

# PLANTING THE SEEDS OF PLANNING

USING ARTS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN TUPI, PIRACICABA, BRAZIL



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Planting the Seeds of Planning:  
Using Arts for Community Engagement in Tupi, Piracicaba, Brazil

by

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Note: Cover page photo depicts final painting of Plantando. All photos of the process taken by M. Schambach and M. Avila, unless otherwise indicated.

## ABSTRACT

This project is about creatively building individual and organizational capacity in Tupi, a small neighborhood in Piracicaba in the interior of the State of São Paulo, Brazil. Plantando was a process of community engagement through arts conducted at Estação Travessia, a not-for-profit organization that facilitates educational processes through agricultural activities such as gardening. Youth were invited by the organization to participate in a community mapping workshop followed by an arts initiative where they were encouraged to reflect on their role as citizens, brainstorm ideas for engaging their community, and develop a livelihoods plan. The youth were also given the role of facilitators and took on the job of engaging community members in the process.

The month long workshop was facilitated by artist Melanie Schambach and myself who worked as a planning consultant with Travessia. This report documents this experience and seeks to provide insights into youth's perceptions of citizenship and agency in a rural context in Brazil. It also looks at how arts can be used as a capacity building tool to facilitate community engagement.

Mandei plantar  
Folhas de sonhos no jardim do solar  
As folhas sabem procurar pelo sol  
E as raízes procurar, procurar  
Mas as pessoas na sala de jantar  
(...)  
São ocupadas em nascer e morrer

Paris Et Circenses  
(Caetano Veloso / Gilberto Gil – 1968)

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## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Plantando was a youth-led process that focused on the use of arts as a tool for community engagement among residents of Tupi, a small rural neighborhood in Piracicaba, Brazil. The process took place throughout February 2010 and involved Estação Travessia, a local non-profit organization focusing on education; artist Melanie Schambach, whose work through SpeakArt focuses on arts for community engagement; and myself, who worked as a planning consultant.

Plantando was a collaborative process and was developed in accordance with the work rationale adopted by Estação Travessia:



Estação Travessia means Crossing Station. Just like a train station, where passengers come from different places and leave to different destinations. It is at Travessia where different individuals connect and are able to exchange what they bring with them in their luggage. Travessia works under the principle that whoever comes by will have something to share with others and will have something new to learn from others. Every passenger will leave something behind and will take with them something new when they continue on with their journey. In this sense Travessia works as a hub that highlights integration where diversity is acknowledged, valued and promoted.

Source: adapted from Pastor and Faleiros, Project Plan, 2008



The structure of the process unfolded on the ground building on the strengths of the group. Different questions were brought together:

Melanie:

*How can the artistic process promote meaningful dialogue and social change?*

*How can this be about the participant's own voice and not mine?*

*How can the community speak?*



Maíra:

*What do participants have to say?*

*How do we know what they want to speak about if we don't know them?*

*How can we get to know them so that we know where they are, where they want to go, and how they can get there?*



Travessia:

*How can the youth connected to Travessia gain agency and become more empowered as individuals so that they can promote sustainability in their surrounding environments?*

Plantando is the product of the group's efforts to answer these questions. It was a learning by doing process that generated insightful results, and the process lends lessons that are worth telling in terms of its outcomes and multi-dimensional reach.

My objective through this study is to trace this process and to highlight its lessons and successes. By describing how the initiative evolved, I explore two questions:

- How do youth in Tupi relate to their communities and perceive their role as citizens?
- In which ways did arts serve as a mechanism for participants to develop agency and engage their communities?

I hope this study will inform practitioners and scholars working in community and rural development of the potential of incorporating arts and creativity into planning processes, especially those involving youth. I hope that it will also be relevant to those concerned with understanding the realities of rural youth in Brazil; and to planners and artists working with arts for social change, who may learn about the potential of building bridges between their fields in order to reach the outcomes they envision.

The chapter that follows summarizes the research process. Chapter 3 explains the context and rationale for this project in more detail. Chapter 4 discusses the practical dimension of the project, including its lessons and successes, and Chapter 5 concludes.

## CHAPTER 2. RESEARCH PROCESS

### Methodology

The research relied on a case study methodology and on mixed research methods. This enabled each step of the process to be analyzed: from planning with the artist to engaging with the organization, to interacting with the youth and the community and finally, to understanding the outcomes of the process. The richest sources of information consist of the actual process and the outcomes of the work conducted with the community at Travessia.

The research methods included:

- Secondary review of primary data: review and study of videotapes, photos, written and visual materials produced by the participants
  - SpeakArt incorporates a detailed documentation process using photos, video recording, reflection pieces and evaluation forms. These materials served as an important source of data. Photos and video recordings were analyzed, in addition to the artistic materials produced by participants which includes drawings, writing pieces, images produced through a mapping process, and symbols and images used in the process of painting a large canvas.
- Participant observation, review of field notes and of notes from meetings with the organization and with the artist
  - Besides my firsthand experience working on the project, Melanie and I kept a daily journal and took notes during the workshops in order to plan the activities for the next days. The notes contain our own reflections and describe the debriefing sessions that were held after each activity. We also kept records of our communication with Travessia which includes notes from meetings and emails.
- Literature review
  - A brief literature review was conducted to provide context on the reality faced by youth in rural communities in Brazil especially in terms of civic engagement and planning-related issues; and on the integration of arts and planning and the use of arts for social change.

This study represents my analysis of how Plantando unfolded. To examine the approach and objectives of the project, I focused the analysis on the following aspects:

- Emphasize knowledge produced by the participants;
- Highlight what evolved on the ground;
- Focus the findings on the needs of Travessia, the community and the artist;
- Identify weaknesses and opportunities for improvement;
- Suggest viable recommendations for the community, the artist and the planning field.

### Limitations

A potential limitation of the study is the likelihood that the youth and community members who participated in Plantando are not representative of the diversity of residents in the Tupi region. The youth were recruited by Travessia through a process that looked at their background, aspirations and motivation as expressed in an essay and interview. Thus, we worked with a motivated group of youth who were probably predisposed to engage given that they had an opportunity to do so. Community members who were invited to join the process were acquaintances, family members and friends of the youth at Travessia. This project therefore does not necessarily speak to the reality of all of the youth and local community.

In addition, this study is a result of my own interpretations based on my experience participating in the process and on how I have interpreted the data. Looking back I realize that Action Research would have been a suitable option in this context. Not only would it have enabled the study to evolve directly from the process, but it would have incorporated different points of view, including those of Melanie, the teachers at Travessia, the youth, the community members and other guests.

### Ethical Considerations

This study was subject to ethical review and approval by the University of British Columbia Behavioral Research Ethics Board. The research was considered of minimal risk to human subjects. See appendices I and II for a copy of the certificate of ethics clearance and for a sample of the consent form that was signed by participants.

## CHAPTER 3. CONTEXT

### The Tupi Neighborhood, Piracicaba, Brazil

Tupi is a small district (land area: 1,748m<sup>2</sup>) located in the rural outskirts of the municipality of Piracicaba in the State of São Paulo, Brazil. The district developed along a railway station built during Brazil's coffee cycle in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Around 3,000 people (Piracicaba, 2003) reside in the neighborhood, which is located 15Km east of the Piracicaba city centre. Tupi's proximity to the city has pushed urbanization in the area, which now has a small central core where residents have access to basic urban infrastructure. This includes paved roads along the district's core, a commercial strip, a small square surrounding a church, a school and a health clinic. The neighborhood is also served by public services such as water distribution and wastewater collection pipes (with no treatment). Adjacent to the district's core are smaller neighborhoods such as Jardim Bartira which concentrates a high percentage of low income families and Santa Izabel, characterized by a number of illegal subdivisions occupying the rural land. The municipal Horto Florestal (a forest preservation area) is located within the district's zone.

