



Brussels Health Gardens: potential of participatory research method to co-create urban healing spaces

Vitalija Povilaityte-Petri, Sugir Selliah, Wendy Wuyts, Plants in Brussels

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Brussels Health Gardens

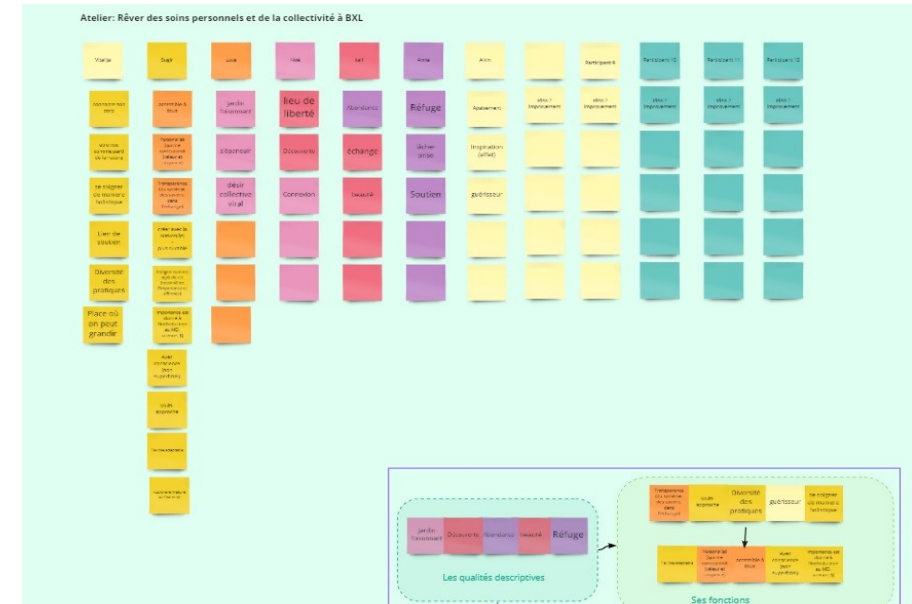
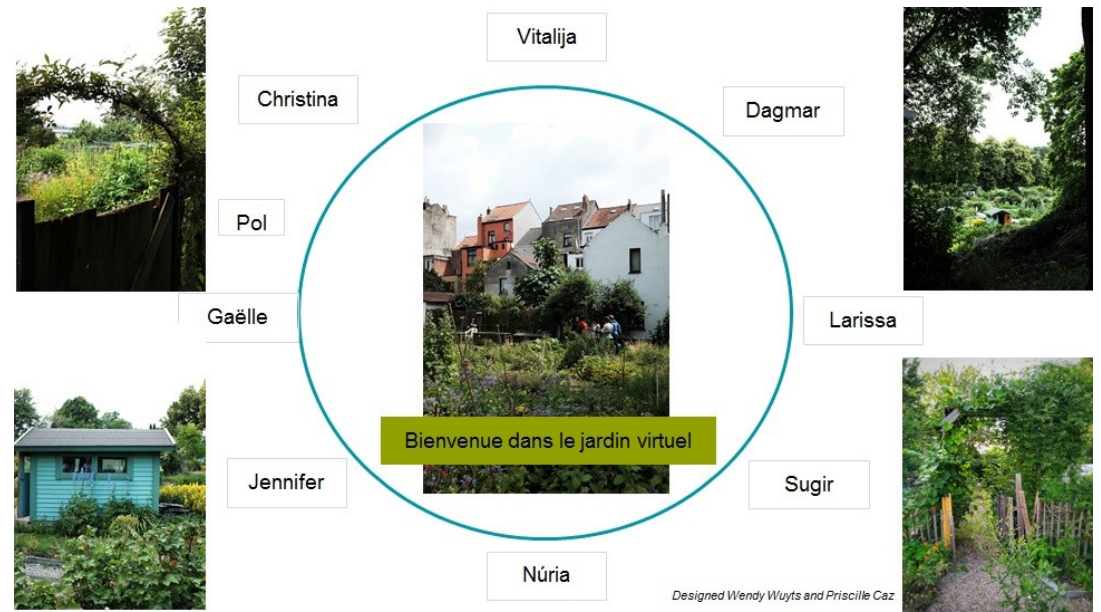
- Health Gardens community came into existence as citizens initiative for co-creative research in 2019
- Original idea was to initiate collaborative research project at Medicinal plants and pharmacy museum of ULB (Université libre de Bruxelles) to transform static university museum into participatory museum space of intercultural and interdisciplinary dialogue where all types of health knowledge (citizens, academic, associative, entrepreneurship and of plants) could interact, be shared and exchanged
- Project was supported by Brussels Research and Innovation Agency Innoviris in our response for call to increase urban resilience by exploring nature-based health practices and healing spaces for health promotion
- Inhabitants of Brussels city join the project with personal experiences what are their relationships with urban nature, medicinal plants and how they effect health?
- COVID-19 triggered more specific research questions: how in times of crisis (and beyond) people are taking self-care in and with nature?
- What nature based health practices, spaces/places and plants people are using for self-care in times of crisis?



Brussels Health Gardens are trans-contextual intergenerational mutual learning spaces (I)



Brussels Health Gardens are trans-contextual intergenerational mutual learning spaces (II)



Brussels Health Gardens are trans-contextual intergenerational mutual learning spaces (III)

Synthesis, analysis, reflections: rooting our field work in theoretical concepts



Photo credit Françoise Rossion



The City and its Suburbs
(Deleuze and Guattari, 2013)

(Haraway, 2016,
Gibson and Gagliano, 2017)

(o)graphy
(no, 2018)



The City(as)Rhizomes



Picture from Blue Labyrinths

Brussels(as)Rhizomes



**Inhabitants and Communities being(with) and becoming(with) Plants
in the City(as)Rhizomes**

Exploring further Inhabitants and Communities being(with) and becoming(with) Plants in the City(as)Rhizomes for health

Can **rerooting traditional (or folk, or common) health knowledge** in a city make humans and their plant companions **resilient and healthy**?

Definitions of Health Gardens and Traditional knowledge **are constantly changing** as project is becoming(with) Plants

Health is an **eco-system of knowledge** in constant flux of **co-creation**

We can reroot traditional knowledge in Brussels City(as)Rhizomes by primarily **creating relational experiences** with ourselves, local communities and plant companions

Rerooting via rhizomatic processes generate health and vitality which manifests in urban resilience

We acknowledge **the city as being dynamic, unstable and chaos**, which is constantly becoming and changing

As a civilisation **we are always rooting, part of becoming** and that is visible in Cities where we grow, learn and create generations that live in **harmony with nature**

Earth's fabric of life(=living nature) **is essential for our survival**, health and thriving, and nature relationships created where we live, in our communities, local soils and above are very important

People save what they love (Michael Soulé and Deborah Bird Rose)!



Can do we **root** on beton and be healthy?

Could we grow with **plants** and how? What can we humans learn about health from the rest of life?