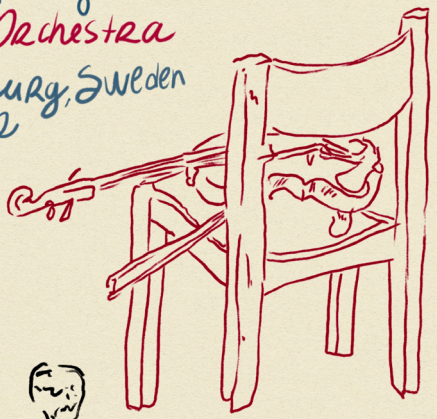
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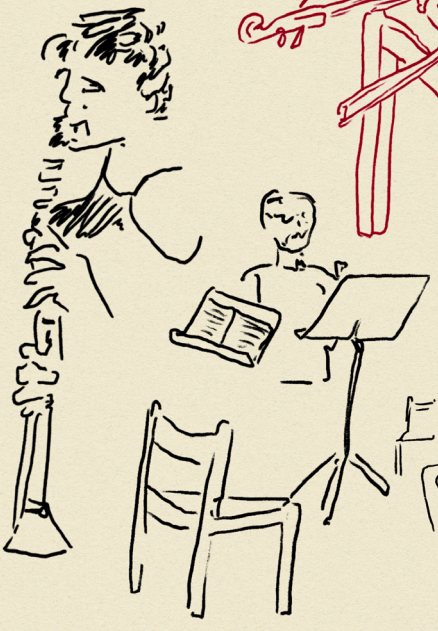
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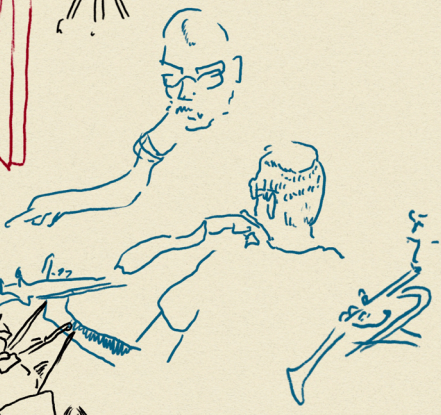


Beatriz Machado
Illustrating
Dream Orchestra
at Gothenburg, Sweden
Aug.- Sept. 22













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Authors: Beatriz Machado and Alix Didier Sarrouy
Illustration and Graphic Design: Beatriz Machado
Editor: Alix Didier Sarrouy (www.orcid.org/0000-0003-0574-7819)
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www.yousound.eu

Instituto de Etnomusicologia – Centro de Estudos em Música & Dança (INET-md)
Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas, Universidade Nova de Lisboa
Av. de Berna, 26 C | 1069-061 Lisboa | Portugal
www.inetmd.pt

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Illustrating musical ethnographic notes

YouSound is a social science research project that studies symphonic and choir music education organizations centred on the inclusion of migrant and refugee youth in Europe.

We have chosen two organizations in different countries, serving as case studies: the Swedish Dream Orchestra; and El Sistema Greece. Between 2022 and 2023, we will be in both countries applying ethnographic methods to better grasp the complexity of interactions between multicultural human beings in such music education contexts.

This specific research project demands something more than the "solo ethnographer" in the field. Complementing the work of the ethnographer who uses a set of qualitative methods to interpret everyday life in a given context, we benefit from the presence of Beatriz Machado, a graphic ethnographer, whose eyes might perceive social reality from a different angle. Moreover, we have attempted to approach fieldwork by using art-based research methods, namely music and illustration. Both art forms also serve as complementary tools of expression for the social actors involved in the programs (teachers, students, parents...).

Two YouSound Zines will be published about each fieldwork in Sweden and Greece. Adding to classical outputs (articles, books, communications) the Zines share some of the graphic illustrations made by Beatriz Machado in each country. One of the purposes is to give back and communicate with all the underaged students, the parents, the teachers, and the directors who had the kindness of letting us in their shared musical world. Thank you for the welcome!

