

PETRA BAUER & SCOT-PEP
WORKERS!

A PRODUCTION DOSSIER

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Edited by Petra Bauer and Frances Stacey
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INTRODUCTION

Frances Stacey (Producer – Collective)

Workers! is a film co-authored by artist and filmmaker Petra Bauer and sex worker-led organisation SCOT-PEP that centres on the experiences of a collective of sex workers in Scotland, their fight for labour rights and relationship to (women's) work. It was filmed in the Scottish Trade Union Congress (STUC) in Glasgow, a building rooted in workers' struggles for rights and political representation. Sex workers have historically been denied access to this space and the recognition of sex work as work in the formal union movement is fragmented and contested. At the time of writing, only a handful of affiliates of the STUC are openly supportive of the decriminalisation of sex work, a crucial step that would remove sex work from a criminal framework and improve sex workers' safety. These unions include the train drivers union, the communications workers union, and importantly a GMB branch formed in 2019 for sex workers by the sex worker community in Scotland. The film bears witness to an occupation of the STUC, where conversations unfold that focus on the voices of sex workers demanding to be seen as experts on their own work and lives. This is a call for labour rights situated in the context of the broader labour and feminist movement.

The film is the result of a long-term collaboration titled *Nothing About Us Without Us*, initiated and supported by visual art organisation Collective. Petra was invited in 2015 to undertake a research-based project as part of Collective's Constellations Programme, a series of projects commissioned during the development of the City Observatory on Calton Hill in Edinburgh¹. Our aim was to develop generative projects with artists, local constituents and community groups during a period of institutional change, building on a commitment to participatory practices and co-production. We sought to operate *not* from a birds' eye view, looking out across the city as Collective does from the vantage point of the hill, but to be embedded in existing and ongoing social, political struggles in our locality. As a Producer my role is underpinned by an emphasis on generating the resources and conditions needed to work collectively. In close dialogue with artists and different publics this often takes the form of active research, hospitality, holding space for others and listening. At the onset of the research project, Petra and I began by informally mapping the political activity of women² in Edinburgh, meeting with a host of collectives, formal charities and self-organised groups from Shakti Women's Aid to the pacifists Women in Black. At this time we met two members of SCOT-PEP with Collective's Director Kate Gray, an initial conversation that would lead to an extended dialogue and later the development of the film. What was clear in this early meeting is that sex workers are

organising globally and “thanks to transnational migration, the internet, and their impact on transnational social movements, sex workers are speaking louder, more often, and more clearly than ever before. Yet, it is still difficult to listen to them.”³ As attested to by SCOT-PEP, sex workers are frequently not heard by policy makers and drowned out by polarising divisions prevalent in feminism, past and present.

From 2015 to 2018, *Nothing About Us Without Us* was structured around a series of regular workshops. Petra and myself with Collective and SCOT-PEP members initially sought to create an open, social space – getting to know each other, eating and watching films together, sharing texts and ideas. Activities were led by everyone involved from the start, the facilitation of different discussions passing between artist, producer and SCOT-PEP depending on experience and interest. We discussed the complex discourses around sex work politics, our varied experiences of work and sex work, and the challenges faced by SCOT-PEP, who are actively trying to change the labour conditions of sex workers in Scotland and beyond. Through this framework we aimed to find common references and build relationships based on trust, initially without knowing whether it would be possible to make a film together. Once common ground was shared – a ground that isn’t fixed and requires ongoing reproductive, relational work akin to all forms of political organising – we began to test with a camera and sound team, work with film producers from HER Film, explore different representational and aesthetic strategies, write a script collectively and devise practical methods for working together.

The co-authored or collective articulation at the heart of *Workers!* is inspired by feminist film practitioners who emphasise the importance of making films *with* their subjects, not *about* them. Watching films together that represent sex work, other forms of feminised labour and political organising formed a key activity in the early stages of the collaboration. Two films became particularly important to how *Workers!* has been conceived of and made: *Jeanne Dielman, 23 Quai du Commerce 1080 Bruxelles* and *Les Prostituées de Lyon Parlent*. These two historic films are used as a starting point for a new document that speaks of present day conditions under capitalism. In 1975, the now well-known filmmaker Chantal Akerman made *Jeanne Dielman* depicting the daily routine of a housewife over three days. As a character, Jeanne embodies at least three different roles: that of housewife, mother and sex worker. Long takes in real-time document the rhythms of these different forms of labour; Jeanne peels potatoes, makes the bed, wakes up her son, and buttons her shirt after meeting a client. This film has long been an important reference for Petra’s wider practice. That same year, in the summer of 1975, *Les Prostituées de Lyon Parlent* was made during the occupation of Saint-Nizier church in Lyon by two

hundred prostitutes, denouncing police harassment and perilous labour conditions. Documented by Carole Roussopoulos and collective Vidéo Out from inside the church, this occupation led to an eight-day nationwide strike. The medium of video was used to create a collective portrait of the women and to broadcast their demands directly onto the street outside the church, enabling them to speak in public space without fear of arrest. This marks a key moment in the sex worker rights movement that was formative to the inauguration of many of the first sex worker-led organisations in Europe.

Workers! attends to contemporary conditions in Scotland, deploying film as a tool for exploring wider debates on work. Here we take cues from Marxist-feminist thinking and activism that has roots in the International Wages for Housework Campaign, which challenged the gendered distribution of socially reproductive work – the childcare, cooking, cleaning, and caring that replenishes the labour force, is largely unseen, unacknowledged and unpaid, and frequently falls to women to undertake. A constellation of texts that emerged in 1975 as part of Wages for Housework, including Silvia Federici’s ‘Sexuality as Work’ and Wages Due Lesbians’ ‘Fucking as Work’,⁴ show the long-established connection between the material struggles of sex workers and other women’s lives. As articulated in a pamphlet published by the English Collective of Prostitutes: “All work is prostitution, whether we work for money or room or board. Whether we fuck for money, wait on tables, pack biscuits, type letters, drive lorries, bear children, teach in schools or work in the coal mines, we are forced to sell our bodies and minds. Our whole lives are stolen from us by work.”⁵

The production dossier gathers together textual material reflecting the collaborative work undertaken towards the development of *Workers!*. It is organised chronologically beginning with a timeline for the project, which details the initial research visits, dates of workshops and test shoots that were so crucial in finding an approach to making the film as a group. There are a selection of emails sent between Petra, myself and a member of SCOT-PEP over the first two years of the project, from which the identity of that member has been removed to maintain their anonymity. Early on in the getting to know SCOT-PEP, Petra and I learnt quickly that as sex workers any attempt to speak publicly and politically involves risks to livelihoods, relationships and families; risks that are felt most acutely by migrants and undocumented workers. When your work borders on illegal, is denied by the state, is subject to carceral responses by the police, stigmatised in civil society and stereotyped in the popular press, to speak out as a sex worker you must constantly negotiate between anonymity and visibility. When making a film – a medium heavily focussed on the visual – this became an interesting point of departure as a group. We

were guided by the questions: how do you speak politically without being public? How do you create new images of sex worker organising without revealing the identity of those involved? How do you visualise political demands while ensuring the safety and anonymity of the group?

Our initial emails are followed by other correspondence and letters exchanged during the filming phase, including a call for extras and a design brief inviting proposals to make a new workers' banner with SCOT-PEP inspired by the collection housed in the STUC; which we would eventually realise with artist Fiona Jardine. Documentation of the initial workshops, including the films watched together, is presented in the form of a short report written by myself in June 2016. A storyboard is included containing the aesthetic structure of the film with Petra's guiding research images and a selection of photographs, both film stills and production shots, that go a little way to revealing the backstage of the film shoots. Lastly, we have included an edited conversation between Petra Bauer; sex worker and SCOT-PEP member Gem; sex worker, writer and activist Molly Smith; and myself.

The production dossier aims to provide an account of our process and is a way for us to share our methods and strategies. It does not give a full picture but a partial account of how relationships, ideas and aesthetics were formed. We hope the glimpses into conversations shared will underline the importance of relations to this form of feminist practice and to the collective effort that made *Workers!* possible. Along the way we became friends, not without disagreements, and this enriched and complicated our work together. Politically, socially and individually we became entangled in learning about each other's lives, struggles and ideas. Our commitments now extend beyond the timeframe of a 'project' or 'film production'. For me this has involved an evolution beyond established models of what might be expected from the institutional role of a producer, becoming a member of SCOT-PEP's charity board and another constituent in the collectively authored work. There is much in the process of making *Workers!* that cannot be reflected on here but needs to be acknowledged. This includes the detailed financial records and contracts that we decided were too unwieldy and multiple to represent. It is important to note, however, that in the making of the film we were unable to pay everyone outside of the film crew a day rate, as resources were extremely tight, as they often are. We prioritised SCOT-PEP's travel, childcare and daily expenses to ensure all could participate actively regardless of their personal situation. Our contracts detail Petra and SCOT-PEP as co-authors, with shared and equal film rights, a necessity and politically important right for the ongoing distribution of the film beyond art contexts. There is also, of course, no documentary record of the friendships made.

What remains are ongoing memories, alliances and the possibility for the film to be used as a tool for future organising.

1. Collective was established in 1984 as an artist-led space and has long supported new work by artists who are at a pivotal stage in their development. *Nothing About Us Without Us* and *Workers!* were commissioned as part of the organisations development of a new kind of City Observatory, placing collaborative and co-authored practice at the heart of a project to reimagine the historic nineteenth-century observatory on Calton Hill in Edinburgh.
2. Women refers to an identity not a biological category.
3. Maciotti, P.G. and Geymonat, Giulia Garofalo (Eds), *Sex Workers Speak. Who Listens?*, p. 12, 2016
4. Thanks to all the members of the Social Reproduction Reading Group in Scotland, particularly to Laura Guy for leading a session that focussed on 'On Sexuality as Work', 'Fucking Is Work' and a selection of manifestos relating to sex work. The group, founded by Victoria Horne and Kirsten Lloyd in 2015, was hosted by Collective over two years, supporting conversation and activities that centre on art's intersection with social reproduction and feminist thought.
5. 'For Prostitutes and Against Prostitution', Power of Women Collective, 1975. In English Collective of Prostitutes, *For Prostitutes Against Prostitution – Crossing the Divides between Sex Work and Others*, March 1990.

WORKERS! TIMELINE

2015

Petra initial research visit in June
- meeting with organisations and
individuals in Edinburgh informally
mapping the political activity of
women in the city with Collective

Petra second research visit in October
- Shakti Women's Aid, Word Power
Books, Glasgow Women's Library, Wiki
House in Fountainbridge, Women in
Black, Saheliya, and SCOT-PEP

Petra artist talk at Edinburgh College
of Art, 30 October 2015

Fran to attend SCOT-PEP'S
consultation meeting on the
Prostitution Law Reform Bill at the
Scottish Parliament, 10 November 2015

SPRING
2016

Petra in Edinburgh for one month -
workshop series

First test shoot with HER Film

AUTUMN
2016

Petra and SCOT-PEP continue developing
the script, exploring content and
aesthetics - shared over email

Campaign group 2 September

Social and support event with SCOT-
PEP and SWOU, organised with Arika,
7 September 2016, 1 - 6pm at Kinning
Park Complex

Petra in Edinburgh 26 - 28 September

Lobbying workshop 27 September

SCOT-PEP parliamentary hearing 27
September, 6 - 8pm

Visit to STUC with Director Of
Photography Caroline Bridges

SWOU involved in Episode 8 of Arika,
20 - 23 October 2016

Campaign group 30 October

Petra in Edinburgh around 1 December
(self-funded)

Brainstorming session for
film 1 December at HIV Scotland
(+ World Aids Day Celebration)

Campaign group 2 December

Funding applications round-one - SFI
and others

SPRING
2017

Tapestry and banner research

Commission banner in January

Proposal for events / context around
the project

Co-production agreement and admin
for film shoot in place

Appoint Executive Producer / research
legal implications of using STUC

Funding applications round-two

Plan for February test shoot

Arika event with SWOU

Script development - over email

Script development through meetings
and workshops: Petra in Edinburgh 23
February to 6 March

Test shoot at STUC - documenting
building, March 4 - 5

Start planning the longer shoot -
with HER Film

Additional funding for exhibition and
project events

SUMMER
2017

Complete banner

10-day film shoot - consider scale
and care for SCOT-PEP

AUTUMN
2017

Editing

SPRING
2018

Additional shooting days

May Day march with new banner

Editing workshop with SCOT-PEP

Post-production

AUTUMN
2018

November - preview screening in
Edinburgh

SPRING
2019

Exhibition at Collective in Edinburgh

Exhibition at Edith-Russ-Haus in
Oldenburg

From: Frances Stacey
Subject: Collective: Hello from Petra Bauer
Date: 28 September 2015 3:45 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Petra Bauer [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

It was great to meet you in June and thanks again for all the information you shared with us following the meeting. We have been very inspired by your work and it would be wonderful to meet with you again.

