Nurturing Third Places: Konstlek på Råby as Artistic Research and Practice for Resilient Creative Communities

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Abstract

This paper showcases Konstlek på Råby, a decade-long community art space in Västerås, Sweden, as a case study in practitioner-led artistic exploration where ethics are integral from the start, not an afterthought. Portrayed and analysed through the co-developed Moral Aesthetic Action (MAA) framework—which embeds ethical imperatives at the heart of creative intervention—our Art in Action Research (AiAR) explores how Konstlek cultivates a liberatory 'third place' (Oldenburg, 1999). We articulate the 'Råbymodel,' a practice-derived approach revealing how core MAA principles—including morally driven disruption, fostering creative indeterminacy (Klinger, 2024), robust practitioner support, and principled 'ethical refusal'—are vital for building youth empowerment and community resilience. This research offers transferable, actionable insights for deeply embedding ethics within community art practice and generating impactful, practitioner-led knowledge.

Keywords: Moral Aesthetic Action (MAA), Råbymodel, Action Research (AR), Community Art, Aesthetic Action (AA), Third Place Theory

Purpose and Background

Starting with Ethical Engagement: The Genesis and Evolution of Konstlek på Råby

This paper delves into Konstlek på Råby, an ongoing community art space in Västerås, Sweden, presenting it as a case study in practitioner-led artistic research. Our exploration begins not with a community in isolation, but with a foundational question: What does it mean to place ethics not as a secondary consideration or an 'add-on,' but at the very centre of artistic practice? For nearly a decade, Konstlek på Råby has served as a vibrant nexus of creative expression and community engagement within a socioeconomically vulnerable neighbourhood. Rooted in Oldenburg's (1999) concept of the 'third place,' its journey traces a 'red thread' from early initiatives like *Råby Planet, Ballongen på Råby, BKK* (the Children's ArtClub) and the mobile, place-activating *Konsthall Ur och Skur*, to its current iteration as an established local art space *Konstlek på Råby*.



From Råby Planet 2018, Foto: Ricard Estay

This evolution—rich with learning, adaptation, and a commitment to place-making and responsive practice—forms a core element of our artistic research. Indeed, it is from the sustained, relational, and ethically demanding practitioner-led artistic exploration conducted

at Konstlek på Råby over nearly a decade that the core tenets of the Moral Aesthetic Action (MAA) framework (Lindblom, 2025) – our primary analytical lens in this paper – were first revealed, tested, and forged. While MAA has since proven applicable in diverse educational and creative contexts, its genesis lies in the lived realities and emergent challenges of nurturing this specific 'third place'. This paper, therefore, not only presents Konstlek's evolving practice – what we term the **Råby model** – but also articulates and grounds the MAA framework through which we understand its contribution to building youth empowerment and community resilience. For those of us embedded in community life—in the rhythms of after-school programs, summer workshops, shared meals, and informal mentorship—ethics are not optional; they are the very conditions that make the work meaningful and sustainable. This paper articulates insights woven from our experiences as co-practitioners, a role demanding continuous reflection on our engagement and influence within the community context, from collective wisdom, and from knowledge that grows slowly, relationally, and sometimes quietly.



Konsthall Ur & Skur, and the now permanent Konstlek på Råby premises.

Guiding Frameworks, Context, and Aims

The Moral Aesthetic Action (MAA) framework (Lindblom, 2025), which guides our analysis, emerged from the insights of years, reflection and action. It was born from a frustration with academic and artistic frameworks that often treat ethics as external to the core creative or research process; MAA, in contrast, is designed to navigate the inherent complexities of such work by embedding ethical deliberation from initiation through to reflection.

Operating within the Swedish context, Konstlek benefits from municipal funding structures which support accessible, free culture programs. This model fosters meaningful, sustained engagement and offers a point of reflection when considering other contexts where community art might be shaped by different drivers. While acknowledging diverse global ecosystems, our experience at Konstlek shows the profound impact of a consistent, accessible, and free-to-participate model.

This paper aims to present and analyse Konstlek's evolving practice—what we term the **Råby model**—and its contribution to fostering resilient communities. We do so through the intertwined lenses of:

1. **Art in Action Research (AiAR)** (Lämmli, 2022; Lindhult, 2008) as our core research paradigm, emphasising our role as active practitioners in an ongoing cycle of action, reflection, and knowledge creation.