In this second YouSound Zine, we continue to follow the artist at the Swedish Dream Orchestra in Gothenburg.
The educational project was created in 2016. It uses music as a tool for the education, emancipation, and social inclusion of unaccompanied migrants. Between 2015 and 2016, Sweden welcomed the largest number of migrants per capita in Europe. Action was urgently required, and Dream Orchestra became an answer. The students benefit from free music classes and free instruments. Being a teacher in this context demands much more than lecturing classes, just as being a music student is much more than learning tunes. It's been almost seven years of hard work, fuelled by passion and respect for each one's history.
Through her illustrations and words, Beatriz Machado brings everyone closer to the everyday experiences lived by the social actors involved in Dream Orchestra.
Take your time to enjoy this zine and follow your curiosity by accessing their website: **www.dreamorchestra.se**

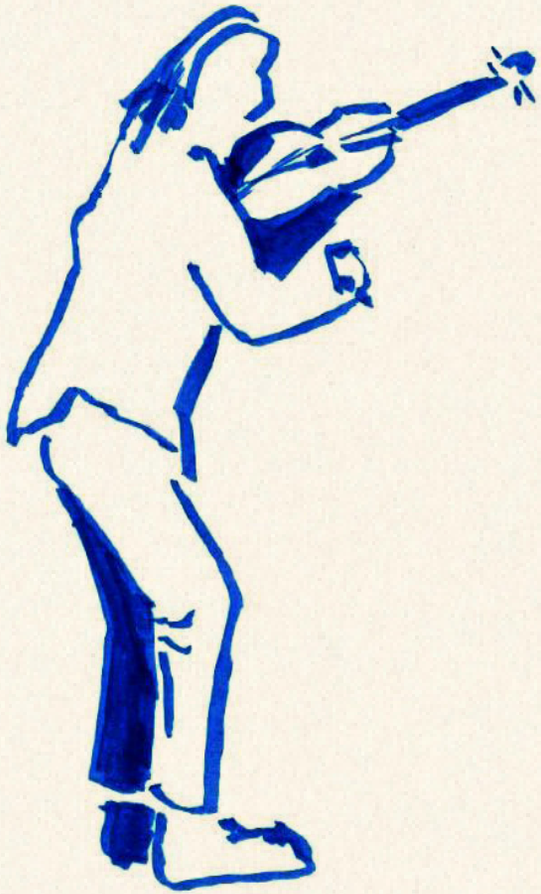
Alix Didier Sarrouy – YouSound Principal Researcher





"(...) drawing is discovering; and we are not dealing here with a made-up sentence, but with something that is, literally, true. It is the act of drawing that forces the artist to look at the object in front of him, to dissect it mentally and then reorganize it again. (...) It is a given that at the centre of learning to draw lies the seeing itself. A line - or a tonality - is not important for registering what has been seen, but to lead us to the very process of perception. (...)"

– Excerpted from Drawing is Discovery (1953) by John Berger (reprinted in New Statesman, 3-9 May 2013, 53.)



Because I am an illustrator, John Berger's idea that "drawing is discovering" followed me like a mantra during the Swedish Dream Orchestra's rehearsals I attended in Gothenburg during the summer of 2022. The eye explores and "dissects" what it sees, transforming the events it aims to capture. It "reorganizes" it in a new perception, where lines and tonality are the main languages, becoming something more: a connection between my eyes and the people I was observing.
My relationship with the students and teachers of Dream Orchestra started by spending time drawing in music classes. It slowly developed further through conversations, by being attentive and keeping in close contact. I experienced the delicate reality of fieldwork in the context of minor migrants who are studying music in Dream Orchestra with sociologist Rita Grácio, not just a colleague, but a team player, a friend, and a mentor. During the interviews and workshops, we have organized, moments of affection, vulnerability and empowerment were experienced. The content of my drawing sketchbook served as a mediator to gain trust, develop self-confidence, and laugh! Such moments were precious.
The first YouSound Zine, focused on quick drawings that were made by direct ethnographic illustration – meaning that most of them were about actions and gestures. YouSound Zine 2 continues to reveal the ethnographic illustrations of the Swedish Dream Orchestra project but explores more demanding drawing techniques, specifically by revealing the physical spaces where the music classes happened.

