

Launching The ITAC Climate Collective - Using Teaching Artistry to Incite Action and Create Change

ITAC THINK TANK: May 2021

Hosted by Eric Booth

This is the transcript of one of ITAC Collaborative's monthly Think Tank sessions. Each session focuses on a new theme and is hosted by someone from a different country.

In May of 2021 Eric Booth announced the ITAC Climate Collective, a group dedicated to advancing the contributions of artists who work in communities and schools around the world to address the climate crisis. Here the session discussed the opportunities of the working group with a call-to-action towards recruitment.

Already the collective has supported five teaching artists that were able to be commissioned around the world to undertake design and lead projects in a local community, not only to address a local climate issue but to change beliefs and behaviors through creative engagement.

Here the group collects artists, art institutions, policymakers, business leaders where focus lies on the question, How can we use the emotional sides of the art to change mentalities, shape behaviors, and find good solutions? The collective believe in the worth of science, pointing to the concerns about serious climate change. The situation is not just kinda bad, it is really bad where human activity is the main cause. So the work involves teaching artists who are poised to be powerful agents of change. The purpose of this collective is to become the powerful agents of change where hope drives motivation.

Instances in which the text is in ellipses in parentheses (...) indicate when the sound was indecipherable for transcription.

Eric Booth

So welcome to this launch of the ITAC Climate collective. It is an action group dedicated to advancing the contributions of artists who work in communities and schools around the world to address the climate crisis. Today, we are launching the large group of the climate collective. And we'll get started on some of the other opportunities that will arise along the way.

Can we do some quick introductions, just so you know, a few people who are leaders in this project? On your screen, you probably can see Madeline McGurk, who is the managing director of ITAC. ITAC is our parent organization, the world's first network of teaching artists, participatory artists, community artists, artists who work in communities and schools around the world. And you've already heard from Caitlin Cummings, who is the coordinator of the climate collective. So she's going to be your guide as we build the power of this group. And can I also introduce Ashlyn Ryan, who's somewhere to give a wave, she is the manager of the ITAC Climate Initiative that we'll hear about. That is a very, it's our sort of boldest move as a project for climate. And I also want to introduce our dear friend and colleague from the Community Arts network, the managing director, and we work in partnership with the Community Arts network, and we're supported by them. It's a new global organization seeking to activate the connectedness of arts for social change, and Anniece. If you're here. Perhaps you can speak up and just say a quick Hi to everybody.

Anniece Barnaut

Yeah, thank you very much, Eric. I'm very, very impressed by all the places where everyone is connecting, it's great. I'm very, very humbled to be here and to have the opportunity to speak to you very humbled, because I regard ITAC as one of the best organizations I work with, and Eric as a true mentor, and a friend. My name is Anniece, I know Eric from the El Sistema world, I was a tour manager for many years of the Venezuelan orchestras and choirs of El Sistema, bringing them to the most beautiful concert halls in the world, and always having an impact on the local communities as the young musicians were offering their time and skills to kids in schools, other young musicians, retired people, people in hospitals, and so on. I've understood from them that music is about the highest artistic quality as possible, combined with the humanity that lies behind. Now I reflect on these periods of my life. And I can tell that he was great in terms of bringing inspiration, but not so great in terms of climate change and protecting our planet, which is a very crucial topic. If we think of sustainability and long term plans. Being close to the Venezuelans led me to co found ssmi in Greece, providing a free music education to refugees, migrants and Greek children, building a new community, their community, the ensemble, Eric is close to the Venezuelans and he came several times in Greece, in person, and now very recently, digitally. To help STC libraries provide guidance and advice for teachers. I understand really firsthand the importance of grassroots organizations. But I also see what a lonely world this is. And we feel all very isolated and discouraged sometimes. So when Eric told me that there is a new ITAC feature, I was very excited. And I said I will be there of course. I've been under polluters for many years and I want to pay for it and engage in these conversations and find solutions. So I'm here with my several hearts. The last one is being the managing director of the Community Health Network. It's a global network. I encourage you to visit this and to be part of the of the global network. We have artists, art institutions, policymakers, business leaders, and one of the focus areas really on arts for climate, how we can find how we can bring

the more emotional sides of the art in changing mentalities, shaping behaviors, and finding good solutions. So I know that this will be very fruitful. I'm super happy to be here with you. And I hope to contribute a little bit of my time and energy to what will be something groundbreaking. Thank you again for the invitation.