Piracicaba is a mid-size city of 370,000 residents known as São Paulo's "sugar capital". The city is located 140km west of the state capital. It developed under a non-sustainable growth model characterized by intense sprawl and social-spatial segregation. Empty lots are visible throughout the city. As a result of land speculation, a large portion of the poorer population cannot afford to live within the city core and resides in distant neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are under-served in terms of infrastructure and transportation, characterizing a territorial disintegration in the region. Piracicaba is highly urbanized, with 95 percent of its population residing in the urban area. Transportation is a major challenge, given the pattern of land-use and the prevalence of a

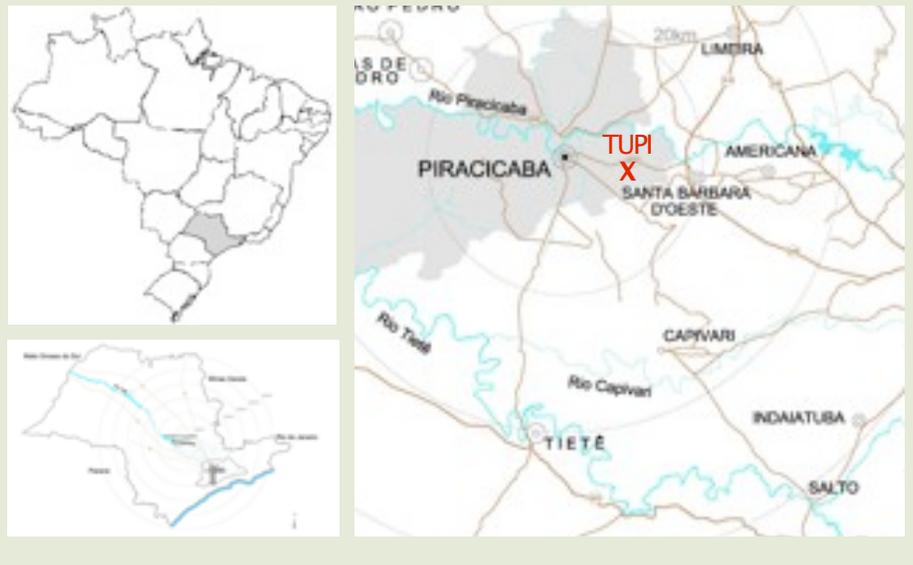
large fleet of heavy trucks moving through the city. Piracicaba is home to a large industrial park that hosts major corporations in sectors including metallurgy, mechanics, paper and sugar cane-alcohol. The rapidly expanding ethanol industry in Brazil has fueled the economy in the region, which is now a hub for research and development in biofuels. Brazil's Center for Sugarcane Technology (Centro de Tecnologia Canaveira) and the National Biofuel Complex are both located in Piracicaba.

### History

Piracicaba has a history of intensive sugar cane production that dates back to the slavery period in the late 1800s. This is reflected in the current land ownership model where most productive land is controlled by a few industrial and agricultural corporations. Following Latin America's modernization process starting in the 1970s, a series of negative consequences linked to fast urbanization and lack of planning have affected the region. Precarious housing, inadequate water and sewage management and a range of social problems attached to the urban transition led political leaders in Piracicaba to seek industrial development as a solution. Now one of Latin America's most productive regions, Piracicaba exemplifies the elitist character of Brazil's agricultural development model based on heavy agro-industrialization. Interestingly, a region known for its strong popular *caipira* culture characterized by rodeos and traditional country style *sertanejo* music and food festivals, also attracts a highly educated agricultural elite as Piracicaba is home to one of the country's oldest and most prominent agriculture universities, Escola Superior de Agricultura Luiz de Queiroz, among other educational institutions.

**The State of São Paulo, Brazil (top left); location of Piracicaba in relation to São Paulo (bottom left) and location of the Tupi district in Piracicaba (right)**

Source: IPPLAP, 2010



## Estação Travessia

Located on a beautiful lot in Tupi, Estação Travessia was established in 2009 with a vision to become a learning hub that promotes educational and knowledge exchange processes through a focus on gardening and agriculture. Consistent with the ideals of integration and exchange, Travessia's main objective is to promote capacity building among youth based on the following principles:

- Sustainability: to advance learning opportunities around environmental, social and economic sustainability by utilizing permaculture techniques, promoting social inclusion and focusing on income generation
- Local knowledge: to collectively build values, abilities and knowledge; and to promote a “dialogue of various knowledge”
- Participation and engagement: to promote popular participation and encourage individuals to engage collectively in actions that will contribute to a healthier future for the community

Travessia's pedagogical framework was developed collaboratively between graduates in forestry engineering and biology from the local agriculture university and a group that brought together a psychoanalyst, a teacher, a landscape architect and an economist. The framework places value on each individual's life trajectory, knowledge and interests and thus seeks to generate opportunities for each one to design their own learning path. This is to be promoted through pedagogical praxis and transformative education. Consensus-building is central to this framework, under which conflicts and contradiction are not to be avoided or hidden through the learning process; rather, they should be made visible as inherent elements of the human condition.

Four youth were recruited to be involved in the pilot stage at Travessia. The organization approached the local high school in Tupi calling for students who were interested in an opportunity to intern with them. The criteria for selection involved holding a desire to share ideas and promote change, having a connection to the rural environment, being interested in gardening and agriculture, and having the motivation to act as agent-multipliers. Students were asked to write an essay describing their life trajectories, aspirations, vision and motivation to become part of Travessia.

Travessia currently functions 5 days a week from noon to 5pm. A teacher overlooks the daily routine of the youth, which involves time allocated for classes and workshops, gardening and performing a variety of tasks necessary to maintain the space running. The tasks include class activities, project planning and design, gardening work, and maintenance and operations. All activities are designed in an effort to utilize agriculture-related tasks as an entry point for deeper reflections around themes such as ethics, socioenvironmental responsibility, food security and social inclusion.

### Current Context

Travessia is currently transitioning from its pilot phase to a more solidified first phase of development, as envisioned in its project plan. The plan proposes three phases of development and creatively uses a metaphor of the life cycle of a plant to illustrate the project's development path. The metaphor looks like this:

#### PHASE 1: SEEDLING (2 years)

- Pilot project: 4 youth recruited as interns
- Initial stage of plant production
- Design of physical space, tree planting, experiments with vases and development of business plan for next stage
- Consolidation of institutional structure

#### PHASE 2: BUSH (3 to 7 years)

- Another 4 youth joining
- Current youth take on managerial role
- Travessia youth host guided visits from private schools
- Commercialization of vases covers operational costs and brings financial return

#### PHASE 3: TREE (8+ years)

- Travessia becomes a reference centre in Permaculture
- Full operation of courses on socioenvironmental themes with involvement of rural community
- Financially self-sustaining
- Demonstration garden of diverse ecosystems

#### What is an OSCIP

Travessia functions as a Civil Society Organization of Public Interest (Organização da Sociedade Civil de Interesse Público). Similar to NGOs, OSCIPs are a type of Third Sector association unique for their ability to relate to the State through a partnership. This model enables the State to share with the private sector the responsibility of overlooking public resource investment. When an OSCIP partners with the State it may utilize both private and public resources. OSCIPs can therefore be designated as a type of NGO that receives a certificate from the Federal government for complying with administrative transparency principles.

Source: Martins, P. (p. 26, 2007)



Estação Travessia

## Community Planning in Brazil

Community-based and participatory planning have been gaining space and visibility in Brazil since the beginning of the democratic transition, marked by the enactment of the 1988 “Citizen’s” Constitution. The Constitution drastically changed the way government spheres interact among themselves and with citizens. A high level of decentralization promoted the integration of planning efforts across the local, state and federal spheres. Public participation in decision-making became viable through the implementation of public consultation schemes, neighborhood committees and especially through the incorporation of citizen’s councils at the municipal level in almost every sector. Participatory budgeting and number of cooperative arrangements, housing schemes and innovative governance models began to impact planning interventions across the country.

Brazil, however, is a country of contrasts. The democratic transition is still under way, and whereas many initiatives are contributing to speed up this transition, the country is subject to the interests of a powerful elite and to political clientelism that maintains a large majority of the population excluded from decision-making processes. Lack of access to education, poverty, violence and discrimination create barriers to public engagement. Planning processes are intensely subject to political environments and in many cases are often inexistent or linked purely to physical or “hard” planning issues (Maricato, 2003, p. 151).

