

ML

24-
25/26

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Threads: A story of a cohort's coming together.

This workbook has been completed by: Frances Richens
Date: Sep 2025



How to read this workbook...

This workbook contains a series of questions and prompts. It is designed so that any student on MA Intercultural Practices 24-25-26 could complete it to reflect on their first year. It aims to untangle and identify the threads that have brought us together as a cohort, while acknowledging that each student's experience and perspective is unique.

This particular workbook has been completed by student Frances Richens - her annotations appear in this font.

Colours are used to create visual divisions. Where they have additional meaning, a key is provided.

Key

This workbook is divided into three Acts and three Questions. A key at the bottom of each page indicates the relevant Act and Question.

Acts:

- Act 1: September to December 2024
- Act 2: January to March 2025
- Act 3: April to July 2025

Questions:

- What happened?
- What emerged?
- What remains?

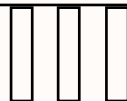
Audio



When this symbol appears in the bottom-left corner, you can click to hear audio with more information about what's on the page.

These blocks are filled in to indicate the Act.

These indicate the Question.



People

Students

Makhasiri Khanoei (Makha/M): Thai architect living and working in Singapore, who is developing her own artistic practice.

Kwok Man Ho (Berry): Video creator and AI artist who lives in her native Hong Kong.

Frances Richens: British writer and arts communication specialist who has spent the past few years based in Mexico.

Lilia O'Rourke: Bulgarian fashion stylist and lecturer who has spent most of her life living in the UK, based in London.

Jasmine Kuti-smith: Nigerian-British artist working across visual arts, performance and scenography, living in London.

Lauryn Langston: American with a background in global studies and fashion who has been living in Brazil for the past few years.

Sarah Josette Rainbird: Australian lawyer and arts worker with a cross-disciplinary practice and backgrounds in art history.

Khloe Parker: Art teacher with a background in linguistics who has British heritage but has lived most of her life in Malaysia.

Milana Prikhodko: Russian abstract painter with a magic practice who has been living for the past few years in Vietnam.

Georgie Udale: British writer and scenographer who has Italian heritage and works in wine importation, based in London.

Faculty

Marsha Bradfield: MAIP course leader, artist, curator, researcher and writer; grew up in Canada and is based in London.

Paul Haywood: Professor and leader of REBEL unit, artist, educator and researcher, based in Manchester, UK.

