

THE INFERNAL GROVE PROJECT

STUDY GROUP ITERATION #2

NOVEMBER 5TH, 2021, 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM EST.



WA WORKMAN
ARTS
RENDEZVOUS
WITH MADNESS

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Infernal Grove Study Group

DRUGS, FREEDOM AND THE TYRANNY OF REPRESENTATION

- Friday Nov. 5, 5:00-6:30pm EST
- Presented by in partnership with [Rendezvous with Madness Festival](#)
- Featuring: [Margaret Sadovsky](#), [Dani ReStack](#), [Liz Roberts](#), [Mikiki](#), [Cooper Battersby and Emily Vey Duke](#).
- Registration is required. [LINK REMOVED]

[The Infernal Grove homepage](#)

Reading: excerpts from Maggie Nelson's On Freedom (2021) ([pdf](#))

Video: [The Infernal Grove](#)

Reading the text and watching the video are not required for participation in the discussion.

The study group brings into dialogue a group of artists from across the continent who have lived experience with substance-use, and who represent a range of current relationships to sobriety and its alternatives. They will discuss Maggie Nelson's On Freedom. The book is an interrogation of the concept of freedom and the way it is deployed in philosophical, literary and political discourses. We will read a section of Chapter 3 Drug Fugue wherein she describes the frame put around drug use and addiction by ideas of freedom and confinement.

In recovery programs, perhaps by necessity and certainly by design, there is a push to accept received wisdom. But for addict-intellectuals, it's hard to forfeit critical thinking to recovery. In addiction, connection to the intellectual can become tenuous. It's easy to lose the relationships and identities that support rigorous critical thinking. Recovery can mean recovering those relationships and identities.

This first session of the Study Group explores the notion of drug-taking as an adaptive strategy in a world stripped of ritual and connection to land.

The Infernal Grove Project exposes the disproportionate effects of public trauma (including the COVID pandemic) on drug users, especially addicts of color. It's become an organizing principle in our thinking about this work: we need to show the connections between addiction and the socioeconomic forces that create and exploit it.

ig: [@the_infernal_grove](#)

The Infernal Grove Project takes place mostly on stolen Mi'kmaq and Onondaga land.

The festival hosting this version, Rendezvous with Madness, is located on the traditional territory of many nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

To those who have allowed us to stay, we humbly extend gratitude and honour.

ABOUT THE FESTIVAL

RENDEZVOUS WITH MADNESS FESTIVAL

**28 OCTOBER -
7 NOVEMBER 2021**

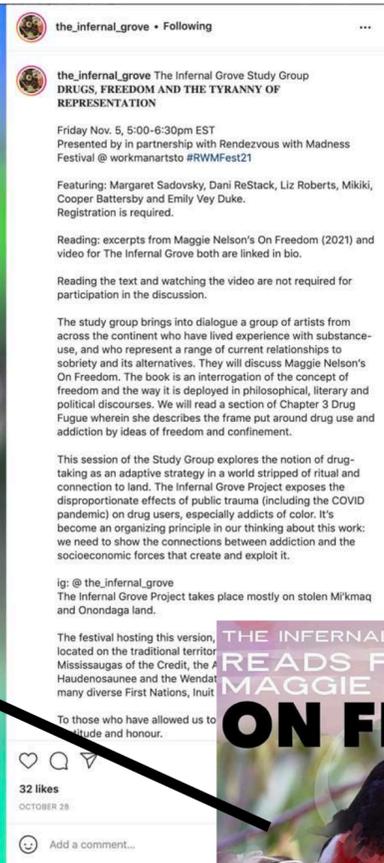
The Rendezvous with Madness Festival is the first and largest arts and mental health festival in the world. Using art as the entry point to illuminate and investigate the realities and mythologies surrounding mental illness and addiction, Rendezvous With Madness' 2021 programming spotlights the human capacity for endurance in the face of great challenges. As community members are feeling the emotional effects of months of isolation, income precarity, and anxiety over what the future holds, the Rendezvous With Madness Festival offers a unique opportunity to come together in reflection and discussion.

We are thrilled to announce the full programming line-up for the 29th annual Rendezvous With Madness Festival. The Festival runs October 28 – November 7, 2021 and showcases a range of feature and short films from around the globe, as well as the In(site) Exhibition, and the production of Rosa Laborde's True.



