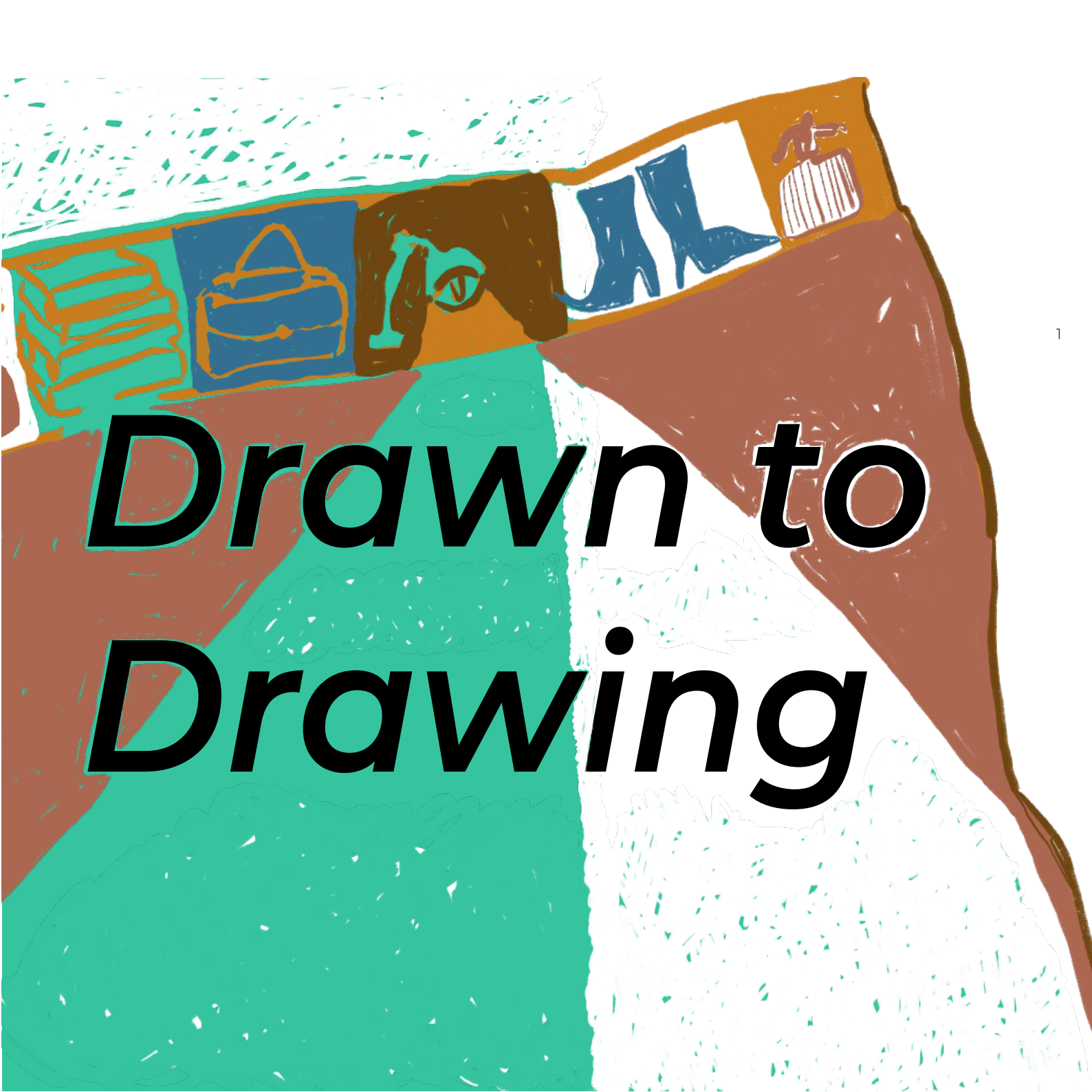




Drawn to Drawing

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“We give gratitude to those who cook the food, serve our meals, clean the toilets, sweep the floors and turn on the lights, fix our computers, turn the soil and water the plants, tend to sick children and vulnerable bodies, lend an attentive ear to grievances and pain, clean and fix the streets, make the beds, wash the clothes, run the trains and buses, teach and mentor, do the laundry, protest, organize, strike, fill out excel spreadsheets, write, read, and send endless emails. We offer our thanks to those who came before, whose names are unknown and unsung but were pivotal in their attentiveness, to those whose histories and labor laid divergent pathways, to those who held silence and space in anticipation of the yet-to-be, to those who bore witness, and to those who listened, extended grace, wisdom, and patience, and to all the countless hours of unseen labor that contributed to the making of this book.”¹

1. Promiscuous Care Study Group, “Gratitude”
 in Promiscuous Infrastructures: Practicing Care, ed. Michelle Teran et al.
 (Leipzig: Journal of Aesthetics & Protest Press, 2024), 263.

Obrigada!

A big thank you to all my brilliant tutors, inspiring classmates and hilarious friends, who always supported the Drawing Club and cared for me in the process of writting this research.

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Inês, for your endless support (and design skills!),
to my mom, my dad, my sister, my grandma and Ben,

and every single individual that took the risk to enter our community,
Thank you all, for think along!

(A love letter to drawing)

Usually when the pencil meets the paper, I can see you.

Or when a stick meets the sand, I can see you.

Or when a waterbrush meets the fabric, I can also see you.

Being drawn to something, coming closer, being so intimately close that the mark emerges on the surface, and therefore I am able to notice you.

You're easy and simple. You never say how late I am or ask me money for to meet you. I can even see you with my eyes closed.

How splendid that we all live surrounded by you. From objects, to cities we permanently walk on someone's drawing. From the gardener, the designer, the writer, the architect, the artist or the engineer, they all leave their traces behind. And they're left purposely.

Your silence cares for me, in a world full of noise, how great that we can just be, together.

Again and again you reshape, I see you as a form of craft, as an artistic practice, as games, as ideas. You sustain yourself but you're also able to be the support for others.

Maybe a place of inquiry, maybe a thinking tool, you give your definition to the ones who meet you. I admire your liminal space between what exists and what can be imagined, what is there and what there might be.

Remain open, exciting, never truly done.

Choose Love



Self-portrait done by a participant (child) during a reading at BIR (Biblioteca Infantil de Rotterdam)

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Drawing spotted in Charlie's neighborhood, Rotterdam, 10 November, 2025

Movement I:
Expose the
hesitation

Thinking about Rilke's words when asked to give advice on how one could become a writer "Sir, the only advice I have is this: to go into yourself and to examine the depths which your life springs; at its source you will find the answer as it is, without seeking to interpret it. Perhaps it will turn out that you are called to be an artist. Then assume this fate and bear it, its burden and its greatness (...) For he who creates must be a world of his own and find everything within and in the natural world that he has elected to follow."²

2. Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*, trans. Charlie Louth, Penguin Little Black Classics (London: Penguin Books, 2015), 6.

This research is born from my dual identity as an artist and an educator. While my background is rooted in Painting, my practice has long since outgrown the canvas.

Central to this research is its context: The Drawing Club, an artist-run initiative I developed as a site for collective experimentation. It is within this space that I explore drawing mediated by Scores. These scores are sets of open-ended instructions or movements that act as a framework for each session we hold. They are not intended to dictate a result, but to trigger a process- they aim to shift the focus from what the drawing looks like to what the drawing does in the moment.

For me, the classroom is not a separate sphere from daily life, but an extension of it; it is a space where everyday objects, shared stories, and a sense of humor become the primary materials for learning². However, conventional educational spaces often leave little room for experimentation. Because to experiment is to try, and that has to come with risks. This project aims to give space to these intertwined thoughts, using both drawings and words to argue that drawing is inherently relational, as it does not exist in a vacuum, and can therefore be triggered as a response to something else.

In the Drawing Club, the drawing is always 'in conversation' with its environment. I will address these conversations as tensions. Call me an optimist, but I believe we can always learn from someone else and through this research, I attempt to see if drawing can learn, too. I consider these scores to be playful, therefore I am researching play not as a superfluous distraction, but as a set of core values that can fundamentally reshape our approach to the line.

My hope is that these insights offer new possibilities to the reader, be they an artist navigating the market, a teacher seeking alternatives to hierarchical models, a creative professional or simply someone curious. By understanding the depth of these playful score-based practices, we may find new ways to balance the rigid demands of society with the fundamental human need to feel free.

This leads to the central research question:

What happens when drawing is practiced through playful scores in the context of artist-run initiatives?

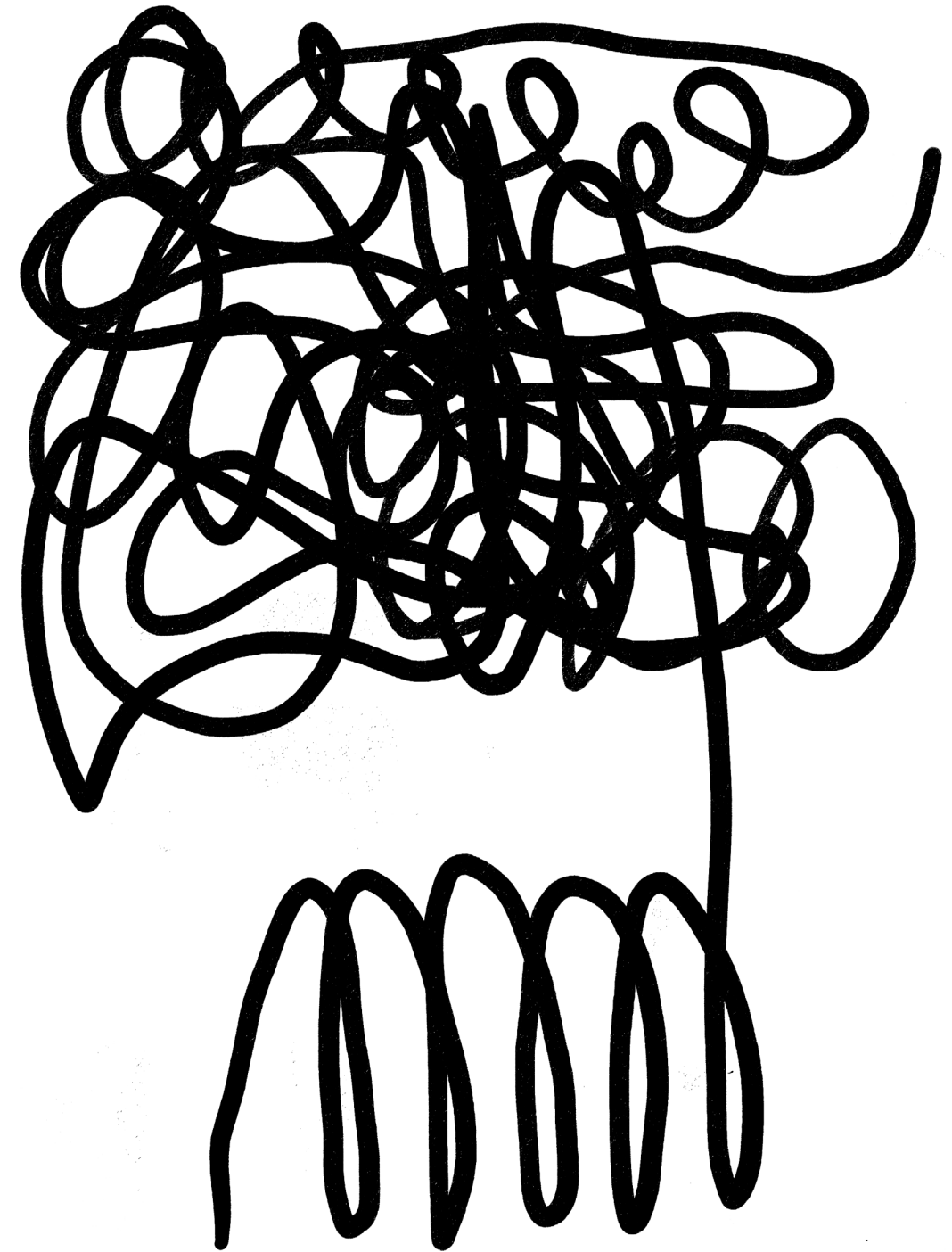
To explore this question, I adopt an approach combining facilitation, participation, observation, and reflection inside the context of the Drawing Club, specifically located in the collective studio Kunst Fabriek Zuid, at PutseBocht 3, Rotterdam (NL).

The Drawing Club functions as the primary site of inquiry, where participants would come together to draw. I created a social media account, where I would advertise each session, and ask for participants to send a message if they wanted to book a spot.

Through a series of sessions of the Drawing Club, I design and test different scores that alter spatial and social relations within the group. These scores are documented through field notes, participant responses, and visual material, allowing me to reflect on how playful scores can actually be felt in the body, in the space, and in the act of drawing itself.

Alongside this practice, I aim to find my partners, whether in books or in other practices. For it, I conducted 4 interviews with professionals working with Drawing and a pilot study to focus on methodology.

Rather than aiming to define play in its entirety, this research situates itself within its complexity, focusing on how specific conditions can enable alternative ways of engaging with drawing. In doing so, it seeks to contribute to artistic and educational practices by proposing drawing not as a fixed skill, but as an open and relational field.



Drawing is often approached as a skill to be mastered or a talent to be judged. Many adults carry a sense of hesitation towards it, shaped by educational experiences that prioritize correctness and evaluation. Sayings such as “I can’t draw” or “I’m not good at drawing” reveal how drawing becomes associated with failure or inadequacy. What’s the space left for experimentation? Can we enjoy it?

“When people find themselves genuinely supported and cared for, they are able to extend this to others in ways that seemed impossible or terrifying before. When people find their bellies filled and their minds sharpened among communal kitchens and libraries, hatred for capitalist ways of life grows amid belonging and connection. (...) When people begin to meet their everyday needs through neighbourhood assemblies and mutual aid, all of a sudden they are willing to fight the police and the fights deepens bonds of trust and solidarity. Joy can be contagious and dangerous.”³

Reflecting on these words, I am constantly struck by the radical power that emerges when we organize and exist together. From micro-social interactions to macro-political revolutions, there is a profound, almost dangerous potential in the simple act of collective gathering. In a highly individualized society, coming together to work toward a shared situation (and without the pressure of capitalist productivity) remains a vital, transgressive movement.

However, this collective energy cannot be forced. I do not want to impose a specific drawing practice onto everyone; that is not what this research is about. Instead, much like the communal kitchens and mutual aid assemblies mentioned above, the goal is about intentionally designing the infrastructure and setting the space and conditions to experiment freely.

How can this be done? What does it truly mean to experiment?

*Practices such as those developed in Black Mountain College and the Fluxus movement remain as important whether I’m working as an artist or as an educator.
3. in *Promiscuous Infrastructures: Practicing Care*, pag 60



Objects with purpose: Watering Can for your wishes; 2020; Photo by Maria Peixoto Martins

Movement II:

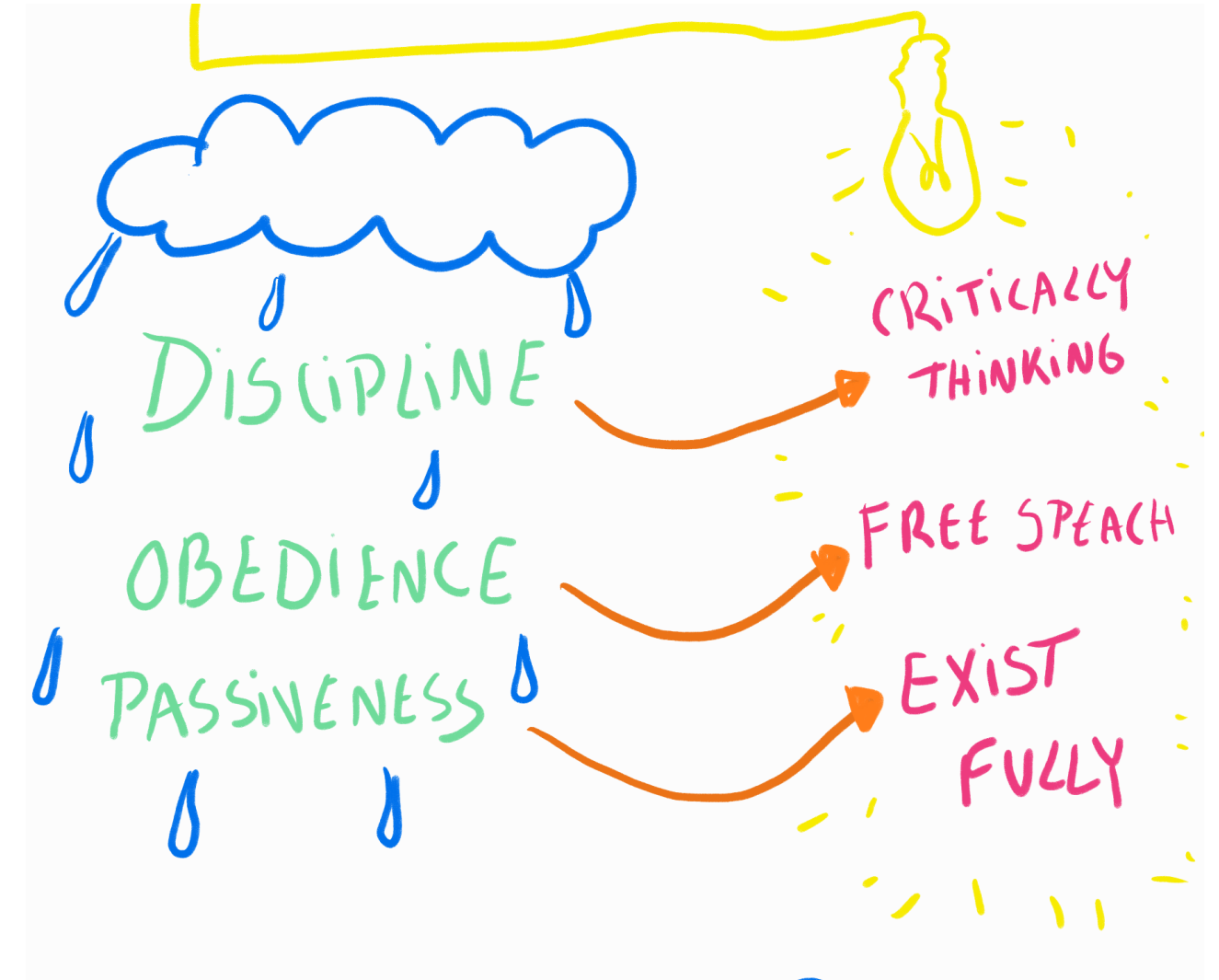
Trace the coordinates

My own understanding of education is deeply informed by informal and everyday contexts. I grew up hearing stories from friends and family, where dialogue shaped the way we understood the world. Learning took place around the dining table, in the streets where children played, and in moments of rest under the shade of trees. I myself I'm trying to learn how to whistle, my friend Duarte has been teaching me for several months, but whenever we "make an appointment" for it I almost feel nervous and paralysis kick in. On the other hand, when we started to do it together, spontaneously, I feel more confident, almost as if there was more room to make mistakes. I would feel scared if I had to go on a whistle exam, by the University of Higher Whistles Of The Kingdom Of The Acoustic Voices*, Somehow it feels more approachable to learn it from my friend, someone with an embodied experience.

Therefore, whether I want to learn how to whistle or how to make a drawing, I want to choose the people over the institution. This is not to say that institutions do not serve us; it is more about understanding their place on our list of priorities. Institutions are powerful platforms with many moving parts that, when cooperative and well-organized, can do immense good for society. However, I believe we must be able to move independently around them—to access them when we choose, but also to feel entirely free to move beyond them, recognizing that they are not our only metric of accomplishment.

*Fictitious institution

Education is a Public Issue



Looking at another example,

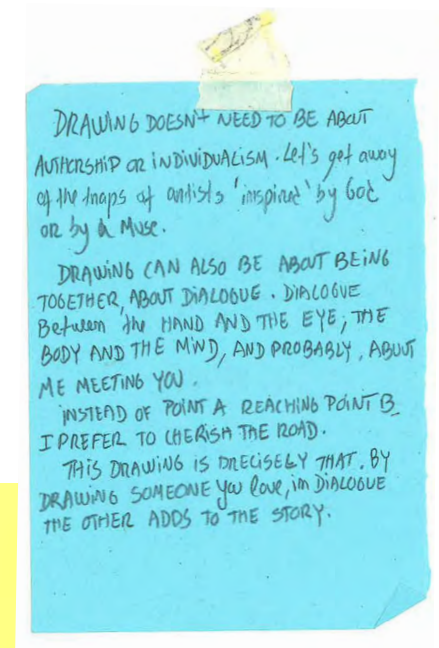
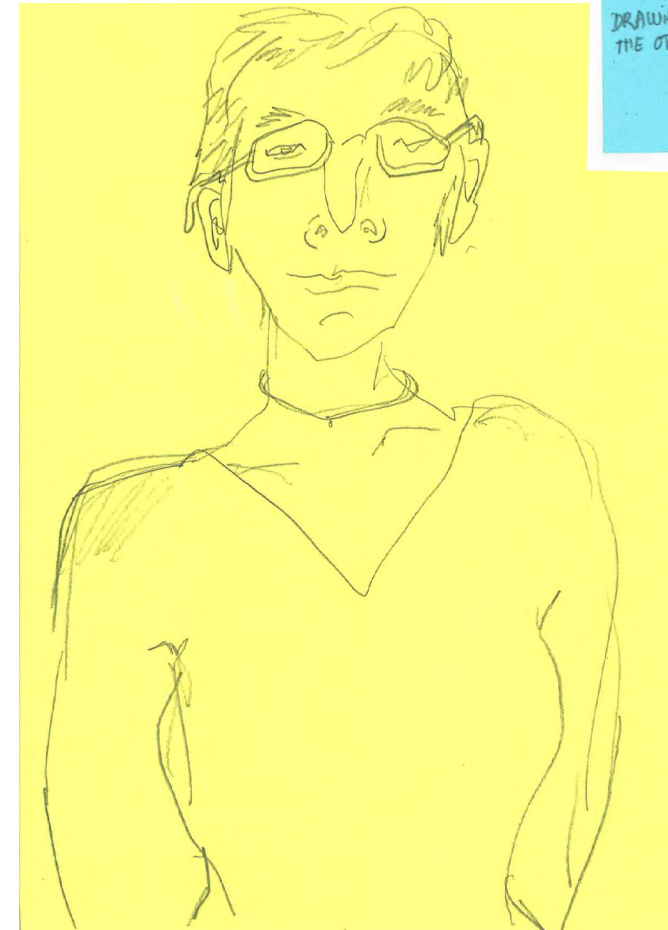
this dynamic is deeply reflected in the experience of my grandmother, Alzira Peixoto. Her formal education was limited to the four years of mandatory schooling available to her under the constraints of Portugal's totalitarian Estado Novo regime (1933–1974). As is typical in any authoritarian system, pursuing higher education was a privilege restricted to those who could afford it, to those who had the luxury to focus on “themselves” without the pressing need to work to sustain their families. Yet, this institutional exclusion does not mean people were less intelligent back then; not at all.

Despite the natural bias of the love we share, I see her as the central star in a solar system that made it possible to sustain and care for a subsequent generation of teachers, writers, artists and scientists. She read to her children, wrote letters to distant family, and sewed the garments for her entire household. She knew exactly what to do when a child had a cold, how to tend to the pigeons, and how to nurture the flowers in her garden. She managed the family's finances, taught herself how to speak French, knew how to treat a bruise, learned how to cook for vegetarians, and, most recently, mastered how to use the contactless feature on her banking card.

Her knowledge, entirely shaped outside institutional frameworks, powerfully reinforces my idea that education is not solely dependent on formal systems. Instead, it exists dynamically within bodies, within generations, within materials,

always within.

Education is a Public Issue



Bringing back to this context, as an artist-run initiative, the Drawing Club is understood as a Public Issue. It is a shared and situated process that extends beyond formal institutions and focuses on the local partners.

This perspective is informed by the principles of Popular Education, particularly developed by the educator Paulo Freire, who proposes learning as a dialogical and participatory practice grounded in lived experiences. There's a subtle shift regarding movement here. Rather than positioning knowledge as something to be transmitted, this approach understands it as something constructed somewhere in between bodies.

So all of a sudden, to feel free in my own drawing process, I should tune in at what is happening between bodies*. I wonder if liberating a drawing process is inherently bound to a form of co-relation and mutual care. Suddenly, education and art are no longer strictly about individual output, but about how these bodies affect one another. It shifts the focus toward how we coexist, which naturally brings us to a more holistic form of learning that prioritizes how we care for ourselves and others.

