Allmännen (The Common Room) Pilot residency [User] [Decentering/Supportable] [Resident]

Allmännen (The Common Room) was a Vinnova-funded project at the Faculty of Fine, Applied and Performing Arts, Gothenburg University (2018–2021). The aim of the project was to begin to develop and pilot a new public model for collaboration and usership between the university and society. Referring directly to the Swedish commons concept of Allmännen and illustrated through terms such as Allmän (general), Allemansrätten (right of public access), Allmänheten (the general public), the commons can be viewed as not only a right to public access, but a relation between societal institutions and the individual citizen. A relation which within the context of Sweden, could and should naturally be applied and extended to the publicly funded university as a common societal resource.

Although there are differences between the natural commons studied by influential figures such as Elinor Ostrom and the university as ‘commons’, the analogy stresses the relational dimensions between viable and sustainable institutions, and the public trust in the commons & its resources. Through a series of residencies in 2021, Allmännen (The Common Room) began by inviting practitioners, collectives and organisations to help think through questions of what kind of common resources are produced within the university? How can these resources be developed as public commons? In what sense are these resources enclosed, vulnerable and at risk of exploitation? And what is needed today to produce a socially sustainable institution? By addressing these questions, the residencies through scholarship and practice piloted and began to suggest alternative modes and models for university collaboration and usership.

The Ballad of Goodwill

Is the privilege of working in the university being compromised by the dominant transactional cultures of contemporary education? Are universities in danger of losing the goodwill of their staff and students? Where does goodwill end and unpaid labour begin? Organised to coincide with International Workers’ Day, The Ballad of Goodwill was an experimental one-day symposium where a new workers’ ballad was collectively produced and sung by soprano and librettist Roxanne Korda. Symposium guests were invited to listen to guest speakers in open conversation, and all participants contributed to the production of a ballad through retelling, scripting and discussing the often-hidden economies of goodwill in academic labour and life.

The lecturers lament at the demise of goodwill in the neoliberal university
The Ballad of Goodwill

**Post Workers Theatre introduction to The Ballad of Goodwill**

Anna Hume (Critical Studies, American Studies, Sociology, Cultural Studies, English, Gender Studies, Film, and Performance) at Goldsmiths University of London 2019-2021

**The Ballad of Goodwill**

Sung by Roxane Korda to a reworking of The Ballad of Flowers, composed by Charlie Brand and sung by Anthony McCool

As through the University I passed of late
Goodwill I met in a sorrowful state,
Both Cold and Goodwill are needed it’s clear
Marketisation looks on us in fear
Education and Goodwill are needed it’s clear

- Fred Moten & Stefano Harney

I was thinking a lot about the problem of goodwill in the University. It’s a problem I have been wrestling with for a long time and it is the stuff of my life. It’s a problem that I have been thinking about in my classes and in my research. It’s a problem that I have been thinking about in my conversations with my students and colleagues.

It’s a problem that I have been thinking about in my own life. It’s a problem that I have been thinking about in my own experiences. It’s a problem that I have been thinking about in the experiences of others. It’s a problem that I have been thinking about in the experiences of the University.

It’s a problem that I have been thinking about in the experiences of the academic world. It’s a problem that I have been thinking about in the experiences of the academic profession. It’s a problem that I have been thinking about in the experiences of the academic community. It’s a problem that I have been thinking about in the experiences of the academic world.

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