*CLICK TO PLAY #RWMFEST21 TRAILER

PROMO STATS



@SUARTVIDEO



@LIZ__ROBERTS__



@MKKULTRA

ACCOUNTS REACHED:
2,483+

CONTENT INTERACTIONS:
183+

PROFILE ACTIVITY:
47+

IMPRESSIONS:
6,050+

SHARES & SAVES
28+

HOSTS + MODERATORS



COOPER BATTERSBY + EMILY VEY DUKE
(HE / HIM) + (SHE / HER)

Cooper Battersby and Emily Vey Duke have worked collaboratively since 1994. They work primarily in video. Their works can be found at V-Tape in Toronto, Video Databank in Chicago and Argos in Brussels. They are currently faculty at Syracuse University.





LIZ ROBERTS
(SHE / HER)



Liz Roberts makes artwork that is often collaborative and rooted in moving image and sound. Recently she's been working on autobiographical filmmaking as a way to try and reckon with the violence of an extractive documentary camera. She has held teaching positions in cinema and art departments at Denison University, Columbus College of Art & Design, and Ohio State University. While living in Ohio she worked collectively and horizontally with a large group of artists called MINT in their warehouse space. Her work has shown widely, and her early films are in the collection of the Filmmakers Cooperative in New York City.



JASMINE AMUSSEN
(SHE / HER)



Jasmine Amussen is a writer, editor and cultural critic living in Atlanta. As editor for Burnaway, she facilitates the yearly Art Writing Incubator, a six weeklong intensive focusing on cultivating writers and critics in the South. As a writer, she has written for publications such as 032c, Art Papers, Limbo and MOMUS, as well as local and international zines. Prior to joining Burnaway, she held positions with the Atlanta BeltLine Partnership, street art conference Living Walls, The City Speaks, DIY organization Murmur Media, and as occasional consultant for Creative Capital. She is a 2020 recipient of MacDowell's Calderwood Fellowship for Journalism. Along with her younger sisters, she is proud to have her name on an 'original students' brick on the path at Clear Springs School in her hometown of Eureka Springs, Arkansas.



MIKIKI
(THEY / THEM)



Mikiki is a performance and video artist and queer community health activist of Acadian/Mi'kmaq and Irish descent from Ktaqmkuk/Newfoundland, Canada.

They attended NSCAD and Concordia before returning to St. John's to work as Programming Coordinator at Eastern Edge Gallery and later to Mohkinstsis/Calgary to work as the Director of TRUCK Gallery. Their work has been presented throughout Canada and internationally in self-produced interventions, artist-run centres, performance art festivals and public galleries.



DANI RESTACK
(SHE / HER)