It is a more visually descriptive zine, which attempts to illustrate the "third space" between reality and its "dissection".



The harmonium, also called Reed Organ, free-reed keyboard instrument. This instrument has been used in almost all genres of music, in countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh.

On Monday the 22nd of August, we went to the first summer holiday rehearsal of the so-called Afghan Music Group. There were only three young musicians present, all siblings. The Swedish Dream Orchestra project has welcomed the idea of some of its students creating an Afghan Music group. We had the chance to sit with them as they talked about music, their Hazara tribal culture, and what it meant to preserve it, particularly since the Taliban takeover.

One of the Afghan musicians talked with Ron Alvarez (Dream Orchestra's artistic director and teacher) about his musical abilities and what he should play. They discussed what music meant to different people according to age and culture. They also examined the relevance of an Afghan Music Group, which it doesn't exist yet in Gothenburg and it's very rare to have live performances by invited musicians. Therefore, this group is a means of passing on melodies to another generation, and not allowing their own Afghan-Hazara culture be forgotten.




this feeling of being alive
having the right to listen
to that music freely

Why you do music?

Sometimes you do things you enjoy, without knowing why

to transport it to another generation, so it doesn't die

you don't hear afghan music in sweden

At the end of this session, the young musicians asked to see the drawings I made of them. One of the girls, a 21-year-old singer and self-taught visual artist, took a picture of a drawing I had made of her. She also shared with me the hyper-realist portraits that she publishes on her own Instagram account.



On August 24th, we were at the Pink Church in Lövgärdets, (near Angered Centrum, northern suburbs of Gothenburg) in the main rehearsal room. The class began by sitting the pre-teenagers together on the floor with Ron Alvarez and Lisa Moberg (a young folk musician and violin teacher). They were invited to draw their holidays on one big sheet of paper, making a graphic composition to be translated into music.
They then played this recently created piece a couple of times. Lisa Moberg grabbed her violin and played a part of the 'Wellerman' by Nathan Evans, a trending tune in TikTok. Everyone applauded!