2. **Aesthetic Action (AA)** (Klinger, 2024) is a key conceptual tool, particularly its emphasis on 'indeterminacy as an end in its own right' and the creation of a 'bond without terms,' for understanding our interventions.

3. **Moral Aesthetic Action (MAA)** (Lindblom, 2025) as our guiding ethical and practical framework, developed from our practice to integrate ethical considerations, social justice, and care from the outset of any creative intervention.

Third Place Theory (Oldenburg, 1999) for understanding the social space Konstlek creates.

The emancipatory pedagogies of **Freire (2000) and hooks (2000)** for informing our relational and ethical engagement, particularly our critique of 'banking' education and our commitment to a 'pedagogy of love.'

As practitioners deeply embedded in this work, we explore how these theoretical frameworks inform our challenge-based inquiry and practitioner-led knowledge creation. We aim to contribute to the broader discourse on artistic research for and with creative communities. By sharing the Konstlek 'Råby model'—its historical development, theoretical underpinnings, practical applications (such as participatory zine-making as a 'determinate performance of indeterminacy'), and inherent challenges (funding, staffing, organisational navigation)—we seek to:

- Offer transferable insights into developing and sustaining community-driven arts initiatives in diverse socio-cultural settings.
- Demonstrate the Råby model's transformative potential, informed by AiAR, MAA, AA, and pedagogies of love, in fostering social innovation, youth empowerment, and community resilience.
- Invite a critical and reflective cross-cultural dialogue, on shared strategies for strengthening artistic research and practice that empower community-driven initiatives and shape more inclusive creative spaces.

The paper will first outline the methodological approach, detailing how we weave theory and practice at Konstlek. Subsequently, we will present key findings and illustrative examples, drawing on our practitioner reflections and documented practice. The discussion will then reflect on challenges and successes, focusing on the ethical dimensions of unlearning, quality, refusal, and relationality that have shaped MAA and the Råby model. We will conclude with reflections on the historical threads of Konstlek, the significance of indeterminacy as ethical infrastructure, and the nature of governance as ethical praxis, before extending an open invitation for continued shared inquiry.

Approach and Methodology

A Relational Weave: Art in Action Research (AiAR) at Konstlek

The research underpinning Konstlek på Råby and the reflections articulated in this paper are not conducted from a detached, observational distance. As co-authors, we are also co-practitioners deeply embedded in its daily life and evolution. Our research, therefore, is an intrinsic part of the living structure of Konstlek. This embeddedness is central to our chosen paradigm: **Art in Action Research (AiAR)**, as defined by Lämmli (2022) and aligning with principles of quality in interactive research outlined by Lindhult (2008). Our AiAR is always filtered through our lived experience, emphasising an ongoing, cyclical process of action, reflection, and collective knowledge creation. At the core of our approach is the understanding that knowledge does not solely emerge from pre-defined systems or

formal studies, but crucially from **reflection-in-action** (Schön, 1983) within the practice itself. This iterative engagement allows for dynamic adaptation and learning, central to both the vitality of Konstlek and the integrity of our research.

Guiding Frameworks: Operationalizing MAA, AA, and Supporting Theories

Guiding this AiAR process and central to the Råby model is the **Moral Aesthetic Action (MAA) framework** (Lindblom, 2025). MAA represents a critical evolution and ethical operationalization of Klinger's (2024) philosophical concept of Aesthetic Action (AA). While AA provides the 'engine' for disrupting established norms and creating conditions for indeterminacy by fostering a 'bond without terms,' MAA synthesizes this disruptive openness with an explicit, multi-layered **ethical compass**. This compass draws upon foundational principles of justice (Rawls, 1971), the relational ethic of love-as-practice (hooks, 2000), the critical responsibility of bearing witness to injustice (Baldwin, 1987, 2016), and the profound responsibility for the Other (Levinas, 1969, 1998). This integration ensures that the generative potential of Aesthetic Action is consciously and consistently directed towards ethically desirable, just, and liberatory ends. The application of MAA involves navigating the inherent dynamism and potential tensions between its six interconnected tenets: 1) morally driven disruption; 2) iterative transformation; 3) relational impact; 4) explicit moral responsibility; 5) maintenance of complexity; and 6) an overarching moral imperative for societal benefit—provide a lens for our ethically grounded and aesthetically potent interventions. **The application of MAA involves navigating the inherent dynamism and potential tensions between these tenets; for instance, balancing the impetus for 'morally driven disruption' with the necessity of 'maintaining complexity' and ensuring 'relational impact' is cared for, a process demanding ongoing ethical deliberation and praxis.**