Eric Booth

Yes, nice, thank you for being here. Thank you for the partnership in this launch of the large group of the climate collective. And we'll put in the chat box a link to the Community Arts network. Now it has a really simple screen share that we want to introduce just to make sure we're all clear on the perspective the ITAC Climate Initiative is coming from. We believe that scientists agree on the facts about climate change, maybe not 100%. But enough that there is no argument about science, supporting the concerns about serious climate change, the climate change is real. The situation is not just kinda bad, it's really bad. For humans and many other living species, human activity is the main cause, especially in the current era, human activity can be changed. Teaching artists are innately optimistic, because we create change. So often in our work, teaching artists are poised to be powerful agents of change, we may not be yet as a large network. But that's the purpose of this collective to actually become the powerful agents of change, that we are in scattered situations, but are not yet in the public eye, or in effect. And finally, there is hope. Behind that change.

Madeline, there's a second screen.

And this begins to share a little bit about how the climate collective is made up.

There's three parts to the climate collective. And I want to just take a moment to describe all three of these pieces. The first. So just to let you know, the ITAC impacts climate, that's our big initiative here, which is an initiative of the International teaching artists collaborative, and we partner with the three parts of the climate collective as the core group, and you're going to meet them a little bit. Those are five teaching artists that got commissions. We were able to commission them around the world to undertake design and lead a project in a local community that not only addresses a local climate issue, but actually sets out to change beliefs and behaviors through creative engagement. So there are five commissioned teaching artists, we're going to be following their work over the rest of this year, their work will create models that can be shared in other communities around the world to be adapted and adopted. They will be served as case studies to create an online curriculum that will live on the cadenza platform, the largest arts learning platform in the world, that will help artists everywhere think about how they can expand the ambition of their artwork to become art for social change. There'll be a curriculum to help them do that.

So the core group includes those five artists. It includes a science ambassador, a curriculum designer, and some support staff. That's the core group. We have a few of them with us here today. And we're going to hear short films from four of those five, so you can get a feel for what their projects are. They're going to meet monthly.

But today, we launched that second group, the large group. That's us, we are the starters of this large group, we're going to meet regularly. We don't know what those meetings are going to be like. Caitlin will give us some ideas a little in a little bit. But the idea is this is a self sustaining, passion driven group of participatory artists and others who work with them around the world who believe that by working together, we can become more powerful in our direct influence on climate change. We're going to make this up. We're making it up from scratch. We believe that because it is passion driven, it can become self-sustaining. It can find the ways it will be useful, that it can find projects that can make resources available that can stir up funding that can spawn projects between different Participants, but today we launched that group. And the first meeting of that group will be June 9, we'll send you notice about that. And that is the day of the first meeting of the large group, out of which working groups will self-identify around projects they want to undertake that will advance our field. We'll talk about that a little bit in just a little bit more. But know that out of the large group that meets maybe every six weeks, we'll find out if it needs to be more or less working groups that actually accomplish things together that build this field. So that's who is involved in the Climate Initiative of ITAC. And now I want to introduce two of the films that show that turn you on to two of our colleagues that are commissioned to do this work. First one, meet Francine Kilemann from Brazil. And she'll tell you just a little bit about her project that we are all connected to.

Francine Kilemann

Hi, I'm Francine. I'm a Brazilian theatre maker and artistic director of flutter goo Tao, a company that creates immersive experiences in education. Our e-tech project will be a participatory experience for kids from primary schools of innopolis, an island in the south coast of Brazil. During two months, the kids will be guided by a fictional narrative divided into seven chapter experiences. And culminating in the final moment, this core of the impossible I school in which the kids are the teachers and a day in which adults are invited to hear what children have to say, and in their own way of saying it about climate change and their imaginative ideas for change. I think that to transform our relationship with society and with the environment, we need to change our intimate perception of the road. And I truly believe in the power of storytelling and of imagination as a tool for transcending the everyday moving between the real and the imagined and exploring new ways of seeing, leaving and perceiving reality. Children are already deeply connected to imagination. You just provide them with playful and fictional tools for them to fully explore that through the lenses of climate change. I am the lead artist of this project, and I will be collaborating with the plateau team. I will let them introduce themselves. Thank you.

