

**empowering
creative
minds**



art catalogue

art, process and local pilots

*“Art can create spaces for dialogue,
reflection, and shared experience.”*

**empowering
creative
minds**



art catalogue

art, process and local pilots



Co-funded by the European Union

Co-funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the granting authority.

Comparative
Research
Network:



Stowarzyszenie
Dla Ziemi

1. Introduction

This catalogue presents the outcomes of the *Empowering Creative Minds* project, a transnational initiative exploring how artistic practices can create space for reflection, dialogue, and shared experience.

The project focuses on raising awareness around trauma and reducing stigma by engaging vulnerable creative and communities in participatory artistic processes. Rather than positioning art as a form of therapy, the project approaches it as a tool for expression, communication, and collective reflection.

Across different local contexts, artists and participants collaborated in workshops and co-creation processes that encouraged experimentation, attentiveness, and exchange. The works presented in this catalogue are inseparable from the processes that shaped them.

This publication brings together artistic outcomes, methodologies, and reflec-

tions from local pilots in Poland, Germany, Ukraine, and Luxembourg.

More than documentation, the catalogue functions as a curatorial and educational resource that can support exhibitions, workshops, and further artistic practice.

It invites readers not only to observe the outcomes, but also to reflect on how artistic processes can create spaces for dialogue, connection, and shared understanding.

2. About the project

Empowering Creative Minds is a transnational cooperation project exploring how participatory artistic practices can support reflection, dialogue, and social connection within diverse communities.

The project brings together artists, cultural organisations, educators, and community practitioners from Germany, Ukraine, Luxembourg and Poland. Through local workshops and collaborative processes, the initiative investigates how artistic methods can create accessible spaces for expression and shared experience.

Project Objectives

- support inclusive artistic participation
- explore process-based creative methodologies
- raise awareness around trauma and social stigma

- strengthen dialogue through collaborative artistic practices
- develop educational and curatorial resources for future use

Working Context

The project was developed in response to contemporary social challenges affecting individuals and communities across Europe, including displacement, isolation, uncertainty, and experiences related to trauma.

Without adopting a therapeutic framework, the project approaches art as a space for presence, reflection, communication, and collective engagement.



3.1 Germany

Comparative Research Network

3.1.1 CONTEXT

The Berlin pilot was implemented by Comparative Research Network (CRN) as part of the *Empowering Creative Minds* project, which explores how artistic practices can support reflection on personal and collective experiences, particularly in relation to trauma.

The project focuses on raising awareness, reducing stigma, and creating dialogue within vulnerable communities through art, without positioning itself as a therapeutic intervention.

In Berlin, the pilot engaged a group of multidisciplinary artists working with visual arts, storytelling, and performative practices. The workshops were designed for adults and young adults, including participants with diverse personal and migration-related experiences.

The pilot functioned as a local testing

ground for co-creation methodologies adapted to an urban, multicultural context, fostering participation, exchange, and creative expression.

3.1.2 PROCESS

The Berlin pilot was structured as a series of process-oriented workshops led by artists working across different media, including visual arts, narrative practices, and spatial storytelling.

Workshops were designed in small groups (6-12 participants), allowing for a focused and supportive environment. The emphasis was placed on co-creation, experimentation, and shared exploration rather than technical outcomes.

A central methodology was collage-based work, used as an accessible and non-directive tool for exploring personal experiences. Participants worked

with found materials such as images and text fragments, engaging in intuitive processes of selection, cutting, and recomposition.

Key methodological principles included:

- process over product
- intuition over predefined results
- openness to chance and unexpected connections

This approach allowed participants to explore memories, emotions, and inner associations without the need for verbal articulation. The workshops created a space for reflection and dialogue while maintaining a non-therapeutic, artistic framework.

In parallel, other artistic approaches explored narrative construction, spatial relationships, and object-based storytelling, expanding the range of expressive possibilities and supporting different modes of engagement.

Case Study: Rodney LaTourelle Workshops

One of the workshops, led by artist Rodney LaTourelle, introduced a material-based approach to exploring personal and collective experiences.

The workshop took place in Berlin over two sessions (10 and 12 April 2026) and involved a small group of eight participants. It focused on working with reclaimed materials as a way to engage with transformation, fragmentation, and reconstruction.

Following introductory exercises focused on group-building and form-making, participants entered a hands-on process that began with physically breaking reclaimed cement and stones into gravel. This act of fragmentation became a starting point for reflection.

The resulting material was then combined with pigments and mixed with geopolymers cement, a low-emission alter-

“It was a new way of telling my story through images, not words.”

native to traditional Portland cement. Participants used this material to cast fragmentary forms, embracing an aesthetic of rupture, incompleteness, and assemblage.

The process invited participants to engage with transformation through material,

allowing meaning to emerge through action rather than verbalisation.

Case Study: Ercan Arslan Collage Workshops

Another workshops explored collage as a method for engaging with personal experiences through visual composition.

Participants worked with images and text fragments, creating compositions based on intuition, association, and free interpretation. The process emphasised openness, experimentation, and intuitive exploration, without predefined outcomes or judgement.

Through the recombination of seemingly unrelated elements, participants developed visual narratives reflecting emotions, memories, and individual perspectives. The method allowed for a non-linear and non-verbal form of expression, supporting reflection through making rather than explanation. The workshops encouraged participants to slow down, observe connections, and engage in collective reflection while maintaining a non-therapeutic, artistic framework.

