The civic role of cultural spaces in culture and immigration: Reflections from the Becoming […] projects

Lora Krasteva

Summary In this contribution I reflect on Becoming Czech, Romanian, Alman, and British – a series of creative residencies interrogating national identities and processes of belonging from the perspective of local first-generation immigrant artists and communities. I draw upon my lived experience and my advocacy as one of the co-founders of the UK-based Migrants in Theatre Movement to reflect upon the role of cultural spaces as sites of power and social change for and by immigrants.

Since March 2022 I have been working with immigrant artists and communities in four different countries. I have travelled with the concept of a creative residency, working in a co-creative way, using creativity (making art and performances, commissioning writing and programming panel discussions, among others) to interrogate processes of nationality and national belonging. The residencies took place in Brno, Czech Republic (Becoming Czech at Terén, the centre for experimental theatre), Bucharest, Romania (Becoming Romanian at Replika, a theatre space dedicated to educational performance), and Berlin, Germany (Becoming Alman at Oyoun, a queer, decolonial migrant cultural space)[1] and were supported by Perform Europe, a new European-wide platform looking at reimagining cross-border performing arts presentation. The original idea was developed as Becoming British, a multi-approach project in the UK whose first iteration was delivered as an exhibition at Bloc Projects, a local contemporary arts organisation that encourages artists' development and participatory practices, in Sheffield.

The project feels like the natural continuation of my own lived experience as an immigrant my entire life (both by choice and not). Questions of belonging, becoming, mutable identities, assimilation, and integration have been part of my

upbringing and my whole adult life so far. I also see a powerful and natural link between processes of migration and culture making. It is precisely at this intersection that much of the anti-immigrant rhetoric takes hold: people feel threatened by the possible changes immigration can cause to their country (often understood along the nation state amalgamation of *one* people and *one* territory), their ways of life (expressed in their culture), or their values and beliefs (expressed by cultural productions). Advocating for a right to access to and creation of culture is diametrically opposed to these fears, for I am suggesting that culture is moveable (and so are our identities) and that the equitable access to culture by migrants is something to strive for, rather than protect against.

In this article, I will draw upon the Becoming [...] projects as well as my advocacy for migrant artists at large, including co-founding Migrants in Theatre (MiT) in 2020. I argue here that cultural spaces – through theatre making and other activities – have the capacity to build relationships between venues and migrant communities, to contribute to feelings of belonging and well-being, and to promote social cohesion by programming migrant-led work, building a culture of solidarity centred around processes of co-creation (working *with* people not *for* them), and striving for intersectionality not only in what they do but in *how* they do it too. It is by connecting the dots between art, creativity, culture making and existing strategies, campaigns, and policymaking that cultural spaces can step into their power and generate long-lasting positive social change for all.

This comes from the belief that art and creativity can affect change in a way that other tools ('pure' advocacy, policy change, campaigning, etc.) cannot. Art moves hearts (and minds) in a different, often more powerful way as evidenced by the extensive legislative theatre work of organisations such as Theatre of the Oppressed NYC and Cardboard Citizens in the UK as well as by my own five-year experience as executive producer of what is now Arts & Homelessness International (AHI), where new homelessness policy and strategy is co-created, using creative methodologies, with people in several UK cities who are or have been homeless.

About the Becoming [...] residencies

In each of the residency countries, I travelled as lead artist together with producer Claire Gilbert. Spending one to three weeks in each location, we engaged with the venues, creatives, and audiences, both commissioning new artistic works and spotlighting existing practices. Although made in a similar format (discussions with

Figure 1 Audiences in the Terén Studio, during Becoming Czech. Photo by
Adam Holubovský, Terén

partners, open calls, selection of artists and workshop participants, co-creation,
and finessing the themes and vision before producing the final presentations),
each residency had a totally different way of sharing with the public, reacting not
only to the commissioned artists but also to the cultural context of the country,
the venues, and to current affairs.

In Brno, Becoming Czech took the form of a two-day event where I, alongside
artists Alma Lily Rayner, Sonya Darrow, and Maa Ry Nguyen and the Terén team,
transformed a studio space into a cosy tent and kitchen open to all to create a
place where people, no matter who they were or where they came from, could feel
at ease and just *be*. The continuous 36-hour programme was broadcast live and
encompassed communal cooking, sharing circles, creative corners, a panel discus-
sion with immigration experts, and a sleepover. We commissioned all the Ukrain-
ian, Belarussian, and Russian artists whose proposals hadn't been selected to
write a text responding to the themes of the project and/or in response to the inva-
sion of Ukraine by Russia. The texts were printed and distributed during the event.