Marcia Donadel

I am Thainan, a theatre maker, producer and production manager for the School of Impossible. I am Marcia Donadel. I work with theatre and education, and I am in charge of research.

Evan

Hi, I'm Evan and I'm the project designer.

Francine Kilemann

I hope that this intergenerational dialogue will inspire new forms of receiving and connecting to our planet, maybe more playful, more imaginative, and more sustainable.

Eric Booth

Beautiful, thank you. And Madeline is going to tee up another film but just notice the School of the impossible. The work. Their work is focused in Brazil elementary schools. And the piece I love the most that the young kids become the teachers of the adults about the issues of climate that are affecting their lives. Boy that is teaching artists thinking. And now Rachel Jacobs from Australia.

Rachael Jacobs

Hello, everyone. I'm Rachel Jacobs, I use she/her pronouns. And I'm sitting here in dharug and double land in the Eora Nation which you know, is Western Sydney in Australia. I acknowledge the elders past present and emerging this land was never seated. Right now this land is in trouble. This land is a place where temperatures regularly get up to 45 and 46 degrees Celsius during summertime. A lot of you would have heard about the devastating bushfires of 2019 and 2020, where we lost land, countless homes and over a billion animals that absolutely devastated this very part of the world. In Western Sydney is frequently too hot and there is no vegetation. So children find it difficult to get to play at lunchtime when they're in school. People find it difficult to travel to work. And of course, as we know the climate crisis hits vulnerable people first. This is one of the poorest areas in Australia. And it's going to be one of the areas hardest hit by climate change. So what are we going to do about it? Let me tell you about The heat festival. This project is going to use five teaching artists working across five different art forms. So dance, drama, music, poetry and visual arts. And they're going to go into communities in southwest Sydney. And they're going to work with those communities to tell the lived experiences of living with hate. I'm partnering with an organization called sweltering cities, that draws attention to how difficult things get when heat is managed really badly. A lot of people say they can't connect with things like rising sea levels and melting polar ice caps. But a lot of Australians can connect when we say that it's really hot in Western Sydney, and something needs to be done about it. So these art projects are going to collect these stories of lived experiences of hate. And we're going to bring them back and have a heat Festival, where we display these artworks, we're going to invite policymakers, we're going to invite politicians and people have influenced leadsites small businesses in the community to cover and it is their job to respond to what they are going to do to address the rising levels of hate in southwest Sydney. The people of Southwest Sydney do not cause this problem. They are not responsible nor solely responsible for finding solutions. This was caused by powerful people in powerful positions. And they are the people that we want to reach by empowering the people of Southwest Sydney to tell their stories. I can't wait for you to see the stories and the artworks unfold.

Eric Booth

Beautiful. Notice those features a local problem that hits the lives of the people who are living there, but the sense that it has to reach policy people to have an impact, and to do it through joyful multi arts expression. So it's built around pleasure and creative potency, not around the

wagging finger of shoulders. And to make it a festival, not a big lecture, Madeline's going to put up two basic premises that we are building the climate collective upon these two big ideas.

Madeleine McGirk

Two seconds, I'm gonna copy and paste them into the chat in just a second.

Eric Booth

Okay, zoom is not our friend at the moment. The first of these premises is that the Climate Initiative crisis is so urgent, artists have to up the game. It is wonderful that there are artists all over the world making powerful artworks that address climate issues. Thank God for that. It's beautiful work, I'm glad it's everywhere. And the climate collective says we have to go further, we actually have to go all the way to aiming for change in belief and behavior. The crisis is too urgent to have a ripple effect that is hopeful, we have to press all the way toward actually making change, we are going to document our change so that the models come with data that supports the kind of impact one can expect. But just to note, this is different than we normally think of artists and climate change, which is making artworks that powerfully raise the issues. This reaches further.

And the second premise is one about building a network. The second premise is if we aren't a network yet, we're a completely fragmented, passionate, urgent field. But there's no there for participatory artists. And we believe that if we can accomplish things together, that makes a difference, then we gather confidence that in fact, we are a network, we gain visibility. And eventually we make the case for funding to be recognized contributors to climate action. So our hypothesis here is that if we start to become effective, hold our feet to the fire of accountability, and show what we know to be true that in fact, we do make a change in belief and behavior, we can then make a significant and sustainable and paid contribution. And we have to get ourselves to that point and that is the work of the climate. electives.