Map

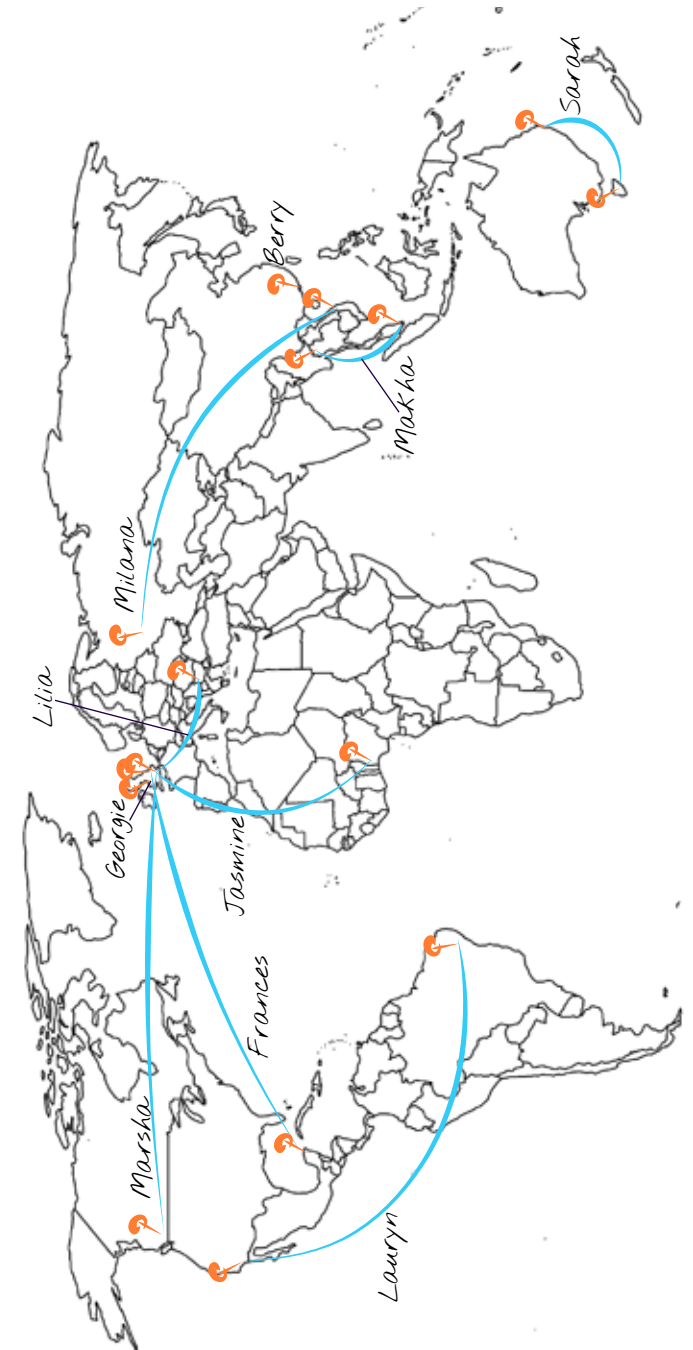
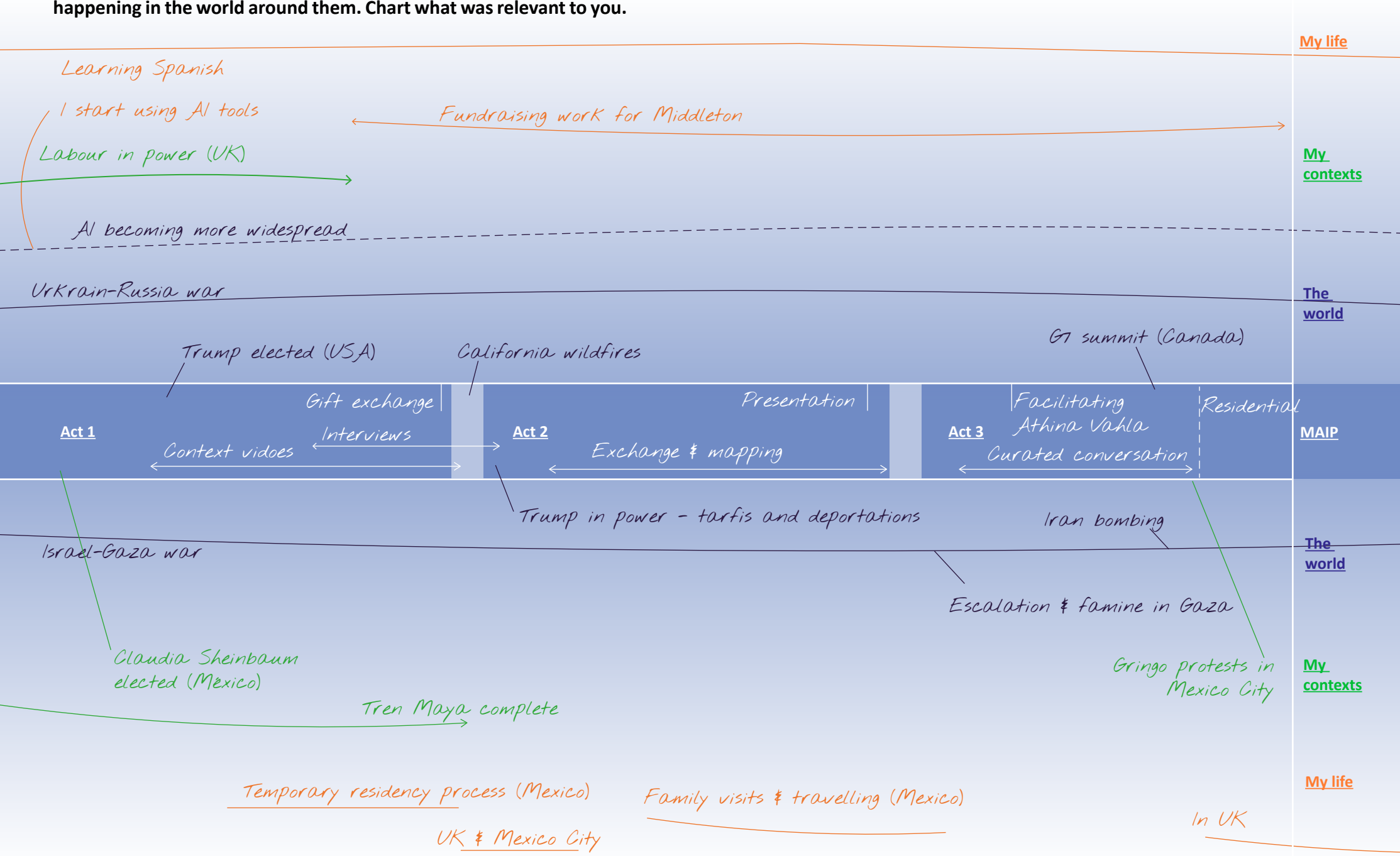