In Romania, the residency was shorter and supported existing work. Visual
artists Valera Hrishanin and Sameullah Attayee were commissioned to take part
in a pop-up exhibition at Replika where I led a series of performance workshops

Figure 2 A corner of the Becoming Alman exhibition. Work by Elif Celik. Photo by Sandra Riekstina

with six migrant community members. Together we created a performance intervention (a short devised scene based on our conversations around the topic). This included sign language and all the participants' native languages. One of the performers also composed original music, which was played during the intervention. Valera made a live painting, which was gifted to the venue. The event was followed by a Q&A with the audience and an immigration expert.[2]

In Berlin artists Elif Çelik jô osbórnia, and Jingyun Li were commissioned to co-create with me for three weeks. Elif and Jo created new work at Oyoun, and I ran a more extensive series of performance workshops. We focused the work around the gaze migrants experience walking in Berlin, and we used mixed media within the exhibition and the co-created piece. Based on the Theatre of the Oppressed methodology, I devised a 15-minute performance with 12 performers. Some of them wrote creative texts, creating a folder similar to that in Becoming Czech, which was handed to audiences. There was an intervention in public spaces to challenge everyday commuters around the themes of 'Becoming Alman' as well as a Q&A with the audience and a series of podcast episodes.[3]

Becoming British ran as an exhibition for a week in June in Sheffield, part of the Migration Matters Festival. Hosted by Bloc Projects, it showcased work
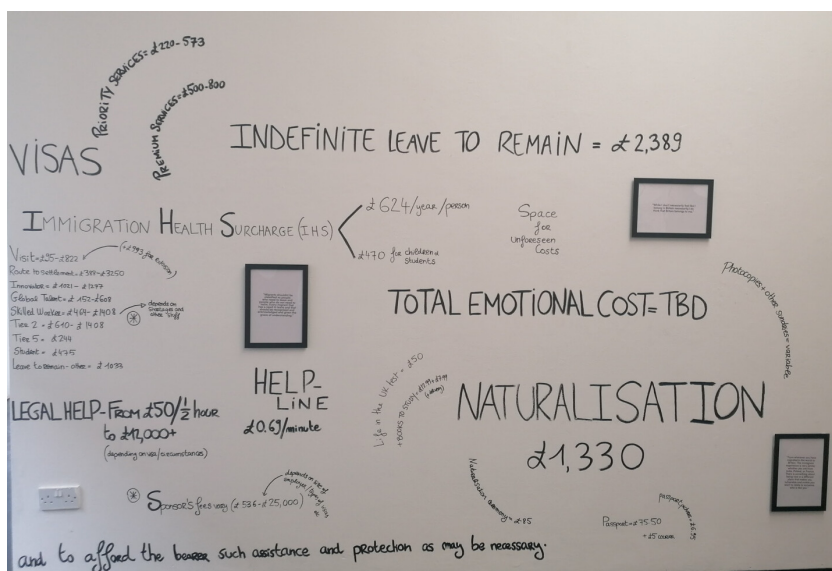
Figure 3 *Becoming British* mural at Bloc Projects. Work and photo by Lora Krasteva

by Chris Cambell, Aisha Serik, and NikNak. I showed my own pieces, including *EVIDENCE #*, a series of A4 frames presenting all the paperwork needed to secure British naturalisation and passport, and I created a mural with all the costs of the Hostile Environment.[4] We held a live event where Chris performed his poetry and NikNak manipulated her soundscape. This was followed by a Q&A with the audience, chaired by Livia Martin Barreira, a prominent local activist. Claire and I continue our efforts to fundraise for researching and developing of the original *Becoming British* play idea – a documentary, devised theatre performance.

Art and creativity for a thriving life

Maslow's hierarchy of needs takes the shape of a pyramid, with so-called basic needs (physiology, safety) at the bottom and the more 'intangible needs' (love, belonging, self-actualisation) at the top. In this model, culture and cultural expression belong to the self-actualisation level that Maslow argues can only be tended to if the rest of the needs are met. This view, although widely accepted across

Figure 4 Jigsaw of Homeless Support by Arts & Homelessness International

society in my experience, generates a terrible effect, playing into the stigma that art is a luxury; this idea permits politicians to cut funding for the arts and arts education,[5] reaffirming the Maslowian hierarchy and confining the arts only to those who can pay for their means of production.

