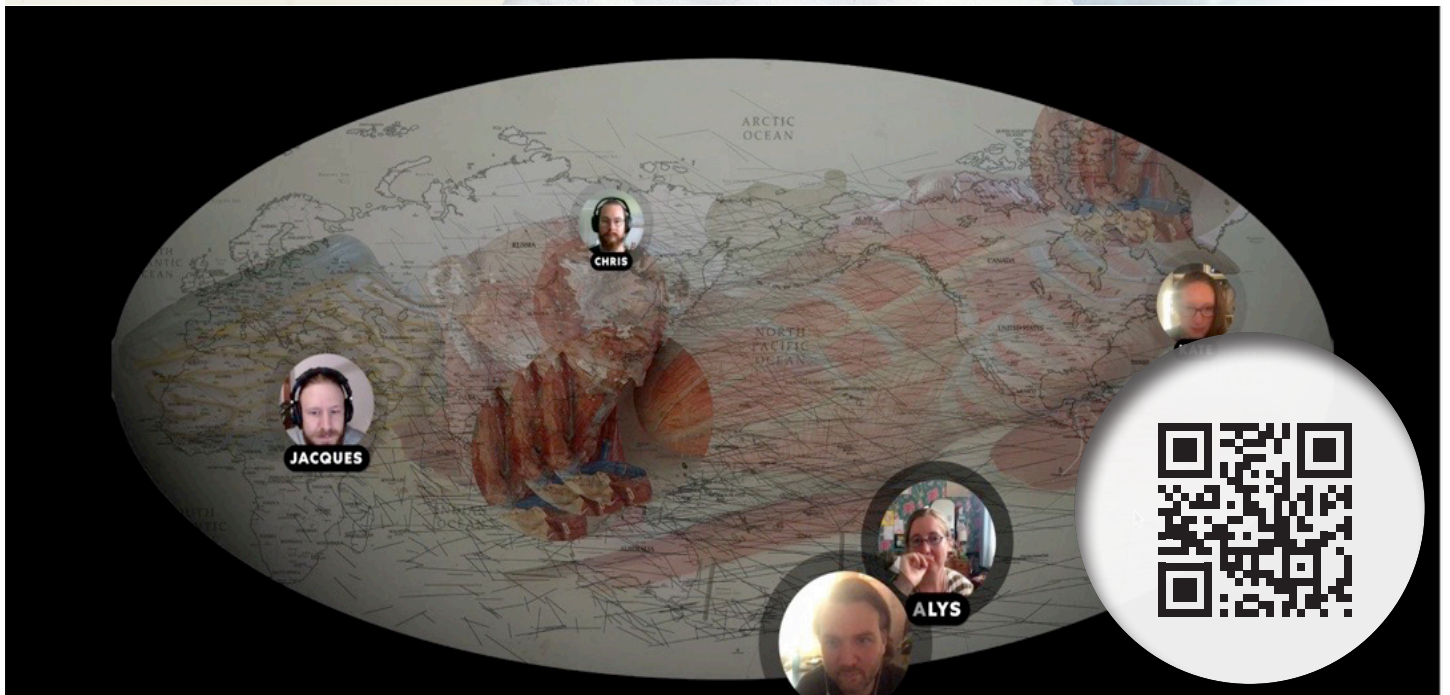


Collaborating Across Borders In Isolating Times; Four Artistic



These artist pages present a series of collaborative artworks, created across international divides through the project *Beberemos El Vino Nuevo, Juntos!* (Let Us Drink the New Wine, Together!). This project is comprised of a series of experiments to bring [artists from across the world](#) into contact, facilitating connection when touch is impossible, in pandemic times. Our strategies take inspiration from artist Francis Alÿs's attempts to create bridges between places which are geographically close but politically apart. In Alÿs's work *Don't Cross the Bridge Before You Get to The River* (2013) and *Sometimes Doing Something Poetic Can Become Political and Sometimes Doing Something Political Can Become Poetic* (Alÿs, 2007), care exists in the attempt to aesthetically, poetically and actually, mitigate the distance between divides, to open spaces of conversation and connection between communities on one side of a strait and the other. With a methodology of artistic research, this project has sought ways to bring artists to touch beyond geopolitical bubbles and continue modes of connecting and working as a transnational community. Touch is a vital aspect of care, without it, humans can fail to thrive, the porous membrane of skin and cellular tissue deprived of essential information. Yet there are many ways to touch – we can touch through sound, through shared experience, we can touch each other through objects and ideas. Each aspect of this project, with exhibitions at Museum of Contemporary Art, Santiago (MAC) Chile (August - October 2022) and BusProjects Melbourne, Australia (Nov - Dec 2021) reflects a commitment to continue collaborative artistic experiments across language and geography, at a time of border closures and distance. These works attend to pandemic temporalities and the states of toxicity and hope carried with them, through four bodies of work.