Fig 1

Everybody's experience of the course was affected by what was happening in the world around them. Chart what was relevant to you.



"How's the weather* with you?"

Act 1: September to December 2025

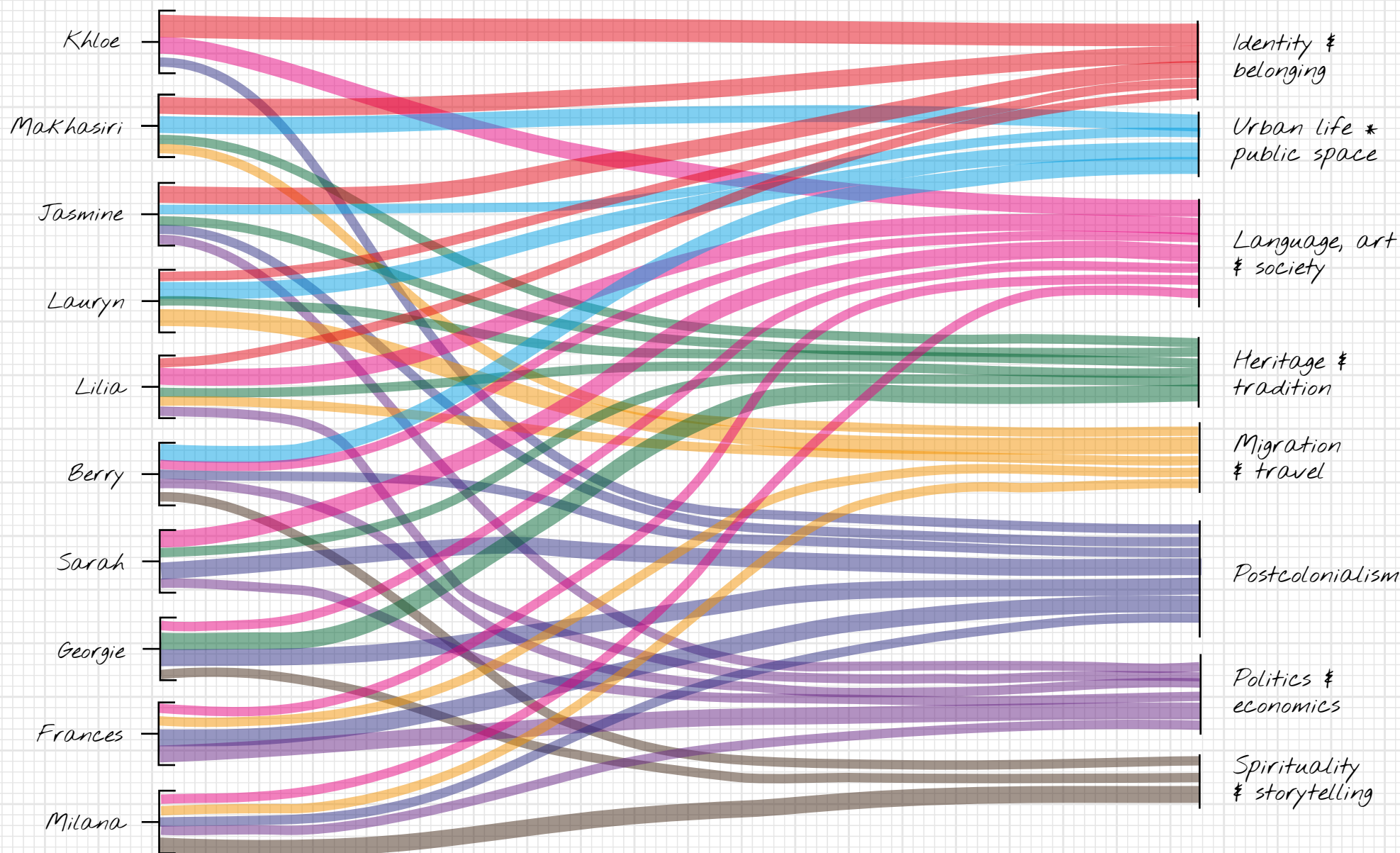
We introduced ourselves with three key words. We got to know the university's systems. We read key texts about interculturality and joined a reading group with students from Zurich University of the Arts. We started blogs and a group chat. We participated in the Fall Festival of Failure alongside year 2 students. We were introduced to REBEL as a tool for understanding our learning. We paired up and interviewed each other. We made videos that introduced ourselves and our cultural contexts. We practised giving and receiving feedback. In the final week before we broke for the holidays, we exchanged virtual gifts.