My view is different. I passionately believe that art and creativity is for and by everyone, including migrants, newcomers, expats, refugees, asylum seekers … Everyone can and should be able to participate in culture making, for it is at the very basis of what makes us human. Let me be clear: I do not argue for art and creativity above all but for its existence and importance in parallel to our needs for survival. If Maslow proposes a pyramid of needs, I have adopted AHI's Jigsaw of Homeless Support as a model. We cannot conceive of thriving individuals, communities, peoples, or indeed nations without art and creativity.

Once we concede that art, creativity, and culture are intrinsic in securing our well-being as a species, the sites and spaces where they exist and can be brought to life immediately become important. What was once 'merely' a community centre, theatre, cultural space, museum, gallery, or library becomes a site of social and political dynamics, a site of latent power – a civic space. This change of perception calls for a re-evaluation of the role of these sites. They are recentred as important places, and all the 'industry' around them (systems of funding, power dynamics, ways of working, relationships, and networks) are repoliticised and therefore can be co-opted for certain agendas, used in such and such a manner to reaffirm a certain way of understanding the world or, and what I argue here, to create positive social change by challenging the status quo and (crucially) provide alternatives.

Access to and creation of culture as a step to generating belonging

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *belonging* as 'the affinity for a place or a situation'.[6] The concept kept coming up again and again throughout the Becoming […] residencies in a much richer definition, interconnected with ideas of being oneself, being seen for who you are, not having to leave pieces of yourself behind … Belonging was also often connected to the question of representation. In passing, one of the artists I worked with in Berlin, who identifies as working-class travesti[7] from Brazil, told me how she felt Oyoun was *her* space. 'There aren't spaces like that. There aren't places for people like *me*.' Similarly, a participant in Romania wrote to me at the end of the process, summing up a lot of the intangible benefits of our work:

> I want you to know that being part of this touched me on so many levels and helped me discover new, beautiful pieces of myself. It was an incredible experience to feel so vulnerable and so connected to other human beings. To witness life stories and see myself through other people's eyes.

Back in the UK, representation was at the core of creating MiT; many migrants working in British theatre did not see people like them onstage. One of the MiT preliminary survey respondents said:

> I'm not eligible for funds or projects looking for BAME [Black, Asian, and minority ethnic]. Even though I'm an ethnic minority, I can pass as white. As a migrant there's an assumption I don't understand the landscape or
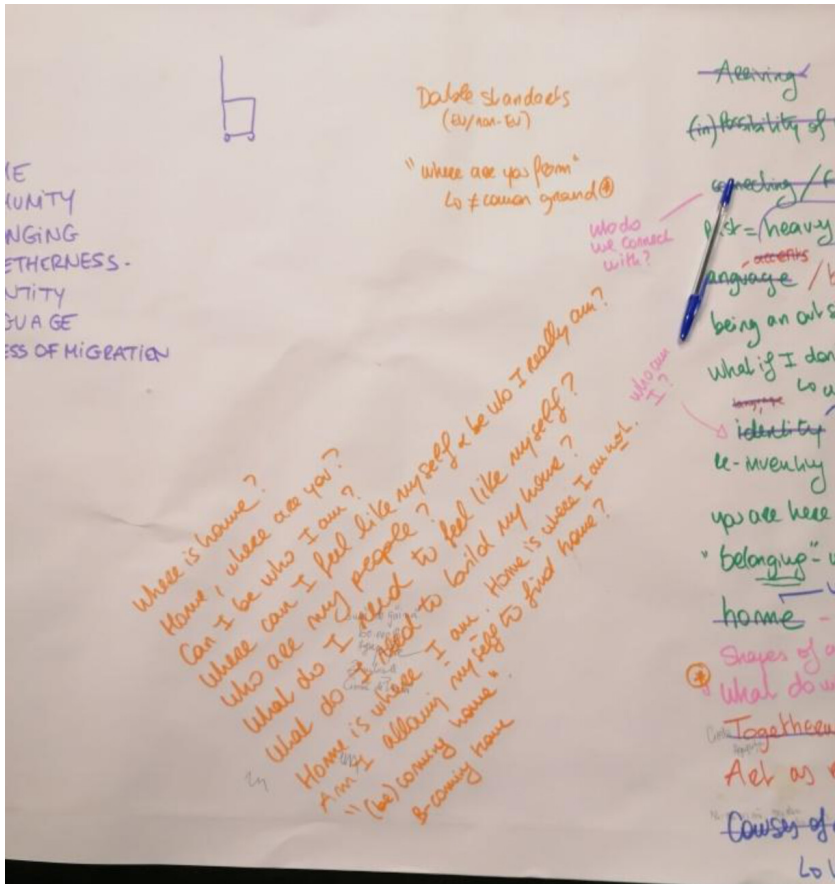
Figure 5 Some of the questions from the Becoming Romanian workshop at Replika