If you start to have responses or thoughts or questions, you can throw them in the chat box. I have never learned how to talk and read at the same time. I know a lot of teachers can do that. I'm an old white male, so I can't do that. But we have the help of Caitlin and Madeline and maybe others. So if you have a comment or a question, we invite them to go into the chat box. While we meet a third commission teaching artist Roz Salvarita, and a project he has already launched. It's underway already in just a couple of weeks. from the Philippines.

Raz Salavarita

Climate change is real. Climate change cannot be denied that it's affecting all aspects of the ways of the worlds that we know. In my country, the Philippines, we are in the midst of the dangerous zones, being part of the Ring of Fire, and inclusion of a superhighway of super typhoons. Because the climate is changing, we the people must change the climate of our own beings. Our ways of living. Our ways of interacting with each other with kindness are ways of innovating for a sustainable planet. As a climate teaching artist, my journey with climate campaigns has evolved over time. Yet three things remain to be part of my conscious creative being as an activator, facilitator, and educator, being part of ITAC impact climate change

fellowship. My vision is to work with selected farm and coastal community members of my local community, the most vulnerable group, and yet the highly valued economic force for agriculture and food security. The theme will be effective climate consciousness through performance installation art. One of engagements would be to conduct a focus group discussion, to be able to understand and gain traditional knowledge that's intrinsic within these most highly sensitive beings in connection to their natural work ecosystems. And through this, I hope to engage these communities for a site specific installation and performance art, with the intention to showcase their creative awakenings and aspirations for the world to see, value, appreciate and be moved to take part in the global action for climate revolution. All throughout this journey, I will be working on a performative documentary, where I'll conduct a day in the life of a certain fisherfolk or farmer. In addition, I will highlight activities dedicated for women farm folks on how they feel climate change within their own climate in their bodies. Being a natural nurturer reflecting Mother Nature's ways. As my former professor said, environmental problems, our emotional, environmental solutions, our technical and environmental decisions, our political May this creative immersion will resolve to a multitude of creative emergence local champions for climate campaigns, activators, facilitators, educators, artists, to help heightened climate consciousness and work to embed their healthy and sustainable world we live in. My name is Raz Salvarita, climate teaching fellow for the Philippines.

Eric Booth

Beautiful, inspiring. And just to note, he's creating focus groups for surfacing what people know. He's focusing on the environment of the own human body. It isn't just a problem out there. He's saying it's a problem here. And he's also using a train the trainer model, where those women farmers will become the advocates and the developers of the work in the communities he's working in. Beautiful project.

I noticed we had a comment in the chat box, and Ashlyn I wonder if you might introduce who our science Ambassador is going to be for our initiative.

Ashlyn

Thanks, Eric. Hi, everyone. I was just about to try and type in my answer to that question. And then, but it's much easier just to say we're really delighted to have engaged a climate expert who is part of the earth commission, and her name is Diane Berman. She has a credible CV, those of you here in the UK, you might be familiar with that organization. So we are still finalizing our details with exactly how she will engage with this initiative. Obviously, there'll be some work with the artists individually and as a group and we really hope to be able to bring her into this collective as well. So we'll have a lot more information to share on that. And hopefully in the next meeting, but yeah, it's really wonderful to have such an expert involved in this initiative.

Eric Booth

Thank you Ashlyn. So just a reminder of where we're at. So we're launching this large group today that will meet regularly guided by Caitlin, to find out what's going to work for them. What, what can that group do, and be together, that sustains its own momentum, because it does stuff. And isn't just about POC, we're imagining it might meet on a six weekly cycle. But it may need to

be more or less than that.

In a moment, we're gonna start talking about a key idea of that group, which is working group projects that emerge from that large group, where our hope is that individuals from that group will say, "you know, there's a thing I can imagine doing that would really build this field". A few other colleagues will join me in this project. I figured I'll take maybe six weeks, and we'll find a little bit of time between us. And we will create this foundational resource for the field. We hope the next will arise. And we will, the June 9 meeting will be where that process starts. But I thought I'd let you know that this isn't just wishful thinking. This isn't just a wouldn't it be nice if people got together and did some things. This has actually worked. I was involved in building the teaching artists field in the US, a big field but disorganized, not well coordinated in our activities. We said we can do much better if we get working groups to start producing tools that build this field.