3.1.3 ARTWORKS





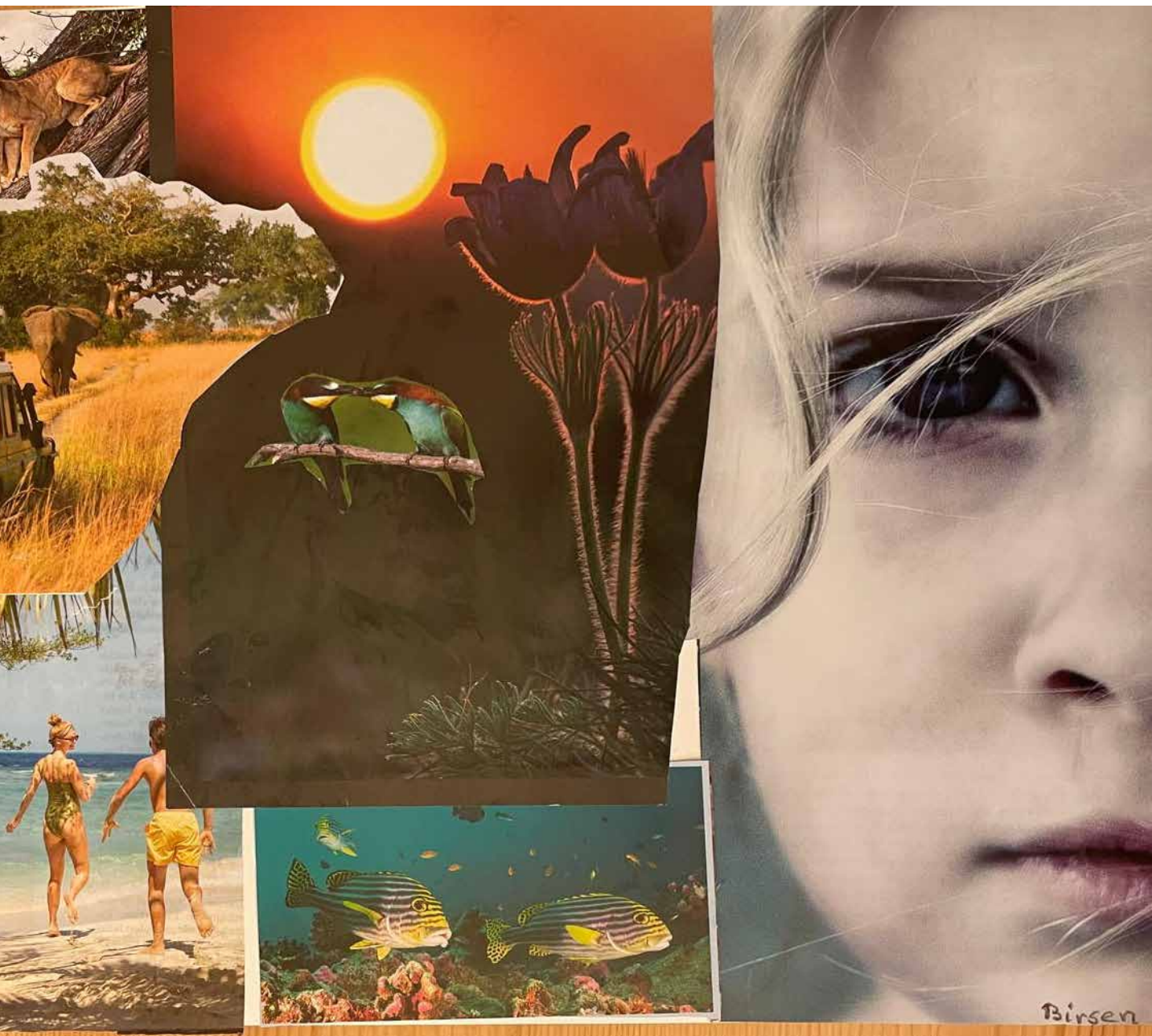




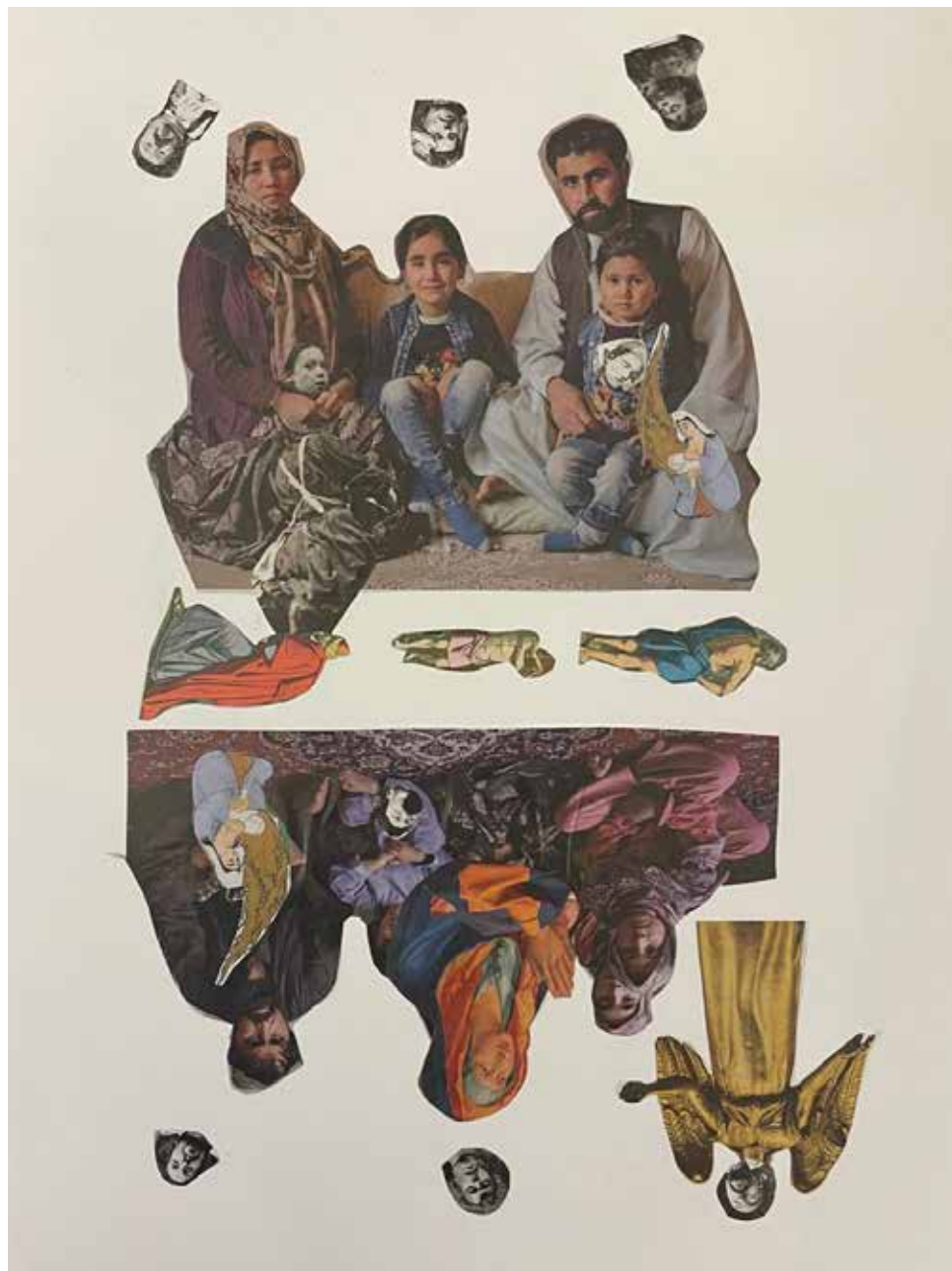


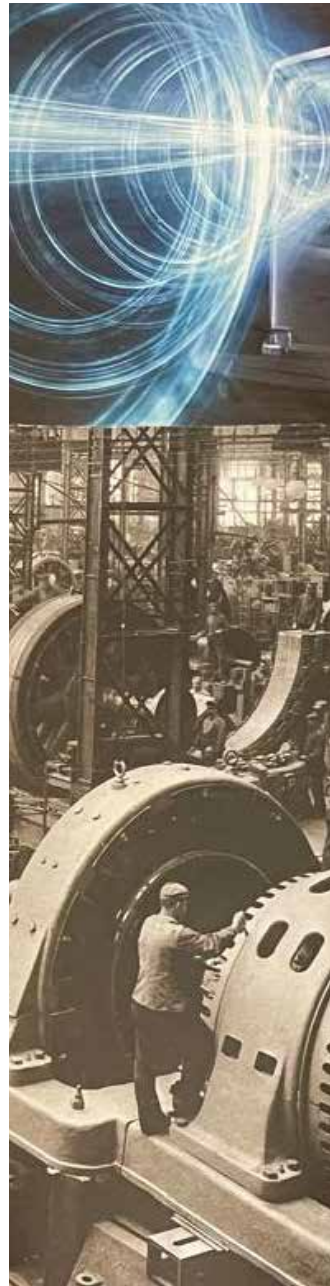


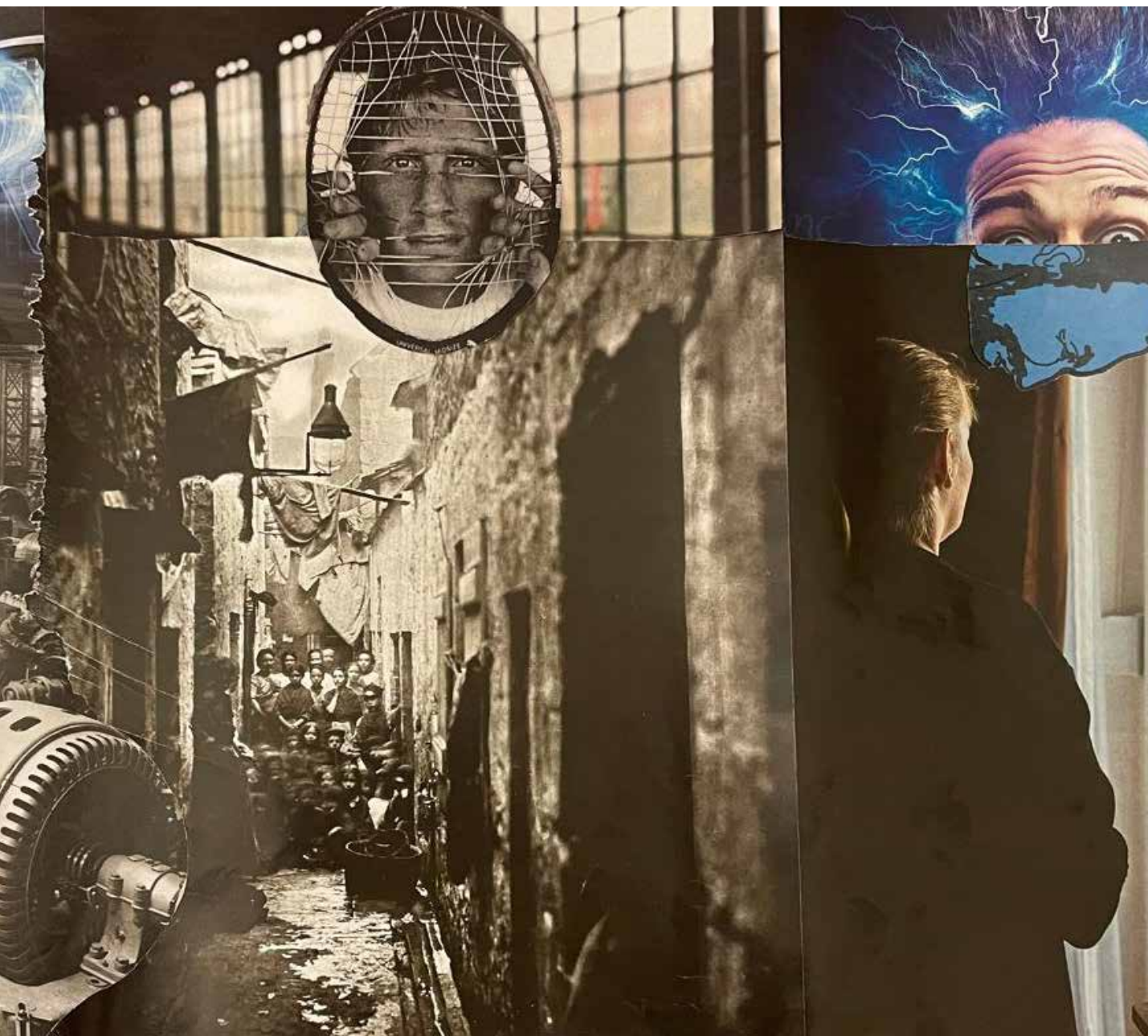


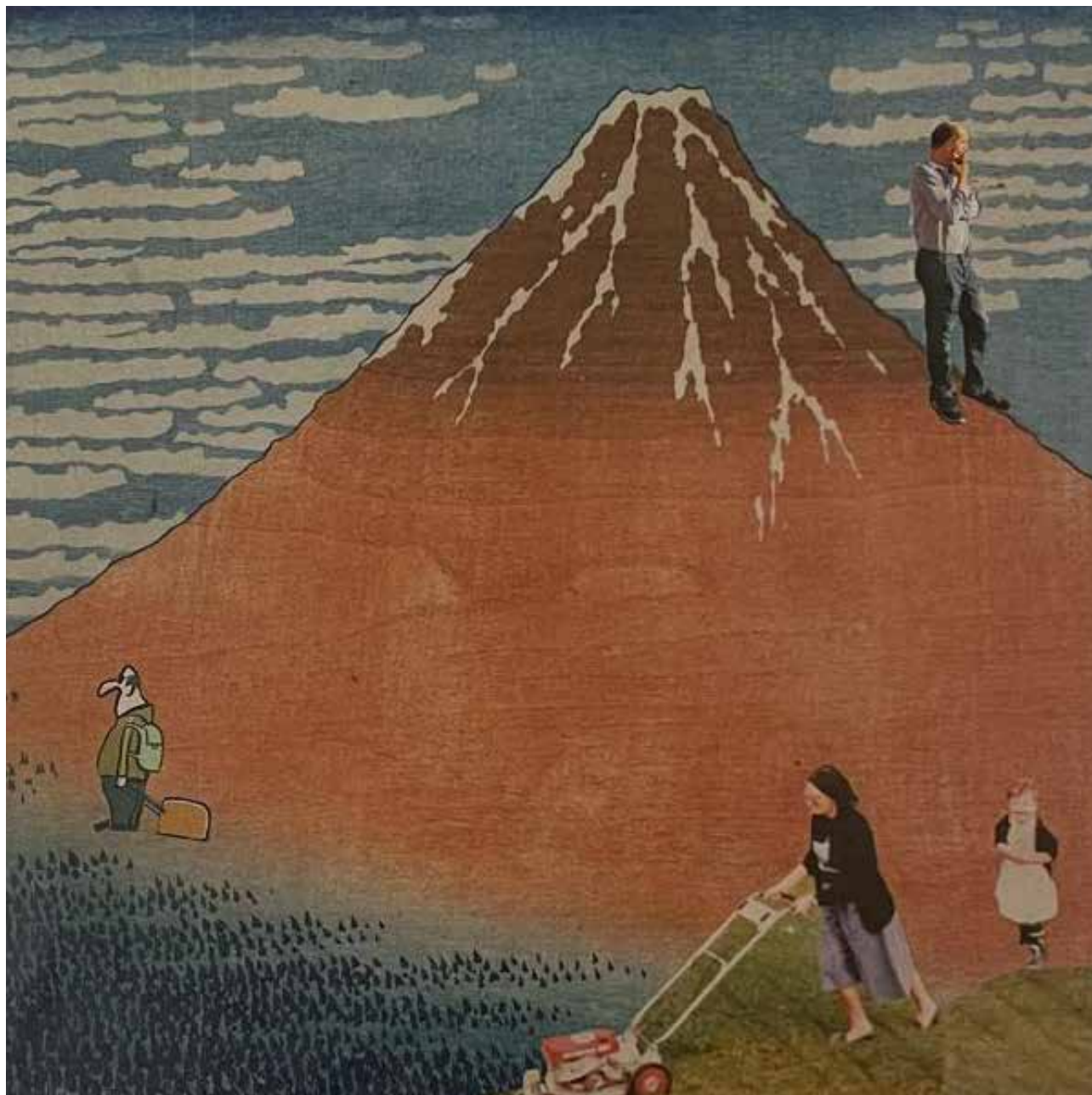












3.1.4 REFLECTION

The Berlin pilot highlighted the value of process-based artistic approaches in creating spaces for reflection and dialogue.

Both material-based and collage methodologies enabled participants to engage with personal experiences in indirect and accessible ways. Working through transformation, fragmentation, and recombination allowed new perspectives to emerge.

A key insight was that removing the pressure of “right” and “wrong” outcomes creates an environment that supports openness and exploration. This not only strengthens individual reflection, but also fosters collective exchange and mutual understanding.

The combination of artistic approaches highlighted the importance of offering multiple entry points, enabling participants to engage in ways that resonated with their own experiences and modes of expression.

Rodney LaTourelle

Artist, Designer, Researcher

Rodney LaTourelle is a Berlin-based Canadian artist and designer exploring memory, materiality, and the built environment. He creates site-specific installations and “walk-in paintings” that blur the line between sculpture and architecture. His work has been shown internationally, including at the National Gallery of Canada and Museumsquartier Wien.

