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The Study Center for Group Work

The Study Center for Group Work is both an online resource and an informal network of artists who gather to study [practices](#) of collaboration. The Center exists to cultivate behaviors that allow groups to gather together and has been directed by founder Caroline Woolard since 2015.

[Listening and looking](#) are forms of artistic attention. Collaboration requires both. What kinds of [listening and looking](#) are provoked by contemporary artworks? How can we develop capacities of [listening and looking](#) that enable us to become more nuanced critics and practitioners of collaborative work? The Study Center for Group Work starts with the premise that certain [practices](#) and [tools](#) can offer an experience of collaborative time, a time which is specifically marked by our engagement with one another.

At the invitation of curator Stamatina Gregory, Woolard created a social space called *WOUND: The Study Center for Group Work* at Cooper Union. At Cooper Union, the Center offered trainings in [practices](#) of [listening](#), attention, and collaboration using sculptural [tools](#) for communication that have been developed by artists who work in groups. The exhibition presented a library of collaborative [tools](#) that visitors could check out and use, including “[Threeing](#) sticks” made by artists Jean Gardner and Paul Ryan. The group Project 404 taught visitors how to sustain attention with imagery by focusing on a single image on their smartphones, and the Design Studio for

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Social Intervention offered workshops with the artist Judith Leemann on the [power](#) of unconventional analogy in speech and in drawing. The collective Ultra-red offered workshops on modes of [listening](#).

The Study Center for Group Work starts with the premise that certain [practices](#) and [tools](#) can offer an experience of collaborative time, a time which is specifically marked by our engagement with one another.

Since 2015, members of the Center have convened to share their methods and to make them freely available online. Portions of the Center have travelled to the Glasgow School of Art, Tenthaus in Oslo, and the Free Library of Philadelphia. See *The Meeting* ^{see chapter 1} for objects that Woolard has developed to facilitate dialogue, in collaboration with the US Federation of [Worker Cooperatives](#), Ombudspeople at Brandeis University, and [labor](#) union organizers in Chicago.

More information is online at: <http://studycollaboration.com>

The Study Center
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Reflect

Idea in Public

Experiment

Timeframe

Inquiry

Commitment

Study

Experience

2013/2014

Occupy Wall Street 2011

New York City Community Land
Initiative officially
forms 2013

New York City creates \$1.2

million Worker Cooperative

Business Development

Initiative 2014

NYC Real Estate Investment

Cooperative (NYCREIC)

forms 2015

350 members, huge interpersonal

conflict in NYCREIC

Obama 2009-2017

Trump 2017-2020?

Study

I will connect people
who are making objects
for groups.

Commitment

Experience

Person X is destroying the
group's ability to work together.

Inquiry

like Clue

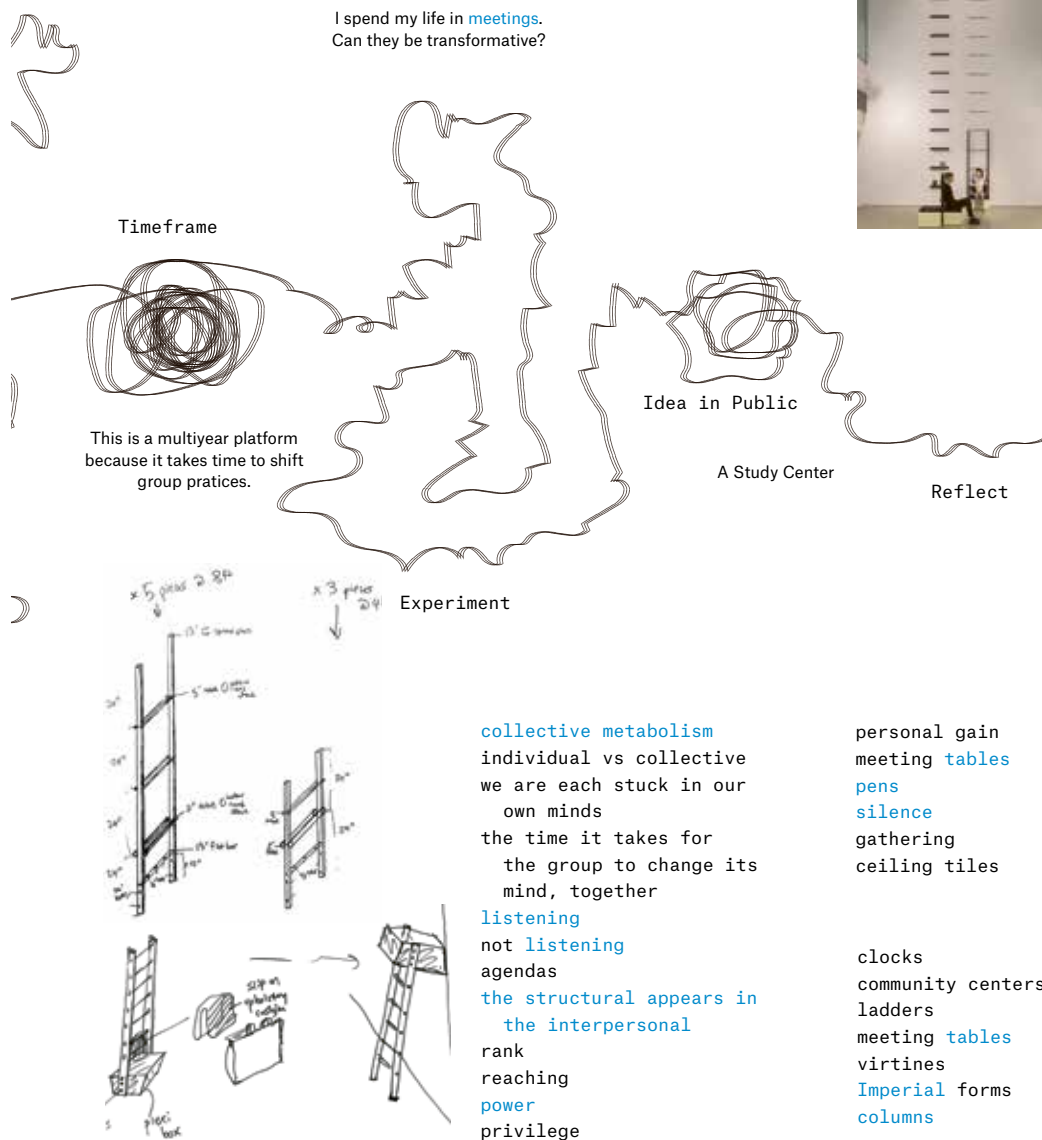
the artist with the candle in
the ballroom

continuous study

Just as dancers take classes
throughout their lives,
the Center aims to become
a permanent **practice** space
for group work in the visual
arts. By attending to
practices of group work,
collectives will meet
and develop shared **power**
as the ability to act with
one another.**facilitation** : sculptureCollectively-
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consensus
voting
facilitation
collaboration
collectivity
mutual aid
temperature checks

transformative organizing
US Federation of
Worker Cooperatives
disability justice
conflict transformation
Generative Somatics
Judith Leemann and
Kenneth Bailey
UltraRed
Center for Artistic Activism
SOVRN state Scott Benaglio
Process Work Institute



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Institutional Possibility

Alison Burstein is the Curator of Media and Engagement at The Kitchen in New York. As an independent curator, she has curated exhibitions or programs for institutions including Tenthaus (Oslo), Mana Contemporary (Jersey City), The Luminary (St. Louis), Knockdown Center (Queens), Museum of Jurassic Technology (Los Angeles), and NURTUREart (Brooklyn).

Alison Burstein, Curator of Media and Engagement at The Kitchen, 2019

Two tactics have been dominant in the field of artist–institution relationships over the past five decades. While some artists have chosen to create works of institutional critique that put pressure on an institution’s structures and ideologies from within, others have stepped outside existing frameworks to build institutions that correct perceived shortcomings in traditional institutional [protocols](#). Caroline Woolard’s work is in dialogue with both of these traditions. However Woolard expands upon the [practices](#) of institutional critique and alternative institution building by mapping a unique third course—one that is guided by an investment in what she calls “[institutional possibility](#).” What distinguishes her strategy is the deliberateness with which she creates new institutions that have the potential to operate both independently and in partnership with other parties: Woolard’s institutional projects are designed to be embedded, scaled, and/or reproduced.

Take The Study Center for Group Work. According to a timeline on the institution’s webpage, Woolard developed the idea for the project in 2013 and immediately began conversations to find a “partner” organization to support its realization in New York City. Three years later, Woolard collaborated with curator Stamatina Gregory to bring the institution to life at Cooper Union’s 41 Cooper Gallery in the form of an exhibition called *WOUND: The Study Center for Group Work*. Since 2016, Woolard and a number of [collaborators](#) have continued to run this institution in several different forms and contexts, including through short-term installations and activations of The Study Center’s collections within

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institutional spaces and via the continuous maintenance of the institution's [website](#) as a resource-sharing platform.

While some artists have chosen to create works of institutional critique that put pressure on an institution's structures and ideologies from within, others have stepped outside existing frameworks

In steering The Study Center's trajectory from its conception through to its functional forms, Woolard has located spaces of [institutional possibility](#) within and outside of established institutions. The original iteration of The Study Center as a temporary institutional presence embedded within the larger institution of Cooper Union demonstrated the feasibility of using an existing entity as a launchpad for an independent initiative. Here Woolard utilized the resources available for the exhibition to facilitate the development of The Study Center's collection of artistic [practices](#) and associated objects, and she harnessed the visibility associated with staging an exhibition within a prestigious school's gallery in order to bring a broad public into contact with these offerings.