language. [...] Also as a migrant I can't identify as working class, middle or high class, hence the assumption usually is that I am well off, hence won't have enough to contribute to a project because I'm not 'homegrown' talent.

Another respondent noted: 'Everyone assumes I do not speak English as a Southeast Asian (Chinese) woman. If I even get into interviews, I have to spend part of the interview time proving my language skills or being praised for being "articulate"'.[8]

Coming together as part of MiT, however, people reported feeling seen and less alone. Projects that centre migrant voices in holistic ways bring about positive

feelings, as evidenced by the positive feedback I often receive from creatives and audiences taking part in the events I produce with my theatre company Global Voices Theatre (GVT). There is a powerful sense of hope in representation, a sense of 'this is possible'.

I argue that this sense of belonging, in all its complexity, is a positive and powerful feeling that cultural spaces should strive to generate with and for migrants.

Cultural spaces and programming: Beyond content

In its founding document, MiT identified five contributions immigrant artists can make to UK theatre. The document also presents 15 key actions theatres can undertake to improve the representation of migrants off- and onstage. Ten of these 15 actions are directly linked to programming, representation, and casting.

By investing in putting migrant-led work onstage, hiring a more migrant workforce, and entering in a dialogue with migrant creators to programme those shows that matter to them, theatre spaces (and, by extension, other cultural spaces that might be dealing in other art forms) can generate representation, which in turn has the potential to generate sentiments of belonging. Programming, working together with creatives and audiences, is thus the fastest way to affect change. But programming alone is not enough – tokenistic approaches and tick boxing exercises can create the opposite effect and alienate migrant artists and communities. Audiences and creatives are perceptive and can't be easily fooled: yellowface casting, unfortunately still commonplace, now rallies protesters and prompts the cancellation of shows,[9] and creatives are speaking up about the colonial mentality entrenched in UK theatre[10] and the lack of theatre in translation (as noted both by MiT and by GVT, which was born out of the absence of such work). These are only a few examples of audiences pushing back against tokenistic attempts at inclusive programming or the lack of more diverse programming.

There is thus more to programming than content. Venues can explore their mission statements to find ways of joining the dots between their 'raison d'être' and engaging with migrant artists and communities. Out of the four venues I worked with during the Becoming […] series, only one (Oyoun, Berlin) specifically focuses on working with migrants. It is my belief that venues do not need to *specialise* in migrant work – on the contrary. With Terén, we explored form and interrogated what performance could be, transforming their studio into a giant pillow fort for 36 hours. At Replika, I workshopped a few devised scenes with a

group of local immigrants, bringing community-led work to a space that doesn't often work with so-called nonprofessionals but specialises in the topics 'no one else would stage'. At Bloc, I was supported in a specific moment of my career, focusing away from producing (organising and/or supporting others with their ideas) and towards making my own art.

These examples show how engagement with migrant work can take multiple forms. And although the focus of Becoming […] was immigration, the ripple effects go way beyond the content of the project: at Terén, the transformation of the space fed into their staff's questioning of how to be relevant to their city and to the refugee influx from Ukraine. At both Terén and Replika, working via open calls provided these venues with an outlet to support Ukrainian artists and meet artists who they wouldn't have met otherwise. Several of the workshop participants in Romania reported having rekindled their passion for theatre and performance, opening the door to future creative explorations and collaborations:

> This was my first performance in six years – and I had all but given up on theatre and performance, to be honest (though it was what brought me to Romania, my last engagements with it here were bittersweet). I am so glad that my passion for it has been rekindled working with someone like you and this particular group of amazing people and artists.