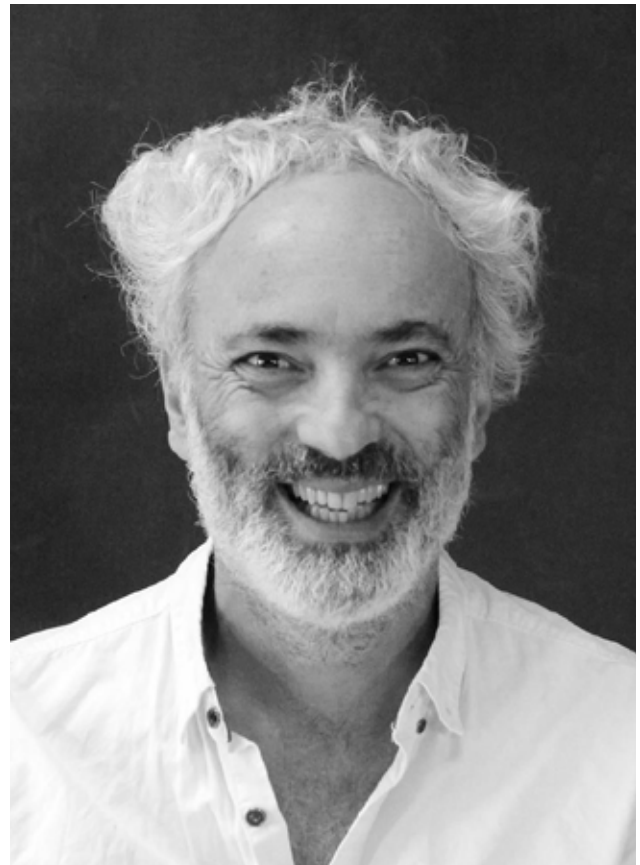
He works with reclaimed architectural materials to explore themes of history, resistance, and repair, while also researching low-carbon alternatives to cement in both his artistic and academic practice.



Ercan Arslan

Fine Artist & Sculptor

Ercan Arslan lives and works in Berlin and Istanbul. He was born in 1969. After completing high school in Berlin in 1989, he freelanced as an artist. From 1992 to 1994 he was in London and studied art at the North London College (NLC). He has co-edited several literature and art magazines. Since 1984 he has participated in various individual and group exhibitions, among others in Berlin, Frankfurt/Oder, Utrecht (Holland), London and Istanbul and since 1996 in numerous art performances in Berlin and elsewhere. His works can be found in public as well as private collections.





3.2 Ukraine UNAEDI

3.2.1 CONTEXT

The Ukrainian pilot was implemented by UNAEDI in Sheptytskyi (Lviv region), engaging creative practitioners, including in-

The pilot focused on creating a structured yet open environment in which participants could engage in artistic processes supporting reflection, attentiveness, and connection – both individually and collectively.

“Drawing with charcoal allowed me to express things I could not name.”

ternally displaced persons and educators working in challenging social contexts.

The activities took place within a reality shaped by war, displacement, and ongoing uncertainty, where access to safe and supportive spaces for expression is particularly important.

3.2.2 PROCESS

The Ukrainian pilot was structured as a two-day workshop combining different artistic practices, each offering a distinct mode of engagement.

On the first day, participants worked with charcoal drawing, using gesture, pressure, and movement as tools for visual expression. The process emphasised direct engagement with material and allowed participants to translate inner experiences into visual forms.

On the second day, the focus shifted to micro-embroidery – a slower, more medita-

tive practice centred on detail and concentration. Through working with thread, ornament, and symbols, participants explored patience, attentiveness, and the cultural dimensions of artistic expression.

Both days followed a structured yet flexible format, including individual work, guided exercises, and moments of collective reflection. The workshops created space for participants to work at their own pace, without pressure or the need to explain personal experiences.

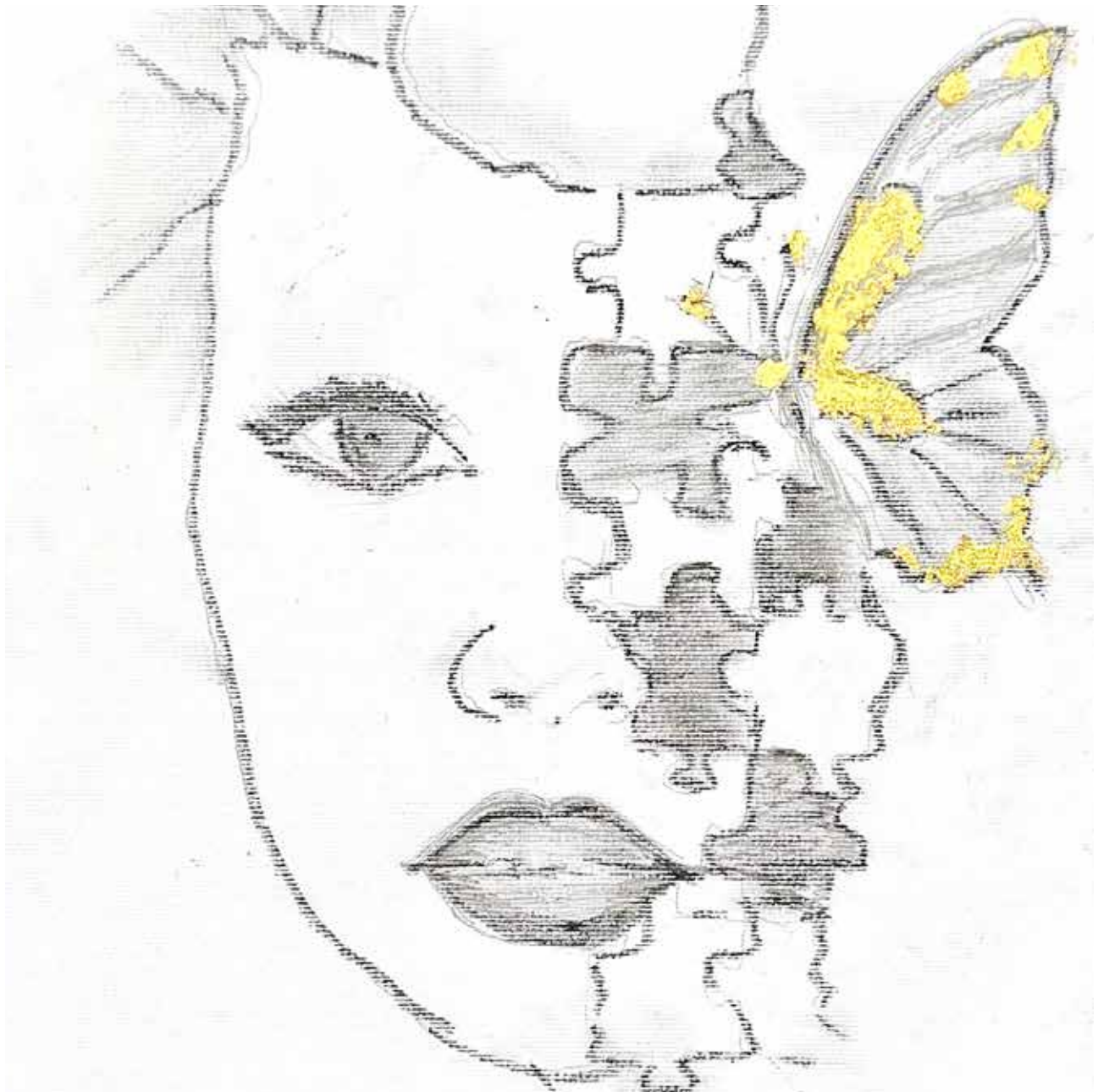
The combination of dynamic charcoal work and slower embroidery processes enabled participants to experience different rhythms of creation — from gesture and expression to focus and stillness.

3.2.3 ARTWORKS



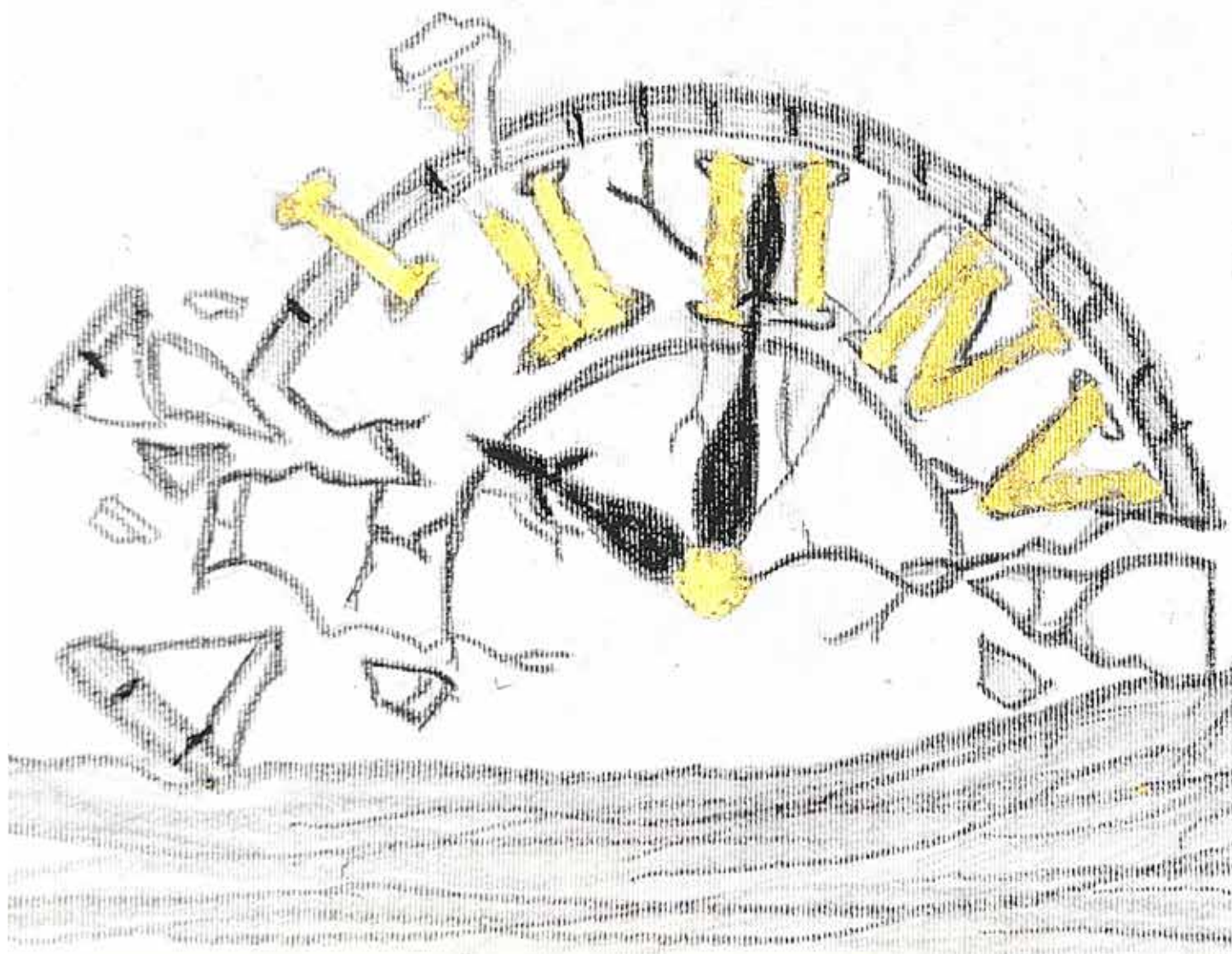








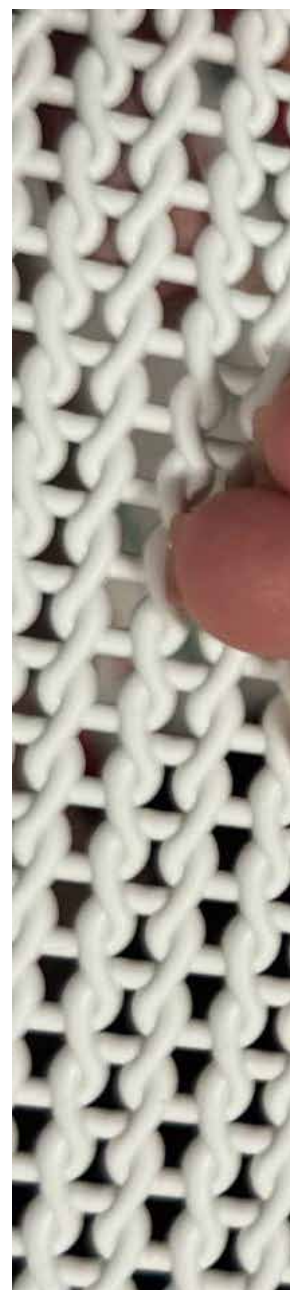


















3.2.4 REFLECTION

The Ukrainian pilot highlighted the importance of creating safe and structured spaces for artistic engagement, particularly in contexts marked by instability and uncertainty.

