

Gustav Oliver Gunvaldsen

## **Tuition for intuition**

Masteroppgave i Master of fine Art  
Veileder: Alexandra Nicki Murray-Leslie,  
Medveileder: Nabil Ahmed  
Juni 2024

Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet  
Fakultet for arkitektur og design  
Kunstakademiet i Trondheim

## **Abstract**

**From Rirkrit to good-kitchen...** my thesis departs from the summer before starting my Master's studies in Trondheim, visiting Documenta15. By examining my own upbringing with an art theoretical waypoint from the 1990s, it attempts to give a summary of my view on collaborative practices ...**to a Film-Cooking Exercise.**

An artistic summary of my journey as an artist, where collaboration across social, national, cultural and interdisciplinary boundaries has been at the core of my work — resisting representation. **From Falafel Making as Art...** Focusing on several projects in working relations with others in Andalusia, as a research and testing ground for non extractive collaborations in art and film making. ...**and a Stopover to ask the Abuelas for Advice...** ending with my own Master's project as a realisation of these reflections and experiments as well as an opening for further investigation. ...**with a Handbag of Dataspace.**

My performative installation “Tuitions for Intuition” (working title) involves a collaborative cooking program, centered around a shared meal, something that is vital to us all, and that is at its best when everybody contributes with their ideas, recipes, skills and intuitions. Equating the logics from filmmaking and its inherent collaborative fundament with the combinations of ingredients and chefs in a kitchen to the practice of art. **Going on intuition, a bar of kindness**

## **Tabel of Content**

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>1. Point of Departure: From Rirkrit to good-kitchen</b>              | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>2. From Falafel Making as Art...</b>                                 | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>3. to a Film-Cooking Exercise</b>                                    | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>4. We start with opening our Eyes...</b>                             | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>5. and continue with a Stopover to ask the Abuelas for Advice...</b> | <b>7</b>  |
| <b>6. with a Handbag of Dataspace.</b>                                  | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>7. "Tuition for Intuition," a Bar of Kindness</b>                    | <b>10</b> |

## Tuition for Intuition

### Point of Departure: From Rirkrit to good-kitchen

As part of my former school education, I found myself at Städelschule in Frankfurt/Main, during an Open House festival called [Gasthof](#).<sup>1</sup> As part of the events taking place, we were going to cook food for everyone. A three course meal/menu with Rirkrit Tiravanija as the head chef. About twenty of us, we all came up with ingredients and suggestions on how to cook. It was going to be fabulous. Rirkrit Tiravanija became famous for serving pad thai, from an English cookbook recipe in which tamarind sauce was replaced with ketchup, in a New York gallery in 1990.<sup>2</sup> The wok had come to the West in the 1990s and I still remember my mother pouring pre-mixed frozen wok mix vegetables into the newly bought wok pan, adding water and boiling them like in a normal casserole. Serving “Chinese” food for me as a 10-year-old.

Rirkrit claims that his work is about bringing people together, by taking ideas from the 1960s and 1970s Fluxus artists and their art to create gatherings. An approach that sounds familiar to me as my family has traveled a similar journey, from experimental revolutionary artists to landownership and founding a family in the early 1990s. As a form of art, this approach was theorized by Nicolas Bourriaud<sup>3</sup> as relational aesthetics in 1998. As a new form of institutional critique.

My parents were both active in the political art community in the 1960s and 70s, including gatherings, parties, sit-ins and protests. To challenge political norms, to re-imagine political structures and social institutions with the purpose of coming together.

My Dad Kjell Mardon Gunvaldsen<sup>4</sup> made textile works like *Soweto* (1978) and *Stålet Dirrar* (1963) about the Vietnam war and the genocide in Rwanda. He was part of the academic, leftist communist circles in Bergen and the creation of the new art academy there. Later, gradually starting their own institution as a family in Kristiansand and making commissioned works for public buildings. As idealism and political experimentation dwindled, more conformative ways of living, such as family life and owning property became dominant.

