Dish of the day 5 - How we thrive: A celebration of APC member stories, practices and projects of solidarity

Welcome to this last Dish of the Day of the APC Member Convening 2021!

We have almost 40 songs in the ***music list*** *we have put together throughout the week.* ***Why not listen to some good music from all over the world while you read the Dish of the Day?*** *Check it here (pass: APCconvening / File: world-music-cafe).*

The closing plenaries: How we thrive: A celebration of APC members' stories, practices and projects of solidarity, Best Futures Awards

The week's final day plenary began with APC council member Pavel Antonov of BlueLink Foundation singing a few songs on his guitar, including popular requests like Here Comes the Sun and Let It Be. Next, we watched a video of some of the gorgeous illustrations made so far at the APC Member Convening week

https://videos.apc.org/mgoblin_media/media_entries/375/Plenary_19.11.2021.720p.webm

This was followed by some reflections by Antonov and APC Director of Operations Karen Banks on the week that had gone by. Antonov recalled how APC brought BlueLink to a campaign recently on an open letter against decisions to open Apple encryption and protect children, which made them realise how they are between two different realities of human rights defenders and children's rights defenders, and APC helped create synergy instead of antagonism. APC is very useful in such pushing of borders and readjusting visions, and this is very important because our realities are changing so fast now. He also expressed a desire to be able to chat more with fellow members between sessions at such an online convening, the way he would offline.

Banks agreed that APC's strong values and principles allows it to cross some "trickier bridges" and connections with communities, such as with our environmental justice and sustainability work. She also expressed joy and awe at hearing members doing their work in extraordinary and often very

difficult circumstances, and how they are collaborating together such as with Jinbonet, JCAFE and JCA-Net's two decades of collaboration. She pointed to a few ideas and opportunities that have come up for her:

- *How can APC collaborate and facilitate more connections between members?*
- *How do we continue the conversations from this week, especially with care and using resources like APC's new Come Together guide?*
- *How do we share and learn together, especially in an unequal world and upcoming dilemmas of travel for meetings, the politics of vaccine access, etc.?*
- *How can we help with strengthening organisations (team care, financial sustainability) and capacity building (policy advocacy)?*

The group also made suggestions like members translating each other's work into their respective languages, continuing conversations on member mailing lists, getting APC's support for tech tools, and coming together for reading groups or to cook together (and replacing ingredients as needed) for more informal connections – to which one participant exclaimed: "Long live the Association for Progressive Cooking!" Members also offered and asked for support on open source tools like BigBlueButton, Mattermost, Jitsi Meet, BlueJeans and guifi.net. One participant quipped how we need to go from sub-granting to sub-tooling!

APC Executive Director Chat Garcia Ramilo also emphasised the online convening guide and how we must continue to learn to connect better remotely and minimise digital fatigue. She also made the point that our strategies should include looking for collaborations outside the APC network. Facilitator hvale summed up the week's larger themes as layers of digital access and ensuring the internet as a global and open good.

Then it was time for the Best Futures Awards! After hearing descriptions of all nominations, the group voted for each category and Membership and Network Building Coordinator Karel Novotný announced the winners, each of which will receive a copy of the books: "You Have Not Yet Been Defeated" by Alaa Abd el-Fattah and "Human Rights and the Internet" by Joy Liddicoat:

- Solidarity: **7amleh**
- Collaboration: **Nupef and Zenzeleni**
- Innovation: **Jinbonet with JCAFE and JCA-NET**
- Creativity: **EngageMedia with Tech Tales**

Chat Garcia Ramilo concluded the plenary with a final remark on how we must continue convening organically and connect throughout the year so that it's not just a burst, but a flow of connections. She thanked everyone involved in the convening, followed by APC's Smita reading Andrea Gibson's evocative poem *Say Yes*.

The second and last plenary of the day – the final plenary of this week's member convening – saw a large turnout and strong participation from members across the globe. APC's Jennifer Radloff led us through a "Welcome with care" activity where participants chose an object in their immediate vicinity that brings them joy to share with everyone. We saw everything from children's drawings

and colourful artwork to newspaper headlines revealing how much progress has been made on freedom of expression – certainly reason to be happy!

Co-facilitators hvale and Mariana next spoke about the value of having this space to connect with each other and the learnings that have come of it. Two speakers were asked to share some reflections on this past week, centred around the following questions:

- *What are some of the threads, issues, collaborations that you have seen as possible or important for the APC network to prioritise and engage with next year?*
- *What are some of the steps you imagine or the resources and conversations that need to happen?*

Highlights included recognition of the supportive nature of the APC network through statements such as “I feel reflected and not like I have to fight the environment that I’m in” and how the concepts of love and technology are closely intertwined. The suggestion of further exploring “how to connect the global and the local” was raised, as well as asking us to consider what role the network can extend as an “amplifier”. The importance of combining health with online work, the connection between the environment and sustainable communications, and the internet as a public good were also noted.

