

Notes from the Groundwork

Prem Krishnamurthy, May 2024

Department of Transformation: Groundwork

The residency period at Canal Projects allowed **Department of Transformation** to pursue diverse research strands. The space served as a hub for dialogue, connection, and prototyping new forms of gathering. Activities included one-on-one and small-scale meetings with artists, designers, writers, curators, non-profit leaders, psychologists, therapists, political organizers, and others; a monthly reading group with a changing format for choosing and understanding new books together; initial workshops with a cohort of artists-turned-therapists to develop cross-disciplinary methods; as well as larger-scale, multi-modal public events in collaboration with artists such as An Duplan, Andros Zins-Browne, Asad Raza, and Naoco Wowsugi, both at Canal Projects and offsite in collaboration with organizations such as Centre Pompidou Jersey City / Villa Albertine and The Clemente.

A number of new frameworks are emerging out of the residency. These range from facilitation methods and collaborative event formats to a longer-term project with the working title, “Museum as Hospital? A Diagnostic.” The conversations, events, and projects completed while at Canal Projects will also help to generate case studies and writing for a future DOT book. The grounding of the residency contributes to the DOT’s next phases in the US and internationally.

[P.P.P.P.P. \(People! Practice Participating in Participatory Projects, Please.\)](#)



Department of Transformation: *Activating Participation Now!* May 16, 2024, Canal Projects. Photo: Walter Wlodarczyk

Groundwork Reading Group

Groundwork Reading Group took place monthly from December 2023 – June 2024 as part of the Department of Transformation's residency at Canal Projects. Organized by David Giles and Prem Krishnamurthy, the program invited participants to propose complex or challenging texts that merit collective engagement. Through a collective process, the group will identify readings for discussion, while also building an ongoing bibliography of transformative texts for our times.

Books We Read:

Wild Things: The Disorder of Desire by Jack Halberstam

The Emissary by Yoko Tawada

The Undercommons by Fred Moten & Stefano Harvey

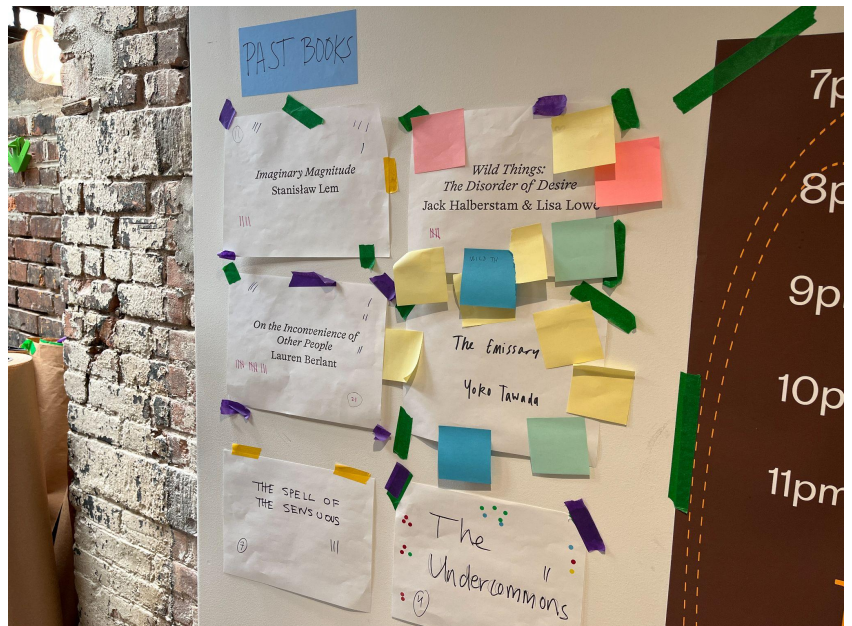
The Spell of the Sensuous by David Abraham

On the Inconvenience of Other People by Lauren Berlant

Imaginary Magnitude by Stanislaw Lem

Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments by Saidiya Hartman

[Groundwork Reading Group, book suggestions.](#)



Groundwork Reading Group, March 2024.
Photo: Prem Krishnamurthy & Caroline Taylor Shehan

▼ Troika Consulting

A quick-fire method for generating feedback on individual challenges in a small group. Read more [here](#).

Martin Beck, *again and again, and again* (2024)

Listen and read [here](#).