Claire Bishop, in her book *Artificial Hells* (2012),<sup>5</sup> challenged the role of the audience, addressing who actually comes to exhibitions, asking what kind of class was accepted. This already becomes apparent for a moment in Matthieu Kassovitz's film *La Haine*, 1995,<sup>6</sup> when Vinz and his boys from the suburbs of Paris stumble into a gallery vernissage. The boys were accepted to enter the space, but the social boundaries of class kept them out (In short). And looking back to the kitchen table of my youth, to the frozen, overcooked vegetables, this is some kind of artificial hell. I had to leave the *Gasthof* festival in Frankfurt early, but it seemed that Rirkrit Tiravanija and Daniel Birnbaum were on top of it, serving wine and old stories with young students. Sad to miss out on cooking the 3-course dinner that we were planning, I was going to

---

<sup>1</sup> Städelschule in Frankfurt/Main, Open House festival, [Gasthof](#), (7.2022), <https://staedelschule.de/en/research/symposien/gasthof>

<sup>2</sup> Rirkrit Tiravanija, UNTITLED 1990 (PAD THAI) <https://www.momaps1.org/events/318-rirkrit-tiravanija-s-untitled-1990-pad-thai>

<sup>3</sup> Bourriaud, N (1998), Relational Aesthetics, [Les Presse Du Reel](#),

<sup>4</sup> Gaustad, Randi: *Kjell Mardon Gunvaldsen i Norsk kunstnerleksikon* på snl.no. Hentet 2. april 2024 fra [https://nkl.snl.no/Kjell\\_Mardon\\_Gunvaldsen](https://nkl.snl.no/Kjell_Mardon_Gunvaldsen) [https://nkl.snl.no/Kjell\\_Mardon\\_Gunvaldsen](https://nkl.snl.no/Kjell_Mardon_Gunvaldsen)

<sup>5</sup> Bishop, C. (2012) *Artificial Hells*, Verso

<sup>6</sup> Kassovitz M (Director) (1995) *La Haine (Hatet)* ( Film) Canal Plus , <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0113247/>

be cooking with people in the *Gud-kitchen!* In a makeshift school called the *Gudskul*, initiated by an Indonesian artist collective called [Ruangrupa](https://ruangrupa.id/en)<sup>7</sup> as part of Documenta 15 in Kassel.

*Gudschool/Gudskul* filled half of the first floor of Fridericianum. It consisted of a dormitory, with bunkbeds for about 100 people, an outdoor kitchen and exhibition space. The model was to invite collaborative art schools and groups to come and stay, make art and workshops and create relations. We travelled with my former school Nordland School of Arts and Film (NKFS)<sup>8</sup> and BlaxTarlines<sup>9</sup> a Contemporary Art Incubator from Ghana, having had Zoom meetings for a year prior to visiting Kassel.

In the backyard of Fridericianum was the kitchen, a makeshift outdoor kitchen. Open to everyone, with a “give what you have”, come cook, donate or party attitude. The agenda was *lambung*, coming together and making art.

The concept of *lambung* was the base idea of Documenta 15. It is an Indonesian word for a communal rice barn, where the surplus harvest is stored for the benefit of the community. Ruangrupa was invited as artistic director for Documenta 15. They wanted group and collective projects to be the main focus of the exhibition. They invited groups from different places predominantly outside of “western countries” in the world to join them in producing the festival itself. And the Artistic Direction of Documenta fifteen, the collective, in turn, invited Documenta to be part of its [ekosistem](https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/glossary/?entry=ekosistem)<sup>10</sup>. To this end, ruangrupa then established [ruruHaus](https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/venues/ruruhaus/)<sup>11</sup> in Kassel as a local meeting point, living room, and laboratory. The collective is engaging intensively with Kassel’s *ekosistem*. Not only during but also leading up to and beyond the 100 days of the exhibition. Thus, in addition to the development of new sustainability models, the establishment of lasting relationships is at the core of this Documenta.<sup>12</sup>

This way of working beyond an art practice, establishing relations and making things together was very inspiring. Although food is at the center, it serves as a good starting point only to establish relations beyond culture and history. Tapping into fundamentals of social and personal life. Making the everyday life complexities more graspable. Asking open ended questions, learning from and making together with, not about. Sharing ideas until no one knows anymore where they came from. By this methodology, one can involve people in complex political issues and deep personal inquiries.



<sup>7</sup> Ruangrupa, visited 1.4.24 <https://ruangrupa.id/en>

<sup>8</sup> UIT , Norges arktiske universitet , Filmkunstskolen i Kabelvåg, visited 1.4.24 <https://uit.no/studiesteder/kabelvag/filmkunstskolen>

<sup>9</sup> Artreview, Power 100, visited 1.4.24 <https://artreview.com/artist/blaxtarlines/?year=2022>

<sup>10</sup> Documenta 15, Glossary, visited 1.4.24 <https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/glossary/?entry=ekosistem>

<sup>11</sup> Documenta 15 rurHaus, visited 1.4.24 <https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/venues/ruruhaus/>

<sup>12</sup> Documenta 15 , *Lambung*, visited 1.4.24 , <https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/lambung/>