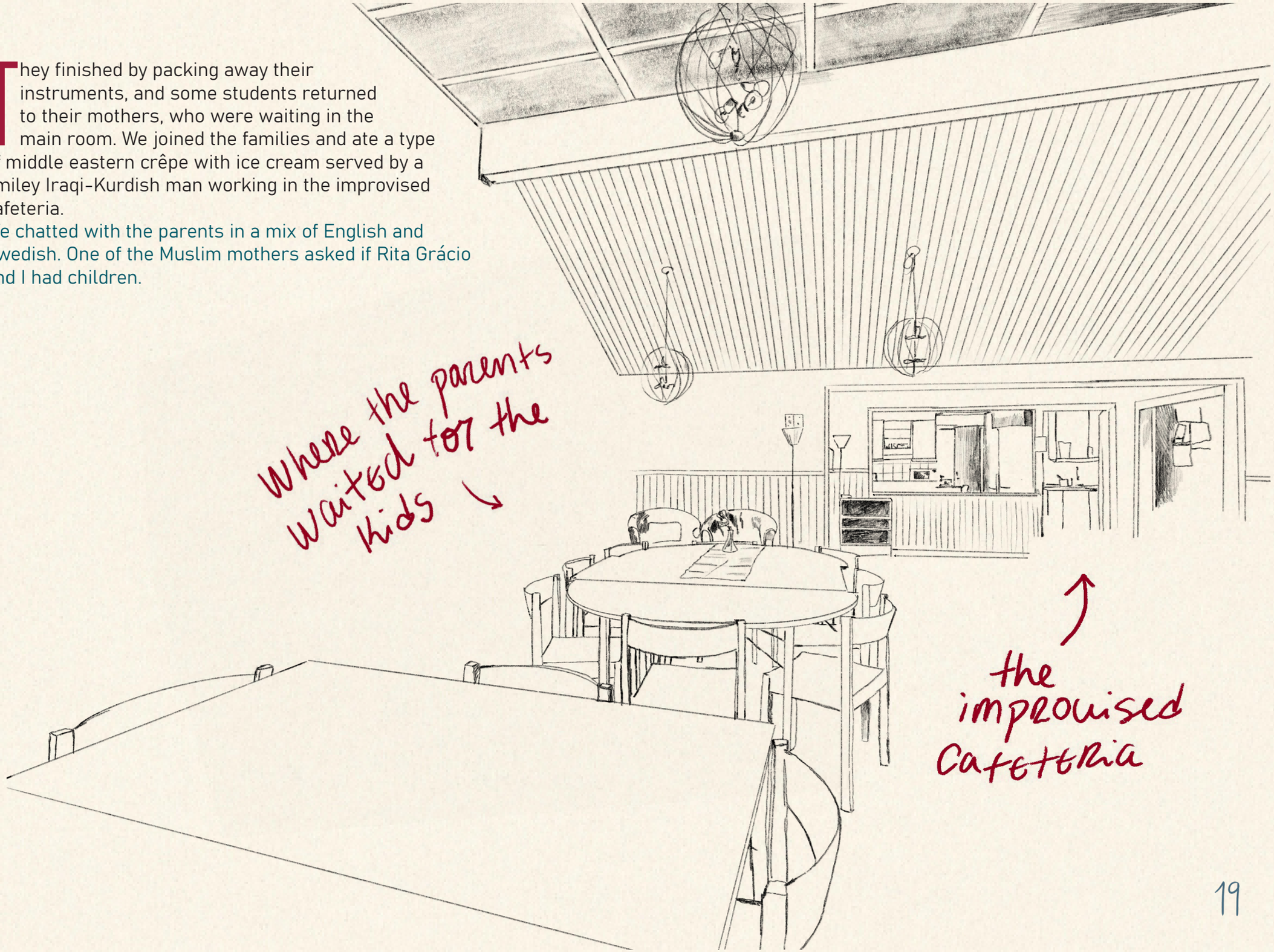
There once was a ship that put to sea
The name of the ship was Billy of tea
The winds blew up, her bow dipped down
Oh blow, my bully boys, blow ...

"Wellerman" by Nathan Evans


Este es un merengue
con ritmo y sabor!
Este es un merengue
que canto con
emocion

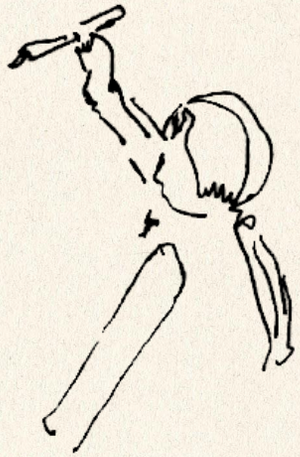
They finished by packing away their instruments, and some students returned to their mothers, who were waiting in the main room. We joined the families and ate a type of middle eastern crêpe with ice cream served by a smiley Iraqi-Kurdish man working in the improvised cafeteria.

We chatted with the parents in a mix of English and Swedish. One of the Muslim mothers asked if Rita Grácio and I had children.



On August 25th, we went to the second rehearsal of the week at the Pink Church. This time it took place in the main room, as it does every Thursday, with some of the parents watching at the back, close to the cafeteria. The classes started with Ron on the piano, while Lisa was leading the warm-up exercises. The students went to the board to write the musical notes that were being played.