Keywords: Context, Connectivity, Complexity, Systems

Key references: Arjun Appadurai, Hannah Arendt, Dwight Conquergood, Christine Hine, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, bell hooks, Erving Goffman, Iwona Blazwick, Liz Lerman, DAS Graduate School, Joseph Campbell, Michael Dicks

*Internal and external

Our interests and approaches are shaped by our contact with each other. Chart the collective themes that emerged through Act 1, as you perceive them.



By the end of Act 1, we had become a community that...

- Knew something about each others' lives, pasts & interests
- Was joined by a shared sense of belonging & purpose
- Had begun to develop shared understandings, norms & language
- Held some deeper relationships formed through pair work
- Had navigated the vulnerable experience of sharing our creative work with each other, giving and receiving feedback

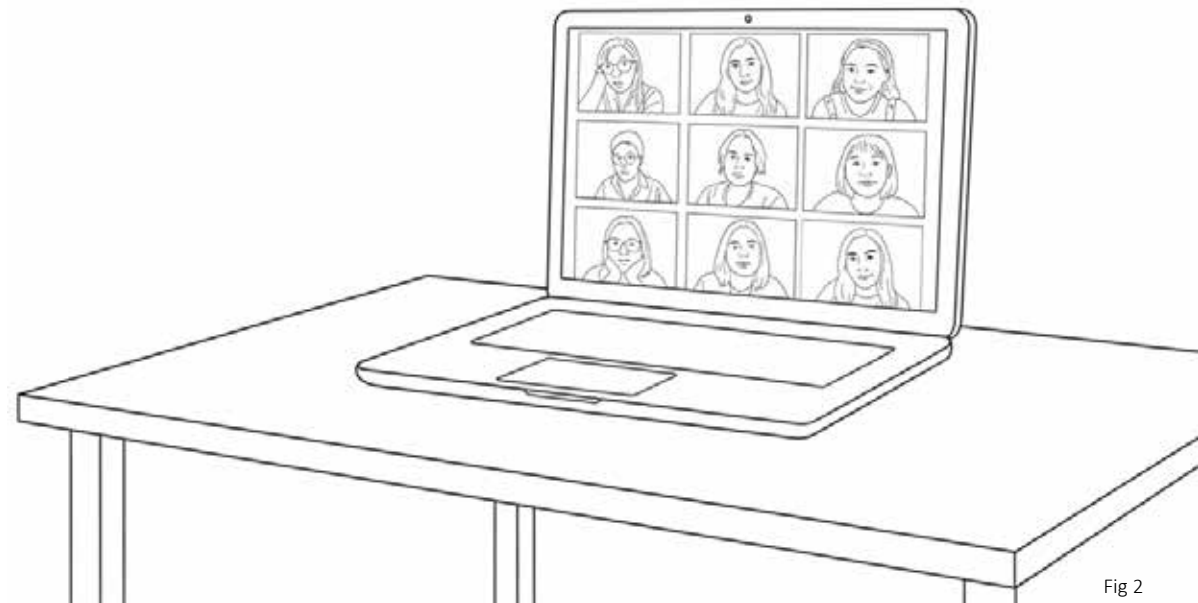


Fig 2

Me
(Frances Richens)

Peer interview

Makha

- Conversations about memory, music and sensory perception
- Singapore
- Migration