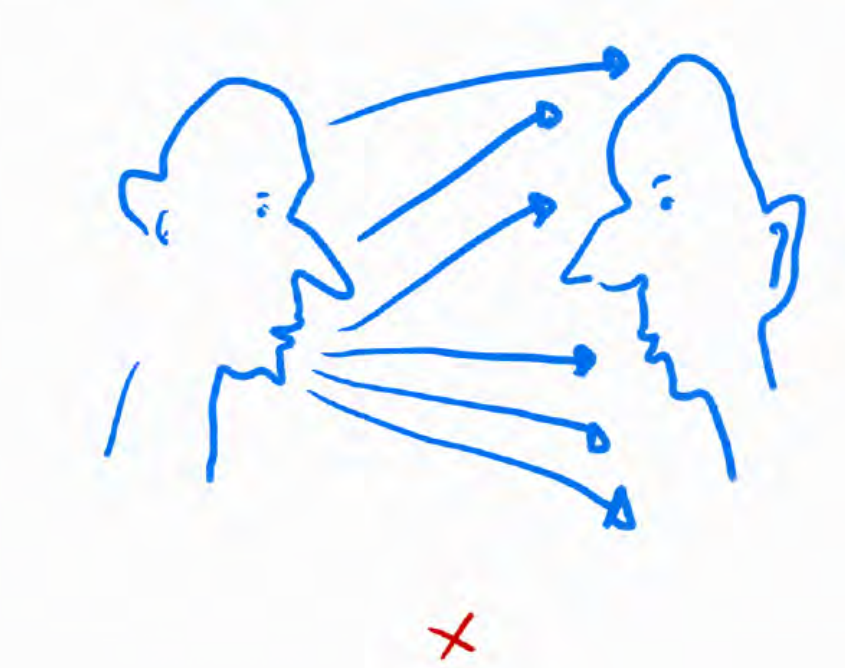
“Progressive, holistic education, “engaged pedagogy” is more demanding than conventional critical or feminist pedagogy. For, unlike these two teaching practices, it emphasizes wellbeing. That means that teachers must be actively committed to a process of self-actualization that promotes their own wellbeing if they are to teach in a manner that empowers students.”⁴

From freedom, to bodies;
to in between bodies to well being,
And to well being to empowerment.

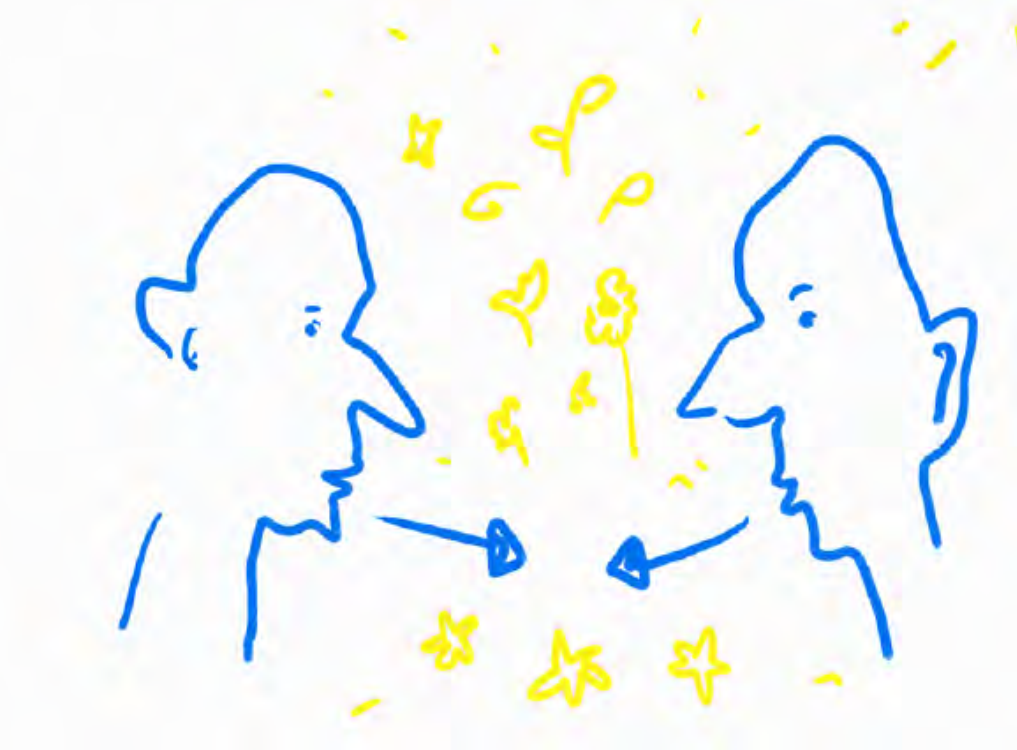
All this terms concern the Drawing Club because it aims to challenge hierarchical models of teaching by proposing learning as a relational and situated process, where participants actively engage in action and reflection, considering their bodies, their experiences and the space in between.

* Within this framework, ‘bodies’ extend beyond the human
4. bell hooks, “Engaged Pedagogy,” in Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom (New York: Routledge, 1994), 15

Education ia a Public Issue



X



What happens when we practice “engaged pedagogy” instead of rigid Banking methods, within educational contexts.

Most familiar assessment systems rely on linear progression, fixed criteria, and final outcomes that can be compared or measured linearly. In a practice like the Drawing Club these models quickly feel too rigid as they tend to close down what is still in wildly in motion. Like you're killing all the little green sprouts in your garden just to protect the big crops of pumpkins.

When stepping away from traditional educational frameworks, outlines get looser and walls seem to soften. But there's great responsibility with fostering these moments with people. The rigidity of assessment crumbles, not fitting in with the conceptual aims of the Drawing Club. Without the immediate need of evaluation, how can I keep track of the vivid and reflecting moments held in session?

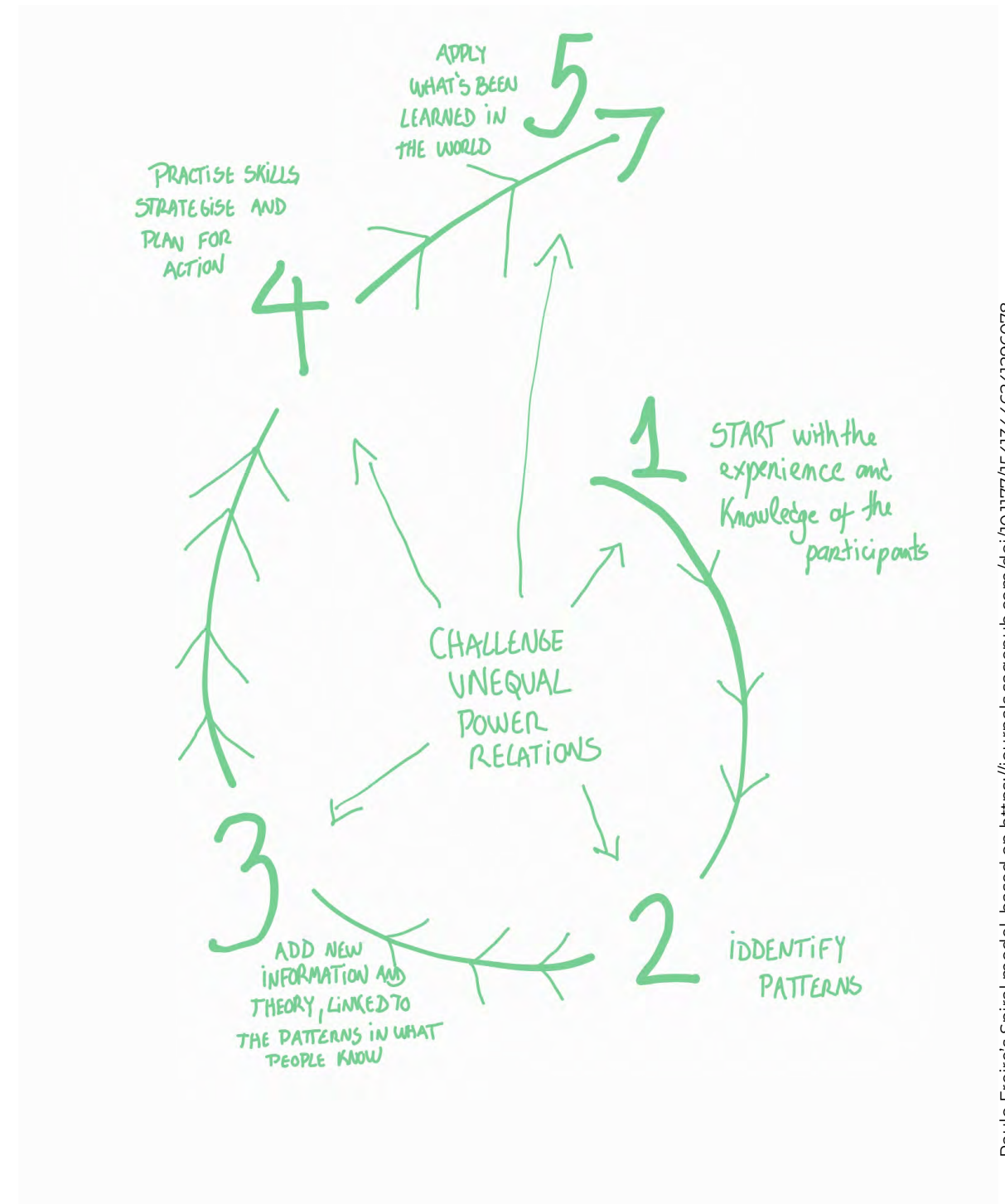
Freire's spiral model offers something else to think along this dilemma.

First of all, there is something important in how the spiral refuses a final point. It suggests that understanding is built through movement. This makes it especially interesting for artistic contexts, where processes are often unstable and where meaning tends to emerge slowly, non linearly. The spiral is not a grid, it's not a table or a square. It does not divide experience into categories or levels. It creates a sense of space where movement is continuous but not directional in a strict sense.

This opens up a different relationship to time. One less about completion, and more about duration and depth. Considering the english wording we commonly use addressing the necessity to reach a certain goal in a certain moment, a **DEADLINE**. This line shouldn't die as we reach it, it should open up other lines for us to follow.

In the context of the Drawing Club, this way of thinking suggests to me that alternative methods of reflecting must be taken into account. Ones that stay close to the movement of the practice itself, and most important, one that stays close to the participant himself

Education in a Public Issue



The Club is here approached as a shared space in which participation can unfold more fluidly, allowing roles to shift and engagement to take different forms. Purposely all people that attend the Club are named as **participants**, rather than students. This decision wants to resonate with the principles of Paulo Freire and Bell Hooks, emphasizing the need to create alternatives to conventional educational structures (classes, lectures), particularly those shaped by hierarchical relationships between the teacher and the student. In a drawing this would feel more like an **horizontal** line, rather than a triangle.

If I aim for my participants to feel free in the act of making a drawing, I consider Bell Hooks wisdom,

“That empowerment can not happen if we refuse to be vulnerable while encouraging students to take risks (...) In my classrooms, I do not expect students to take risks that I would not take, to share in any way that I would not share. When professors bring narratives of their experiences into classroom discussions it eliminates the possibility that we can function as all-knowing, silent interrogators. It is often productive if professors take the risk first, linking confessional narratives to academic discussions so as to show how experience can illuminate and enhance our understanding of academic material. But most professors must⁵ practice being vulnerable in the classroom, being wholly present in mind, body, and spirit.”

For me, practicing this **vulnerability** means letting go of the rule that usually forces people to show up. In traditional schools, mandatory attendance can feel like a demand to be there even if you don't want to be, a forced **performance**. By dropping this requirement, I chose to take a risk first, trusting instead in the participant's **free will**. Consequently, I also chose to simultaneously be a host and a participant, embedding myself entirely within the process, making marks alongside everyone else. After all, a line is composed of infinite dots, and I want to be one as well.

Attendance in the full program is **not mandatory**, and each session can be entered independently. Hopefully, this openness allows the space to remain flexible, while still offering a recurring moment for engagement.

Why a Club?



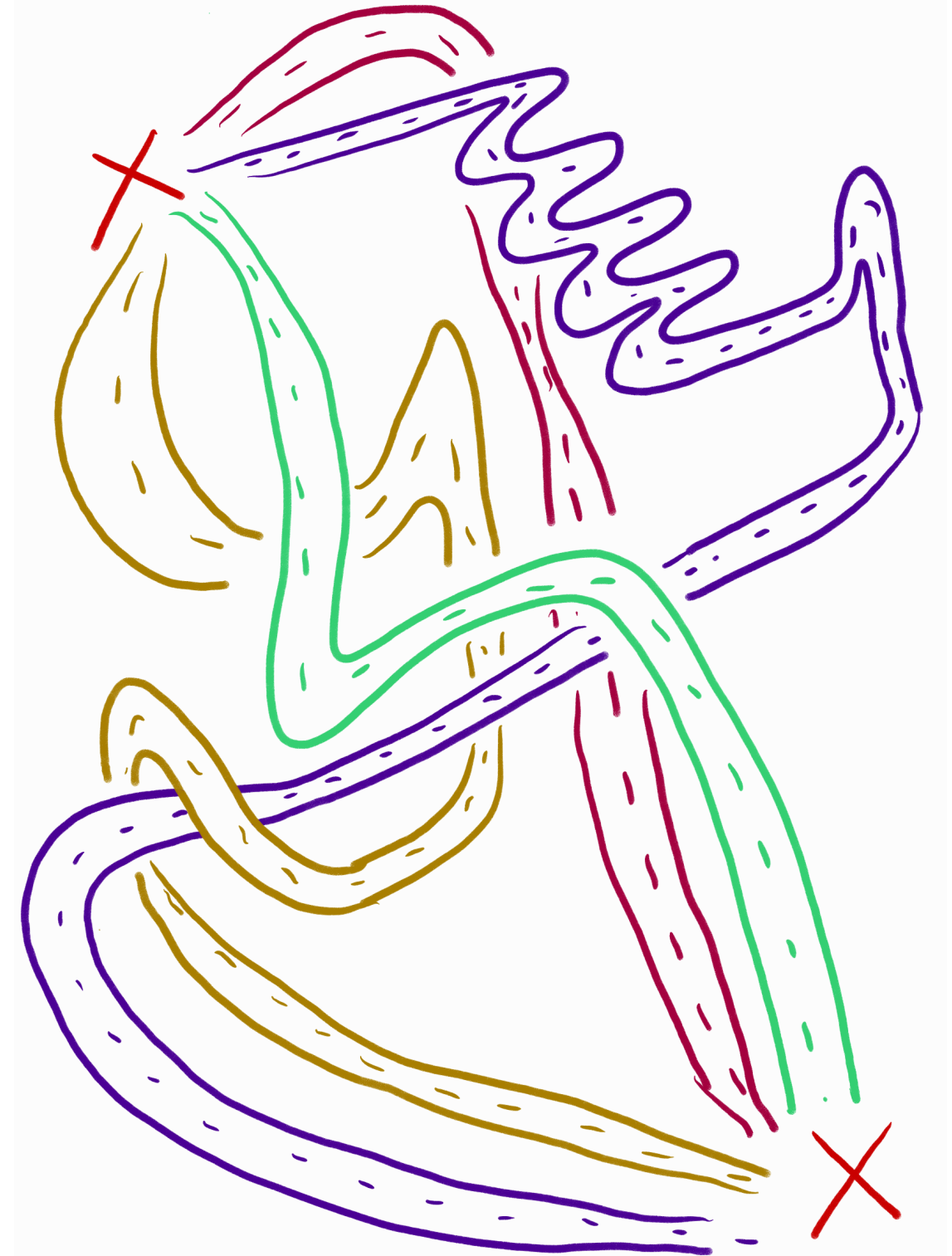
Play informs the design of these situations, not as a fixed concept, but as an attitude that sparkles scores. Hopefully balancing structure and openness while seeking to understand how different forms of engagement can emerge. Often these two terms seem to be opposites, but it's within their tension that we can all play. While my aiming is always to naively keep the space as open as possible, rule-making is essential to create a middle-ground where we can all meet and experiment.⁶

In a way, too many options become no options at all. Consider, for example, the paralysis of facing a completely white, blank piece of paper. When there are no marks on the page, the heavy weight of everything being possible tends to sink in. But if there is a **score**, the pressure lifts. Suddenly, there is a point of departure, a direction to work

for,
with,
against,
about,
at,
or
simply in.

6. In *Playing Our Cards Right: How Games Can Transform The Cultural Sector*, by James Parnell, the chapter *Rulemaking* was specially insightfull when thinking about the necessity of rules. It suggests them as a vital structure capable to support our goals.

Play is a very serious activity



These scores, present in games, in drawing exercises (or even in musical sheets) create a framework in which participants can engage and transform the creative act. Through this lens, play becomes not a fixed definition, but a set of conditions that enable alternative ways of experiencing and practicing drawing.

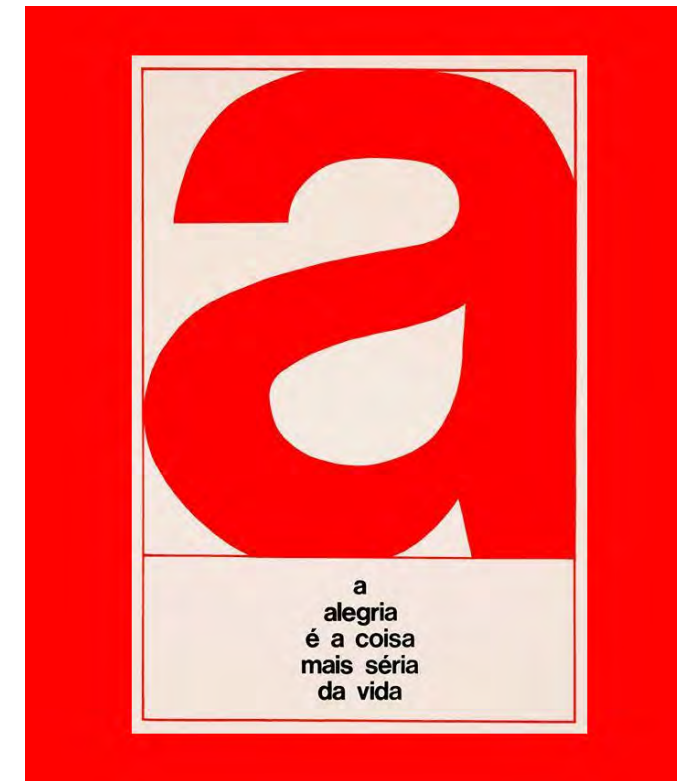
(What could they be?)

But there's a difference between being playful and being funny or entertaining - and that's precisely where I want to position my practice. Engaging in playful encounters with the required responsibility, aiming to massage the rough edges.

Afterall Play is a very serious activity.

"Being smart and being serious are traits that teachers value. (...)We are not as familiar with the healing power of humor. When humor is used to wound or hurt by either a teacher or students, it is the responsibility of everyone in the classroom to find ways to acknowledge what has happened and to work at mending the tear in the class body politic. All teachers could use more studies about sharing the power of humor as a force in the classroom that enhances learning and helps to create and sustain bonds of community. Working together in the classroom, teachers and students find equanimity when we laugh together."⁷

7. From bell hooks, Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom (New York: Routledge, 1994), **146**



Ernesto de Sousa (artist), Poster, *A alegria é a coisa mais séria da vida* ("Joy is the most serious thing in life")1970. In this work, graphic design and bold typographic drawing converge as a mode of political resistance, in the context of Portugal's Estado Novo.



Thinking along in a metaphor, if a table
the different balls can function as its str



Historically, the pedagogical **score** in teaching Drawing was synonymous with mimicry, a rigid instruction to replicate the lines of the masters with absolute fidelity. This begins to shift in the 1950s and 60s, when artists start to treat scores differently. In experimental music and performance, especially in the teaching of John Cage at the New School (NY, USA) the score stops being a blueprint and becomes a set of conditions. Instead of telling you what to make, it suggests something might happen. Around the same time, Fluxus artists turned this into short “event scores”: simple instructions anyone could perform, like small actions in everyday life. Artistic practices move away from correctness and toward interpretation.

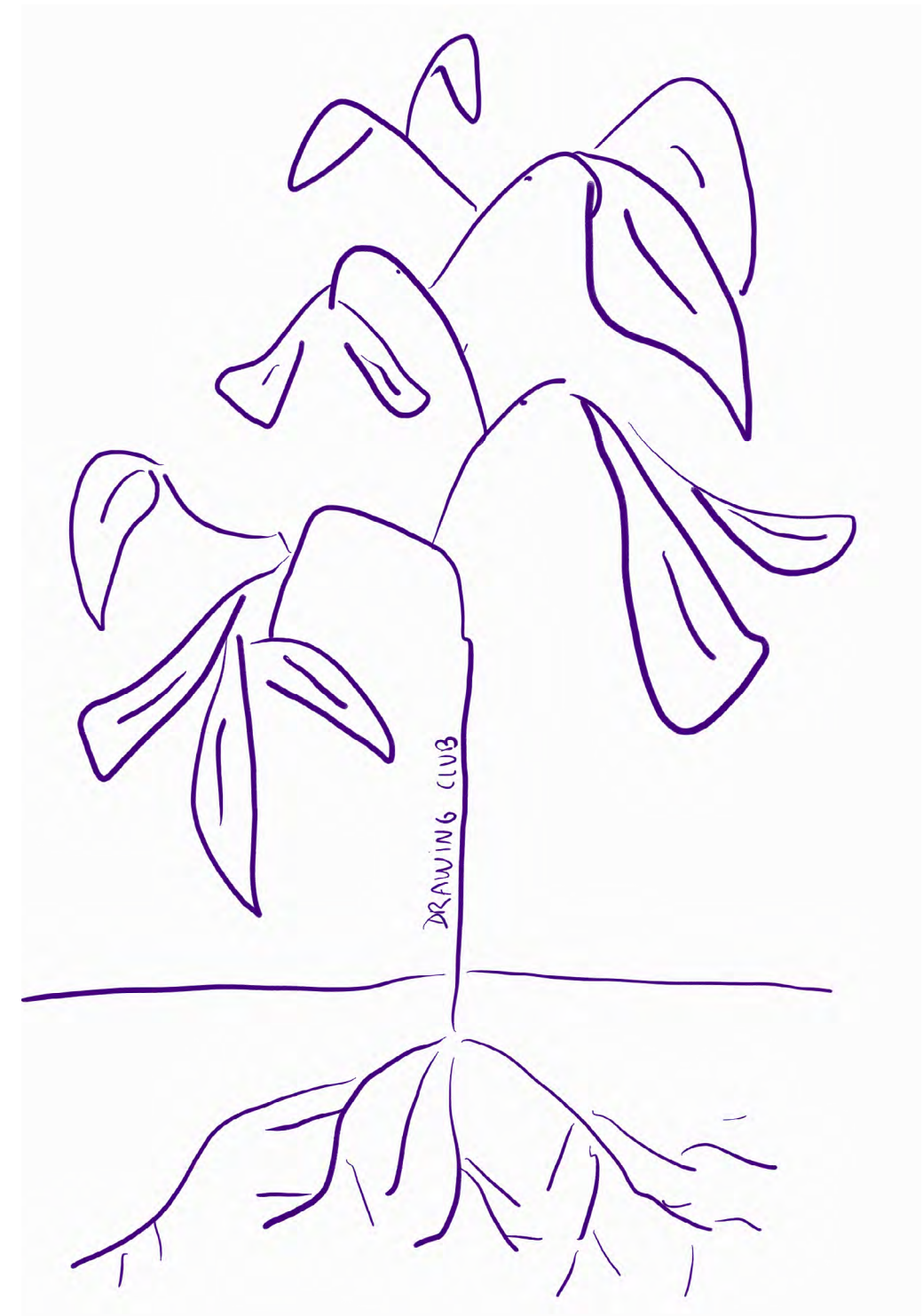
This departure from a standard of “rightness” shifts the pillar of authority away from an external judge and places it back onto the performer, demanding an internal leap of faith. In his reflections on creative liberation, jazz pianist Kenny Werner highlights this necessary reclamation of personal authority, writing: “The point is: you too can have permission to believe in yourself—but that permission has to come from you. No one will give it to you until they see that you already have it.”⁸

When we understand that there is no “right” way to do things, one has to trust their own instincts. As the jazz pianist Kenny Werner points out, this kind of confidence has to start from within: “The point is: you too can have permission to believe in yourself—but that permission has to come from you. No one will give it to you until they see that you already have it.”⁸

In this context, the score becomes less like a rule and more like a **trigger**. It doesn't describe the outcome, it sets something in motion. It also shifts the role of the teacher, from someone who demonstrates the right answer to someone who proposes situations. In the Drawing Club, scores are used in this way. They are not there to explain how to draw, but to disturb how drawing usually works. They create small rules that are easy to enter, but impossible to fully control. Everyone follows the same instruction, but ends up somehow different.