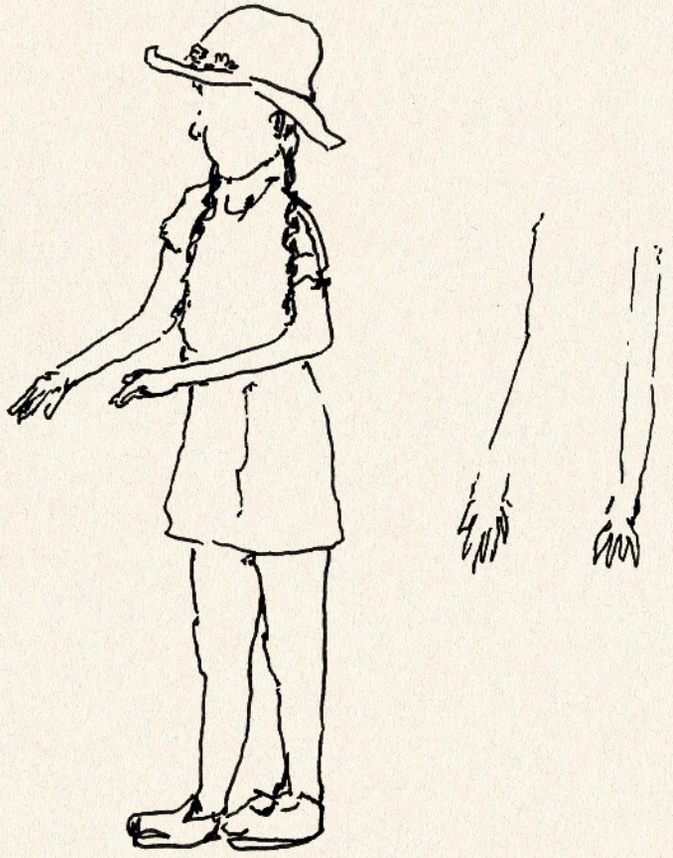




The next group was the same as the day before. It being their second rehearsal after the holidays, the class was more focused on music theory.

The students were very curious about what I was drawing and spent the rehearsal asking Lisa if they could question me about what I was doing. They did it in Swedish! At the end of the class, I was surrounded by girls who were very interested in making sure I had drawn them too.

I promised I would make portraits of of them during next week's rehearsal.



On Friday the 26th, I had a “drawing date” with a former Dream Orchestra student. She came from Afghanistan, underage, in 2015/16. She studied fashion design in the mandatory Swedish education system based on practical trades. I think she is very, very talented! We started by talking and comparing techniques and approaches, then delved into the observational drawings.

As suggested by her, our first illustration subject was a rubbish bin. Each of us drew it in different ways and using several methods. She is a self-taught artist while I previously had quite a few years of drawing classes. We finished this encounter by drawing portraits of each other. Once again, it was amazing to compare them, realizing how unique and personal our perspectives of the world are.

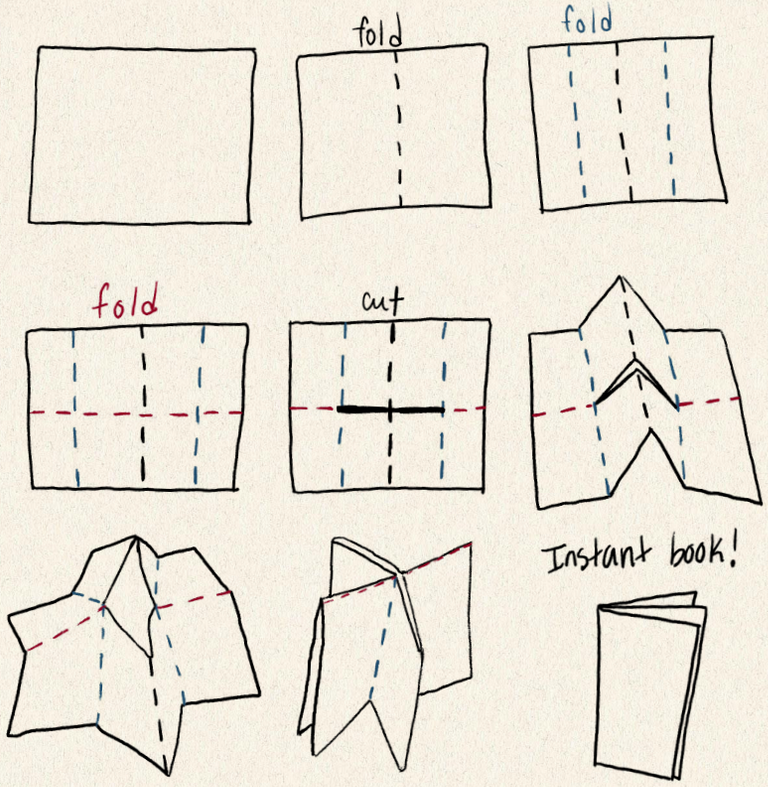
The next day, we went to the Bethlehem Kyrkan, a church the centre of Gothenburg that also serves as the Swedish Dream Orchestra’s headquarters.