## Reaching Rural Brazil

Regions and populations that are not part of the spotlight of political action are often left behind in terms of how and whether they are planned, and how and whether these processes engage the population. Brazil’s rural regions have not been included in the agenda of planners, and in smaller interior towns this problem is aggravated. An opportunity for change is the Statute of the City (Estatuto da Cidade, implemented through Federal Law 10.257/2001) which represents a turning point in terms of how planning deals with the rural region. The Statute requires cities to develop Directive Plans (Planos Diretores), and outlines that each city’s plan must consider the whole region, including urban and rural areas (article 40, paragraph 2), promoting integration and complementarity between activities developed in these spaces (Santoro et. al, 2004, p. 8)

Piracicaba is starting to respond to these changes. The Institute for Research and Planning (IPPLAP – Instituto de Pesquisas e Planejamento de Piracicaba) was implemented on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2003 and has worked on the downtown revitalization action plan, the Beira-Rio project targeting the city’s relationship to the Piracicaba River, and the first Development Plan (Plano Diretor de Desenvolvimento), approved in late 2006 and coming into effect in 2007. It is the first plan to be accompanied by a Rural Development Plan and a Mobility Plan. It also represents a step forward in terms of its participatory methodology, which followed the principles set forth by the Statute of the City.

### Youth in the rural environment

“Youth face very little recognition in the rural environment. They do not have legally established rights to act politically or to participate in decisions that affect themselves individually or their communities. One of the factors that affects youth migration to urban centres is education, seen as a vehicle of change from agricultural activities to non-agricultural ones (Gaviria and Menasche, 2006 p. 72 and Ferrari et al, 2004)

## Interactions Between Planning and the Arts

The intersection of planning and the arts has focused mainly on cultural planning, concerned with elements such as cultural infrastructure, museums, exhibits, public events, and cultural heritage; and public art, which looks at art in public spaces, graffiti and other forms of cultural expression in the city. The concept of Creative Cities has recently gained popularity and speaks to the importance of the creative sector and the arts in ensuring vibrant neighborhoods and cities (Landry, 2000).

A number of studies have looked at the correlation between participation in the arts and civic engagement (NEA, 2006, Putnam, 1993). The relationship is shown to be positive and demonstrably high, suggesting that those who engage in arts are more active in the community: “Art is not escapism but an invitation to activism” (NEA, 2006). Similarly, the arts have been credited with promoting civic values such as trust, cooperativeness, and respect: “The arts are a superb means of building social capital” (Saguaro Seminar, 2000, p. 29).

## Arts for Community Engagement

The democratization of planning and governance relies on civic engagement and participatory approaches, which have shifted the way citizens relate to their governments and the way planning processes are realized. Participatory video, community mapping, and innovative approaches to public consultation such as World Cafes and design charrettes have enabled deliberation in an environment where diverse forms of knowledge are valued and integrated. Whereas community-based artists have been engaged in a variety of community development, activism, and civic engagement initiatives, there seems to be a great deal of untapped potential in terms of how artists and planners could join their skills and work. Often sharing similar goals, the arts have a powerful role to play as a medium, not simply as an end, in community planning.

### Speaking through Art

“Art links communities, speaks about the public, mirrors culture, and deconstructs riddles of society. Art can expand our creativity. It encourages us to think critically. Art can reach out the public, inform, and raise consciousness. And most importantly, art has the power to motivate us to change.” (Schambach, 2010)

Artist Melanie Schambach developed SpeakArt as a way to facilitate participatory painting processes where groups and communities are encouraged to engage in critical thinking around socially relevant themes. Concerned with making her artistic practice relevant for communities and conducive to social change, SpeakArt evolved into an innovative community engagement model taking place around the painting of large canvasses. Melanie has worked in Canada and Latin America on a variety of projects ranging from one-day workshops to year-long projects. She often partners with non-profit organizations, school boards and community centers, and works on projects involving groups that share an interest including youth, women, children, and immigrant communities.

Melanie invites participants to learn and experiment with painting techniques, while she facilitates a range of activities geared towards developing creativity and encouraging dialogue among the group. These include storytelling, abstract painting, theatre and writing. The process is shaped in accordance with the objectives and characteristics of each group.

#### Artists and Community Planning

“Artistic endeavors and the institutions that sponsor them can achieve a host of important policy goals. Arts institutions can anchor neighborhood revitalization efforts, and cultural activities can help heal community divisions and make social programs more effective. However, while policy makers and political leaders have begun to understand the economic benefits of a strong cultural sector, they have not fully understood the civic benefits. To remedy that, leaders of the local arts community need to be incorporated fully into planning efforts, commissions, and programs at the neighborhood, city, state, and national levels.” (Saguaro Seminar, p. 34, 2000)



SpeakArt's main elements



Mural painting with kids in Guatemala



The 'Rec Room' in Ladysmith, Canada

## The Seeds of an Idea

Melanie and I have been long term friends. Our first experience working together was in 2005 when she invited me to be a participant in her first Speak project (as she called it at the time). Over the years, especially after I began my academic career planning, we started to draw parallels between the work we do, looking for inspiration and building on each other's ideas.

The opportunity to work with Travessia emerged at a time when Melanie was seeking to explore new partnership models involving the private sector. Unsure of what this new model would imply in terms of her work ethics and principles, we brainstormed ideas together and decided to write a proposal for Travessia, which I was connected to in Brazil. Whereas our intention was to use this experience as an experiment and an opportunity to work together, I knew Travessia was going through a process of structuring its operational framework and that they could potentially benefit from a type of visioning process that would engage the organization and the community.

## SpeakArt and Travessia

One of the main objectives of Travessia is to operate a knowledge exchange model where youth from Tupi facilitate guided visits of the garden to students from the city. The underlying motivation is to break the prevailing model where youth tend to leave the rural area and go to the city to learn. It also seeks to challenge perceptions of inferiority and superiority often associated with dualistic views of "rural versus urban", and to highlight the value of knowledge related to the land.

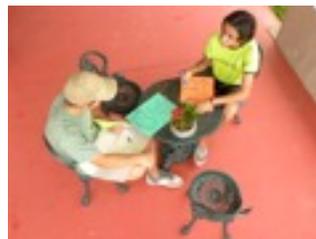
The way Travessia was operating at the time when we initiated our work was not yet fully reflecting the ideals outlined in its project plan. This was partially anticipated and expected as a reality of the project maturation cycle, partially due to key staff turnover, and partially because of a gap that often remains between ideas on paper and how they unfold on the ground. Whereas activities and workshops were promoting hands-on training and stimulating critical thinking, the participatory component and the focus on exchange, which had been strongly highlighted in the methodology, were in some aspects falling short. According to my own perceptions and observations:

- The format of most classes was still based on the traditional teacher-student relationship.
- The teachers came from the city to teach the youth at Travessia, which was not contributing to the initial intention of reversing the knowledge transfer pattern, at least symbolically.
- The youth were not finding space to develop a sense of ownership towards Travessia. They seemed attached to their role of interns at the organization, which emphasized the working aspect and perhaps created barriers to breaking the traditional hierarchy of relationships.

Travessia offered to fund the initiative and was very welcoming of the idea that we could play a role in and contribute to their objectives. We acknowledged, however, that both Melanie and I were coming in as outsiders with very little connection to the reality of Travessia and vice-versa. The groups that Melanie had previously worked with had very specific issues to discuss, and in this case, we knew we had to get to know each other in the first place. SpeakArt would be a process of discovery in many dimensions.

Bringing participatory planning was a determinant factor in linking SpeakArt to Travessia at this stage. We aimed to achieve this by working towards:

- Creating an environment where our previously held assumptions about one other could be challenged;
- Making every possible effort to level the grounds at work;
- Encouraging the youth to lead rather than follow the process; and
- Incorporating a debriefing exercise at the end of each activity and building on the feedback received from participants.



## CHAPTER 4. PLANTANDO

### Preparation Stage: Developing a Framework for the Process

Given the questions that motivated the group to work together, Travessia's role was to propose a **destination** for the project: its objective is to find ways to encourage the youth to develop agency and become more empowered individuals capable of promoting sustainability. Melanie offered a **vehicle** for getting there: she was concerned with exploring how the artistic process could promote dialogue and social change and how creativity could lead to action. I offered to help **draw alternative routes**: my concern was finding out where the youth were in relation to where they want to be, and from then on exploring possible ways to achieve their goals.

