with the photograph through a QR code), where a wolf speaks to the visitor. Exceptionally, as a curtesy to the visitor, they will speak a human language. Or at least, the visitors will understand them, even if they might challenge them a bit.

Of course, non-human animals can use language. They have vast repertoires of verbal and non-verbal communication at their disposal. They can talk, even if human animals can hardly understand them. But non-human animals cannot produce discourse, at least not when we see discourse as systematically articulated knowledge frameworks. This inability to produce discourses generates structural power imbalances,

Wolf talks

Ett
konstbaserat
forskningsprojekt
om
(av)tystnaden
av naturen

Av
Nico Carpentier



24/10/22 - 5/11/22
Uppsala

<https://wolftalksinSweden.commedia.wiki/>

Samarbete/stöd:
Sqridge, ICSJ & Fotograf Festival





which places non-human animals in a fundamentally disadvantageous position. This imbalance is only worsened by the access that human animals have to advanced technologies.

Human animals have the ability to categorise and classify non-human animals through their discourses. They can label them as harmful, undesirable or simply irrelevant, thus, in some cases, legitimating species-cides. Predators, in particular, have been subjected to excessive violence, as they competed with human animals over territory and livestock. The European wolf, for instance, was almost completely eradicated from its habitat. One of the safe heavens that were created for them were the European zoos, but this produced a high cost for them, as these animals were then subjected to fierce restrictions, and became trapped in discursive-material enclosures.

This sometimes structurally oppressive and violent relationship between human and non-human living beings is not easy to remedy. Wolf Talks analyses and questions these inequalities, acknowledging the unequal power relations non-human animals find themselves in, symbolised by the cat-face filter, which ironically anthropomorphises them and emphasises their tragic situation. But, Wolf Talks also supports the wolves, inspired by post-colonial theory, to talk back and to continue to resist human domination. Even if this tactic is necessarily imperfect – all material is still created by human animals – these emphatic visual and auditory representations strengthen the wolves' agency through role reversals and highlights their ability to resist, not only through material behaviour but also through the stewardship of these visual and auditory representations.

In 2021, a first version of this exhibition was part of the 2021 Fotograf Festival in Prague (Czech Republic) and it was on display at the Hollar Gallery, also in Prague. In February 2022, the exhibition moved to Pakistan, with two exhibitions, one at the University of Okara and one at the University of the Punjab, in Lahore. In October/November, the exhibition was on display at 12 different locations in Uppsala. The latter was coordinated by Elisabeth Wennerström.

The Uppsala exhibition was also an occasion for Elisabeth Wennerström to organise a reception study. Focus group data have been collected, and their analysis is ongoing.



Photos of the Pakistan exhibitions





Photos of the Uppsala exhibition







Publications about Wolf Talks (and Silencing/Unsilencing Nature)

- CARPENTIER, NICO (2022) Silencing/Unsilencing Nature: A 'Lupocentric' Remediation of Animal-Nature Relationships, Central European Journal of Communication, 15, 1(30): 92-111.

Talks

- CARPENTIER, NICO (2022) How academics can do more: the Wolf Talks exhibition as an example of Arts-based research (Exhibition opening), English Institute, University of the Punjab, 8 February 2022.
- CARPENTIER, NICO (2022) Arts-based research in communication and media studies: The example of Silencing/Unsilencing Nature, XVI Jornadas do CIAC, University of the Algarve, Faro, Portugal (February 25, 2022), invited keynote.
- CARPENTIER, NICO (2022) Breaking down representational frontiers: A case study on the unsilencing of the wolves in the Prague Zoo assemblage, Media breakdown and recovery International Symposium, Lund, Sweden (16 March 2022), invited keynote panel.



2

Sqridging 2: The Mirror of Conflict: Iconoclastic Controversies 2 **Nico Carpentier**

The ethnographic and historical research on memorialization in Cyprus in 2021 resulted in an exhibition at the H4C in Cyprus, in April 2022. In the last part of 2022, the preparations started for the exhibition's second iteration in Limassol, from 20 to 29 January 2023.