I want to introduce three of those tools, just to give you a sense of what can happen from volunteer artists working together on their own. The first one I want to introduce was called the teaching artists Manifesto. We never even had a definition of who we are and what we do really hard to become a powerful group. If you can't describe who you are and what you do. So a group of teaching artists took a long time to wordsmith agreement for what this field is, what it does. And then to, to double check it with all the different parts of our field, with people who call themselves community artists, with artists to different kinds of work. And they finally came to agreement for this Manifesto, that is used widely to introduce people to what teaching artistry is, and to let them have a sense of we are a field, a second project. This addresses the fact that teaching artists were paid differently all around the US. Nobody knew how much they were getting paid. It was like a big secret. And this allowed employers to under pay them. So a group of volunteer teaching artists said let's gather information about how much teaching artists are paid. And they created the teaching artists pay rate calculator. And this tool is now used across the US for local conversations about how much teaching artists should be paid. It's calibrated for different costs of living in different parts of the country. But they can now go to employers and say, hey, look, By comparison, other communities like ours pay this much. And we have a regular report that it has raised the pay rates of teaching artists in different areas. And one final project that became a big one. It started as a volunteer working group that said, we don't know where the teaching artists are. We don't know who they are. We don't know where they are. We don't know who hires them. We don't know where you can get training. So they created the teaching artists asset map, which is a map where individual teaching artists say I live here, here's what I do. Here's a little bit about me. And here's an organization that hires teaching artists in my area. And here's some places you can get training, the teaching artists asset map, and there's the link to it has gone global. So I hope everyone on this call, putting yourself on the map doesn't cost anything. It takes about five minutes. But it begins to make visible the size and potential impact of this field. So those are some possible projects. And in a minute, we're going to talk more about those projects.

Can I invite you to throw into the chat box? Any networks that you know of, that might be good models for us? Because we're just starting to build this network, their networks, you know, have

disconnected practitioners who actually have found a way to be powerful together. We want to study those networks, so that this large group can become a powerful network. put any of those suggestions in the chat box. I see they're coming. And while we're doing that, we have a fourth film to share with you. This is from Dijana Milošević in Serbia.

Dijana Milošević

I'm Dijana Milošević theatre director. And this is [...] one of the main collaborators on the project Dancing Trees. Hello to everyone. The project Dancing Trees started from our need to address the topic of the cutting of the trees and deforestation that is extensively happening in our city because of the profit in our country, and all around the world. And this action actually causes big climate changes, and it could really ruin the life of the citizens on the planet. And right now, if you're in a Botanical Garden, this is really a little oasis of nature in the city. And we would like to raise awareness about the importance of the trees for the lives in our communities. So we are creating an extensive, long lasting project that includes Dance Theater performance, then symmetries, conversations after the performance in order to hear our audience, which are the citizens of the city, about their perception of this problem around tables with experts, activists and citizens. And together all together in order to learn more about the relation between politics, economy and ecology, and digital platform that include the various forms and website, which will be the meeting place between the people, the activists, experts, artists, and if changed place where we expect to raise to generate new ideas about the future activities future projects in relation to the problem we are dealing with. One of the main goals of this project is really to influence the beliefs of the members of our communities, because usually they treat trees as the commodities, the furniture, and we would really like to raise awareness about the importance of trees as living entities.

Eric Booth

And just a few things to note there, performance art work, that inspires roundtables of multi stakeholders, addressing the issues of trees in in Serbia, which are being cut down in in Belgrade at an alarming rate to produce an ongoing platform where activity and policy and new actions get addressed the work of a teaching artists at the heart of it. We have a fifth commission teaching artists who didn't get us a film in time, but Nick de Maris from the US will be creating climate choruses. And there's a whole process involved in the music they compose and create and how they present it. So it has an ongoing life for young people through songs addressing the actual issues within climate change. I am so much looking forward to shutting up and handing it over to Caitlyn to describe just a little bit about what we're thinking and what we're bringing to the start of these large group gatherings. So Caitlyn, take us away.

Caitlyn

Thanks, Eric. I'm there. I'm just going to ask one question that came up in the chat from Vanessa. Will the videos be uploaded anywhere for us to watch them later?

Eric Booth

Madeline, what's the good answer to that?

Madeleine McGirk

The answer is yes. All of these videos will go up on our YouTube channel. And then we're going to start spreading them out over Instagram and Facebook so that anyone who's not able to join this call, can watch them back. And also this session is going to go up online as part of our learning modules within the next week or so. So that'll be out there too, for folks to watch back.