Participants responded strongly to the combination of contrasting artistic approaches. The dialogue between expressive drawing and slow, detailed embroidery created opportunities to experience different forms of presence, concentration, and attentiveness.

An important aspect of the process was the possibility of working without pressure or expectations regarding the final outcome. This approach encouraged openness, gradual trust-building, and stronger connections within the group.

The workshops demonstrated that artistic processes can support reflection, shared presence, and a sense of connection – even in difficult and unstable circumstances.

Yurii Babii

Educator & Art Therapy Practitioner

Yurii Babii is an educator and facilitator whose work connects non-formal education, community engagement, and psychosocial support. He works with children, teenagers, and adults, creating spaces where people can reconnect, express themselves, and build resilience.

Drawing, movement, and creative group activities are central to his approach. He sees creativity not as decoration, but as a practical tool for communication, emotional regulation, and rebuilding connection after difficult experiences.

Alongside his community work, Yurii volunteers in local initiatives and continues to expand his expertise in art therapy, facilitation, and burnout prevention.



Khrystyna Chemerys

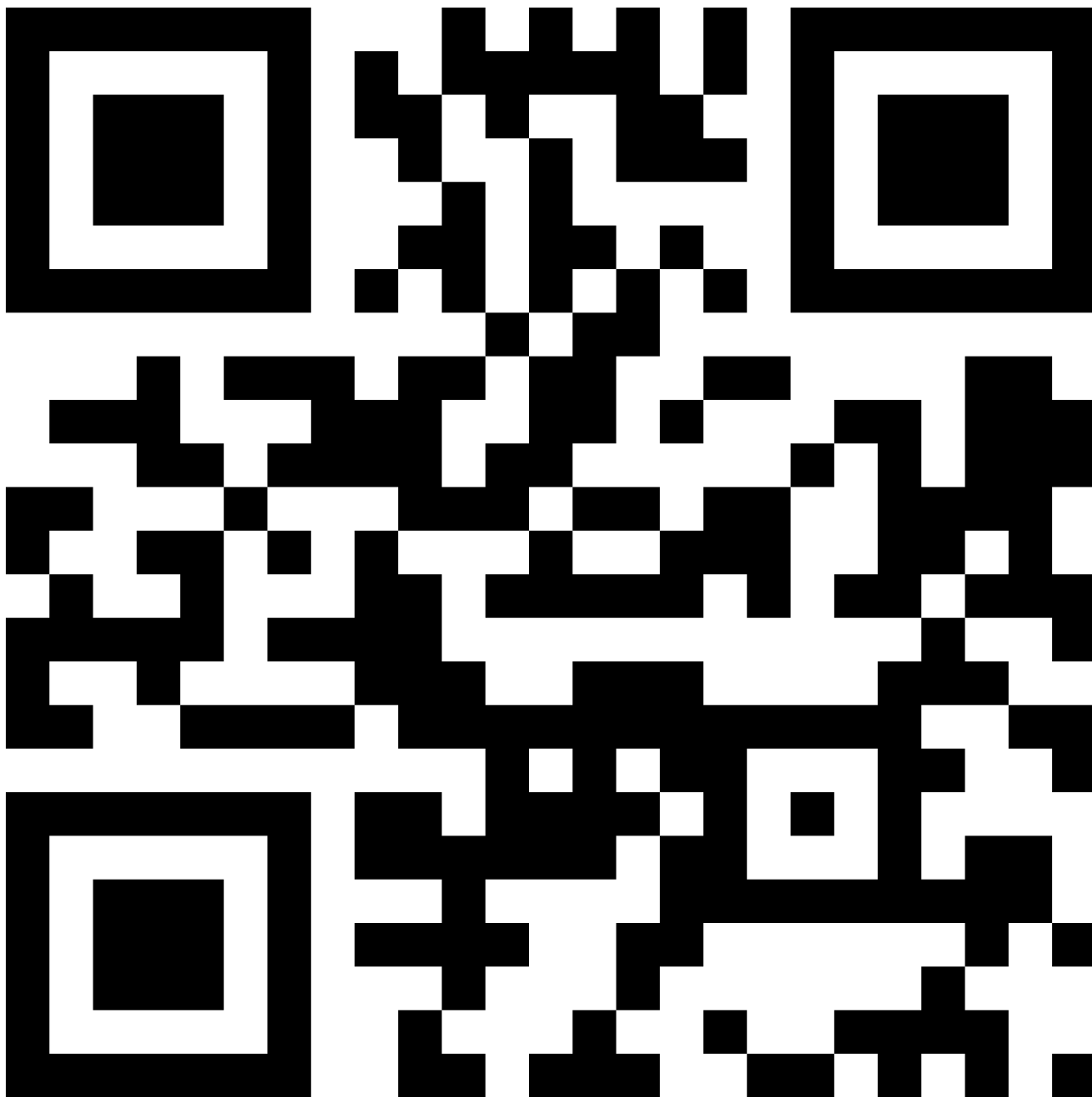
Psychologist & Psychotherapist

Khrystyna Chemerys is a psychologist and psychotherapist specializing in mental health, trauma, and emotional resilience. Much of her work focuses on families of soldiers, veterans, people grieving war-related loss, and survivors of violence and trauma.

She combines psychotherapy with art therapy, body-based practices, and emotional stabilization techniques. In her experience, creative expression can help give shape to experiences that are difficult to put into words.

She facilitates therapy groups, provides individual counseling, and leads trainings focused on resilience and self-regulation. She continues to deepen her expertise through ongoing work in crisis counseling and trauma-informed care.





3.3 Luxembourg

DOURI

LOCAL PILOTS

3.3.1 CONTEXT

The Luxembourg pilot was implemented by DOURI as part of the *Empowering Creative Minds* project, which explores how artistic practices can support reflection on personal and collective experiences related to trauma, resilience, identity and belonging.

The pilot brought together participants from diverse cultural and creative backgrounds, including Ukrainian artists, community members and older adults. Through a series of workshops led by visual artist Walid El Masri, participants engaged in artistic processes that connected memory, personal narratives and creative expression.

The workshops were based on the Artwem methodology, an original art-based approach developed by Walid El Masri. The methodology combines drawing, writing,

movement, sensory observation and material exploration to support self-reflection, concentration and creative confidence.

The pilot took place in two contrasting locations: Rotondes in Luxembourg City and the Musée Rural, creating a dialogue between movement and rootedness, departure and memory.

3.3.2 PROCESS

The Luxembourg pilot was structured as a series of five intensive workshops conducted between April and May 2026.

Participants were guided through a gradual creative process designed to encourage observation, reflection and artistic experimentation. The methodology combined sensory warm-ups, expressive writing, drawing exercises and material-based artistic practices.

Key methodological principles included:

- process over artistic performance;
- gradual progression from observation to expression;
- materialisation of memories through artistic practice;
- emotional safety through indirect expression;
- experimentation and curiosity;
- reflection through making.

Participants explored personal experiences through drawing, writing, colour, line and material composition. Rather than focusing on verbal narratives, the workshops encouraged participants to transform memories and emotions into visual and tactile forms.

“I arrived tired and left full of energy.”

Case Study: Different Mirrors

The workshop series *Different Mirrors*, led by Walid El Masri, explored how artistic processes can support reflection on personal experiences through indirect and material forms of expression.

Participants engaged in a sequence of

exercises developed within the Artwem methodology. Activities included blind drawing, air drawing, still-life observation, expressive writing, memory drawing with closed eyes and the creation of “Life-Line” artworks using coloured threads and mixed media.

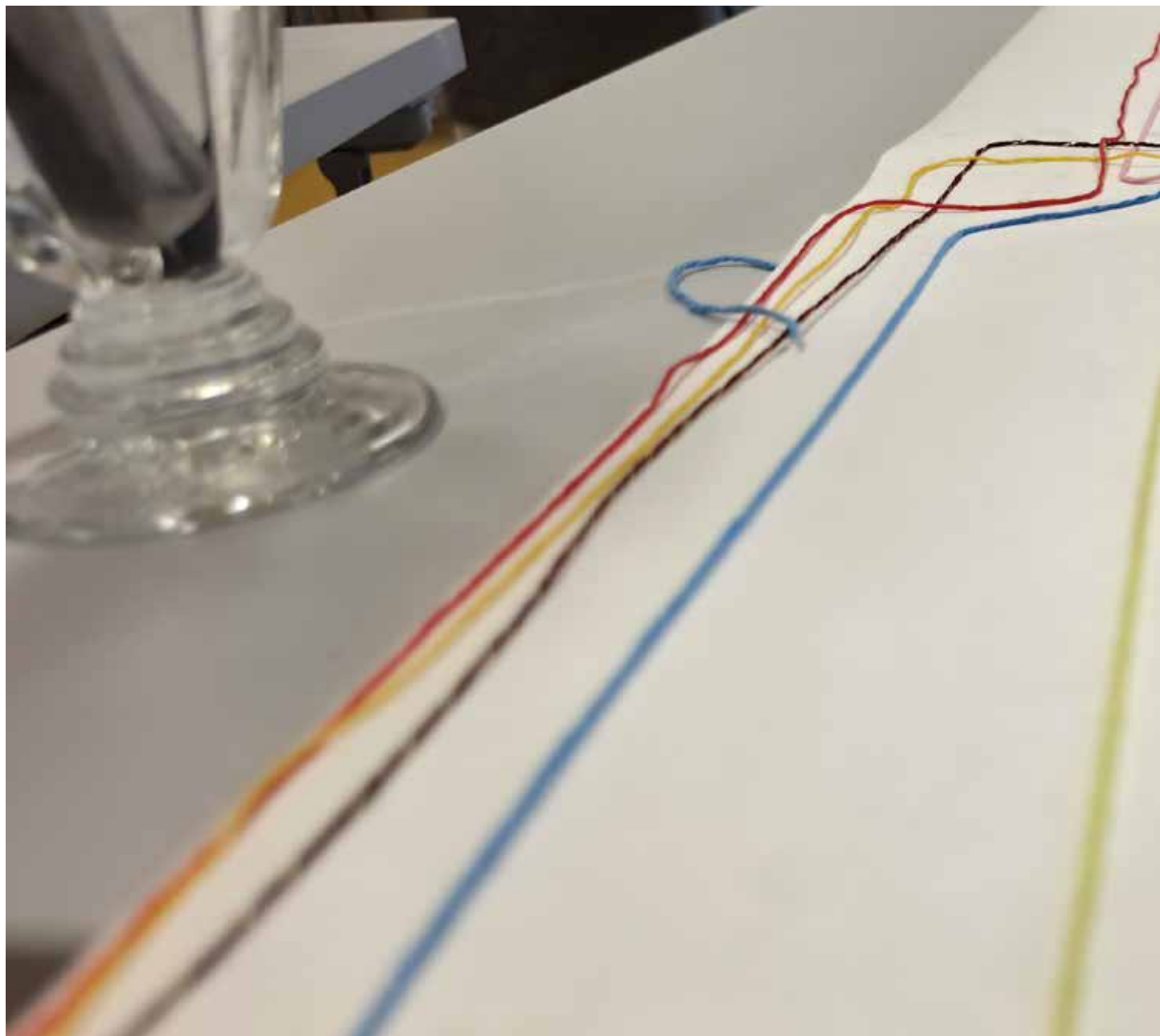
One of the central elements of the process was the transformation of personal memories into visual pathways. Participants created symbolic life maps using coloured threads, lines and forms that represented experiences, transitions and turning points.