The exhibition investigates how the memorials on the island of Cyprus represent the Cyprus Problem in very particular ways, often supporting antagonistic nationalist discourses and constructing the other as Enemy. It is an arts-based research project, grounded in academic research, that uses an artistic repertoire to communicate and co-produce knowledge.

The 93 photographs, capturing acts of memorialization both in the south and north of Cyprus, show the presence of national(ist) markers and the connections with Greek and Turkish histories.

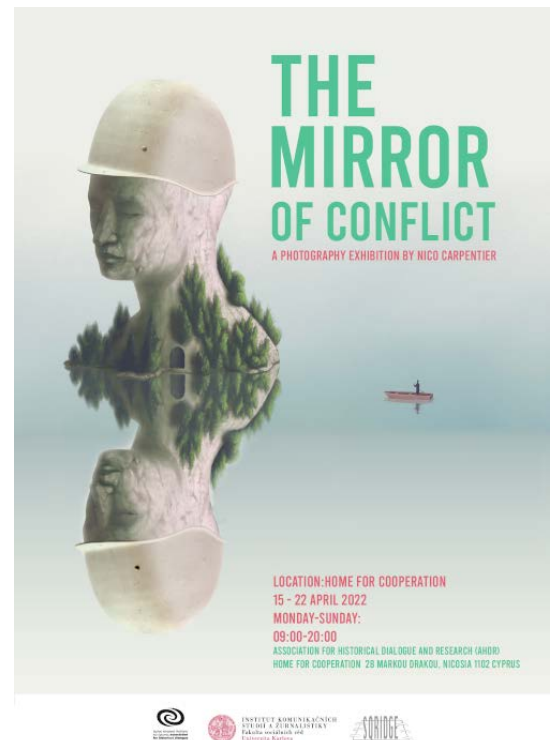
**They glorify heroes and leaders.
They remember victims, pain and suffering.
And they celebrate freedom, victory and sacrifice.**

Still, these antagonistic nationalist discourses do not go uncontested. In some cases, these discourses are undermined by the practices of everyday life, that deny the memorials the attention and respect that they seek. In other cases, material processes such as decay, or the spaces where they are placed, work against these memorials (and the discourses they try to communicate and support). Moreover, a number of informal and formal memorials try to actively resist and disrupt the antagonistic nationalist discourses, even though they remain rare.

When displaying these photographs next to each other, we can also see the structural similarities between these memorials. Even when they refer to different people, events and analyses, the memorials in

the north and south of Cyprus are remarkably similar in how they focus on history and identity, on victims, heroes and leaders, and on freedom, victory and sacrifice. Also the memorials that resist dominant (antagonistic nationalist) discourses exist both in the north and south of Cyprus, and they use similar tactics. Here, the exhibition demonstrates how the constructions of the enemy and the self are each other's mirror image. These constructions might be claiming radical difference but they are simultaneously characterized by structural similarities, often functioning as each other's inverse and constitutive outside.

The 33 metal stands on which the photographs are displayed, convey an analysis of how dominant and resistant discourses are engrained in memorials, and the different ways that they communicate ideology. By clustering the photographs on stands, the visitor is also invited to reflect about the similarities (and differences) between north and south. As the stands form a metal forest through which the visitors can stroll, the exhibition embodies the idea that we are immersed into these ideologies, and that we are part of these struggles over how to give meaning to the Cyprus Problem and its histories.