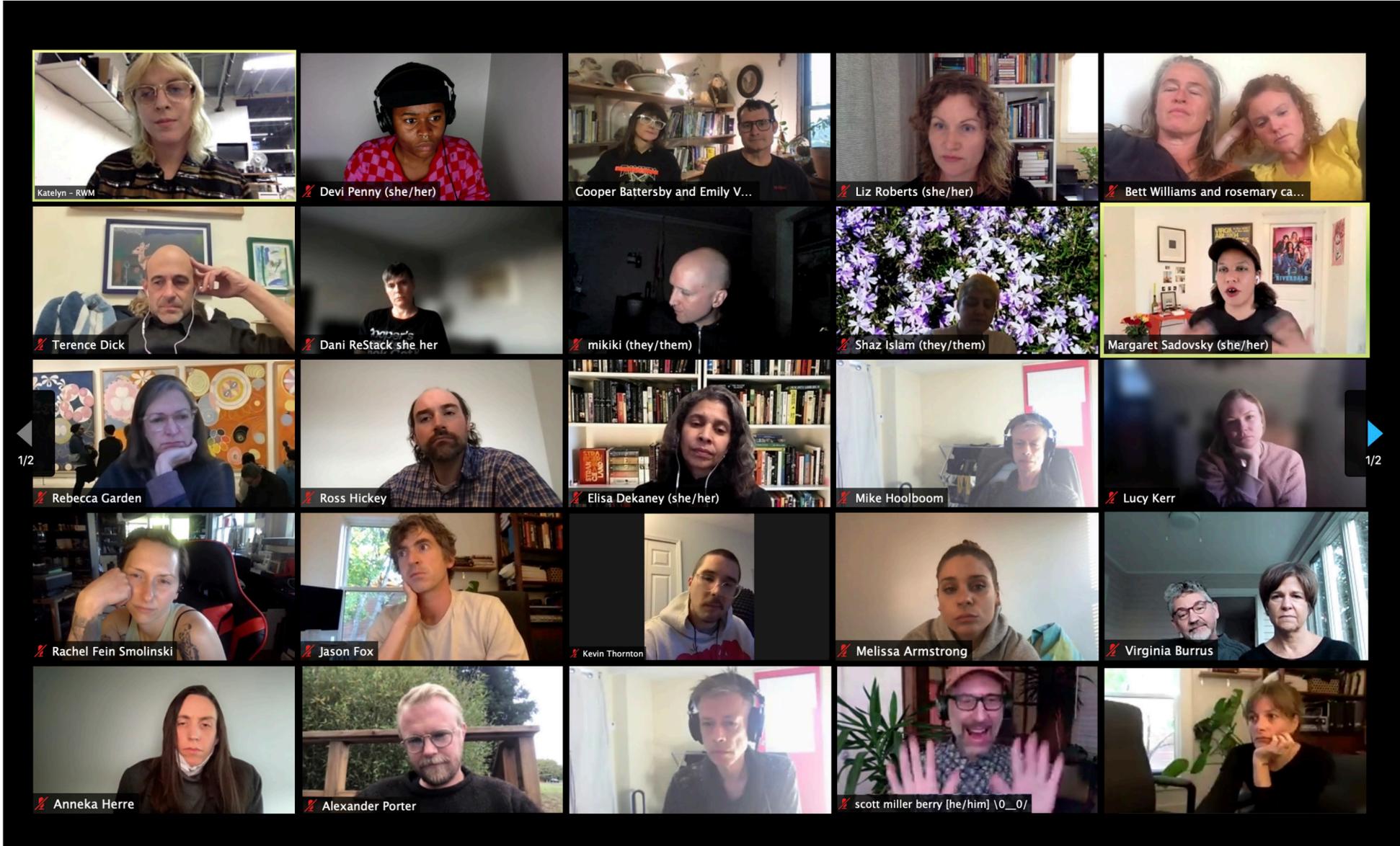
Dani Restack describes the creation of her moving-image works as a process of “accumulation and excision.” In videos such as *Sister City* and the companion piece *Platonic* (both 2013), Restack collects and chisels moments, stories, and images, placing them within loose constellations rarely unmarked by the specter of death. Restack shoots her own footage, often involving individuals who are close to her, but treats the resulting images almost as a bank of found material to be manipulated and recontextualized through montage. Her cutting is intuitive, not systematic. Micro-narratives of birth, aging, awkwardness, and pain gradually take shape without ever fully congealing, as Restack allows her images to breathe even as she transforms their tenor through assemblage. The textures of the everyday are refracted through an intimate sensibility that dwells in the vulnerability of our fleshy bodies, our need for care and communion—and our cruelty.

ATTENDEES

OVER 50
REGISTERED
PARTICIPANTS

COOPER BATTERSBY
EMILY VEY DUKE
DANI RESTACK
LIZ ROBERTS
KATELYN
MARGARET SADOVSKY
MIKIKI
DEVI PENNY
ALEXANDER PORTER
DAWN WELESKI
JASON FOX
SCOTT MILLER BERRY
KEVIN THORNTON
LUCY KERR
MELISSA ARMSTRONG
RACHEL FEIN SMOLINSKI

ROSS HICKEY
BETT WILLIAMS
ROSEMARY CARROLL
SHAZ ISLAM
TERENCE DICK
ANNEKA HERRE
HANNAH J
JORDY BRAZO
MARY KELLY
MICHAELS JP
EMILY ENG
MIKE HOOLBOOM
REBECCA GARDEN
SAMARA CHADWICK
ELISA DEKANEY
VIRGINIA BURRUS
+ MORE





slam Shaz

From Devi Penny (she/her) to **Everyone**:
New drug language loading



From Alexander Porter to **Everyone**:
Afropessimism
Book by Frank B. Wilderson III