Central to the operationalisation of MAA at Konstlek is Florian Klinger's (2024) philosophical concept of **Aesthetic Action (AA)**. We utilise AA in practice by designing open-ended creative activities and provocations. These prioritise the process of questioning and interaction over predefined artistic products, creating conditions for ‘indeterminacy'. This involves fostering what Klinger describes as a ‘bond without terms’—a connection based on shared creative exploration rather than fixed roles or outcomes. Such encounters, which often trigger ‘disorienting dilemmas' (Mezirow, 1991, 2000), are understood as catalysts for transformative learning. Klinger's deeper philosophical exploration of AA as the ‘determinate performance of an indeterminacy,’ a ‘form as question,’ and its capacity to unsettle and impact historical action through its unique form, informs our understanding of the transformative potential of our work. **MAA, therefore, can be understood as AA consciously guided by an explicit ethical compass, ensuring that the openness generated by indeterminacy serves just and humanising ends.**

This AiAR framework, guided by MAA and actualised through AA, is further enriched and specified by:

1. **Third Place Theory** (Oldenburg, 1999): This informs our understanding of Konstlek's function as a vital community anchor fostering creative interaction beyond home and school, a characteristic we continually assess as the space evolves.

2. **Emancipatory Pedagogies** (Freire, 2000; hooks, 2000): Freire's critique of ‘banking’ education and his call for problem-posing, dialogical approaches, alongside hooks' emphasis on a 'pedagogy of love' (underscoring care, mutual respect, and valuing individual experience), are cornerstones of Konstlek's pedagogical ethos.

3. **Countering Commodification & Fostering Belonging** (Chan, 2023): Our AiAR approach critically examines how Konstlek's activities resist commodifying pressures and

genuinely contribute to the social fabric and collective identity of the Råby community, fostering a sense of belonging.

4. **The Arti-fact** (Schiesser, 2015): Tangible outputs (zines, workshop designs, documented reflections) and evolving understandings are viewed as dynamic 'arti-facts.' These materials or processual traces are imbued with practitioner-generated knowledge and serve as crucial resources for ongoing inquiry, reflection, and knowledge dissemination within our AiAR cycles.

Data Generation and Analysis in Practice

The insights shared in this paper are drawn from sources inherent to our relational AiAR practice. Recurring practices scaffold our method, including:

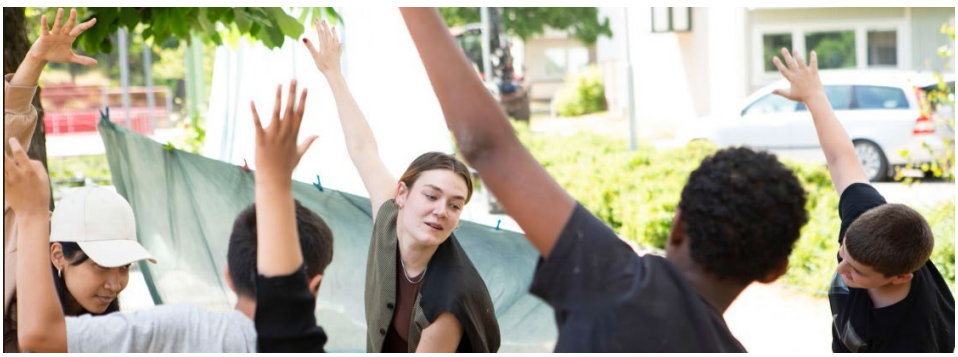
• **Practitioner Reflection:** This is a primary data source, involving ongoing dialogues, personal journals, and critical reflections by us as co-authors and core practitioners. This provides a subjective reflective layer, particularly when considering comparative aspects of community art and navigating the interplay of theory and practice, **while also prompting reflexivity on our own roles, biases, and the power dynamics inherent in our embedded positions.**

• **Documentation of Practice:** This includes photographic and video records of workshops/activities (with ethical considerations for participant anonymity/consent, following GDPR), examples of art created by participants, and internal project reports/plans (e.g., Konstlek på Råby Internal Activity Report, 2023; historical documentation from BKK – The Children's Art Club – and Konsthall Ur och Skur).