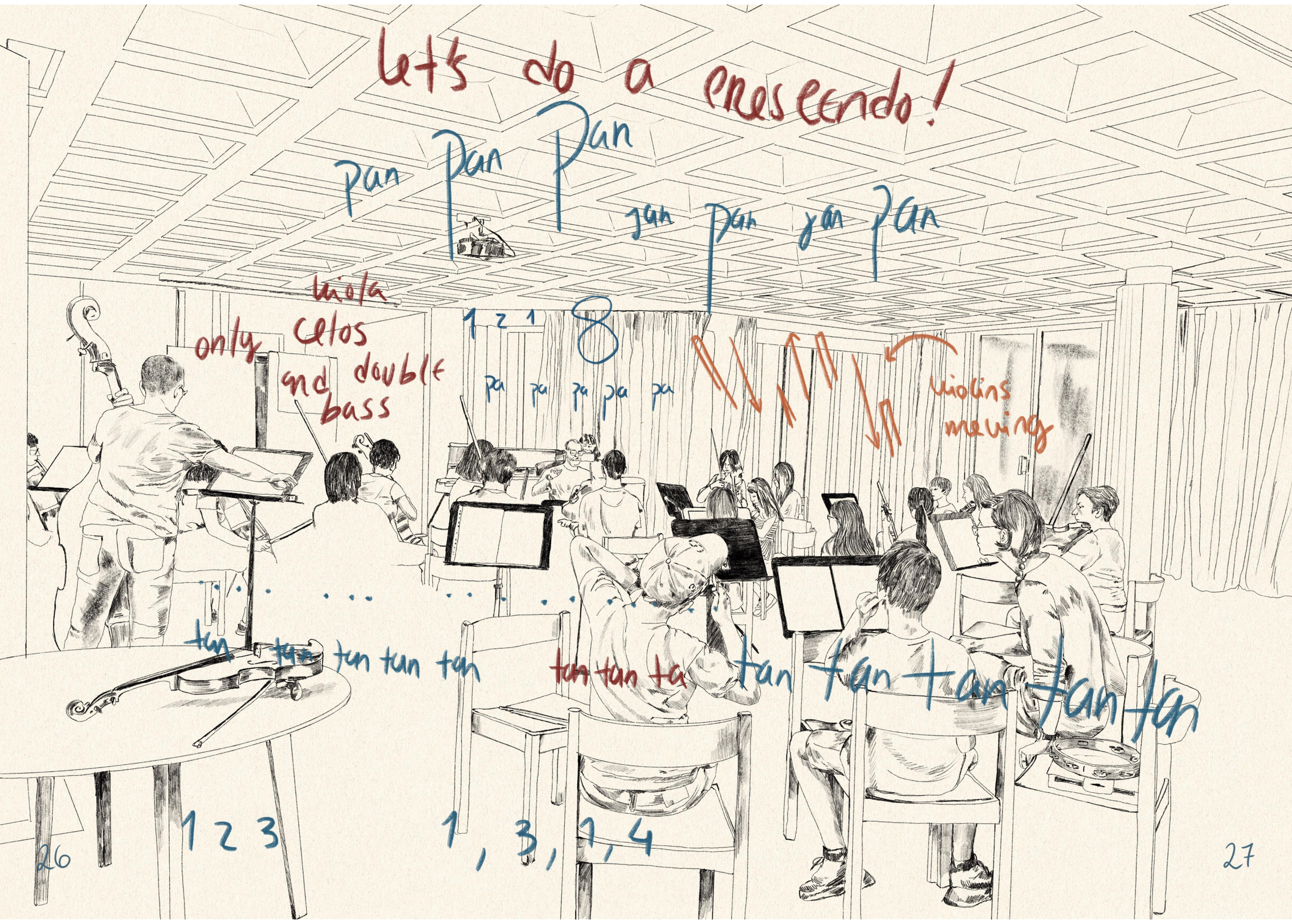


At the beginning of the rehearsal, Ron introduced me to the orchestra members and invited everybody to participate in an illustration workshop I was preparing. I went to the front, where Ron was standing, and was able to explain more fully the idea of this collective workshop.

I explained to them that we were going to do a little instant book about their own stories with their instrument. Most of them (twenty students and two parents) joined me after the first part of the rehearsals in the room where they normally have *Fika* on Saturdays.

Fika is a break for coffee and cake, but it means much more than that. It’s a state of mind, a ritual, and a fundamental part of Swedish culture. It means saving time for friends and colleagues to share a cup of coffee (or tea) and a little something to eat. In the Dream Orchestra, the *Fika* moments are as important for socialising as the music classes.




Let's do a crescendo!
pan pan pan
jan pan jan pan
viola
only celos and double bass
1 2 1
pa pa pa pa pa
violins moving
tan tan tan tan tan
tan tan ta
tan tan tan tan tan