Building on the momentum gained during the exhibition's run—the involvement of artists who contributed objects and led public workshops outlining their [practices](#), the critical praise voiced in exhibition reviews, and the interest of audiences who visited

WOUND—Woolard was then able to secure additional streams of support for the institution. The subsequent iterations of The Study Center reveal the institution's ability to function on varying scales within different physical spaces and organizational infrastructures. Whether a viewer encounters The Study Center's collection of objects (in full or in part) in a physical space or they download PDFs outlining individual artistic [practices](#) from [www.studycollaboration.org](#), the institution continues to serve its aim of calling attention to and encouraging experimentation with [tools](#) that foster collaborative working methods. And across all of its forms, The Study Center's focus on artistic [practices](#)—exercises that are meant to be enacted time and time again with the aim of refining a particular skill or set of [skills](#)—defines the institution's commitment to reproducibility: to engage with The Study Center is to learn [tools](#) that are by their very nature intended for application across contexts.

Woolard's institutional projects are designed to be embedded, scaled, and/or reproduced.

With The Study Center, as with her other institutional initiatives, Woolard productively collapses the distance between institution-critical strategies and the efforts of institutional formation. The result is an extensive field of possibility in which artists can test new modes of interacting with institutions.

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More recent iterations of The Study Center reveal the institution's ability to function on varying scales within different physical spaces and organizational infrastructures.

fig. 2-1

Project 404 teaches [practices](#) of attention using the very devices that threaten to distract us. Image courtesy of Project 404 from a [practice](#) in 2014. Photo by Filip Wolak.



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Study

A Musculature of Attention

Stamatina Gregory is the Director of Curatorial Programs at the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art. She has organized exhibitions for institutions including The Cooper Union, FLAG Art Foundation, Austrian Cultural Forum, the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, and the Santa Monica Museum of Art, and was the Deputy Curator of the inaugural pavilion of The Bahamas at the 55th Venice Biennale.

Stamatina Gregory, Director of Curatorial Programs, Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art, 2020

Can simply being present together be a form of learning, a way of transforming one another? There is something dubiously utopic—or perhaps merely banal—about this question. Yet, it has prodded my thinking as a writer and curator for some time now, even making it into a recent exhibition wall text (as one of several questions on forms of learning and unlearning in contemporary feminisms). In a real economy driven by shares, clicks, and likes, movements toward social justice have had their vision all but replaced by the politics of visibility, in which momentary and disembodied acknowledgment can too easily stand in for solidarity. In a time of escalating and far-reaching humanitarian crisis, what might be the potential for a [practice](#) in collectivity that is [haptic](#), that we can touch and feel?

artistic [practice](#) ... is continually made and remade through its participants

Artists have considered some of these questions for years, even decades. Caroline Woolard's Study Center for Group Work is an online, iterative resource for [listening](#) and communication methods and [protocols](#) developed by artists and arts collective. When we collaborated on a physical iteration of the Study Center, which opened to the public as an exhibition and meeting space in the fall of 2016, individual persons and groups were able to develop and exercise what Woolard calls a "[musculature of attention](#)" through textual directives (printed on handheld panels), sculptures

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our need to negotiate new ways of being together in aural and digital space is more urgent than ever

meant to be held and manipulated, and workshops ranging from restructuring group work [practices](#) to understanding phenomenologies of [pain](#). We included no lens-based media among the objects available, to emphasize forms of seeing, hearing, and touching that exceed our relationship to screens. After the 2016 election, the Study Center became a place to collectively process grief, a place to express and imagine past and impending [violence](#) through directed physical touch, a place to express and empathize with chronic [pain](#), a place to speak and to learn to listen. Woolard's vision of artistic [practice](#) as something that is continually made and remade through its participants, as an ethical force to penetrate our unconscious ways of being with one another, has since only become more urgent. Four years later, as [meetings](#) and gatherings are placed on hold by the [COVID-19](#) pandemic, our need to negotiate new ways of being together in aural and digital space is more urgent than ever, with our collective agency, creative [practices](#), and [activism](#) at stake—along with our lives. Woolard's [practice](#) remains an ethical force to shift and redirect our unconscious ways of being.

Study

Experience

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fig. 2-2

Judith Leemann, *preposition and prosthesis*, 2013, found and made objects, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist.

These found and made objects were first used to choreograph wordless didactics for *Resonating Bodies*, an examination of the participatory in large-scale sculpture (curated by Shannon Stratton, Soap Factory, 2013) and have been activated as part of The Study Center since 2015.

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Idea in Public

IMAGINE A GROUP GATHERING

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IMAGINE A GROUP GATHERING

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fig 2-3

Cooper *WOUND Furniture (Ladder Chairs)*, Installation view of *Wound: the Study Center for Group Work*, 2016, [plywood](#), steel, paint, three-*ing* rug on loan from Jean Gardener and the Estate of Paul Ryan, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist. Photo by João Enxuto.

Sitting there, the chair provides choreography of absent presence, comfortable with the body's void. The chairs that stand and sit and lounge about the Watermill Center are happier than any traditional museum chair. Residents work on and with these chairs. Fluctuating between chair-for-use and chair-as-autonomous-object, these chairs flirt with users/viewers in ways that most museum objects cannot touch. It is this in betweenness that we seek to cultivate, for all objects wish at once to be left alone (to suggest without acting), and to be held, used, and fused with a body.

—Caroline Woolard, excerpt from successful Watermill Residency application, 2009

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Art, Engagement, Economy: The Working Practice of Caroline Woolard (fall 2020).
More information at CarolineWoolard.com.

fig. 2-4
 Cooper *WOUND Furniture*
 (*Ladder Chairs*), Installation
 view of *Wound: the Study*
 Center for Group Work, 2016,
 plywood, steel, paint,
Threeing rug on loan from
 Jean Gardener and the Estate
 of Paul Ryan, dimensions
 variable. Courtesy of the
 artist. Photo by João Enxuto.



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fig. 2-5
DIY Ruin Columns, 2016-2018,
 turned poplar, oil paint pickling,
 felt, 18 × 16 × 16 inches each.
 Courtesy of the artist.

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fig. 2-6

DIY Ruin Columns, 2016-2018,
turned poplar, oil paint pick-
ling, felt, 18 × 16 × 16 inches
each. Courtesy of the artist.

fig. 2-7 (overleaf)

DIY Ruin Columns, 2016-2018,
turned poplar, oil paint pick-
ling, felt, 18 × 16 × 16 inches
each. Courtesy of the artist.

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Ephemera

In the pages that follow, you will find correspondence, budgets, grants, technical drawings, and renderings required to create and run the exhibition, online platform, and network of artists in The Study Center for Group Work.

A short documentary video about The Study Center for Group Work was commissioned by the Glasgow School of Art and filmed and edited by Herman Jean-Noel, founder of NEGLAKAY PRODUCTIONS, a grassroots video production [house](#). Artists from the Center who are included in the video are: Chloë Bass, Melanie Crean, Jean Gardener, Judith Leemann, Shaun Leonardo, Adelheid Mers, Leonard Nalencz, Project 404, Paul Ryan, Sable Elyse Smith, Sal Randolph of ESTAR(SER), and Anna Riley.

Woolard has selected ephemera that serves as visual reference points for The Study Center for Group Work. All materials here are reproduced with the consent of [collaborators](#).

Making

In the exhibition at 21 Cooper Gallery, at Cooper Union, it was very important to me that The Study Center balanced the tropes of a [white](#)-walled gallery exhibition with my interest in interaction and study. This meant providing lots of space around objects, while also creating furniture that encouraged people to transition from viewer to participant or library patron. I designed a system of [tables](#) and plinths and [vitrines](#) to hold the objects that could be touched, upon request. I also designed the exhibition to offer both small, intimate spaces and large, gathering spaces, which were activated in public programs.

The Study Center balanced the tropes of a [white](#)-walled gallery exhibition with my interest in interaction and study.

Surrounding the [tables](#) in the Study Center were stools which can be stacked together to form a life-size Roman column. This sculptural furniture, called *DIY Ruin*, takes its shape from smugglers who took ancient [columns](#) away in [sections](#). *DIY Ruin* draws on the North American adoption of classical motifs in the organization of social life and of social space on campus. The [columns](#) mimic the Ionic [columns](#) used in buildings for education, justice, and government in the United States, particularly the [columns](#) of the [White House](#), and invite people to dismantle the column. The *Ladder Chairs* were stationed around low objects, standing in for a desire to climb, both socially and physically.

I'm really interested in how collectives are able to communicate with each other, how they can [heal](#) each other, and often how they learn to listen to one another, rather than focusing mainly on speaking, or taking action. I think of art as a space for [reflection](#) and celebration, so not always for productivity.