• **Anecdotal Records & Observations:** Detailed notes from interactions, informal participant feedback, and observations of engagement within Konstlek contribute to a rich, qualitative understanding of the project's dynamics.

• **Theoretical Engagement as Data Generation:** The continuous interplay between our lived practice and these theoretical frameworks constitutes an active form of data generation and analysis. As we test, adapt, and refine our understandings (Lindhult, 2008) in dialogue with these theories, new insights emerge.

Our analytical approach is iterative and interpretive. We seek insights, and illustrative examples within the collected data that demonstrate the principles and impact of our research. These empirical observations are consistently connected back to our theoretical underpinnings, particularly MAA and Klinger's AA, to build a nuanced understanding of Konstlek's practice. The comparative reflections on community art models, subtly informed by our varied cultural and academic experiences, are integrated as a vital part of our reflective practitioner insight within this AiAR process. We know theory only lives if it can breathe in practice.



Movement workshop with Tova.

Results and Findings: The Råbymodel in Action

Our sustained Art in Action Research (AiAR) at Konstlek på Råby, guided by the Moral Aesthetic Action (MAA) framework and operationalised through interventions aligned with Klinger's (2024) philosophy of Aesthetic Action (AA), has yielded several significant findings. These insights, drawn from our reflective praxis as deeply embedded practitioners and documented through various 'arti-facts' (Schiesser, 2015), demonstrate the potential of this approach to foster youth empowerment, community building, and generate contextually rich, practitioner-led knowledge (Lindhult, 2008). The following subsections detail key aspects of the **Råby model** as it manifests in practice.



A group of children's drawings on a line.

Cultivating a Liberatory Third Space through MAA and Intentional Indeterminacy

Konstlek på Råby consistently manifests as an Oldenburgian (1999) 'third place,' providing an essential informal social and creative hub. Its documented historical evolution from earlier, more mobile initiatives to its current established physical space reflects a deep-seated commitment to the Råby community and an ongoing, iterative refinement of its operational ethos (Lindhult, 2008). This space is actively shaped through MAA's principles of morally driven disruption and iterative transformation, particularly via emergent, youth-led programming.

A prime example is the "Vad är Konst?" (What is Art?) summer zine workshop. This initiative was not a pre-scripted, top-down directive. Instead, as I (Simon Lindblom) observed in my role supporting the Konstlek team, it emerged from the proactive engagement of a former youth summer worker, , who sought further involvement. The core Konstlek team responded by securing funding and, crucially, empowering Tova to lead two new summer youth workers with full autonomy. The directive was simply to *lead an exploration*, with no predefined goals or deliverables. This intentional facilitation of 'indeterminacy as an end in its own right' (Klinger, 2024, p. 134) by 'easing, instead of giving or demanding,' allowed the project's focus—the question "What is art?"—to emerge organically from the youth themselves. The resulting zines, as 'arti-facts,' embodied not just creative outputs but the youth's journey through meaning-making and democratic agency (Freire, 2000).



Vad är konst?/What is art? After four weeks we know less than when we started. Cars- Italia, 8 years.

Beyond specific workshops, this principle of intentional indeterminacy and youth co-creation is a consistent feature. For instance, the physical layout and decoration of the Konstlek space itself have evolved through ongoing, informal input from the youth, who often rearrange furniture, add their artwork to the walls without formal curation, or suggest new materials and activities.