8. Kenny Werner, *Effortless Mastery: Liberating the Master Musician Within* (New Albany, IN: Jamey Aebersold Jazz, 1996), 92.

Scores as Triggers



If a score is not a map of a destination, but a spark for a journey, what then makes a score “good”?

It should generate different approaches, which makes it generative. It should be simple enough for a child to enter, yet complex enough that even a professional creative cannot predict where they will land. A good score thrives on the action rather than the destination. It doesn't seek to control the outcome, but to leave a subtle loose end. Even when a hundred people are asked to draw the same thing, a good score should ensure that no two marks could be identical. Why? Because it prioritizes the individual's process over a singular correct answer. It is a trigger that sets a movement in motion, leaving enough space for the unexpected to enter.

On the other hand, what fails as a score in the context of practice drawing is this being closed-ended. A “bad” score is one that contains a hidden right answer. It is an instruction that is so descriptive of the final result that the act of drawing becomes merely a technical chore of execution rather than an act of discovery. If every participant follows the score and the results all look identical, the score has functioned as a mold, not a trigger.

If Drawing is a car, a good score acts as an intricate round-about, and a bad score acts as a one-way dead end street

In English, the use of the word Score can also be associated with a Musical sheet. Johan Huizinga's reflection about this subject precisely touches on that. “ However natural this affinity seems to us it is far from easy to form a clear idea of its rationale. The most we can do is to enumerate the elements which music and play have in common. Play, we said, lies outside the reasonableness of practical life; has nothing to do with necessity or utility, duty or truth, All this is equally true of music. Furthermore, musical forms are determined by values which transcend logical ideas, which even transcend our ideas of the visible and the tangible.”⁹

To transition from the historical **copy** to the modern **trigger** is to move from a culture of reproduction to a culture of participation. The following pages show specific examples of artistic practices where scores have successfully disturbed the peace of the white page, turning the act of creating back into a site of play and radical possibility. These are the practices of the great Yoko Ono, Trisha Brown and Priscila Fernandes:

9. Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), 158

Scores as Triggers



What does it make a good score?

Yoko Ono: Grapefruit

40

PAINTING UNTIL IT BECOMES MARBLE

Cut out and hang a painting, design,
a photograph, or a writing (printed or
otherwise), that you like.

Let visitors cut out their favorite
parts and take them.

For example, if the visitor likes red,
let him take all the red parts.

Ask many visitors to cut out their
favorite parts until the whole thing is
gone.

Also, instead of cutting the parts out,
you may ask them to paint black ink over
them.

In case of the writing, you ask the
visitor to cut out his favorite letter
or word.

1961 summer

10. Yoko Ono, Grapefruit: A Book of Instructions and Drawings (New York:
Simon & Schuster, 2000),
82 (left side), 84 (right side),
accessed May 16 2026, https://monoskop.org/images/archive/6/64/20190320203953%21Ono_Yoko_Grapefruit_A_Book_of_Instructions_and_Drawings_2000.pdf.

41

PAINTING TO EXIST ONLY WHEN IT'S COPIED OR PHOTOGRAPHED

Let People copy or photograph your
paintings.

Destroy the originals.

1964 spring



Trisha Brown: It's a Draw!



11. Trisha Brown Company, stills from *It's a Draw*, accessed May 13, 2026, <https://trishabrowncompany.org/reperatory/its-a-draw.html>.



This subversive attitude of seriously fun speaks along these projects. For me, practices like those of Yoko Ono, Trisha Brown, and Priscila Fernandes act like a constellation of vital reminders of what happens when we dare to keep our hands and minds playful. Whether using text instructions to crack open infinite spaces for action, dragging the whole body onto the paper to create a choreographic blueprint, or subverting the very structures of education to remind us that creative freedom is a form of resistance, their shared spirit is the way to go.

How can this be understood within the practice of the Drawing Club?

It means that the scores designed in the Club are not technical exercises; they are disruptions. Like Ono, I count on simple written instructions to bypass the fear of the blank page. Like Brown, I invite the participants to treat drawing as a whole-body, choreographic movement. And like Fernandes, by pushing the body against these specific rules, the predictable path breaks, giving rise to an endless variety of unexpected possibilities.

Movement III:

Gather the ingredients

Understanding other artist's practices allows me to trust my own process. Like finding a flashlight in a dark tunnel.

My practice often begins with intuition. The Drawing Club was already in motion when I began to more deliberately frame this research, including the development of a pilot study focused on methodology, a term I initially found difficult to approach. If this research is to remain grounded in participation, I want it to be shared and responsive to others.

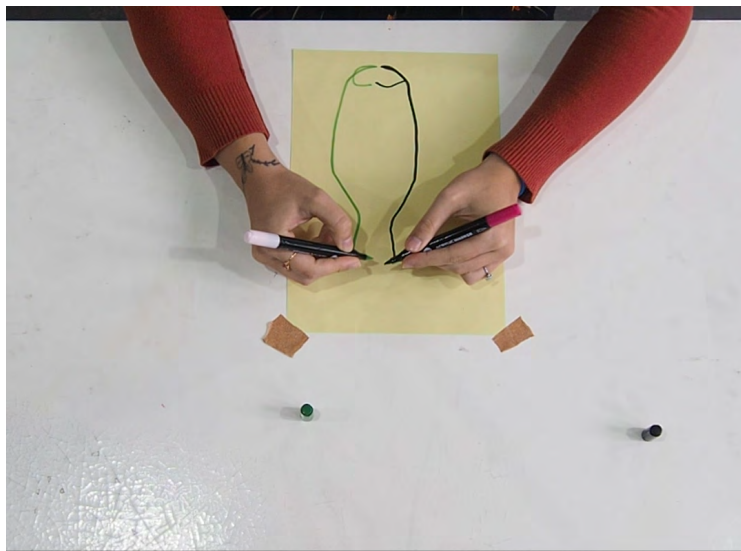
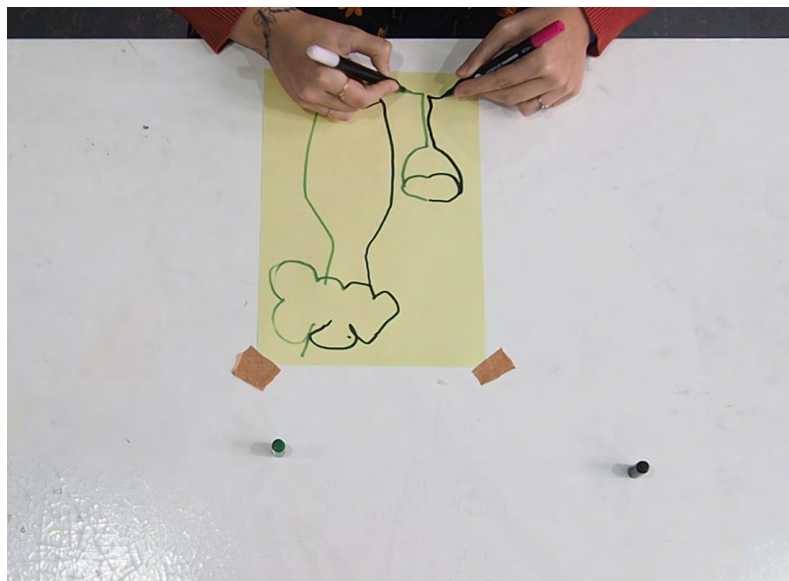
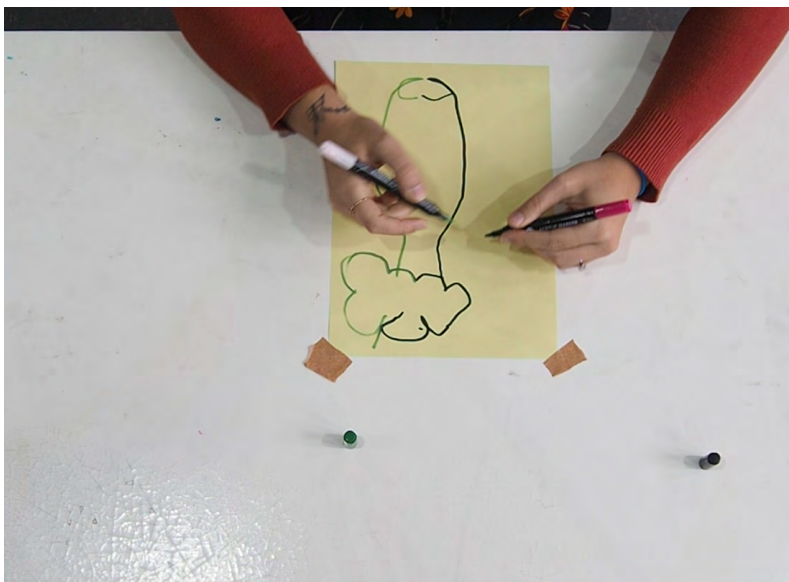
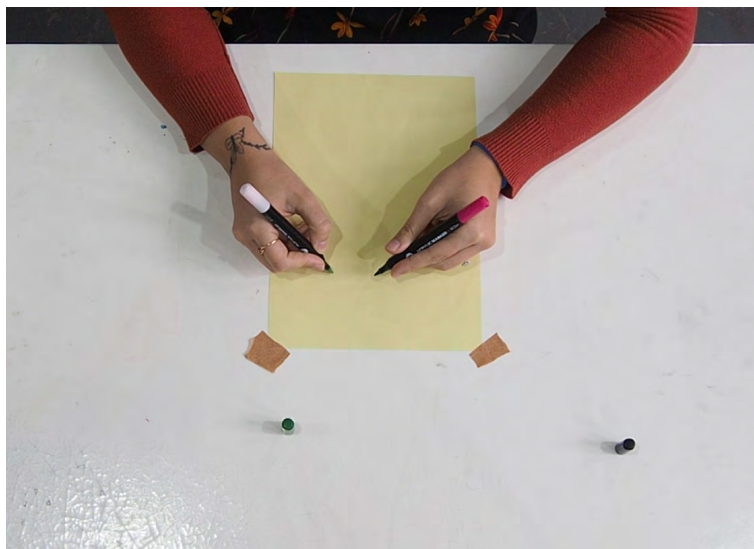
This raised an initial question: how can the method of the Drawing Club be understood, or even "drawn"?

My first approach was to look closely at what happens at the level of the drawing itself, on the surface of the paper. To explore this, I invited an artist and collaborator Inês Garcias to the studio, where we recorded a series of drawing movements based on actions previously explored in the Club. Using the same materials and setup (coloured paper, acrylic markers, and pencils) we documented approximately thirty different movements performed at the table. A second collaborator, artist Duarte Oliveira, assisted with filming, allowing me to guide the process.

Pilot Study: How can I draw the method of the Drawing Club?



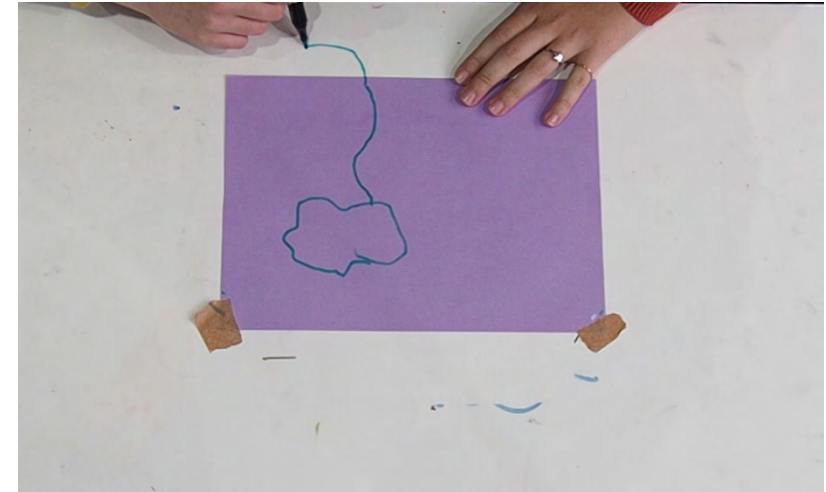
Behind the scenes: my friend Inês doing the Movements of the Drawing Club, with Duarte on the camera, and me directing the moment.

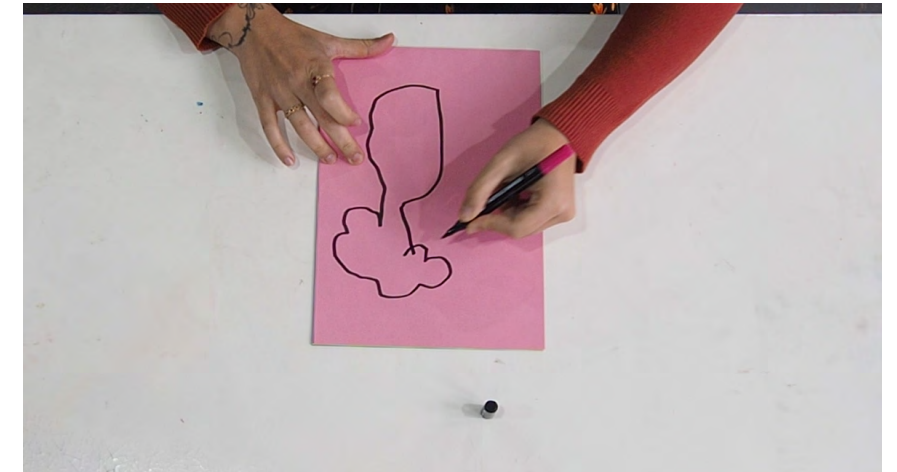
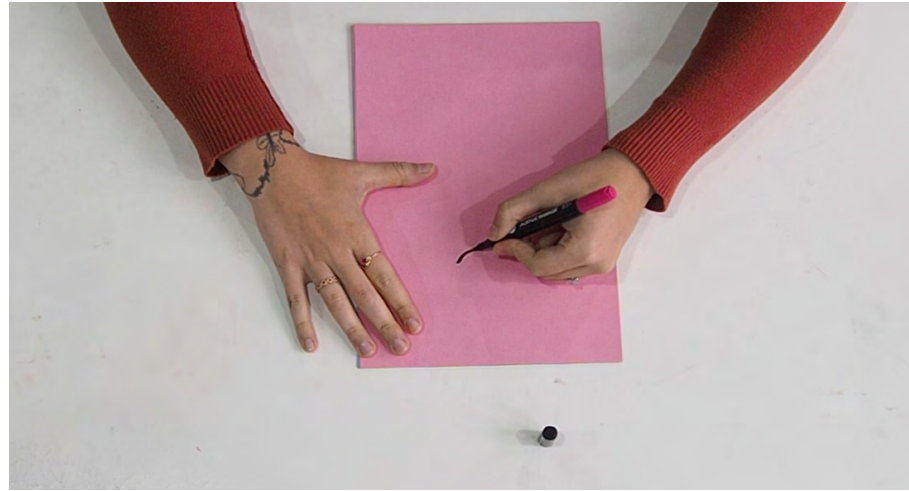


*“For 2 minutes draw
the outline of the
objects you see, using
your both hands.”*



“-Now, I’m going to
 join you!
 -Let’s hold the pen
 together and, in
 silence, draw the
 objects in front of us.
 (2 min.)”





“-Now Inês, please hold the pen with your non-prominent hand and draw the same objects.”



-For 1 minute, use
your mouth to draw



-For 2 minutes, draw the
negative space around
the objects you have in
front of you



-For 1 minute, use your
feet to hold the pen, and
draw the objects in front
of you



-For 1 minute, you can
only draw looking at your
objects, and never at the
paper (blind drawing)

A change on direction

Upon revisiting the recordings, I found them visually compelling, yet I began to question their value as a foundation for understanding methodology. While they captured gestures and process, they seemed to isolate the act of drawing from the broader conditions in which it usually takes place.

A conversation with my peer Femke marked a turning point. After sharing the recordings with her, she pointed out that if the drawings were produced by a single person, it would be difficult to speak of a method that could extend beyond an individual practice. This observation led me to reconsider my initial approach and recognize that I might be focusing too narrowly on the drawing itself, rather than on the relational and situational aspects of the Club.

Shortly after, I was invited to bring the Drawing Club into the exhibition POST-LUDENS, hosted by the artist-run space Troef in Leiden and curated by Matilda and Louw.



My peer Femke, during one of her visits to the studio.



The exhibition engages with the shifting role of play in adult life, particularly how it becomes instrumentalized within systems of productivity, while also proposing play as a form of resistance and collective imagination, drawing on Johan Huizinga.

This context offered a new direction for the pilot study. Rather than focusing on isolated gestures, it became an opportunity to observe how play operates within a shared environment. In this setting, the figure of the “post-ludent” (as described in the exhibition) resonated with the participants of the Drawing Club: individuals who choose to engage in play despite the pressures of productivity and structured time.

The session, which took place on the 30th of November, became a key moment to reconsider where methodology might reside in the conditions that shape participation, interaction, and reflection within the space.

At the playground: *Post-Ludens*



Poster for Drawing Club x Post Ludens

I arrived at the Drawing Club with a clear plan, but quickly felt the need to deviate from it. Rather than following a fixed structure, I began to respond to what was unfolding in the space, adjusting the pace and allowing more time for participants to remain within each action.

This shift became central to the session, shifting my role from leading a sequence of activities to facilitating an evolving situation. The need to respond to my participants became particularly visible during the warm-up. Participants were invited to draw the path their bodies had taken that day, mapping their journey to the space. What was initially conceived as a short introductory exercise extended into a longer moment of engagement, where individual lines began to overlap and conversations emerged organically. The activity moved beyond its initial intention, creating a shared entry point through memory and exchange.

Throughout the following movements, the introduction of constraints generated unexpected forms of engagement. Participants adapted these conditions in their own ways, often collaborating or inventing alternative strategies. The moment of revealing the drawings was frequently met with surprise and enjoyment (laughs were heard in the room), suggesting a temporary suspension of habitual judgments.

Movement 3 introduced a more explicitly relational structure, where participants worked in pairs, describing and drawing without direct visual reference. This required attention, trust, and negotiation, extending the act of drawing into a shared and performative exchange. The activity unfolded both within and beyond the exhibition space, reinforcing the fluidity of the setting.

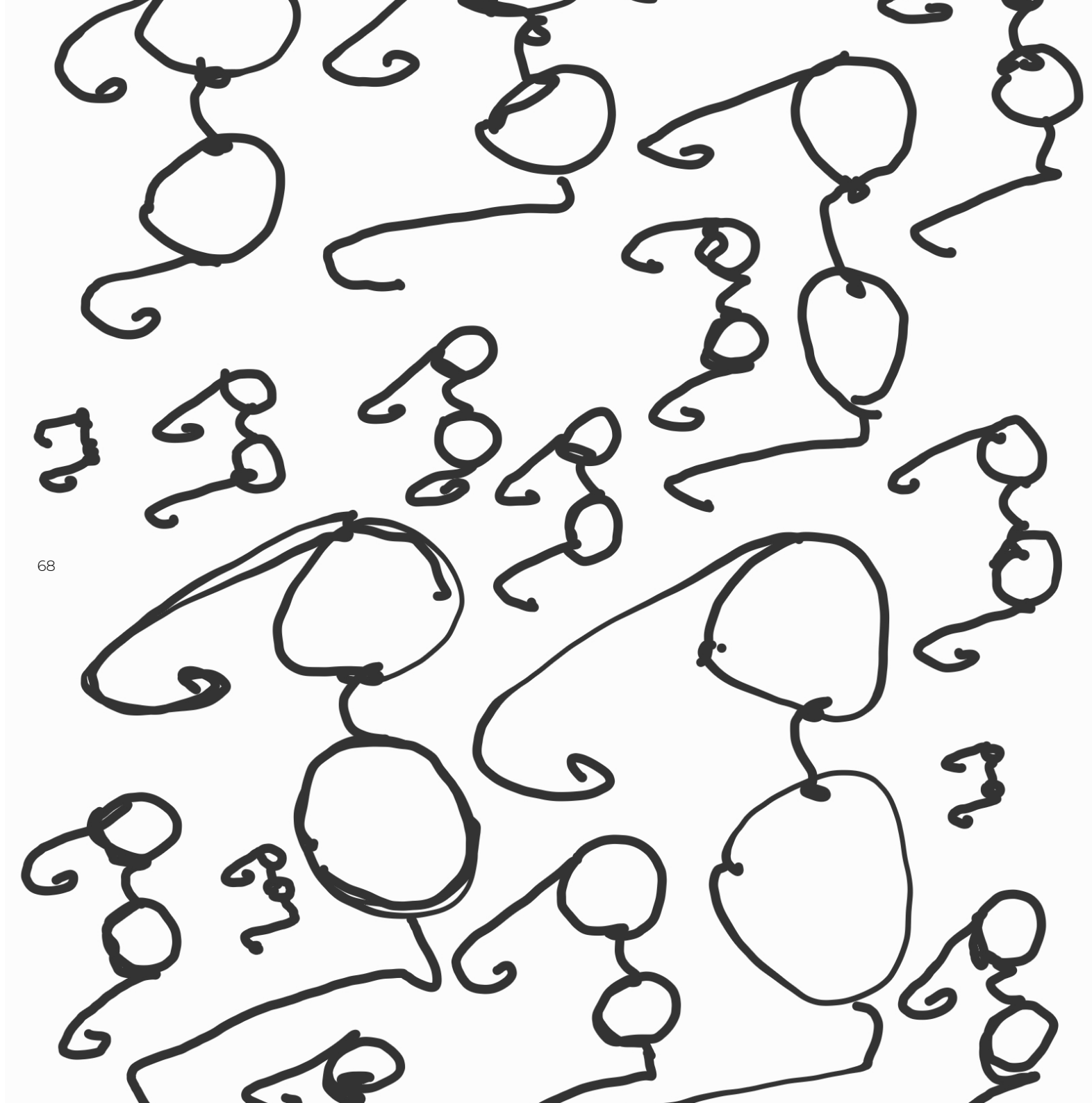
THE PLAN:

Warm-Up	<i>"Draw your map of the day" Close your eyes and with memory trace your steps."</i>	On a big canvas on the floor every participant draw the map they did to reach Troeuf. Everyone can present their line and therefore introduce itself to the group	30 min
Movement 1	What doesn't belong into an office?	Draw objects, people, colours, whatever you don't associate to an office. For this you can only doing it "blindly", meaning that you can not look at your paper during the process	20 min
Movement 2	What does belong in an office?	Repeat the motion across the room. Draw the objects/props you usually find in offices. For this you can not use your hands at all (offer suggestions, like feet, armpit, other people's hand)	20 min
Movement 3	Let's play the "description game"	In pairs you'll have to face back to back to each other. One starts by describing something, without saying what the thing is- the other participant needs to draw accordingly to the instructions. After 15 min switch turns.	15 + 15 min
Group reflection	Display all the drawings on the floor	What was your experience? (Ask participants to leave a written note as a feedback of the day)	20 min

All things considered, this experience raised a major shift in my inquiry. The question was no longer how to draw a method for the Drawing Club as a whole, but rather: how can I draw a method to notice how play actually unfolds within the room?

At the playground: Post-Ludens





Do I have to get new glasses to see better?

This pilot study suggests that drawing, within this context, can be approached as a play-oriented process. Both drawing and play appear to rely on a balance between structure and openness, where constraints do not limit action but instead create the conditions for it to emerge. At the same time, participation cannot be imposed; engagement depends on the willingness of each individual to enter the situation in their own way.