—Caroline Woolard, 2016

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Experiment

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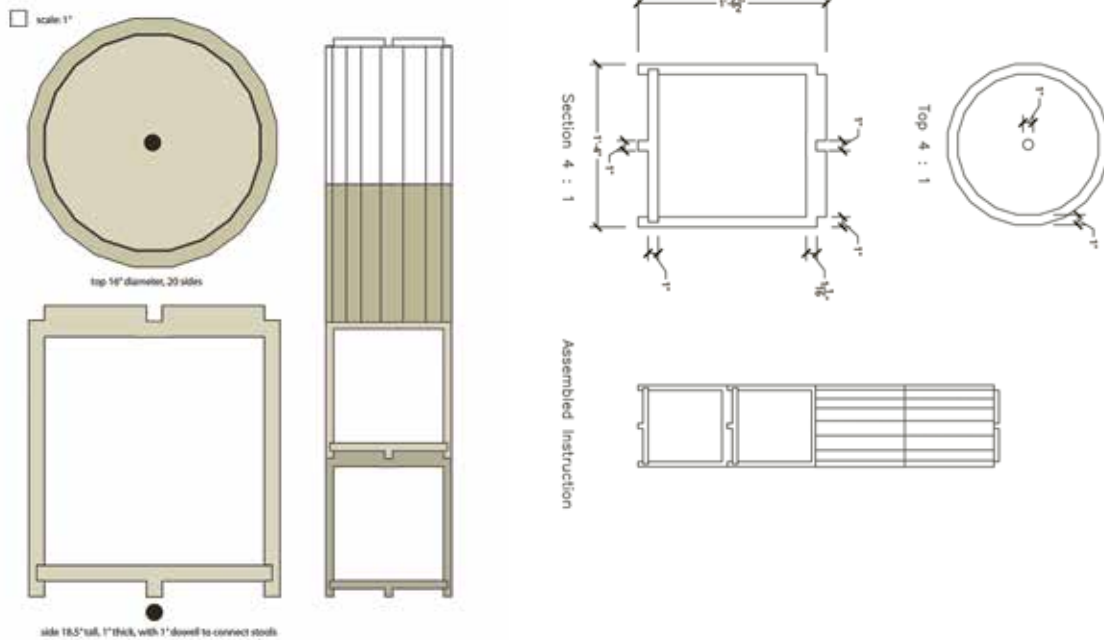
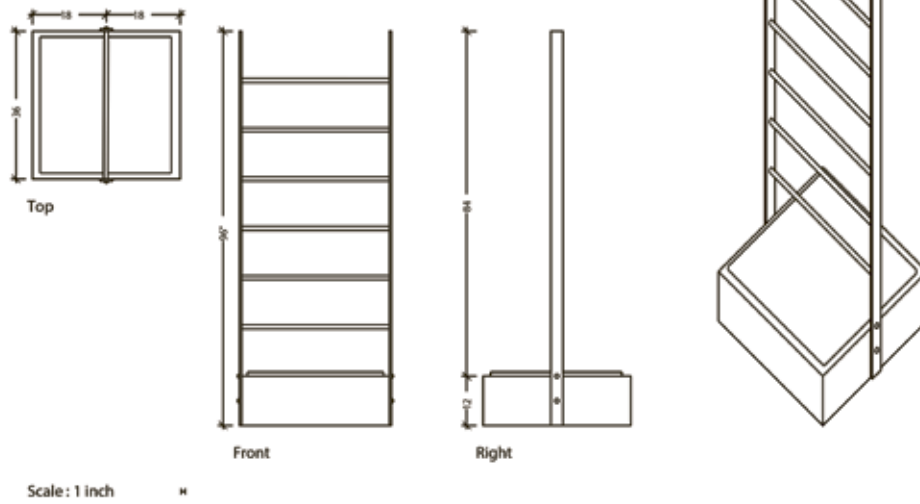
fig. 2-8
 Renderings for The Study Center
 for Group Work, 2015, dimensions
 variable. Courtesy of the artist.



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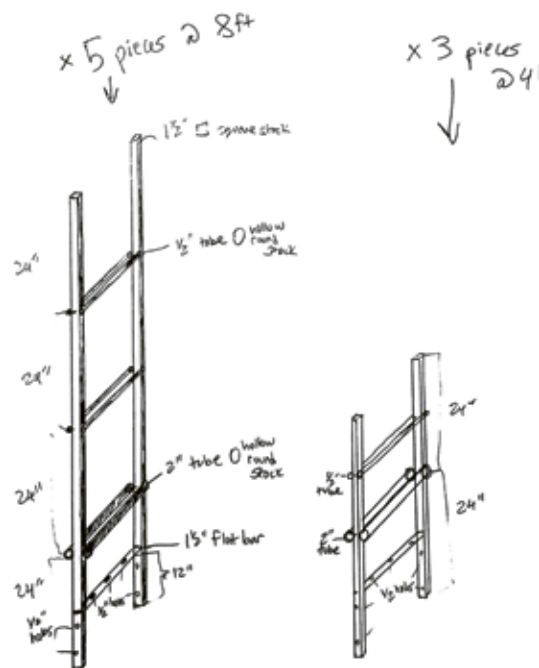
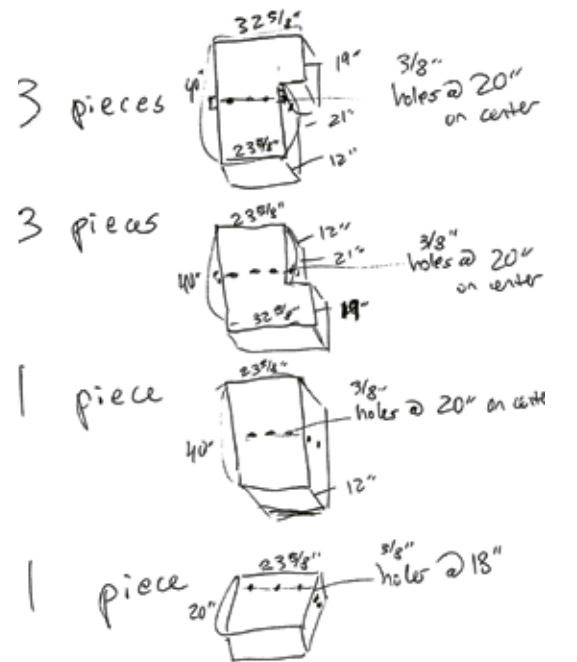
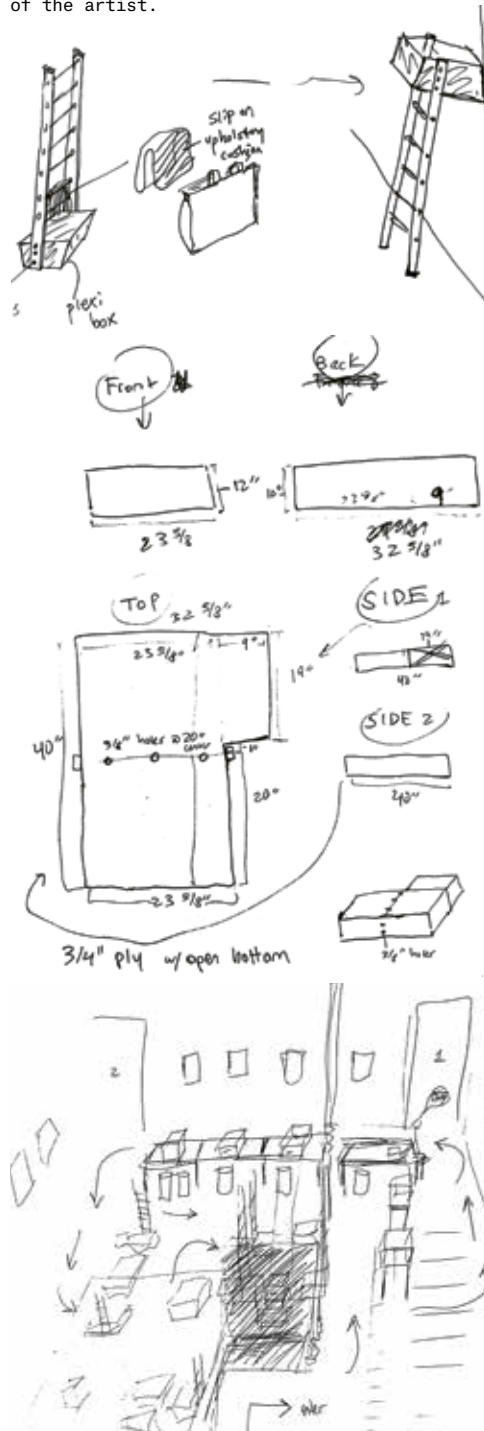
fig. 2-9

Technical drawings for *DIY Ruin*
and *Ladder Chairs* for The Study
Center for Group Work, 2015,
dimensions variable. Courtesy
of the artist.



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fig. 2-10
 Sketches for Ladder Chairs and
 exhibition design for The Study
 Center for Group Work, 2015,
 dimensions variable. Courtesy
 of the artist.



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fig. 2-11

Reference collage (clockwise from left): Lucia Moholy, Alma Buscher's *Ladder Chair for Children's Room*, 1923; Aleksandr Mikhailovich Rodchenko, *Fire Escape*, 1925; Trisha Brown, *Woman Walking Down a Ladder*, 1973; Lawrence Shustak, *Lette Eisenhower Ascending Ladder in "The Courtyard,"* a Happening by Allan Kaprow, New York City, 1962; Yoko Ono, *CEILING PAINTING*, 1966; Mel Bochner, *Measurement: Shadow*, 1969.

The artists in the Study Center were selected based upon the following criteria that Stamatina Gregory and I created:

Groups under consideration, 2015

At least 3 of these qualities are present:

- is a **practice** that has been taught to other groups and that they now use (**practice** over author)
- is a **practice** that has been refined for years (rigor/commitment)
- is a **practice** that is used for conflict resolution, anti-racism, feminism, or **queer activism**

Inquiry



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- is a **practice** with a **beautiful** sculptural tool
- is a **practice** with **facilitators** locally (in NYC in our case)
- is a **practice** that could occur over a year
- is a **practice** that might be “disruptive,” that has perhaps-untested potential for progressive or “radical” social change
- what else?

I continue to work with many of the artists from the show at 21 Cooper Gallery. In the years following the exhibition that Stamatina curated, the artists Adelheid Mers, Judith Leemann, and Project 404 have continued to participate in The Study Center by sharing **practices** with one another. Recently, we were invited to be part of an exhibition that Alison Burstein curated at Tenthaus in Oslo about artist-run institutions, including The Study Center for Group Work.