From mikiki (they/them) to **Everyone**:
Bett and Rosemary it's Pleasure Consuming Medicine
by Kane Race



OCEAN

Yeah. It's like a drug, I have to be honest. I'm an addict. I'm recovering. Still, I don't talk about it too much, because I don't feel like I'm truly sober. I am since 2013, but I still think like an addict. It's just like my vices are controlled and they're all literary, but I can feel it: "Oh, that's a great line." I'll stop what I'm doing. I'll lay down and try to get that line right or I'll look at an image or a tree and I'll see some kind of connection. It feels too much like when I was doing the other bad stuff that was destroying my body. I think my sobriety is like crashing a car. Your car is flipped over in the ditch and you look around and you realise, "Oh god, I'm still here." And then you just start crawling on the side of the road. You crawl; you don't look back. You're too scared. You don't know what's back there. And after a while you get on your hands and knees, and then you're miles away from the car. You start walking. You see a thrift shop. You go in, you put on some new clothes and you keep walking. And eventually you walk into a university. You walk onstage. You walk into a publisher's house. I'm still walking from that car crash. That's the metaphor that I feel.

What was the drug?

Well, it's a cliché in New England, but it was Oxy and Percocets. And then if you crushed that over weed, it's like a double downer; you mix it with coke, then you have a speedball. So it was those. All the white things you can crush. It was rough. I still remember what it feels like, and it's the best thing in the world. I mean, this is why it is what it is, because it creates a synthetic heaven, but the price is hell.

informed consent is luxurious
also PCP is the Black Unicorn. it is my FAVOURITE.



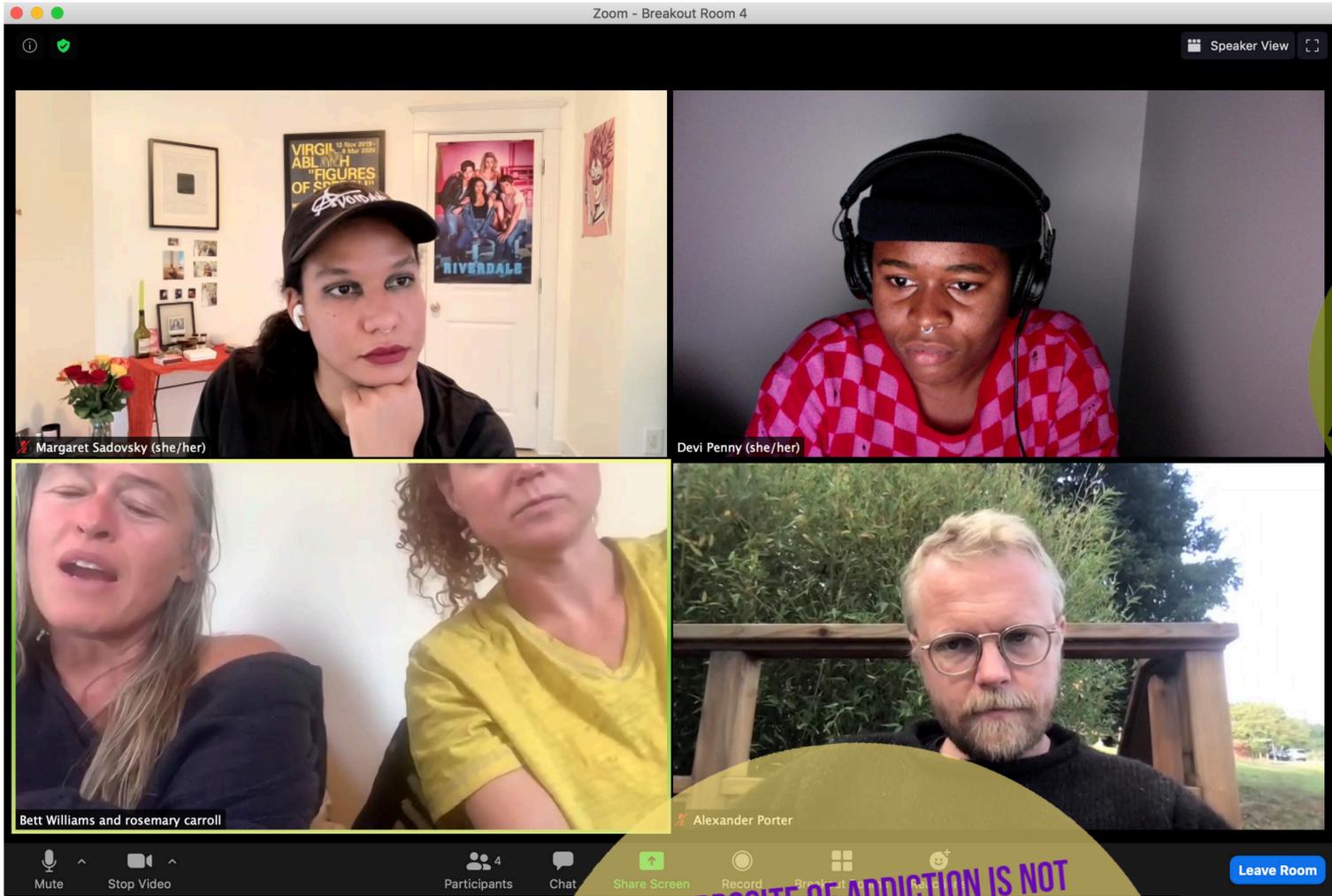
From mikiki (they/them) to **Everyone**:
it's the CAREENING into a situation
that I have never been able to find a way into in sober
head-scapes
curiosity rinses out judgment