Exchange project

Milana

- Migration / travel
- Performance / ritual
- Visual art

Georgie

- London
- Food & drink
- Zines
- Performance

Khloe

- Food & drink
- Gardening
- Paper

Jasmine

- London & East England

Sarah

- Fundraising
- Art history
- Annaka Harris

Lauryn

- Migration / travel
- Values / ways of thinking

Lilia

- Convening
- Mutual help - conversation project
- Food & drink
- London

Marsha

- Interests: value, archives

Paul

- Manchester
- Systematic thinking

Angela

- Conversations about course & practice
- Land
- Canada

Berry

- Food & drink
- Storytelling

Shared experience of residential

Athina Vahla
(facilitated)

Pippa
(Decisions conversation)

Mina

2nd year MAIP students

Agnese

Tash

Tokyo Uni students

Friends, family, colleagues & collaborators

- Discussing themes & learnings (eg feedback)
- Sharing work - deepening relationships
- Creative project development

Within our cohort, each individual is building their own community around their participation in MAIP. Chart your own connections & sphere of influence inside and outside of the cohort.

"A chimera,
not
a
donkey"

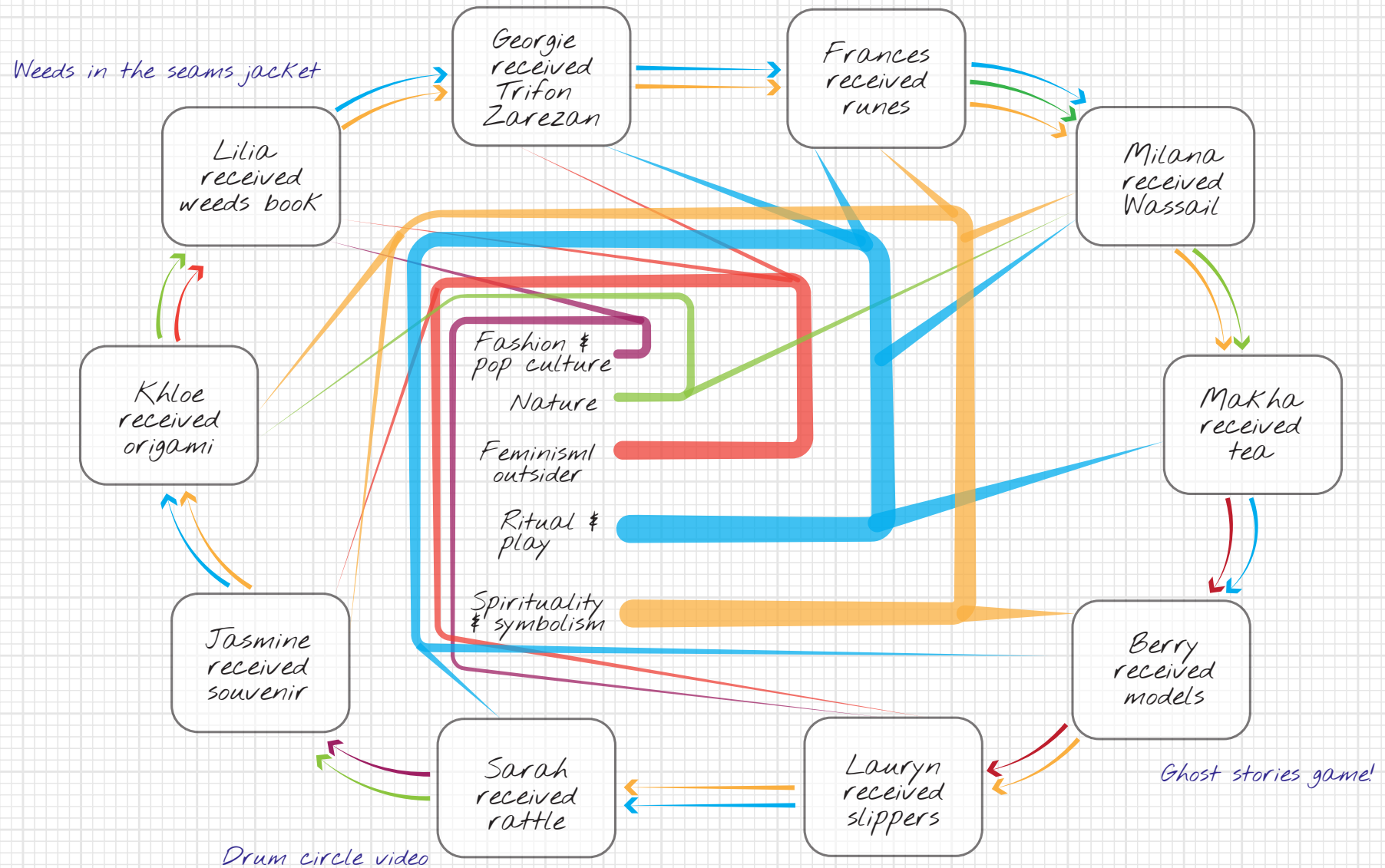
Act 2: January to March 2025

We shared our peer interviews and received feedback on our videos. We sent materials in the post to a peer, which they used as inspiration for an intercultural project. We took turns to convene open studio in pairs. We developed maps that represented our positionality in relation to our practice and to each other. We worked with REBEL, becoming familiar with UNESCO's cross-cutting competencies. We progressed our blogs and gave each other feedback on our maps. We shut down our group chat following a conflict. We each gave a presentation about the creative project of the peer to whom we'd gifted materials.

Keywords: Positionality, Materiality, Mapping, Relia