Because of this fluidity, arriving at a fixed methodology felt impossible. Instead, this pilot points toward an evolving framework that functions very much like a drawing itself—it is an initial sketch, a temporary proposal. Rather than claiming these are the absolute, definitive rules of the space, I am choosing to look through the lens of five specific elements that felt vital in the heat of the moment. I am risking this specific selection as my starting point, fully intending to later reflect on whether they were the right choices or how they might need to shift. For now, this is the palette I am using to read the room:

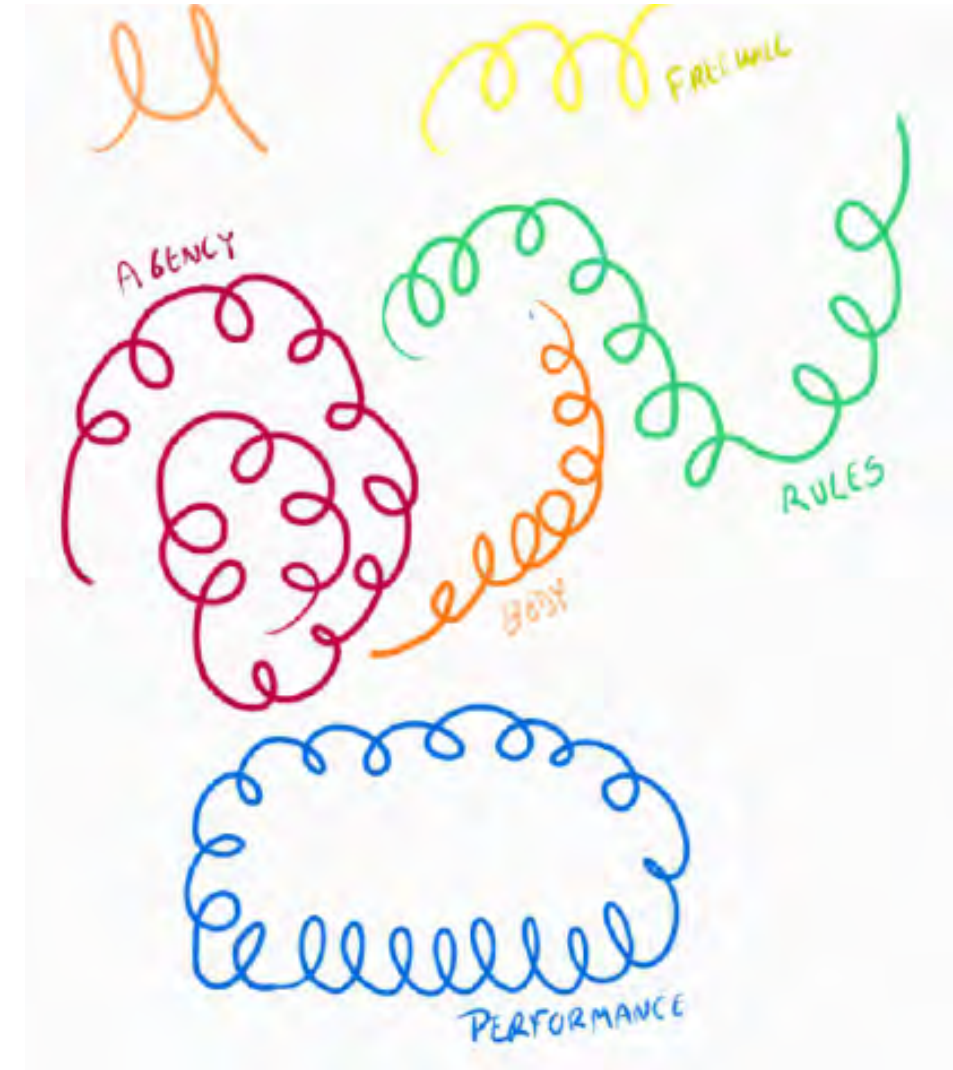
Body awareness (orange)

Seriousness in the **performatic act** (blue)

Rules and boundaries implied (green)

The **free-will** of the participant) (yellow)

Agency within the player (red)



What if this concerns turn into lines?
How can they intertwined?
Can they form shapes?

This choice to use drawing as a way of reflecting on and analyzing the unfolding of play throughout the sessions is fully intentional. I also want to embrace the different possibilities of drawing, not only as a practical activity, but as an expansive way of observing. In the following chapters, I will create drawings after each session to track how play moved through time, mapping the moments where it intensified, resisted, or dissolved through the lenses of the 5 ingredients I collected.

These drawings emerge from a combination of documentation methods gathered during the sessions, including photographs, field notes, and the drawings left behind by the participants. They are heavily informed by my own embodied experience within the room, which holds space for the delicate shifts in rhythm, hesitation, excitement, and collective flow. Through the act of drawing, these fleeting observations can be translated into lines, colors, movements, and their own relational logic.

At the same time, I recognize the limitations of this approach. These reflections are inevitably filtered through my own sensitivity, memory, biases, and standards of perception. The drawings therefore function as situated reflection shaped by my presence within the Club itself. For this reason, I believe it is important for multiple forms of documentation to coexist simultaneously. Photographs, participant feedback, written reflection and drawings, each reveal different traces of the experience, allowing one form of documentation to feed or question another.

The lines within these drawings will be intentionally intertwined and looping, reflecting the intuitive and living qualities of the sessions themselves. After all, these are vibrant moments filled with moving bodies, interactions, and unpredictability. Through drawing, movement and duration can temporarily be held on the flatness of the paper. It is an attempt to see if, for a brief moment, life itself can be traced through lines.

Drawing a method



Movement IV: Rehearse by doing!

-“Hello! I am doing research on how Drawing can become rather than a talent, a practice. I am conducting some interviews with different artists and creatives that use drawing in their work. I am hoping to get some insights on how Drawing is perceived and if there’s a connection to Play, while we do it. Would you like to talk with me about it?”

“Do you like drawing? Why?

When did you first start drawing? Where or how did you learn it?

What role does drawing play in your artistic/creative practice?

Is there a difference for you between drawing alone and drawing with others?

How do you deal with mistakes when you draw?

What’s your favorite game or way of playing?

Do you think you’ve ever learned something important through a game?

Do you consider play part of your drawing process? In what way?

What’s the room for play in your broader practice?

In games, do you like to follow the rules, or break them?

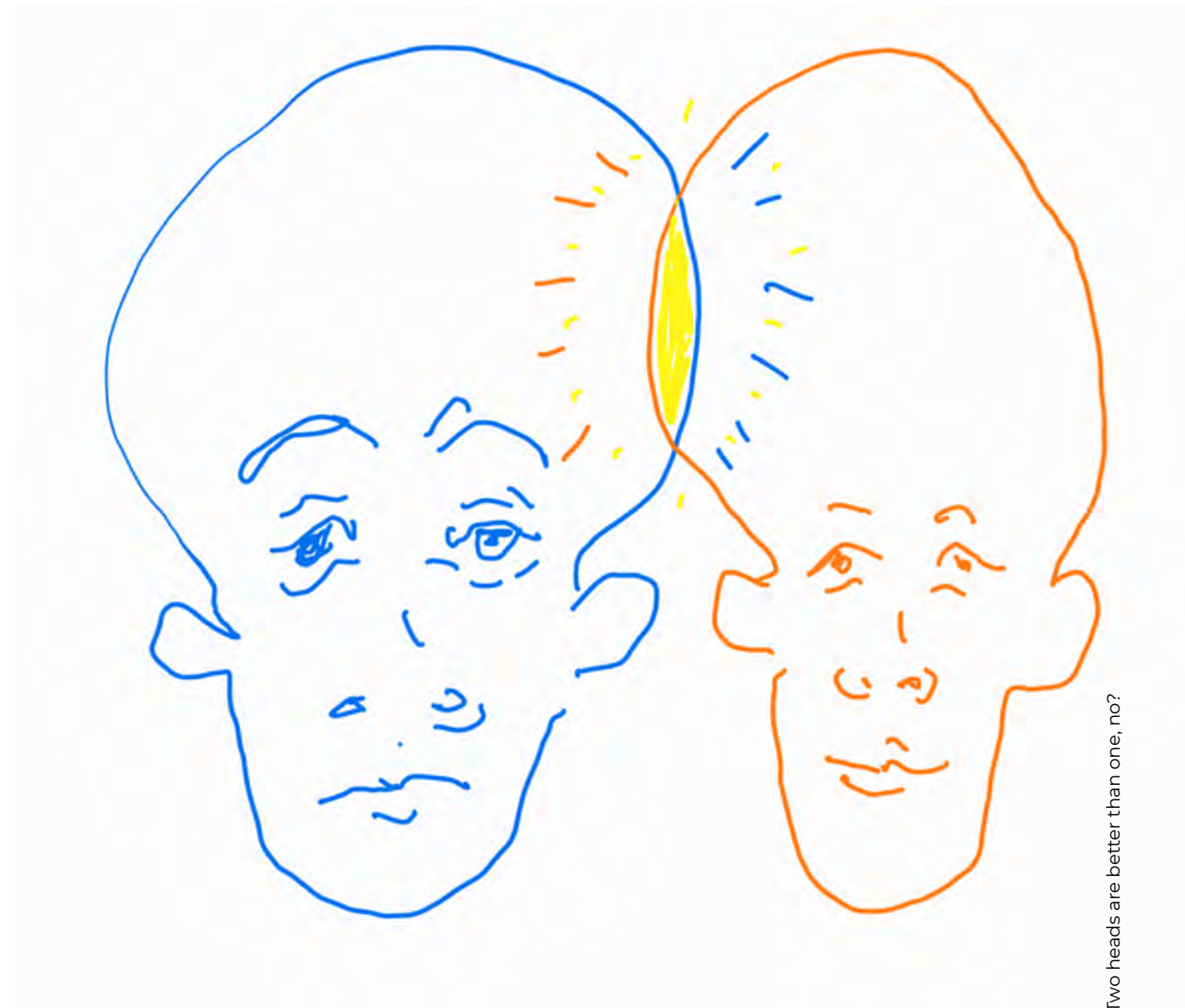
Do you think everyone can draw?

When someone says “I can’t draw,” how do you respond?

Can you remember a time when drawing didn’t feel good to you? What made it difficult?”

The script above was my guideline while engaging in 4 different conversations, with Glenn, Rita, Leonor and Jasmine. To better understand how these lines resonate beyond my feelings and the Drawing Club practices, it felt natural to expand this reflection into dialogue, holding space for open conversations about how people actually feel and think about the practice of drawing.

-Hello, can we talk?

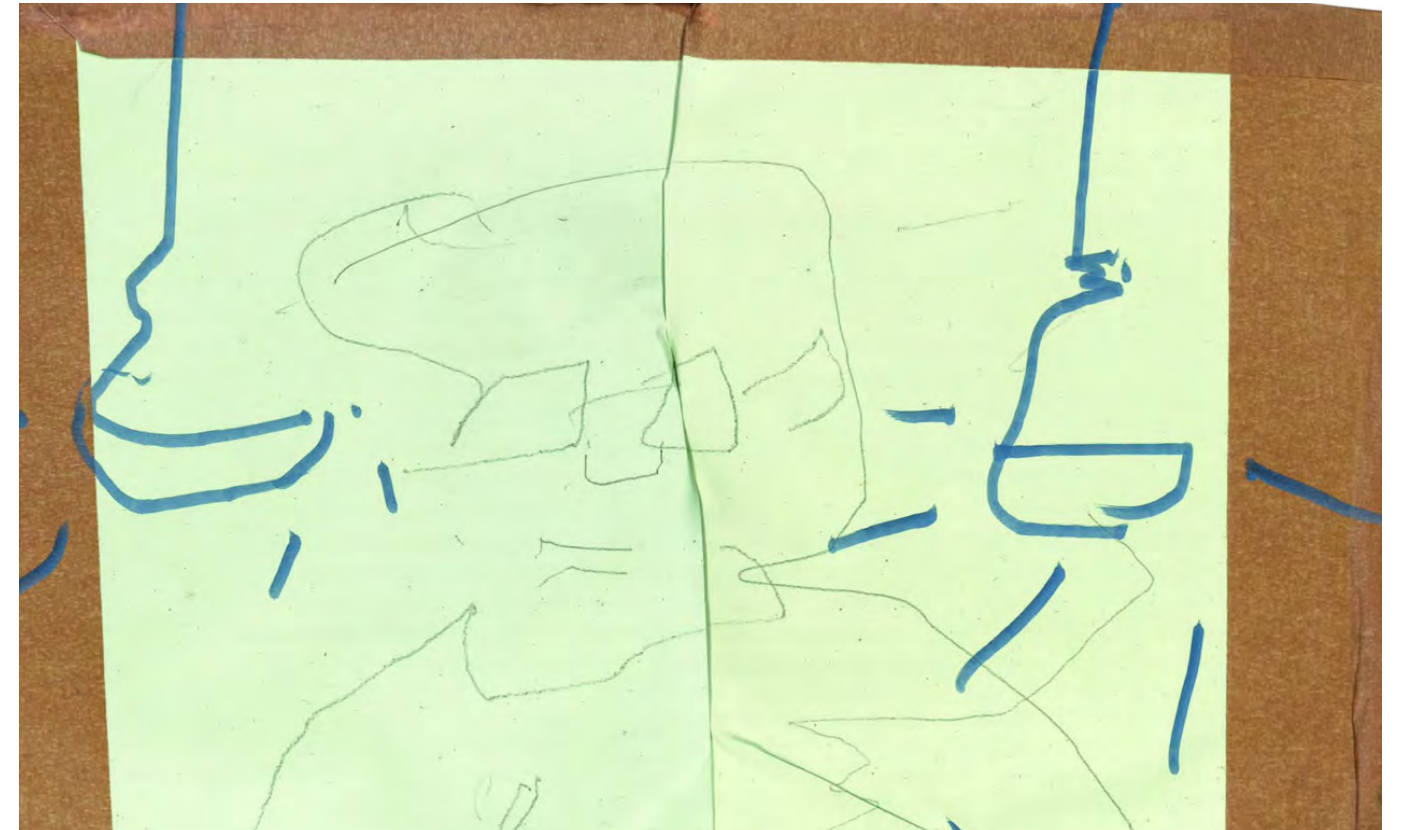


Two heads are better than one, no?

Across these dialogues, drawing was recurrently mentioned as a living muscle. Rita, a ceramicist, provided a grounding metaphor by comparing the act of drawing to the skill of literacy. “Drawing is like learning to write,” she explained, going against the mysticism of “talent” and replacing it with the necessity of training, precisely like a muscle. To her, “knowing how to draw” is a byproduct of the practice itself, a physical persistence where “the quantity creates the quality.” This sentiment resonates with Glenn, who perceives drawing as an “attitude”, a way of approaching material and thought that is fundamentally embodied. When Glenn remarked that “Rotterdam was also a drawing once,” he shifted the scale of the conversation from the sketchbook to the street. He reminded me that the very reality we inhabit (the concrete, the steel, the sidewalks, the parks, and the spatial flow of a city) began as a trace of the hand. In this light, drawing is the ultimate act of world-building, a blueprint for the future that exists first in the kinetic movement of the arm.

78 This sense of “puzzling” through the world is a central theme for Jasmine, an architect, who uses drawing as a primary bridge for communication. In her working context, she finds that words often reach a limit that only a line can cross. “When I explain something, I love to draw,” she noted, “so then people can see what I’m thinking about.” For her, drawing is a tool for spatial negotiation, a way to solve technical puzzles together. This is also related to her work in architecture, she is a technical drawer, but her practice expands outside the office. Our conversations also touched upon the psychological friction created by modern tools. Jasmine spoke candidly about the “pressure toward perfection” inherent in digital drawing, in her case when she drew using her tablet. While paper offers a sanctuary of speed where “it doesn’t have to be perfect,” the digital screen, with its infinite “undo” buttons, often creates an expectation of correctness that can paralyze the hand.

Rita echoed this concern, observing how children today are often “trapped by the image” comparing their raw attempts to the polished and filtered results of the internet.



To combat this paralysis, we dived into the concept of “play” as a pedagogical attitude or method. I was curious whether my partners had considered this attitude in their own work.

For Glenn, play is a specific way of engaging with the unknown. For Leonor, a painter, it is the “what if” used in her studio practice to unlock curiosity, like a willingness to turn a “failure” upside down to see if it has revealed a new kind of meaning. Leonor views drawing as a “process to think along another thing,” where the marks on the page are the result of a deeper exploration. She embraces the “productive” nature of the mistake, noting that “accepting error is already a great learning.” She addresses that only by nurturing this playful attitude she can allow the “muscle” to grow without the constriction of fear. Whether it is Jasmine’s 30-second collaborative games or Leonor’s blind drawing exercises, these “playful scores” serve to “lower” the stakes and return the body to a state of spontaneity. As Jasmine beautifully summarized: “The point of the game is to have fun. It doesn’t have to be perfect.”

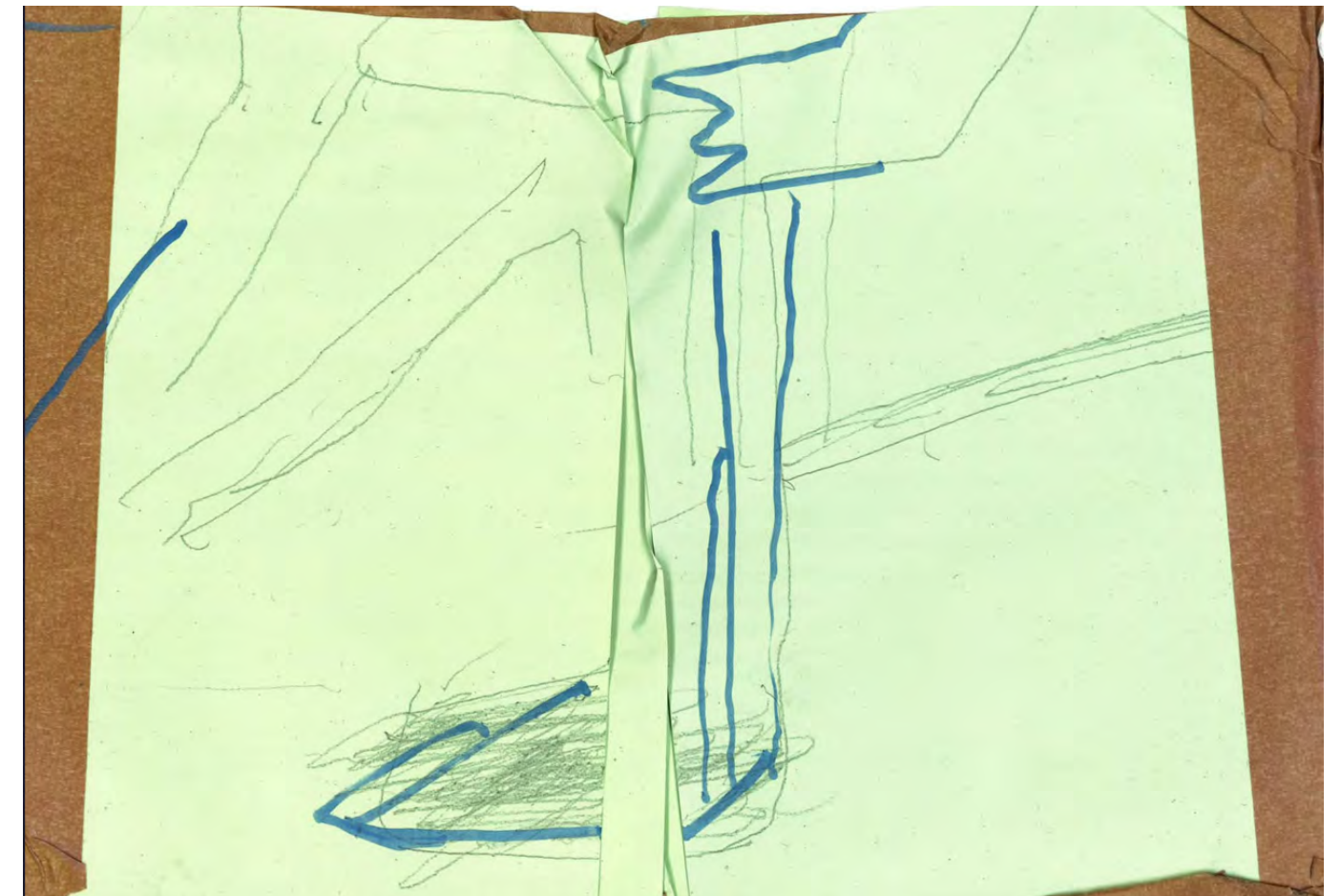
80 Ultimately, these reflections suggest that to learn with our bodies is to accept that drawing is mobile: a practice that shifts between individual reflection and collective participation. Drawing remains our most ancient and modern way of staying attentive to the world. It is a way of saying “I am here,” whether that “here” is a technical floor plan, a smudge to plan the next painting, a proposal for a ceramic mold, or a graffiti of our name on the wall.

I am continually amazed by the diverse ways drawing breathes life into our world, but I am even more struck by the generous attitude of my participants. To my dear collaborators in Portugal and the Netherlands, thank you for thinking alongside me and for trusting me with your reflections. Your willingness to share the deep and often unspoken feelings you have toward this practice has given me a sense of community and I am deeply grateful for your voices and your visions.

As a researcher I feel amazed by these different possibilities, but even more with the kind and generous attitude by my dear participants. Thank you for thinking a long and thank you for sharing with me your deep feelings toward this subject.

The Drawing Club, and the research sustaining it, functions as a space where this “attitude” is exercised—a place where we remember that we are not born taught, but that through (tiny) movements, we can maybe draw ourselves into existence.

81



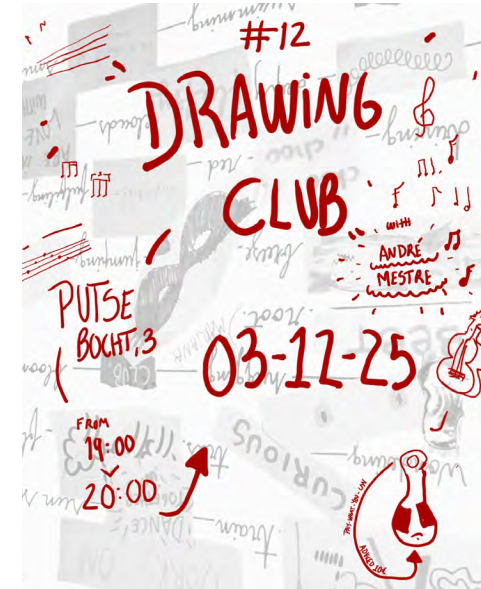
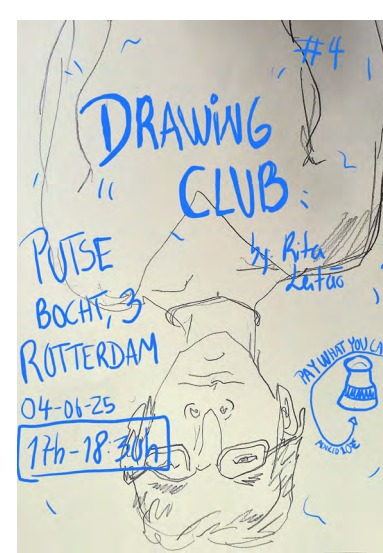
The following chapters move through specific encounters where this friction was the primary guest. I have organized these sessions into three Fields of Tension to examine how drawing shifts when confronted with something else. This something else can be a place, an object, someone, or simply a score.

First, we encounter **Body vs Tool**, where we notice the physical exhaustion of the hand and the material reality of the object, asking what happens when the body is the one that reaches its limit.

We then move into **Self vs Collective**, examining drawing as an intrusive, social act where lines must share the same skin and learn to be together in a crowded room.

Finally, we face **Judgment vs Liberation**, where we confront the internal ghosts of what we consider “good” and “bad,” allowing our expectations to crack, suspending this notions and curiously.

By looking at these moments, I want to notice drawing not as a solitary skill, but as a reactive, living practice that is shaped by the very friction that brings it to life.



MAPS AND EMOTIONAL LANDSCAPES

with Rita Leitaõ
& Jazz musicians

Thursday 15th January
19:00 - 21:00
Art is Home Hillevliet Studios
No sign up necessary, just show up!

INTRO
EXHIBITING ARTIST SPECIAL



COLLECTIVE STORYTELLING

with Ines Garcias

Thursday 22nd January
19:00 - 21:00
Art is Home Hillevliet Studios
No sign up necessary, just show up!

INTRO
EXHIBITING ARTIST SPECIAL



DRAWING TALK

with Mariana, Rita and Ines

Thursday 29th January
19:00 - 21:00
Art is Home Hillevliet Studios
No sign up necessary, just show up!

INTRO
EXHIBITING ARTIST SPECIAL



Body vs Tool

Drawing and tools (DC #7)

23/07/2025
20:00- 21:30 pm
Purse Bocht, 3, 3073 HD, Rotterdam
Guest host Inês Garcias

We live in a world full of objects that were once drawn by someone else. Can these objects be traced and transformed into something else? Can we use them as drawing tools? Will these constraints restrict movement or spark creativity?

Movements:

1. With one hand feel the object you have in front of you, and with the other draw it at the same time
2. Collect words from participants (“What forms did you see today?”) and place them in the collective jar
3. Take one word from the jar and use it as a prompt. You can only draw using other objects that are in the room- literally meaning using their shape and outline to draw
4. Invite participants to collaborate and make drawings together
5. Collective Reflections



Due to so many participants (16 in total), and the collaboration of the artist Inês Garcias, this was a very enjoyable experiment. The table was full of objects spread all over which transformed the space, bringing many sparks of curiosity.

The limitation of only using these objects to draw created some initial tension that was address with a very playful attitude by the participants. Participants had to search the room, interact, ask for permission to take something from the table, wait for others to finish using specific tools.

This led me into thinking that sometimes creating obstacles on the task can generate more energy towards the movement. When everything is possible sometimes the world gets too big and our decision-making loses some of its purpose. Funny to realize that actually building walls makes you wanna jump.