From mikiki (they/them) to **Everyone**:
when i am in a country that doesn't have a last call
(historically) i wake up at 2PM under the pool table
naked with a Swede

From Margaret Sadovsky (she/her)
to **Everyone**:

mikki lets go to new orleans

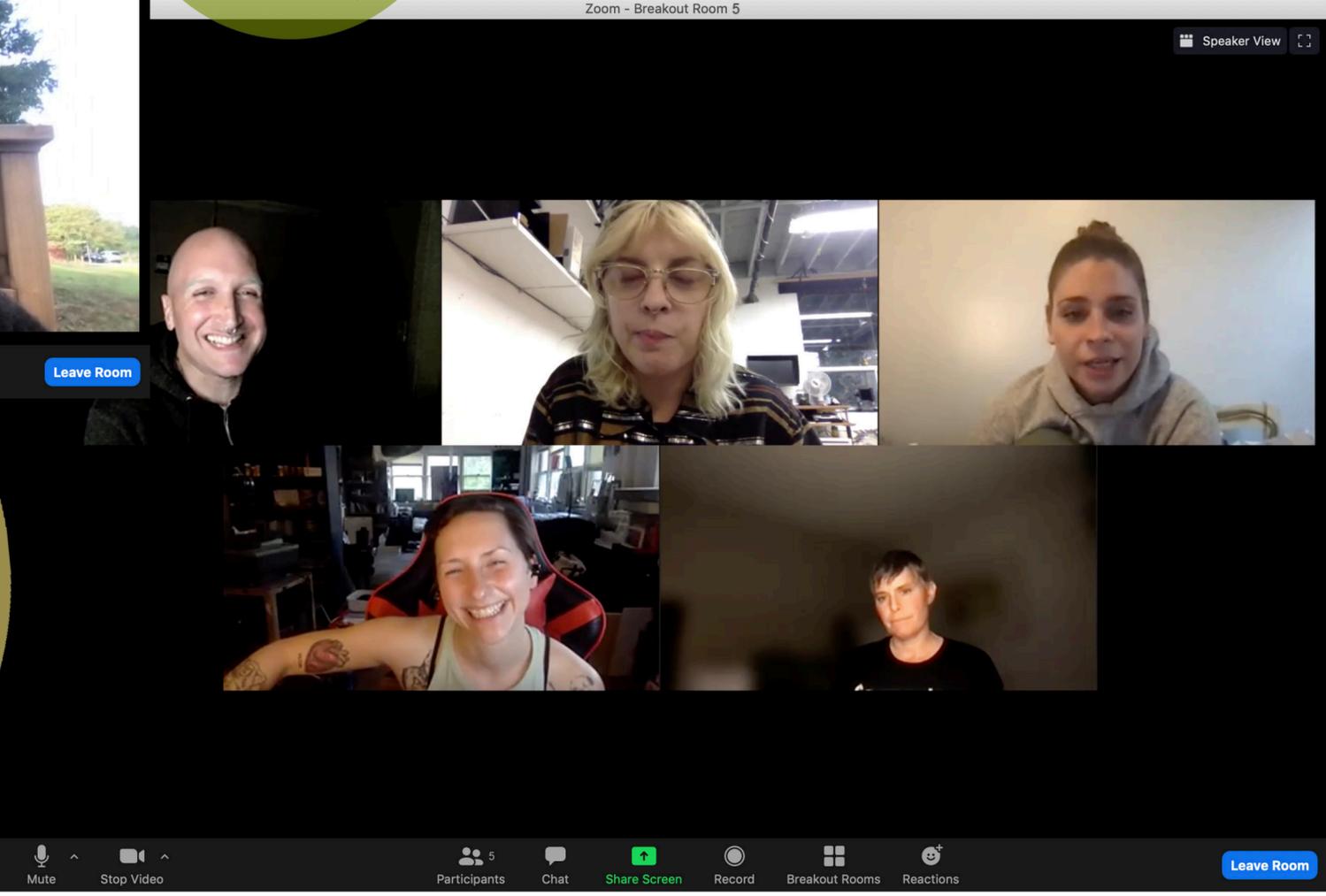
BREAK-OUT GROUPS



“WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DRUGS AND FREEDOM?”