Key references: Kim V.L. England, Andrew Gary Darwin Holmes, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Ken G Brealey, Homi Bhabha, William Pope.L, Resma Menakem, Donna Haraway

During Act 2, we undertook an exchange, directly influencing each other's creative projects. Chart the collective themes that emerged, as you perceive them.



By the end of Act 2, we had become a community that...

- Had collectively navigated differences of perspective, experience & perception
- Had gotten to know the creative practice of one or two peers more deeply
- Had experimented with collaborating together and/or influencing each other's creative projects
- Shared in the vulnerable experience of having someone else reflect on our work
- Had a more developed shared Knowledge base



Fig 3

"Peel the onion; follow the spiral"

Act 3: April to July 2025

Each week, we hosted a visiting practitioner and took turns facilitating the discussion. We developed a shared Ethics code and reinstated our group chat. We introduced and reintroduced ourselves, and listened as others did the same. We took turns convening open studio, but sometimes nobody volunteered. We thought about how to apply the REBEL framework to our own projects. We made moving image documents that captured a curated conversation. We studied design techniques and anticipated chronicling our first year. We travelled to London and spent two weeks together, alongside year 2 students, alumni and visiting students from Tokyo University of the Arts.

Keywords: Consideration, Dialogue, Ethics, Norms, Value

Key references: Greer Mac Keogh*, Doreen Massey, Marsha Bradfield*, Bakhtin, Athina Vahla*, Miguel Escobar Varela, Michiko Oki*, Pramod K Nayar, Rosa Uddoh*, Sylvia Wynter, Justina Semčenkaitė*

*Visiting practitioners

By the end of Act 3, we had become a community that...