The pedagogical ethos at Konstlek, deeply informed by hooks' (2000) 'Pedagogy of Love,' translates into a tangible prioritisation of a nurturing environment characterised by care, mutual respect, and safety. Cultivating this 'beloved community' is paramount for creating the conditions where Klinger's (2024) 'bond without terms' can authentically emerge. Observations from our shared practice, detailed in internal reports (e.g., Konstlek på Råby Activity Log, 2023), consistently show children and youth engaging in collaborative problem-solving (e.g., collectively deciding how to share limited popular art supplies, or helping each other with challenging techniques observed during open studio time), offering mutual support, and expressing a strong sense of ownership over the space. This direct focus on relational well-being and the co-creation of a supportive atmosphere actively counters the commodification of urban public spaces (Chan, 2023) and is a direct manifestation of MAA's commitment to relational impact and explicit moral responsibility. **For example, a recurring observation is older youth spontaneously mentoring younger children in drawing techniques or helping them navigate the use of new materials, interactions that are encouraged but not formally structured, fostering organic peer-to-peer support and strengthening community bonds.**

The 'Råby model': Ethical Infrastructure and Practitioner Support as Core Components

A crucial finding is that the success and sustainability of the 'Råby model' hinge significantly on the authenticity of engagement and the robust, ethical support structures

underpinning the practitioners' work. This moves beyond pedagogy into the realm of organisational practice and an ethics of care.

The ‘lived experience,’ where "every meeting, every person and every-day matters," nurtured by committed individuals including Katrin Ingelstedt, Jenny Berntsson, Leif Jonsson, Patrick Kretschek, Anna Törrönen, Wichanan Glunrawd, Lina Ahtola, transforms MAA from an abstract framework into a palpable reality. This ensures Konstlek transcends being a superficial ‘band-aid’ to becoming an integral, transformative element of local society. The role of those supporting Konstlek, including the Konstfrämjandet Västmanland board and management, extends to navigating the complexities of funding, local politics, and, crucially, fostering a psychologically safe and supportive working climate for the team. The importance of "BE[ing] there"—to work for their employment safety, to work with psychological safety climate, to over and over again make decisions that look forward—is paramount. This commitment to the well-being and stability of the practitioners, including fair pay and manageable workloads wherever possible, provides the foundation for them to facilitate empowering and ethically sound experiences for the youth. This aligns with Lindhult's (2008) broader understanding of the conditions necessary for quality in interactive research and highlights a core, often invisible, strength of the Råby model: **an aesthetic infrastructure of care that prioritizes human sustainability alongside programmatic goals.** It is important to note that this is an ongoing struggle, and often those most deeply engaged have given far more than their roles demanded, sometimes to the point of burnout, highlighting the continuous need to advocate for and secure adequate resources to truly sustain this ethical infrastructure.

Unsettling Societal Norms: Aesthetic Action, Ethical Refusal, and Localised Disruption

The ‘unsettling’ at Konstlek på Råby, informed by Klinger's (2024) Aesthetic Action (AA), is not a random disruption but targets specific societal norms. This includes challenging prevailing narratives, both those that frame Råby primarily as an 'underprivileged place' and broader societal assumptions that impose a success-mentality where monetary or measurable worth often trumps other values. Konstlek's operational ethos embodies what we term **’ethical refusal’—a core practitioner competence within the Råby model and a crucial operational aspect of Moral Aesthetic Action.** This involves a conscious, principled rejection of demands from funding bodies, institutional pressures, or dominant societal narratives that would compromise the intrinsic values and ethical commitments of the third place, such as its dedication to open exploration, process-oriented engagement, and genuine human connection over purely instrumental or commodified outcomes (Chan, 2023). This practice of ethical refusal is a powerful Aesthetic Action in itself, safeguarding the integrity of Konstlek's unique, ethically grounded environment.

This practice of ethical refusal is a powerful Aesthetic Action in itself. It involves a conscious decision-making process within the Konstlek team and its supporting structures to decline opportunities, partnerships, or framings that might compromise the intrinsic values of the work—such as open exploration, process-oriented engagement, and genuine human connection over commodification (aligning with Chan, 2023). By asserting the community's right to define its own narratives and measures of success, Konstlek protects the integrity of the 'third place' it offers. This ensures it remains a space where value is found in the journey of creative discovery and relational depth, rather than in predetermined outputs, competitive metrics, or externally imposed agendas that may not align with the community's actual needs or Konstlek's foundational principles of care and empowerment. This consistent, often quiet, form of refusal constitutes a significant, localised, morally driven disruption to dominant operational modes and expectations, safeguarding the unique, ethically grounded environment that defines the Råby model.