Petra is visiting late in October. Please see her message below. She will be here from 26 October to 1 November and will give a talk at Edinburgh College of Art about her work on Friday 30 October, 11.30am, which would be great if you could join us.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes, Frances

—

Dear [REDACTED]

Hope all is well!

At the end of October I am coming back to Edinburgh for another week, and I wonder if you had time to meet again?

I have been thinking a lot of our meeting in June, and I have to say that I got really interested in your struggles. However, I have to admit that I felt ashamed that I know so little about the sex workers' rights movement, especially considering that I claim to be a feminist (and have been for many years). I especially got very intrigued by the fact you meant that your struggle is part of the women's liberation movement. (But where of course the notion of woman is questioned, since I assume you also include trans and men???)

I also got very interested in the fact that you are opposed the Swedish model – a model that so rarely is being questioned in Sweden. Just a few weeks ago there was a huge debate in the media on Amnesty's decision to support the decriminalisation of sex work. All voices that were heard were against Amnesty, and not a single voice in favour of their decision. However, I started doing some research and realised that there are actually several voices, both individual as well as organisations that are in favour of it. But they were not heard. There is actually an organisation here that like you is for sex workers by sex workers – it is called Rosealliance, and they are also posing severe critique against the Swedish model

(as far as I understand it). Do you know anything about it? I am also curious to hear your thoughts on Amnesty's decision.

In other words, I really have to thank you for opening my eyes for a movement that I have been completely unknowledgeable about. And I look forward to learn more. Would you have time to meet again when I am in Edinburgh (between the 26-1st of November) And, I also wonder if you would be interested in discussing a longer collaboration with the aim to make a film? (Of course terms and conditions need to be discussed properly, but I am just now wondering if this would be of any interest to you to at least discuss.... Sorry for my rather blunt and direct question.) Hope to hear from you.

All my very best
Petra

From: Frances Stacey
Subject: Collaboration
Date: 9 November 2015, 13.09
To: [REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I hope your back is all better now. I just wanted to get in touch to say thank you again for sharing your time with us the other week and I am really excited about developing this project with Petra and Scot-Pep over the next year.

I am going to set up a collaborative google drive today. I thought this would be a good way to share texts, films and other documents. I'll begin populating with stuff we have shared over email, but please do edit, add files etc. And let me know if you have problems accessing it.

This film and book were suggested to me, as good things for us to look at: Live Nude Girls, Unite! (2000) directed by Vicky Funari and Julia Query - a documentary looking at the effort of dancers and support staff at a San Francisco peep show to unionise. Here is a link to the trailer, looks like its possible to buy the DVD, which I could do and copy for you both to see, if you think that would be good?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NZjCID7QA0c>

Art Labour, Sex Politics (2015) by Siona Wilson - 'investigates the charged relationship of sex and labor politics as it played out in the making of feminist art in 1970s Britain.'

I booked a ticket to come along to the briefing tomorrow evening at the Scottish Parliament. Hopefully see you there.

Best wishes,
Fran

Från: Petra Bauer [REDACTED]
Ämne: [REDACTED] - from Petra
Datum: 15 januari 2016 12:36
Till: [REDACTED]
Kopia: Frances Stacey [REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED],

Hope all is well! And that you had a good x-mas and new year. I have been more or less on the couch eating sweets, drinking whiskey and trying to recover from a very intense autumn.

My intention was to write to you already in December, or at least over the x-mas holiday, but I never got a second to myself where I could read, think and reflect. Or rather, while on the couch I started to read and think, but it was too early to write to you. I didn't want to throw out any questions. But now I feel a lot more energetic, and I have had some time to reflect on the reading.

This was a very long excuse for my complete silence. Sorry about that!!

However, before I start I want to stress again that I really look forward to collaborating with you and Scot-Pep. The more I read, the more important it feels. But, I am still a beginner without too much knowledge.

The last weeks I have mainly been reading Petra Östergrens book that came out in 2006. (It exists only in Swedish) There she primarily analyses the Swedish debate on sex work, and she criticises it for being very biased and full of moral convictions against sex work. She claims that those opposing sex work have been refusing to listen to sex workers themselves. Petra Östergren does not, however, really go into the Swedish prostitution law and its consequences. But my aim is to contact her and meet her, and see what she has to say. It kind of feels important to get a proper insight into the Swedish model since it is so debated around the world. And especially since you in Scot-Pep are highly critical of it.

Now to my questions... I start with a few, and then we see where that can take us. One thing I would like to know is if there are any questions that you miss in the debates? Are there any questions you would like to receive, but never do? And the opposite, are there some questions you DO NOT want to receive? Are there some questions that you want me to avoid?

When we met in both June and October we talked about the importance of improving the situation for sex workers in Scotland. What would be the most important change for you? Are there any rights you feel you do not have at moment? If so, what are they, and what kind of change would you like to see? What are the most important issues for you in relation to a debate on sex work?

In October we talked about the difference between legalisation and decriminalisation of sex work. Do you think you could tell me again what the difference is, and what you prefer.

Sorry, I know - the questions are huge. So feel free to pick one, or enter them as you think is the most appropriate way to go. And hopefully soon I will get rid of my rather formal tone in my questions...:)

Looking forward to hearing from you! All my very best
Petra

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: [REDACTED] - from Petra
Date: 15 January 2016 11:57 PM
To: Petra Bauer [REDACTED]
Cc: Frances Stacey [REDACTED]

Hiya!

First of all, happy new year, Petra and Frances! Best wishes and hugs galore!

Secondly, Petra, don't be silly; this is your project, you take it at the speed that works best for you. We all need time to rest and we all have different ways of digesting information, be it a walk in a park or a whiskey on a sofa. Rushing and stressing yourself out isn't going to spark your creativity.

I'll send the questions off to the group, except the one on different regimes which, I think, Scot-PEP would trust me to explain.

Legalisation is what they have in Austria, Germany and Holland (and some other places, of course, but these are the best known ones). It basically means that the government tells people "you may sell sex but I tell you how to do it. If you don't like it - too bad for you". In different countries (and even in different regions within one country) these conditions will be different. In some places you are only allowed to work in a brothel. In others - only in certain parts of the city. Elsewhere - only if you're registered with the local police. Often it also involves mandatory health checks. So if you don't want to work for someone and you'd rather have all your earnings to yourself - it's illegal. If you don't want to be registered as a prostitute - it's illegal. If you want to work from home, but your home is not in the area which the city council allocated for sex work - it's illegal. So under legalisation some people will be working legally, but a lot of them will still be working illegally with everything that it entails - police harassment, criminal/administrative charges for prostitution, increased vulnerability to violence and no recourse to justice. In filmmaking terms, it's as if it's completely legal to make films, but only once you register with the police as a filmmaker (to be inspected by them to make sure you have all your filmmaking equipment checked by a professional every 2 weeks), work for a company suggested by the government, only on locations recommended by the government and only on the subjects approved by the government. 'Cause the government knows helluva lot about filmmaking.

Decriminalisation is so far implemented in New Zealand and parts of Australia. This is a setting where all the laws regulating or prohibiting anything to do with sale of sex are removed. It's like the government saying: "Want to sell sex - good idea, just

make yourself comfortable! Want to open your own business - be my guest, here's the tax form you'll need to fill in. Can't be arsed to run your own business - pick one of the local brothels! Want to share a flat with a couple of colleagues for safety - go for it! You'd rather work outside? It's ok, outside is that way, best of luck! Want to have a sexual health checkup? Sure, here's a clinic for you, go when you feel you need it!" Removal of all laws takes the police out of the equation, they have nothing to police and regulate anymore. When police stop harassing and arresting sex workers, sex workers stop feeling like the police are the enemy and feel more willing to turn to them for help to exercise their labour rights, like reporting poor working conditions in a brothel, harassment by employers, landlords or public, and, obviously, violence. And this is what we would prefer. In filmmaking terms, it's like you want to make films? Go make 'em, what's stopping you?! Decriminalisation doesn't solve ALL the problems; for example, undocumented migrants involved in sex work will still be working illegally and still won't be able to turn to police for help, but at least the chances of them being picked up in a brothel raid are super low because there are no more brothel raids. People who turn to sex work to support their drug use can still be charged with drug possession, but at least it won't carry the additional charge for prostitution and, again, the chances of them being picked up by police are much lower. So decriminalisation is not the be all end all in terms of intersection of vulnerability, but it's a brilliant start.

Does this help? I could google around to see if there are articles where the differences between the two systems are laid out with concrete examples.

Yours, [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Docs uploaded
Date: 16 January 2016 5:42 PM
To: Petra Bauer [REDACTED]
Copy: Frances Stacey [REDACTED]

Hello again!

I have just uploaded a document to Fran's google drive, Guide to Sex Work, it's by SWEAT, I think, a South African sex worker organisation. It gives a good outline of four different law regimes around sex work and how these impact on sex workers. I will now be looking out for articles on the subject as well and will send you the links if I come across something.

What I am currently trying to do is to understand the different contexts in which sex workers work, and what these different contexts imply for different individuals as well as groups, with all the complexities and nuances that life brings.

That'll take a while!

And of course not the least what could be change in order to improve working conditions.

This is relatively simple. Labour rights. If you haven't done a job, be it sex work or flipping burgers in MacDonald's, you will never get to really understand what would make it better. But if you give the people involved labour rights and the power to exercise them, they will make all the changes THEY need themselves, and they will be able to make the changes according to the situation and their priorities. For example, every time you flip a burger, hot oil splashes around and burns the skin on your hands and wrists. With labour rights, you go to your employer and ask for rubber protection gloves. However, as time goes by, you start to develop an allergy to latex. So you go to your employer again and ask for latex-free gloves. This is just me trying to come up with something so situational that it wouldn't have occurred to whoever is at the top, in the position to make my working conditions better. So these changes should always come from the bottom, from the people involved, so labour rights is the universal solution.

We already started to talk about these things in October, in our very long meeting...), but since I did not record it I only remember parts of it. And since I had even less knowledge then, it kind of tainted what I remember and not. Whereas now, with a little bit more insight, I realise that I forgot to listen to other important matters that you addressed. Therefore some of my questions and thoughts might seem a bit repetitive... so please bear with me.

Not a problem at all, Petra.

I have read some of the documents on Scot-Pep's website, that inform about your (i.e. the organisation's) claims. However, I always think there is a big difference between reading a well-articulated document and a more personal voice, or thoughts based on actual experiences, which in many ways are always more complex.

I agree completely. I've also uploaded a few papers on that. Kontula (Finland) and Lucas (USA) docs are focused on indoor female sex workers and there are a lot of quotes from the women there. And most of them I could put my name under, although the women interviewed live in different countries to me and work under different regimes.

Then there is Levy (research in Sweden) and The Case Against Criminalisation (Canada). These two also feature lots of sex worker quotes, but unlike the other docs, where the quotes are sex workers' experience of sexual interaction, these two deal with sex workers experience of criminalisation and how it affects their work and lives. The Canadian paper may seem a bit complicated as you most likely don't know about the complexity of law changes there in the last 5 years, so feel free to just skip the politics and read only quotes. If you want an outline, sex workers in Canada did what we are attempting to do now: they challenged the law. Since the political structure is totally different there, to do that they opened a court case claiming that the three main laws around sex work were unconstitutional. This case lasted 7 years but eventually in 2013 the Canadian High Court (or something like this) ruled that those laws indeed violated safety and security of sex workers and should therefore be revoked. It was a massive win, a historic event. The Court gave the Canadian government a year to introduce better laws, and instead in 2014 the Canadian government introduced laws that were even worse, resulting in criminalisation of purchase of sex as in Sweden.