In Berlin, Oyoun's reputation attracted both artists and audiences with deeply intersectional experiences, adding to the richness of our explorations. The participants of the workshop reported increased well-being and connection. In their feedback, one said:

> It was a remarkable experience in my first steps here in Germany. [To] have the chance to share with other immigrants, experiences and feelings about the immigration process in Germany help[ed] me to deal in a better way with it. Furthermore, the methodology that Lora used also help[ed] me a lot to work and rebuild my self-confidence [o]n the stage.

Many of the participants had never been to Oyoun before. They looked forward to coming back to see and experience other projects, and one of the commissioned artists (who got Covid-19 and was unable to take part fully) will deliver the work at a later date, continuing the Becoming […] legacy beyond our initial collaboration.

These examples show how programming around migration as a topic can be a powerful way to kick the doors open and start a wave of ripple effects. But

programming solely around content would miss the richness of personal and professional experiences migrant artists have to offer. One of my biggest concerns is the idea of being pigeon-holed and known (and programmed) only on the basis of our work with/about immigration and our lived experiences. There is certainly a greater interest in this intersection both in the UK and elsewhere (I have been invited to speak on the topic three times in the space of two months), but there is also a danger of fetishising lived experiences and using them to sell tickets or get funding.

This is why I argue that programming will only be an effective step towards venues embodying their civic power if resources, in their broader sense, are reallocated and intersectional ways of working are implemented early on.

Towards a culture of solidarity

It is important to think holistically when thinking about the role of cultural spaces as civic spaces. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *civic* as 'relating to a city or town' and as 'relating to the duties and activities of people in relation to their town, city, or local area'.[11] To relate to immigrants in a local context is to take into account their transnational experiences and the marginalisation they often experience as a result. This marginalisation occurs on multiple levels.

Throughout the Becoming [...] residencies, several of these aspects kept coming up, regardless of where I was working, such as the oppressive bureaucracy of the host countries and language and culture barriers that made life harder and lonelier (hampering access to work, education, or leisure, including cultural consumption). Experiencing these inequalities had a negative effect on people's well-being, often already in a precarious state. For those who had been forced to migrate due to the circumstances in their home countries and who were unable to 'go back', these inequalities and the associated feelings were felt even more sharply: one of the participants in the performance workshops in Berlin I ran wrote to me:

> I pushed and pulled internally since yesterday and all through the night on making this decision. I cannot continue the workshops because of feeling triggered, and stirs of the trauma wound. [...] I reflected and I just think my specific personal story and where I am in my healing journey + the situation in [...] has made me a little less 'stronger' than I thought I was in handling these themes currently.

For venues to fulfil a civic role, they need to take inequalities and feelings into consideration and act consciously to alleviate them. This is why safeguarding was paramount during Becoming […]. We planned for a safeguarding officer to be present during workshops, allowing me to concentrate on the creative aspect of the process while they looked after emotional and social support. This role was a new and unknown one to our partners. Other steps we took to create this culture of solidarity was to ensure everyone was paid properly for their participation, working sometimes around specific tax and contract difficulties linked to people's immigration status.[12]

As Augusto Boal, the father of the Theatre of the Oppressed, reminds us, quoting Che Guevara: 'solidarity means running the same risks'.[13] Cultural spaces therefore need to go beyond a culture of welcome (the first stage for many) towards a culture of solidarity, which will inevitably mean taking more risks in the face of oppressive and unfair systems.[14]

While I was in Brno, I was invited to talk about my experience working in arts and homelessness and arts and migration. The conversation soon turned to the topic of the venue's relevance in the face of the increased number of Ukrainian refugees the city was expecting. I had to pause the debate to remind everyone that taking a decision without involving Ukrainian voices would be counterproductive at best and damaging at worst. I could sense there was hesitancy in the air. How to engage people in debating what a cultural space should be when they are facing the horror of war? Terén's staff (like myself and many others) had internalised Maslow's pyramid of needs, believing that what they were doing as cultural leaders was merely a nice add-on. This was standing in the way of taking co-created action and was keeping us from devolving power and agency to the people affected.