## From Falafel Making as Art...

The first project of this kind was my and Ali Jabali's falafel stand. First as a falafel shop in my studio during Trondheim Open in November 2022, then later during the SAR conference in Trondheim in April 2023 and finally during the *Pacesetters Kick Off*<sup>13</sup> in March 2024. We had a makeshift stand in the gallery where we fried falafels and Ali packed them and sold them. The falafels were homemade using a recipe from Ali's mother. I helped where I could, under Ali's supervision, and was quickly assigned to frying. We made around 70 to a 100 falafels each time. Ali Jabali is a Palestinian artist who focuses on painting and public art. I have known him for the last five years and as an artist like many other artists, Ali likes to keep to himself when working on his art. I realized that cooking together allowed us to connect and be creative on a different level. Tasting, experimenting, chopping, frying. Discussing size and texture. Talking about how the family would come together for iftar after fasting during Ramadan. Or about the practice of giving food to a person in need if you missed a day of fasting.

During the last falafel stand activities in 2024 for the *Pacesetters Kick Off*, it was the beginning of Ramadan, the holiest of months, a month of joy and celebration to be spent with loved ones. This is in stark contrast to the situation of the ongoing genocide in Palestine by the Israeli government. I say this to put it in context of history and cultural encounters. And as a reason why we felt it was important to share Palestinian food with the guests.

Making falafel together as art made me want more, as I was full of hummus. A new project emerged. In the small town of Genalguacil. Much more complex and with more people and institutions.

Through my professor Annett Busch and PhD-candidate Prerna Bishnoi, we began to develop fundamentally new concepts and a new understanding of research and innovation facing the increasingly complex societal changes in general. Making Genalguacil through Joe Lockwood and the Pueblo Museo into a laboratory for experimentation. With shared methods of filmmaking in the context of the rural.<sup>14</sup>



<sup>13</sup> Pacesetters, Pace of Concepts, visited 1.4.24 <https://pacesetters.eu/pace>

<sup>14</sup> Ganalguacil, Pueblo Museo, Lab Genaguacil, visited 1.4.24 <https://pueblomuseo.com/lab-genalguacil/>

### ...to a Film-Cooking Exercise

I collaborated with an architecture student from the [Elisava Barcelona School of Design and Engineering](https://www.elisava.net/en/)<sup>15</sup>. Coming from design and architecture, she has an interest in researching the tools of traditional craftsmen. Me, coming from art and filmmaking, I was interested in the connection between the tools and the movements of the hand and muscles, memory and inherency. We started interviewing the arts and craft workers, asking them to show and talk about their tools. As a way of figuring out what the hand does in relation to the tool. These rural towns are intrinsically bound to traditional craftsmanship, methods and tools, and so are the bodies of the craftsman — as if the body contained the knowledge in itself. It was never the question whether these traditions have survived because of the rural condition or if the bodies got stuck in routines to endure the rural. What if the use of tools needs no master, and how can we find new purposes for old tools? Would that be innovation?



### We start with opening our Eyes...

Being inspired by “Labor in a single shot” (2011-14)<sup>16</sup> a project developed by Harun Farocki and Antje Ehmann, where they take from the Lumière Brother’s first moving images of *Workers leaving the Factory*. To declare that every detail of the moving image is worth considering and capturing. Connecting this static shoot in history as observation of work and labor. Taking it from history as a technological achievement to aesthetically and conceptually connecting these first images of film to social and documentary history.

As a group of students we were going to make *innovation in one shot* mirroring Harun Farocki’s *Labour in one Shot* mirroring Lumière’s *Workers Leaving the Factory*. Looking for my one shot, I ended up going with Paco, an elderly man who spoke no English and, as his wife said in poor English, actually was happy to not speak at all. I joined him going to his farm and filmed him working on his farm. I quickly understood that Paco was totally unaware that I was filming him

---

<sup>15</sup> Elisava Barcelona School of Design and Engineering, visited 1.4.24 <https://www.elisava.net/en/>