- is a **practice** that has been taught to other groups and that they now use (**practice** over author)
- is a **practice** that has been refined for years (rigor/commitment)
- is a **practice** that is used for conflict resolution, anti-racism, feminism, or **queer activism**

The interviews and information that follows comes from the publication that was created for the exhibition in Oslo in 2019.

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The Braid/ Performative Diagrammatics

Adelheid Mers (b. 1960, Düsseldorf, Germany; lives in Chicago, Illinois) has developed a generative, topological method for talking about arts production and collaboration. Mers creates diagrams for workshops with artists, arts managers, and theorists that include fractals, matrices, and braids to guide conversations about art works and art **practice**. Mers writes that she “draws on the performative **tools** of studio critique. Formally, diagrams are defined by their operativity, engendering action and **reflection**. Mers’ diagrams are presented as manipulable whiteboards, with occasions for use and response. In addition, they are often distributed freely, online and in poster and flyer format.” As visual arts pedagogy shifts to embrace collaboration and social action, the “**tools**” of Adelheid Mers are helpful models for dialogue.

Online: <http://studycollaboration.com/practice/performative-diagrammatics-braid>

Caroline:

Adelheid, why do you make objects for groups? What got you into this? What is possible with an object in a group, that would not be possible if the object were not there?

Adelheid:

The Diagrammatic templates and conversation **facilitation** objects I have developed serve to promote ways of thinking and perceiving flexibly, reshaping regimes of making sense by admitting unnoticed or undervalued perceptions, and loosening petrified knowledge. These **facilitation** objects are animated by prompts that a **facilitator** delivers, or that an accompanying text provides. Facilitated conversations are embedded in a performance that is structured by the object. Think jumping rope while telling a story. In this way, users open themselves to interactions between propositional knowledge (what is readily stated) and embodied knowing (what is readily enacted).

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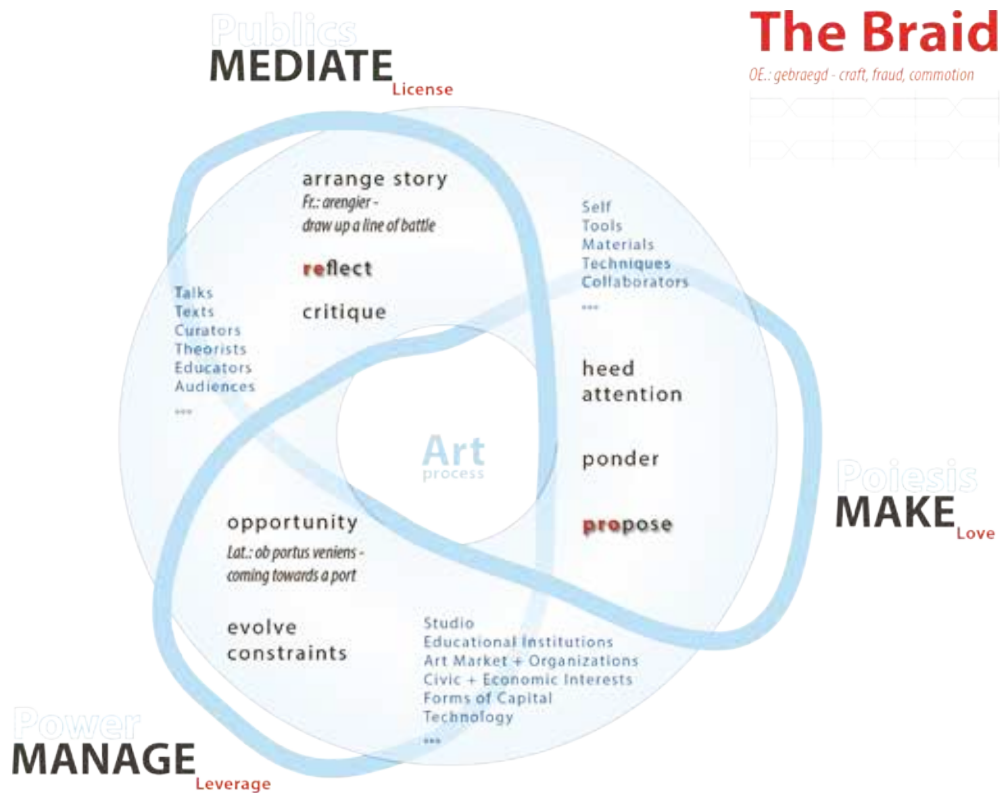


fig. 2-12
Adelheid Mers, *The Braid*, V3,
2019, dimensions variable. Image
courtesy of the artist.

The Braid diagram is a tool that is designed to aid users in discussing and comparing how they recognize and work within the forcefields they inhabit. It is aimed at artists and other cultural producers. The diagram contains verbal prompts that emerged from individual conversations with artists, who derive agency from more or less intentionally integrating epistemic, critical and administrative needs and capacities into an

idiosyncratic practice. Prompts are associated with a path wound around a continuum. The path is represented by a trefoil, the continuum by a torus. These mathematical shapes evoke topology as a metaphor through which to inclusively model and by that also brace the practices of cultural practitioners.

The key prompts are marked by an alliteration:

MAKING includes forms of attention, epistemic and material work processes, in the studio or equivalent.

MEDIATING contains forms of reflection on all aspect of cultural practice, and verbal articulation of narratives among stakeholders.

MANAGING broadly frames generative and normative institutional exposures. These areas may expand or contract at different times of practice. There is no specified point of entry.

These **facilitation** objects are animated by prompts that a **facilitator** delivers, or that an accompanying text provides.

Seemingly simple conversation/performances of this kind can bring embodied knowing into play, or alternatively dislodge hardened ideas. Performative actions promoted by *The Braid* template, for example, may consist of walking across and placing oneself within areas outlined by a rope designated as “artist studio,” “public discourse zone,” or “exhibition opportunity”; shifting the gaze to the ground and lowering one’s center of **gravity** while feeling a site’s presence anew; or refashioning the rope into an expanded shape to accommodate a story. Similarly, observing others perform can reframe perceptions.

This yoking of conversation to physical situation resonates with recent research in cognitive science that addresses the connection of space- and text-based **practices**. John O’Keefe, May-Britt Moser, and Edvard I. Moser received a Nobel prize in 2014 for showing that “grid cells” in the brain are used both for mapping space and for the processing of abstract thought. Facilitating user experiences through diagram-based objects also interlinks with theory that presents diagrams as inherently implying an invitation to act. The invitation to act, also known as operativity, further confirms the character of diagrams as performative objects.

By presenting **facilitation** situations as art, I claim an ethico-**aesthetic** surplus that emerges from the public performance of diverse, cognitive ecologies. A focus on users shows my approach to thinking and being with others. It is

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centered on the recognition of cognitive diversity, or cognitive preference, which I understand as situated on a continuum, similar to how gender and sexual preference are now understood. This perception was shaped in large part through the formal and informal studio conversations that are part of arts pedagogy, leading me to intentionally map artists ways of knowing or making sense: artistic epistemic engines, accessed in conversations about art making. To mobilize such resources as diagrammatic **tools** puts me in line with Félix Guattari's project of metamodeling. Metamodeling draws on existing frameworks across multiple areas of life to develop a personal mode of sensemaking and acting that works. **Beautifully**, Guattari embodies an ethics of a "New Gentleness" in this conception. My diagrammatic templates and **facilitation** objects function in that spirit. I believe that the cognitive and affective implications of play within a formalized game can, gently, promote **skills** towards discourse that is needed to keep peace.

By presenting **facilitation** situations as art, I claim an ethico-**aesthetic** surplus that emerges from the public performance of diverse, cognitive ecologies.

Object Lessons

Judith Leemann (b. 1971, [Walnut](#) Creek, California; lives in Boston, Massachusetts) is an artist, educator, and writer, whose hybrid [practice](#) plays the [boundaries](#) between distinct areas of professional [practice](#). Her performative and collaborative work includes what she calls object lessons: attempts to develop form languages for rendering relation. In her words, “since 2007 I’ve been experimenting with [crafting](#) wordless explanations, in which hands manipulating objects on a small stage are asked to take on the work of explanation that usually rests with language. Over time, I’ve come to be most curious about the way in which language permits certain kinds of sense to come forward while actively preventing other kinds of sense from being made. Can this play of hands and objects do the work of foregrounding relations such that the relation itself becomes the subject?”

Online: <http://studycollaboration.com/practice/object-lessons>

Caroline:

Judith, why do you make objects for groups? What got you into this? What is possible with an object in a group, that would not be possible if the object were not there?

Judith:

Initially the objects were simply [tools](#) for me, extensions or externalizations of objects of thought. The fact that they were located in the realm of the physical and not in the realm of the imaginary meant that their constraints and affordances (a brick can’t roll, an object with an axis can and must point) led to new insights into things already fairly well thought through.

I invited others to model something that occupied their thoughts, asking them to explain that thing to me using only hands moving objects, without any words. I began to see how productive it was to block the grooves cut by repeated verbal telling. Watching the objects being moved, without knowing what they stood for, I could see spatial and temporal patterns inside the telling that the use of words would have masked.

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fig. 2-13
Judith Leemann, object lessons,
2013-present, found and made
objects, dimensions variable.
Courtesy the artist. Leemann's
performative and collaborative
work includes what she calls
object lessons, or "attempts
to develop form languages
for behaviors."

I wanted a way to thicken the
possibilities for encounter with
something new inside the well
rehearsed telling of knowing.