Maybe the questions about different working conditions could be a question for one of the workshops/meetings in March. What do you think?

Absolutely. Start making a list of things you'd like to discuss. I've also uploaded an interview with Maggie McNeill (she is a former sex worker in the US and is now an advocate for sex workers' rights) and some paper in Swedish. I have no clue if it's useful, but I'm sure you'll tell me either way. I have a few more in Swedish, including police reports, if it's helpful to you. Also, everything new is in the main file, if you find it useful just sort it into folders as you please, if not - delete it.

Also another question that comes up continuously in Petra Östergrens book is how to define sex work? How would you define it?

It's not an easy question. Sex work is an umbrella term for many types of sexual services. The broad definition would be something along the lines of "performance of sexual services or production of sexual material in exchange for money, goods, services, substances, food or housing". This, however, is so broad that it would include any erotic literature, which isn't sex work. Even if we leave stripping, camming, phone sex, porn, etc. aside for a moment and try to define just prostitution, it's still tricky. For example, how many clients make you a prostitute? One? I am sure that a lot of women have had transactional sex in their lives. Like, meet this guy in a bar, he buys you drinks, you end up sleeping with him. Or have sex with your neighbour to make him fix your car. Or give a blowjob to a police officer to avoid a fine for speeding - that's a real thing, by the way, not a scene from porn. Or have sex with your boyfriend to encourage him to do the dishes. Don't even start me on people (men and women) who marry rich people, or not even rich, just people who own their own home (I know in Sweden this is different, but the economic and financial situation in the UK, especially now, means a lot of people will never own their own home, and as they get older it becomes more of a problem as they won't be able to pay rent out of their tiny pensions). Yet a lot of these transactions aren't thought of as prostitution. Moreover, how do you then prove that this intercourse was indeed transactional? If we decide that maybe two clients is enough for someone to become a prostitute, how do you then make sure that indeed there were at least two of them? One of the brothels in London where I worked was once raided by police. It happened on the night when I brought a friend there, a woman I met in another brothel who was looking for a better place. The raid happened before we started actual work. The police took down all our names, including the name of my friend. But she hadn't had a single client in that brothel. If that had been her first foray into sex work, she wouldn't have had any clients at all by then, but her name went on the list anyway as that of a prostitute. Thinking of that, even if at the time of the raid a cleaner had been in, someone who comes to Hoover the place before each shift starts, the cleaner's name would end up on that list too, because she's female and in a brothel. Anyway, I'm probably getting needlessly philosophical here but the point is that it's not easy to come up with a definition that will clearly separate some women from others. Of course, there are women who are obvious prostitutes, like me, who have a site, and place ads, and for whom it's their main income, but that's not the case for everyone who does transactional sex, especially because some prostitutes don't even have sex.

In the next few days I will again go through the decriminalisation bill proposal drafted by Scot-Pep, this time more carefully, and really pay attention to all the

different articulations. Do you have any recommendations on what to pay particular attention to?

Probably The Proposals and Violence and the Harm of Criminalisation. The Current Laws in Scotland also has some examples of how sex workers are affected.

A friend of mine recommended me to read a dissertation by Susanne Dodillet. Is that a name you recognise?

I only have one paper by her and it looks like you've already found it, the collaboration with Petra Östergren that you uploaded. If you have a title for that dissertation, I can most likely find it.

Från: Petra Bauer [REDACTED]

Ämne: Re: Docs uploaded

Datum: 16 januari 2016 22:57

Till: [REDACTED]

Kopia: Frances Stacey [REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED],

You are fantastic! Thank you for your great and insightful answers! This really pushed me forward in my thinking. I especially sympathize with the following political position "**But if you give the people involved labour rights and the power to exercise them, they will make all the changes THEY need themselves,**" I even think that could be the core message of the film, as well as the point of departure for the production.

Another thing that I want to stress since you are so generous in your replies to all my questions: if you ever feel like asking me questions about anything you are curious of, you are more than welcome. (May they be personal or political...)

All my very best to you and more soon!
Petra

From: Frances Stacey [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Docs uploaded

Date: 18 January 2016 1:21 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED] and Petra,

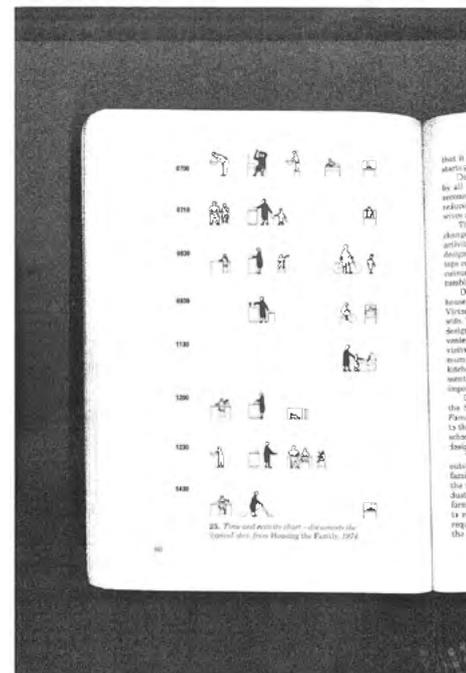
It's super nice to hear from you both.

[REDACTED] - do you know where in Australia sex work is decriminalised? Or where I could find out? I am really asking because I've been exploring some options of galleries internationally that may be interested in the project, and it would be great to look at places where sex work is decriminalised.

Also, I was wondering about how the consultation process with the new bill is going? Does Scot-Pep have the recordings from the consultation session at the Scottish Parliament last year? It seemed that two different groups were filming on the day and I think Petra would get a lot from seeing/hearing the debate.

I found this image a few weeks ago. It made me think of the work/time exercise we did with Petra. It's from a book published in 1984 by feminist architectural collective Matrix, titled Making Space: Women and the Man Made Environment (Pluto Press: London and Sydney).

I look forward to reading everything you shared.
Best wishes,



From: [redacted]
Subject: Re: Docs uploaded
Date: 20 January 2016 6:31 PM
To: Frances Stacey [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]

Hello Fran,

It's New South Wales (and Australian Capital Territory, since it's part of NSW) where sex work is decriminalised in Australia. As far as I know, it's not COMPLETELY decriminalised (I'm under the impression that some things are still illegal there, like living on the earnings of a sex worker, but this might be just me being misinformed) yet it's still many times better than what we have here at the moment. Here's the link to Australia's biggest sex worker organisation, they may be able to help with your search:
<http://www.scarletalliance.org.au/>

The consultation is now at the stage where we go through all the responses received and put together a summary, it will be published around the end of February. As for the recordings, I'll ask SCOT-PEP. I've been told so much about that event, I would like to watch them too!

Yours,
[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Subject: Re: Docs uploaded
Date: 20 January 2016 11:12 PM
To: Petra Bauer [redacted]
Cc: Frances Stacey [redacted]

Hi Petra,

Thank you, I'm pleased to know my answers were helpful! We were indeed thinking that we would like the film to be about rights, this is all we want really – the same rights as other people. We even had this idea of a film that shows how our lives and work are affected by the lack of rights and only at the end it is revealed that it's about sex work. People can and will sympathise with the lack of rights or access to justice as long as they think we're talking about exploitation in an ordinary job. But if you start by mentioning sex work, all reason flies out the window, something clicks in people's brains and we're back to "sex work is exploitation and it needs to be banished!" Here's a lovely cartoon for it.

Last week I went to a seminar at the University of Edinburgh, a young researcher presented her thoughts on whether there is such a thing as a good policy on prostitution. There isn't, according to her. She started really well by saying that sex work is a complex social phenomenon, which most people will have an opinion on

because they think they know what they are talking about (unlike global pollution, for example, where some people will understand that they lack the knowledge of important specifics). She branded criminalisation/prohibition as an obviously bad policy, said the downside of the Nordic model was turning everyone in sex work into a victim and ignoring the sex workers who were willing participants, and the drawback of decriminalisation was that it didn't solve the gender inequality. The conclusion was that there's no good policy on sex work because every regime in existence throws someone under the bus, either those who are forced, or those who chose it, or both.

It wasn't the worst talk on sex work that I've heard, she was good enough to acknowledge that there are people with different experiences in sex work. But I was a little (ok, a lot) taken aback by the fact that a researcher in social science thinks that the gender inequality should be solved by Scotland's prostitution policy. It's like expecting Edinburgh city council's policy on waste collection to solve the problem of global warming. And the same with decriminalisation throwing people forced into sex work under the bus - which was what she implied. Trafficking and coercion exist in a lot of industries, but no one trashes Scotland's policies on fishing, farming, domestic workers or hospitality for failing to tackle exploitation. When it comes to other industries, namely industries that don't have an overt sexual component to them, everyone recognises that gender inequality and exploitation happen and that they aren't part of the industry but a separate social phenomena that should be dealt with accordingly - separately. But when sex enters the equation, suddenly the industry is responsible for both inequality and exploitation and should be blamed for them.

It is a mini-rant, but it's also an example of how labour rights (which, by the way, help those who were forced into sex work just as much as they do other sex workers) get sidelined because "SEX". I am still waiting to hear the rest of the group. As for the event's footage, [redacted] put me in touch with someone so this might be sorted soon.

Yours,
[redacted]



From: Frances Stacey
Subject: Re: Docs uploaded
Date: 21 January 2016 12:29 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]

Hello [REDACTED],

Thanks this is brilliant. Will check the Australian group out later today.

Also, sex work was discussed on Women's Hour this morning, did you listen?
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b06wg9f0>
And have you seen these comics: <https://www.bitchmedia.org/article/barely-represented-how-laws-regulating-sex-work-ignore-sex-workers-themselves>

Best wishes,
Fran

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: The cartoon
Date: 22 januari 2016 8:39 PM
To: Frances Stacey [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]

Oh the cartoon is brilliant, Fran! I don't know much about art, so you might have a different opinion on that perspective, but I love how it shows the different lives sex workers have through the different styles of clothing, items from dogs to potted plants, etc. It also pays attention to journalism ethics, so a cool thing altogether! Not to mention that it had useful links at the bottom, there were more podcasts and interviews there! Thank you so much!

As for the Women's Hour, I spent a few hours pulling myself together to listen to it. I heard about it on Twitter, I knew Julie Bindel was speaking and this woman is something. As Petra most likely doesn't know, Ms Bindel is a British journalist, a feminist who fights sex work at every opportunity. Sex work is already hard to discuss with the general population, but whenever Ms Bindel speaks about it, she straight away brings in rape, child prostitution, pimps and all other things that the conversation wasn't about. All sex work is rape and all women need to be saved and all clients must be shot at dawn. Quite often you can actually hear that she's far more concerned with men - clients, pimps, rapists - than with women.

The links below aren't too relevant, it's just something that I personally found interesting and that relates to both art and sex work. Molly Crabapple is an American artist with (loose) ties to sex work activism - here's a 10 min film where she talks a little about sex work and a 5 min film she made about sex work in America (so not very relevant to our case if you haven't got the time). As it's all about art, I thought you might see/find something useful there.

<http://www.vice.com/video/taking-drawing-lessons-from-artist-and-journalist-molly-crabapple> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k-dU9R3tME0>

Yours,
[REDACTED]

Från: Petra Bauer [REDACTED]
Ämne: yet another step...
Datum: 1 Februari 2016 15:52
Till: [REDACTED]
Kopia: Frances Stacey [REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED] and Fran,

Thank you so much for all the links and documents.

I have started to read the texts, focusing on the bill proposal as well as the study from the 90s on sex work that [REDACTED] posted. Both are really interesting. I will continue reading the rest as well.

I have started to think of March, and how we could structure the meetings/workshop.

Like you [REDACTED], I definitely think that the film should be about your struggle for labour rights, and I think it is an excellent idea to think of structure that makes the audience focus on the actual labour rights, and only later in the film understand that it is related to sex work. However, we need to think carefully how we do that. But it is a good point of departure. I think that the cartoon that you [REDACTED] sent where there is a dialogue between the stressed-out person involved in a call centre and the sex worker is great as a source of inspiration.

I have started to think of our workshops in March, and that it would be good if they all circulate around issues on labour rights, both current experiences, contexts but also focus on struggles, strategies and futures.