An initial concern for Malanie and I was our position as outsiders. Not only we lacked familiarity of the place and the community, we also did not know how they perceived us. Melanie was worried about a potential language barrier given that she is Colombian and would have to communicate in Spanish. To test the grounds and address these issues we drew on the use of community mapping and developed a framework for the first week of the process that focused on dealing with the initial barriers, getting to know each other and establishing the foundation for the following three weeks:

#### Preparatory framework for the process

##### Where we are

- Unfamiliarity, possibly fear: not knowing each other and having our own assumptions about one another
- Difference: not knowing what the youth value and what they want to get out of the process
- Being outsiders: we are "city people" and have no idea of what Tupi is like. We also don't know how the youth perceive us

##### Where we want to be

- Familiarity and trust: relationship building, feeling comfortable
- Breaking barriers and enabling horizontal integration: we are all there to learn. We respond to how the youth guide the process
- Relating to the reality of Tupi residents: we have a better understanding of what they value and perceive as positive or negative

##### How can we get there?

- Letting the youth tell us who they are: hearing their personal narratives on their day-to-day life and finding out what is important to them
- Asking them to show us where they live: experience hanging out in the neighborhood and listening to stories that help us relate to that space
- Use mapping to get the youth to reflect on how they relate to and perceive their neighborhood

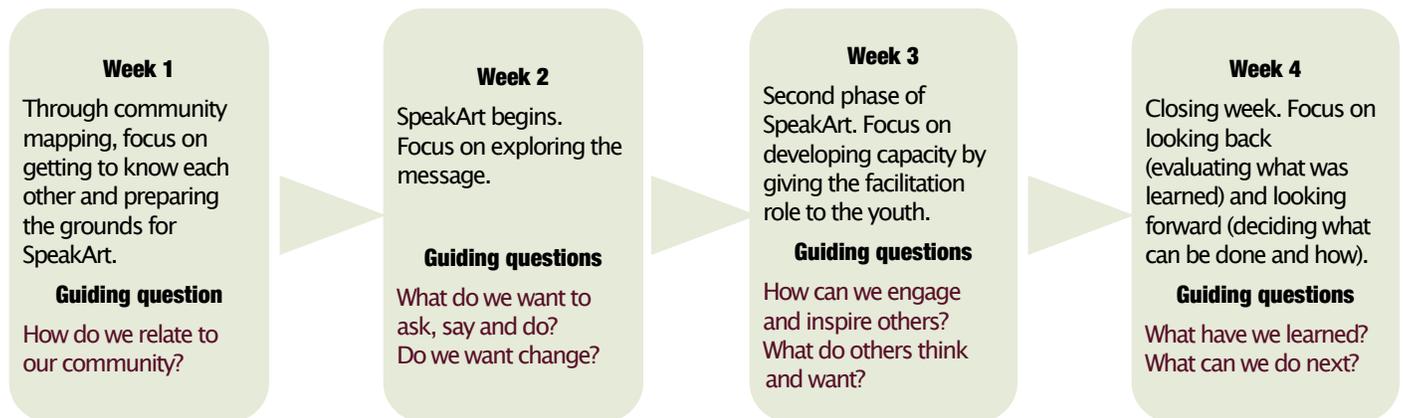
The group introductions also involved concluding the first day with a closing circle that focused on discussing what each of us was bringing into the process. This discussion was useful to clarify some key definitions we were going to be working with from that point on. I talked about my background in planning and explained what planning means. Melanie explained her work, giving examples of previous Speak projects. The youth explained the principles of Travessia, in which ways they shared these principles and what were their motives and aspirations to be there. This discussion was useful for the group as a way to set the grounds for future activities and to informally establish our roles in the process.

#### Group definitions of key concepts

- **Art**: work that contains layers of meaning, diverse forms of expression of human creativity, using creativity to produce something; alternative ways of expressing what's inside.
- **Planning**: reflecting before doing; being conscious of the process of getting to the desirable place/state; moving from thinking to doing; visioning; using a sustainability lens; considering the multiple implications of a certain course of action.
- **Youth**: young at heart; having energy to make things happen; experiencing a transitory and sometimes confusing phase in life; falling into a certain age group; being like anyone else.
- **Agency**: making informed choices rather than simply responding to something external, being emancipated/empowered, independent and autonomous through the exercise of civil, political and social rights, individually and collectively.
- **Engagement**: being aware of and actively participating in dealing with collective issues, working to reach a desired destination.
- **Participatory**: an environment that encourages individuals to take agency of processes that affect them; coming in without pre-conceptions or acknowledging that they exist and creating an opportunity for pre-conceptions to be challenged; non-top-down; horizontal more than vertical.

# Overview of the Process

We envisioned the project flowing in the following manner:



## Focus on creativity: the role of interactive arts in the process

Melanie facilitated a series of creativity-based activities geared towards stimulating dialogue and critical thinking. Through key activities, the artistic process fulfilled a variety of objectives:

1. It encouraged the youth to think in non-conventional ways

### Example: abstract painting activity

During an activity focusing on understanding what abstract painting is, the youth were asked to listen to different songs and use brushes to paint lines on the canvas that would represent each song (e.g. rock, classical music, salsa). The objective was to let the song produce an emotional reaction, which was translated into the shape of the painted line. This activity illustrated through practice that art is an expressive medium, and that images often contain hidden layers or messages. It also encouraged observing /“reading” art.

2. It made it fun to engage

### Example: interactive theatre and body sculpture

Interactive theatre was used to stimulate thinking about differences and positioning oneself in others’ shoes. The youth were encouraged to brainstorm aspects that make people different, those that create division and segregation, and those that bring people together. They came up with skits that represented their message. They also were asked to shape one another’s body in a way that their body language spoke of their personality, feelings or position.

3. It made it inclusive of differences

### Example: canvas painting

The activities around the painting provided a horizontal and leveled ground of work, both literally (by having the canvas placed on the ground) and symbolically (by enabling people of different ages, genders, literacy levels, backgrounds, languages, and social groups to work on the same message). Besides one senior lady who could not lean down to paint (and who ended up working on stencils instead), the painting process engaged a diversity of people in reflecting around the same message, including: the youth, myself, Melanie, the Travessia staff, a physically challenged girl, an illiterate adult, a Canadian student who was visiting, parents, a single mother, a young child and young teenagers.

Melanie easily took on the role of main facilitator. By the second day working together we had realized that communication was not going to be an issue. Speaking slowly enabled everyone to understand each other and this in fact helped the process as it made everyone more aware of and attentive to what others were saying.

## WEEK 1: Mapping Exercise



### **Focus**

The activities during the first week of the project were geared towards using community mapping to build integration and to explore potential topics to be discussed in SpeakArt in the subsequent weeks.

### **Overview of the activity**

Community mapping is a collaborative method of map-making that enables community members to design maps that reflect their own perceptions of place. It involves identifying features that are relevant and elaborating map categories that express in a more personal level how community members see and relate to space. It is much about process as it is about the final product or outcome.

### **Process**

The youth were given a short introduction to the concept of community mapping. We then moved to a brainstorming session around categories and themes of relevance to them, and these were represented through a variety of symbols which they came up with. On the following day we asked them to take us on a tour of their neighborhood and show us what they had mapped. As an initial exercise it served multiple purposes:

#### **•Integration / breaking the ice**

Mapping brought proximity between all of us and served as a way to integrate the group in a more horizontal way, through the sharing personal stories and perceptions. We encouraged the youth to show us where they live and demonstrated our interest in getting to know them and their reality. This enabled us to develop a level of trust and to start building a closer relationship.

#### **•Understanding the reality of youth in Tupi**

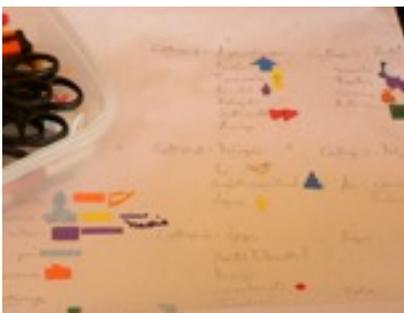
The map provided a unique way for the youth to express themselves. They laid out on the map what is important and significant to them and the map became multi-dimensional, overlaying both the physical and social/cultural/human aspects of their neighborhood, thus providing a number of messages at once.

#### **•Critical thinking and spatial awareness**

The process of creating a map that reflected personal perspectives and knowledge encouraged the youth to reflect on what they value in their neighborhood, including aspects they would like to change, to maintain the same or to enhance. Reflecting on these aspects encouraged critical thinking around multiple layers of meaning attached to space. They reflected on relationships between the different layers (i.e. how spatial features and feelings are related). They also reflected on and envisioned change (i.e. what are its broader consequences and benefits, is it desirable and why, what would be possible ways to promote change). Some of the youth pointed out that they gained a new perception of space by seeing for the first time a satellite image of their own neighborhood.