Opening up the floor to all participants, statements such as “hear, listen and learn”, “wouldn't have wanted to miss it for the world”, “APC is creating a space for the future” and “one of the safest events I’ve been to” highlight what a truly valuable gathering this has been. Following a short video of vibrant illustrations created throughout the week, it was time for round two of the Best Futures Awards! Following voting across the four categories, the award winners were announced by Vassilis:

- Solidarity: **WOUGNET**
- Collaboration: **Leandro/Pangea and Leandro/Pangea** (nominated twice, won twice!)
- Innovation: **Servelots/Janastu** and **eQualitie** (it was a tie!)
- Creativity: **EngageMedia’s Tech Tales**

Congratulations to all nominees and winners!

We ended our time together with Jenny, who played this video of the poem from the earlier plenary:

https://www.youtube.com/embed/0pNQNfL7jRM

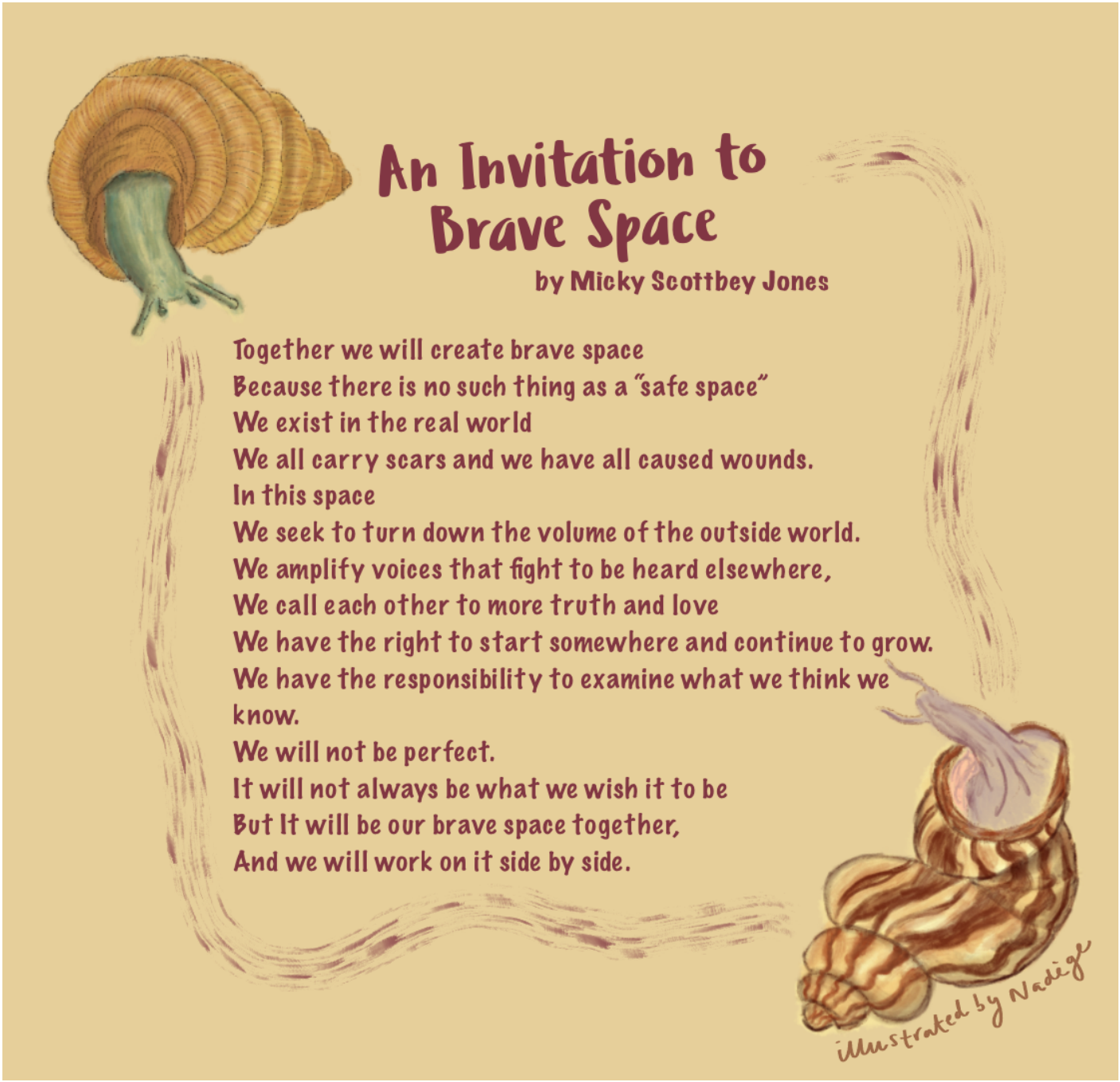
More highlights from Day 5 here!



Illustration by Sonaksha.

And that was a wrap on an intense, inspiring and collaborative week of sessions at APC's 2021 member convening! Sincere appreciation is sent out to APC staff and organisers, to the members, to APC's tech team for their ongoing support throughout the week, as well as to the many interpreters, captioners, documenters and illustrators who made all the rich content widely accessible. This week has been possible thanks to you!

We are just saying goodbye (for now) with this illustration by nadege of the poem "An invitation to a brave space" that was shared on Day 1 of our APC Member Convening 2021.



Revision #16
Created 19 November 2021 19:16:40 by Flavia
Updated 19 November 2021 21:25:18 by Flavia