



# Activity Report 2024

6 February 2025

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**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” (iuzw, 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 fourth full year of its existence, from 1 January until 31 December 2024.**



## **Sqridgings**

**In 2024, a number of existing projects continued, with new activities. In particular, the work on the Iconoclastic Controversies 2 (“Mirror of Conflict”) project (1) was continued, with an exhibition in the Hollar Gallery in Prague. Also the Moulding Nature project (2) had new output in 2024.**

**New projects in 2024 were the production of a visual essay about the permanent collection of the House of European History in Brussels (3), the start of the production of the film Agon: Constructions of Democracy (4) and the application for a doctoral network centred around arts-based research (5) together with a series of presentations on this topic.**

**As a footnote, the exhibition, which was scheduled to take place at the Estonian National Museum, in Tartu, in November 2024, was cancelled by the museum, and a new location is being sought.**



# 1

## **Sqridging 1: Iconoclastic Controversies 2 (“Mirror of Conflict”)** **Nico Carpentier**

**The organisation of the Iconoclastic Controversies 2 exhibitions continued, with the following iteration:**

- **1 to 6 October 2024, at the Hollar Gallery, Prague (Czech Republic);**

**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.**

# The Mirror of Conflict Zrcadlo konfliktu

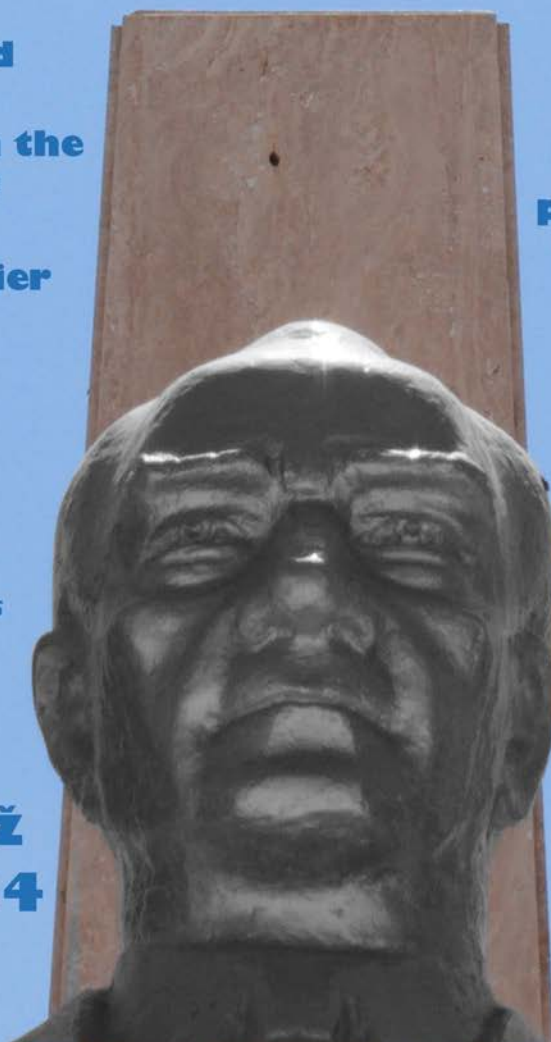
**An arts-based  
research  
exhibition on the  
memorials of  
Cyprus by  
Nico Carpentier**

**Umělecky  
zaměřená  
výzkumná  
výstava o  
památnících na  
Kypru od Nico  
Carpentiera**

**Hollar  
Gallery**

**Smetanovo nábř. 995  
Praha I**

**1/10 to/až  
6/10/2024**



 **INSTITUTE OF COMMUNICATION  
STUDIES AND JOURNALISM**  
Faculty of Social Sciences  
Charles University



The SORIDGE logo, identical to the one at the top of the page.