<sup>16</sup> Labour in a single shot, Concept , visited 1.4.24 <https://www.labour-in-a-single-shot.net/en/project/concept/>

when he started to pee in the bushes while watering the plants on his Finca. This trust or obliviousness was a delight and daunting. I was filming around Pacos Finca for four hours and the only thing I understood him saying was that the cats had eaten my lunch. At the end of the week, we showed our *Labour/Innovation in one Shot* films from a rooftop in the town center. As an event for the inhabitants and the young people from the neighboring villages before leaving. I regret to say, I cheated and had a lot more than one shot. And I omitted the peeing shot. Although it would probably have garnished a lot of laughter. It was probably nice enough for everybody to see what we had been doing, our view of the pueblo. But sitting there on the rooftop I thought about something I saw in the work of Harun Farocki, *Workers leaving the factory*.<sup>17</sup> You can see how aware the workers are of the camera, there is this one moment when one woman playfully pulls in the skirt of another as if to mock her in front of the camera. The other woman pauses for a split second but decides not to retaliate because of the camera machine and continues on to her bike. It's maybe not that important, the workers had obviously been told to behave and that something was up when they were leaving the factory. And they were most likely very familiar with photo images, even possibly short moving ones from the likes of Thomas Edison's Kinetoscope and so on. But they couldn't have known what kind of mark in history they were a part of. Or maybe its just the delight of seeing somebody goof off before the invention of being able to watch yourself goof off on a moving picture that's delightful. Filming people in Genalguacil, and within a week showing it back in public and getting feedback from the audience who is also in the film was such a nice and giving experience.

### **...and continue with a Stopover to ask the Abuelas for Advice...**

How to capture, frame and film rural knowledge? This endeavour may sound as exotic as a safari hunter trying to put down a tiger from a safe shooting position such as a Landrover. Although rural knowledge is a very concrete thing, it can quickly become an object of exoticisation and misinterpretation, if not treated with critical care. Ephemeral as it is, ever-lasting and always evolving. So away with the Landrover, the gun and all the other ideas, to make space for unlearning.

We had created a plan, in trying to catch these ghosts that rural knowledge provides. Figuring food making would be a good place to start. And who knows it better than the grandmothers? These older ladies who basically run the social life of the town from their kitchen and restaurants honed their skill long before the invention of the internet. Interviewing "Abuelas" (Grandmothers) on how to make these local dishes, we quickly got referred to a google search for a recipe. Which was not ideally what we were looking for.

There is a divide in this little town. And the gap starts with eighteen. After reaching the age of young adults, the young people move to the larger cities for school and work. As in many other small towns, it is the very young and the old who remain in the village. Since 1994, the municipality has been fighting this trend by commissioning contemporary artworks to populate the entire village. More than a quarter of a century later, this small village in the Genal Valley stands out on the Spanish art scene for its determined commitment to contemporary creation as a driving force in finding ways to improve life in Europe's rural regions and to break down

---

<sup>17</sup> Farocki, H, Arbeiter verlassen die Fabrik (Workers leaving the factory) ( Film) 1995, <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0360377/> <https://vimeo.com/59338090>



people's ideas and stereotypes about what it means to live in the countryside. It also recognises its value, identity and opportunities. The activities of the Genalguacil Pueblo Museo are collaborative relationships between people, place and art, fostering sustainable innovation with and from the community.

We need to find the young people, through their eyes we may be able to find this rural knowledge, from someone who knows the space, the environment and the people. So we got to know two young people from the village. Nerea Holgado Holgado and Alvaro Holgado Sanchez. We put the camera in their hands, and went out to a “finca” (farm). A beautiful place just outside town, where Rafael Centeno grows his vegetables and fruits, he also has a donkey. We met with his wife Monsalud Bautista and a bunch of elderly women, all eager to cook and drink and chat with us about our project. We spent the day there, Nerea and Alvaro filming, the grandmothers cutting, chatting and cooking like they have never done anything else. Not a smartphone or cookbook in sight. We had a wonderful day, cooking, chatting, eating and chatting. Nerea and Alvaro eagerly filmed the cooking procedures and we could converse over images and aesthetics beyond language barriers. This was the first step in capturing rural knowledge on film. Me and Perna took the material of the cameras and cut it down to about 25 minutes in a chronicle manner. We later showed the material at the opening of “The Lab el Huerto.” The space the museum has made for collaboration and research. The next step is to edit and cut the material into films, together with Nerea and Alvaro. To distill the pieces while conversing over images and cutting in time with them. Like a film-cooking exercise. Which is why I'm sitting here now in Genalguacil and writing instead of being in my studio in Trondheim.



### **...with a Handbag of Dataspace.**

The information data space is an idea we developed to collect and share the various materials in a central hub in the [“The Lab el Huerto”](#).<sup>18</sup> Organising and storing material has been a challenge for me for a long time. I used to collect many minutes of recorded material and insofar many terabytes, which has to do with my fundamental approach to filmmaking: everything is important or could be. The picture frame itself is important, like a tableau. Light, movement, color, nature, subjects. Often I try not to “cut” in my head. Not to have a preconceived idea of the sequence, but to film linearly as it unfolds. To keep it as open as possible for the next phase, the editing, and through the editing other things can turn out to be more important than when filming.