A culture of solidarity needs co-creation at its core, *and* it needs allies to be proactive in opposing the hostile environments created by anti-immigration policy. In the UK, cultural spaces are compelled to support the Home Office and act as their agents, gathering and storing information about migrant staff or requiring proof of their right to work, for instance. The lack of understanding of and interest in current laws and procedures makes venues complicit in oppressive systems – often without realising.

The 'external' solidarity messages (communicated through programming, statements, social media) need to be matched with a robust internal restructuring and awareness. 'How we work' as well as 'what we do' has an impact and produces meaning in society, so this culture of solidarity needs to be upheld by a reallocation of resources to support the equitable participation of immigrants in cultural production and consumption. Some of Oyoun's events have dynamic

Figure 6 Work by Sameullah Attayee exhibited as part of Becoming Romanian

ticketing, with lower prices for BPOC (Black and people of colour) and queer people, but higher prices for their white allies, for instance. Their CEO and artistic director holds a 'listening hour' every week, where she listens to staff, recognising the power dynamics that are inherent to her role. Their entire staff of 26 has access to a somatic coach, and they have healing sessions (both individually and as a team of BPOC cultural workers). To name but a few examples

of proactive culture of solidarity in action, back in the UK, the New Diorama Theatre offered several companies (including MiT) the possibility to manage free rehearsal spaces, in recognition that some communities have increased barriers to access, and Inc Arts UK have led the way in terms of diversity and inclusion throughout the pandemic and beyond, including encouraging organisations to actively allocate 1 per cent of their budgets to a 'diversity intervention'.[15] These are often imperfect and, if seen as isolated practices, highly ineffective to topple the inequalities historically marginalised people face. However, visible programming decisions and practical processes, coupled with reallocation of resources, start to form a solid core around which cultural spaces can enact their civic role.

The revolution will be intersectional, or it won't be

Permeability between strategies, programmes, and internal processes is key. Working in silos is the death of genuine change. The more a venue can build bridges between its communities, cross-fertilise its events and audiences, and have a say in local affairs, the more it can fulfil its civic duty.

One of Oyoun's producers mentioned the animosity with the neighbours that the new management had created. Based in a 4,000-square-metre building that was once led by white middle-class Germans but focused on immigrants, Oyoun was rapidly changing (or rather, better reflecting) the nature of the neighbourhood, with LQBTQIA* BPOC communities now calling it their home too. This seemed to have ruffled some feathers locally. But the Oyoun producer had brought together several family groups (e.g. queer parents, local parents, and single moms), changing how they used to be run. She insisted: 'We need to mix the groups. They need to talk to each other'.

Working holistically as a civic space also means building bridges with other sites of power and agency in the city, local area, or region. It means being able to attract and speak with policymakers, provide them with evidence and creative tools to aid their work, and not be afraid to lobby for what is coming through the grassroots. A fantastic example of this work is AHI's civic plan,[16] which brings together cultural spaces, council staff, and people who are or have been homeless to make and implement policy together, enshrining creativity and the arts as part of the solution when tackling homelessness. This holistic approach is still often missing when we look at the intersection of arts and immigration. There are multiple examples of great creative work (often with and for refugees and asylum

Figure 7 Becoming Alman workshop participants in rehearsals

seekers specifically), but it tends to be led by independent companies rather than produced and propelled in-house.[17]

Venues I work with often invoke the *c* word (capacity!) as a reason for this. Staff are overworked and overstretched, and cultural leaders are barely keeping their heads above water, especially as a result of the pandemic. It is a hard time for culture, no doubt. But I have also found that capacity is a convenient excuse for not making something a priority. It is my view that cultural spaces need to shift their work focus from the *urgent* to the *important*. They need to mobilise attention and resources to fulfil their civic roles, with particular attention to generating belonging. What the Becoming [...] series taught me is that people crave to be seen, listened to, acknowledged. It is not a 'migrant thing', but it is sharper among immigrants because we've lost our connection with what we knew previously. We are also able to rekindle that, miles and miles away from some original *home,* and it sometimes feels like a superpower we have that others can also benefit from.

My partner shared a quote with me recently:

Migrants cross over borders, come together as strangers, find ways of communicating despite their differences and forge powerful assemblies to make

themselves heard […] in short, they constitute a new common without ever losing their singularities […] we must learn how to speak (and to act, live and create) like migrants.[18]

And I couldn't agree more …

Acknowledgements

Notes

1   Information about each of these Becoming projects can be found on my website: https://www.lorakrasteva.com/past-projects.