## Photos of the Hollar Gallery exhibition (and its opening)









(Photos by Nico Carpentier and Vaia Doudaki)

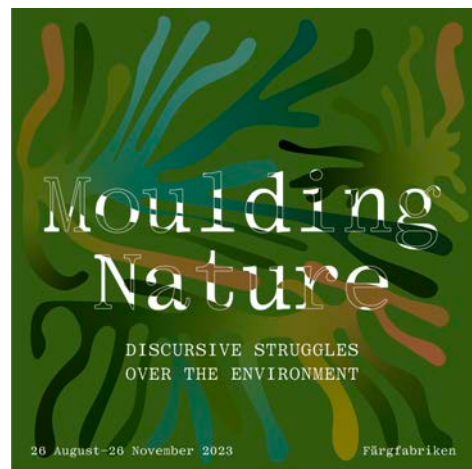
**Videos about IC2 @ the Hollar Gallery**

- [Short introductory video] > <https://vimeo.com/1013154592>
- [Short video impression] > <https://vimeo.com/1018018958>

## 2

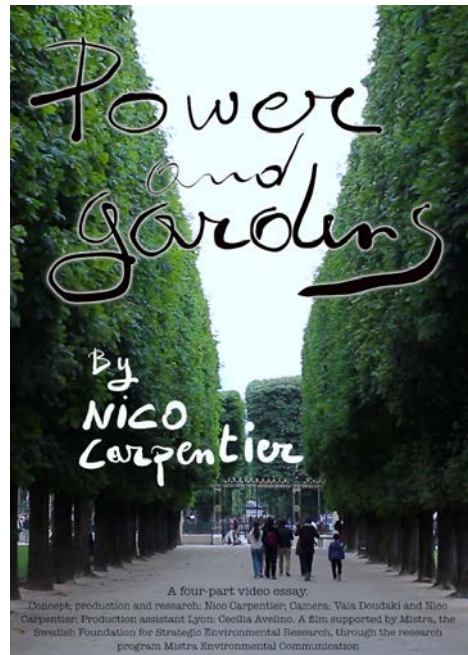
### Sqridging 2: Moulding Nature

In 2023, the exhibition **Moulding Nature** took place in the Färgfabriken arts centre (Stockholm, Sweden). The exhibition, which ran from 26 August 2023 to 26 November 2023, raised questions about the construction of our environment. In video works, collages, photos and installations, artists and other participants explored how different discourses affect the way we give meaning to nature and the role of mankind in it. Discourses that often are in conflict with each other and compete for space, sometimes even fight each other.



The exhibition was part of the MISTRA environmental communication research programme where researchers identified voices, positions and ideologies that can be linked to the discussion about nature and the environment. These were illustrated through an ideological map developed by Nico Carpentier (with a design by Irene Straccuzzi), which, together with selected works of art, gave a multifaceted and deepened picture of the struggle about how the world around us can be interpreted.

For this exhibition, Nico Carpentier produced the four-part video essay, *Power & Gardens*, already in 2022. In 2023, in addition to a series of screenings, the audiovisual essay was published in [Tecmerin: Journal of Audiovisual Essays](#). In 2024, there was one more screening (of part 1), in Flow34 of the IAMCR conference in Christchurch, New Zealand, which took place from 30 June to 4 July 2024.



A second activity related to Moulding Nature was the presentation of a paper on one of the art works on display at the exhibition, called *The Forest Owners - Balancing Acts for Women Family Forestry*. This paper, “Articulating social and environmental justice: A participatory arts project on forestry at the Moulding Nature Arts exhibition”, authored by Vaia Doudaki and Nico Carpentier, was also presented at the IAMCR conference in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Finally, a paper on Moulding Nature’s ideological map, which was—literally and conceptually—the basis of the exhibition was presented by Nico Carpentier at the 7th International Communication and Media Studies Conference, at the Eastern Mediterranean University in Famagusta, Cyprus, which took place from 4 to 6 April 2024. This paper was entitled “Discursive Struggles Over the Environment: An Ideological Map for Moulding Nature”.