Caitlyn

Nice. So the meetings, we're not 100% sure yet what the meetings of the large group will include largely because we want your input into that agenda. But we'll include updates on the five projects and the curriculum development that's happening with the core group, as well as updates on what you all are developing in the working groups in the larger climate collective lunch today. We'll make sure that there's time to connect with others on shared interests and questions and ways to dig deeper into key topics that will Build the knowledge of the collective. We want to keep these sessions really engaging and interesting, valuable enough to be worth your time and commitment. We certainly have some ideas about guest visitors but with love your input and suggestion. And we're really excited about the possibility for diversity and leadership across our working groups, which can bring a variety of perspectives and experiences to the table, which is so welcome in this global field. So I'm really looking forward to working and learning from all of you.

Eric Booth

Beautiful. If people have any questions, I'm noticing the resources suggested. So we're going to take careful note of extracting all the ideas in the chat box. But if there are any questions before we move toward a breakout group where you actually get a chance to connect with one another. This would be a moment to post a question in the chat or just unmute and ask it right now. There's Francine, one of our commission teaching artists in the chat box. All right.

Caitlyn

I was just looking back, Eric to see if there were any questions. There's several artistic projects. And I wondered if you wanted to just talk a little bit about building the field.

Eric Booth

Yeah, and there, we don't exactly know how to take advantage of this abundance of work. As I've just mentioned, the launch of the idea for this collective came from our request for proposals. For the five commissioned teaching artists projects, we put out this proposal, this request for proposals, we only had a short window of two weeks, we sent it out in our somewhat random way, not knowing how many responses would come back. And we were overwhelmed with over 90 proposed responses from around the world. And when we had to break the sad news to many artists that your project hadn't been selected. Many of them said, How do I stay involved in this idea? How can I continue to contribute, and we recognize there is a pool of passionate energy to be tapped. And that's what we're trying to tap with this. Much of that work is going into creating environmentally powerful artworks around the world. Through this initiative, we hope we can make them more visible.

My dream is people within this large group start connecting with one another, so that colleagues in countries around the world start to connect. I will say we're thinking hard about how to adjust the hours of meetings to include our friends in Asia. So they don't have to stay up all night just to say hi to everybody else. But there's the sense that artists who care about this work, need to be connected, they need to share their work, they need to connect to one another to find resources and ideas together. And this is the place we want to make that happen. So we want to make the work more visible within the arts. And definitely beyond the arts. As that comment in the chat box said, we got to start connecting scientists to the policy people to the business foundations.

That's the work of this initiatives: Let's let you talk to each other a little bit, you've been very patient and generous with your attention. So we're going to have a breakout group that runs about 20 minutes. And you're going to be with a small number of about seven colleagues. And we want to ask you, of course, to do some work for us. The first few minutes, just introduce yourselves. But don't get carried away. Try to keep the introduction section to maybe just five minutes. Instead of falling in love with each other during this first breakout. We can postpone that to later. We want to ask you to come up with ideas as a group and post them for us in two Google Docs we're going to give you access to and here are the two questions we would like you to address as a group of colleagues that are just meeting and put your best ideas in this Google Doc to help us get off to a good start the first question, and there'll be a separate Google lock for this. What are ways we can get this network off to a good start. What? How can we get this new network? This large group that we want to have is self-sustaining out of interest and a sense of success? How do we get it off to a good start? There'll be a Google Doc for your car, you, one, maybe one generous person in your group can type in while you're meeting. Because you can have the Google Doc open while you're talking. Maybe one person will put some ideas in there. And Caitlin, that second question.

Caitlyn

The second question I have to get my engaging voice on right after Eric, that second question is, what are some possible good projects for working groups to take on. And just a few words about these working groups, there'll be self managing. Each one needs a leader or leaders to take responsibility to manage the process to completion on June 9, will propose projects and you can sign up and join right then. But let's just think a little bit about the kinds of projects we're looking for. Each of these projects needs a specific goal. That is, as Eric says, Goldilocks sized, ambitious enough to create something that's clearly valuable, exciting enough for people who want to work on and create and at the same time, be achievable enough that the group can manage the commitment and see it through to completion, valuable and achievable. My role with the collective is to schedule our meetings and decode designer agendas with you, and to oversee the completion of projects. But I'm not there to manage your groups, these need to be largely autonomous. Eric did you want to give a few examples