Strategies for International Co-Creation, with Examples



Firstly, the [Post Project](#) considers artistic practice and solidarity between international artists an 'essential service', facilitated through the humble institution of the postal service. Twenty envelopes were each sent from New Zealand, to three artists in different countries across the world, to the Museum of Contemporary Art Santiago, via the studio of Chilean artist Máximo Corvalán-Pincheira. This project converses with Chilean artist Eugenio Dittborn's postal artworks, in attempting to evade repressive or isolationist regimes through a language of stamps, marks, insignias and codes that tell practices of movement, care, and interconnection in times of containment (Allsopp, 2021). The [fifty artists](#) who contributed to the [envelope project](#) were invited to keep something from inside their envelope when it arrived. They then contributed writing, drawing or notation on paper, sent work on, and documented their process. As postal routes and national borders cascaded between availability and closure, the envelopes, in their delays, arrivals and losses, tell of the movement of time and border-controls in the pandemic era. Secondly, for the [Artistic Mapping](#) project, curators Máximo Corvalán-Pincheira and Alys Longley sent the same digital map to artist friends and acquaintances across the world – inviting each one to rewrite the world through their chosen intervention. Maps were sent to artists in all continents and combined through chance processes into collective bodies of video and installation. In Santiago, a large mapping table charted the journeys of the maps and envelopes across the world, with the envelopes exploding in the chaotic space above. Artistic-mapping is understood here as an action that can question and interrupt conventional representations of power (Duxbury et. al., 2018; Knight, 2021). The project considers borders as political fictions and operates through a transversal, nomadic methodology (Braidotti, 2010) defined by anti-nationalism and the



rejection of fixed or essentialised identities. [Performance making through scores and instructions](#) formed our third strategy, which developed via a partnership with the dance centre CCOV in Montreal and Santiago-based Proyecto Cartón, for which the digital artist book [Language is an Intangible Bridge](#) was written. This facilitates shared approaches to score-based choreographic work from dispersed locations. Due to the precariousness of cultural spaces over 2021-2022, the fourth artistic strategy, of [interactive online exhibition/performance](#) could be accessed by wifi from anywhere, without cost. Artist maps, experiments in choreography, poetry and postal artworks were translated into a labyrinthine series of approximately twenty interactive virtual rooms in which visitors could see and talk to each other while navigating pathways through a series of animations, drawings, sound and video works. As they found their way through the knotted pathways of multi-modal artworks, visitors to this exhibition negotiated multiple languages and scales of space and embodiment. Examples from each of these four artistic strategies can be accessed via the QR codes embedded in the images, the hyperlinks embedded in this text, or our [website](#). Our book-length [exhibition catalogue](#) tells the story, in some detail, of each of the artistic strategies that form this work. The catalogue design is an homage to Alÿs's (2013) book *Don't Cross the Bridge Before You Get to The River*. This practice of homage allowed us to work, in a design sense, with questions of how we contain each other, the permissions we give or withhold in what language and pages can do and what we are able to say of artistic processes and collaboration. Like Alÿs's projects at the borders of nations, this project has sought to make connections between strangers in an era of magnified distance. Practices of homage enabled a sense of connection, ground, gratitude and potentiality through an era of impossibility and despair. In the absence of the touch and energy drawn from working together in studios, long-distance international collaborations need dedicated, active facilitation to create bridges in the form of workarounds, leaps of faith and lateral thinking. Such bridges can support other kinds of movement (imaginative, poetic) enabling touch with others across vast distances to continue to shape our lives, even in impossible times.

REFERENCES

Allsop, Laura (2021), The Airborne Art of Eugenio Dittborn, *Apollo; The International Art Magazine*, doi: <https://www.apollo-magazine.com/eugenio-dittborn-airmail-paintings-goldsmiths-cca-review/>

Alÿs. Francis. (2007). *Sometimes Doing Something Poetic Can Become Political and Sometimes Doing Something Political Can Become Poetic*. NY: David Zwirner.

Alÿs, Francis (2013), *Don't Cross the Bridge Before You Get to the River*, Japan: Seigensha Art Publishing, Inc.

Braidotti. Rosi. (2010). Nomadism: Against Methodological Nationalism. *Policy Futures in Education*. 8 (3-4). 408-418. <https://doi.org/10.2304/pfie.2010.8.3.408>

Duxbury, Nancy., Garrett-Petts, Will., Longley, Alys. (2018). *Artistic Approaches to Cultural Mapping; Activating Imaginaries and Means of Knowing*. London: Routledge.

Knight, Linda. (2021). *Inefficient mapping: a protocol for attuning to phenomena*. California: Punctum Books.

CAPTIONS

1. Post Project: Beberemos El Vino Nuevo, Juntos!
2. Artist Map: An exquisite corpse of four artistic maps. Maps by Meng Qu (Japan), Paul Hughes (UK), Nipan Oranniwesna (Thailand), Alys Longley (NZ), Máximo Corvalán-Pincheira (Chile). Image by Alys Longley and Jeffrey Holdaway
3. Performance Scores and Instructions: Sean Curham and Alys Longley for Proyecto Cartón, Photograph by Jeffrey Holdaway
4. Interactive Online Exhibition: Design by Kate Stevenson, Alys Longley, Jeffrey Holdaway, Virtual Room based on artist map by Nipan Oranniwesna and Máximo Corvalán-Pincheira
5. and 6. Beberemos El Vino Nuevo, Juntos! Exhibition, MAC Santiago. Photography 1. Eduardo Cerón Tillería 2. Marcel Ibaceta 3. . Envelope contribution by Richard Orjis (NZ) Photograph by Alys Longley