A possible overall structure:

- Workshop 1: Introduction: What is sex work for each participant? Individual and group experiences? What does a workday look like? What are the different needs and contexts?
- Workshop 2: Labour rights: What changes are necessary? Strategies to achieve those rights and changes? Methods of organisation and difficulties? Short and long term aims?
- Workshop 3: The current status of your struggle (this could be a smaller meeting with just the core people).
- Workshop 4: What do we include in the film? Brainstorming and trying to articulate possible content.

What do you think? If you think this is a good idea I could start making a more detailed plan for the workshops, that is how to structure them (the dramaturgy), but also suggest ideas about what method we could use in order to explore current and future labour experiences and rights (please feel free to suggest other themes that you think are relevant).

All my very best to you
Petra

From: Frances Stacey [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: yet another step...
Date: 8 February 2016 12:07 PM
To: [REDACTED]

Hi Petra and [REDACTED],

Sorry for the slow reply. I've been working on a film programme over the last few weeks. The first film we watched, by Kevin Jerome Everson and Claudrena Harold called Sugarcoated Arsenic, made me think a lot about this project. It is really different thematically and is a re-telling of student protests at The University of Virginia in the 1970s. The point of departure of the film is the discovery of rare archival material that highlighted the university's connection to cultural and political revolution at the time. What was really interesting to me was the use of scripted scenes and non-actors to replay real scenarios. I thought this could be one approach to discuss in terms of making political films and the need for anonymity. Just a thought.

I am glad you like the cartoon [REDACTED] and thanks for sharing those videos. Also thanks for the workshop outline Petra. The main thing I have been thinking about is how we can test with a camera in the workshops, so the group can think about filming practically as we go along.

Would it also be good to share films/have a screening together? It could nice to share some of your existing films Petra? It would be good if the workshops were about sharing not only the work and experiences at Scot-Pep but also introducing what you do.

[REDACTED], it would be great to hear what you think about the themes and questions. I also have a few practical questions that will help us to get organised for March:

How do you think it will be best to invite people to sign up for the workshops? Shall we do that informally as we did before? Once we have some potential dates and a general plan, I can give you an email invite that could be circulated – would that be good?

Petra is it important to you that people come to more than one session? Do you think this will be possible [REDACTED]? If you have time personally, we also talked about some extra one-to-one meet-ups during the month, are you still keen to do this (obviously, work permitting)?

In terms of dates and times, what is best for you and are there particular times of day that may work best? Petra is thinking each workshop will last 3 hours roughly.

I'm trying to work out where will be best to host them. We have the big gallery free, which would be good for sessions where we want to show films but is very cold. So not great for long sessions or for more intimate groups. Is there space in HIV Scotland that we could possibly use?

We can cover travel and childcare costs, but how is it best to go about doing this? Should we reimburse people after or we could give people a per diem in advance that would cover such costs?

Are Scot-Pep doing anything on 3 March for International Sex Worker Rights Day? If not, maybe we could have one of the workshops then or mark it some way? Sorry for the many questions in one go!

All the best,
Fran

Från: Petra Bauer [REDACTED]
Ämne: Re: yet another step...
Datum: 8 februari 2016 13:02
Till: Frances Stacey [REDACTED]
Kopia: [REDACTED]

Dear both,
The film you mentioned sounds interesting, is it possible to see March? And, I thank you for stressing the "sharing" part. I think that is important. It would actually be great to watch some films together in order to create common references but also as a way to think of what could be possible. I am happy to show some of my films, but we could also include others. And I would also be happy to talk about methods and strategies I have used in the past. The best thing would of course be if people joined more workshops than one, but that of course depends on how much time people have. [REDACTED]: what do you think is realistic? At the moment there are three important core points that I constantly come back to:

1. The first, and the most important one, is importance to listen to the sex-workers themselves. I can of course be in solidarity with you, and make my tools accessible for you. But it is not about my voice, neither about giving voice, but rather about listening (and collaborating).
2. Labour rights – this is of course the key aspect for the content.
3. How do you act politically without being public? This for me is a really important and crucial questions, and I am really interested in discussing methods and strategies related to this question.

I would even say that these three points are recurring questions in my work, and that I also see as important in this case. Especially since you [REDACTED] have stressed so many times that the most important thing is to give agency to the sex-workers themselves, and their organisation.

my best to you both Petra

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: yet another step...
Date: 9 February 2016 02:16 AM
To: Frances Stacey [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]

Ladies, Hello. I somehow must have missed Petra's first mail and it's now lots to catch up with. Sorry.

First of all, I'll e-mail Scot-PEP about the workshops and let you know what people think. I am sure we can get a room at HIV Scotland. If their rooms are taken, we could use the space at UKNSWP (which is supposed to be Scot-PEP headquarters, long story). A screening would definitely be good, especially if we could pause now and again and talk about techniques and how they can be used in our film. Because we at Scot-PEP are really clueless about these things. We can't propose this or that because we don't know what exists. Like, what's non-actors? What's scripted scenes? Also, people are interested in Petra's work, so yes to that.

I can't really say anything about covering the costs until I hear from at least a few people in Scot-PEP. I've no children and will be walking to all the meetings, but others will be coming from Glasgow and have 2 kids at home, so they will have better suggestions. With this in mind, would you consider taking at least one of the workshops to Glasgow? There's a sex worker-friendly space there so hosting isn't a problem.

I can't promise that people will come to all the sessions. In fact, I can promise that there will be people who will only show up for one workshop and not the rest of them. They all have lives, work, etc. For myself - yes, unless something out of the ordinary happens, like I get hit by a bus, I'll be there. Including as many one-to-one sessions as you want. In fact, I'm happy to take Petra round Edinburgh when/if she has free time. I love this city and happy to give a little guided tour. This is not because I'm so generous or committed, it's because unlike most people in Scot-PEP I have no family, no friends and my work is isolating, so I've bags of free time, and if there's something useful I can do with it while being around people - great!

Now, getting people to sign up for the workshops. This depends on what people you have in mind. If it's people from Scot-PEP, I suppose it can be done just by sending out a mail to the group. If you would like to see general sex workers in Scotland, unaffiliated with the organisation, this is tricky on many levels. But either way, an e-invite from you setting out the details will be very welcome.

In terms of dates and times, 4th March is the next Scot-PEP meeting so this is either a good opportunity for everyone to stay for a workshop afterwards, or to not have a workshop on that day as everyone will have to rush home - I'll ask the group. I'll also ask if you can attend in case you're interested. I would tentatively suggest morning as the best time for workshops as afternoons and evenings tend to be busy in terms of work.

I don't know if Scot-PEP is doing something for 3 March. If nothing (which I suspect might be the case because we're quite busy at the moment), arranging one of the workshops or the film night to mark the day is a great idea.

Yours,
[REDACTED]

From: Frances Stacey
Subject: Re: yet another step...
Date: 9 February 2016 3:20 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED]

Nice to hear from you.

It would be really great if you could speak with the group to find out general availability and interest. After that, we can pull together an invite with the decided dates and venues etc? Aiming to send that out around 19 February at the end of next week.

It would also be brilliant if we could use HIV Scotland or UKNSWP; and it sounds like a good idea to host one session in Glasgow, lets propose that.

In terms of people attending and signing up to the sessions, I think it's okay if people don't come to all the sessions and indeed come to just one. It would be great if a few people were interested in coming to more than one but let's see what people say, understandably everyone has many other things to be doing! I think the focus is on Scot-Pep, not trying to reach outside of that. Brilliant that you can attend all and I'm sure Petra would enjoy a city tour...

Sounds like watching some films together will be nice. I don't even realise I am using 'art speak' sometimes, sorry! What I meant was not professionally trained actors, but people reading from a script, as opposed to straight documentary style, talking heads or use of found footage... but this highlights a really good point, that sharing different approaches and finding ways to talk about it together is also important.

It would be great to come along to the meeting on 4th, if that won't be too much of an intrusion! Nice idea to mark the 3rd March with the film night; we can build that into the plan.

Best wishes and speak soon,
Fran

Från: Petra Bauer [REDACTED]
Ämne: Re: yet another step...
Datum: 9 februari 2016 22:24
Till: Frances Stacey
[REDACTED]
Kopia: [REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED] and Frances,

Just a quick reply, and then more in the next few days.

First: I would love to hang out with you [redacted] when I am in Edinburgh in March, and it would be great to get introduced to the city through your eyes. My only commitment is our project... so beyond the reading, the workshops, the research and our meetings (and the gym of course...) I have all the time in the world. And also a nice way to get to know each other. So please make plans for us...

Otherwise I can only agree with Fran.
And I think it is a great idea to also organise two workshops in Glasgow. But as Fran said, I also think it is better to really focus on Scot-Pep and your members.

And, I would be more than happy to introduce you and the other Scot-Pep members into different film methods, strategies and lingo. In other words, that is where the collaboration takes place. Fran and I bring our expertise when it comes to visual methods and strategies, and you bring your expertise.

More very soon.
My best
Petra

Från: Petra Bauer [redacted]
Ämne: Re: yet another step...
Datum: 11 februari 2016 18:16
Till: Frances Stacey [redacted]
Kopia: [redacted]

Dear both,

I just want to say that I will move from sending emails to instead communicating via google doc. Would this work for the two of you?

I will start writing either tomorrow, or during the weekend. (I have to finish my taxes before Monday, when I am meeting the accountant...phu! Wish me luck!)

One thing that I do want to discuss with you concerns the possible workshop on 3rd of March. We said that this could be a good opportunity to watch films since it is also the international sex workers day. I completely agree, but I am a bit lost when it comes to which film we could watch. I am not sure that my films are so joyful to watch, and I also think that it might be a bit too heavy to start the whole workshop series with a discussion on filmic strategies. It would be better if the workshop would be about introducing oneself, and then we could watch a film that triggers discussions. What do you think? Do you have any films in mind?

This weekend I will take time to watch the film you, Frances, sent a link to a few days ago.

Otherwise: should we watch a film that explicitly deals with sex work, or could it be a film that also deals with other matters? A film that comes to my mind is of course Jeanne Dielman, which is my absolute favorite film. However, it is very slow, very long - so a bit tough to watch....

A few months ago I got a film programme that focuses on sex work. I have not watched any of the films, but I can send you the programme and see if you recognise any of them. What are your thoughts on this?

My best
Peta

From: [redacted]
Subject: Scot-PEP meeting Friday 4 March
Date: 13 februari 2016 3:51 PM
To: Petra Bauer [redacted] Frances Stacey [redacted]

Ladies,

You are kinda* invited to attend Scot-PEP meeting on the 4th of March at midday.

The meeting will take place at HIV Scotland (18 York Place, EH1 3EP). To enter, you need to press the buzzer and someone on the intercom will speak to you. Just say you're there for Scot-PEP meeting. That someone will come to open the door and escort you to the meeting room.

The board meeting is 12pm to roughly 1.30. 1.30 till 2pm is lunch and social time. Some basic snacks are usually provided, if you have any dietary requirements - let me know (thanks to me there's usually something gluten-free there). There is a little kitchen there as well, so if you are particular about what you eat, you can bring your own lunch and warm it up in the microwave. There's cutlery and crockery there, teas and coffees.