#### **•Capacity building and creativity**

Exploring different categories and having to develop symbols to represent each category required the youth to use their creativity. The process promoted learning about mapping concepts from a physical and human geography perspective and suggested a new lens through which they could look at their environment. The concept of community mapping was introduced as a process they were learning in order to facilitate later on to their peers, which ended up encouraging the youth to engage fully in the activity.



## Community Mapping Activity

Through the themes that were selected and the discussions the youth engaged in we were able to get a closer picture of the dynamics of their lives and their neighborhood.

### Highlights

- Relationships were emphasized as a cross-cutting category. The youth easily identified their houses, the homes of their relatives and friends. During the walking tour we found out that they know the residents of every house or lot in the entire neighborhood. If not personally, they know people's names and know who they are. It was highlighted that their community makes them feel safe and protected. One of the participants told a story about a bike accident where she was immediately rescued by some neighbors, which was a reminder that people are watching out for her.
- The value of home and its natural features was emphasized in descriptions of their daily activities. Symbols representing happiness and love were placed next to friends and family homes. One of the participants described his routine of waking up at around 5am, going outside and picking a fresh fruit from the tree. This was like a ritual to him and together with fishing in the lake adjacent to his house were among the two things he values most in life.
- The central square in Tupi was pointed out to be the main community gathering space. There is one restaurant across the street from the square which is where the community meets, and where they often see their friends when hanging out outside of home.
- Transportation was an important theme that stimulated a great deal of discussion. Bicycles are a major form of transportation for the four of them. They drew their bike routes on the map and seemed surprised to realize that they often take the same route as the others to get to places. They related transportation to fear, especially those who lived further or who do not have access to a car: walking home after dark, biking home during or after a rainy season when the roads are bumpy seems to generate insecurity.
- The discussions then went further around how they could pressure the government to be more present in the neighborhood. Frustrated comments were made with regards to the neighborhood being often left aside by the government. It was pointed out that infrastructure jobs tend to be done poorly or using low quality materials, given the lack of resources and training opportunities for workers.
- Physical distance was often connected to feelings of fear in the sense that within their neighborhood they feel protected by their neighbors, and the further away a place is (e.g. an adjacent city) the more they emphasized danger. Stories came up of crime in the cities nearby, and very little was brought up with regards to crime in their neighborhood. They mentioned, however, that one of the adjacent neighborhoods is now attracting low income residents, informal settlers and drug dealers, which is causing concern to the community.
- With regards to faith and religion, the youth pointed out that a number of protestant churches are coming into the neighborhood. Even though they had different views on religion and its role in their own lives and the lives of the community, they agreed that people are joining these churches very easily and their community seems to be vulnerable to some degree of manipulation from members of these churches, who have been asking people for money by aiming directly at their insecurities.
- The theme of arts and culture was brought up as an aspect that has been left behind in the neighborhood. They complained of the lack of opportunity to engage in creative and artistic activities especially outside of school. It was pointed out that most initiatives are not consistent; they happen sporadically.
- It was pointed out that there is a very restricted number of businesses in the Tupi region. This makes it difficult for families to access groceries and other necessities, especially without a car.

### Insights

- The group focused on positives more than on negatives. At first we were not sure whether or not they were simply hesitant or not comfortable enough to talk about problems. But later on when they facilitated the mapping exercise with the adults we found out that most of the residents perceive their neighborhood in a very positive way.
- At first the youth were not taking the initiative to point things out during the mapping exercise or walking tour. It took quite a while for them to warm up to the activity and to grasp it. At first we had to ask them a lot of questions, and they would respond, and from then on they would elaborate on some aspect or would mention some additional point. It seems that it was difficult for them to have to categorize aspects of their lives, especially because they seem to perceive life as "a whole". The mapping exercise was probably the first time they were asked to stop and think of what they do, see and experience as different categories.
- Whenever a new issue came up we encouraged the group to discuss it in terms of what each one of them could do as individuals or what they would chose to do to face the situation. When a problem was brought up or change was proposed the youth were encouraged to pause and discuss the larger implications of their reasoning, and then to re-evaluate their initial position. This approach was used in order to generate links between the workshop activities and the class content they were being exposed to at Travessia, which emphasized logic and rhetoric. Even though this often slowed down the process, it visibly enhanced their critical thinking skills, which were highlighted while they were facilitating the activities to community members.
- We began and ended the walking tour at their school. This was a good idea because the school is a central place in the community and a very familiar space for all of them. They showed us the space, which is colorful and nicely laid out with classrooms around a courtyard and a common area adjacent to the classrooms. There is also a sports court, a stage for presentations and some information murals. Some criticism of their school came up in relation to racial discrimination and lack of preparation among teachers. But given the natural flow of the process and the time constraint, discussions were limited around these topics and around other important themes such as difference, prejudice, class, race and gender.

## WEEK 2: SpeakArt Project



### Focus

The focus of the second week was to introduce SpeakArt, explore a message of relevance to the youth and decide on what the image of the painting would be. To choose a topic we drew on what had been discussed in the mapping activity.

### Process

We started with a brainstorming session and by drawing conceptual mind maps, exploring thoughts in a non-linear way. We then did a visioning exercise focused on imagining their life in 30 years. Given that they all envisioned themselves living in Tupi, we first discussed what their neighborhood would look like, and then moved on to the individual, focusing on the characteristics they would like to or needed to develop in order to achieve the vision they were projecting. This exercise was very objective and resulted in a list of aspects they saw as priorities for the neighborhood, and then for themselves as individuals sharing a space with others.



### Highlights - Community dimension

#### Public services

- Public works should be well done and of higher quality; more presence of the government is required in the rural area
- The neighborhood lacks a police station (currently there is none in the area)
- There are no public telephones in Santa Izabel
- More resources should be invested to ensure the maintenance of roads and to improve the public transportation system (buses don't reach all of the neighborhood; those who live far away are segregated)
- To improve safety at night, more street lighting is required



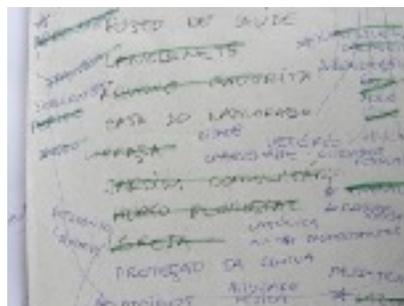
#### Education, arts and leisure

- There is a lack of training opportunities and technical education to prepare workers. In spite of the large number of university programs, the region needs more programs focusing on manual skills development
- More options for leisure and community gathering places should be made available, especially with a focus on sports
- The youth proposed integrating education, arts and leisure through bringing a library into the neighborhood and a theatre for movies and plays



#### Local businesses

- Residents still depend on commuting to Piracicaba to find most of their basic grocery shopping items, aside from what they produce themselves through farming



#### Characteristics to maintain or enhance

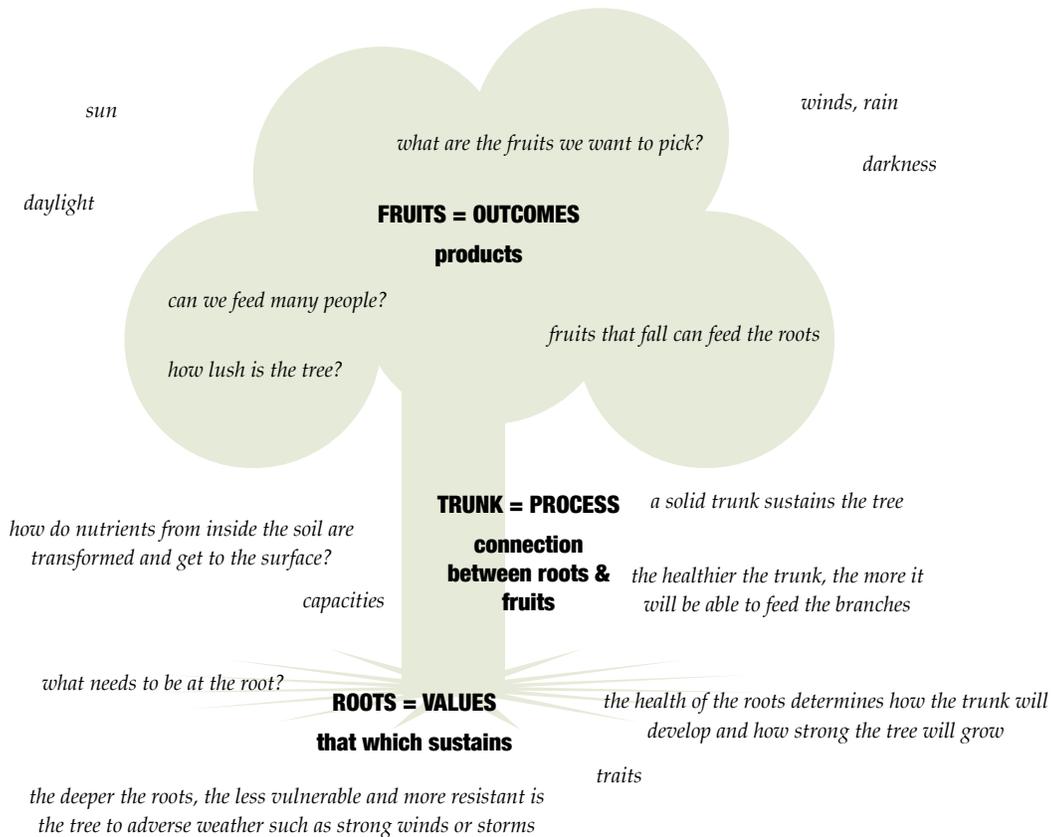
- Preserve nature and vegetation
- Protect the horto florestal (forest preservation area)
- Keep and maintain dirt roads, unpaved roads
- Preserve the neighborhood's classical architecture
- Continue living near their community: maintain proximity of home to all places