Eric Booth

Just to sort of plant some seeds of thinking about projects that had occurred to me that might be Goldilocks sized, and I know would be valuable to our emerging field. One, for example, whenever I try to talk about this collective, I start sounding kind of like a babbling idiot, after a

few minutes of verbi talk up in the air. We don't have succinct case studies of effective projects that have changed belief and behavior, how valuable it would be if a working group could go find five case studies and write them up into short, succinct descriptions. So all of us could have Top of Mind examples that knock people's socks off. Boy, that'd be a beautiful working group project. Do the research, pull it together for the rest of us. Another one might be I mean, we're sort of casual in saying we know what it takes to change people's beliefs and behaviors. Wouldn't it be great to have a working group, go find out what psychologists know about what it takes to change people's beliefs and behaviors. So we aren't over claiming, or we aren't Miss directing? A beautiful project for a working group would be to pull together in a useful way, a summary of what psychology says we should be focusing on? If we indeed want to change beliefs and behaviors. What about a short glossary and frequently asked questions for teaching artists who work with climate issues. What are the few key things you really need to know the vocabulary, What the things mean? How do they relate to our work? And some answers to the frequently asked questions. So we can get that first set of ideas available to everybody, so that we're not fumbling over our vocabulary as much as we can be stronger in our verbal communication. And there's two other projects I have a hunch might come up that I can give us an example that you might sign on to at a later date. One is, as the Cadenza team is putting together the curriculum.

Eric Booth

For artists around the world, to up their game, as social practice artists, they may be able to reach out and say, you know, if a small group could just pull together a set of thoughts for us, we could include it in the curriculum. Or they'll give you a specific assignment, could a working group pull together this set of ideas in a concise way the teaching artists would understand, so that we can enrich the curriculum. And also, we have a few of our commissioned artists on this call. They may say, you know, Roz or Francine may say, you know, in my project, it would really help me, if a small group of you could put together this, maybe the Serbian group, if you could put together the six books, anyone who cares about this should read, or the three articles that express exactly what everyone should know, they may have requests of our large group for work we could put together that would support them. But most important, and this is heading towards January, June 9th, if you're saying, Man, I would love to create this resource to build our field. Would anyone else join me? And that's what drew nine will basically be the offer of ideas, and people signing on to complete a project with you, Caitlin, I'll give you a little bit more little later about how that's actually going to work. But let's send folks off to these discussion groups. Remember your two questions. And we've got the links for the Google Docs where you're going to post your answers. And if you want to open those now, they'll be ready for you. And we're just going to have a big long list of ideas that are our starting place. The first one is how do we build this climate collective? And the second, what might be some great projects to undertake? And Madeline, let's see what the current temperature of this group is. All right, two thirds are eager to join a working group. Fantastic. To do that, you're going to join us if you can on June 9th. And then the working groups will spring from there. And the regular large group meetings every six weeks or whatever gets decided. That's where we'll meet and keep in touch with what's going on. So Caitlin, can you tip us off a little bit about how the process of getting to those project launches?

Caitlyn

Yes. So in a minute, I'm going to post two forms in the chat. And the first is a form indicating that you'd like to join us on June 9. The second form is if in addition to joining on June 9, you would like to propose an idea for a working group project. And I loved my group, they had some really amazing ideas. So I'm already in love with them. Let's see, we're really hoping to keep the momentum going, which my group was talking about a lot. I think the fact that you're all here today speaks volumes about the role of visual and performing artists and addressing the climate narrative and a collective belief that whilst there's hope for change that it needs to be grounded in action. I also just want to say on a personal point I can't quite believe that I'm in the same room with Eric Booth and John Deek at the same time. That's so exciting. Eric, I think you have some final questions for the working groups. I'm gonna post those documents now.

Eric Booth

Okay, good. So be sure to save those links. I noticed in the chat box, someone reminding us that you can save this chat yourself. If you want to catch some of those links. We'll save it for ourselves. But if there's ideas or links there you want to have I think it was Jeff who said find the three dots. And that will save the chat those three dots in the bottom right of the chat box. That will save this chat box on your computer. Let's see what I don't think I have any more specific information to share. We have a couple of minutes if you have questions or something you think is important for the whole group to hear in this first grappling with the possibility anyone feel free to put a question in the chat box, or just unmute. If you've got something that must be said.