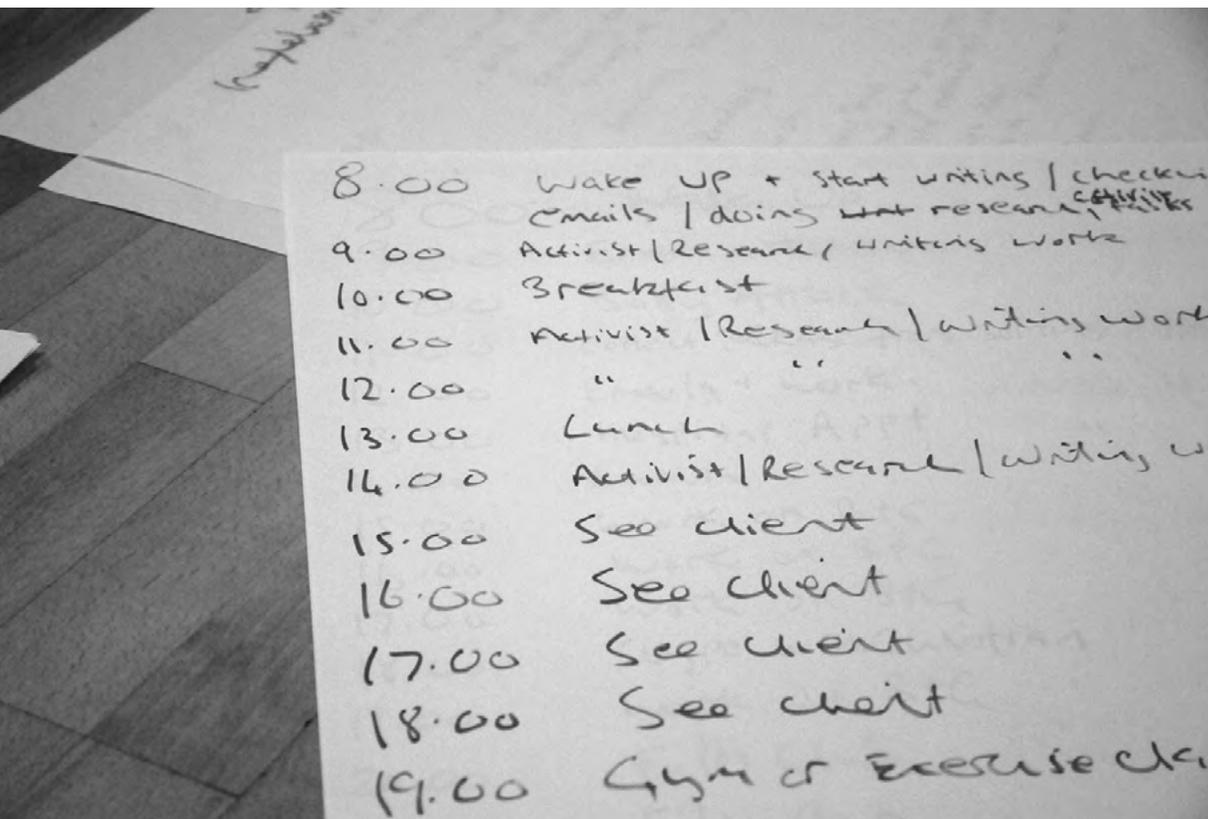
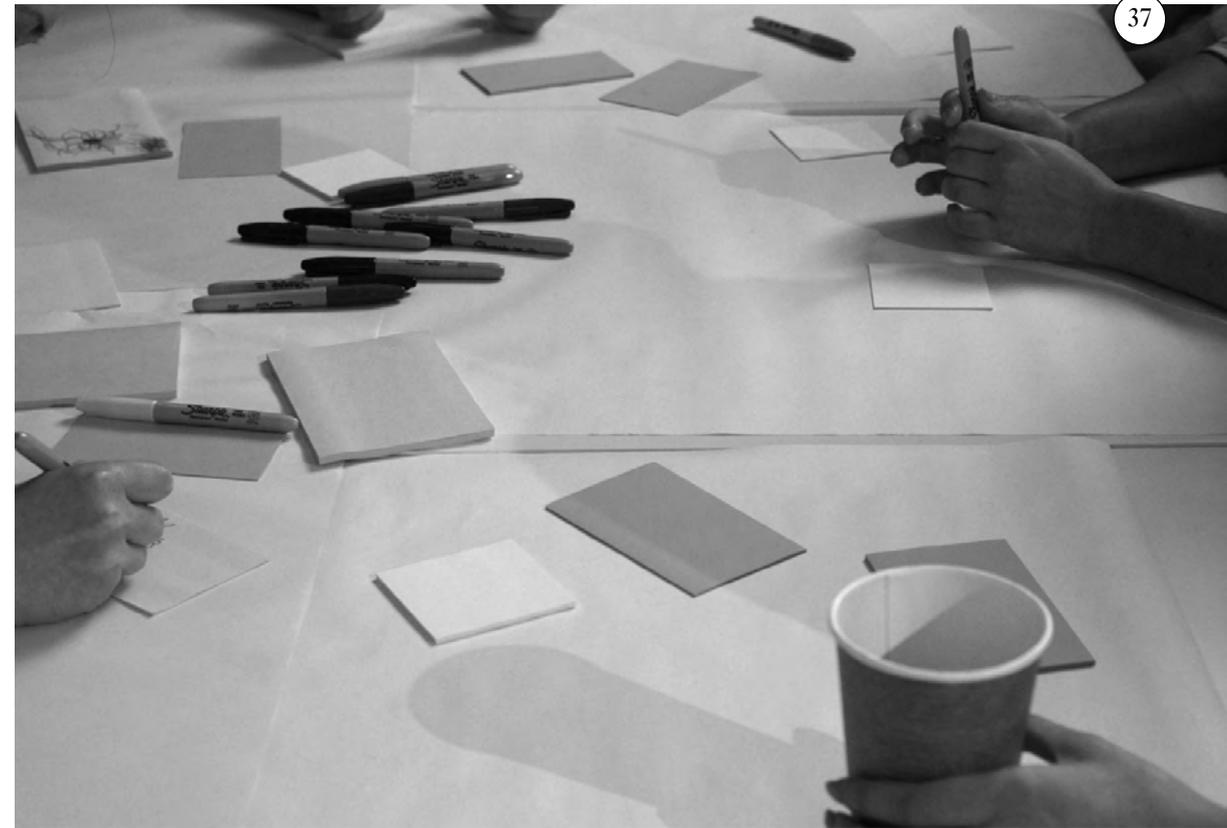
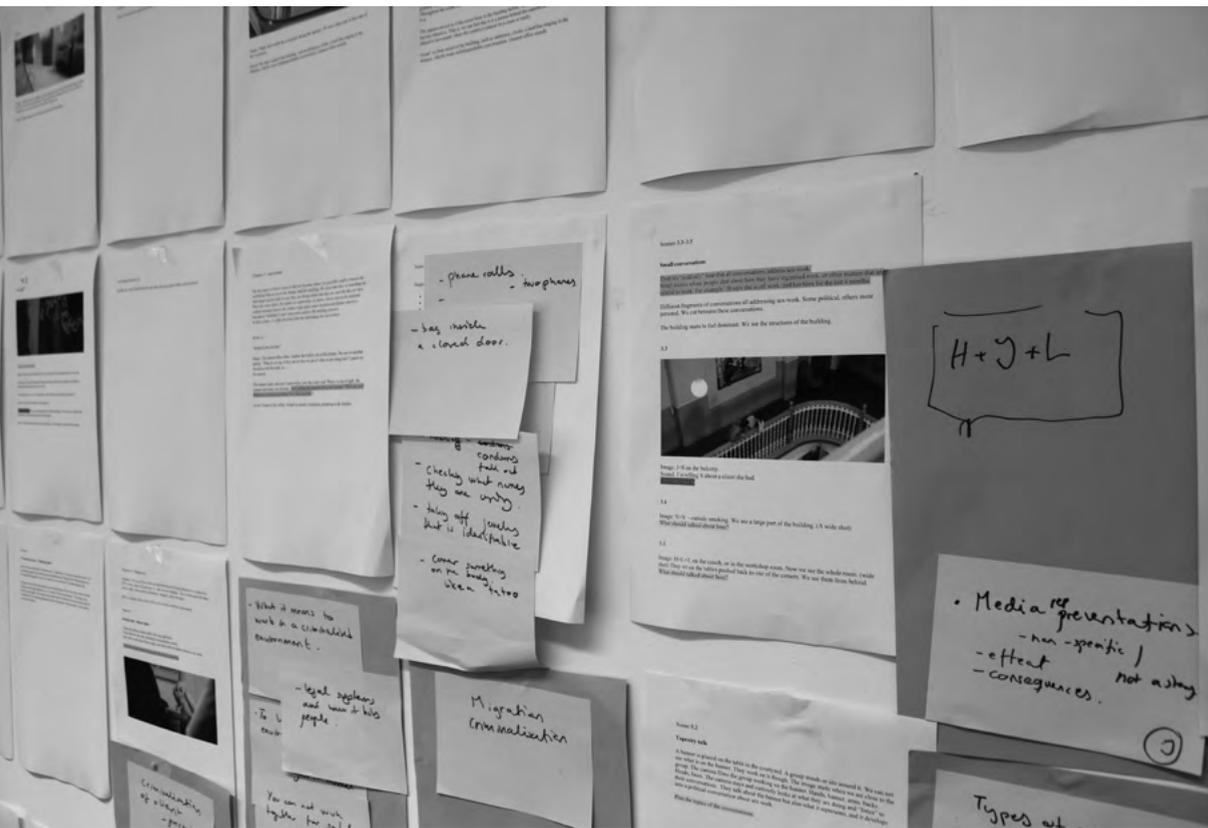
The campaign group meeting is 2pm until we tire or run out of stuff to talk about (usually 3.30 or 4). Campaign group members start to arrive from 1.30. I usually come at 2. There's no telling how many people will attend.

When this meeting is over, I suppose people will want another short break before we start the screening, it'll also take some time to set up the equipment. Once that is sorted, you're in charge.

Also, if you would like to record the meetings or part of them in any way, let me know so I can get people's permission.

*kinda because a decision is assumed to have been made when 3 board members agree. So far only 2 board members got back to me to say that it's ok for you to come. I don't doubt in the least that you are welcome to come, but formally this hasn't been approved yet.

Yours,
[redacted]









COLLECTIVE

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Workshops in March

Hello!

Collective and artist Petra Bauer are excited to be collaborating with Scot-Pep on a new film project with a focus on sex workers struggles for rights.

Petra, [REDACTED] and Fran from Collective therefore invite you to join us for two workshops this March as a way to get to know each other, share experiences and together discuss the content of the coming film. In the workshops we will watch and discuss films, but also talk about the sex worker movement, labour rights and begin to work out how we can make a film together.

The first workshop will take place in Glasgow and will be a chance to share group and individual experiences and the second workshop will take place in Edinburgh, focussing on labour rights. Each workshop will be three hours long, will include lots of activities and we will have plenty of snacks and refreshments to keep us going! If you have children or need to travel to get there, we can cover the costs if you let us know.

We recognise the importance of your privacy and will only audio record with your permission. In the second workshop we suggest that we use a hand-held camera, where we together can test out film techniques and ideas, and creatively experiment with methods where we can film without revealing identities and where each and everyone can set their own boundaries.

Dates and times are flexible; so do let us know if you are interested in taking part and if you have any questions. We'll also be hosting smaller sessions throughout March for anyone who can't make it to the workshops and would like to share their stories with us.

We are really looking forward to meeting and talking with you all.

Petra, Fran and [REDACTED]

Collective
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ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

Constellations Programme: Petra Bauer and SCOT-PEP

Working title: Nothing About Us Without Us

March – June 2016

Report by Frances Stacey

The workshops, screenings and meetings in March served multiple aims, including to get to know each other and build trust; create common references and frameworks; develop strategies on how to work together; learn from each other and pay attention to how we perform our relations; listen to sex workers; discuss labour rights and film methods; think about political and individual strategies for organising; and develop a plan for the film project: How do we work? When do we work? Agree a timeline? How do we develop content and aesthetics?

SCOT-PEP board and campaign meeting: 4 March 2016

Attendees: Petra and Fran; 6 SCOT-PEP members.
Duration: 12 – 4pm
Where: HIV Scotland

Film Night and discussion: 4 March 2016

Attendees: 8
Duration: 4.30 – 8pm
Where: Collective

A screening of Vicky Funari and Julia Query feature film *Live Nude Girls Unite!* (2000), which documents the exotic dancers of The Lusty Lady in San Francisco in their attempt to unionise. The film takes the form of a talking heads documentary, intercut with scenes of the group negotiating the terms of the union and stand-up comedy by Julia Query. This was followed by a group discussion with SCOT-PEP members.

Workshop: 8 March 2016

Attendees: 9
Duration: 2 – 5pm
Where: Basic Mountain

This first workshop was centered on sharing individual and group experiences, asking: what is sex work for each participant? What does a typical workday look like? What would an ideal workday look like? What are the different needs and contexts? What needs to be changed on an individual as well as group/structural level?

It was structured around four activities - an introductory 'game', diary writing where everyone wrote down what they did the day before the workshop – in this way we introduced to each other what our days look like in terms of spare time, work time and so on. This was followed by a screening and discussion of an extract from curator Grant Watson's *How We Behave* (2014) focused on an interview with an American sex worker;¹ and a discussion around how work is described (without using the words 'art', 'work', or 'sex').