A participant at the end of the session told me that she used to do this when she was a kid, and thanked both me and Inês for reminding her of that moment.



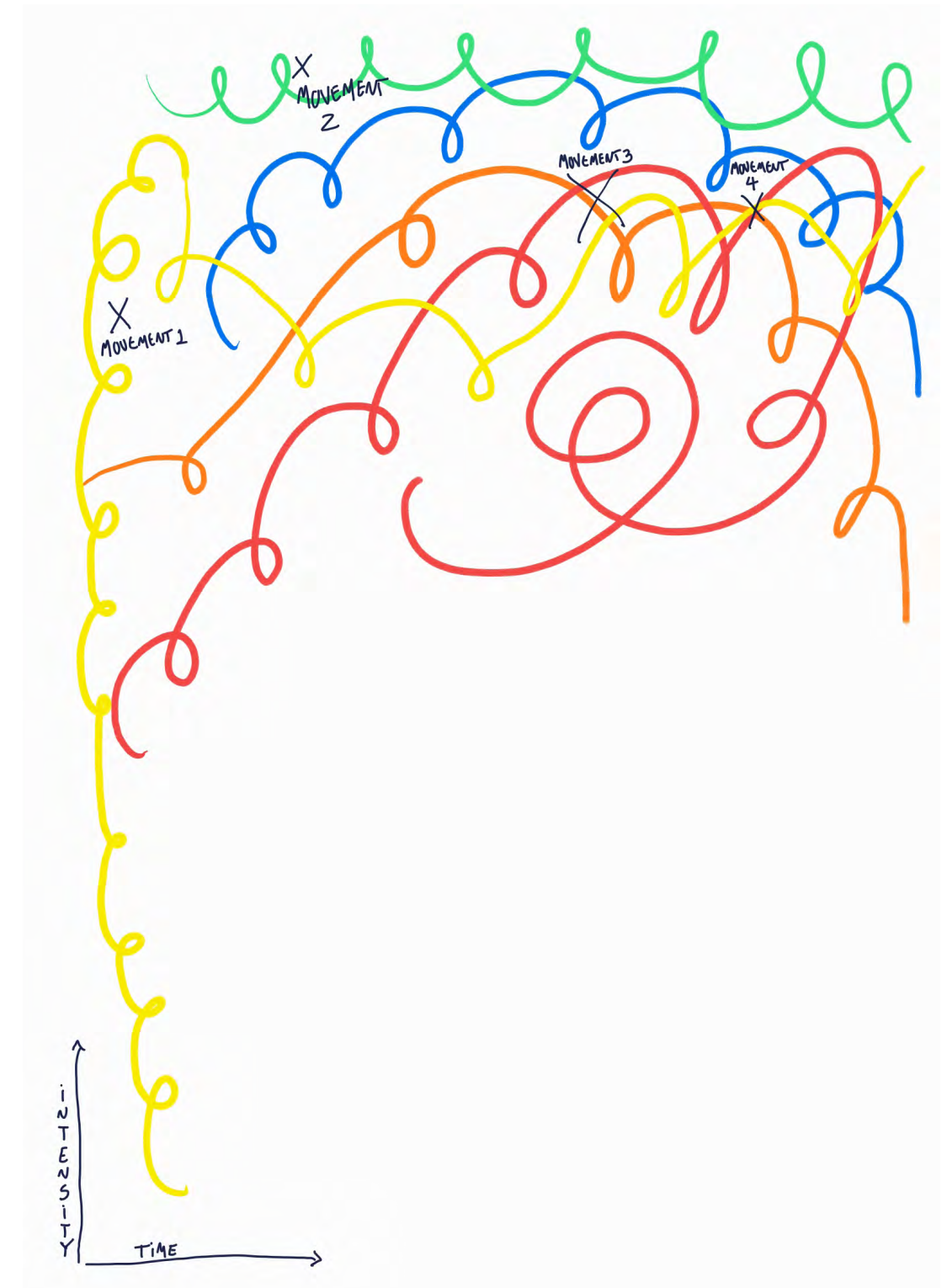


Reflecting on this session, the five lines in the drawing begin to trace how different conditions of play unfolded over time.

Free will seemed to expand gradually, becoming more visible as participants grew comfortable within the space. Agency and body appeared closely intertwined, suggesting that one rarely operates without the other.

Participants began to experiment more freely, adjusting how they held materials, trying unfamiliar approaches, and responding to one another. This openness seemed to be supported both by time and by the presence of others.

At the same time, the performance of the scores gained intensity along the session. What began as tentative actions developed into more focused and committed engagements. Toward the end, the intensity in the room slowly came down and a sense of tiredness emerged, allowing the energy to soften and settle into a collective moment of reflection.



Drawing and Repetition (DC #2)

07/05/2025

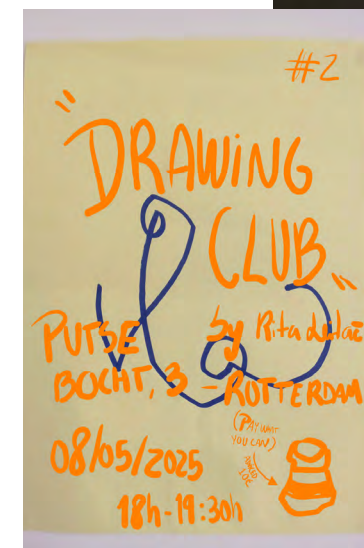
18:00- 19:30 pm

Purse Bocht, 3, 3073 HD, Rotterdam

Does the way we look at things affect our drawings? What can we learn from repetition? If we intensely draw the same thing over and over again, will we get closer?

Movements:

1. Dismantling automatisms- look at your object for 30 seconds and never look again. By using your memory, draw the image you have in your head.
2. Slow Down Blind Perimeter Drawing- Never looking at your paper, follow the line that marks the perimeter of what you're looking at. At the same time as your eyes follow this line, draw it on the paper.
3. Negative Space- Draw the liminal space between your object and the background. Try to see the object for the outside space it interacts with.
4. Divide your object into different parts. Draw something different with them.
5. Collective Reflections

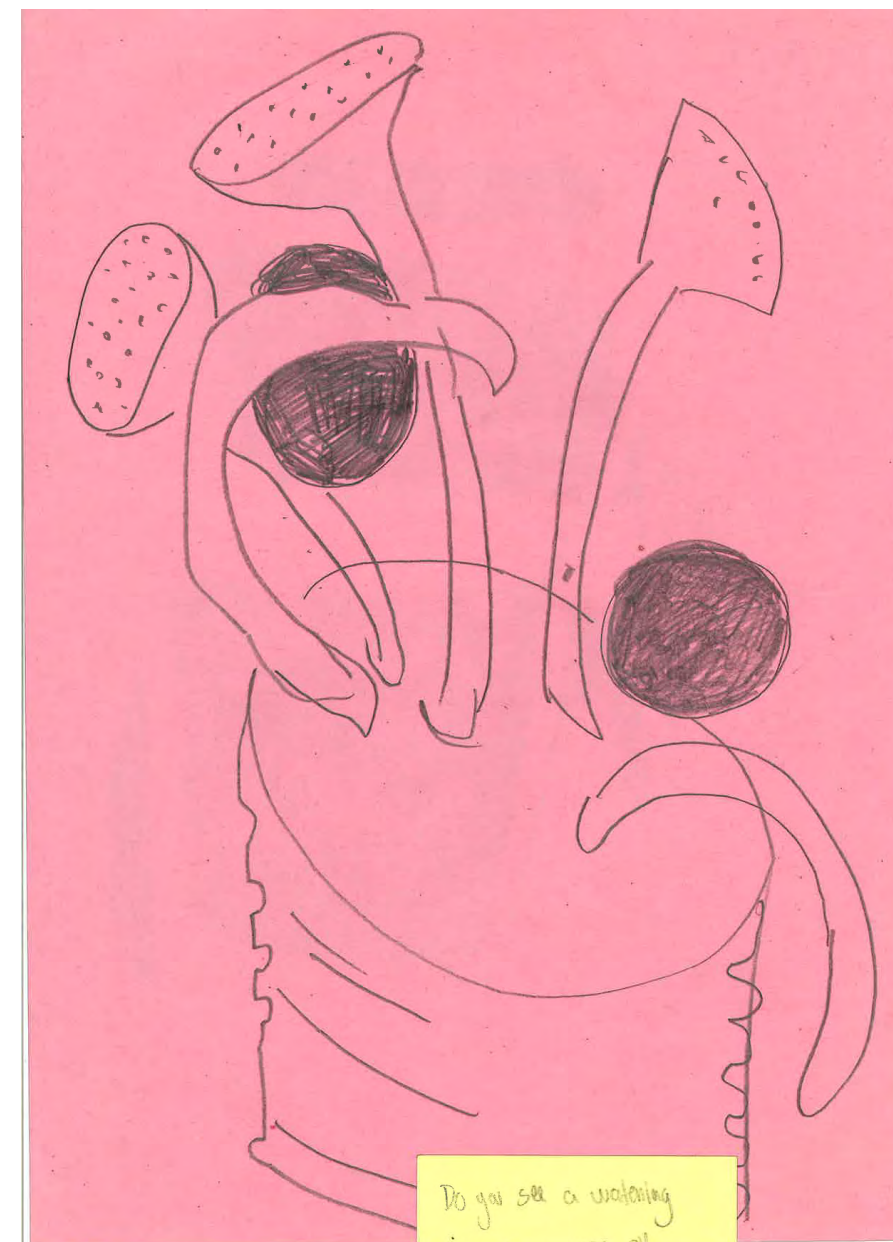


This session was about different ways of drawing and therefore looking at one subject. I brought with me a watering can, a chilly pepper plant and a boot. Lucky chance that we only had 3 participants, meaning that each one could use one object to work with. I asked participants to choose an object for the entire session.

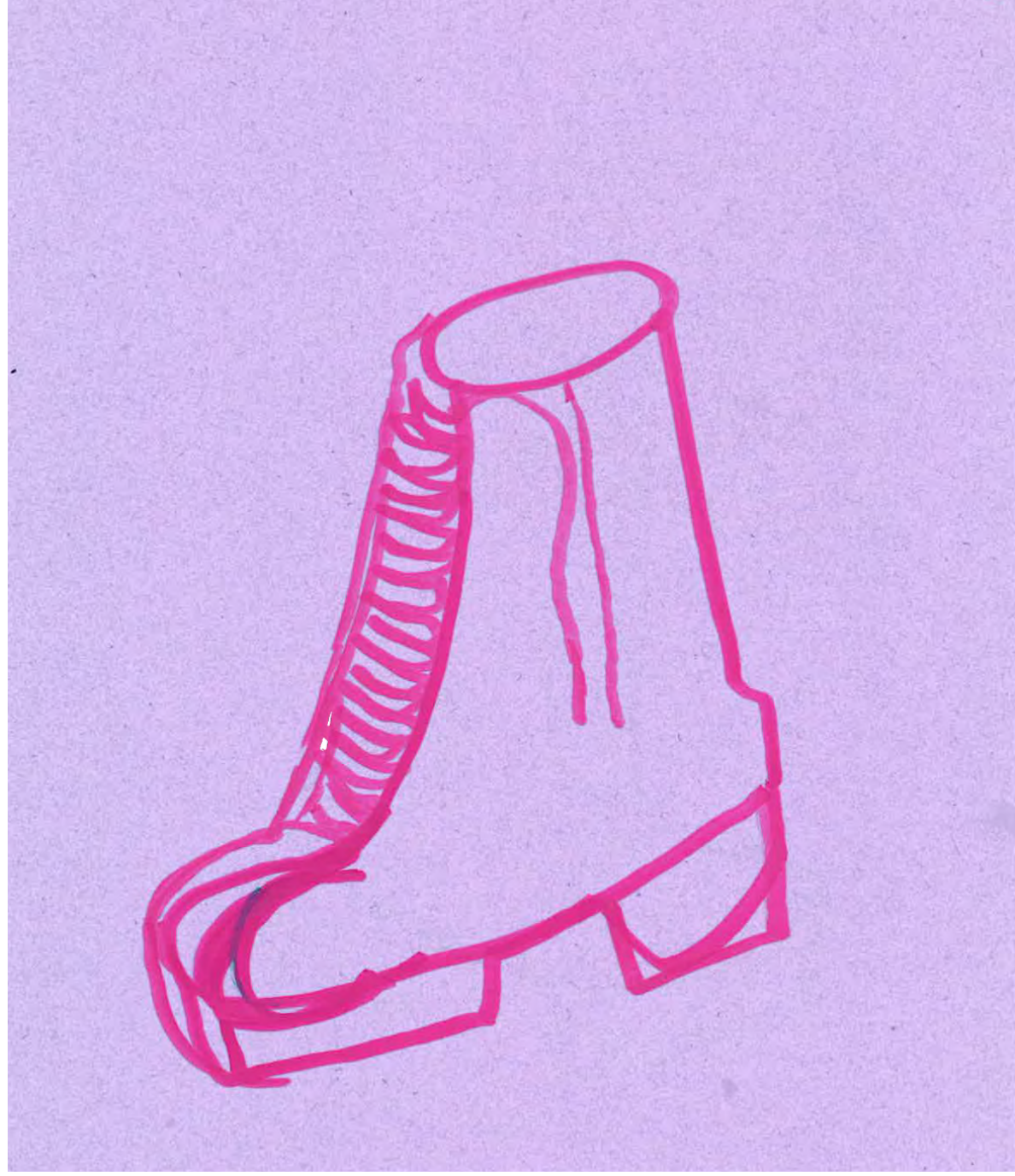
At the time I felt that I had to improve my networking skills to call more people, maybe investing on paid publicity through social media - note for improvements.

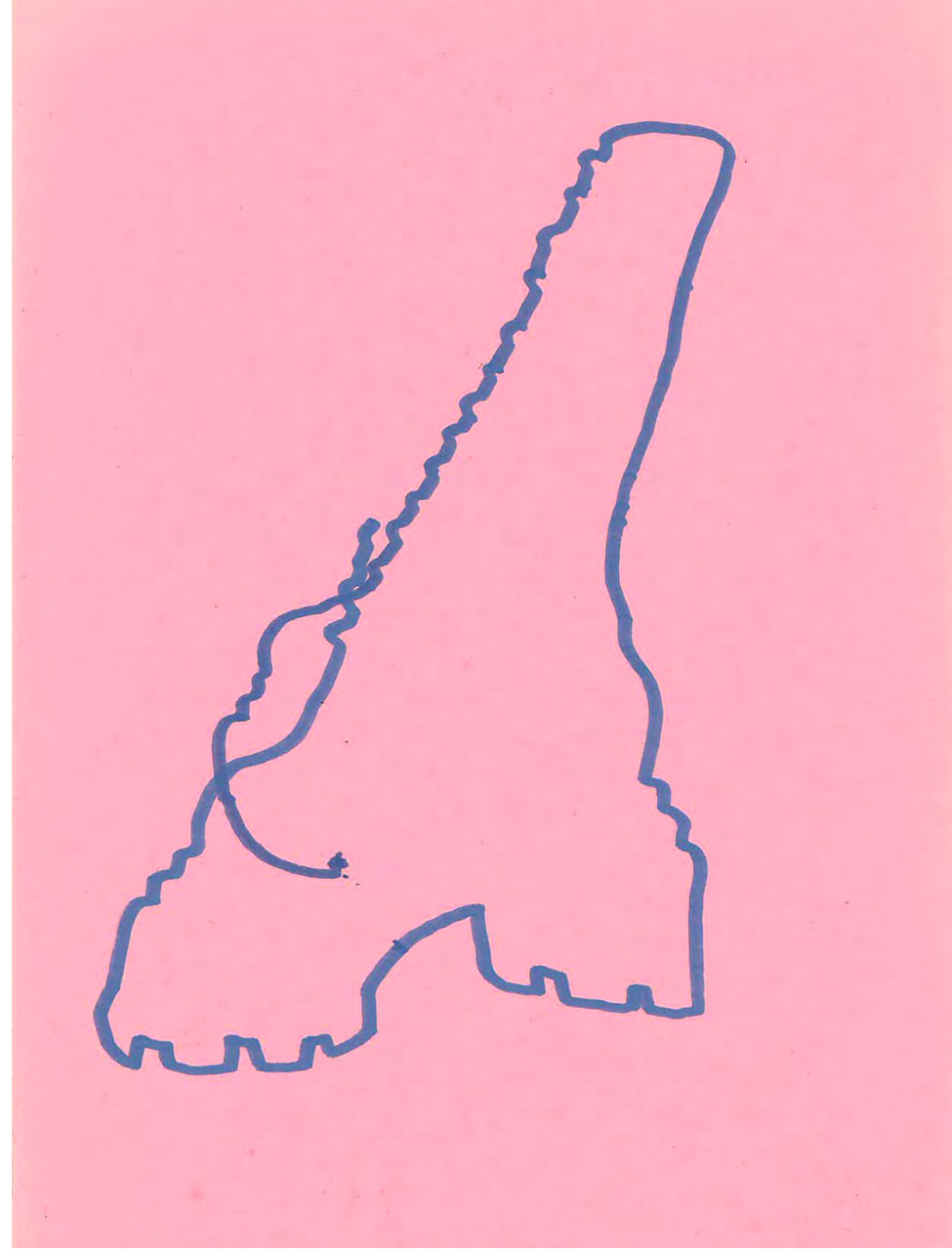
Mário (a participant) started by asking me to go a “bit slower today”, because he just came from a physical class. He shared with me that last time the Club was very physical and he needed more time to adjust today. Funny how life sometimes works, because that was precisely my plan.

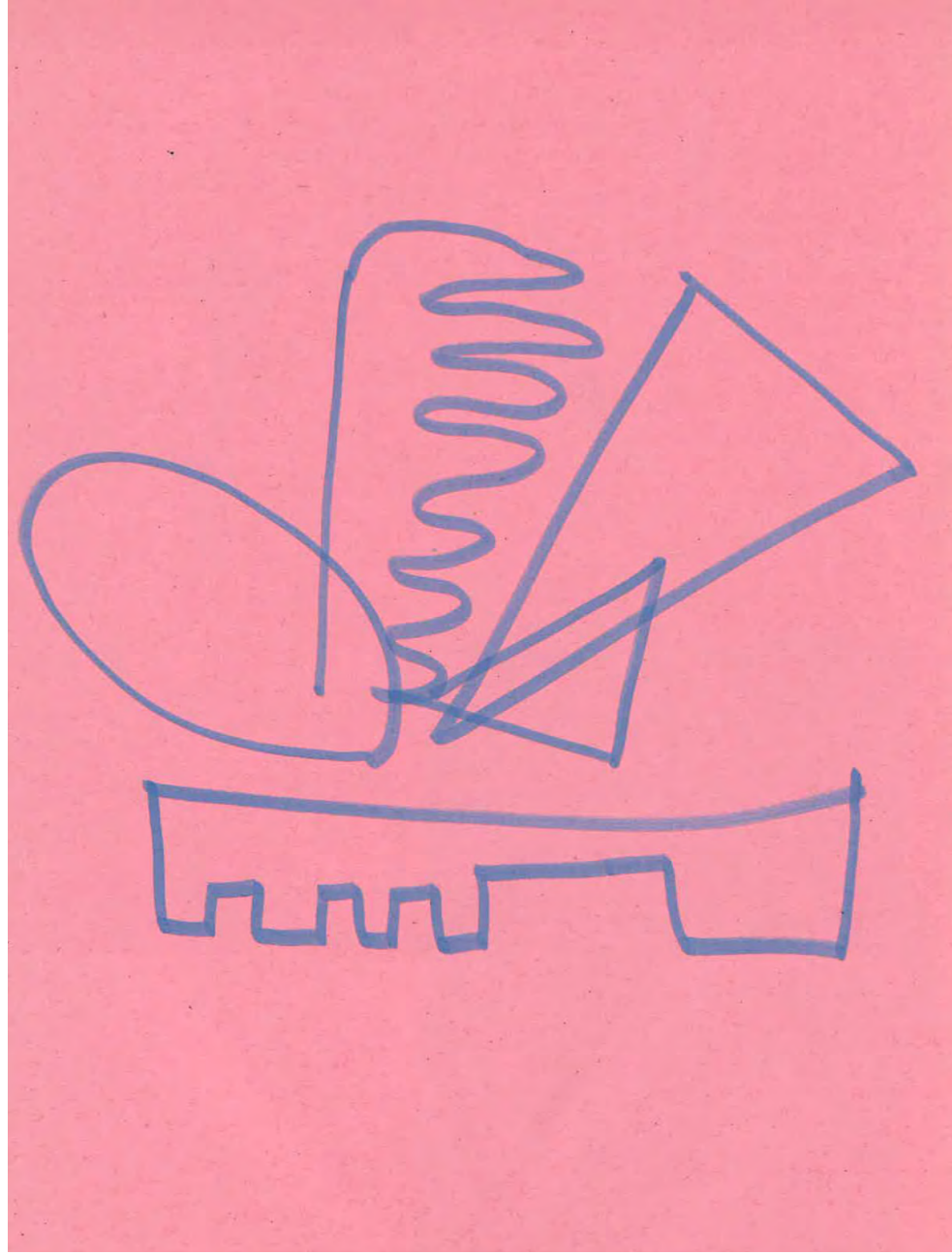
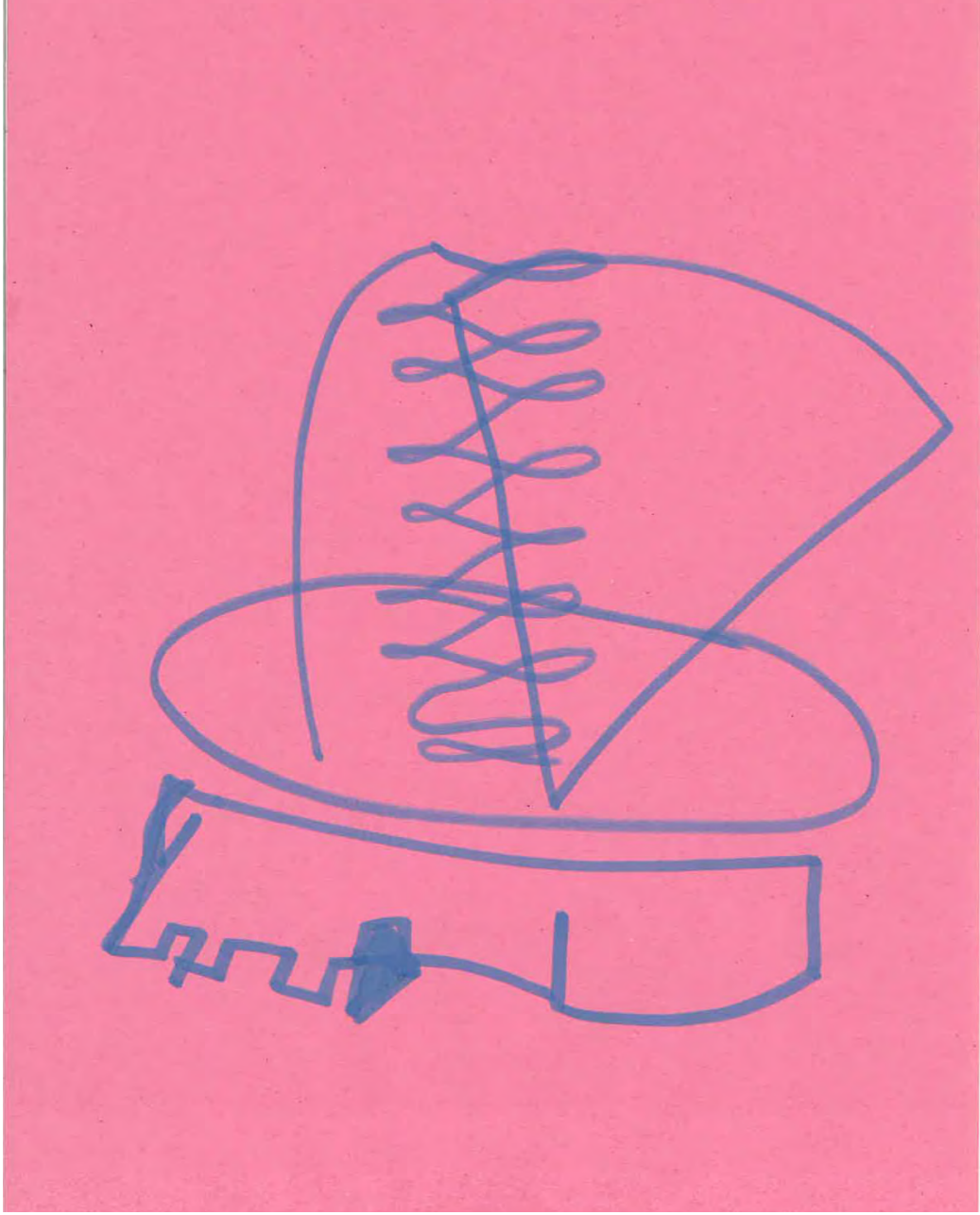
Different ways of drawing something is important for the practice, we also have many different sides that all combine to make us who we are. I, myself, am at the same time my front forehead but also my hair in the back, I am my knee, I am my hands and maybe the spaces my body occupies. and drawing a new object.