Woman 1

Hi, Eric. This is Beata. Hi, John and everyone. I just wanted to share what Jeanne mentioned in our group about within these groups to keep it creative. Since most of us, we're all creative, that process doesn't have to be. The process itself can be so creative that even if you might be working on policy or psychology, whatever, like it can start off with a creative activity and people can switch off so that it's because I feel like, you know, this can be overwhelming. There's a lot of steps, but we can still make it work for us and keep everything creative.

Eric Booth

Good reminder, Beata. Thank you. One little note I was going to add at the end, but that's a perfect segue for earlier today, I was in a conversation with two colleagues, outside of the teaching artists field, who didn't really know about teaching artists, and they really wanted to get a sense of like, what is it that teaching artists add? You know, we've got all these artworks and we've got this art connection to the community to, to climate concern. What is the distinctive piece that teaching artists add? And the answer that came to me was the reminder, the number one goal of a teaching artist is the capacity to activate the artistry of other people. And when that capacity is activated, it is so universal and so powerful. Its energy can be channeled in many different directions. One of those directions is attending to the impact of climate change on our lives. So it is their artistry, their wish to make stuff they care about, that then gets guided into change that addresses the climate challenge. Other thoughts? Let's see. Lee Jones, Lee is asking how to reconnect with those in your breakout group. Wow, Madeline, how do they do that one?

Madeleine McGirk

I would say the best way is to chat and have the ability to private message each other. And I think you could private message each other your email address, you could drop it in the chat if you're open to everyone staying in touch with you. And there is no record of who was in which group when so it's one of those self starter situations. But this chart on the right hand side can be saved. So if you hit the three dots and hit save, you will have access to everything that's been written including any email addresses that get dropped there.

Maureen Heffman

I have a question. My name is Maureen Heffman. I'm from New Jersey. And Eric booth A long time ago called me a lifer. And I am more than a lifer. But I mentioned it in our group and would be very interested, as we look at cultures that have preserved things, we often look at what they might be called wisdom councils. And I noticed that there may be other people in here that are in the second act three of their time is teaching artists. And I wonder if there's a place for people to come together and gather some of the oral testimonies of other social justice issues, and climate discussions that have happened to sort of as we save that, because as that knowledge as that knowledge moves on, we want to make sure that that some people have access to it. So that's something that I would be interested in working with other people that want to do that.

Eric Booth

So beautiful, Maureen, that is exactly what the launch of a working group sounds like, which is there is this pool of knowledge that we can tap that serves us and the working group finds out a way to help us all gain access to that. Such a beautiful suggestion. And I'll just note one climate project I'm working on in the state of Vermont. It's one of our efforts that we have a native elder who is guiding conversations around the state that are about social change and long knowledge from the abenaki tribe.

Hmm. Okay. We have just another couple of minutes here we're vamping so people can have a furious dating exchange in the chat box. You Do it either by private people or out seem to already be past the private part and say any of you, it's okay, contact me. And we will feel free to contact the emails of this group. With further information, you gave us your permission, and we don't ever want to overstep our bounds. But to keep you up to date on things that are already coming up in the chat, alternative times people can join, how do we accommodate people in other time zones, all of that to be worked out? Thank you, Caitlin. We won't overstep our contact with you, but we will initiate it on the front end.

Madeleine McGirk

Sorry to interrupt, I've just seen something else in the chat. Someone said, can we hang back and the group stay behind to exchange email addresses. And I can certainly keep the call open for five more minutes if people want to do that afterwards. So feel free.

Eric Booth

Yeah, so if you are in a particularly friendly breakout group, if your group can stay on for a bit, you can get your connections made. I think that might be it for our official duration. I wanted to end with just a little piece of poetry that I think captures what we're up to here. And this is the last stanza of a poem by Robert Frost. The poem is Two Tramps in Mud Time. Most of the poem is kind of a bummer. But the last stanza. I think it says what we're up to about bringing in this passion part of our work together with the longtime history part of our work. "But yield who will to their separation, my object in living, is to unite my avocation and my vocation, as my two eyes make one insight only, where love and need are one. And the work is play for mortal stakes." Is the work ever really done for heaven and the future sakes? Thank you all for joining the climate collective. We're just getting started. Stick around if you want to make connections, and hope to see you on June 9.