2   The recording of the Q&A can be viewed here: 'BECOMING ROMANIAN – Centrul Replika', Centrul de Teatru Educational Replika, 21 April 2022, 2:05:10, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QnZ9B8VckSg.

3   Listen to the first of these podcast episodes here: 'Becoming Alman Lora Krasteva', *OyoUniverse*, 58:15, https://oyouniverse.buzzsprout.com/1293719/10985466-becoming-alman-lora-krasteva.

4   'Hostile environment' is a term used to describe a set of administrative and legislative measures, launched in 2012 and legislated in the Immigration Act 2014 and 2016, designed to make life in the UK as difficult as possible for people without leave to remain in the hope that they may 'voluntarily leave'. Definition provided by Migrants in Culture: https://drive.google.com/file/d/12tFSNkvJvmk5fI9V4E5sX7BNhcOgsMa3/view.

5   In 2021 the UK government announced plans to cut 50 per cent of funding for arts subjects in higher education. Gareth Harris, 'Museum directors and art school leaders demand that UK government "scraps cuts to arts education"', *The Art Newspaper*, 12 May

2021, https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2021/05/12/museum-directors-and-art-school-leaders-demand-that-uk-government-scraps-cuts-to-arts-education.

6   *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. 'belonging (*n.*)', accessed 16 August 2022, https://www.lexico.com/definition/belonging.

7   The term travesti is used in Latin America. Travestis are part of the trans community.

8   More about MiT, the preliminary survey, and quotes from respondents can be read in the MiT founding document here: https://migrantsintheatre.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/MIT-Creating-a-Thriving-Environment-for-Migrant-Theatre-Artists-in-the-UK-2020.pdf.

9   For example, see Mark Chandler, 'Notting Hill theatre faces "yellowface" protest for casting white actors in Chinese roles', *Evening Standard*, 18 January 2017, https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/notting-hill-theatre-faces-yellowface-protest-for-casting-white-actors-in-chinese-roles-a3444051.html, and 'The Guardian view on the "yellowface" casting row: classical music has a diversity problem', *The Guardian*, 15 October 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/oct/15/the-guardian-view-on-the-yellowface-casting-row-classical-music-has-a-diversity-problem.

10   See Nick Awde, 'Where are the European migrants in the UK's theatre scene?', *The Stage*, 11 February 2020, https://www.thestage.co.uk/features/where-are-the-european-migrants-in-the-uks-theatre-scene.

11   *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. 'civic (*adj.*)', accessed 16 August 2022, https://www.lexico.com/definition/civic.

12   In the UK asylum seekers aren't able to receive remuneration for their work, making working equitably difficult.

13   Augusto Boal, *The Rainbow of Desire: The Boal Method of Theatre and Therapy* (London: Routledge, 1995).

14   My colleagues at Migrants in Culture have done excellent work around this and adjacent topics. Please visit www.migrantsinculture.com for more info.

15   'The 1% Challenge', *Inc Arts UK*, https://incarts.uk/the-1%25-challenge.

16   'A&H Civic Plan', *Arts & Homelessness International*, https://artshomelessint.com/what-we-do/advocacy/arts-homelessness-civic-plan/.

17   See the excellent work of Stand and Be Counted or LegalAliens, to name but a few: https://www.sbctheatre.co.uk/ and https://www.legalalienstheatre.com/about/

18   Karen Savage and Dominic Symonds, *Economies of Collaboration in Performance* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2018), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-95210-9.

About the contributor

Lora is an artist, cultural producer, and activist. She is part of Global Voices Theatre, a female, nonbinary, and immigrant-led company introducing international work by historically marginalised creatives in the UK. Lora creates devised, socially engaged work with professionals and other community members alike and has worked with Arts & Homelessness International, advocating for a place for creativity in homelessness provision. Lora is a steering group member of What Next? and a founding member of Migrants in Theatre, the movement advocating for better representation of first-generation immigrants. Lora currently lives in Sheffield, UK, where she is training as a coach and NLP (neuro-linguistic programming) practitioner. Her latest project, Blurring the Edges, is a multi-media and augmented reality exploration of the concept of social frontiers, in collaboration with visual artist Uzma Rani and based on cutting-edge research from the University of Sheffield.

For more info about Lora's work, visit www.lorakrasteva.com and follow her on Twitter: @lorakrasteva