1 2 3
1, 3, 1, 4

At the beginning of the illustration workshop, I presented two of my graphic diaries: one with older drawings, and the other with drawings I had made in Gothenburg. They took a good look. I received shy but appreciative nods from the students and positive comments from the parents. Even though it didn't dissolve much of their shyness, it enhanced their curiosity.

Rita Grácio, the sociologist working with me on this YouSound research project, also took part in the workshop and helped me to prepare for it. We were going to ask the students to make a little instant book with a few folds and a cut, but, before that, to loosen their hands and minds, they had to think of a shape, a texture, a flavour, a colour, or a scent that they associated their musical instruments with. They drew it on a blank sheet, slowly letting go, feeling freer to experiment.

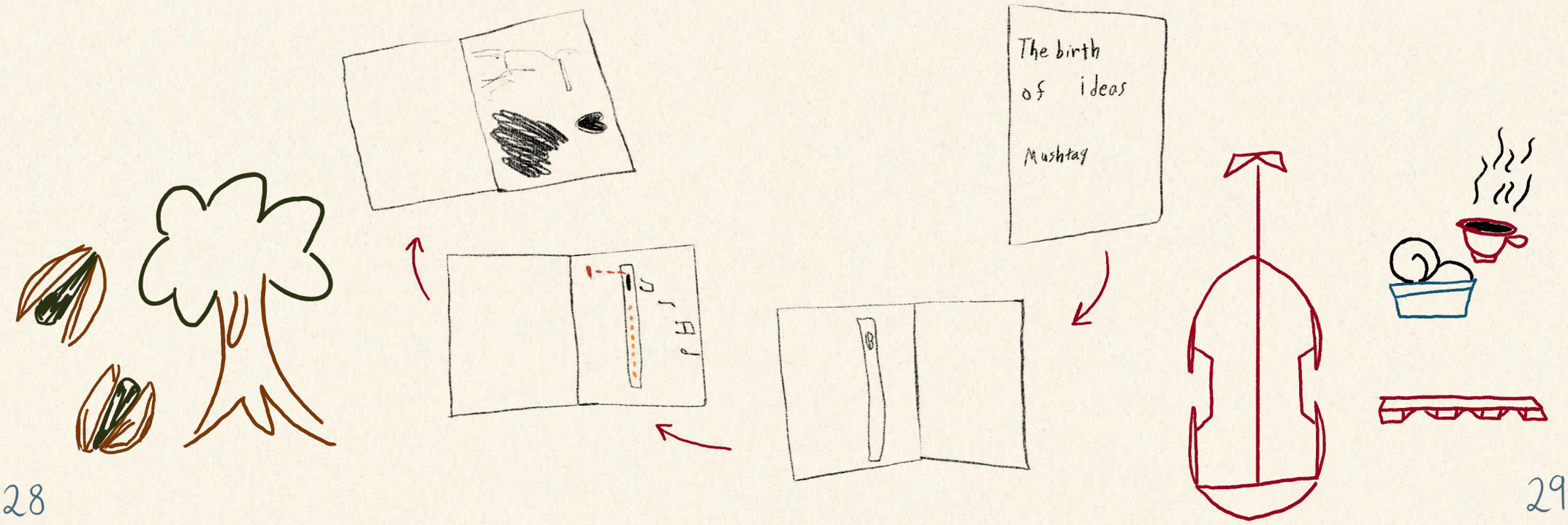
Since most of them were still shy about drawing, it was difficult to make them open to the use of colours and more abstract shapes. Nonetheless, a lot of ideas and drawings appeared on those blank pages.