Photos of the H4C exhibition (and its opening)



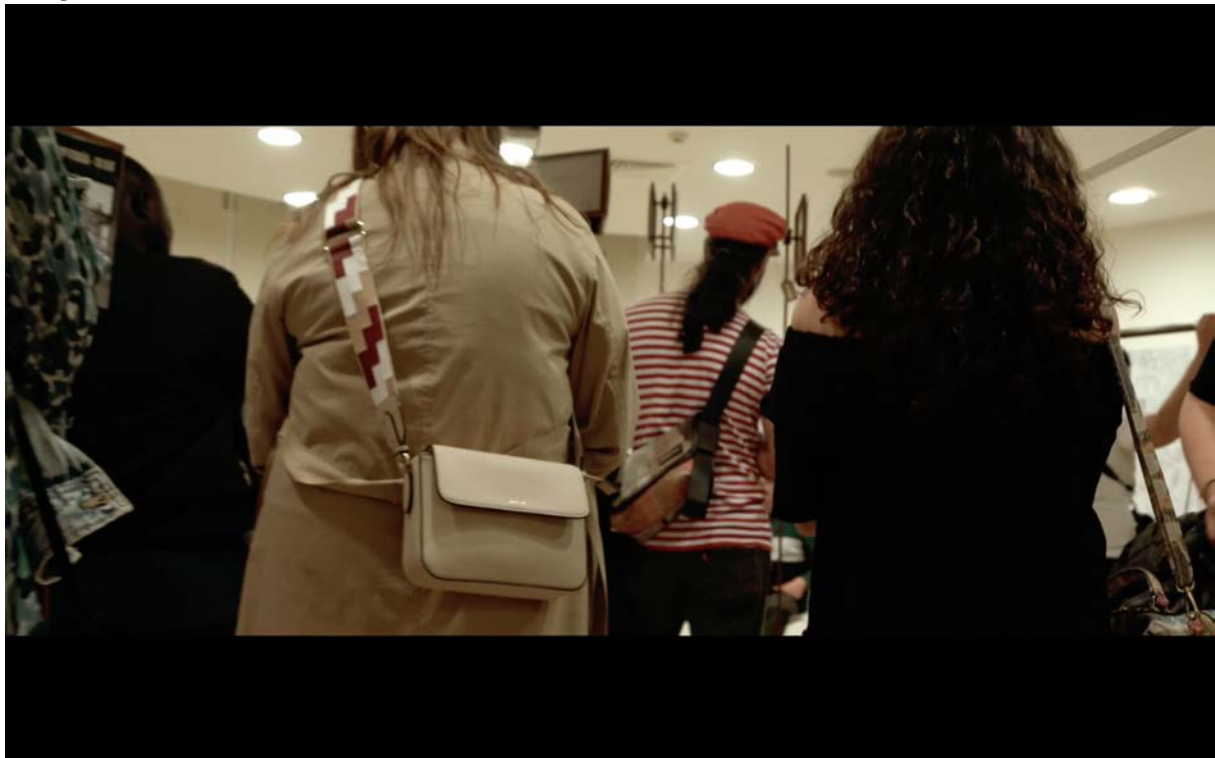




Videos about the H4C exhibition



A video impression of the exhibition, by Nico Carpentier
<https://vimeo.com/701733198>



Video essay on the Representation of Conflict, by David Hands and
Aleksandar Ljubojevic.
<https://vimeo.com/704798647>



Talks about IC2

- CARPENTIER, NICO (2022) The right to commemorate as a human right: A visual case study on the victims of the Cyprus Problem: AMCAP – UO 2022 International Media Conference: Okara, Pakistan (February 2 – 3, 2022), invited.**
- CARPENTIER, NICO (2022) Materiality in the Digital Era: Antagonistic Nationalism and its Memorializations in Cyprus, 9th International Communication Days: Communication Studies in the Digital Age, Üsküdar University, Istanbul, Turkey (16–18 May 2022), invited keynote.**
- CARPENTIER, NICO (2022) We've Never Been Global: Post-Colonial Nationalist Desires and Cypriot Memorializations, IAMCR panel at 72nd annual ICA conference, Paris, France (25 – 31 May 2022).**



3

Sqridging 3: Artist-in-residence at MEC **Nico Carpentier and Derya Yüksek**

SQRIDGE supported the series of artist-in-residence (AiRs) at the Mistra Environmental Communication research programme, coordinated. Within this project, artists were invited to collaborate in a dialogical fashion with academics and to become immersed in the Mistra Environmental Communication research programme, to develop creative work that situates environmental communication in art and explores academic research through an artistic lens.