—Judith Leemann

Nouns and proper names disappeared from the telling, I couldn't see who or what, just that a something approached another something with a pace that caused a sudden retreat. And the role of pace, which had no place in the verbal telling, now becomes legible as a potential point of shift. Analog aspects of communicational interaction lifted into ready recognition, while digital aspects necessarily took a back seat. Organizing metaphors became apparent, shareable, testable, in other words, workable. (I recently made myself a personal reminder: choose workable metaphors. In other words, let the image you use to describe a condition to yourself be one that has articulations, perforations, ways in and out. Don't accidentally describe corners that you then find cornering you. Or do. But know that you are).

In some ways this is utterly ordinary, continuous with reaching for the salt shaker to move it around the [water glass](#) to show a dinner companion just how the thing happened. By making sets of objects for particular telling contexts (turned wooden forms to talk about

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artists' conceptions of time, found and manipulated objects to work through experiences of the liminal) I wanted a way to thicken the possibilities for encounter with something new inside the well rehearsed telling of knowing. I root my embodied understanding of the challenge of meeting habit and cultivating space for 'the new' in years of somatic learning via Alexander Technique and Contact Improvisation, as well as in the pedagogies of the Goat Island performance group.

I could see spatial and temporal patterns inside the telling that the use of words would have masked.

Summoning a habitual response and running it into an obstacle breaks open space for the emergent in ways that no amount of deciding to do something new will ever allow. The anthropologist Gregory Bateson famously proposed that noise was the only source of the new—noise introduced or arriving in a system around which that system would now need to reorganize itself. Bateson's frequent co-conspirator Paul Watzlawick suggested that if you wanted to understand what was keeping a problem in place, look at what is being done to solve the problem, that solution very likely being where the cycle turns and begins again.

Watzlawick's pithy "description embeds prescription" is a touchstone for me. How we describe, and with what languages we describe, prescribes what is seeable, touchable, actionable. The play of these object based choreographies is my contribution to multiplying the languages we have at hand for casting relation anew.

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Project 404

Project 404 (founded 2014, New York) teaches [practices](#) of attention using the very devices that threaten to distract us. This [protocol](#) asks participants to focus on one image for twelve minutes of [silence](#) with the phone or device in airplane mode. The ambition of the project, as the name indicates, is to reverse the “not found” message often seen when [looking](#) for a [website](#), and to send it back—briefly—to who or whatever else wants attention.

Protocol of Attention and Adaptation

15 minute silent phase,
60–75 minute colloquy.

↓

Download the image to your smart phone.
Turn your phone on airplane mode.
Look in [silence](#) at the image provided, following these prompts.

↓

1. What do you notice? What do you notice now?
5 minutes: bell

2. Use your phone to modify or change the image
(do whatever you like, while staying in airplane mode).
What do you see?
5 minutes: bell

3. What is your relationship to this image?
Have you become crucial to what you see?
5 minutes: bell

↓

(Take a few minutes to jot down some notes about your experience of each of the three phases of the [protocol](#). When we are finished we will begin colloquy.)

Online:
<http://studycollaboration.com/practice/protocol-of-attention-and-adaptation>

The [404] [practice](#) empowers you to be imaginative in your relationship with your technology. The phone demands certain types of attention: texts pop up, we scroll through images, but with 404 you permit yourself to spend time with a single image.

—Anna Riley, Project 404
[facilitator](#), 2019

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The [404] **practice** isn't academic—we are not **looking** at an image to be right and know things about it; the **practice** is creative. We use attention as a creative medium, and the tenet of generosity extends to the image itself, of course; to the other people participating, whom we are going to listen to with generosity; and to the **practice** itself, which we want to treat with a certain amount of generosity.

—Len Nalencz, Project 404 **facilitator**, 2019

Caroline:

Project 404, why do you make **protocols** for groups? What got you into this? What is possible with a **protocol** in a group, that would not be possible if the **protocol** were not there?

Project404:

Project 404 began as a **practice** of sustained **looking** at works of art with the kinds of students I teach: digital natives, mostly first generation college students from immigrant families. The **Protocol of Attention and Adaptation** asks participants to use attention as a medium for creativity; the objects we look at are digital images, either made by the participants or found online. Doing **practices** of attention in a group requires generosity, both toward the image that is the object of the **practice** and toward each other as participants. Doing **practices** of attention together, and using the devices that usually divide us from others, enables us to connect through our powers of creativity, and offers us unexpected glimpses of ourselves.

fig. 2-14

Image of Seph Rodney facilitating a practice of Project 404 in 2015. Photo by Filip Wolak.



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Mediating

From the outset, I wanted the exhibition to “read” as a long-term project. I knew that a [website](#) would be central to this, so I made sure that the budget for the exhibition made room for an independent [website](#), to launch in tandem with the physical exhibition. I used the following language on the [website](#), to help visitors imagine a long-term project:

WOUND, adj.

/waʊnd/ mending time and attention

WOUND is a study center for [practices](#) of [listening](#) and collaboration. The study center offers free trainings in [listening](#), attention, and collaboration, all of which foreground the relationship between capitalism and time, [practice](#) and temporality. Trainings are led by UltraRed, Shaun Leonardo, the Order of the Third Bird, Project 404, the Canaries, the Design Studio for Social Intervention, [Generative Somatics](#) (Alta Starr and RJ Maccani), and the Extrapolation Factory. WOUND displays a collection of sculptural [tools](#) which can be used by visitors who have been trained. Outside of training hours, the study center is a quiet place to sit, read, and contemplate conceptions of time as articulated by Yoko Ono, taisha paggett and Ashley Hunt, Dave McKenzie, Judith Leeman, Adelheid Mers, Chloe Bass, Linda Montano, Danica Phelps, the New York Horological Society, and the National Watch and Clock Museum.

STAFF

Interim Director: Caroline Woolard

Art Historian: Stamatina Gregory

Assistants: to be announced soon

[Facilitators](#): (link to [facilitators](#))

Trainings: (link to [trainings](#))

[Tools](#): (link to [tools](#))

The Study Center
for Group Work

MEMBERSHIP

To support WOUND, please become a member. Membership is offered at sliding scale, from \$20-\$200, based on what you can afford. Members are notified of trainings before the general public, and enable us to continue our work.

THANKS

Special thanks to Stamatina Gregory and Cooper Union for making this project possible. Thanks also to Jennifer Monson, Aaron Landsman, Risa Shoup, Abigail Statinsky, Alicia Boone Jean-Noel, Robert Sember, and Athena Kokoronis for introducing Stamatina Gregory and Caroline Woolard to artists, designers, dancers, and [facilitators](#). This project would not be possible without ongoing conversations with Leigh Claire La Berge, Louise Ma, Or Zubalsky, Susan Jahoda, Emilio Martínez Poppe, and Pedagogy Group members. WOUND is supported by a generous grant from the Rubin Foundation and from Cooper Union.

HOURS: Wednesday through Sunday from 1-8 p.m. from October 12-November 11

GRAND OPENING PARTY: October 13, 6-8 p.m.

LOCATION: 41 Cooper Gallery, 41 Cooper Square, on Third Avenue between 6th and 7th Streets

If you would like to host WOUND, please contact [<email>](#). WOUND is currently seeking spaces that can host [facilitation](#) and training.

Curator Stamatina Gregory allowed me to add the following text to the curatorial statement that a viewer would read when entering the gallery, as a wall text in vinyl:

WOUND is a study center for [practices](#) of [listening](#), attention, and collaboration. In its month-long installment at The Cooper Union, WOUND director Caroline Woolard worked

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with curator Stamatina Gregory to select **tools** from artists and collectives whose multi-year **practices** register in the visual arts. In its online archive, WOUND will present a full spectrum of **tools**, **facilitators**, and **practices** from the performing arts, speculative design, community organizing, geography, and engineering. Director Caroline Woolard calls WOUND, “a study center for the mending of time and attention”...

By writing a “month-long installment at The Cooper Union,” and “director Caroline Woolard,” rather than “this exhibition,” and “artist Caroline Woolard,” I convinced more than a few people that the center had been open for years, and was on its way to other locations. By writing this on the wall, and online, in many ways, it became true. I was approached by Malick Kane, a curator from Dakar, about bringing the center there, at the opening. The center traveled to Glasgow, to Oslo, and to the Free Library of Philadelphia.

In addition to the wall text, I wanted to make sure that I hired people to engage visitors in the space in ways that created an atmosphere of “study” and welcome. For the first installment of The Study Center, in the gallery space at Cooper Union, I knew that I needed to train **facilitators**. I hired people who had been students of mine at the New School and at Cooper Union, and recent graduates that Stamatina Gregory recommended, to work in the space: Emilio Martínez Poppe, Jordan Delzell, Anna Vila, Anna Zinovieff Papadimitriou, and Samantha Rosner. I held a training for them, and I also created a printed PDF for the **facilitators** to review, at work, so that they would be prepared to answer questions that visitors might ask.

As someone who has spent the last decade in a lot of **meetings** with groups, I have realised that to organize new projects you essentially spend your life either sitting at a table in a meeting or typing on a computer. I’m hoping that we can move from sitting in spaces that feel very allergic to imagination, the formica table and fluorescent lights that you imagine at most organising spaces—to spaces that are exciting that are developed with artists and organisers so that the furniture itself reminds us of the vision of the world we want to see.

—Caroline Woolard, 2016

The Study Center
for Group Work

Mediating

WELCOME!

Welcome to The Study Center. We call the objects here “tools,” because they are used to facilitate listening, attention, or collaboration. The Study Center is dedicated to mending time and attention, which means that we aim to offer experiences of collaborative time: time which is specifically marked by our engagement with one another.