A text by Ursula K. Le Guin, [The carrier handbag theory of fiction](#)<sup>19</sup>, inspires my approach to storytelling. She promotes a different kind of narrative than the predominant three arch structure, which she compares to that of throwing a spear. A spear has a start, a middle and an end, often resulting in death, the killing narrative. She proposes a different one, from a feminine perspective. The one of the gatherer. Long before weapons, the first invention must have been a bag of some sort and it offers a different narrative. You look and find, pick it up and collect it in your bag, you gather and forage. You find new things and so on, and together they make their own multitude of stories and connections. In an endless tail of ends and new beginnings. Creating a “bag” for material which we find, produce and make in Genalguacil: called the information data space. When weaving this “bag,” I think it’s important that it is not bound to bigger conglomerates and centralized data storing centers. To decide for a free and open source solution, not to be dependent on the Silicon Valley ideologies and patents. We found a peer to peer solution that can work on a little and open source computer and OS platform, but still be accessible and easy to share. Not going through a third party data storage, but directly in between whoever has the files. Installing the server in the Lab will make a digital open source space for participants to share and store their collected data. At the core, it opens up the editing processes to be shared. And everybody involved can have access to the material I have filmed and add new material, to use and edit and connect in different ways.

---

<sup>18</sup>Genalguacil, Pueblo Museo, Lab Genaguacil, visited 1.4.24 <https://pueblomuseo.com/lab-genalguacil/>

<sup>19</sup>Leguin, K.U., (1989), Dancing at the Edge of the World: Thoughts on Words, Women, Places, Grove Press  
The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction | The Anarchist Library  
(<https://theanarchistlibrary.org/mirror/u/uk/ursula-k-le-guin-the-carrier-bag-theory-of-fiction.pdf>)

### **"Tuition for Intuition," a bar of kindness**

My exam project working title: "Tutions for Intuition" will be a performative installation in "sky bar" (the student canteen of KiT): cleaning it and installing videos from Genalguacil in an integral site specific way. Making sky bar a satellite installation to the Bar of Kindness in Genalguacil. Inviting my classmates to cook food on specific days of the exhibition, as this might be the last class with this amount of foreign students coming from outside the EU to Norway. Coming together, making food, and sharing it with visitors as an event.

In my final exam work I want to draw on the practices from Andalusia/Spain and Documenta 15 and make a performative dinner in a space I have created. A programmed week with dinners for participants to come and enjoy the cooking, me and my classmates, coming from all parts of the world and backgrounds, have made.

In the main exhibition space I will have a poster referencing my preformative installation talking about; tuition fees, my project and inviting audiences to come to the dinner events. Set during the weeks of the exhibition.

The idea springs from protesting against the introduction of tuition fees for non-European students, launched in 2023. It's a historical shift, the first tuition fees for Norwegian public education. Offered up as a money saving measure by the government.

For me it's also just wrong from an educational perspective. As I understand learning not as a top down but more like a flat structure. With this in mind, following my own principles on learning and collaborating intuitively this is the best way to have a final exhibition in a masters of fine art at Kit NTNU.

**Thanks to:** Annett Busch, Prerna Bishnoi, Joe Lokwood, Alexandra Nicki Murray-Leslie, Nabil Ahmed, Tara Fraser, Morten Løge, Miguel A. Herrera Guterrez, Nerea Holgado Holgado, Alvaro Holgado Sanchez, Marta Calvente Alvarez, Manoli Núñez Calvente, María de los Angeles Rubio Gómez, Carmen Mateos Arrebola, Diodoro Rubio Holgado, Inmaculada Corral Cantero, Inmaculada Corral Cantero, Jose Antonio Roa Ratia, Laura Espada Bellido, Salvador Sánchez Morales, Ana Álvarez Gutierrez, Beatriz Álvarez Urda, Maria Jose Álvarez Rubio, María Isabel Navas Rodríguez, Monsalud Bautista Galindo, Rafael Centeno López, Fernando Centeno López, Manoli Núñez Calvente, María José, González Núñez, Gonzalo Calvente Ruiz, Paco Holgado Carrillo, Paqui Domínguez Holgado, Ismael Izquierdo Yeder, Diodoro Rubio Holgado, Jorge Romero Moreno, Mari Sanden, Hege Ertzaas, Jacob Jessen, Kit NTNU, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Knut Åsdam, Nordland School of Arts and Film (NKFS), BlaxTarlines, Ruangrupa, Pueblo Museo Genalguacil.