Do you see a watering
can or a vase of
flowers?
What do you want to
see?



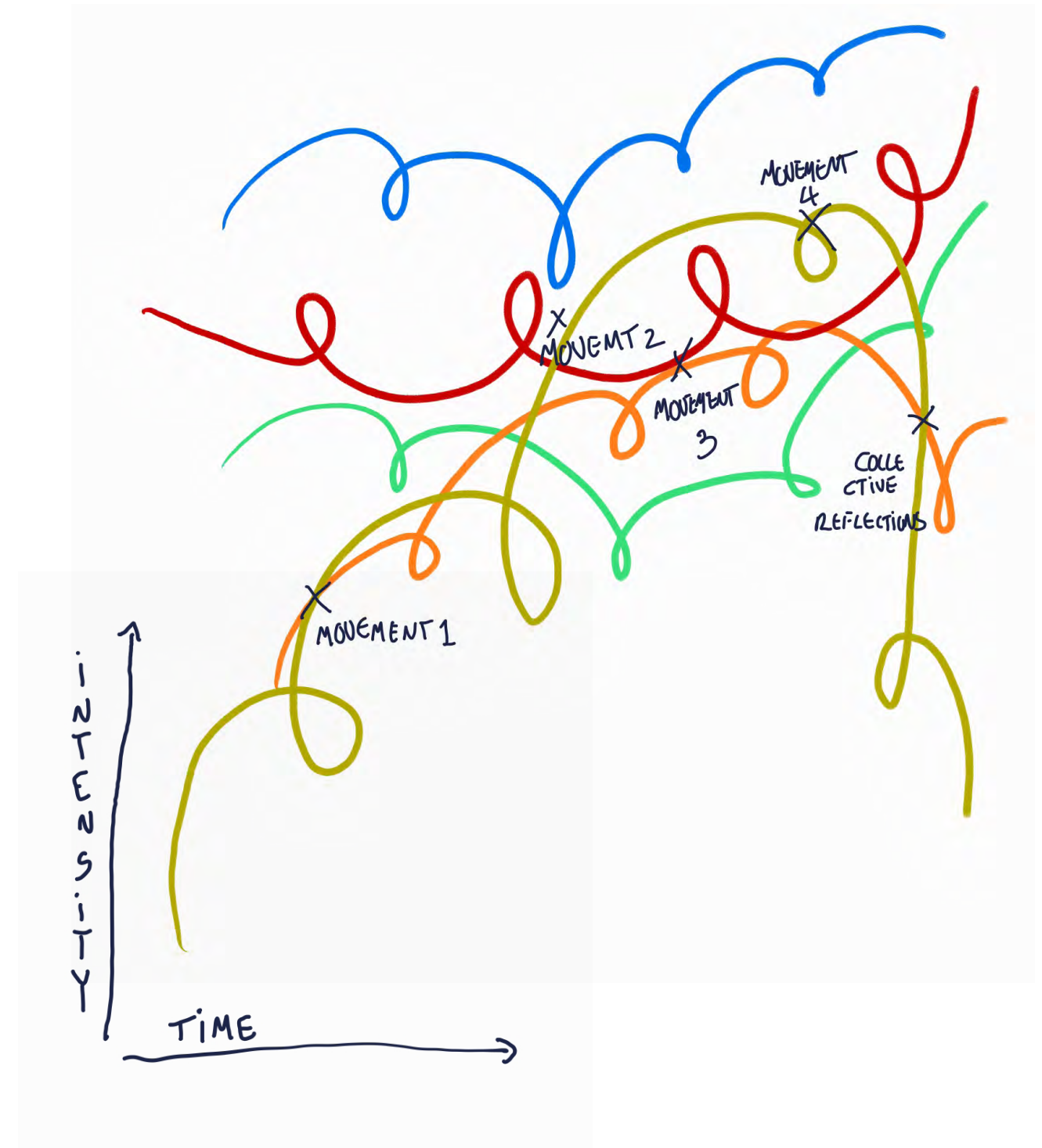




In this session, play unfolded in a more gradual and continuous rhythm, building towards a stronger moment of engagement in the final movement. The structure appeared to adapt to participants' agency, rather than directing it, allowing the session to grow in intensity over time, putting them in the lead of the process.

The scores proposed different ways of looking, aiming to unlock different ways of drawing the same object. This repetition seemed to support participants in moving beyond typical approaches, opening space for experimentation.

Although the session remained spatially centred around the table, the body was still present through attention and responsiveness. Free will and agency once again appeared closely connected, emerging together as participants navigated the conditions of each score.



Self vs Collective

Drawing and Public Space: Drawing on Wheels

08/08/2025

10:00- 17:00 pm

From stitching “Take a Away” to a public park

Does the physical space where we draw affect the way we do it?

Can drawing claim space in the city without the need for consumption?

What if we go to the streets and turn the Drawing Club nomadic?

Movements:

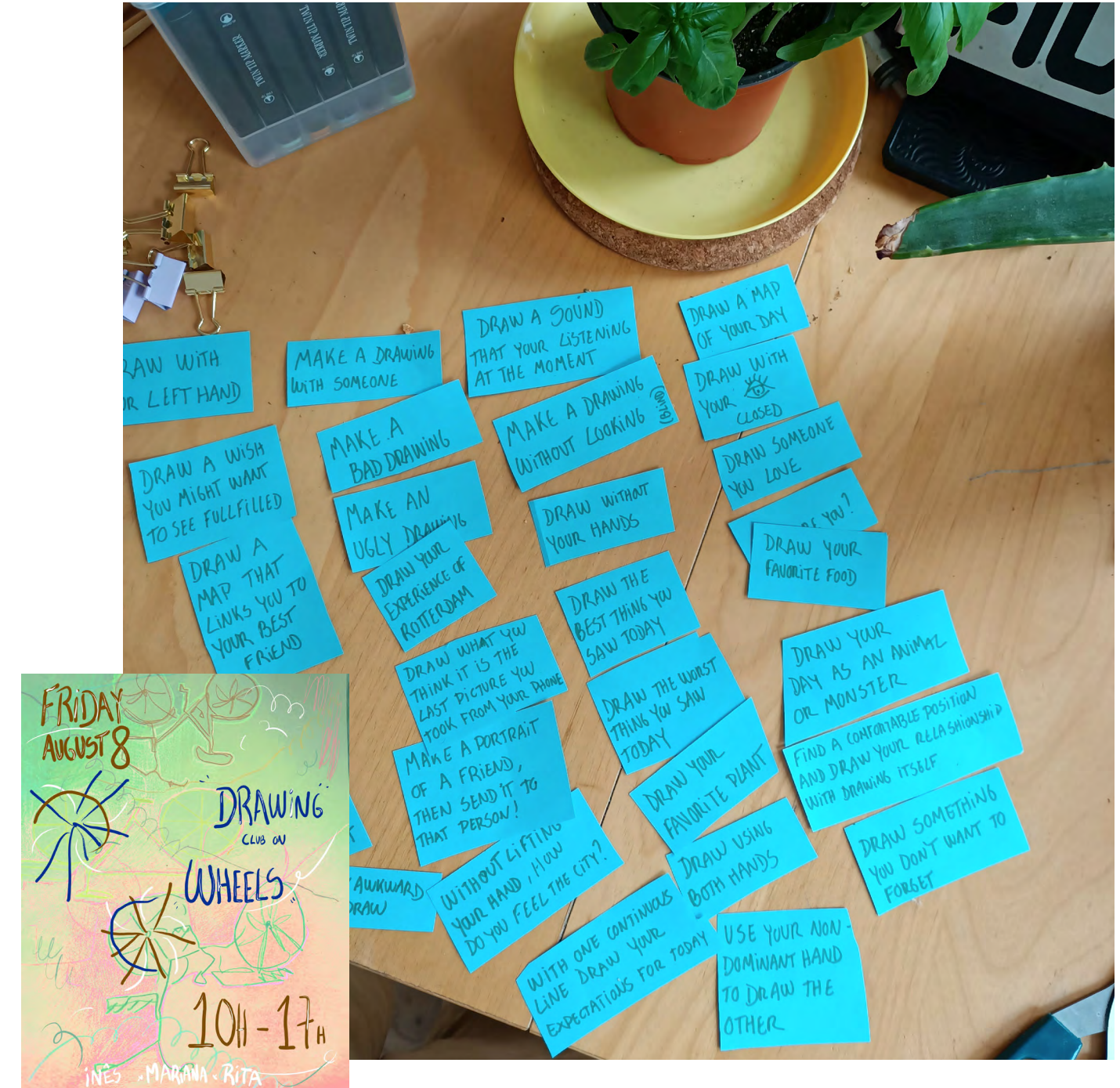
1. Would you like to make a drawing with us?

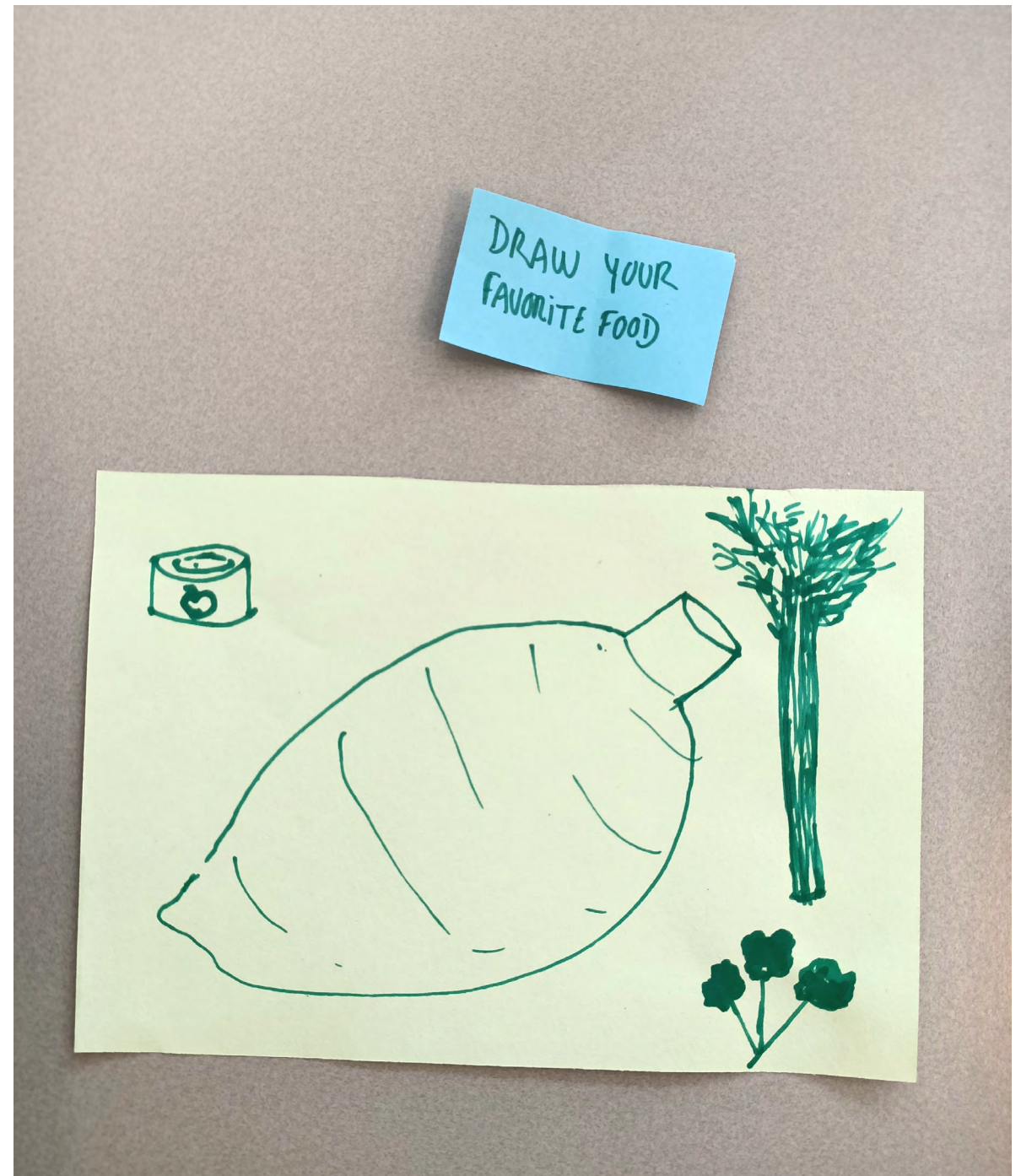
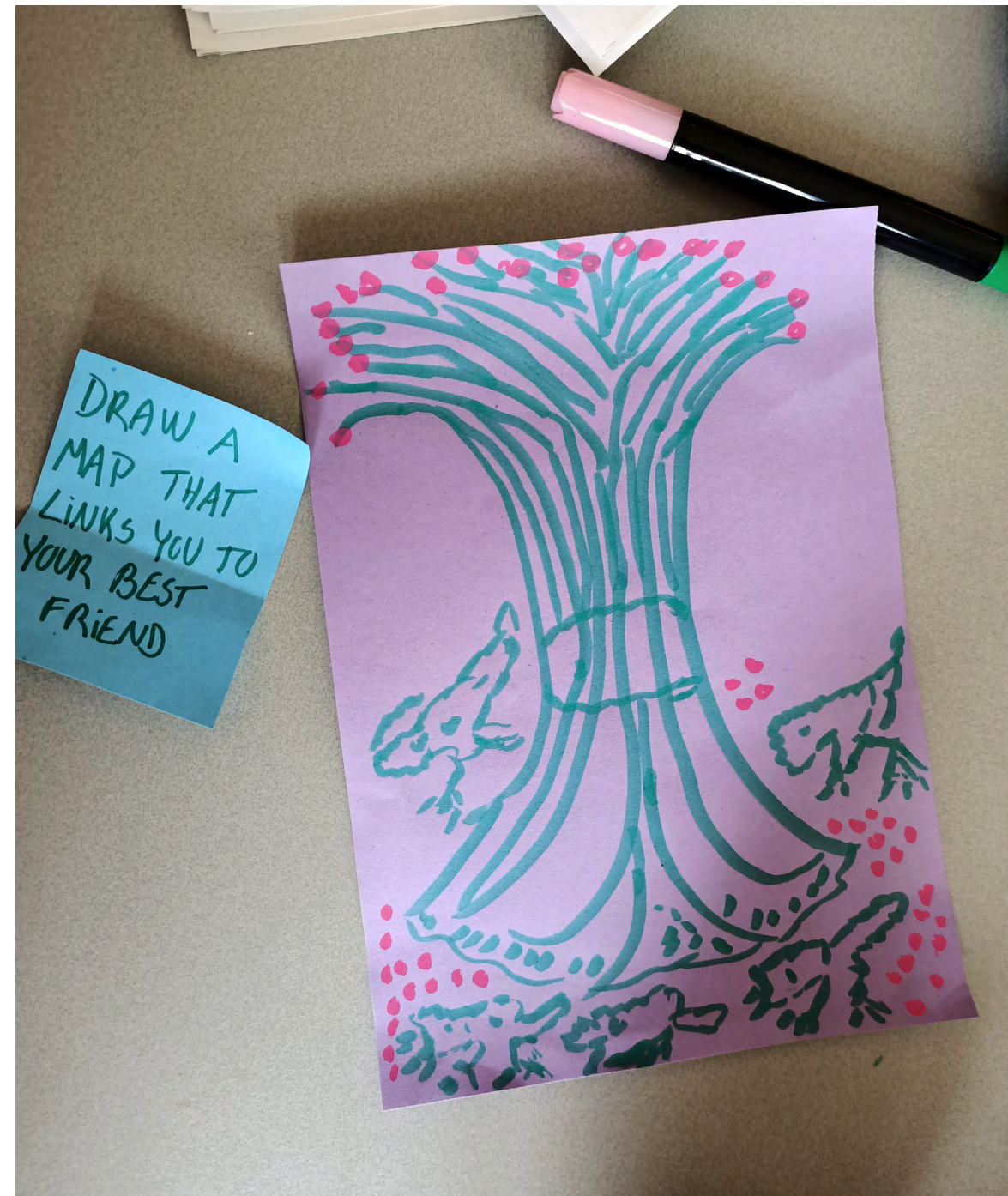
This session had a different format from usual. Having been in collaboration with **Mariana Santos**, she shared with me her ongoing questions concerning public space. In a city like Rotterdam, it often feels difficult to inhabit outdoor spaces without the implicit expectation of spending money. At times, the city often appears to function as an extended shopping center, where access and comfort seem to be conditioned by one's ability to consume.

In response to this condition, we began to consider **how the Drawing Club could move beyond the studio** and into the streets. The summer season created a good context for this shift, encouraging a more spontaneous engagement with passersby.

Together with our collaborator **Inês Garcias**, we set a date and developed a simple, mobile approach. The idea was to move through the city by bicycle and invite people to make a drawing with us.

Our plan was to activate two different locations: a community space, “Take a Way” (Stichting), located in Rotterdam Zuid, and a public park in the city center. For the two locations we prepared a “Jar of Prompts”, that aimed to provoke quick responses in A5 size papers.











How lovely it feels to work with friends!

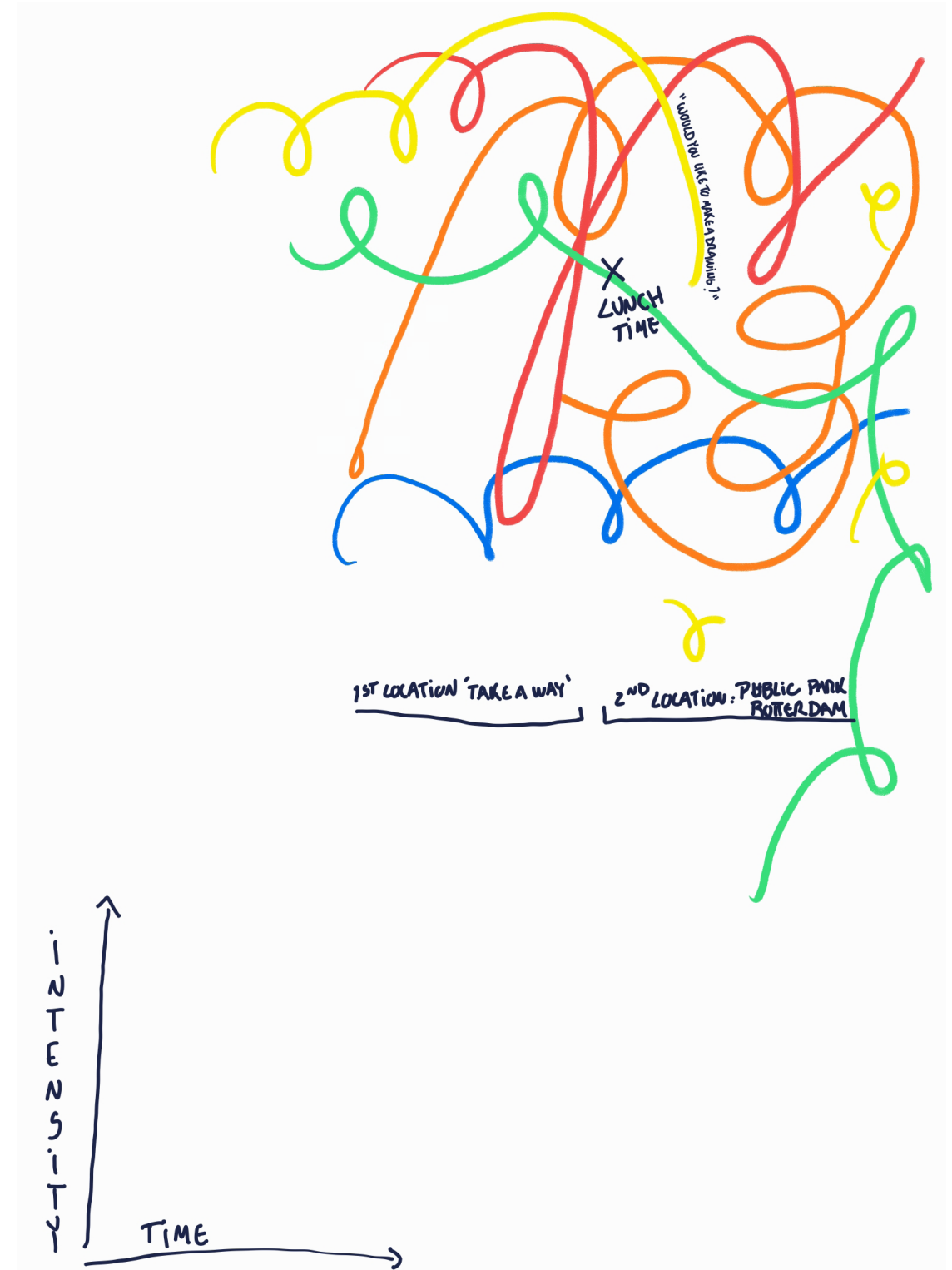
At the same time, this was the Drawing Club I felt most uncertain about. For the first time, we reversed the usual dynamic: instead of participants choosing to come to us, we brought the Club to them.

The first location became an unexpectedly generous starting point. At “Take a Way,” the participants, mostly aged 60+, came from diverse backgrounds and countries. Communication unfolded in different modes, some through English, others through limited Dutch, and at times, only through drawing itself. There, the lines in the diagram appear dense and continuous: performance (blue), agency (red), and body (orange) were all strongly present. Participants were eager to engage and moved quickly through our prompts, almost devouring them one after another. Time dissolved, and rules (green) became more permeable, allowing the session to follow the rhythm of the group.

120 After lunch (kindly offered to us as a thank you by the community!), we cycled towards a public park near the old church in the city center of Rotterdam. There, we encountered a different dynamic.

We settled near a temporary structure being built for a market the following day and began inviting strangers to join. In the diagram, this shift is reflected in the yellow line of free will, which becomes more fragmented. Participation was no longer assumed, it had to be negotiated. Some people accepted the invitation, while others declined or simply moved on, as expected. As the afternoon progressed, we gradually let go of our prompts and reduced our intervention to a simple question: “Would you like to make a drawing?” Accordingly, the presence of rules (green) diminished, becoming lighter and less directive.

Overall, the experience was very pleasant. Inviting strangers to engage in our process requires a different kind of vulnerability and openness. We were left with a sense of excitement, carrying with us the many small encounters, conversations, and shared moments that unfolded along the way.



Drawing and Collective Story Telling (DC x Art is Home)

25/06/2025

19:00- 21:00 pm

Hillevliet 90, 3074 KD Rotterdam

Guest host Inês Garcias (+Mariana Santos and Rita Leitão)

Can a group of strangers engage in telling the same story?
How to collaborate?

Movements:

1. Please write two words a place them into a jar.
2. Take one and use it as your score for the following movement.
3. For the next 15 minutes, you're gonna use your score to make a drawing. But every minute we're gonna ask you to switch your paper to the person on your right, so everyone can spend a minute with everybody's drawing. (Make sure that every participant interacts in every paper)
4. Now, go to the big paper and complete blank spots for the collective story.
5. Collective reflections



COLLECTIVE STORYTELLING

with Ines Garcias

Thursday 22nd January
19:00 – 21:00
Art is Home Hillevliet Studios
No sign up necessary, just show up!

INTRO
EXHIBITING ARTIST SPECIAL

FRENS TAKEOVER!
JANUARY
FRE

Together with Inês Garcias and Mariana Santos, we developed a series of Drawing Clubs to take place at “Art is Home” (Stichting). For this session, roles overlapped, as hosting and participating happened simultaneously for the three of us.