You can use a few of the “tools” right now, if you like. If you are interested in trying out any of the “text tools” over here, you are welcome to check one out and work with it anywhere in The Study Center. We have two practice spaces in the back and many places to sit. Or, if you would like to practice using Judith Leemann’s tools for non-verbal communication, taisha paggett and Ashley Hunt’s par course mirror, or the Extrapolation Factory’s speculative design tools, I can show you how to use any of these.

Many of the “tools” are activated in events—which we call “trainings”—where the artists who have created certain tools will demonstrate their use. If you are interested in coming to a training, please see the flyer and be sure to RSVP online. I can RSVP for you, right now, if you prefer.

You can use a few of the “tools” right now, if you like. If you are interested in trying out any of the “text tools” over here, you are welcome to check one out and work with it anywhere in The Study Center.

Some of the tools in The Study Center are on view only. These tools cannot be used either because there are no trainings scheduled at this time or because the tools are too precious to be used by the general public. For example, we have one of the only prototypes of Paul Ryan’s *Threeing* rugs, called *Rose Window*. This was created by Paul Ryan (1943-2013) and Luis Berrios-Negrón (b. 1971) as a 1:3 scale-model for DOCUMENTA 13 (2010-12) in hand-spun alpaca which was hand-dyed and woven in Peru. This work comes to us from the collection of Jean Gardner, Paul Ryan’s widow, who teaches at the New School.

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Q&A

HOW DO YOU “MEND TIME AND ATTENTION”?

WOUND aims to mend time and attention by providing:

- (1) **Practice** Spaces for groups
- (2) A study center for **practice**-related readings and sculptural **tools**
- (3) Trainings in **practices** of **listening**, attention, and collaboration.

WHY DO VISUAL ARTISTS NEED **PRACTICE** SPACES?

Just as dancers take classes throughout their lives, WOUND aims to become a permanent **practice** space for group work in the visual arts. **Practice** requires duration. Art departments and art institutions have increased funding for social **practice** since the early 2000s, but the communities that are rewarded within academic and non-profit spaces tend to be short-lived and outcome-oriented. Transformative **practices** cannot be developed or contained in a month-long exhibition, a four-year or two-year degree, or a year-long grant. To move toward an **aesthetic** of **practice**, further study is required.

WOUND aims to become
a permanent **practice**
space for group work in
the visual arts.

WHAT “**TOOLS**” DOES THE STUDY CENTER COLLECT AND STUDY?

The Study Center holds a collection of small objects, writing, and ephemera used in group work. This Study Center makes impossible the fantasy of an autonomous object, one removed from collective **practice** and historical context. Every object in The Study Center is called a “tool” and is either “on view” or “in use” in trainings by collectives and politically engaged artists. WOUND links a wide range of collaborative and participatory **practices**, from the so-called 1960s dematerialization of the art object (tool on view: Yoko Ono), to 1970s cybernetic systems (tool on view: Paul Ryan), to 1980s feminist durational performances (Linda Montano). The Study Center places **practices** of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s in conversation with artists and collectives of the 2000s who continue to emphasize collective **practice** by distributing texts, prototypes, and **tools**.

WHY DO WE NEED TO BE TRAINED?

If most New Yorkers have no experiences of **democracy** at work, at home, in school, or online, how will we learn to work together? This Study Center provides a **practice** space for joint work and joint decision-making.

Every object in The Study Center is called a “tool” and is either “on view” or “in use” in trainings by collectives and politically engaged artists.

If [democracy](#) is “an endless meeting” and socialism “requires too many evenings,” then WOUND cultivates behaviors that might allow groups to gather together more carefully. WOUND director Caroline Woolard says, “I see this study center as a demonstration of the future of art school. Art departments will be the places where interdisciplinary teams are formed, utilizing [practices](#) of [listening](#), attention, and collaboration that this study center honors.”

IS IT WOONND OR WAAAAUND?

You decide. We say waaaund, to remind ourselves that time-keeping devices are always time-producing devices. As the past participle of the verb to wind, “wound” reaches back to a past that has seemingly been set in motion. And yet, as a present participle of the same verb, as seen, for example, in the phrase “the clock is wound,” the verb

indicates a potentiality that can be altered, it indexes a conclusion that is not foregone. Nonetheless, when most visitors first see the word W-O-U-N-D, they will make an association to the much more common noun form: a wound, as in a harm or an injury.

Perhaps the current injury on view at WOUND is in thinking that time has been wound against our desires: there is “too little time,” time moves “too quickly,” our time has been attenuated. WOUND asks: How, through collaboration, can we unwind time in order to render it open, unspecified, and inviting? How can we recognize the nature of our seemingly dwindling attention not as the result of being “wound up,” but as the result of being hurt or injured, an emotional claim which, necessarily, implies the ability to be [healed](#)? Can these [practices](#) render time a qualitative not quantitative phenomenon, something that is marked and construed for groups through mutuality rather than received through [authority](#)?

WHO MADE THIS SPACE?

WOUND director Caroline Woolard worked with curator Stamatina Gregory to select [tools](#) from artists and collectives whose multi-year [practices](#) register in the visual

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arts. Caroline Woolard is the creative director and exhibition designer for the space, and the “tools” in use and on view come from 19 artists and collectives: Ultra-red, Shaun Leonardo, the Order of the Third Bird, Project 404, Sick Time with Canaries, the Design Studio for Social Intervention, the Extrapolation Factory, Yoko Ono, taisha paggett and Ashley Hunt, Paul Ryan, Dave McKenzie, Judith Leemann, Adelheid Mers, Chloe Bass, Linda Montano, Danica Phelps, Matthew Buckingham, Nightwood, the New York Horological Society, and the National Watch and Clock Museum. Caroline Woolard makes art and institutions for the **solidarity economy**. Her method enjoins objects to their contexts of **circulation**. Woolard builds sculptures for **barter** only as she also co-creates international **barter** networks; she fabricates model Shaker housing as she also co-convenes organizers of community **land trusts**. WOUND, the study center launched here at 41 Cooper Gallery, is a continuation of Woolard’s dedication to art and also to the institutions which enable these objects to circulate.

Can these **practices**
render time a qualitative
not quantitative
phenomenon?

In its online archive, WOUND will present a full spectrum of **tools**, **facilitators**, and **practices** from the performing arts, speculative design, community organizing, geography, and engineering.

WHERE WILL THE STUDY CENTER GO NEXT?

We are **looking** for a permanent location. For inquiries regarding travelling The Study Center’s collection, or to offer a space to WOUND, please email Caroline Woolard at caroline@woundstudycenter.com.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

Go to <http://woundstudycenter.com> and read more about the artists and collectives in the show from this binder here.

HOW CAN I SUPPORT WOUND?

Please become a member. Yearly membership is offered at a sliding scale, from \$20-\$200, based on what you can afford. Members are notified of trainings before the general public, have access to **tools** on member-only days, and enable us to continue to provide trainings to the public. Please write to info@woundstudycenter.com if you would like to become a member.

When the Glasgow School of Art invited me to give a lecture in Glasgow, I convinced them to commission a video so that I would not need to travel, and the video would honor the [practices](#) of a wide range of people in The Study Center. This way, the \$1000 could be used to pay filmmakers and go online, visible to thousands of people. I wrote an email, asking members of The Study Center to participate, and explaining the overall budget. Many people agreed to be involved, so I went ahead and hired Herman Jean-Noel, a filmmaker who I met at TradeSchool.coop ^{see chapter 3}, and who made a film about my work at Cornell.

I wrote Herman an email to see if he would be able to do this job.

SUBJECT: job? ... study center video update for \$1k by March 10th (shooting video Feb 16th)

February 3, 2019

Good morning dear Herman,

I hope you are loving CA! I just got an invitation to make an updated video of The Study Center to be shown at the Glasgow School of Art (in place of me going there, as this way other groups can use it). I want it to be like the [beautiful](#) one you made two whole years ago, but updated as I will describe below.

Questions:

- Do you have time/interest to do this? (see below for project scope)
- Are you free on Saturday Feb 16th to shoot video for it (location TBA, but someplace with good light/sound that isn't too far from us)
- Can you do this for \$1k? That's what they are giving me, so I would have them send it to you directly, or I can Venmo you if that's better for tax reasons.

Scope:

You would be doing the audio, titles, a bit more video shooting, and editing. I would use

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the intro audio in your video (<https://vimeo.com/198242353> starting at 00:11 and going to 00:42 ... possibly until 01:18 or even 01:47) From there, it could move into more of a tutorial where I teach people how to do *THREEING* (I can explain) while these objects are in the background, on a meeting table, to hint at all the things we could get help with in groups:

- a ruler and a ribbon from Chloe Bass
<http://studycollaboration.com/practice/field-guide-spatial-intimacy>
- an orange scarf from the *Order of the Third Bird* <http://www.mildred-slane.com/upcoming/2018/8/6/attention-lab-order-of-the-third-bird>
- the *water* clock, keeping time
<http://carolinewoolard.com/project/amulet/>
- a marker board, from <http://studycollaboration.com/practice/three-line-matrix>
- an object TBA from <https://cargocollective.com/mirrorchotilt>

It needs to be done by March 10th.

Let me know what's possible, and if you can do it, or not. No hard feelings if the budget is too small, or if you are too busy. I wish it were a bigger budget, but here we go. I'm giving the whole budget to you (or to another person, if you can't do it). Just let me know, when you can, or perhaps we can talk later today.

Sending light and appreciation,
Caroline

Herman said yes, so I coordinated with the artists from the Study Center who were open to doing this shoot and sharing their existing footage with us. To orient Herman as the filmmaker and editor, I created a document that outlined the plan for the day of shooting and that outlined the clips to use from existing footage artists had sent me.