Workshop: 15 March 2016

Attendees: 7
Duration: 2 – 5pm
Where: Basic Mountain

This workshop had three activities each led by different members of the group, reflective of the co-authored approach. We started with a short exercise: "questions we will and will not answer publically", moderated by Fran, in which we discussed 'what question you do not want to be asked and in what context?' and 'what question you would like to be asked and in what context?'. The aim was both a playful introduction to each other, and an attempt to identify the familiar and problematic questions encountered by sex workers, to discuss the difficulties in not being public and the topics not covered in sex work debates.

██████ led a longer session focused on labour rights – thinking about individual experiences and collective demands: What changes are necessary? What are the strategies to achieve those rights and changes? What are the methods of organisation? Difficulties? Short and long-term aims?

Petra then shared a series of film extracts as a way to introduce a history of political film, different filmic methods, strategies for image making when you cannot be public, forms of representation and different aesthetic strategies. This in turn acted as a way to trigger further thinking about the new work. The films discussed included:

1. Peter Watkins, *La Commune* (1871), (2000): Peter Watkins (b.1935) is an English film and television director, who make films that employ documentary techniques and blur the lines between documentary and fiction. *La Commune* is a historical re-enactment the Paris Commune. Workers and the bourgeoisie of 19th century Paris are interviewed and covered on television, before and during the workers' revolt. Figures are played by volunteers, who researched

their own history and do not perform a script but speak as the character when interviewed.

2. Abderrahmane Sissako, *Bamako*, (2006): Abderrahmane Sissako is a film director and producer who often works in Mali and France. This film tells the story of Melé and her husband who live in Bamako, the capital of Mali, and a trial that is taking place where they live, in which African civil society spokesmen have taken proceedings against the World Bank and the IMF, whom they blame for Africa's woes.
3. Petra Bauer and Annette Krauss, *Read the Masks. Tradition is not Given*, (2009): This film was made as part of a larger project critically questioning the Dutch Tradition of Zwarte Pieter (Black Peter) – whom is a companion of Saint Nicholas, commonly depicted through blackface make-up, red lipstick, curly wig and Renaissance clothes. The project “provoked a lot of reactions in The Netherlands and triggered a lot of intense discussions, speculations, opinions and rumours which touched upon questions around national identity, xenophobia, racism, who has the right to speak, freedom of speech, the relation between art and politics” (Petra Bauer)
4. Wendelien van Oldenborgh, *Bete & Deise* (2012): Wendelien van Oldenborgh is an artist and filmmaker based in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. In van Oldenborgh's new film *Bete & Deise*, two women encounter each other in a building under construction in Rio de Janeiro. Bete Mendes and Deise Tigrana have—each in their own way—given meaning to the idea of a public voice.
5. Derek Jarman, *Blue*, (1993): Derek Jarman (1942-1994) made *Blue* in 1993 a year before his death from AIDS-related complications. The script is recited by actors and by Jarman himself.
6. Petra Bauer, Marius Dybwad Brandrud, Kim Einarsson, *Mutual Matters* (2011): The film centers on discussions about the situation of the political left in Sweden. Two women speak to politicians, activists, NGO workers and others active on the left to test their views on political events, international solidarity and the future of socialism.
7. D.A. Pennebaker and Chris Hegedus, *Town Bloody Hall*, (1979): *Town Bloody Hall* captures the now infamous 1971 public meeting on the issues of Women's Liberation, that was chaired by novelist Norman Mailer and features literary critic Diana Trilling and three members of the Women's Movement, Germaine Greer, Jill Johnston (Lesbian Nation) and Jacqueline Ceballos, while Susan Sontag and Anatole Broyard contribute from the audience.

Social Reproduction Reading Group: 23 March 2016

Attendees: 12 (Social Reproduction members, primarily artists and academics)

Duration: 6 – 8pm

Where: Collective

Two texts discussed: 'Prostitution: Just Another Type of Work' by Mojca Pajnik from *CODE:RED*, edited by Tadej Pogacar (2011) and 'Whether from Reason or Prejudice: Taking Money for Bodily Services' by Martha C. Nussbaum, from *Sex and Social Justice* (Oxford University Press: 1999).

Film Night: 24 March 2016

Attendees: 4 SCOT-PEP members + Petra and Fran

Duration: 4.30 – 7pm

Where: Collective

A screening of Carole Roussopoulos, *Les Prostituées De Lyon Parlent (Prostitutes from Lyon Speak)*, (1975). In Lyon in June 1975, two hundred prostitutes occupy the Saint-Nizier church, denouncing police harassment and labour conditions. From one of the texts we read in advance of the screening: “Locked up in the church, unable to leave on pain of arrest, the video device allows them to “break the walls” and expose their claims outside.”

Discussion points: Motherhood, the start of the sex worker movement, urgency, solidarity, changes in language, and how the film was set up.

Brainstorming Session: 29 March 2016

Attendees: 9

Duration: 3.30 – 6pm

Where: Basic Mountain

In this workshop we each shared our favourite film(s) and began to discuss what our film project could do, mapping ideas for content, techniques, potential audiences, and framing methods. The filming location and the politics of these spaces were central to our discussion. We talked about the Lyon occupation and what could be an equivalent encounter in Scotland today.

Individual and small group meetings:

The smaller meetings between the workshops built on the group discussions and provided opportunities to talk in more depth about political strategies, individual concerns and filmic methods.

Experiments with the camera: June 2016

This test shoot with HER Film, camera woman Caroline Bridges and sound recordist Becky Thompson focused on how we can use the camera without revealing identities. It was a crucial beginning for Scot-Pep to become familiar with filming equipment, explore methods in which all have agency over the image making, and understand each other's boundaries in relation to visibility.

Noting About Us Without Us, June 2016

How to open up the sex work debate beyond sex as violence and sex work as work? How do you not get stuck in this flattening binary, but allow complexity? In March we talked together about the challenges for SCOT-PEP of introducing complexity around these questions, when faced with possibility that their arguments could be hijacked or used to detract from focus on labour/labour rights.

How to sidestep emotional attachment people have to sex? see
Are we conditioned to see sex as outside of exchange value and other forms of sociality?

How can we create a space where differences are heard and debated?

What is our definition of work?

Does anti-work debates come into this?

How does the discussion on sex workers' rights intersect with other labour struggles?

Dear all,

Over the last few months that I have been meeting with SCOT-PEP, I have been really inspired by the work that you do. I very am excited to work with you all more and develop a film together over the next two years. I thought I would take this opportunity to introduce myself to those that I haven't yet met, tell you a little more about the film project and how you can get involved.

Just to introduce myself, I am Swedish artist and filmmaker who is based in Stockholm. I have been working with art and film for many years now and always work collaboratively with political groups. I have made films with lots of different organisations, including Southall Black Sisters, a radical, pioneering London-based feminist organisation in south London, and the Women's Centre in Tensta-Hjulsta, Stockholm. All the works I make are political, both because of the nature of the groups themselves and the collaborative process we go through to develop the film. I don't make documentary reportage (the stuff you would normally encounter on television), but generally make films that sit somewhere in between feature film, documentary film and art. In the next workshop on Tuesday 15 March, I will introduce some of my previous work and a series of film clips, that I hope will be an interesting starting point to discuss filmic approaches and how we can develop a work together.

I am in Edinburgh because Collective, a visual art gallery based on Calton Hill, has invited me to develop a project over the next two years. I have really enjoyed meeting and talking with some of you already and I hope to meet more of you in the coming weeks. I thought it might be useful to update you on some of the discussions I have had with SCOT-PEP, Collective and possibly a film production company called HER.

As I mentioned, I always work collaboratively so this film can't be made without your involvement. We all will make the decisions together about the content of the film and how it looks. So it will not be a film about SCOT-PEP, but a film considering sex work and your struggle for rights that is made collectively. One of the main reasons that the development of the film is quite long is to allow us the time to work together to agree on what and how something should be filmed. It is at the workshops, in our individual meetings and brainstorming sessions that we will begin to set the content, aesthetics and other matters connected to the film project.

Your presence is extremely important, without you there will be no film.

I do hope you will be able to join us over the coming month, please get in touch if you have any questions. My email is: [REDACTED]

My best,
Petra Bauer

HER AB
22 SEPT 2016

LETTER TO SCOT-PEP RE: NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US

Dear SCOT-PEP members and organisational committee,

We were delighted to be invited into this project, believing firmly in the aims of your organisation and keen to find a way to make a film together.

We are keen to maintain clear and open channels of communication, on the basis of respect and clear establishment of trust. We are committed to safety at all times, inclusion and a respectful working environment for all participants. In the coming months we will write a letter of agreement between our organisation and SCOT-PEP'S organisation detailing the conditions on which we agree and will work together towards a common aim.

As a first step in the process, we decided together to do a 'test shooting' day this summer to introduce the camera and see the possibilities to work with visibility in a way that could feel comfortable for the participants to reveal as much or as little of their own identity as they wish. Petra then screened this material for feedback from those involved. The feedback was very positive and enriching - and we are keen to continue these discussions in the coming period of time.

Of course, it is challenging to make a film in which no faces are visible, but I would like to take this opportunity to clarify our stance on the position of 'visibility' and our responsibilities therein. We believe it would be the best approach for us together agree ahead of any shooting period, each individual's boundaries and preferences for their own inclusion and visibility on-camera or in sound. As you can see by Petra's editing of the test shoot in June - it is even possible to participate without been seen or heard directly. Arranging this framework from the outset will be helpful, not only for the direction of the crew, but also for everyone involved and for each stage of the process. We should all of course be respectful of each individual's continuing requirements, individual requests, and are open to discuss if at any point if one needs to remove themselves from the project fully.

If at any point anything is unclear or you would like any further information about our role in the project you are very welcome to contact me.

With very best wishes

Ruth Reid
PRODUCER

Banner for Workers!

Brief

Commission for an artist/designer to develop a textile or tapestry banner with Scot-Pep, a sex worker-led organisation in Edinburgh. The banner is being commissioned by and for Scot-Pep within the context of 'Nothing About Us Without Us' – a research project and new film by Petra Bauer and Scot-Pep. The intention is for the banner to feature in the new film and for the process of making it to be documented.

It needs to be a functional banner for Scot-Pep events, rallies and protests – so must be both durable and able to be carried. We are drawing inspiration from the workers' union banners found in the Scottish Trade Union Centre in Glasgow the Aids Memorial quilt and Vancouver missing women's quilt

The banner must be developed collaboratively, with the imagery and text on the banner designed in close dialogue with Scot-Pep members. We are open to a process being set up that is specific to the artist/designer and are very interested in making the banner together. As a starting point, we would imagine a minimum of two group sessions to brainstorm ideas and develop designs. Scot-Pep's campaign group meet monthly on the first Friday of each month – this time can be used to develop the banner or workshops can be set up additionally.

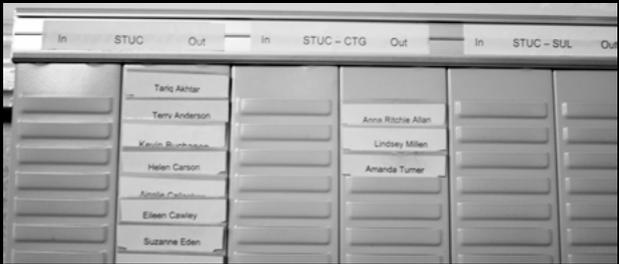
The total budget is £4000, which would include a £1000 artist/designer fee. The timeline for the project is:

- Presentation to Scot-Pep members on Friday 5 May, 20 minutes to outline work and approach.
- Selection will be made on Friday 5 May and artists will hear about the decision by Monday 8 May.
- Development of design and making between May and August 2017.
- Banner completed by August 2017.

NARRATIVE AND AESTHETIC STRUCTURE

Proposal August 2017

- ◇ Prologue
- ◇ Introduction
- ◇ Chapter 1: Gestures (social reproduction) and exploration of the building
- ◇ Chapter 2: The history of the labour movement through objects, posters and tapestry
- ◇ Chapter 3: Individuals interacting with the building and its history, preparations, reproductive labour
- ◇ Chapter 4: Uncertainty
- ◇ Chapter 5: Sex worker protests
- ◇ Chapter 6: Occupation – Taking over
- ◇ Chapter 7: Alliances
- ◇ Chapter 8: Leaving a trace – What is left?