**Connecting the community and individual dimensions: working with metaphors**

The tree was chosen as a symbol that relates to and connects the individual dimension and the community dimension. The idea emerged from Travessia’s project plan which relied on the metaphor of planting seeds, caring for and respecting a plant’s development as a symbol of the organization’s path. The metaphor spoke to the youth’s experiences in other levels:

- The concept of individual responsibility towards the community was represented as a metaphor of the ecological cycle of systems connectedness;
- The youth’s involvement with Travessia focuses on nature as an entry point for reflecting around themes related to citizenship and agency;
- Trees were brought up repeatedly as an important element of their neighborhood during the mapping exercise;
- One of the first jobs the youth accomplished at Travessia was planting 100 trees as part of the landscaping plan.

The tree was thus chosen as the image of the painting and was used as a metaphor to discuss individual and collective resiliency:



## WEEK 3: Leading the Process



### Focus

The second phase of SpeakArt began on the third week, when the focus was on connecting with Tupi residents outside of Travessia and developing capacity by giving the facilitation role to the youth.

### Process

The youth invited their friends, neighbors and family members to come to Travessia during 3 afternoons. They were asked to facilitate all of the artistic activities they engaged in and the mapping exercise to the community members. Between 10 and 20 guests came each day (some people came once, some twice or three times). The youth set up “stations” where they would facilitate different activities in each area (i.e. mapping, stencils, body sculpture,

interactive theatre, developing metaphors, etc), and the guests were invited to rotate between the stations. Through participating in these activities, the guests were encouraged to reflect around the same themes the youth had been discussing and created symbols to represent their thoughts, which later they transferred to the canvas. There were also “free painting” sessions where everyone was encouraged to sit around the canvas, chat, and paint freely.

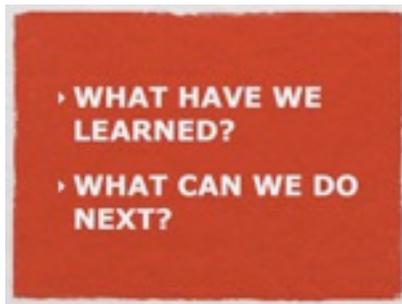
### Highlights

This was a key week in the project as it brought to the surface many realizations. It was important in many aspects:

- For Melanie, who had never tested this approach, this represented a new opportunity since she learned of the potential of assigning the facilitation role to SpeakArt participants (the youth),
- For Travessia, this represented the exchange of “luggage” taking place right there,
- Especially for the youth, it represented a turning point where they consolidated and developed their ability to facilitate and lead. This was demonstrated through their performance guiding the community members through the activities, and through their confidence and excitement. Melanie and I played a minimal role from this point on.
- The residents who participated provided very positive feedback during the closing circle. One of the ladies mentioned that she wished there were more opportunities for her to engage; one young boy said that what he liked the most about the workshop was that he was being heard, whereas at school he does not feel this way. Coming from a child, this spontaneous comment turned out to be very moving during the closing of the week.
- For myself, this phase of Plantando was very rewarding in terms of planning objectives as the youth actually took ownership of the process and established a high level of comfort with the themes and the dialogue. Participants engaged in discussions about their neighborhood, the atmosphere in the space was positive and the energy level was kept high. The most important, however, was noticing that the youth developed confidence to facilitate, speak and express themselves in front of others throughout the process, and that people with very diverse characteristics were present, interacting and engaged in discussions around topics that affected all of them.



## WEEK 4: Where to go from here



“This experience here  
was a great novelty  
it began on the map  
and about community

If the idea was to connect everyone  
the result worked out well  
and it was a lot of fun

I learned to work in teams  
without fear of making mistakes  
I was able to use my creativity  
to be able to invent

We formed a great group of friends  
where there was no lack of laughter  
And reflections in our mind  
Became so augmented

I loved making the map,  
walking around, and then the talk  
But even better yet  
was to see the results after that

Fun activities such as ceramics, theatre  
and painting  
not to forget the name games  
and the emotions produced by the  
sculptures

What I liked also was learning to  
dialogue  
and to fight the winds  
that insist in interfering

I made my seeds grow their own roots  
and now I know they will grow properly  
My life will be a beautiful tree  
with fruits, flowers and birds

I'm grateful for the intelligence  
respect and attentiveness  
please know all of you how much I  
loved being here  
I loved it with all my heart”

### Focus

The last and closing week was geared towards finishing the painting, unveiling it, celebrating with the community and doing final activities to close Plantando.

### Process

Melanie guided the youth to create a group poem through a free association reflective exercise which drew on main concepts and ideas that were discussed during the previous three weeks. The poem was then used as the basis for developing a play. The youth also worked on an individual writing piece where they were encouraged to express their thoughts about their experience participating in Plantando.

We prepared a celebratory afternoon and invited the community to come back to Travessia. The youth were once again fully in charge and were responsible for planning the itinerary for the day and dividing the tasks among themselves. They were given the tasks of greeting guests, presenting and facilitating the activities, answering questions and encouraging participation. We rehearsed together and prepared for it the day before.

The celebration included an opening circle where everyone had a chance to introduce themselves. The youth read their poem, presented their play and their writing pieces, and presented a short video that showed clips of the previous weeks and demonstrated the process behind the painting. To finalize, the painting was unveiled. The day ended with an opportunity for each one to express their thoughts in a closing circle.

The final activity with the youth involved a guided visualization followed by drawing exercise of what had been visualized.

### Highlights: What did the youth and the participants have to say?

The excerpt on the left is a translation of one of the youth's writing pieces and illustrates how this participant felt about the experience. In their evaluations they expressed the following:

- They learned to work on activities that pushed them to go beyond their initial comfort zone, interacting with people they did not know well before. Eventually they learned that it was in their hands to work to connect people, which they did by using their own creativity and arts in its diverse forms.
- The process was fun and the most enjoyable part was seeing the guests participating and interacting with them. The circles were also an opportunity for them to liberate themselves. The map enabled them to see their community with new eyes and to notice their surrounding environment.
- The initial shyness and hesitation from the part of some of the guests is something that could have been addressed or improved. It would have been useful if the project had lasted longer, so that more attention could have been paid to these issues, and so that conversations could have been deeper.
- The objectives they had anticipated for the project was achieved through both complex and simple activities, which stimulated their spontaneous creativity or other capabilities. The format of the conversations enabled them to expose their thoughts and voice.

Using the metaphor of the tree was surprisingly effective in encouraging all participants to reflect around their role as citizens and their aspirations for the future. The process of transferring their ideas to the large painting required them to articulate their views and express their voice.