THIS Sunday: 567 Carlton Ave Brooklyn NY
(not the best light)

10-11:00 Set up 45 mins—Herman

11-11:30 Chloe

11:30-12:00 Caroline misc objects video shoot
(see below)

12 or 12:30 Sal around noon

1:00-1:30 Caroline *Threeing*/misc objects video
shoot (see below)

1:30-2:00 Pack up/leave

Here is the link to the videos.
[http://www.mediafire.com/file/gvhw5eciuyqhf0t/
Archive.zip/file](http://www.mediafire.com/file/gvhw5eciuyqhf0t/Archive.zip/file)

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VIDEO SCRIPT / CUTS / SHOT LIST:

Use old Intro <https://vimeo.com/198242353>
(00:12–00:42...possibly until 01:18 or
even 01:47)

Record new audio:

Hello, my name is Caroline Woolard. I am the interim Director of the Study Center for Group Work. Today I want to introduce you to some of the **practices** that you might want to try out in your own self-organized groups. Self-organized means that you are doing this without a boss.

I started this center because I spend half of my time thinking about art, and the other half of my time thinking about how people can work together to effect social change. I love making objects, and yet, I am often in ugly meeting spaces with formica and horrible lighting.

I wondered: what if the objects in our **meetings** were as **beautiful** as the conversations we were having?

I realized that a lot of artists have been working on this—creating ways for groups to gather together and often using objects to do so—so I started this Study Center to share what I was learning about all of the artists who want to facilitate group work, dialogue, and transformation.

I like to say: What if the **tables** and objects in our spaces were as imaginative as the conversations we were having? I have found that by bringing sculptural objects to community gatherings, I make tangible the slow temporality of community-building; people sense the care that has gone into the **facilitation practices** I bring to group work.

The reason I am so excited about making objects for **facilitation** is that it solves two deep desires I have: (1) to make **beautiful** objects and also (2) remain in **facilitation** settings, **meetings**, and group settings where I can offer my **skills** as an artist and honor existing, slowly-developed, community-generated **facilitation skills** without trying to author them.

(1) to make **beautiful** objects and also (2) remain in **facilitation** settings, **meetings**, and group settings where I can offer my **skills** as an artist and honor existing, slowly-developed, community-generated **facilitation skills** without trying to author them.

Think of the last time you were trying to get people together to do something... maybe you wanted to ask for a pay raise, for better working conditions, or to create a project together.

What is so difficult about people coming together, on their own terms, without a boss?

Have you ever tried to get together with a group of people, outside of work, and had a horrible time getting things done?

Most people have very little experience with group work. They might come together and wonder: Who is going to send out invitations to gather together? How can we make decisions once we are together? Can we **trust** one another to do what we say we are going to do, without a boss?

It turns out that visual artists have been thinking about how to collaborate, and developing collaborative methods that they want to share. Today, I want to describe a few of the collaborative methods that artists have developed to help us work on:

- group roles (**Threeing**),
- the politics of the space between us (field

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for Group Work

- guide to spatial intimacy),
- non-verbal communication (*Preposition and Prosthesis*)
- attention as a medium (the *Protocol of Attention and Adaptation*, the Birds)
- theater games to explore structural *violence*/social identity (*mirror*/echo/tilt)

Threeing: Starting in the 1970s, the video artist (not politician) Paul Ryan developed a method for collaboration called *Threeing*. Ryan described *Threeing* in this way: "Just as training wheels help one learn to ride a bicycle, so the [*Threeing* method] helps people to learn *Threeing*. Once people learn to change roles without confusion, the training wheels come off, the [*facilitation* objects can be] discarded."

- [Smithsonian Video to use](#)

Here is how to *practice Threeing*:

EXERCISE # 1 DRAWING

Give each participant a drawing pad and a drawing pencil or marker. Each person is asked to draw one spontaneous line on the paper, all at the same time (First Skill Set).

Team rotates the pad to the other members of the team. Now each member of the team reacts to the line in front of them with another single line that indicates their reaction (Second Skill Set). Rotate pads again.

Each team member takes their time and adds another line to the drawing that seeks to balance or mediate between the two lines in front of them (Third Skill Set).

Show each other the final compositions.
Repeat procedure for as much time as you have.

The Field Guide to Spatial Intimacy is...
(Chloe audio recording on Sunday)
[Chloe Bass video](#)

Propositions and Prosthesis is...
(audio from Judith???)
- <http://www.judithleemann.com/object-lessons/>

The Braid is... (audio coming from Adelheid by Monday) [Olivia Junell and Asha Iman Veal video](#) to use

I condensed *The Braid* template from a large number of conversations with artists whom I asked: How do you work? It became very clear that nothing can be considered external to doing cultural work. Because of that, *The Braid* is visualized as a continuum that is traversed by a path. I think of it as a topology. It can stretch, but not tear.

The Braid template was made as an invitation. You are invited to unfold it into the present moment, your present moment, to inscribe your own *practice* as a unique path within a continuum that is both personal and shared. This works really well in pairs, with each person appreciatively inquiring about how the conversation partner works.

We made videos of artists and other cultural workers using the template to share how we inhabit these spaces differently, and to give examples how *The Braid* template can be used.

The Birds are... (video with Sal on Sunday)
- attention as a medium (the *Protocol of Attention and Adaptation*, the Birds)

Mirror/Echo Tilt is...
(video coming from Melanie/Shawn)
- waiting...

Project 404 is... (audio coming from Len by Monday)
- the theater of social identity
(*mirror*/echo/tilt)

Water Clocks... to record Sunday
- to think about time in groups, to mark it unconventionally
- include the video of the hour *glass* that never runs out
- include video of the net and the ceiling?
- include video of the aqueous event object?

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This project continues today, as it is core to my interest in making objects for groups, and in continuing to learn how to transform myself in relationship to other people, through collaboration. See *The Meeting*^{see chapter 1} for more.

Managing

Ideas take a long time to form, and even longer to find financial support, if that is what they require. I want to share an unsuccessful grant with you, to demonstrate the patience and persistence that I believe are required to bring a big project to life. For example, I wrote this Creative Capital grant for what would become The Study Center in 2013, but I did not get it.

Study

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If **democracy** is an endless meeting, why not make **meetings beautiful**? A *Beautiful Meeting* honors process over product, connecting groups who want better **meetings** to a collective of artist-**facilitators** who use sculptural **tools** and installation environments to create **beautiful meetings**.

A *Beautiful Meeting* honors group work by creating a living collection of sculptural **tools** and a system for booking artist-**facilitators** in installation environments. Members of the public will browse sculptures made for dialog and request artist-**facilitators** for unconventional **meetings** in installation environments. The collective will be comprised of artists from The Exchange Archive (from the Exchange Café at MoMA) as well as artists who emerge from a call for participants that will be made with the launch of this project. This project will shift the context for **socially engaged art**, cultivating primary publics for these works. Looking back to Lygia Clark and Paul Ryan, a growing group of artists are interested in sculptures made by and for small groups.

HISTORY: Last year at MoMA, working on Artists Experiment, I found many 20th century precedents for one-on-one relational **practices**. I found artworks, neither singular nor

static, that revolve around voluntary, reciprocal commitments and sculptural **tools**. Rather than sitting alone on a pedestal, these artworks use **tools** to facilitate dialog. Meaning is made in action as two people gather, build, and distribute ideas. These artworks refuse to separate production from objecthood; **political economy** from the presentation of ideas. I want to honor this history, and make it contemporary by creating a nomadic collective, a distributed network of artist-**facilitators** who make and use sculptural objects and are dedicated to group process. A *Beautiful Meeting* is the Dematerialization of the Art Object in the 21st century—the **facilitation** context of the art object made manifest.

APPROACH: A *Beautiful Meeting* accepts the fusion of **websites** with interactions, social **practices** with social networks. Noticing that the cultural landscape of the 21st century is not a lake or a mountain, but a google search bar, A *Beautiful Meeting* demands that more publics be created for social engagement of shared decision-making. What if works circulated not for their uniqueness or autonomy, but for their **beauty** within a commitment to community struggle, for their ability to be replicated and altered? This work carries on the traditions

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of fluxus, dada, situationists, and **conceptual art**: replicable objects made in and for groups.

IMPACT: When collaboration is understood as “working jointly to create something new,” it often translates to “my **whim** is your **labor**.” This project is an attempt to wrestle the term “collaboration” from ambiguous descriptions of contemporary cultural experience, making collaboration not simply shared **labor**, but shared decision-making **power**. While participation, which I define as informed engagement in a predetermined structure, is valuable and necessary in many contexts, understanding the drive for collaboration as an enthusiasm for shared decision-making **power**, not just joint work, has wide-ranging implications for direct **democracy** in art projects, businesses, and classrooms.

Study

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I had to convince NYFA that The Study Center was going to become a business.

I write over twenty grants for every grant I get. It was not until 2015, when Stamatina Gregory approached me, that this project was able to come to life. After that, I applied for a \$25,000 grant from the New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA), and I got it. I had to convince NYFA that The Study Center was going to become a business. To write this, I clarified aspects of the previous Creative Capital application that had been unclear, looked at the text I had written for the exhibition at Cooper Union, and used the start-up and computer engineering jargon that I learned through OurGoods.org and TradeSchool.coop ^{see chapter 3}.

Managing

Additional thanks to:
Peter Cobb at NYFA ([Producer](#)),
Rudy Kanhye at the Glasgow
School of Art ([Producer](#)),
Or Zubalsky (UX Designer,
Developer), Leonard Nalencz
(Researcher), Anna Riley
(Researcher), Herman Jean-Noel
and Neglakay Productions
(Video), Danielle Jackson
(Event [Facilitator](#) and
Researcher), Anna Vila (Event
[Facilitator](#)), Emilio Martinez
Poppe (Event [Facilitator](#)),
Anna Papadimitriou (Event
[Facilitator](#)).