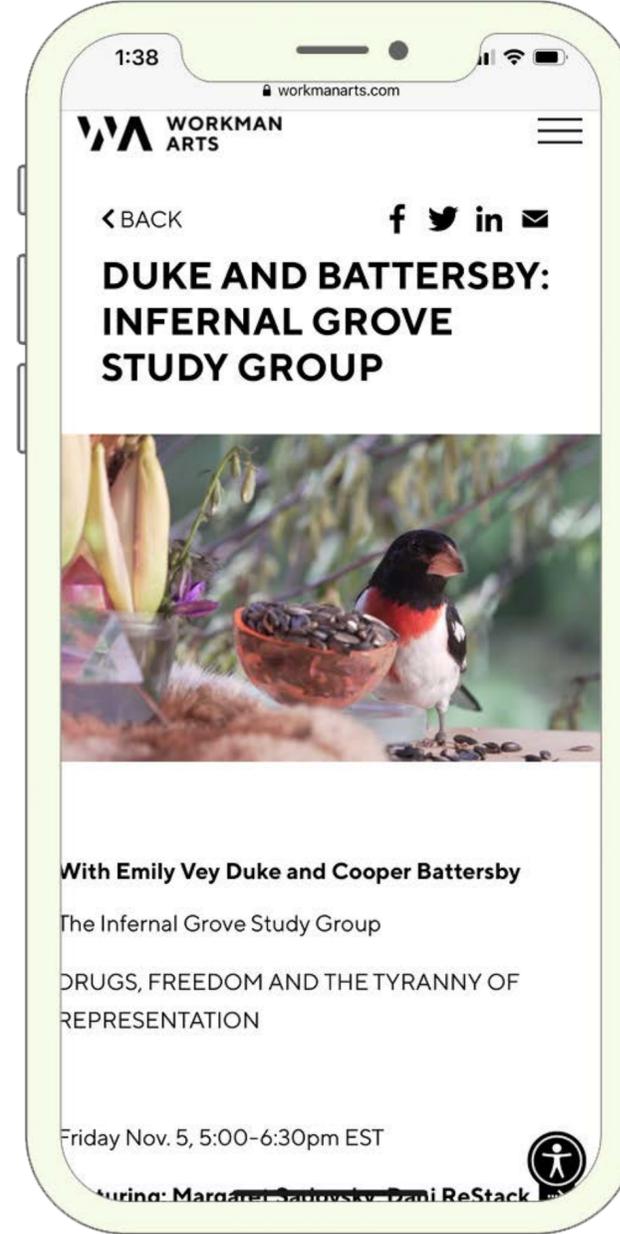
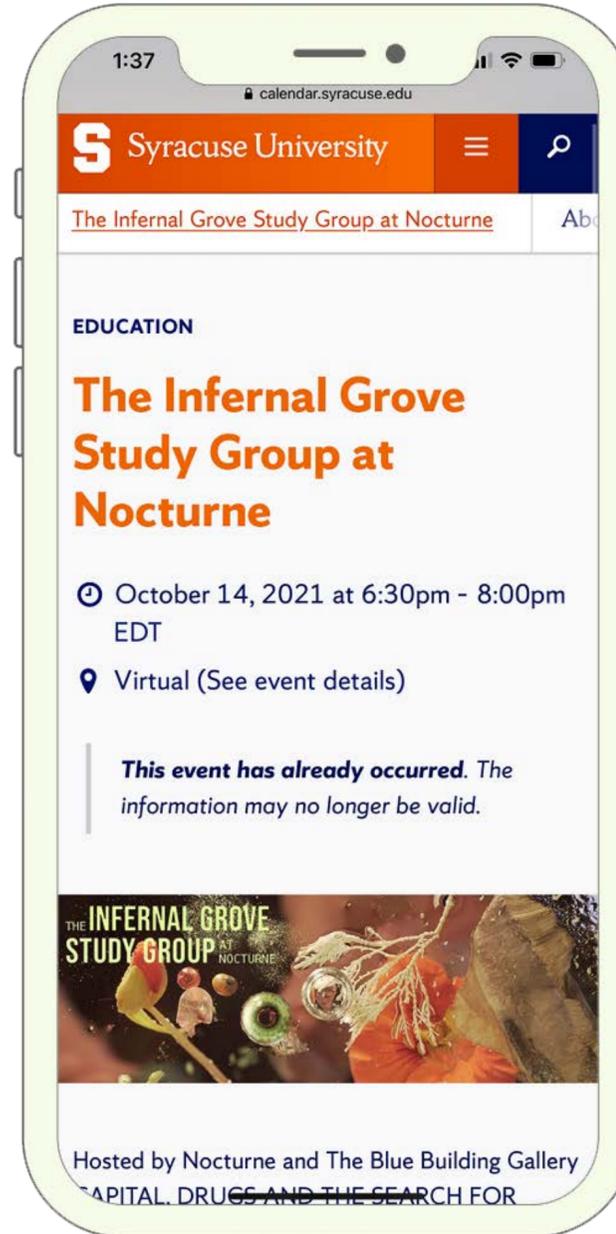
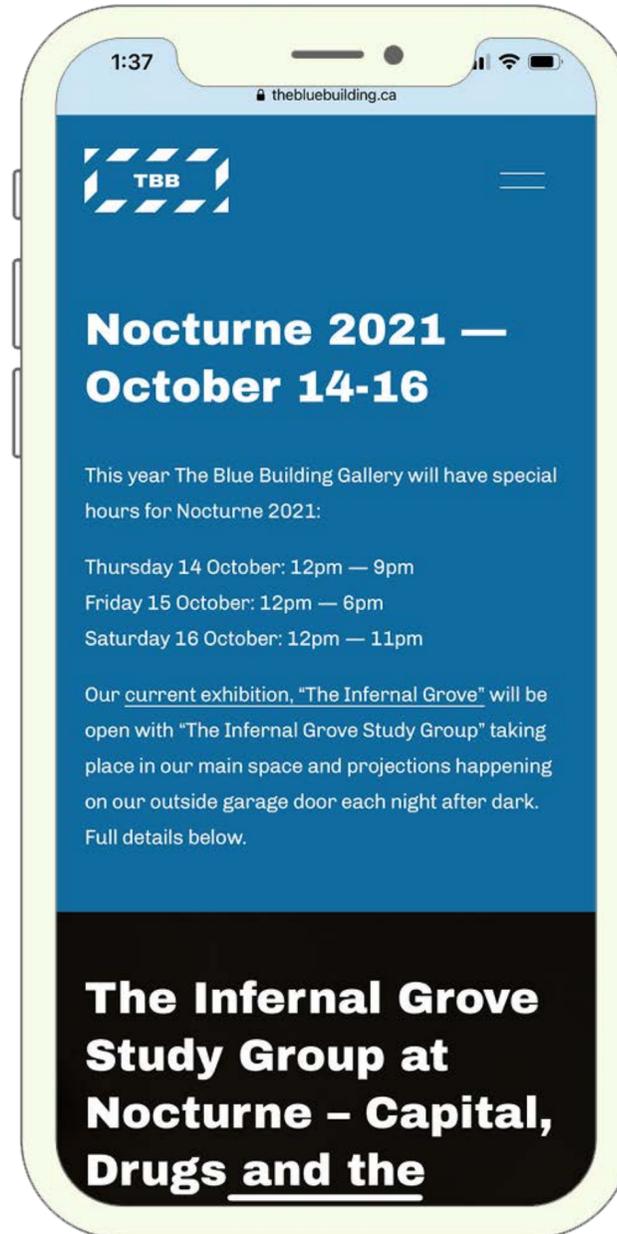
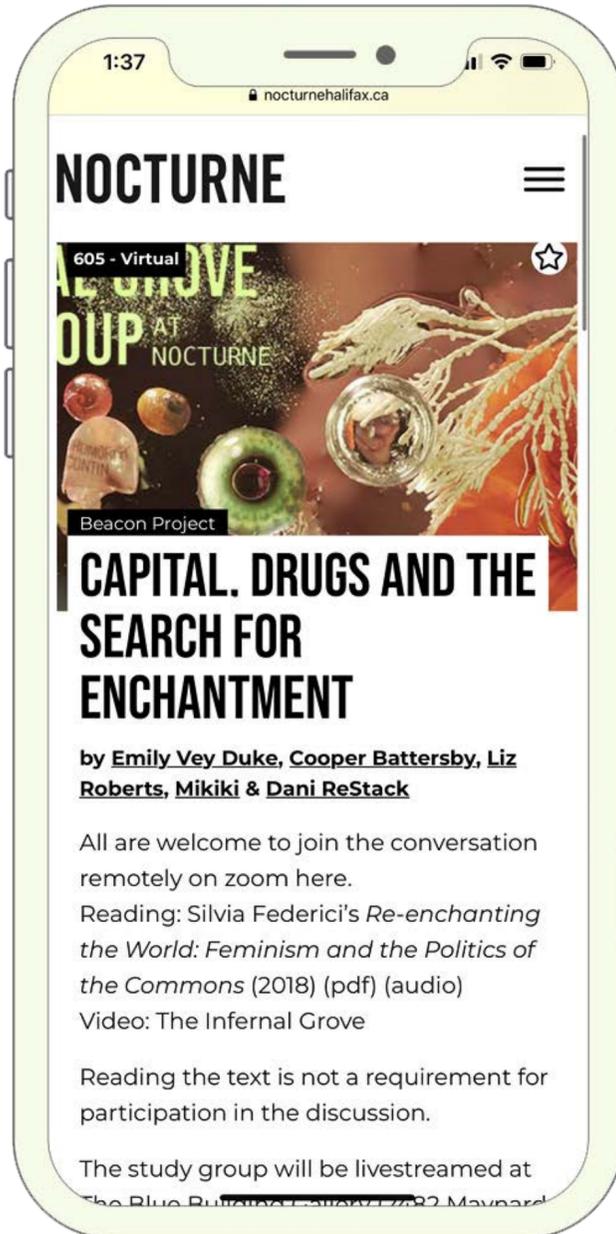


Zoom - Breakout Room 5



I LOVE HOW MUCH DESPENTES THERE IS IN THIS BOOK - IN ALL OF THE CHAPTERS! IN SEXUAL OPTIMISM AND DRUG FUGUE

“THE OPPOSITE OF ADDICTION IS NOT SOBRIETY BUT HUMAN CONNECTION” P. 165 - THIS FEELS A LITTLE “THE RANGE OF HUMAN EMOTION IS FEAR AND LOVE” ... IDK SEEMS WEIRDLY BASE TO PUT ‘HUMAN CONNECTION’ OUT THERE LIKE THAT. WHAT ABOUT THE SUBLIME? THE INHERENT EROTICISM OF THE SEA? THIS IS SUCH A STRANGE LINE FOR ME.



*CLICK TO ACCESS FULL ARTICLES

THANK YOU!

**THE INFERNAL GROVE PROJECT
BY DUKE+BATTERSBY**

© Soft Launch Studio