After that, we gave them thicker papers so they could make their little instant books.

We had only one craft knife to make the central cut. There was waiting and sharing but, after a while, they found their new solution by folding the A4 paper in half and cutting the centre with scissors.

Each person had three pages and the goal was to make them think about their relationship with their instruments in a narrative way, whether realistic or abstract.

Most of them ended up using only two pages. I wish we could have had more time because when the workshop ended they were starting to trust me as well as themselves.



On August 29th, I was in Tynnered (located to the south west of Gothenburg), watching a beginners' class for under-10s. They were learning how to hold the instruments.
They were training their hand positions, using metaphors related to the four seasons (winter, spring, summer, and autumn).
Ron presented the musical notes and the sounds associated with each of them. He proceeded by explaining how to hold the bow of the violin.








The little one has
to be the magic one!
Rag Davis Always
1
2
3
4

On September 1st, at one of the Pink Church rehearsals, I drew the portraits I had promised. It made other kids very interested in getting their portraits done, too. To organize this experience, I made a type of improvised 'portrait stand'. I let them choose two or three colours. Some even told me what to draw: for example, "the truck on my shirt!"

Two girls continued drawing and painting for a short time more after their portraits were done. One of them wasn't happy and tore her drawing up. I encouraged her to continue and take her drawing home.





On Saturday the 3rd of September, our last day with the Swedish Dream Orchestra in Gothenburg, we went to a concert at Lövgärdets Centrum in the north of the city. We helped carry equipment from the Pink Church to a square nearby where the concert would take place.
When we arrived, we set up the music stands. At 3 pm, the Dream Orchestra and the Pink Church groups played together harmoniously. Listening to all the young multicultural musicians in this project was a great way to conclude this brief music-illustration experience.
More than accurately depicting what I see, I also intend to represent what I feel, opening the door to expressive and subjective ways of looking at the world. It's risky, as it may clash with the more rationalist, figurative and precise tendencies in social science productions. This risk will be subject to further critical reflexive analysis during the YouSound research project.

This is YouSound Zine number two out of a total of four. These are my initial experiences drawing with an ethnographic purpose. At first, I was slightly afraid of showing these illustrations to the people I met at the Dream Orchestra, fearing that they would be angry or displeased with me. Either it was because I had pictured them too fast, as is usual in ethnographic illustration, or simply because it was not the way they see themselves. I was surprised because the reaction was exactly the opposite. We, as humans, like to see ourselves represented through someone else's eyes, we want to be drawn, not to see ourselves as if looking in a mirror, but to know how we are perceived, the identity that only another person can grasp.
Illustrating in the context of the Swedish Dream Orchestra is one of the many ways to reveal fragments of such a particular reality, continuously questioning what Berger named above as each one's 'process of perception'.

Next YouSound Zine: the El Sistema Greece project in Athens!







fct Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia

inet^MD instituto de etnomusicologia centro de estudos em música e dança

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