The results are illustrated in the final painting:

Plantando: final painting, displayed at Travessia



- The roots of the tree illustrate what participants saw as fundamental elements for individual and community resiliency. These included the intangible aspects of the community, personal values, the natural environment and access to social services such as adequate education.
- The trunk of the tree is composed of what they saw as strategies for achieving their objectives. This section generated an opportunity for the participants to be more specific in their reasoning, and to articulate what they saw as potential actions. For example, bicycles were included as a solution for the transportation issue given that it is in harmony with other desirable elements of the community. Riding bicycles requires better roads and street lighting, which in turn depends on the community organizing and lobbying the government to be more responsive to the needs of the Tupi district. One of the guests, a little girl, drew a line of aunts on the trunk and explained that it was metaphor for working together, with discipline, and understanding that each small action is a step leading to a larger change.
- The fruits and leaves represent the outcomes they envisioned. It includes symbols such as question marks, reflecting a desire for community mobilization, awareness and critical thinking. As one of the participants articulated it, residents should certainly look for answers, but should also be asking more questions.
- The darker side of the painting contains barriers to achieving the expected outcomes. It includes elements such as poor governance, fragmented actions, corruption, global trends, climate change, and personal problems.
- The brighter side contains factors that can contribute to and enrich the process. These include transparency, a healthy environment, and positive feelings and values such as family, friendship, and happiness.

## CONCLUSIONS

"I come from a place where, perhaps if I had never met you or gone through this work, I would still be a prisoner of: the dungeon of timidity. The place where I am now is a world I do not want to ever leave, because it is here where all good vibrations are and it is where I am able to comprehend them. I am going to a place where I hope people will understand me and I will understand them too."

"I come from a place where people are what they are not, where everything appears to be what it is not, (...) a society where we have to learn to live in. (...) In this place there are many problems from the part of the government (...) and I am very small when confronted with the immorality of the world. But one day I hope to find a new place, the long awaited for utopia, where I will find pure friendship and caring feelings (...)."

–Youth evaluations

Communities share spaces, characteristics, interests, and problems. What Plantando brought to the surface is how each individual uniquely experiences their reality within a community. It created an opportunity for discussing how to negotiate these spaces, how to integrate different views and interests, and it highlighted individual and joint paths towards making things happen.

In achieving this, one essential element of the process was its focus on guiding the participants to identify their own issues and themes to be worked on through the artistic process. Difference and diversity were incorporated as guiding elements of the work, which allowed for multiple points of views around the theme to be brought together. This approach also encouraged the youth to develop ownership of the process, thus 'planting a seed' of engagement and participation. By becoming involved in the design and development of the process, participants awoke their sense of connection towards their surroundings.

### **Alternative routes, a vehicle and a destination**

One thing planning can do for communities is to facilitate such processes, which encourage individuals to revive their bonds, build stronger relationships, and care for their community, feeding a pattern that builds social capital. The use of arts cannot be underestimated in this process. The experience at Travessia demonstrated that bringing the arts into planning processes can:

1. Promote interactions between different people in the community

Arts is a means of communication between individuals who do not necessarily speak the same language. SpeakArt levels the grounds by encouraging participants to interact while working on the same task (painting) and in the same physical space (around the canvas), no matter how young or old, poor or rich, shy or outgoing a person is. By focusing on the experiential side, it promotes interactions where they might not have existed otherwise, both within and among individuals.

2. Create pathways for participation and engagement

Plantando put in the hands of youth the responsibility to conduct the process. This equipped them with leadership skills and encouraged them to identify themselves as meaningful contributors of the community building process. Most importantly, however, is that the process did not target civic engagement among youth alone – it targeted the integration between youth and the overall community.

3. Encourage action

Collective action depends on a variety of factors, among which are the strength of connections between people, social awareness and critical thinking. Community arts offers a space for the community to deliberate, explore powerful ideas and pull together the energy needed to finding solutions to problems and improving lives and environments. Arts can enable the sensorial aura of a community to be reached and to come to surface. When that happens, the community is more likely to fight for spaces that provide more people with the opportunity to implement the change they envision.

### **Planning alternative routes**

Based on this experience I propose the following recommendations for the planning field:

- To consider the arts as a process in planning, not only an ends

Planners, governments and planning agencies should acknowledge and take advantage of the instrumental uses arts can have in planning process. Besides being intrinsically worthwhile, the arts can facilitate the achievement of planning objectives.

- Bring more art and creativity into the world of planning

Planning can be made more organic through artistic means. Artists can help planners work with communities in imagining new futures and expressing new visions. It can open doors for community dialogue and action.

- In planning processes, make an effort to assign the facilitation role to participants

This generates multiple benefits as it helps to validate information and builds capacity of agent-multipliers. Planning is not necessarily in the hands of planners; but the ability to catalyze the process often is.

#### **Travessia: towards a destination**

Through hands on practice the youth gained experience and confidence in their own capacity to act and experienced the multiplier effect of their actions. They experienced how challenging it can be to get people to engage and reflect beyond the surface, and the importance of identifying whether genuine engagement or more shallow participation is taking place in a process. For Travessia this was timely given that the youth are about to start hosting guided visits of the space to guests from outside of the community, which they now feel more prepared do.

Travessia is in the process of adopting a more business-oriented character focusing on income generation. The youth are being encouraged to take the lead and run the business. This is being done through the structuring of a livelihoods plan focusing on selling plants in stylized vases. The organization is working with a sculpture artist in developing vases using a blend of waste materials from surrounding industries and the youth are starting to produce the vases, where they will sell the plants they are growing.

Since this marks a new stage of development for the organization, I propose three recommendations for Travessia:

- Work on its definition of “who we are”

Clearly defining the mission, vision and goals of the organization can help those involved to be more committed to their roles and responsibilities within Travessia. The current structure does not exactly reflect the former project proposal.

There is great potential in inviting professionals and volunteers from the community to conduct workshops and activities with the youth and working with people such as university students, who can bring in new perspectives and who can take with them valuable experiences and learning opportunities. The more objective Travessia is about what it is doing and why, the more effective it will be in promoting the exchange it envisions.

- Enhance organizational capacity

Travessia is working on a series of important initiatives and would likely benefit from a more structured action plan. Laying out current and future actions, its objectives, and assigning roles would help the organization move forward while it keeps track of its accomplishments. This could start with something simple such as a “to do list” developed collaboratively.

- Implement an evaluation system

A useful and easy way to find out what aspects need improvement and what is working or not within the organization is to implement an evaluation system and encourage people to take it seriously. Travessia could have something as simple as a suggestion box, a log of activities, and a form to be filled out after each activity. Another suggestion would be to brainstorm ideas for participatory evaluation with the youth, so that they can develop their own system.

The proposed recommendations would help Travessia focus on being proactive while avoiding responsive action.

#### **Arts as a vehicle**

As an arts practitioner who uses a unique approach to community arts, Melanie Schambach facilitates participation in the artistic process and, as opposed to dealing with the public as spectators, she presents the arts as something that we can simply do ourselves. In this way she brings art closer to the public realm, connecting people to it and through it, connecting people to each other and to community institutions. In her endeavor to create opportunities for political expression and to bring civic action to the forefront through the arts, I propose the following recommendations:

- Let the theme of discussion guiding the artistic process be defined by the community

Aspects of relevance to a community are always better understood by those who are part of it. Even when an issue is evident, the perception of the artist coming from outside will always be resting on assumptions and will be shaped by their own reality and experiences. By designing the artistic process on the ground with the participants, it is more likely that these assumptions will be acknowledged and negotiated, and that the process will address issues of real concern to the community. It also gives the artist time for self-reflection and to develop familiarity with the group.

- Work with others

Building partnerships with practitioners in other areas can greatly enhance the process. Working in teams helps not only in terms of support while holding the actual workshops, but in terms of cross-pollinating ideas and building on one another's strengths. Planning is one among a variety of disciplines that artists can work with.

Delegating the facilitation task to participants is something that was done for the first time in Plantando. The idea was a result of the process of shaping SpeakArt to the needs of Travessia. Since Travessia works under the principle of exchange, transferring the job to the hands of the youth was in many ways a highlight of the process especially for Melanie, who could witness the process of change – namely the impact of the capacity building process on the youth.

- Develop a project plan for SpeakArt

Melanie's talent as an artist speaks for itself and the potential of SpeakArt as a process is demonstrated by the outcomes of numerous previous projects, by the many lives they have touched, and also by the increasing number of organizations and individuals that have expressed interest in the work (among which are community organizations, arts councils, and the media). As the initiative grows and in order to continue spreading its seeds, SpeakArt could benefit from a project plan outlining goals, work ethics and principles, tackling potential and stable funding sources, and looking for examples of initiatives that can provide ideas and lessons.