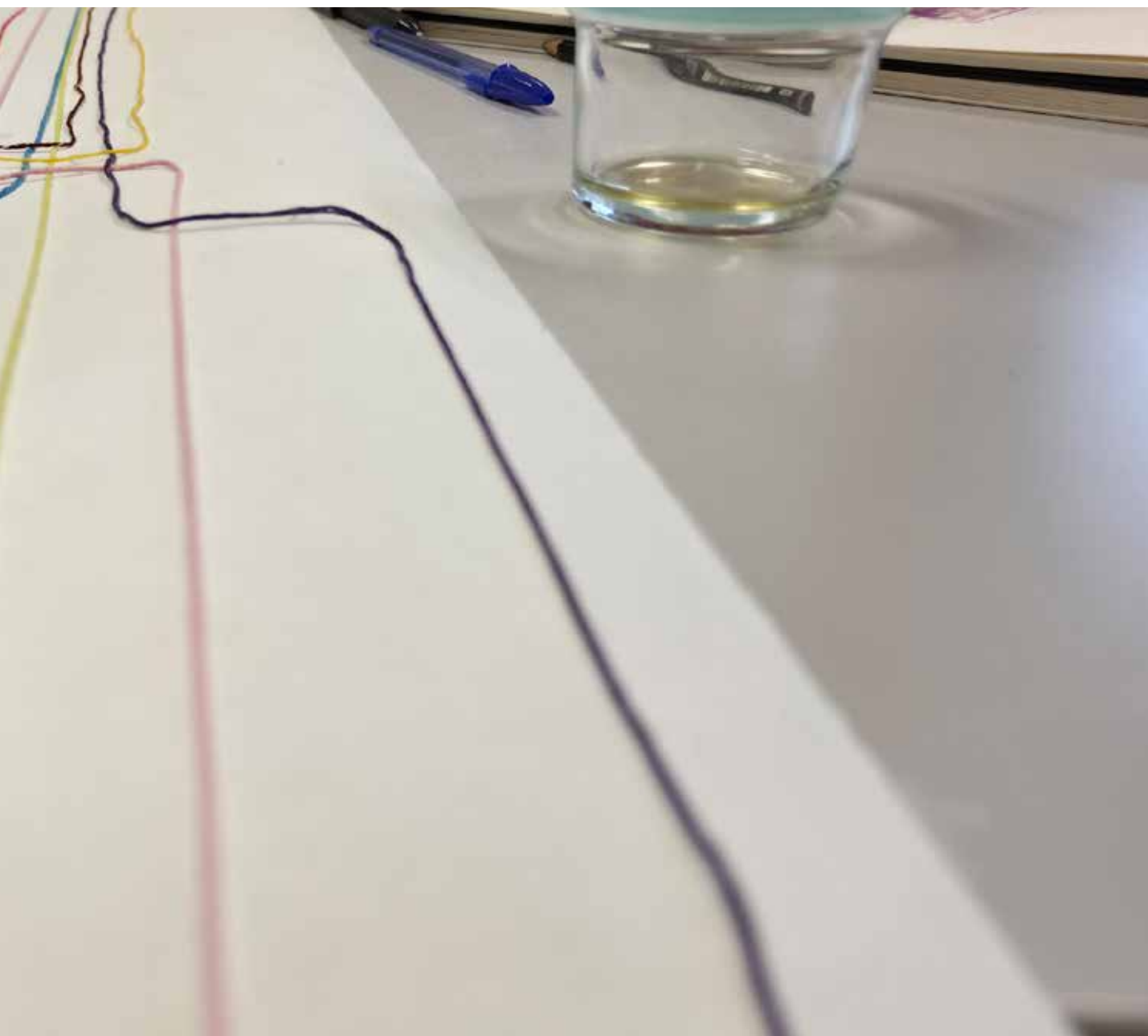
The workshops emphasised gradual engagement. Technical exercises functioned as creative entry points, helping participants move from observation and concentration towards personal reflection. The process encouraged immersion, focus and creative exploration while maintaining an artistic rather than therapeutic framework.

The final session took place at the Musée Rural, where participants combined the different stages of the methodology into a collective artistic experience integrating drawing, writing, memory work and three-dimensional thread compositions.