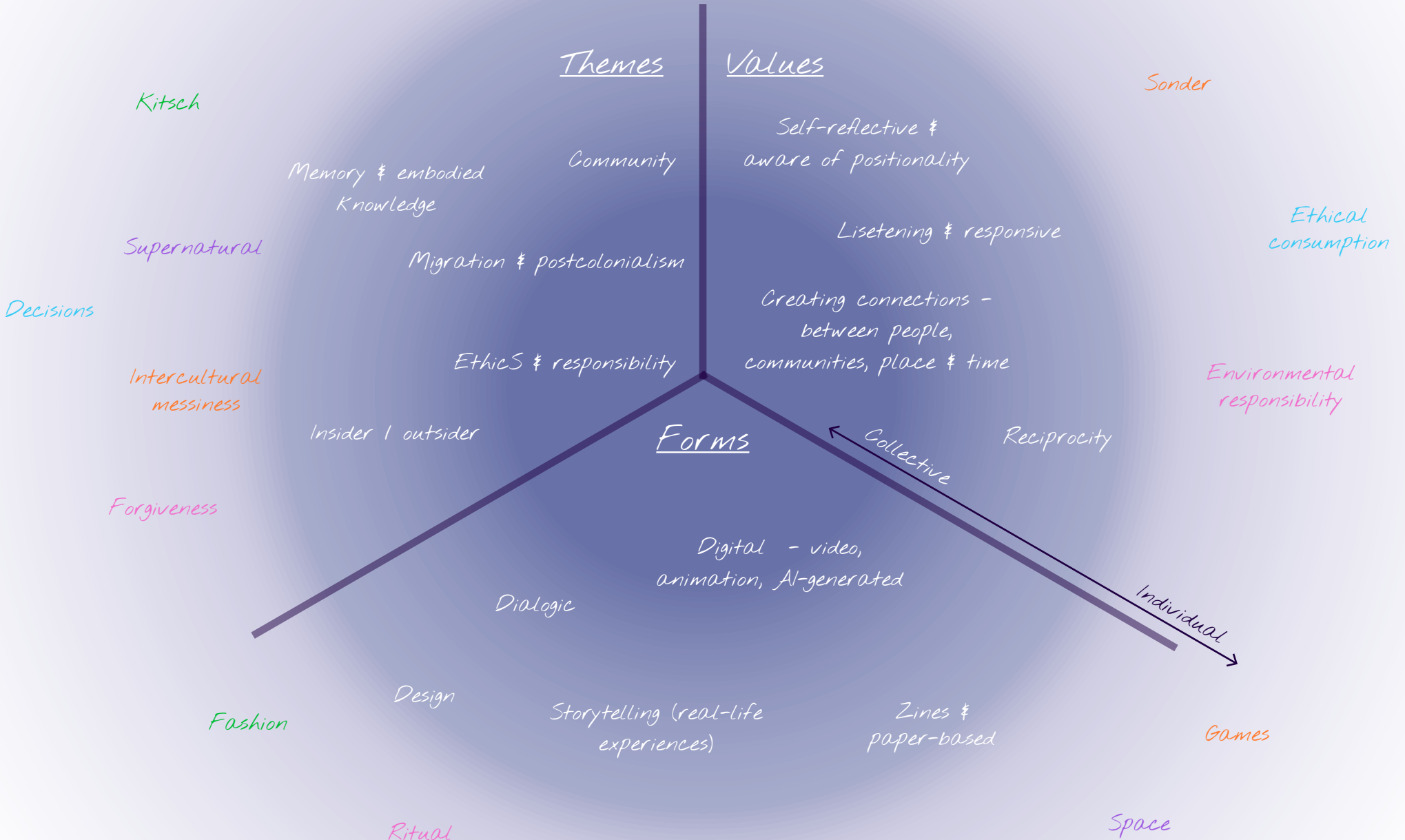
- Had started to support each others' creative processes in organic and independent ways
- Had built a greater sense of how we as a community fit in within a larger community
- Had a developed sense of what binds us together and what marks us each as distinct
- Had an emerging shared set of values and ethics
- Had produced a body of creative work, which could be seen as representing a connected, collective practice

And, by the end of the London residential, we had become a community of individuals who had hugged one another, who had laughed together, had sat around a table and drawn on the same piece of paper, had sat around a table and shared a meal, had witnessed each other's idiosyncrasies and eccentricities, had disagreed and found consensus, had developed shared jokes, had discussed TV shows and books and family and love and shopping, had cried and commiserated, had bought each other drinks and given impromptu gifts, had walked London's streets together, gotten lost together, bumped into one another and texted to say "I got home safe, good night..."