WORKERS! A CONVERSATION

This conversation, recorded in 2018 and edited in early 2019, brings together four members of the long-term collaboration *Nothing About Us Without Us* and the film production *Workers!* with different experiences of work and film production:

Petra Bauer (artist and filmmaker)

Gem (sex worker and SCOT-PEP member)

Molly Smith (sex worker, writer and activist)

Frances Stacey (producer)

CO-AUTHORSHIP

PB: I would be really interested in hearing your thoughts on the way we have been working with the project so far in terms of collaboration and authorship. Especially since I am personally inspired by feminist film practitioners, like Trinh T. Minh-ha, who emphasise the importance of making films *with* their subjects, not *about* them.

G: Hmm, I feel like there is probably a bunch of art world specific jargon for talking about that stuff that I don't know, so...

FS: That's fine, we can remove the jargon.

PB: Yeah, we should throw this language out.

MS: I think that making the film has felt very collaborative and much more so than I could really conceive of when we started. In the beginning, I didn't really have any sense of how we would make a non-fiction film about sex work that wasn't a point and shoot interview style documentary. There may be other people in SCOT-PEP who were more visually sophisticated than me, but I just couldn't imagine how we would work together. So, not only did we work together, but my brain physically expanded, in terms of conceiving of how one would put together something that was about aesthetics and about collaboration. This really fell into place when we began to watch other films and extracts of various films, such as *La Commune* by Peter Watkins, where they re-enact events from the Paris commune of 1871.

On the one hand, feeling my brain going like 'wow, okay, wow' with the possibilities, while on the other, still not quite understanding how we would make a film like that, without being derivative. Sharing these films were like building blocks that then



structure a process. I couldn't see at the beginning what direction it would go in, so it was a really in-depth education in how filmmaking happens.

FS: Those early moments in our collaboration were really important (even as someone with experience of filmmaking and production) because we set out without a preconceived idea of what and how a film would be made together. In holding a space together to talk about other films and each other's interests we created a reflective space, akin to SCOT-PEP's campaign groups, but more social. All those moments of finding a common ground felt really necessary for working towards the next stage when we began to think more specifically about a film centred on sex workers rights and work.

G: I honestly don't know how to answer this question, I never felt like there was collaboration going on.

PB: Not a collaboration?

G: No, as collaboration implies that there is 'me' and there is 'them', and I need to find ways to work with them effectively. Working on the film, I have never felt like there were two sides, it was always 'us'. So, I find it very difficult to say, "Oh yes, the collaboration was really productive." As in yes, it was productive, but 'collaboration' as I see it doesn't describe my experience.

PB: Just so I understand you correctly, how do you then see it? Would you say we worked collectively, or would you say that I did it? Do you see what I mean? If you say that it is not collaborative how would you then describe it?

G: I mean together. Like Molly, I also had zero experience of making films and I wasn't even trying to figure out how it was all going to come together. You said, "You come and bring the content, and I'll make it visual", and I think I've done my part – and you know, I've got plenty of content to bring. But the next thing I know, we had ideas for what the visual part could be and these ideas became part of the film. In this way, we worked together. But most importantly, it was never a compromise between the interests of two sides. It was always 'us', not 'me' and 'them' but one party, working with the same priorities.

PB: I was in the same position when it comes to sex worker politics. Or rather I brought my filmmaking experience into this and had to learn the rest. The initial

workshops we had in March 2016 were crucial for me and Fran when we shared films with you and you shared sex worker politics with us. This mutual exchange of knowledge or mutual listening is what I really enjoyed throughout this process.

This led me to understand what areas of sex worker politics were important to address in the film and you became clearer about how we could address it through the film medium. However, I have never been interested in pursuing a certain kind of argument, rather what has been important to me is to see what issues are important for SCOT-PEP and how we can address that in film.

And I have to say I am really proud of the fact that we managed to create a platform where we were able to discuss and have opinions beyond the knowledges we initially brought to the project and to explore something together.

MS: To me, it always felt very horizontal, not like we were teaching you, or you were teaching us. But like everything was being shared horizontally.

FS: I've been reflecting on the ways our roles shifted throughout the process, initially we worked in a shared physical space but as the film develops, for instance during post-production, we pass the baton to others. So our process is not static or equal always, but we continue to find space to reflect on the decisions together.

MS: Which is good I think, it feels like that gives us a chance to rejuvenate. We can pass back the film to you Petra for six weeks and you come back to us with a draft. Because definitely the process of making a film was pretty physically arduous...

FS: ... demanding on all our energies.

MS: Yeah, so the way in which it gets passed back and forth between us is useful and rejuvenating.

G: And actually, now thinking back over the three years, I have to say I appreciate the way you two, Fran and Petra, created the structure for the project. We don't know how to make films, but the way you framed it from the beginning, it all seemed to fall together quite seamlessly and I can imagine a much bumpier road in that respect; with people who have less experience or less appreciation of our personal circumstances and in how flexible and sometimes inflexible sex workers can be, in terms of time and visibility that we can afford.

FS: It makes me think how useful the early exercise was in which we recorded what our days look like each hour, reading that back together. This gave us all an understanding that we are awake at different times and live differently, which was important for how we set the framework for filming, knowing what conditions were needed to support each other.

And of course along the way we became friends, not without disagreements, and this enriched and complicated our work together. Politically, socially and individually we became entangled in learning about each other's lives, struggles and ideas; to the extent that our commitments now extend beyond the timeframe of a 'project' or 'film production'.

POLITICAL SPEECH AND ANONYMITY

FS: It was raised in one of our early meetings that there wasn't much space within existing debates and forums that SCOT-PEP take part in for modes of speech that aren't extremely direct, that aren't about arguing a very specific position. It felt exciting to open up the possibility in the film to also talk about sex worker organising through each other's experiences, with a different texture to how you talk and relate...

MS: ...with complexity. I think the film does a really good job of making space for including the stuff that isn't verbalised often in sex worker rights politics, because you develop a script or a series of lines that you call on for specific arguments in specific contexts. I certainly think that I have much more complex conversations about sex and work, sex work and trauma, intimacy and money, and all these kinds of things in private with friends, many of whom are sex workers. We've kind of texturised the conversation in the film, as much as we can, and this gesture towards complexities in a sense that they are being discussed elsewhere often in private. It goes beyond just the standard sex worker rights script, for sure.

PB: I completely agree. I've been really interested in how can we make a film where there's not pragmatic and programmatic talk, but rather where a conversation can take place. Where viewers are invited in as guests into a group and a movement they do not normally have access to for a short period of time. They are allowed to listen but not overhear – I mean overhear in the voyeuristic sense – where we as makers and sex workers are in control of the listening.

FS: Equally, we were conscious that some people when viewing the film in an exhibition or a screening might come to this with very little knowledge of sex worker rights or even sex work. How to address this audience while also addressing those that are already embedded in the struggle is an ongoing question.

PB: That's the balance isn't it. We will see in time how this works, but I like that if you see the film without having any knowledge of sex work beforehand you are likely to have an experience of feminised work inserted into a male-dominated labour history. And if you are already familiar with sex workers' politics you will see something else, most likely the importance of political organising.

My ambition for the project is that the film is itself a political act through the fact that we are visually occupying the space of the STUC. I would love it if the film will operate on an aesthetic and a political level and that it becomes a political event in itself once the film is shown publicly.

FS: And when you say that's your aim, what do you mean by the political event? What would you hope it to be or what would it look like?

PB: That is a good question, maybe it's kind of an abstract romantic idea of a political event of mine, but I do hope that it will trigger a conversation that goes beyond both the sex worker movement as well as the art world. Something that can actually trigger serious conversation about work, about sex work, about history writing. That it is not just another voice on sex worker politics and it's not just another artwork but it actually has a potential of pushing something.

FS: Well, I suppose in a way you are saying the film itself isn't an endpoint, it's not a closed representation but has the potential to open up other discussions or other debates.

PB: Yes, that would be amazing, but we will see this with time. These things are highly unpredictable. Sometimes things have an effect, sometimes not.

FS: I certainly feel on a small scale that this is happening already, in the way that academics are asking questions and problematising what we've been doing, prodding at the film, for instance asking us if the fight for sex workers' rights is in itself anachronistic when the rights of workers are disintegrating for many people globally.

MS: We haven't really talked about anti-work politics. On the one hand there is obviously a struggle for sex work to be recognised as work, but then actually what work is, needs to be dismantled anyway. Not that it's necessarily the responsibility of sex workers busy with our own struggle already to do this, but it's something that should be addressed by everyone who works.

PB: But the problem is...how can you address anti-work if you're not acknowledged as workers? It's this double bind almost. I remember post-colonial feminists in the seventies, I think Trinh T. Minh-ha was one of them, replying to famous male theorists (like Barthes and Foucault) who said "there are no authors or any subjects anymore." - and the women were like "okay, and you say that now? Finally, when we as women have a chance to come to the negotiation table, now you are saying there is no table anymore!", which again is removing the possibility to be empowered or to be part of a struggle.

FS: For sex workers there isn't another horizon or a more abstract, anti-work struggle. However, it is not contradictory to want rights, when you are not recognised as a worker, while also wanting to dismantle work itself. It returns to short and long-term goals.

MS: Right, totally.

PB: I think that one thing that I really learned from you is not to single out sex work from other forms of precarious work. This is very effective, if you agree with it or at least take the proposal seriously, you have to have a completely different take on sex work.

MS: Exactly, it is about connecting this to people's material needs. When people have more of what they need then they are less vulnerable to exploitation regardless of what they are doing, whether that is sex work, busking, informal cash in-hand work or staying in a relationship that they might otherwise not stay in (all things people do to get what they need). When you start to see sex work in that light then it no longer appears abject or abhorrent, instead it becomes one of many rational modes of survival in a really shit world. The answer becomes clearly about resources, not about empowering the police and the immigration police.

PB: Yeah, so it is about resources, structures and politics.

MS: Right, but currently it's like people think that you can redistribute resources with more policing. When actually of course policing takes resources away from the community - people have to expend resources like time and energy thinking about how to avoid the police and when people are caught then they're fined or deported or their housing or access to childcare or education is put in jeopardy. Policing is the theft of resources; it worsens already existing inequalities and injustices.

PB: And also, it's really easy to target sex work but not take responsibility for the structures that have created this situation. So instead you target the sex industry, or you target the people that the state deems traffickers.

MS: Rather than thinking about capitalism or thinking about borders.

PB: And I think this is also what we try to do with the film; to connect it to other forms of struggles and forms of work.

FS: ...You have these moments of feeding, cleaning, replenishing; the maintenance or supportive work.

MS: Social reproduction.

FS: Yeah, social reproduction, what is needed to organise collectively. This is weaving through the film visually.

PB: Gem, are you thinking of something? I just heard your brain working.

G: I don't think I have a lot to add to the whole political conversation. It's not something I was thinking about when we were making the film. You know I'm not really political by nature, although yes, Petra, you keep arguing about it...

FS: But you are, you are!

PB: I know, I was just about to say that! You always say that you're not political and I'm always saying you're hyper-political.

[Laughter]

G: I don't think in political terms, I think in personal terms. And for me the film

wasn't political, it was personal. I think there will be many people like that, like me, out there, who are not politically aware, who don't think and speak with theory.

For me, when I was watching the film the first time, I think even if it doesn't work on a political level, it will work on a personal level. The conversations, where we talk about our children, for instance, will hopefully build some sort of camaraderie with the characters at first. When you later realise they are sex workers, I hope that the feeling of solidarity that you developed at the start of the film will stay, and maybe make sex workers more real as people and not just a political talking point; or a talking point about social fucking reproduction.

PB: I think you have a point, Gem, I completely agree with you.

MS: It's a conversation about workers as people, not abstractions.

PB: I think that's excellent. But it's so funny when you said that you don't care about social reproduction and then you make this beautiful analysis of social reproduction.

FS: You're right that this terminology is maybe not always useful.

MS: It is useful to name the work of everyday life, the work that's traditionally women's work – looking after babies and children, feeding and comforting the worker – feeds back into capitalism. If we don't name it then it vanishes. Capitalism relies on us not naming it in part.