Yet, as James Baldwin reminded us:

"I never have been in despair about the world. I've been enraged by it... I can't afford despair. I can't tell my nephew, my niece. You can't tell the children there's no hope." – James Baldwin, 1987

This sentiment resonates deeply with the ethos of Konstlek. Even in exhaustion, the commitment to showing up—with hope, integrity, and love—has remained unwavering.

These findings collectively illustrate key facets of the **Råby model** in action. They demonstrate how Konstlek på Råby, through its MAA-informed AiAR, effectively operationalises complex philosophical and pedagogical concepts into impactful community practice, fostering a liberatory third space, underscoring the vital role of ethical infrastructure and practitioner support, and enacting a principled unsettling of limiting societal norms.

Discussion: Interpretation and Implications of Moral Aesthetic Action at Konstlek

The findings from Konstlek på Råby, when viewed through the integrated lenses of Art in Action Research (AiAR), our co-developed Moral Aesthetic Action (MAA) framework, and Florian Klinger's (2024) philosophy of Aesthetic Action (AA), offer significant insights into the practice and transformative potential of community-engaged artistic research. This discussion interprets these findings, focusing on the liberatory power of intentionally facilitated indeterminacy, the critical importance of ethical practitioner support and organisational praxis, the nuanced unsettling of societal norms, and the broader implications for understanding quality and generating knowledge in artistic research.

The Liberatory Power of Intentionally Facilitated Indeterminacy: From Klinger's AA to Konstlek's Praxis

Our work at Konstlek demonstrates a practical and impactful translation of Klinger's (2024) often abstract philosophical concepts of Aesthetic Action into tangible community art pedagogy. The genesis and an ongoing characteristic of activities like the "Vad är Konst?" zine workshop, emerging from facilitator initiative and youth-led exploration rather than prescriptive plans, illustrate a core principle we foster: the 'determinate performance of an indeterminacy' (Klinger, 2024). Reflecting on this process, the role of the core Konstlek team and its practitioners is to create the conditions for this indeterminacy by "easing, instead of giving or demanding," allowing indeterminacy itself to become an 'end in its own right' (Klinger, 2024). This is a direct application of MAA's tenet of 'morally driven disruption,' as it challenges the power dynamics inherent in traditional, outcome-focused creative and educational settings (Freire, 2000).



Arti-facts

The zines and other ‘arti-facts’ (Schiesser, 2015) produced are not merely creative outputs but embody the youth's journey through meaning-making, critical inquiry, and democratic agency. This process underscores how Klingerian AA, by ‘suspending established terms’ and fostering a ‘bond without terms’ (Klinger, 2024), can empower individuals to co-construct knowledge and articulate their unique perspectives. This unsettling of predefined meanings, what Klinger terms a ‘form as question’ (2024), creates the fertile ground for Mezirow's (1991, 2000) ‘disorienting dilemmas,’ often the catalysts for profound transformative learning. The liberatory aspect lies in this shift from passive reception to active co-creation of meaning and value, directly empowering participants.



Arti-facts

Ethical Infrastructure as the Bedrock of Quality in AiAR: The Råby model’s Core

A central argument emerging from our research is that the ‘Råby model's’ success and sustainability are inextricably linked to the often-invisible ethical infrastructure that supports its practitioners. This interpretation aligns with Lindhult's (2008) criteria for quality in interactive research, suggesting that such quality is met not just through pedagogical innovation, but through a sustained, ethical commitment to the well-being, agency, and professional sustainability of the practitioners themselves.

Reflecting on the role of Konstfrämjandet Västmanland's board and management, alongside the continuous efforts of the Konstlek team, emphasises that MAA extends beyond direct artistic intervention into organisational praxis. The commitment to "BE[ing] there... to work for their employment safety, to work with psychological safety climate... to over and over again take decisions that are looking forward" is fundamental. This consistent, ethical support, built by a ‘lineage of dedicated individuals,’ ensures practitioners like Wichanan have the stability and emotional resources to genuinely enact a ‘Pedagogy of Love’ (hooks, 2000). This ‘lived experience,’ where "every meeting, every person and every day matters," ensures that MAA is not an abstract ideal but a palpable reality. This authentic, ethically consistent environment is what allows the Klingerian ‘bond without terms’ to flourish with participants, validating Lindhult's (2008) assertion that the quality of interactive research is deeply tied to its contextual and relational integrity. **The Råby model, therefore, posits that the 'aesthetic infrastructure of care'—encompassing fair remuneration, psychological safety, manageable workloads, and supportive governance—is not a desirable add-on**

but a non-negotiable prerequisite for high-quality, ethically sound, and sustainable community-engaged artistic research.