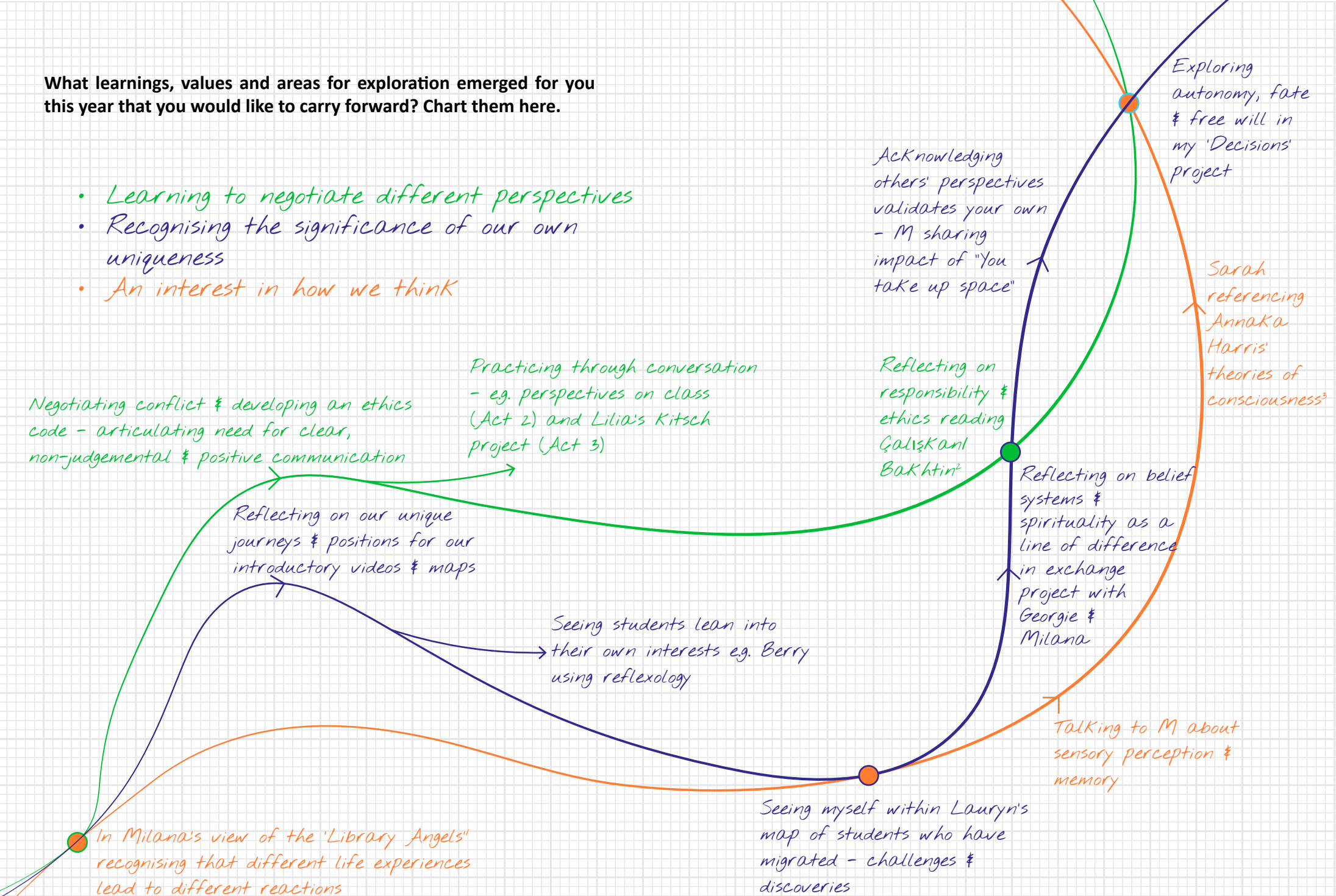
Fig 4

By Act 3, we had begun to develop a shared practice within the context of the course. Chart the characteristics of this practice here, as you perceive it.



What learnings, values and areas for exploration emerged for you this year that you would like to carry forward? Chart them here.

- Learning to negotiate different perspectives
- Recognising the significance of our own uniqueness
- An interest in how we think



Images

Figure 1. Myvolcano (2011). *World Location Map SVG for Xcelsius*. [Map] Available at: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:World_Map.svg (Accessed: 9 September 2025).

Figure 2. Gemini (2025) AI generated image by Gemini based on a screenshot of a video call with prompts: 'Create a simple line drawing of this screenshot'; and 'Create a simple line drawing of a laptop on a desk with this image appearing on the laptop screen'. 22 September.

Figure 3. Gemini (2025) AI generated image by Gemini based on a still of the film by Prikhodko, M. (2025) 'Awakening of the Canvas' with prompt: 'Create a simple line drawing of this image, it should include the figure and headdress, drum, table and its contents but none of the background'. 22 September.

Figure 4. Gemini (2025) AI generated image by Gemini based on an original photo by Frances Richens with prompt: 'Create a simple line drawing of this photo, featuring the leg, hand and bark but none of the background details'. 22 September.

All other graphics are original works by Frances Richens.

References

¹ Jordan, J. (2006) 'In the Footnotes of Library Angels: A Study Room Guide on Live Art & activism', Live Art Development Agency. Available at: <https://www.thisisliveart.co.uk/resources/in-the-footnotes-of-library-angels-a-bibliography-of-insurrectionary-imagination-2006/> (Accessed: 24 September 2025).

² Çalışkan, S. (2006) 'Ethical Aesthetics /Aesthetic Ethics: The Case of Bakhtin', *Journal of Arts and Sciences*, (5), pp. 1–15.

³ Harris, A. (2025) *Lights On* [Podcast]. 18 March. Available at: <https://annakaharris.com/lights-on/> (Accessed: 24 September 2025).