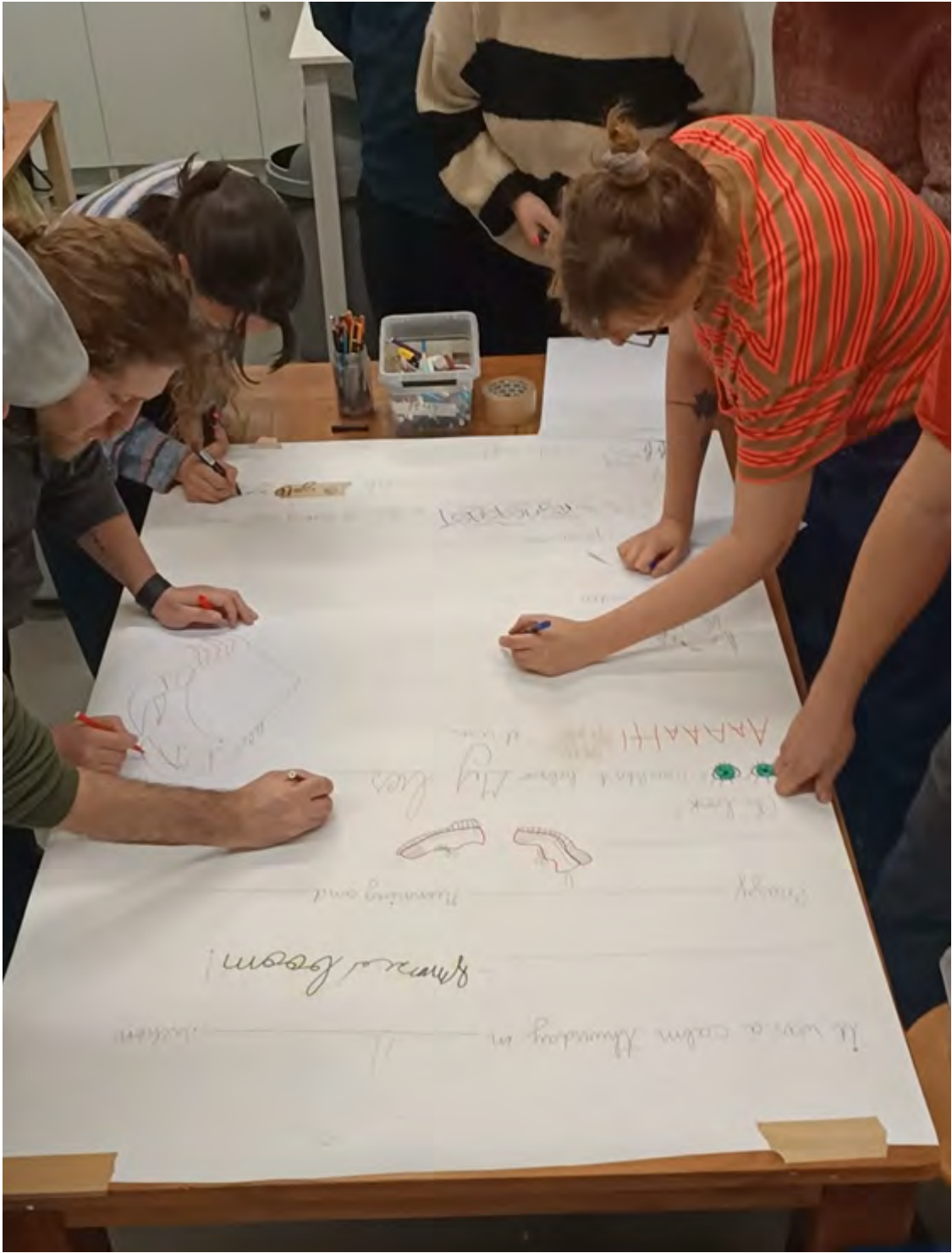
High paced, as a social experiment this Drawing club revealed to be very great. And as a drawing practice, even more so.

The draft of the session was designed mainly by Inês, so for this day I could really take a step back, observe and help in whatever needed. By the second minute of Movement 2, the atmosphere had already intensified. The group began to respond collectively, talking, laughing, and reacting positively to the unfolding process. The Movement generated a noticeable sense of joy, aligning closely with the principles of play that underpin the Drawing Club. It also produced a wide range of unexpected outcomes, as drawings became layered through multiple hands and decisions.

Some participants recalled having done similar exercises in childhood, reinforcing the sense that this activity reactivated a form of play. At the same time, the process challenged more fixed expectations of what a drawing should be. By introducing continuous and permitted interference, authorship became shared, and the notion of a “finished” image was destabilised.

Negotiation became particularly relevant in Movement 4, when participants collectively contributed to a shared narrative. Although the resulting story leaned towards the non-sense, it functioned as a cohesive ending to the session. Conversations extended beyond the drawings themselves, opening into exchanges about the city of Rotterdam and even drifting into personal UFO stories.







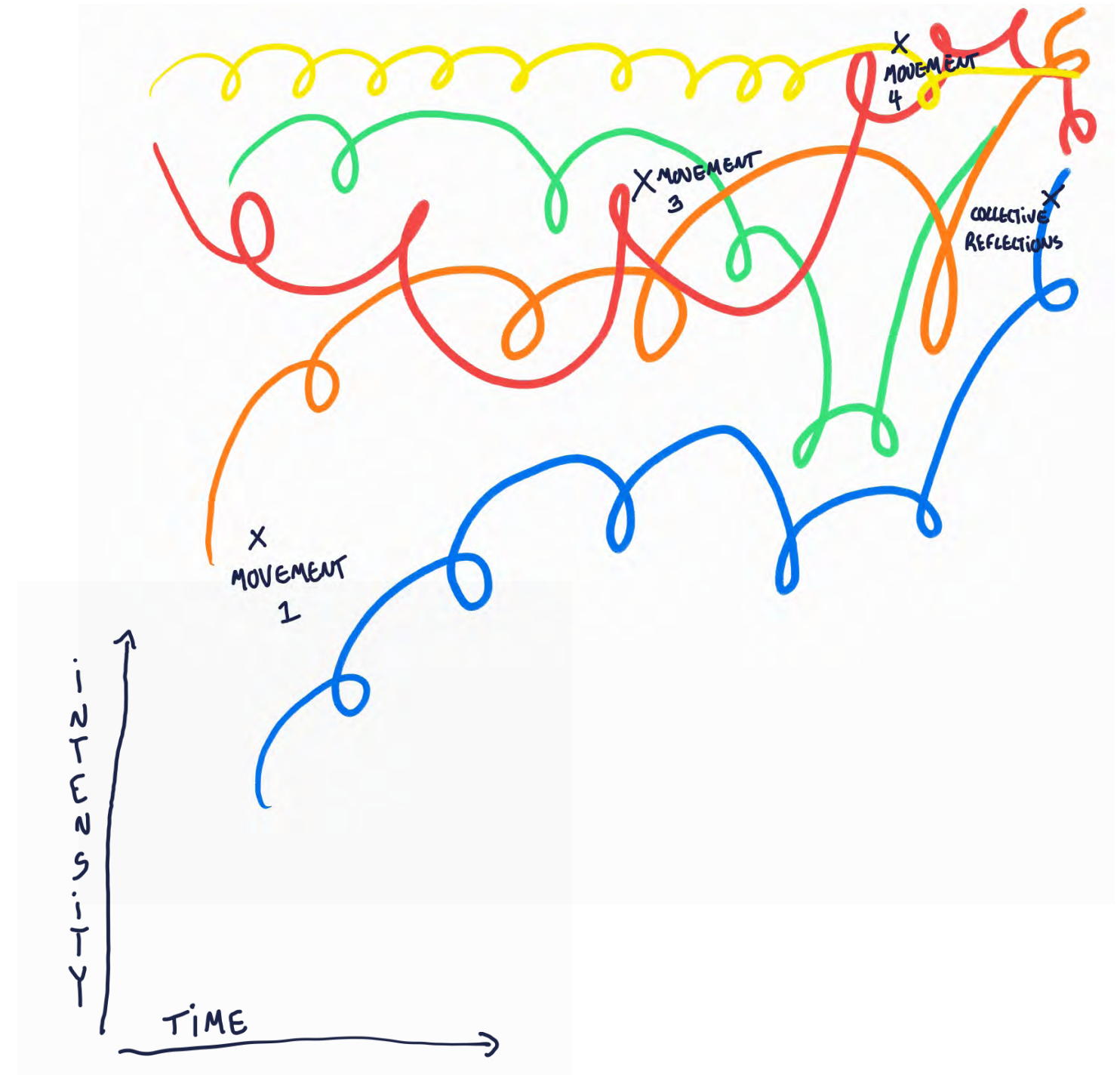
Play was felt immediately from the start. It was probably helpful that the group consisted of many friends that knew each other previously, some were made on sight.

I noticed participants acting on their free will, the initial movement also required their input, which is always a good reminder to include participant's voices in the work we do.

When we had to interfere with each other's drawing the energy was very high, the timing and the rhythm were exactly right to generate laughter, excitement but also attentiveness in the work.

Bodies were free in the space, almost like performing a choreography. Towards the end, in the final movement, a sense of mutual respect was felt, with no bigger voices in the room that could potentially occupy the whole space (It was all about negotiating) The performance and the body were felt in a similar way.

Due to this high intensity, people were happy to go to rest, but also generally satisfied with what had just happened: we built a story together!



Drawing and talking about drawings (DC x Art is Home)

25/06/2025
19:00- 21:00 pm
Hillevliet 90, 3074 KD Rotterdam
Guest host Inês Garcias, Mariana Santos and Rita Leirão

What are the questions we can ask drawings?
What can they tell us?

Movements:

- 1. Each one speaks about the drawings they brought. Do you like them? How could they work better? What was in your mind when you were making it?
- 2. Displace all the drawings on a table
- 3. In pairs assemble a small exhibition using how many drawings you would like, rearranging new connections
- 4. Present this exhibition to the group
- 5. Collective Reflections



Talking about drawings is never easy.

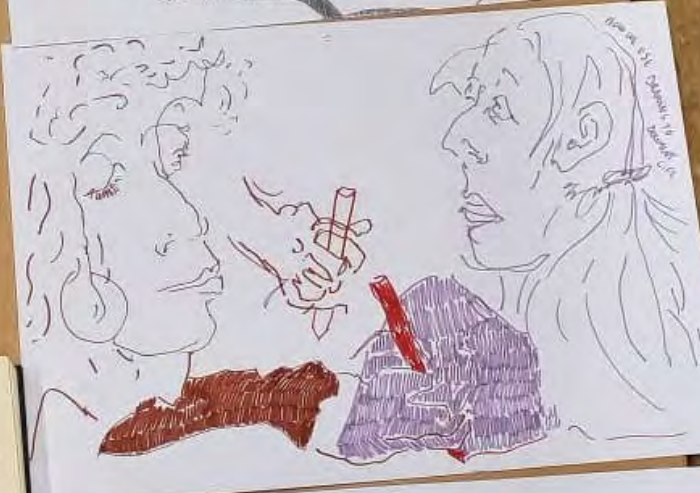
The session started with only the three of us in the room. There was an initial awareness of the difficulty of the setup: speaking about one's own drawings, especially with strangers requires trust and vulnerability. The space held that tension at the beginning, but we were happy to also have the time to draw together.

To our surprise, gradually participants began to arrive, and over time the table was full. The initial plan quickly dissolved. Instead, the group instinctively shifted into drawing portraits of one another. Often working on the same page of a participant's notebook, multiple hands contributed to a single surface. What became striking was the diversity of approaches, each person interpreting the act of making a portrait differently yet somehow, the drawings still retained a resemblance to the subject.

Moments of self-consciousness also surfaced. There was a tendency, at times, to apologise for one's own drawing when sharing it with the group. This revealed how judgment can persist even within a space that attempts to suspend it. At the same time, such moments were often diffused through collective responses, reinforcing the shared understanding that the value of the exercise did not lie in producing "good" drawings. Why are we so obsessed with it?

As the session unfolded, conversation and drawing became increasingly intertwined, resembling the atmosphere of an informal gathering. For this it was extremely important to let go of our initial plan.





This session taught me that vulnerability walks side by side with drawing making.

The initial plan was disrupted from the very beginning, when no participants were present. Rather than resisting this, the situation allowed us to sit the three of us together. In the diagram, rules (green) appear fragmented, with loose starts and interruptions, reflecting how structure was continuously shifting.

In contrast, body and agency did not emerge with the same intensity at first. The body moved in waves, alternating between moments of dialogue and moments of focused drawing making, which created a rhythm within the group. Agency became more visible toward the end of the session, as participants grew more comfortable and began to take initiative.

Also towards the end participants started to exchange their social media, showing support to each other's work, which is always a good sign of connection.

Performance acted similar to agency, like testing a water with your feet to see if the temperature is warm enough to go in.



These two encounters reveal the complex friction between the self and the collective. When we draw alone without looking, we bridge closer to our inner selves, momentarily suspending judgment. Yet, the moment we draw together, directly in a table full of strangers, or indirectly influenced by the work of others a shift occurs: self-consciousness slips back in, and we feel an impulse to apologize for our marks. Do we change our lines because we want to impress, or because we want to be perceived differently? Perhaps it is simply the natural negotiation of sharing space. Entering the collective requires a distinct vulnerability, but it also brings the transformative power of community.

I consider the words of Roberto dell’Orco about the challenges of collectivity

“I thus feel that the collective challenge in front of us is to renew our gaze and to completely abandon the habit of separating ourselves from the life we face, which has led some people to falsely believe they are superior, as if human beings were chosen above other species, So the challenge is to finally abandon the illusion of privilege, of one human over another, or humans lording over other species, thus destroying the toxic human privilege that has poisoned our whole living systems.”¹³

Sitting at the table, learning from others and drawing together is a small but vital way to dismantle that toxic privilege, allowing us to renew our gaze and reconnect with the shared life happening right in front of us.

13. Roberto dell’Orco, “Eating Together,” in *Being Together: A Manual for Living*, by Grace Ndiritu (The Hague: Page Not Found / rile* books, 2022), 52–53

Judgement vs Liberation

Drawings and Bad Drawings (DC# 8)

08/04/2025
18:00- 19:30 pm
Purse Bocht, 3, 3073 HD, Rotterdam

What does it mean when a drawing is bad? Does it have to do with technique?
Skill? Talent? With the subject itself?

Movements:

- 1.Be bad! Draw the worst thing possible (1 min)
2. Be very bad! Use the wrong tool (2 min)
3. Ask 2 “Bad” Words from your day, write them down in a small paper, fold it and put it in a community jar
- (Invoke yourself has the president of Ministry of Bad Drawings, explain them about this institution and ask)
4. What could be a bad drawing made in the past?
5. What could be a bad drawing made in the future?
6. Now it's the time for you as a Ministry member, to be professionally bad. You have orders from above to collect one drawing made by the collective and correct it, the best way you think of.
7. Collective Reflections



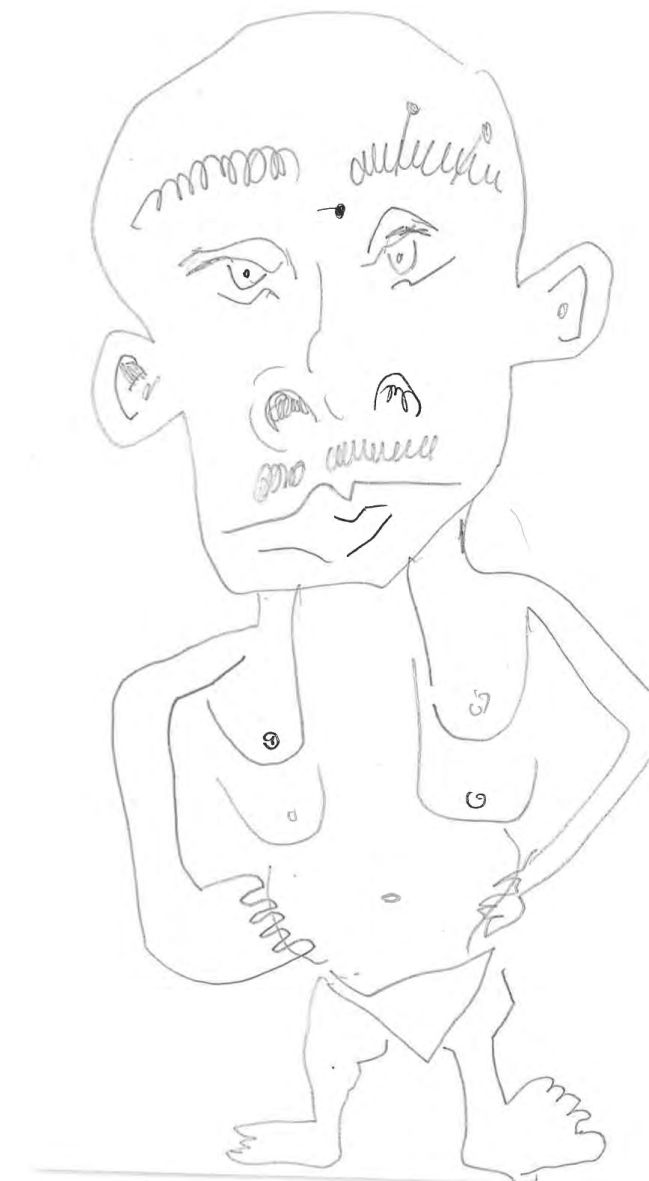
This workshop was fast paced, with several movements along the hour, ending with an ongoing dialogue and reflection about what **Bad** actually means. It's purposely a broader term adjusted here to cause some type of reaction, as using humor turned out to be a very important tool throughout the session.

In the beginning there was some hesitation by the participants, my input for them to "be bad" landed with some paralysis, almost asking "can I really be so?". This led me to think that in drawing practices and especially in Education we should create spaces for error, when you aim to be purposely bad, the results are for sure going to surprise us.

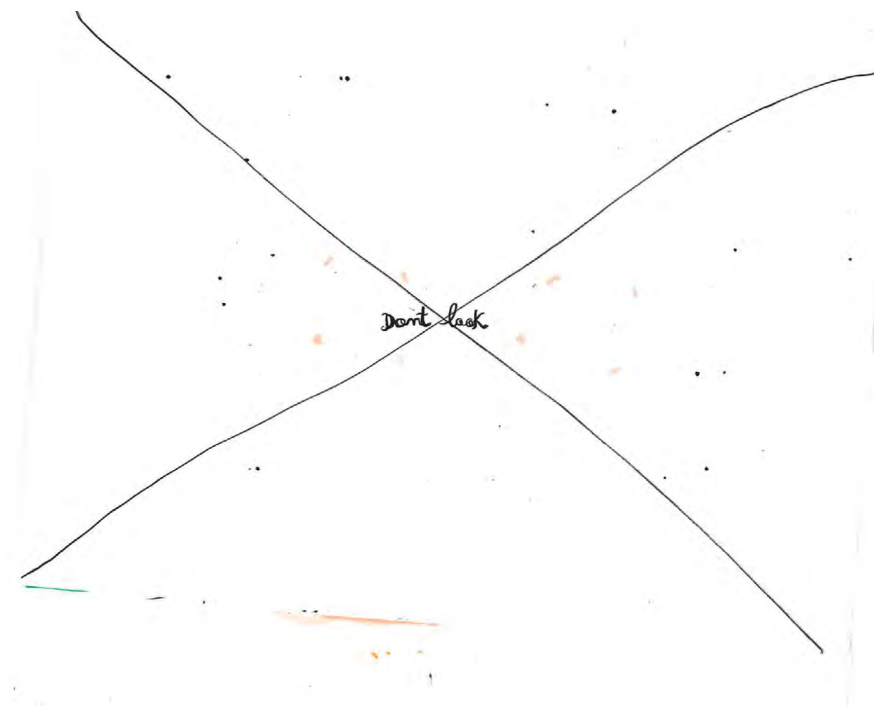
146 The discussion progressively evolved to compare what could be considered bad 100 years ago and 100 years from now. Politics and the state of the world dominated the conversation. Thinking about the past questions of nudity, proportion of bodies and lack of harmony in the page were brought up. Thinking about the future, what was bad was mainly invasions by external living creatures and drawing with written words were points of focus.

In both cases participants said that only marking the outline of your subjects could also be considered "bad". Well, I'm not sure I can quite agree. For movement 6, I asked them again to "be professionally bad" and it was funny to notice how some participants first apologized to each other before starting. This "corrections" I asked them were mainly giving content (colour, texture) to the outlines in the page.

I left the space with the sense that what is "good" or "bad" is widely subjective. It changes over time, over subject, and it's extremely intimate to aesthetic opinions. If we aim to emancipate participants, maybe we need to find other lexical terms to be more specific with certain components. Are we ready to let go of these judgments?



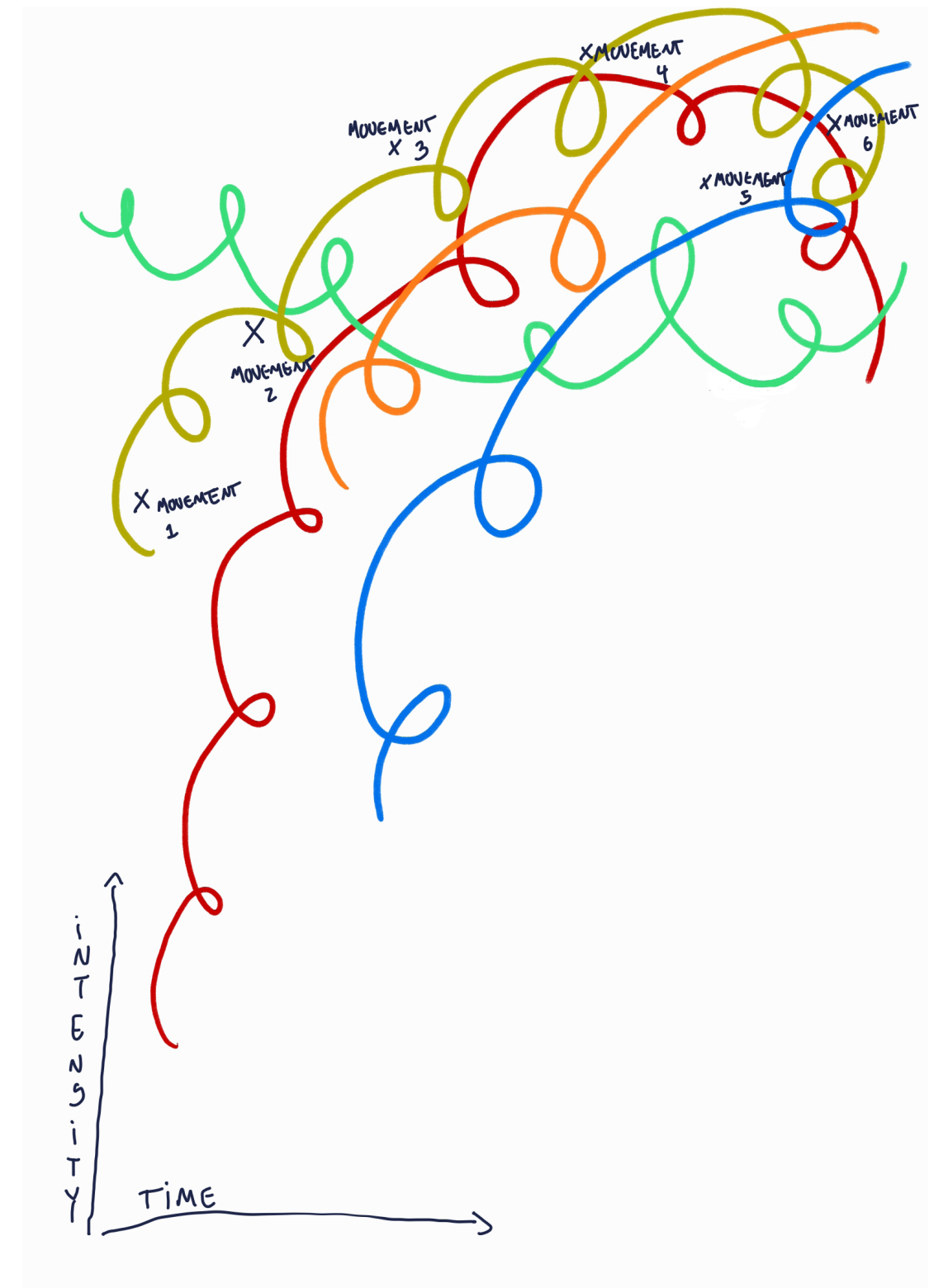
BAD IN
THE PAST



In this session, play did not emerge immediately. The initial response to the prompts was marked by hesitation, as the unfamiliar instructions introduced a sense of strangeness. Free will, body, performance, and agency took time to develop. I understand that the fast paced atmosphere was maybe too abrupt, too intense to immediately jump for.

As the session progressed, a shift became visible. Participants gradually began to engage more openly, suggesting that play requires a period of adjustment before it can unfold. (One should first test the waters with their feet before entering the sea). This transition seemed to be supported by doing the movements several times and slowly by slowly growing a sense of familiarity with the concepts.

In response to this hesitation, I aimed to soften the prompts. At the same time, this raised questions around the role of framing: could a more explicit performative setup, for instance through some type of costume, help participants to embrace this fictional atmosphere? Or could a stronger transformation of the space (scenario) support the same?