To conclude, I would like to add a note on how this experience has shaped the way I perceive myself as a planner entering the profession. Plantando to me was an opportunity to share with others a shift in thinking, which is something I have been experiencing since I started learning about planning. It was an opportunity to realize that the way I think will probably always be shifting, and that I am ok with it. Plantando brought art into my life and into my work, and it brought me closer to home. It taught me that there are limits to my profession, but that I can always make the journey a little more interesting by adding to it color and creativity. As a planner, I hope to always be able to ground my thinking on lived experiences. I hope that my work will continue to be about exchange, and about reflective processes that will enable myself and whoever I am working with to develop our own definition of what planning is, what it is for, and why it matters to each one of us.

“As the opposition of capitalism versus communism collapses, perhaps there is a hope that, through dynamically critical communicative processes, the democratic project of ‘making sense together while living differently’ can develop as a progressive force.”

Patsy Healey, p. 249, 1993

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I – Certificate of Ethics Approval

https://rise.ubc.ca/rise/Doc/0/ED9GK1SL0CHKJAV7857P88DC83/fromString.html

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The University of British Columbia  
Office of Research Services  
Behavioural Research Ethics Board  
Suite 102, 6190 Agronomy Road, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z3

### CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL - MINIMAL RISK

|   |   |                                      |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| <b>PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:</b><br>Leonora Angeles   | <b>INSTITUTION / DEPARTMENT:</b><br>UBC/College for Interdisciplinary Studies/Community & Regional Planning | <b>UBC BREB NUMBER:</b><br>H10-01336 |
| <b>INSTITUTION(S) WHERE RESEARCH WILL BE CARRIED OUT:</b>   |   |                                      |
| Institution   | Site  |                                      |
| N/A<br>Other locations where the research will be conducted:<br>N.A. Application is for approval of use of primary data collected by a Brazilian youth NGO. |   |                                      |
| <b>CO-INVESTIGATOR(S):</b><br>Maira Avila   |   |                                      |
| <b>SPONSORING AGENCIES:</b><br>N/A  |   |                                      |
| <b>PROJECT TITLE:</b><br>Painting/Planting the Seeds of Planning: Using Arts for Youth Community Engagement in Tupi, Sao Paulo, Brazil                      |   |                                      |

**CERTIFICATE EXPIRY DATE:** June 4, 2011

|   |                                       |              |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>DOCUMENTS INCLUDED IN THIS APPROVAL:</b>     | <b>DATE APPROVED:</b><br>June 4, 2010 |              |
| <b>Document Name</b>                            | <b>Version</b>                        | <b>Date</b>  |
| <b>Protocol:</b>                                |                                       |              |
| Project proposal                                | 1                                     | May 12, 2010 |
| <b>Consent Forms:</b>                           |                                       |              |
| Consent form for youth participants             | 1                                     | May 12, 2010 |
| <b>Letter of Initial Contact:</b>               |                                       |              |
| Letter of initial contact to artist facilitator | 1                                     | May 12, 2010 |
| Letter of initial contact to participants       | 1                                     | May 13, 2010 |
| Letter of initial contact to NGO coordinator    | 1                                     | May 12, 2010 |

The application for ethical review and the document(s) listed above have been reviewed and the procedures were found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.

**Approval is issued on behalf of the Behavioural Research Ethics Board  
and signed electronically by one of the following:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. M. Judith Lynam, Chair  
Dr. Ken Craig, Chair  
Dr. Jim Rupert, Associate Chair  
Dr. Laurie Ford, Associate Chair  
Dr. Anita Ho, Associate Chair

## Appendix II – Sample Consent Form

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



School of Community & Regional Planning  
#433-6333 Memorial Road  
Vancouver, BC  
CANADA, V6T 1Z2  
Tel: (604) 822-3276; Fax: (604) 822-3787

### PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

**"Planting the seeds of planning:  
using arts for youth community engagement in Tupi, São Paulo, Brazil"**

**Principal Investigator:**

Leonora Angeles, Assistant Professor, UBC School of Community and Regional Planning, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Tel: 1-604-822-9312. Fax: 604-822-6162. E-mail: [angeles@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:angeles@interchange.ubc.ca).

**Co-Investigator:**

Maira Avila, Master of Arts candidate, UBC School of Community and Regional Planning, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Tel: 1-604-771-5066. E-mail: [mairafsa@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:mairafsa@interchange.ubc.ca)

You are being invited to participate in a study entitled "Planting the seeds of planning: using arts for youth community engagement in Tupi, São Paulo, Brazil". The study is being conducted by Maira Avila and professor Leonora Angeles. Maira is a masters student in the School of Community and Regional Planning at the University of British Columbia.

**Purpose and relevance:**

The purpose of this research is to examine youth's perceptions of citizenship and agency in a rural context in Brazil. More specifically, the research will draw on the experience of students from Estação Travessia to explore how community mapping and community engagement art can be used as capacity building tools for youth to engage in planning processes. This study is relevant because it will shed light on rural youth's perceptions of citizenship and agency and will demonstrate an example of how art can provide a means for youth to develop awareness of their role in their communities, while engaging with a diversity of individuals in planning processes that affect their lives.

This research is being conducted as a requirement for the partial fulfillment of the masters of arts degree in Community and Regional Planning. You have been invited to participate in this study based on your involvement with Estação Travessia and your experience participating in the community mapping and community engagement art workshops.

Version 12 May 2010

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**Study Procedures:**

If you agree to participate in the study, the researchers will review materials (primary data) collected by Estação Travessia, including videotaped interviews, photographs, visual materials of you or produced by you and other participants, workshop notes and journals based on activities that you participated in. With the consent of the participant, photographs and other visual media may be displayed in the final report of the study. If the use of materials, images or interviews causes any discomfort to the participant, it will not be reviewed or included in the study. The participant will be asked to review any quotes or visuals before the content is included in the final report. In addition to the final report being submitted to the University of British Columbia's online library repository, the research findings may also be used in academic journals or conference papers. Each participant will be provided with a summary of the report if they so indicate in the box below.

**Potential Risks and Benefits:**

Your participation in this study will mean that your experiences may be shared in the final report and circulated to members of the University of British Columbia and beyond. This may cause some discomfort to you because some of activities conducted through the workshops at Estação Travessia involved asking your personal opinions and touched on your personal experiences. The potential benefits of your participation include the opportunity to inform a larger audience of youth's interests and views around how rural communities can be planned.

**Anonymity:**

Ideally, the researchers would like to have your identity disclosed and would like to attribute comments, quotes and visual materials to you. If at any time you would prefer for your comments or images of you to be removed from the record or anonymous, you may feel free to say so and your wishes will be respected. In that case your identity will not be disclosed in the final report.

**Confidentiality:**

The identities of people participating in this study will be kept strictly confidential, unless participants consent to disclose their identity. The text of any direct quotations transcribed from interviews will be sent to the relevant interviewee for their review before the quotations are included in the final version of the study. At that time, each participant will be asked to indicate in writing if they wish to have their name and images appear in the final report. The videotape recordings of interviews will be available only to the principal and co-investigator. In order to ensure confidentiality, all documents and videotapes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet.

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



**Disposal of data:**

Once the materials provided by Estação Travessia have been reviewed, they will not be used for research purposes and will be returned to Estação Travessia.

**Contact:**

If you have any questions or would like further information about this study, you may contact any of the principal or co-investigator using the contact numbers (calling collect) or email addresses above. If you have any concerns about your treatment or rights as a research participant, or if you wish to verify the ethical approval of this study, you may call the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at 1-604-822-8595 or email [ors@ors.ubc.ca](mailto:ors@ors.ubc.ca).

**Voluntary participation:**

You understand that your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that you may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without jeopardy. You also understand that you do not waive any of your legal rights by signing this consent form.

**In terms of identification, I agree to - PLEASE CHOSE ONE:**

**Public access: I consent to have videotaped images and photographs of myself disclosed in the study**

**Confidentiality: I consent that researchers review materials produced by me and images and videotapes of myself but that they do not disclose it to others, and they will refer to me by a pseudonym.**

You have received a copy of this consent form for your own records.

**Consent:**

You confirm that this document has been translated to you and that you understand its contents. You consent to participate in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**I would like to receive a summary of the report, which will be done by August 2010. Send it to me by (check one):**

Email

Canada Post

A copy of this consent will be left with you and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

Version 12 May 2010