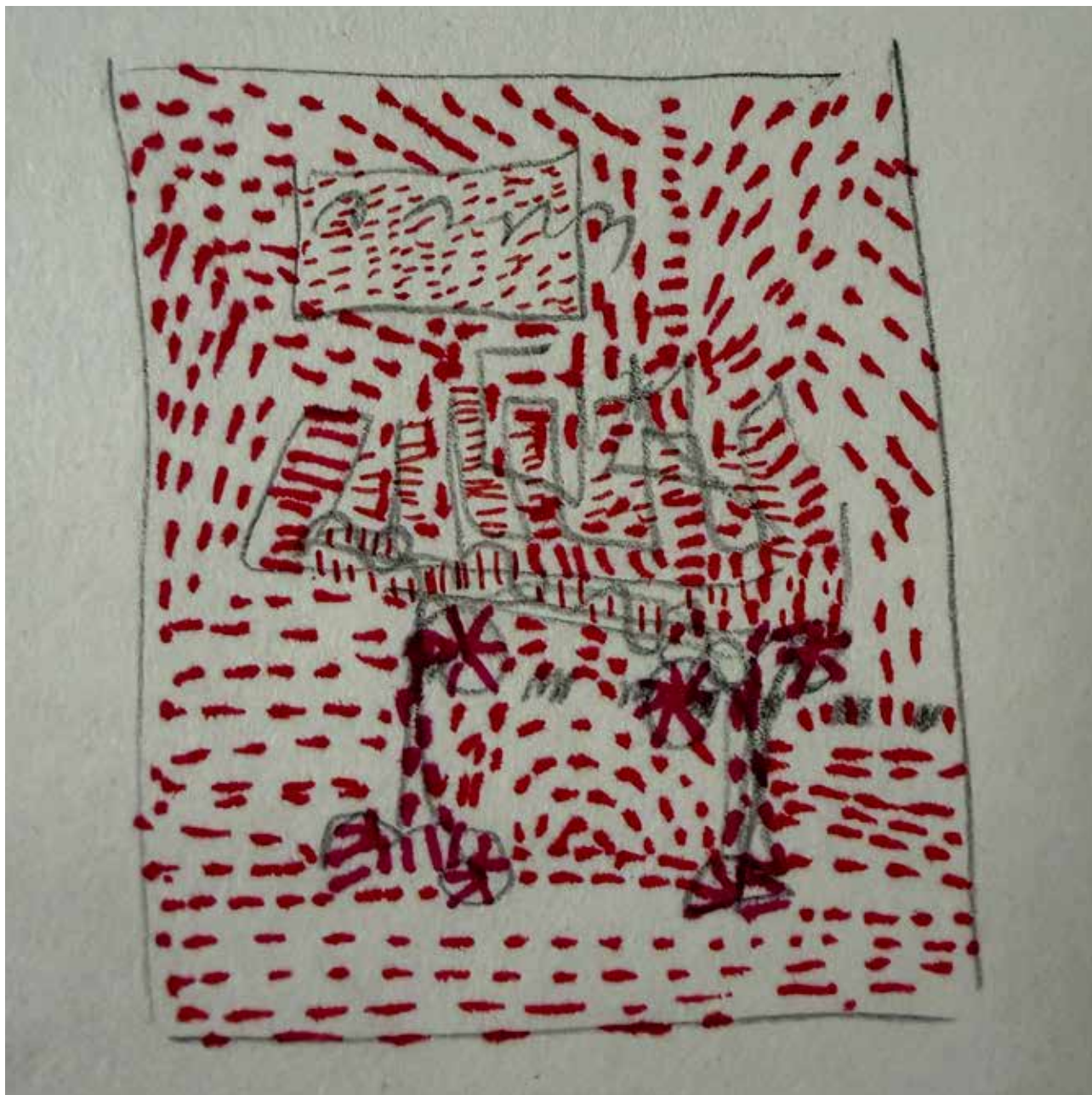
3.3.3 ARTWORKS





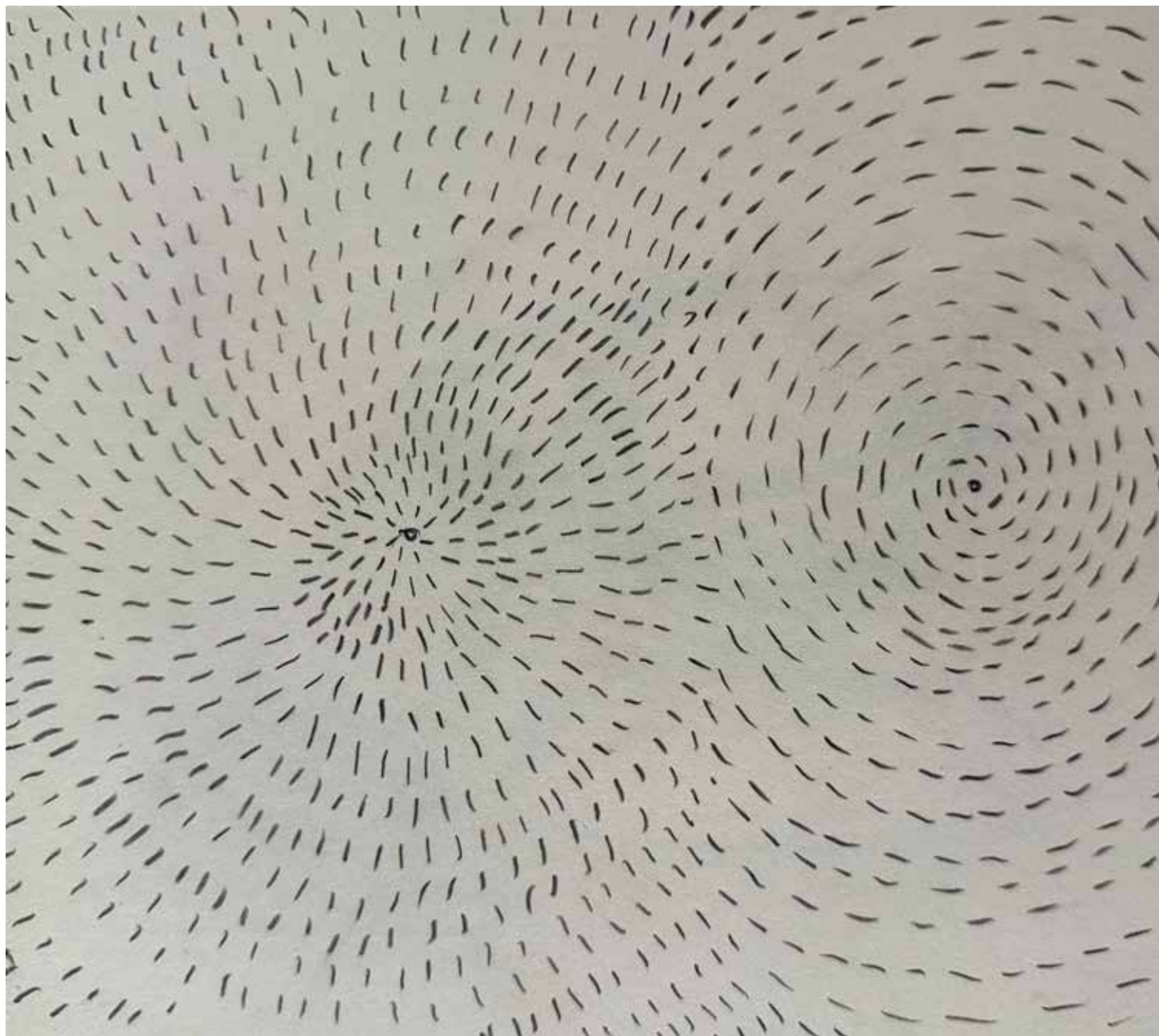


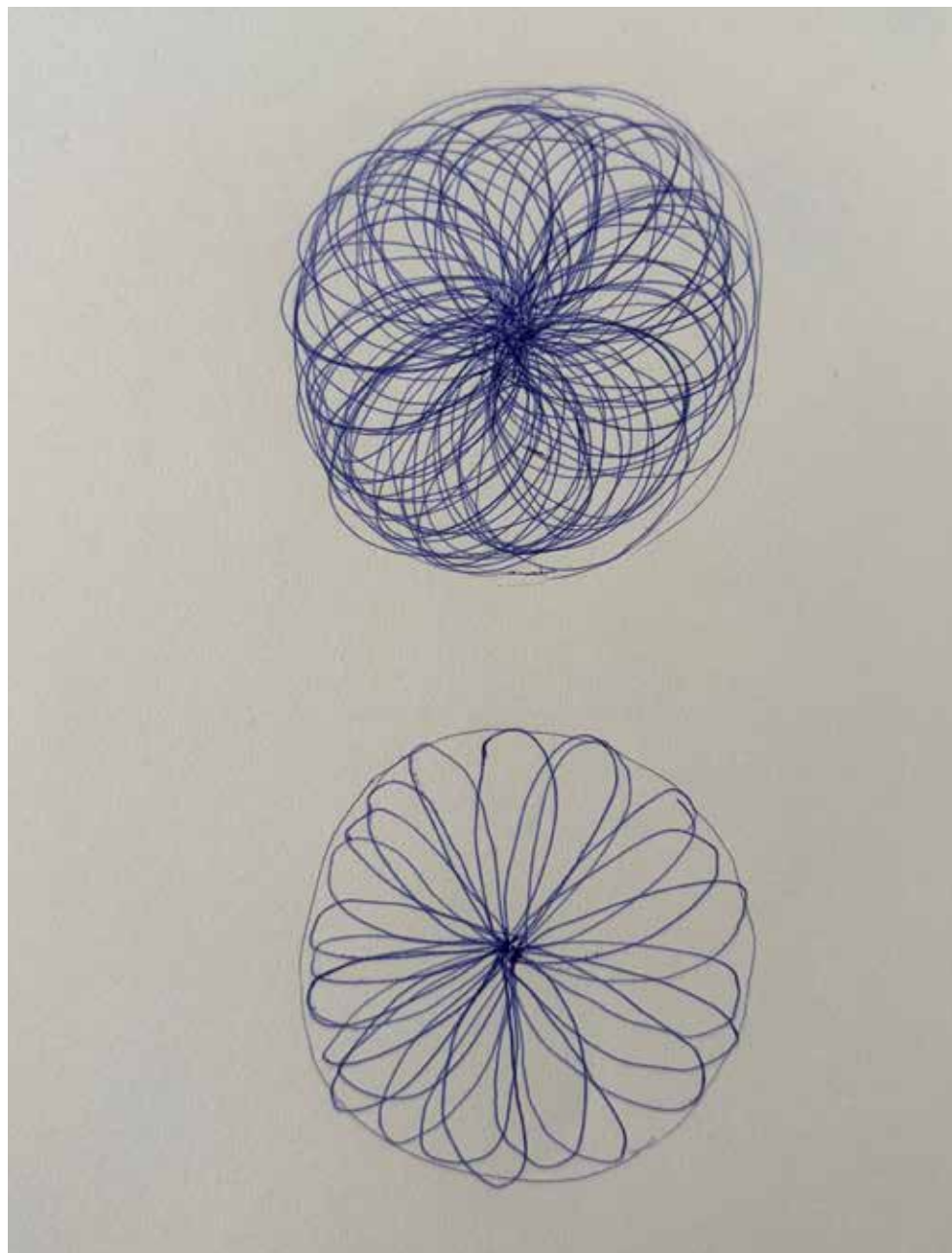


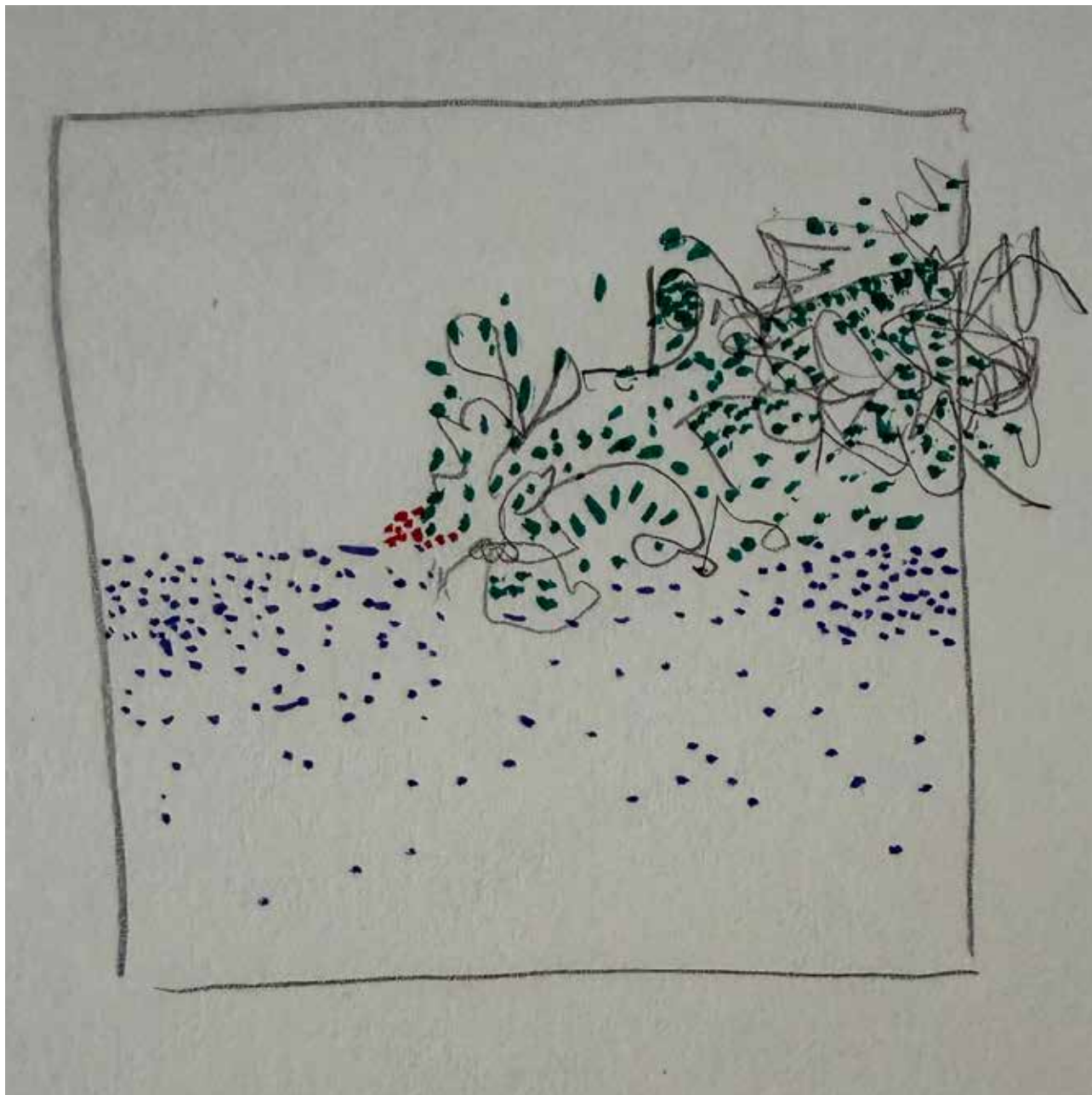


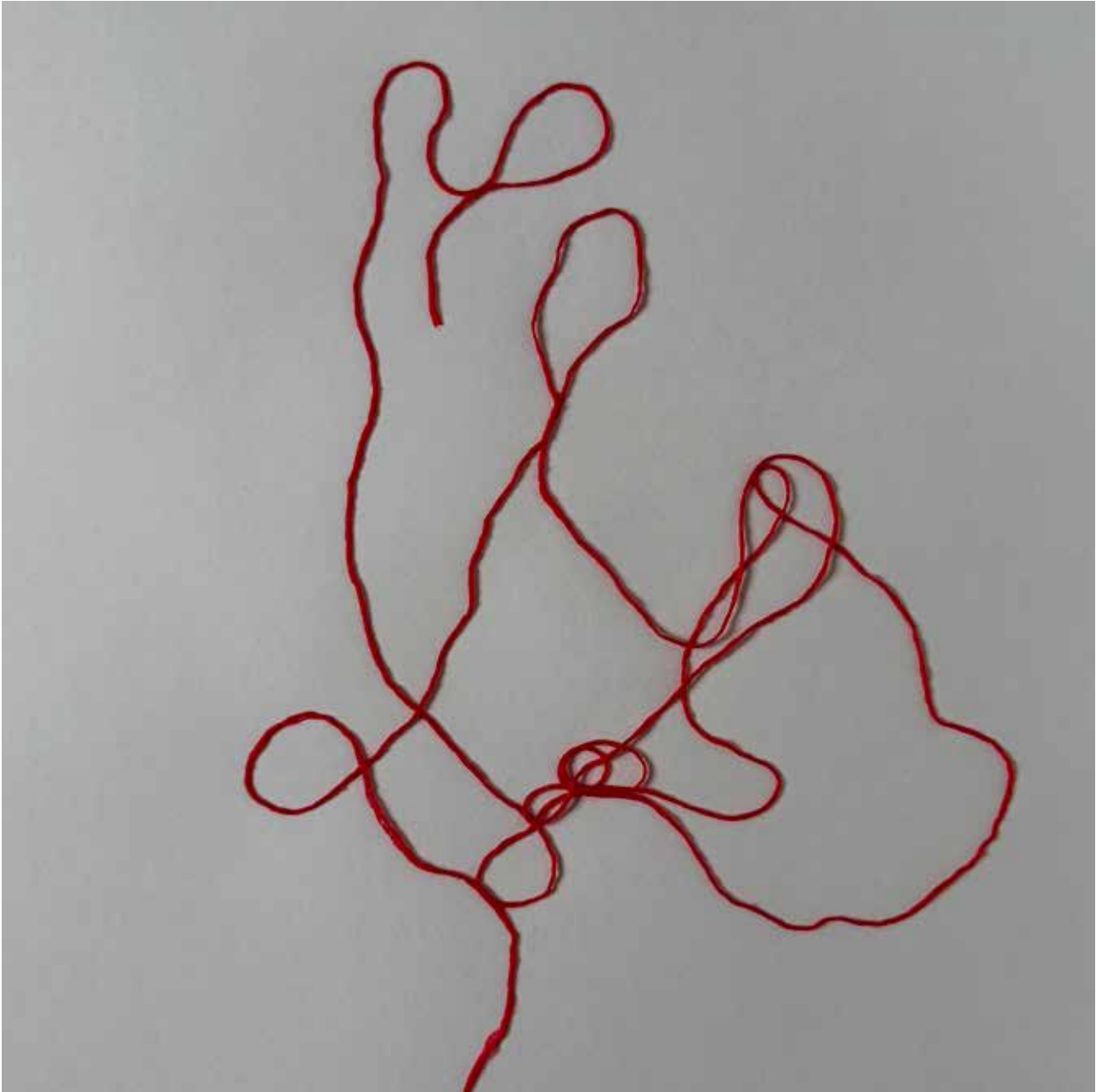


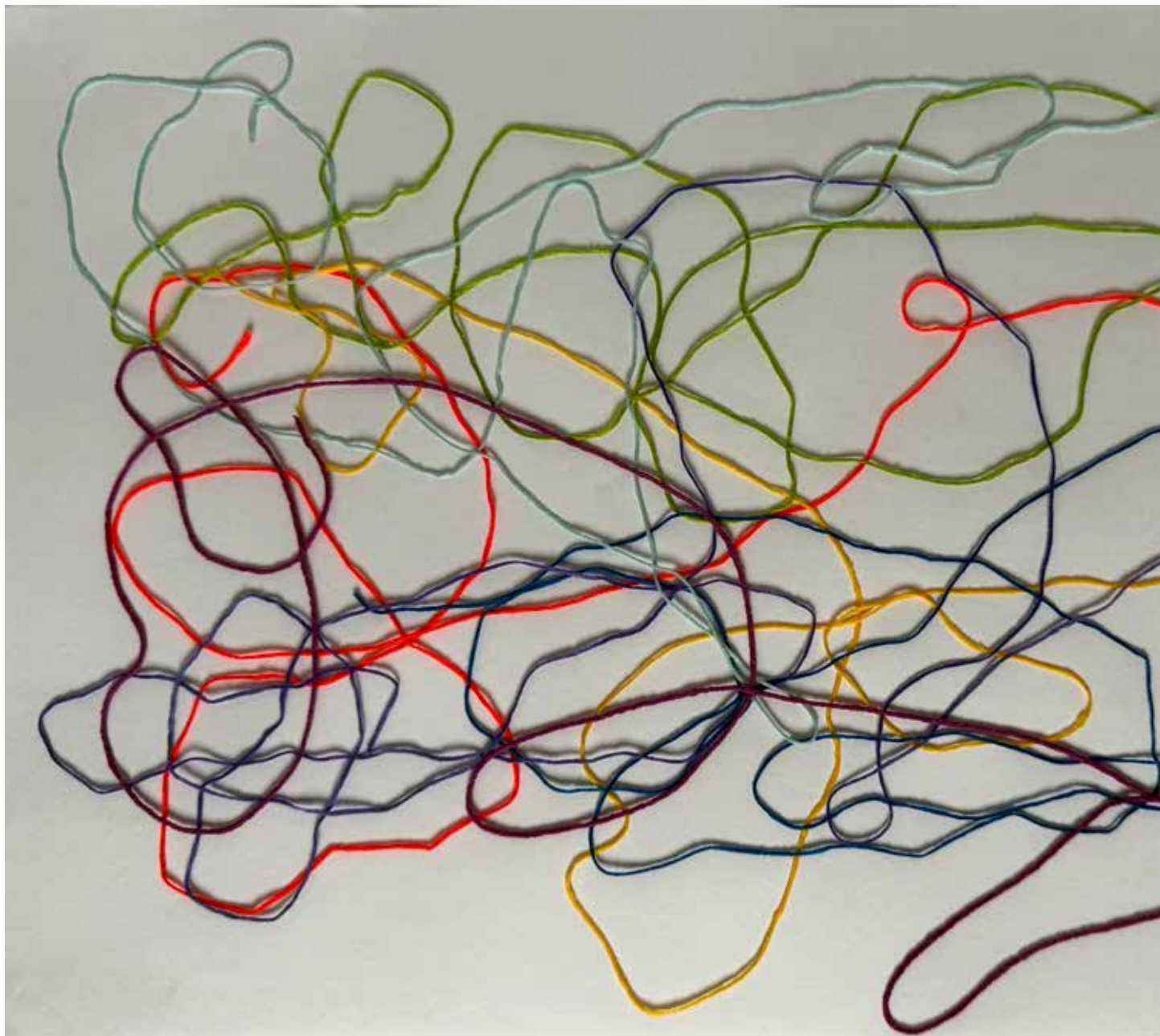


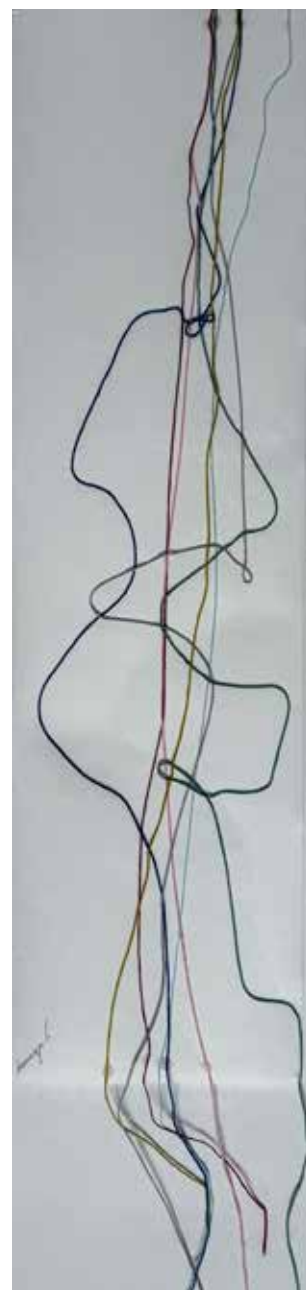
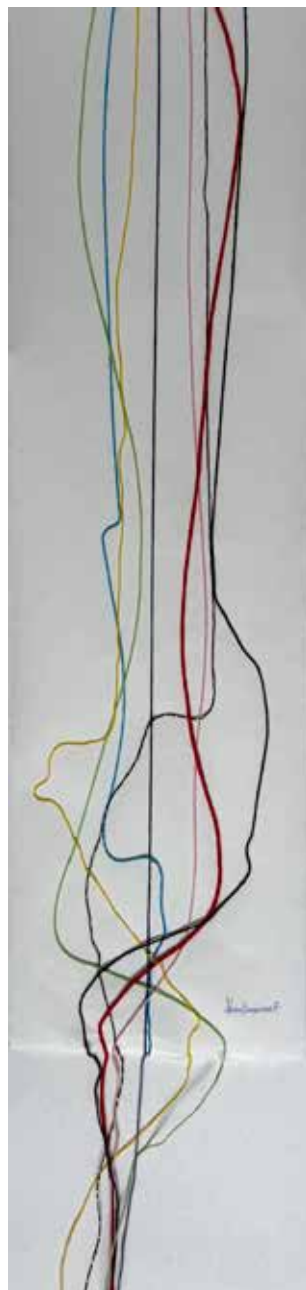
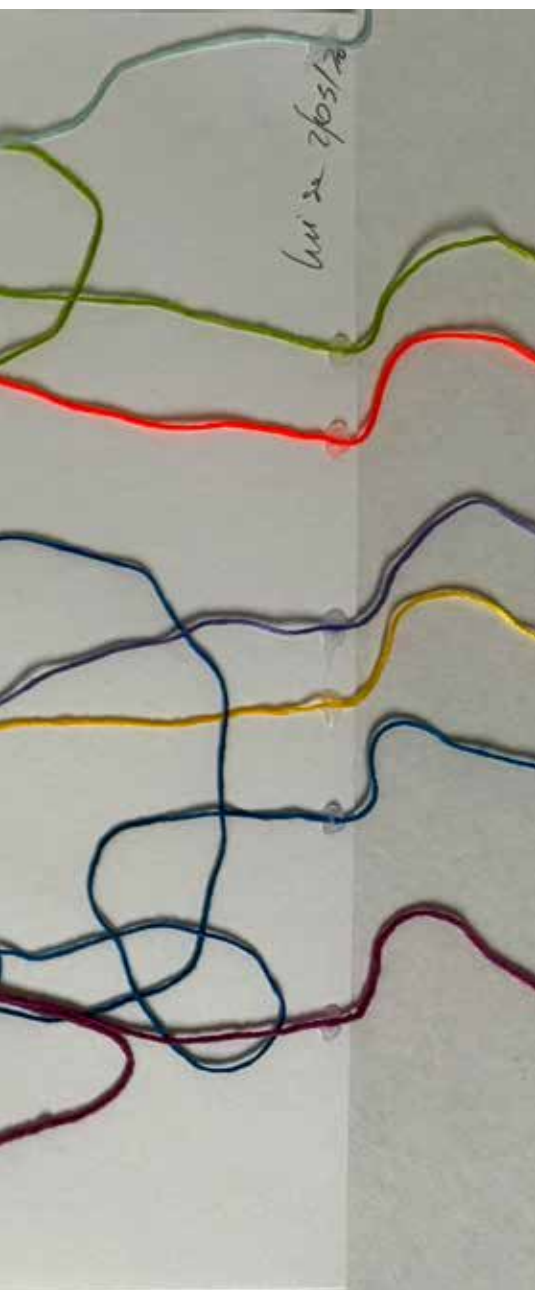


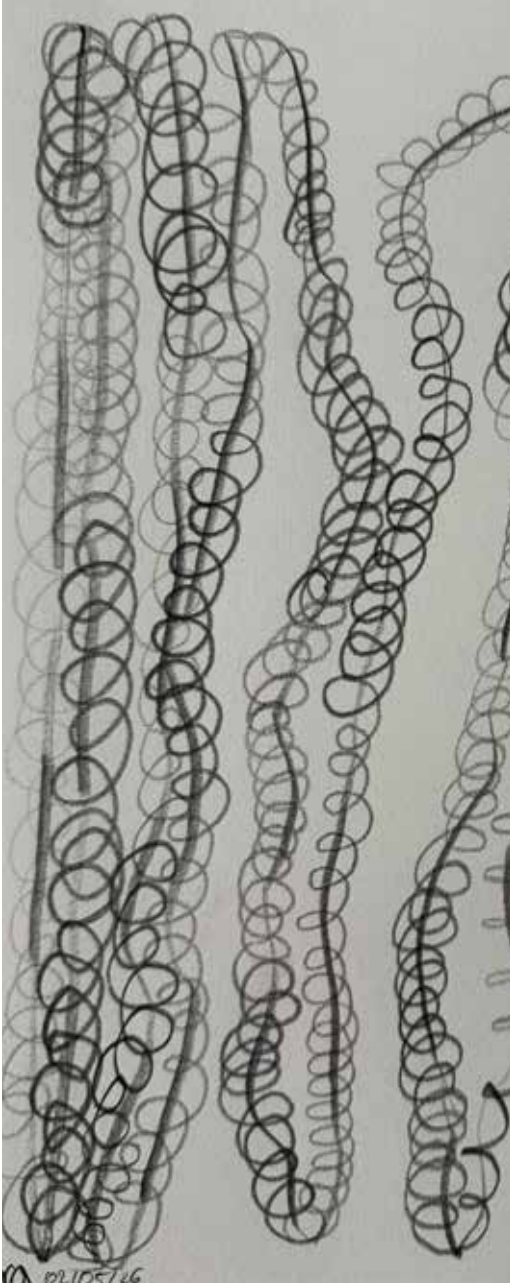












3.3.4 REFLECTION

The Luxembourg pilot demonstrated the value of gradual, process-based artistic methodologies in supporting reflection, concentration and creative confidence.

Participants highlighted the experience of becoming deeply absorbed in the creative process. The combination of movement, drawing, writing and material exploration encouraged focus and helped reduce self-criticism and performance pressure.

A key insight was the importance of indirect expression. Rather than requiring participants to explain personal experiences verbally, the methodology provided alternative ways of engaging with memories through line, colour, texture and form.

The pilot also highlighted the role of artistic structure in creating a sense of safety. Carefully sequenced exercises enabled participants to move step by step from observation towards more personal forms of expression.

The combination of individual reflection and collective sharing created opportunities for dialogue, mutual understanding and creative exchange while maintaining an open, non-therapeutic artistic framework.

Walid El Masri

Visual Artist & Educator

Walid El Masri is a Lebanese visual artist based in France and Luxembourg. His practice combines visual arts, experimental education, and community-based artistic processes. Trained at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Damascus, he has exhibited internationally in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia, including at the Arab World Institute in Paris and the Busan Museum of Art in South Korea.

Alongside his artistic work, El Masri develops participatory and process-based methodologies through ARTWEM Studio, founded in France in 2021 and later expanded to Luxembourg. His work focuses on artistic experimentation, collective creation, and accessible forms of creative education.