Aesthetic Action as Social Critique: The Impact of Ethical Refusal

Konstlek's practice of 'unsettling,' informed by Klinger's (2024) AA, is interpreted as a targeted and ethically considered engagement with, and critique of, prevailing societal norms. The 'ethical refusal' described in our findings—declining framings or opportunities that compromise intrinsic values—is more than a protective mechanism; it is a proactive form of social critique enacted through aesthetic action. By choosing not to align with instrumentalizing agendas, Konstlek asserts different values—those of process, exploration, human connection, and intrinsic worth—over purely utilitarian or market-driven logics. This aligns with MAA's tenets of 'morally driven disruption' and contributing to 'societal benefit' beyond mere economic terms. The capacity for 'ethical refusal,' as demonstrated at Konstlek, therefore emerges not merely as a reactive defence, but as a proactive, teachable skill essential for practitioners navigating the often-conflicting demands of community work, institutional expectations, and ethical integrity. It is a vital strategy for maintaining the 'moral' in Moral Aesthetic Action when faced with systemic pressures.

The aim is not simply to critique from a distance, but to actively construct an alternative social space, a 'third place' (Oldenburg, 1999), where these different values hold sway and can be lived. The ethical navigation of this unsettling lies in its grounding in care, affirmation (hooks, 2000), and a commitment to the community's self-definition. This ensures that the questioning of norms is an empowering act of opening possibilities and asserting agency, rather than a purely deconstructive or destabilising one. **This highlights a nuanced aspect of MAA: that disruption, to be morally effective, must be coupled with a constructive, care-centered vision for what *could be*, actively shaping an alternative rather than merely pointing out flaws.**

The Iterative Weave of AiAR: Generating Practitioner Knowledge and Bicultural Insights

The entire journey of Konstlek på Råby embodies the iterative spirit of AiAR (Lämmli, 2022). The 'red thread' tracing its evolution is a testament to continuous learning, adaptation, and reflection-in-action (Schön, 1983)—a practical demonstration of Lindhult's (2008) principles for quality in interactive research. The consistent practitioner reflections, documented dialogues, and adaptation of practices in response to emergent needs have deeply enriched this AiAR process.

As co-authors and co-practitioners from different cultural backgrounds (Swedish and Thai), our ongoing internal dialogue, while not a formal comparative study, has fostered a heightened awareness of cultural nuances in understanding and enacting concepts like "art," "community," "participation," and "ethics." This bicultural lens has subtly informed a more globally conscious and contextually sensitive application and interpretation of MAA and related theories. **This ongoing reflective praxis, inherent in AiAR, also requires acknowledging our own positionalities and the potential power dynamics at play when working as facilitators and researchers within a community, even one as familiar as Råby. It is a continuous process of questioning whose voices are amplified, whose definitions of success are prioritized, and how truly shared ownership is fostered (a point requiring ongoing vigilance and humility).**

The 'arti-facts' (Schiesser, 2015) generated—zines, workshop plans, internal reports, and this very paper—are not endpoints but active elements in this ongoing cycle of knowledge generation. They make tacit, practice-based knowledge visible and offer

transferable insights, demonstrating how deeply embedded artistic research can yield unique, valuable, and contextually rich understandings.

Navigating MAA in Practice: Interdependencies, Tensions, and Limitations

While the MAA framework offers six guiding tenets, their application in the dynamic context of Konstlek is not a simple checklist but a complex navigation of interdependencies and, at times, productive tensions. For example, the drive for 'morally driven disruption' (e.g., challenging institutional norms) must often be carefully balanced with 'maintaining complexity' (avoiding simplistic solutions) and preserving 'relational impact' (ensuring actions do not inadvertently harm the community bonds we seek to foster). Resolving such tensions is not about finding a perfect formula but involves ongoing ethical deliberation, situational judgment, and a commitment to Freirean praxis (action-reflection-action) within the practitioner team. The 'aesthetic infrastructure of care' discussed earlier becomes crucial here, providing the supportive environment where such difficult navigations can occur without leading to practitioner burnout or compromising core values.