# 3

## Sqridging 3: Deconstructing the House of European History in Brussels



**The visual essay analyses the construction of Europeanity in the Brussels-based House of European History, a museum which opened its doors in 2017 and is mostly finance by the European Parliament. With a theoretical framework that distinguishes two dimensions (an essentialist/relationist discursive dimension and a political-spatial/socio-spatial material dimension), the essay combines a discourse-theoretical analysis with an arts-based research driven approach. The latter resulted in the inclusion of 19 photomontages which re-articulate the objects and projections of the permanent exhibition (and the museum shop) and which autonomously reflect on the museum's construction of Europeanity. Together with the discourse-theoretical analysis of the exhibition (and its Guidebooks from 2019 and 2023), the analysis shows the strong presence of a more relationist discursive dimension, but it also demonstrates the impossibility to escape from more essentialist components, which include the articulation of Europeanity through value discourses, combined with the progressionist approach towards history and the privileging of the state on the one hand, and the (semi-)exclusions of regions that once were Europe, combined with the lack of substantial attention for the European periphery, and its key minorities and indigenous people, on the other hand.**



# 4

## Sqridging 4: Agon: Constructions of Democracy

**Agon is a filmic interpretation of the chapter on democracy from the book “Democracy and Media in Europe: A discursive-material approach” that Nico Carpentier and Jeffrey Wimmer published in (early) 2025. Both the film and the book are part of the Horizon Europe project MeDeMAP (Mapping Media for Future Democracies).**

**The 25-minute film, currently in production, will have four main scenes, which align with the book’s approach: Core concepts of democracy, political struggles over democracy, conditions of possibility of democracy and threats to democracy. In 2024, the script and storyboard of Agon were produced, and filming start early 2025. One key element of the film is the collaboration with members of the Indonesian community in Prague, which invokes a more global dimension when discussing democracy. The film’s co-directors are Nico Carpentier and Ali Minanto, and the director of photography is Jhon Sany Purwanto.**



"Democracy is a complex phenomenon.  
It is contingent, contested and constructed."

# AGON

## CONSTRUCTIONS OF DEMOCRACY

A FILM BY

ALI MINANTO  
NICO CARPENTIER  
JHON SANY PURWANTO



(Photos by Nico Carpentier and Ali Minanto)



# 5

## Sqridging 5: Developing arts-based research

**One key activity in this project was the application for a Marie Skłodowska-Curie doctoral network, centred around arts-based research. This proposal, called SABReK (“Strengthening arts-based research as knowledge production and communication”), aims to strengthen the presence of Arts-Based Research in doctoral research in the fields of communication and media studies, visual arts studies and discourse studies.**

**As ABR is always research, SABReK will focus on three domains of inquiry, namely the construction of democracy, of the environment, and of war, conflict and death. In doing so, SABReK will show awareness of the lessons learned by the ABR pioneers, will develop a doctoral network that will train a present-day generation of doctoral candidates (DCs) through a collaboration of academic and non-academic partners, will deploy strategies for high-quality supervision, training, and networking, and will deploy a series of strategies that will allow the DCs to develop their future careers—within academia or outside academia.**

**The SABReK consortium consists of six academic partners and four non-academic partners. The academic partners are Charles University (and its research centre CULCORC) in the Czech Republic, Lusófona University (and its research centre CICANT) in Portugal, Helsinki University in Finland, Cyprus University of Technology in Cyprus, Antwerp University (and its research centre ARIA) in Belgium, and the University of Ljubljana in Slovenia. The associated partners Färgfabriken, Fotograf Zone, NeMe, and Sqridge.**

**In addition to developing this project proposal, also two presentations on ABR were organised, namely:**

- Arts-based research as a tool for producing and communicating academic knowledge, Xi’an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, Suzhou, China, 12 June 2024.**



- **Bringing arts-based research into Communication and Media Studies: An auto-ethnographic analysis of the MPD installation experiment, Department of Communications, Universitas Islam Indonesia, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 26 August 2024.**

### **ABR presentation at Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University**



**(Photo by Yiming Chen)**



## **Future plans**

**The first priority for 2025 is to finalize the Agon film.**

**Negotiations for another iteration of the Mirror of Conflict exhibition in Greece are ongoing. For the exhibition on the memorialization of WWII in Estonia, a new location is being sought. The visual essay on the House of European History (with its photomontages) is proposed for an exhibition at the IAMCR conference in Singapore.**

**Also the presentations (e.g. on the Forest Owners) will be transformed into publications.**

**The outcome of the SABReK proposal evaluation will have a significant impact on the activities for 2025. This is still uncertain.**