G: But also, I think the film, our film makes words visible. I think a lot in the film has to do with visibility. You know Petra, when we started, visibility was the first thing that you mentioned, asking "how do you speak politically without being public? How do you create new images of sex worker organising without revealing the identity of those involved?" Now towards the end we're coming to this question again; how to make something visible, and very personal, while still remaining invisible and elusive.

FS: Yes, this is crucial, I think early on Petra and I learnt from you that any attempt to speak publicly and politically involves risks to livelihoods, relationships and families; risks that are felt most acutely by migrants and undocumented workers. When your work borders on illegal, is denied by the state, is subject to carceral responses by the police, stigmatised in civil society and stereotyped in the popular press, to speak out as a sex worker you must constantly negotiate between anonymity

and visibility. In making the film, a medium heavily focussed on the visual, this became an interesting point of departure as a group. Now the film is public and we speak publicly in different forums about the work, we have to keep asking: How do you visualise political demands while ensuring the safety and anonymity of the group?

REPRESENTATIONS OF WORK

FS: As we have mentioned briefly, watching films together that represent sex work, other forms of feminised labour and political organising formed a really important activity in the early stages of our collaboration (if we can call it that). Two films became particularly important to how the project has been conceived of and made *Jeanne Dielman, 23 Quai du Commerce 1080 Bruxelles* and *Les Prostituées de Lyon Parlent*. Can we talk about how these historic films have been used as a starting point for *Workers!?*

PB: Chantal Akerman's filmmaking has always been an important reference for me. I am particularly inspired by how she addresses questions related to identity, women and labour through a very conscious combination of content and aesthetics. A few years ago, I started to revisit her now iconic film *Jeanne Dielman* from 1975, which depicts the daily routine of a housewife over three days.

FS: When you introduced this to us you were interested in Jeanne embodying at least three different roles: housewife, mother and sex worker.

PB: Yes.

G: We actually watched parts of the film during our first film shoot. Waiting for our scenes to begin, we watched the slow rhythms of different forms of labour: Jeanne peels potatoes, makes the bed, wakes up her son, and buttons her shirt after meeting a client.

PB: The film has been very important for a feminist discussion on women's conditions and the potential of feminist aesthetics. Since then almost 50 years have passed, and for me it became important to ask who and what could be a contemporary Jeanne? Or what happened to the figure of Jeanne? While developing this project with SCOT-PEP, I decided to embark on this crazy journey to remake *Jeanne Dielman*, but in three parts. Each dealing with one of the themes addressed in

the film: sex-work, motherhood and domestic work.

I see *Workers!* beginning literally where *Jeanne Dielman* ends; that is, in the last scene Jeanne sits in the dark in her living room staring into the void. She has just killed one of her clients, the dead body is still in the bedroom, and her son has not yet come home. The film ends there, in this unresolved political situation and narrative. To me, with this scene Chantal Akerman asks us – in her future – to continue looking into women's conditions and resistance. I heard her, and took her proposal seriously. So I guess this is my starting point and what I brought with me into our work and film project.

FS: *Les Prostituées de Lyon Parlent* was introduced to us during the process of making *Workers!* by another member of the sex worker rights community. The occupation of Saint-Nizier church in Lyon by two hundred prostitutes, denouncing police harassment and perilous labour conditions, documented in this film remained a key idea for our project.

G: This film made me cry. On a personal level, I found it only too easy to relate to the women in the church. They feel the way I feel. They struggle daily with the things I have to struggle with. They are desperate, they are scared. I understand all this very well. And then in the broader context, this film made it obvious that nothing has changed in the 40 years since those sex workers went on strike. Here we are, 40 years later, different people, in a different country, with different means of communicating our demands, but still demanding the same things, still not being listened to. It almost makes you want to give up, because what's the point? And for me, the point was that what if, 40 years later, some sex workers somewhere will be watching our film? We can hope that the political context will be different for them, and our film will make them happy – for all the shit they don't have to deal with, for all the safety they have at work, for all the access to justice that is available to them. They will be able to look back at us and see how far they have come and be proud. I would very much want this for them. But if, another 40 years later, the situation for these future sex workers hasn't changed, at least they will see that they are not alone, that they are right in their demands, that they are doing the right thing by standing up for themselves. Everyone needs strength and as we took inspiration from the Lyon film, maybe ours can inspire other sex workers to go on.

FS: The dual nature of this film, made by Carole Roussopoulos and collective Vidéo Out from inside the church, is also really thought-provoking. The medium

of video was used to create a collective portrait of the women and also to broadcast their demands of the occupation directly onto the street outside the church, enabling sex workers to speak in public space without fear of arrest.

MS: The occupation led to an eight-day nationwide strike.

PB: ... And we started to discuss what an occupation today would look like, what we could occupy, and what it would imply. But also how we could be inspired by their strategy; how the occupation of a church gave them cover as people could not enter, but at the same time their demands were heard. That was so clever.

FS: It's interesting both films were made in 1975. We have returned to the year specifically throughout the making of *Workers!*, as a way to think about present day conditions. Not only is this the year *Jeanne Dielman* and *Les Prostituées de Lyon Parlent* were made, but also Silvia Federici writes 'Sexuality as Work' (presented at the second International Wages for Housework in Toronto), and Wages Due Lesbians write 'Fucking as Work'. We shouldn't overlook the specificity of this return, as it is not a return to the 1970s generally, which has the potential to be nostalgic for an abstract political moment.

MS: The English Collective of Prostitutes was formed a few years after this in 1977.

FS: Then SCOT-PEP was formed in 1986 and for over twenty years its roots in campaigning for sex workers rights have moved between different scales of activity and timeframes; moving between campaigning with a relatively small group involved month-to-month, to working globally to institute change that takes many, many years.

MS: Yeah, I definitely feel we are very connected to a global movement.

PB: When I got to know SCOT-PEP I also realised that local and global politics are taking place at the same time. I got very impressed by this, and this was something we referred to in the development of the film; that the film must give a sense of a larger movement and be used as a mobilising tool, to be, not universal, but at least address change on a larger scale. But at the same time it also had to be particular to a Scottish context and the legal system here.

MS: Totally. There is a geographical element but also a time element. You need to

think about social change almost in terms of geological time, it is incredibly slow. And even though the day-to-day stuff feels really important and is in its own way, it's also really important to be able to zoom out and look at the larger picture. This can feel like we are all just pushing against this enormous boulder and probably will be for the next twenty years; maybe in twenty years' time we'll see a difference and that can be sort of reassuring as well as depressing.

FS: In that sense, the film being developed over three years felt simultaneously a long and a short time for SCOT-PEP. Long in the sense that the organisation is relatively precarious, in who is able to be involved, how it is funded and everyone's energy to work together; and very short in terms of the work needed to change the material conditions for sex workers. I have always been struck by your commitment and endurance; despite the feeling of a huge boulder of resistance against change, you keep going.

PB: In this way, it was also a good decision, or I don't know if it ever was a decision, that we didn't focus on making a campaign or conventional advocacy film, as this would already be yesterday's film. Whereas hopefully *Workers!* can have a longer time span, particularly thinking about the location of the Scottish Trade Union Congress in Glasgow. Everything there, the ephemera, group portraits and so on have an anachronistic aesthetic. When creating imagery that addresses this historical movement through a contemporary lens, different time zones are suddenly crossing.

You see this clearly in the scene where you are preparing the workers' banner. Up until then the film has focused on close-ups of gestures, that we could describe as socially reproductive labour...and then you, Gem, say: "Do you think we will get a chance to watch the Lyon occupation film again?...It's sort of inspiring, and it's sort of depressing...well, that's why I cried, because you know it was 40 years ago, and we have not moved anywhere. Nothing has changed. They are talking about my life." As you say these very words you are all at the same time busy sewing the banner, a feminised activity as it is traditionally understood, but in 2018. Time becomes compressed, both in what you say, and in what we see. Present meets the past and we have to think of how they connect or disconnect. We have to think of where we are, where we have been and where we are going.

FS: Yes, the ephemera in the STUC, the different union banners function as a backdrop or character in the film. We enter the topic of work without the need for dialogue and this connects the viewer to the alliances SCOT-PEP have been forming

for many years with groups fighting for migrant rights, reproductive rights, disabled rights and so on.

PB: It is also clear that there is a gender issue at play in the STUC, which is a male-dominated place or at least visually has a strong male history. This is actually more present than I thought it would be.

FS: It appears as a constant in the film and means every action is sited in relation to the role of women and people that are marginalised from the formal union movement. Although there is a Women's Committee at the STUC, womens labour is addressed from a very specific idea of who is an acceptable woman.

G: I admit, it never crossed my mind to think of the STUC as a patriarchal institution.

MS: Oh, it definitely crossed my mind to think of it like that. It is similar to NGOs that are quite dominated by women, but still function as a patriarchal institutions, not least in their exclusion of sex workers.

PB: Yes, and the history in itself is quite exclusive in terms of what a struggle consists of and who is part of that struggle. I actually love the first part of the film where fairly slow, gestures of doing and making, feminised forms of work in this building. Throughout the process we started to connect sex work not only to work (in the formal sense) but also to social reproduction, blurring these lines between these different forms of labour.

PETRA BAUER works as an artist and filmmaker. She is concerned with the question of film as a political practice, and sees film as a place where social negotiations can take place. She focuses on how women have organised and resisted, historically and in a contemporary global world. Petra has collaborated on long-term projects with Southall Black Sisters in London, the sex-worker led organisation SCOT-PEP in Edinburgh, and The Women's Centre in Tensta-Hjulsta in Stockholm, which primarily mobilise and organise with minority women. She is one of the initiators of the feminist platform k.ö.k (Women Desire Collectivity).

COLLECTIVE is a contemporary visual arts organisation that brings people together around the production and presentation of new work. Established in 1984, Collective has been fundamental to the cultural vitality of Scotland by supporting artists who are at a pivotal stage in their development.

GEM is a migrant sex worker, a member of SCOT-PEP and a volunteer for TAMPEP, a European Network for the Promotion of Rights and Health for Migrant Sex Workers.

HER FILM was established in Stockholm by three producers: Hedvig Lungren, Malin Hüber and Ruth Reid. The company supports emerging directors, with a focus on producing films by and about women.

SCOT-PEP is a sex worker-led charity that advocates for the safety, rights and health of everyone who sells sex in Scotland. They believe that sex work is work and that sex workers deserve protections such as labour rights. Along with Amnesty International, the World Health Organization and the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women, they believe that the decriminalization of sex work best upholds the safety and rights of people who sell sex.

MOLLY SMITH is a sex worker, writer and activist involved with The Sex Worker Advocacy and Resistance Movement (SWARM) and SCOT-PEP. She recently co-authored with Juno Mac *'Revolted Prostitutes: The fight for Sex Workers Rights'* (Verso, 2018).

FRANCES STACEY is Producer at Collective, Edinburgh, where since 2013 she has closely supported artists and groups to produce films, exhibitions, events, summer schools and off-site programmes. She is a coordinator of a reading group on social reproduction, co-founder of artist-run organisation Rhubaba and a board member of SCOT-PEP.

Workers! the film by Petra Bauer and SCOT-PEP was commissioned by Collective and produced by Collective and HER Film.

The film was made possible by the commitment of all at SCOT-PEP; the Collective team; sound designer Mario Adamson, sound assistant James Bell, editor Susan Brand, artist Petra Bauer, director of photography Caroline Bridges, gaffer Steve Cardno, first assistant camera Steven Cook, additional camera Marius Dybwad Brandrud, colour grading and mastering Mats Hjelm; assistant Georgia Horgan, producer Malin Hüber, assistant Petra Hultman, runner Camilla Irvine-Fortescue, runner Ross Little, DIT Natalie McGowan, runner Emmie McLuskey, runner Tiki Muir, runner Alice Ogle, graphic design Maeve Redmond, producer Ruth Reid, producer Frances Stacey, and sound recordist Becky Thomson.

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SCOT-PEP's banner was made with artist Fiona Jardine, printed by the Centre for Advanced Textiles and Glasgow School of Art, poles made by Johannes Sailer Fabricators, powder coating Hendersons Metal Cleaning, design workshops led by Mhari McMullan and Francis Robertson, and sewing by Ashleigh Miller.

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