It is also important to acknowledge the limitations of the 'Råby model' and this study. While we offer it as a catalyst for dialogue, its direct transferability to vastly different socio-cultural or resource-scarce contexts requires careful consideration and adaptation, not direct replication. The specific funding structures in Sweden, for example, play a role that cannot be ignored. Furthermore, while we strive for shared power, the inherent dynamics of practitioner-researchers working with youth and community members necessitate continuous critical self-reflection on issues of power, voice, and representation. This paper is one interpretation, and the voices and perspectives of the youth and wider Råby community, while informing our work, are primarily filtered through our practitioner lens here. Future research could explore more direct co-authorship or participatory analysis with community members to further decenter traditional research hierarchies.

Conclusion: Weaving Ethics into Everyday Practice for Resilient Creative Communities

This paper has journeyed through the practice of Konstlek på Råby, an ongoing community art space in Västerås, Sweden, presenting it as a dynamic site of Art in Action Research (AiAR). Our central argument has been that through the sustained and reflective application of the co-developed Moral Aesthetic Action (MAA) framework—illuminated by Florian Klinger's (2024) philosophy of 'Aesthetic Action'—practitioner-led artistic research can profoundly cultivate liberatory 'third places' (Oldenburg, 1999), foster youth empowerment, and build community resilience.

The historical evolution of Konstlek, its 'red thread' of responsive, ethically grounded engagement, demonstrates that MAA is not an abstract theorization, but a framework born from the practical necessity of placing ethics at the heart of creative work. Key findings from our research articulate the 'Råby model,' showcasing how MAA's tenets—morally driven disruption, iterative transformation, relational impact, explicit moral responsibility, maintenance of complexity, and an overarching moral imperative for societal benefit—are operationalized. This includes the intentional facilitation of creative indeterminacy to empower youth agency, the critical role of an 'aesthetic infrastructure of care' that ensures robust support for practitioners as foundational to quality and sustainability, and the practice of 'ethical refusal' as a potent form of Aesthetic Action that protects intrinsic values and challenges limiting societal norms. The diverse 'arti-facts' (Schiesser, 2015) generated, from youth-created zines to this very paper, testify to the knowledge-generating capacity of this ethically attuned, practitioner-led model.

A crucial insight, reinforced through our engagement with Konstlek's operational and ethical structures, is that the 'Råby model' thrives because ethics are not an afterthought but a beginning; when this is the case, the rest often becomes surprisingly practical. It is this invisible yet foundational labour—administrative, emotional, and structural—that provides the soil for Klingerian 'bonds without terms' to flourish and for genuine community co-creation to occur. Konstlek's engagement with Klingerian Aesthetic Action, particularly its embrace of 'indeterminacy as an end in its own right' and its function as a 'form as question,' allows it to 'unsettle' societal narratives that might frame Råby merely as a site of deficiency. The practice of 'ethical refusal' is itself a potent moral aesthetic act, safeguarding Konstlek as an integral part of the neighbourhood's fabric rather than a transient intervention.

Ultimately, this paper and the MAA framework it explores offer an invitation to our colleagues. We present Konstlek på Råby and the Råby model not as a definitive template but as a contribution to a shared, urgent inquiry: What happens when we begin with ethics? What if we prioritize and protect openness and emergent possibilities instead of predetermined outcomes? These are not rhetorical questions; they are the real, daily questions that guide our work and, we believe, are vital for the future of community-engaged artistic research. The Konstlek experience suggests that by embracing an 'ethic of unsettling,' by fostering genuine dialogue in spaces of indeterminacy, and by co-creating conditions for presence, trust, and mutual care, we can collectively advance artistic research as a profound force for positive social transformation. It is a call, in the spirit of James Baldwin's unwavering hope, to build practices that are not only aesthetic but deeply, unapologetically moral—weaving ethics into the everyday work of creating more just, resilient, and truly creative communities for all.

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