The dialogues with researchers serve as inspiration for artwork(s), and enriches the perspectives of the researchers. The goal of the AiRs is to foster collaboration between participants and to unlock new perspectives on environmental communication.

The AiRs is coordinated by the Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism at Charles University, with Derya Yüksek as coordinator. It includes three artist-in-residencies:

- (1) AiR@CU welcomed Soraya Poulin at the Mistra Environmental Communication research team at Charles University in Czech Republic;**
- (2) AiR@SLU welcomed Coralie Gourguechon at the Mistra Environmental Communication research team at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in Sweden;**
- (3) AiR@USC will be hosted by the Mistra Environmental Communication research team at the University of the Sunshine Coast in Australia.**



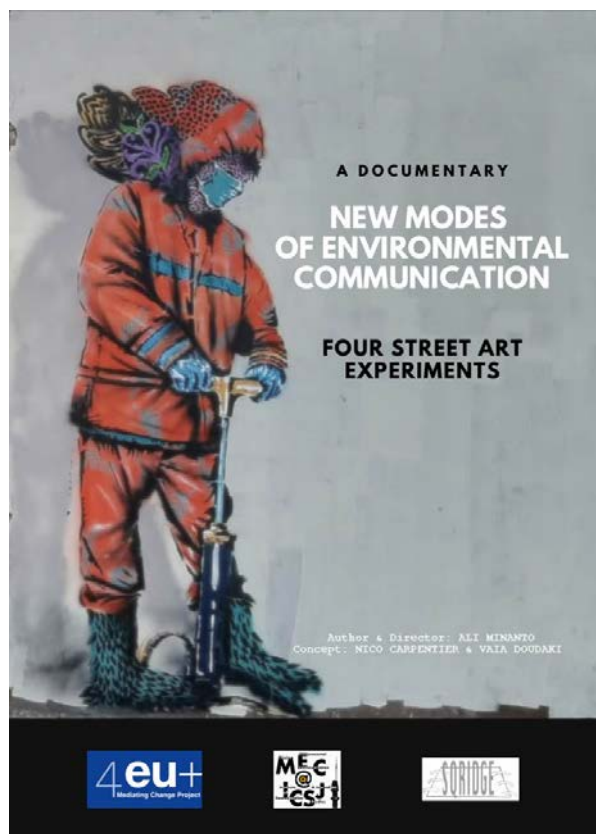
4

Sqridging 4: New Modes of Environmental Communication: Four Street Art Experiments **Ali Minanto**

“New Modes of Environmental Communication: Four Street Art Experiments” is a 23:34-minute documentary film by Ali Minanto, that reflects on how knowledge about the environment is produced and shared in creative ways, moving beyond the, sometimes, narrow spaces of academia, without disregarding academic knowledge.

One of these spaces of knowledge production and creative communication is street art, where artistic aesthetics and practices of civic expression are combined.

This video features the experiment, where academic researchers, based at Charles University in Prague and affiliated to the Mistra Environmental Communication Research Program and the 4EU+ European University Alliance, commissioned four Indonesian street artists to produce four street artworks in the Indonesian city of Yogyakarta.