3.4 Poland

Stowarzyszenie „Dla Ziemi”

3.4.1 CONTEXT

The Polish pilot was implemented by Stowarzyszenie „Dla Ziemi” as part of the *Empowering Creative Minds* project, which explores how artistic and embodied practices can support reflection on personal and collective experiences related to trauma, migration, resilience and belonging.

The pilot was developed as a nature-based and eco-somatic process combining movement, artistic reflection and collective dialogue. It was connected to the creation and presentation of the dance film *Leaving Can't Stay*, one of the artistic outcomes of the project.

The workshops took place in Bratnik, within the Social Garden – a community-oriented space connected with the activities of Stowarzyszenie „Dla Ziemi”. Approximately 26 participants took part across two workshop days, including art-

ists, educators, women with migration experience, activists, cultural workers and local community members.

The pilot created a temporary community grounded in attentiveness, embodied listening, collective creativity and connection with nature.

3.4.2 PROCESS

The Polish pilot combined movement practices, eco-somatic exercises, artistic reflection and collective sharing within a trauma-sensitive and non-hierarchical framework.

The workshops were designed and facilitated by choreographer and movement educator Agnieszka Sikorska, with support from dancer and somatic educator Alesia Seraya. The methodology emerged from a broader artistic research process involving interviews with artists working with trau-

ma, co-creation events organised in partner countries, and the development of the dance film *Leaving Can't Stay*.

Key methodological principles included:

- embodied listening;
- slowness and attentiveness;
- voluntary participation and respect for boundaries;
- nature as an active participant in the process;
- reflection through movement, drawing and sensory experience;
- process over performance.

Participants engaged in grounding exercises, movement improvisation, partner work, eco-somatic activities, intuitive drawing, reflective writing and collective reflection. The process encouraged non-verbal forms of expression and created opportunities for dialogue without requiring participants to directly narrate personal experiences.

Case Study:

***Leaving Can't Stay* – Film and Reflection Workshop**

A central element of the pilot was the collective screening of the dance film *Leaving Can't Stay*, created by Agnieszka Sikorska in collaboration with Alesia Seraya.

The film explores themes of transition, migration, resilience, support and the

search for safety within and between bodies. Rather than focusing on trauma itself, it explores how people create conditions for moving forward, reconnecting with themselves and building relationships based on trust and mutual support.

Following the screening, participants engaged in intuitive drawing, reflective writing, silent walking and movement improvisation inspired by the film. The process culminated in a collective practice called *Leaving Trace*, where participants created a temporary shared installation using drawings, written reflections, gestures and objects collected from nature.

This approach allowed participants to engage with the themes of the film through artistic exploration, sensory experience and collective reflection rather than direct verbal analysis.

Case Study:

Feldenkrais and Embodied Listening Workshop

A second methodological strand focused on embodied awareness, movement exploration and somatic listening inspired by the Feldenkrais Method and contemporary movement practices.

Led by Agnieszka Sikorska, the workshop invited participants to explore movement through curiosity rather than performance.

Through gentle movement sequences, attention to breath, weight, balance and sensory perception, participants were encouraged to observe how movement patterns influence perception, emotions and relationships with others.

Exercises focused on slowing down, noticing bodily sensations and developing awareness through movement rather than verbal interpretation. Participants worked individually, in pairs and within the group, exploring touch, support, orientation in space and embodied communication.

The workshop created opportunities for participants to reconnect with their own bodily experience while remaining attentive to the presence of others. The emphasis was placed on safety, choice, self-observation and non-judgement, allowing each participant to engage at their own pace.

This approach highlighted the potential of somatic and movement-based practices to foster reflection, resilience and a deeper sense of connection with oneself, others and the surrounding environment.

3.4.3 ARTWORKS





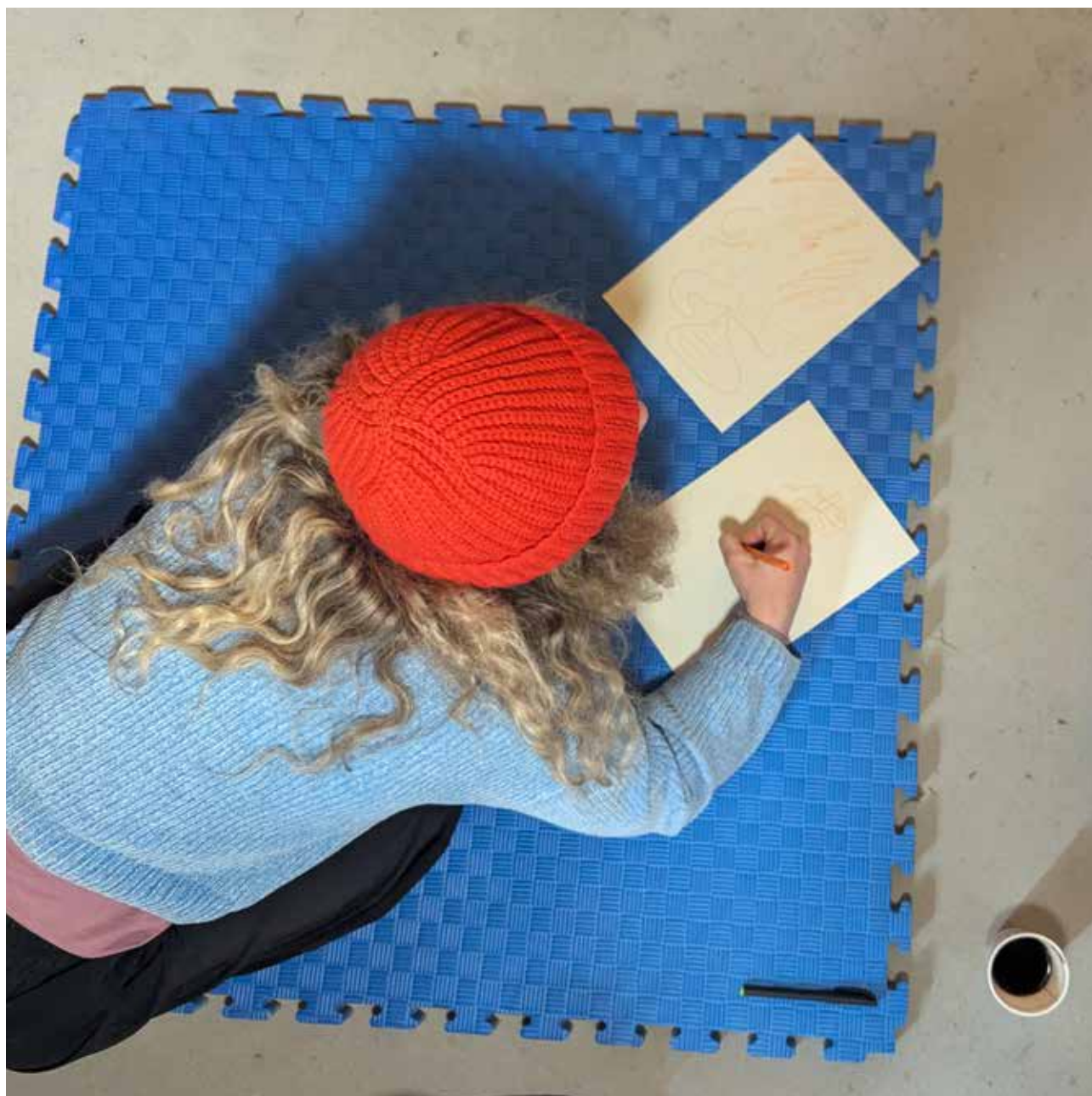
























3.4.4 REFLECTION

The Polish pilot demonstrated the value of embodied and eco-somatic artistic methodologies in creating spaces for reflection, connection and resilience-building.

Movement, breath, drawing, nature-based practices and collective reflection enabled participants to engage with complex experiences through sensory and artistic processes rather than direct narration. This created a supportive environment where personal and collective meanings could emerge gradually and voluntarily.

A key insight was the importance of slowing down. Participants repeatedly highlighted the value of movement, body awareness, contact with nature and the atmosphere of safety created during the workshops. The process showed that artistic methodologies rooted in embodied experience can foster both individual reflection and collective understanding.

The pilot also demonstrated the importance of offering multiple forms of participation. Movement, drawing, silence, writing and shared presence provided different entry points, allowing participants to engage

in ways that resonated with their own experiences, needs and forms of expression.

Another important finding was the role of nature as more than a setting. The Social Garden became an active component of the artistic process, supporting grounding, attentiveness and a sense of connection. Working outdoors encouraged participants to engage with their surroundings through sensory perception, movement

“Working in nature helped me slow down and reconnect with my body.”

and observation, enriching both individual and collective experiences.

The combination of film, movement, eco-somatic practices and reflective exercises highlighted the value of interdisciplinary artistic approaches that invite participation through different modes of engagement while maintaining an open, non-therapeutic framework.

Alesia Seraya

Dancer, Educator & Somatic Practitioner

Alesia Seraya is a dancer, contemporary dance educator, and practitioner of somatic methods. She graduated from the Belarusian State University of Arts and is currently studying Cultural Studies at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin.

Since 2016, she has been leading movement workshops for children and adults, creating spaces that encourage exploration, creativity, and authentic connection. As a member of Quadro Theatre, she has co-created educational projects and artistic initiatives presented across Belarus and Poland.

She is currently involved in developing the Improvisation Festival in Lublin, where she continues to combine artistic practice with movement-based education and community engagement.



Agnieszka Sikorska

Performer, Choreographer & Educator

Agnieszka Sikorska is a Polish performer, choreographer, and somatic educator whose work explores the relationship between body, nature, and presence. Educated in Łódź, Prague, and Warsaw, she continues to deepen her practice through the Feldenkrais Method.

Her performances have been presented across Europe, while her educational work brings together movement, creativity, and embodied awareness. She works with diverse groups, including children, older adults, people with Parkinson's disease, and those with different movement abilities.

Since 2022, she has been involved with the „Dla Ziemi” Association, supporting people with experiences of forced migration through dance and somatic practices.



4. Closing reflections

The *Empowering Creative Minds* project brought together different artistic practices, local contexts, and personal experiences through processes of collaboration and shared creation.

Although each local pilot developed its own methods, materials, and forms of expression, all activities were connected by a common interest in participation, attentiveness, and the possibility of creating spaces for dialogue through art.

The works and processes presented in this catalogue reflect not only individual artistic outcomes, but also moments of encounter, exchange, experimentation, and collective presence.

Rather than offering fixed interpretations, the project invites openness — to process, to uncertainty, and to the diverse ways artistic practice can support connection and reflection within communities.

5. Contents

1.	Introduction	04
2.	About the project	05
3.	Local pilots	
3.1	Germany – Comparative Research Network	07
	Rodney LaTourelle	24
	Ercan Arslan	25
3.2	Ukraine – UNAEDI	27
	Yurii Babii	42
	Khrystyna Chemerys	43
3.3	Luxembourg – DOURI	45
	Walid El Masri	61
3.4	Poland – Stowarzyszenie „Dla Ziemi”	63
	Alesia Seraya	80
	Agnieszka Sikorska	81
4.	Closing reflections	82
5.	Contents	83

Catalogue Coordination and Editorial Work:

Elżbieta Rojek – Stowarzyszenie „Dla Ziemi” (Poland)

Prepared in close cooperation with all project partners, artists, facilitators and participants involved in the Empowering Creative Minds project.

Graphic Design:

Simche Taub

Layout and Typesetting:

Jonatan Jażdżyk

Empowering Creative Minds – Project Partners:

Comparative Research Network (Germany)

UNAEDI (Ukraine)

DOURI (Luxembourg)

Stowarzyszenie „Dla Ziemi” (Poland)

Published by

Stowarzyszenie „Dla Ziemi” (Poland)

2026 CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>

Co-funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are, however, those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the granting authority. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

*“Art became a way
of understanding experiences without
having to explain them.”*