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NYFA: What need does your enterprise fill for the public, or what problem do you solve?

If [democracy](#) is an endless meeting, how can we learn to gather together more [beautifully](#)? I believe that the future of arts education lies in the ability for artists to teach collaboration to interdisciplinary teams across sectors.

NYFA: What will your company make, or what service will you provide?

Caroline Woolard is the Director/CEO of a new Study Center for Group Work in New York City. The Center offers meeting-[facilitation](#) and collaboration trainings to corporate clients and community based organizations using sculptural [tools](#) in unconventional environments. For example, Project 404 teaches CEOs how to focus on a single image on their smart phone in a gallery in Chelsea; Extrapolation Factory provides futurist scenarios for activists in the basement of a museum.

NYFA: Describe the market (or potential market) for your enterprise's product or service.

According to informational interviews with Charlie O'Donnel of Brooklyn Ventures and Scott Benaglio of SOVRN State, corporate clients

spend \$5000 on similar half-day retreats and team-building [events](#). Non-profits are able to spend \$1000 for a similar experience, and wealthy individuals are willing to spend \$100 each for workshops of this nature. I will provide scholarships and low-cost workshops to grassroots organizations and people who demonstrate need with philanthropic support and a sliding-scale pricing model.

NYFA: What kinds of sales has your company had thus far? If none, what other metrics might indicate traction or future success?

The Study Center received a grant of \$30,000 from the Rubin Foundation as well as a matching grant of \$20,000 from Cooper Union to open a pilot program from October 13-November 18th at the Cooper Union. In under a month, The Study Center held twelve workshops with over 150 participants, an opening party with 300 people in attendance, and reviews in the *New York Times*, *Artforum*, *Vice*, and *Art in America*. After launching a successful pilot at Cooper Union this year, Caroline Woolard is seeking support to move this Study Center from its current phase toward a sustainable business for artists, designers, and [facilitators](#).

Collectively-
Initiated

NYFA: Who are your competitors? Who else is doing what you do?

No one is providing training in group work led by artists. The Center for Art and [Activism](#) and the Center for Story-based Strategy both provide trainings for artists who are interested in using creativity in [activism](#), but no arts-based consultancies specialize in artist-led group work. SOVRN State offers unique arts-based experiences and artwork license agreements to corporate clients, but does not do experiences related to group work led by artists. While many artists attempt to work with clients on an individual basis, artists have yet to band together to create a visible platform for their services surrounding group work. The Study Center does exactly this.

NYFA: How is this enterprise involved in the arts?

During our pilot program, The Study Center revealed a shift in the arts toward group work.

"Wound" also shows how the [art world](#)'s breakneck schedule of exhibitions, fairs and biennials undercuts the ability of [socially engaged artists](#) to develop long-term strategies and [practices](#).

—*The New York Times*

"And yet "Mending Time and Attention," an exhibition and a series of workshops organized by WOUND, seeks to [heal](#) the [pain](#) inflicted by late capitalism's compartmentalization and commodification of time."

—*Artforum*

"When artists create opportunities for support and [mutual aid](#) rather than unquestioningly competing with one another for meager resources, they open a small space of resistance to the divisiveness that comes from an economically precarious existence."

—*Art in America*

NYFA: Please describe the roles of each team member.

Caroline Woolard is the founding Director, currently operating as a technical project manager, communications director, and HR support for The Study Center. Or Zubalsky is the lead computer engineer, responsible for development of the [website](#). Staff assistants in The Study Center include Emilio Martínez Poppe, Jordan Delzell, Anna Vila, Anna Zinovieff Papadimitriou, and Samantha Rosner. Mentors include Robin Chase of ZipCar, Charlie O'Donnell of Brooklyn Ventures, and Tom Finkelpearl of the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs.

The Study Center
for Group Work

NYFA: Has anyone on the team started a company before? If so, what?

Caroline Woolard ran an 8,000 square foot studio space for 40 artists for eight years: from 2008-2016. The space led to Woolard convening the NYC Real Estate Investment Cooperative.

More information is here: <http://www.art21.org/newyorkcloseup/films/caroline-woolard-flips-the-real-estate-script/>

NYFA: What other significant accomplishments have team members had that we should know about?

Woolard's [practice](#) produces objects and develops new contexts in which those objects may circulate. For Woolard, the enjoining of object

and context is the sine qua non of artistic [practice](#). Since 2007, she has created Exchange Café (MoMA, 2014), the [barter](#) networks OurGoods.org and TradeSchool.coop (2008-present), as well as cultural equity platform BFAMFAPhD (2013-present) and the NYC Real Estate Investment Cooperative (2015-present).

The budget for the project is here: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1L9iqjkEPirBhu-znWeOXufa3GVthii_05smX-pzkMrWs/edit?usp=sharing

NOTES:

2016 reflects the annual budget based upon what it would be, had we run our pilot for longer than one month.

*

New Foundation TBA refers to multiple Foundations I am in dialog with, many of whom I have cultivated relationships with over years.

**

[Nonprofit](#) Commissions / Speaking refers to public speaking and commissions.

Currently, Caroline Woolard makes \$20k a year on public speaking, with a public lecture every week Sept-Dec and Feb-May at \$1000. As visibility for the Study Center increases, public speaking invitations will increase as well.

Workshop space was donated by Cooper Union during the pilot in October and November of 2016. In 2017, space will be donated by NYPL and RISD.

"Partner Shares for Outreach" is the grant funding the study center shares with outreach partner organizations. I find that these partnerships are more successful when the partner has a financial stake in the project.

INCOME	2016	2017	2018
Individual Support			
Individual donations	\$0	\$10,000 (pending)	\$10,000 (pending)
Memberships (@\$100 yearly)	\$0	\$1,000 (pending×10)	\$10,000 (pending×100)
Total individual support	\$0	\$11,000	\$20,000
Foundations			
Cooper Union	\$15,000	\$0	\$0
Rubin Foundation	\$20,000	\$0	\$0
New Foundation TBA*	\$0	\$5,000 (pending)	\$10,000 (pending)
NYFA	\$0	\$15,000 (pending)	\$0 (pending)
Total Foundations	\$35,000	\$20,000	\$10,000
Sales			
Nonprofit Commissions/speaking	\$750	\$1,500 (pending)	\$14,000 (pending)
Low-cost Workshops (@ \$500)	\$5,000 (secured x 10)	\$5,000 (pending×10)	\$7,500 (pending×15)
Corporate Workshops (@ \$5k)	\$0	\$25,000 (pending×5)	\$50,000 (pending ×10)
University Workshops (@ \$1k)	\$0	\$5,000 (pending×5)	\$10,000 (pending×10)
Total Sales	\$5,750	\$36,500	\$81,500
In Kind			
Site Engineer	\$5,500 (secured)	\$0	\$0
Site Coding	\$12,700 (secured)	\$0	\$0
Graphic Design	\$3,000 (secured)	\$0	\$0
Outreach	\$10,050 (secured)	\$0	\$0
Fundraising	\$11,800 (secured)	\$25,000 (secured)	\$0
Utilities	\$2,400 (secured)	\$2,400 (secured)	\$2,400 (secured)
Workshop space ***	\$50,000 (secured)	\$50,000 (secured)	\$50,000 (pending)
Home Office Expense	\$9,000 (secured)	\$9,000 (secured)	\$0 (secured)
Total In Kind	\$104,450	\$86,400	\$52,400
TOTAL INCOME	\$145,200	\$153,900	\$163,900
EXPENSES	TOTAL/IN-KIND	TOTAL/IN-KIND	TOTAL/IN-KIND
Personnel			
Site Back End Engineer	\$7,500/\$5,500	\$5,000/\$0	\$5,000/\$0
Site Front End Coding	\$15,000/\$12,700	\$2,000/\$0	\$2,000/\$0
Graphic Designer	\$3,000/\$3,000	\$3,000/\$0	\$3,000/\$0
Outreach Staff	\$12,250/\$10,050	\$30,000/\$0	\$30,000/\$0
Fundraising Staff	\$14,000/\$11,800	\$30,000/\$25,000	\$30,000/\$0
Facilitators (@ \$500 per event)	\$5,000/\$0	\$10,000/\$0	\$17,500/\$0
Event Assistants (@ \$100 per event)	\$1,000/\$0	\$2,000/\$0	\$3,500/\$0
Total Personnel	\$57,750/\$43,050	\$82,000/\$25,000	\$91,000/\$0
General Administrative Expenses			
Printed Materials	\$600/\$0	\$1,000/\$0	\$1,000/\$0
Office Supplies	\$300/\$0	\$500/\$0	\$500/\$0
Utilities	\$2,400/\$2,400	\$2,400/\$2,400	\$2,400/\$2,400
Workshop space ***	\$50,000/\$50,000	\$50,000/\$50,000	\$50,000/\$50,000
Home office expense	\$9,000/\$9,000	\$9,000/\$9,000	\$9,000/\$0
Total Administrative	\$62,300/\$61,400	\$62,900/\$61,400	\$62,900/\$52,400
Other			
Partner shares for outreach ****	\$0/\$0	\$5,000/\$0	\$5,000/\$0
Total Other	\$0/\$0	\$5,000/\$0	\$5,000/\$0
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$120,050/\$104,450	\$86,400/\$86,400	\$158,900/\$52,400
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$25,150	\$4,000	\$5,000

Managing

The Study Center
for Group Work