5

Sqridging 5: Conceptualization of Change by Kristýna Kopřivová, Nico Carpentier and Vaia Doudaki

In 2022, the following screenings of this film took place:

- at Ponrepo cinema 21 March 2022;
- at Luhačovice festival (as installation) 23–26 June 2022;
- at PAF Olomouc 1 – 4 December 2022

Moreover, the film was part of these conference programmes:

- Film Geographies, as part of AAG Shorts 2022 (American Association of Geographers) (25 February – 1 March 2022),
<https://www.filmgeographies.com/aag-shorts-2022/>;
- Flow34, IAMCR 2022 conference, Beijing online (13 – 19 July 2022),
with extra screening at IAMCR watch party, Social Sciences Faculty,
Prague, 22 July 2022;



Finally, the film has been accepted for publication, as visual essay, in the Journal of Science and Technology of the Arts.

“Conceptualization of Change” is a 12-minute film that provides a theoretical reflection on the signifier ‘change’, and its five dimensions: Normativity, Scale and Intensity, Focus, Control and Time. Filmed in Prague, with the integration of archive material that is mostly related to the 1989 Velvet Revolution, the essay unpacks the signifiatory complexity of change, mapping the diversity of meanings that have been



allocated to this notion. The film's five chapters organize a dialogue between fast-paced and still poetic imaginaries and voice-overs, starting with the normativity of change, and its utopian and dystopian meanings. The Scale and Intensity chapter reflects on the sometimes minute and sometimes all-encompassing nature of change, combined with its hegemonic and counter-hegemonic roles. The Focus chapter deals with the autonomy and dependency of change, while the Control chapter focusses on how change can be controlled and controlling. Finally, the Time chapter brings in differences between process and outcome, and patterns and events. Analytically and methodologically, the film uses a post-structuralist paradigm to assist theory formation, grounded in, and combined with, an analysis of the content produced for the Mediating Change Colloquium, that took place in Prague on 20 and 21 November 2020. To render this source of inspiration and analysis visible, the film starts with a one-minute preamble, including a selection of voices from this Colloquium, in order to then shift to a more general theoretical discussion on change, with its five dimensions.



6

Sqridging 6: Palimpsestic memorializations of World War II in Estonia

Nico Carpentier, Inês Moreira, Ruth-Helene Melioranski and Pille Runnel

The complicated and traumatizing Estonian WWII history has produced a significant number of memorials in Estonia, which have continued to be the object of a series of discursive struggles, and in some cases, material resistance. In particular in April 2007, when one monument in Tallin—the so-called ‘Bronze Soldier’—was moved from the city centre to a cemetery in the outskirts, the response was strong.

Arguably, with the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, and the decision of the Government of the Republic of Estonia to remove a series of Soviet memorials, legitimated by the need to protect public order (especially in the city of Narva), another—less violent—phase in this discursive-material struggle has been initiated. After the governments’ decision, and the removal of a first series of memorials, a Government Office’s Soviet Monuments Working Group was established and in its 23 November 2022 report, the Working Group evaluated 322 memorials. They advised that 244 would be removed or replaced. At the time the report was published, 56 memorials had already been removed.

This project, based on field work in November 2022 and January 2023, aims to contribute to the documentation and analysis of these attempts to alter the Estonian memorialscape, which are also strategic attempts to intervene and re-signify the discursive construction of Estonia’s history through these material alterations. At the same time, these attempts did not go uncontested, and with this project we also want to document and analyse the agonistic responses, driven by mourning for the lost memorials, that these removals and alterations have caused. Finally, the project aims to show the complexity of these material inventions into the Estonian memorialscape, and the difficulties to re-signify history, given the recalcitrance of history, with its discursive constructions and material traces to be moulded in one particular homogeneous shape.

First elements of a visual essay







Future plans

For the Mirror of Conflict exhibition, the first priority is to have the next iteration of the exhibition organised in Limassol, in January 2023. Moreover, the negotiations for new iterations in Turkey and the North of Cyprus are ongoing.

A book proposal based on the Mirror of Conflict exhibition has been accepted by Black Dog publishers, and in 2023 the financial resources required by this publishing company need to be gathered.

Finally, the project on the memorialization of WWII in Estonia, which just started, will be further developed.