Drawing and Jazz Improvisation (DC #12)

25/06/2025

20:00- 21:30 pm

Purse Bocht, 3, 3073 HD, Rotterdam

Guest hosts: André Mestre and João Barata

Guest photographer: Duarte Oliveira

Can improvised music inform the practice of Drawing? How can music influence the traces we left behind? Can a Drawing be heard?

Movements:

1. Please place a pencil in both your hands at the same time. Close your eyes and imagine them as Music Instruments (you can never look at the paper while drawing. If you do, start again)
2. Please pay attention to rhythm and draw it instinctively as an emotional landscape. (Attention, you can not use your hands!)
3. Please pay attention to the harmonie and draw it, instinctively as an emotional landscape. (Using your both hands at the same time)
4. Please pay attention to the silence and draw it, instinctively as an emotional landscape.
5. Collective Reflections



We may initially think that drawing only concerns the hand and the eyes but it feels a bit wasteful to not consider the whole body. Isn't it all connected? I was intrigued whether Music could inform the practice of drawing, and as it turns out, it truly did.

Drawing Music is not a simple invitation to make. This was the second time I facilitated this kind of experiment, which allowed me to refine my prompts. It is important for me that participants do not need any prior knowledge of music to engage as I believe that we all have sensitive bodies, and that is enough to act.

For a large part of the session, I asked participants to draw without looking at their paper. I was interested in how removing the capacity to see could open up different possibilities. If you are not looking, you are also not judging while you do it, bridging closer to your inner-self. I always enjoy observing the moment when participants finally look at their drawings as it often brings laughter and surprise ("Did I really make this?")

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I am aware that the way we feel music is deeply personal. To support the process, I suggested that participants try to imagine landscapes within the sounds they were hearing. I offered this as a kind of anchor, a light rule that could help them enter the movement. I noticed that this was particularly helpful for those who had never tried something like this before.

Drawing and Improvised music maybe walk side by side. You can read scores, but it's about being aware of yourself and others in the moment of the performance, maybe communicating without words.



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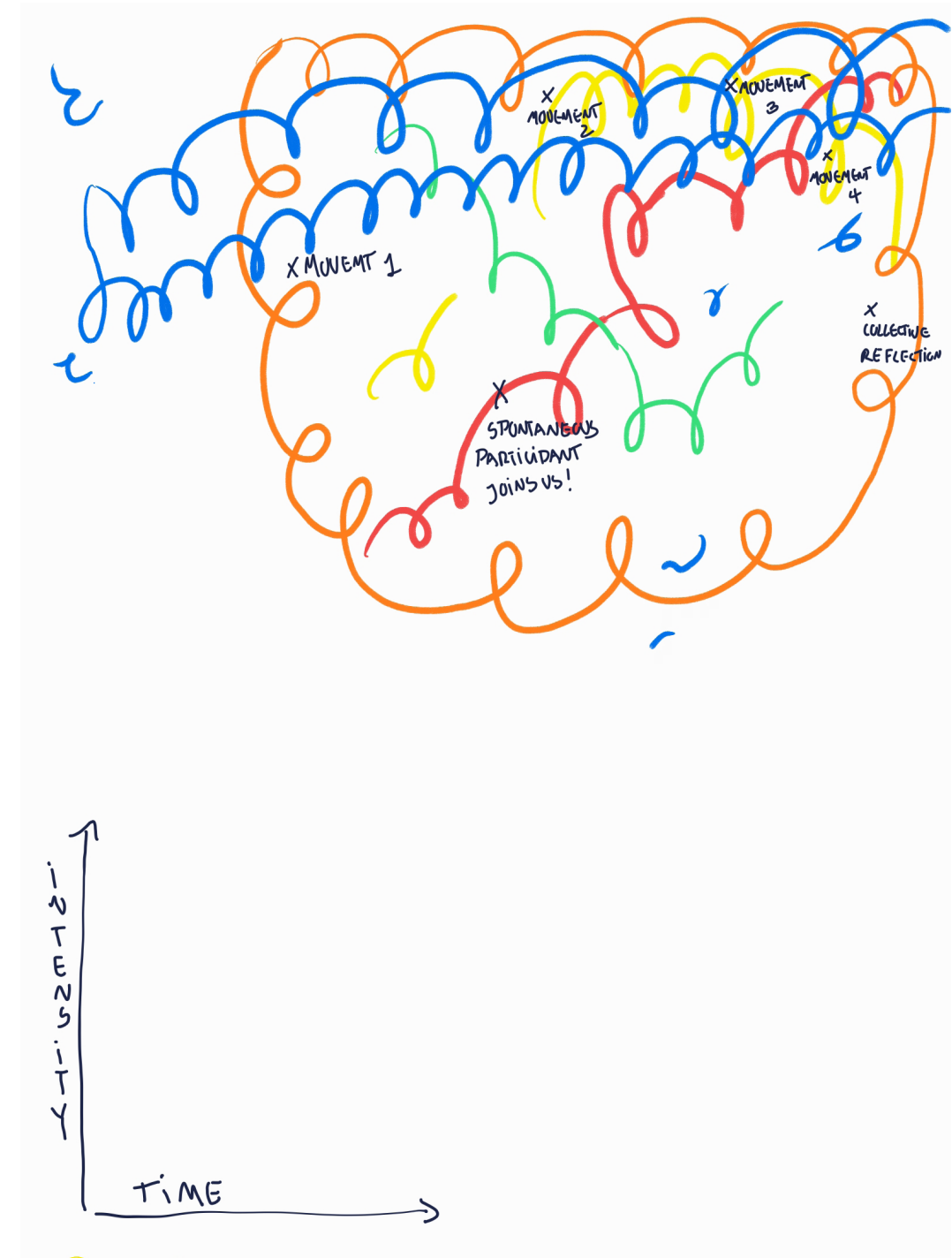


It appears that music functions as a strong facilitator of play. From the beginning, participants' bodies were visibly engaged, shifting positions and finding alternative ways of sitting and moving. The relatively small group size (5) allowed for a sense of intimacy to emerge.

An unexpected moment occurred when a participant entered the space mid-session, drawn in by the music he could hear from the building. Without prior context, he decided to join for the rest of the hour (5+1). This reinforced the idea that sound can extend the boundaries of the Drawing Club, making it more accessible, easy to invite.

In the diagram, the different lines begin to intertwine in relation to one another over time. Initial apprehension gradually gives way to a more vivid form of free will, visible in the way participants start to engage with materials in unconventional ways. When asked to "not draw with their hands," participants began to explore alternatives to sustaining a pencil with your hand, holding materials differently and allowing the (entire) body to take over the task of drawing.

As the session unfolds, there is a noticeable shift toward slowing down. The need for extended time within each movement becomes more apparent, and the structure of the session gradually softens. Alongside moments of active engagement, there is also a clear presence of contemplation, where simply listening to the music becomes a valid and meaningful form of participation.



“You always want to do well, but the recurring paradox is that you have a much better chance of doing well if you let go of the anxiety and just get on with it.

Try writting three bad pieces a day. I bet you can’t do it. Your talent will sabotage you and cause some great music to come out! Another composer-friend of mine told me, “Kenny, I know that that just doesn’t work. I’ve written a ton of bad pieces over the last thirty years, and it hasn’t done anything for me.” I said to him “Ash, yes, but did you ever try to write a bad piece? That is the liberation that I’m talking about!”¹⁴

14. Kenny Werner, “Fear-Based Composing,” in *Effortless Mastery: Liberating the Master Musician Within* (New Albany, IN: Jamey Aebersold Jazz, 1996), 75.

By weaving together the experiments of drawing to jazz and intentionally making “bad” drawings, the next question emerges: what does it truly mean to be free?

True liberation in drawing is not an immediate state and means something different for every single individual; but maybe, we can come close to its meaning by gradually dismantling the paralyzing judgments of what we consider “good” or “bad.” When we remove the capacity to see the paper, or when we use humor to purposely aim for failure, we bypass our critical minds and bridge closer to our inner selves. This reveals that, as play, liberation is not the total absence of rules, but rather a dance with them. And play, as liberation, is not immediate, but emerges through a balance between understanding the specific context by giving it time, and the willingness of participants to embed themselves critically, in the set environment.

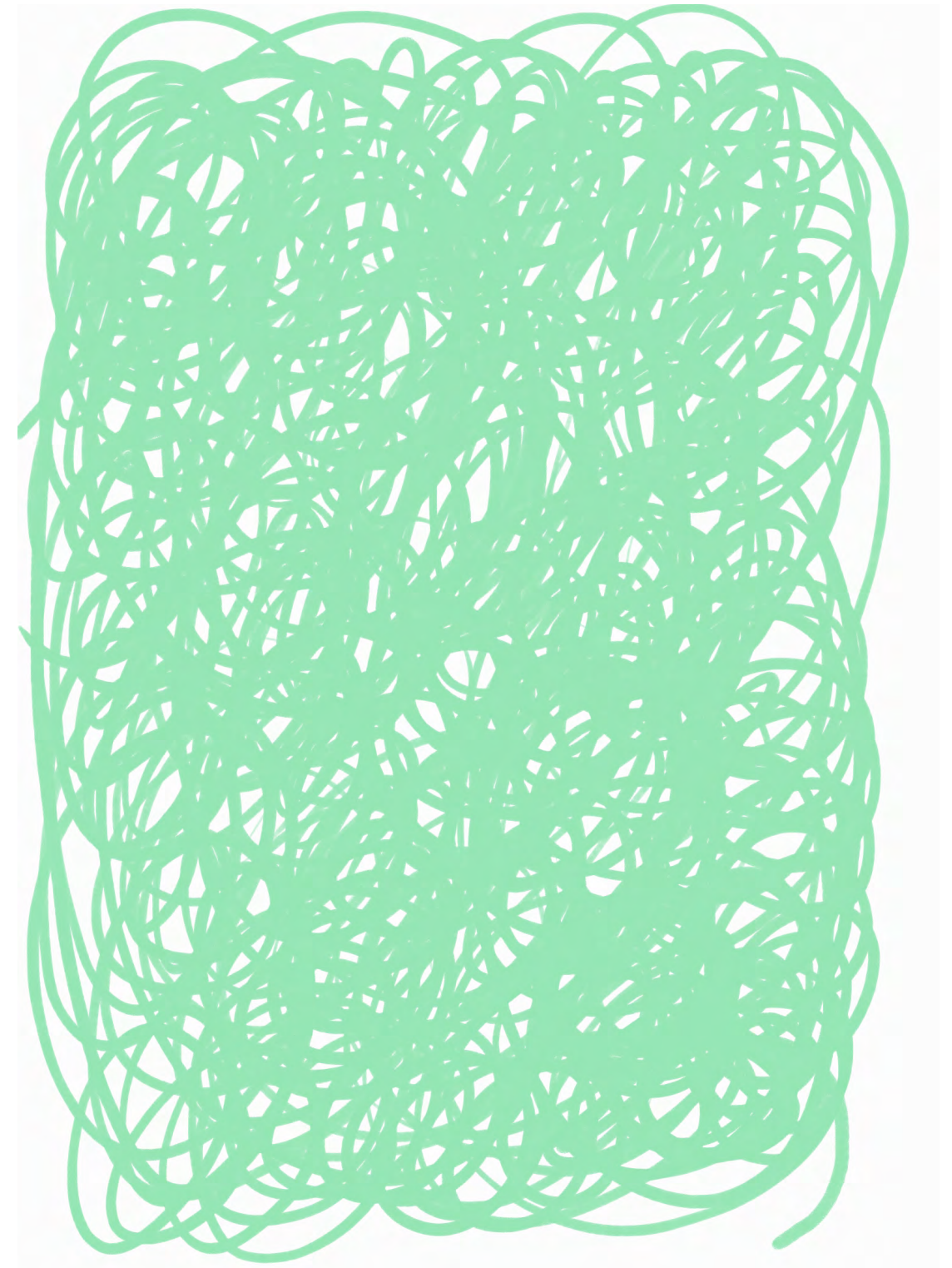
We must continuously navigate how to balance the restrictions imposed upon us by a score while still finding the agency to emancipate ourselves. By transforming structural constraints into playful prompts, we create a temporary sanctuary where the body can drop its hesitation, test the waters, and finally transform judgment into absolute creative survival.

Movement V:
Never close the circle

When I first set out to ask, “What happens when drawing is practiced through playful scores in the context of artist-run initiatives?” I could not have anticipated the rytthm it generated. The short answer is: a lot. This practical journey has reinforced my fundamental conviction that everyone can draw, provided one has the willingness to step into the space.

Drawing often begins with a physical tension. At its most basic level, it occurs when an object and a surface are held in pressure. For a mark to exist, something must give way. While working on paper, usually, the tool proves to be the stronger one; it is the surface that is the first to crack or transform under the weight of the gesture. If there is no resistance, there is no line. And throughout this process, drawing itself was kept under intense tension, yet it survived.

In the Drawing Club, I have come to see this friction as our most honest teacher. Tension is therefore not felt as a mistake, but as the essential trigger of the experience. It is the pull between the hand’s desire and the tool’s stubbornness. When we lean into the “cracking point,” drawing stops being a static exercise and becomes a constant negotiation with different forces. It is precisely through this friction that drawing proves itself to be a deeply resilient, play-oriented process. We have witnessed firsthand that drawing is never strictly an exercise of isolated hand and eye muscles. It is an act concerning the entire sensitive body.



The Power of Self-Organization

As an artist-educator, the radical potential of artist-run initiatives became impossible to look away from. Hosting This experience tells me that self-organized structures are perhaps the most liberating actions we can take as a collective; by claiming our own spaces and inventing our own rules, we gain the power to shake both social hierarchies and political frameworks.

What began as a simple idea in my head evolved into a horizontal, self-sufficient shared practice. Growing this collective spirit within the club has been vital, and I feel incredibly proud to work alongside such wonderful people and brilliant artists. This journey wouldn't be what it is without Inês Garcias, an artist friend I met in Lisbon whose multidisciplinary work expands toward collective storytelling and the diverse meanings we read from pictures. And, of course, Mariana Santos, whom I met on our very first day of class in our Master of Education in Arts. In a lovely twist of timing, she studied Drawing at the same university where I studied Painting, just a few years apart. Our practices have truly grown together, and the following lines are a conversation piece Mariana and I started, wondering how one could even draw:

“(R) When I was younger I thought that to be able to draw you had to see really good.

Then I grew up and wondered whether the hand had to be heavily muscular. Nowadays I often prefer to draw using my non-prominent hand and eyes closed.

(M) What even is drawing?

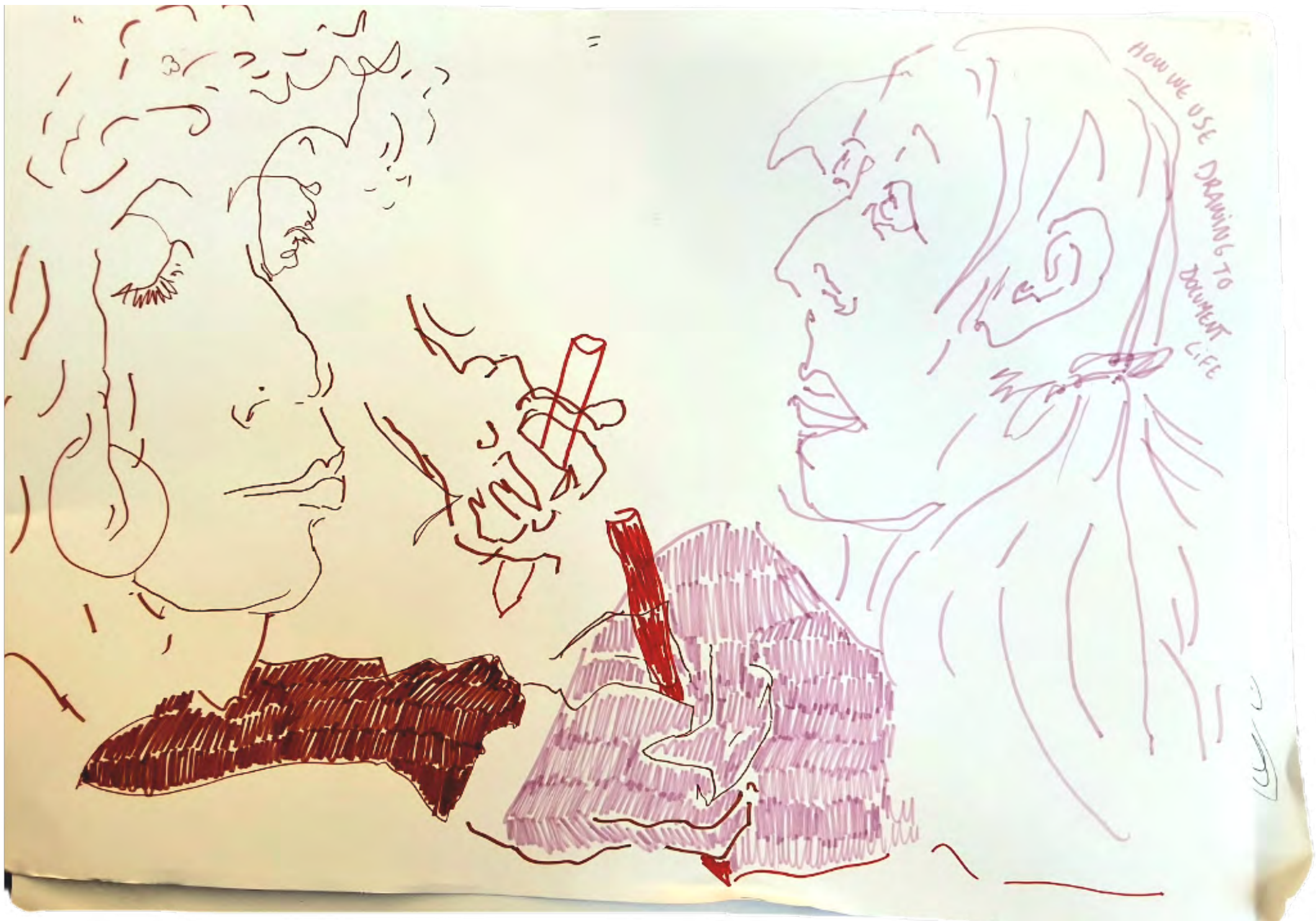
For what is a drawing is debatable, some of my drawings could be considered paintings or installations. It needs to be on paper-but I also draw on fabric. It can only be done with lines - but I also paint in my drawings. So why isn't it a painting if I paint? What even is a drawing? And how do we make a drawing?

To scribble until something comes out, to talk with someone and the drawing makes itself inside the conversation, or to be with my own thoughts and suddenly something shows up. I notice when I draw that it is a conversation with a material, there are limits and restrictions and I'm made aware of them along the process, it requires thought and deliberation, what goes where, what is first, to trust the process

in the most stereotypical way, to see where it takes you. And if I don't like- I'm allowed not to like, like in a conversation with a friend- I can try again, leave it for a bit, return later to embrace it or to move on to the next drawing.

(R) Being a painter myself, the boundaries get mixed. I can paint with pencils and draw with brushes. Does one care for the context and other for the content? Is it about surfaces and lines? You're right, these materials are wild, they don't want to be stuck in concepts, and when they are, all they want to do is trespass them. Like olive oil and water.

In art school, I remember my Drawing teacher telling us that every possible drawing is already on the surface of the white page, we just have to find it out with our pencils. Maybe highlight it, discover where its hidden, lines are quiet, waiting for us. Like this it takes a bit of the pressure out, huh?”



Portrait I did of Inês (left) and Mariana (right), during the "Drawing Talk" Club session.

Redrawing the Framework

Of course, this research carries its own built-in boundaries and inevitable biases. Throughout this cycle, I deliberately gathered multiple roles, acting simultaneously as an artist, educator, host, collaborator and researcher. While navigating these overlapping identities allowed for deep lived insights, it also made it difficult to step outside the process to observe it from afar. As the popular saying goes, you cannot see the mountain if you are standing in the mountain. These reflections are intimately tied to my own body, memory, and standards of judgment. Yet, there is a distinct beauty in recognizing this limitation. Because this methodology is completely situated within my own presence, the facilitation of the Drawing Club by anyone else would feel drastically, beautifully different. That open-ended variability is exactly what keeps the practice alive.

Looking back at how I chose to notice play within the room, this practical experience has also reshaped my own methodology. While I initially approached the Club through five specific lenses—body, free will, agency, performance, and rules—the reality of the workshops proved that Time and Space were not just passive components, but massive, active forces within the process. In future iterations of this research, I would reframe this scope entirely, situating my lenses into **body, space, time**, and **rules**, since it could help understand better not just the internal ingredients of the player, but the exact conditions of where and when play actually unfolds and shapes its own context.

The Next Loop

My original intention was never to dictate a final outcome, but to offer a palette of possibilities and understand how they were received. Consequently, this conclusion does not mark the end of a line, but will continuously keep on spiraling, perhaps towards a never ending loop. I am left wondering how these playful scores might expand when shared with other groups of people? How would this setup be received if we deepened it alongside children? Collaborated with the elderly ? Or reawakened the practice within those who gave up on drawing long ago? Specific target audiences could make the program also be more specific and adapted to these specific contexts.

More than anything, this work made me face multiple challenges, pushing my actions into a more critical analysis of the balance between Art and Life, and how one can feed the other. It also made me confront other internal and urgent interrogations. By observing how participants continuously navigated structural restrictions to find moments of genuine liberation, it also made me confront other urgent interrogation, like: **how can one truly feel free?** It is a continuous dance between the constraints imposed upon us and our collective will to subvert them.

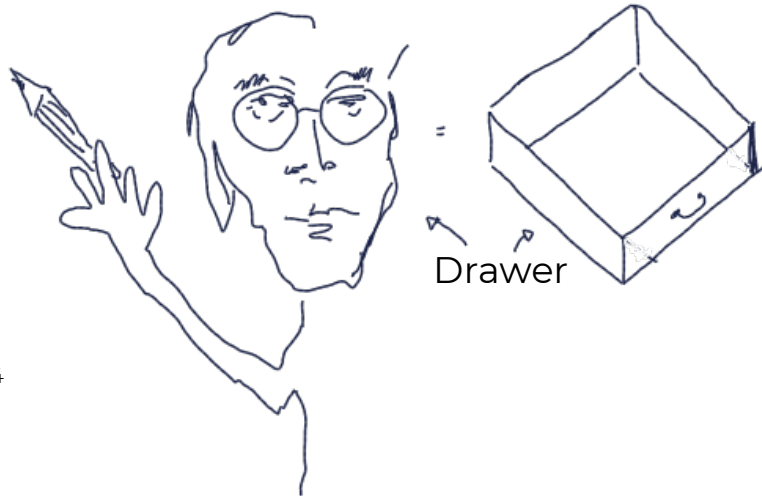
But for now,

i can only hope for us,

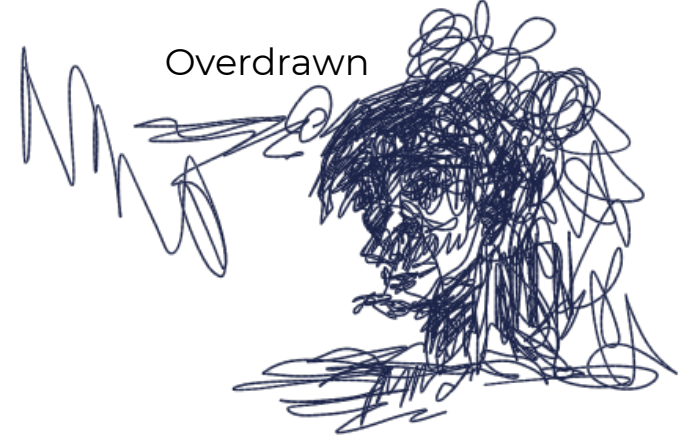
for us all,

to keep on playing, and to keep on drawing.

Movement 0



Drawer



Overdrawn

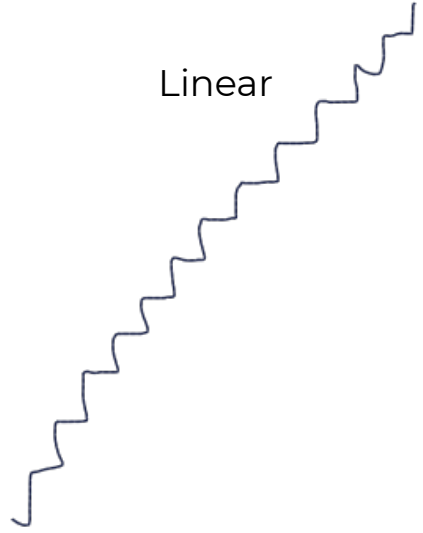
Multidiscipline



Fine line



Linear



Drawn to

Deadline



Drawing the line



Sketchiness



Blueprint



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