

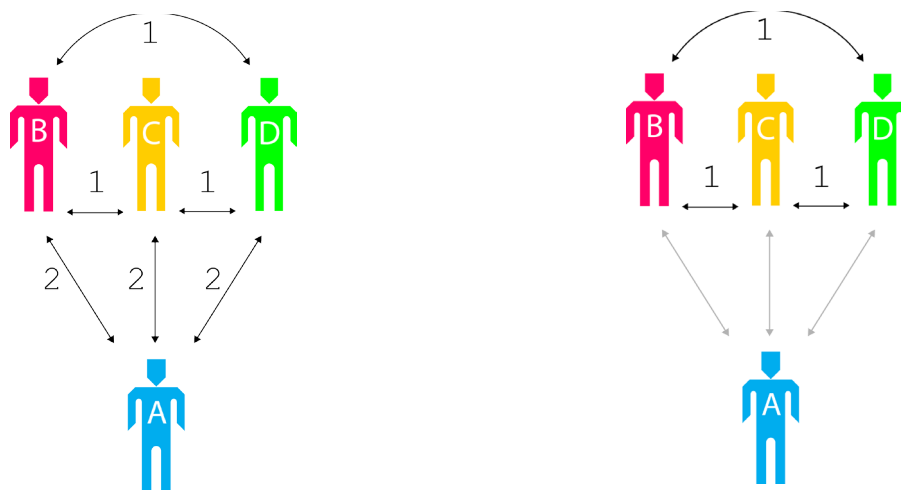
CURATRON

Curatron is an ongoing project that I begun in 2013. It is a online software system originally designed to allow artists that apply to an open call and to collectively choose the final group. It is a form of crowdsourced, collective, selection process.

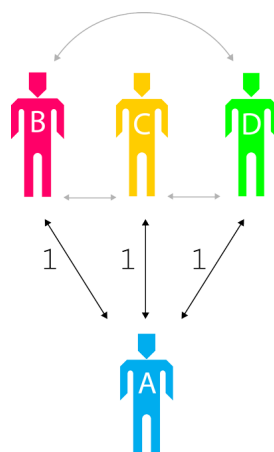
The way it works is that an open invitation to apply for an exhibition at a gallery is released to the public and interested participants apply on Curatrons homepage (curatroneq.com). They are then re-invited to come back to the site when everyone has applied to see all the other applicants. Then they make a selection of artists that they would like to exhibition with and the system then calculates all the choices to define the final group that will show in the gallery. The final group could be seen as the most popular group or a group that represents a current trend of interest in the selecting group.

THE ALGORHYTHIM

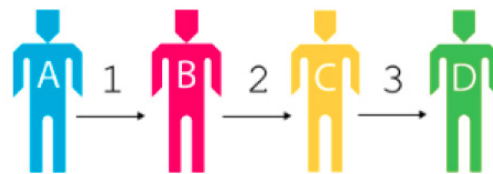
The algorithm is designed to aggregate individual user selections into a final group selection. Curatron allows applicants to view each other's profiles in order to select a group of artists to show with. When one person selects another person, a value is created between them. When one person selects several others, they create value between themselves and all those people, but they also create values between those people, independently of themselves.



The value of self-selection and group selection is weighted differently. At the moment, you create more value between people by selecting them to be part of a group than you do by choosing to associate yourself with them. These values used to be weighted evenly, but we discovered over time that the way a user thinks about his or her own practice in relation to an others is less accurate than their perception of how other practices relate to each other.



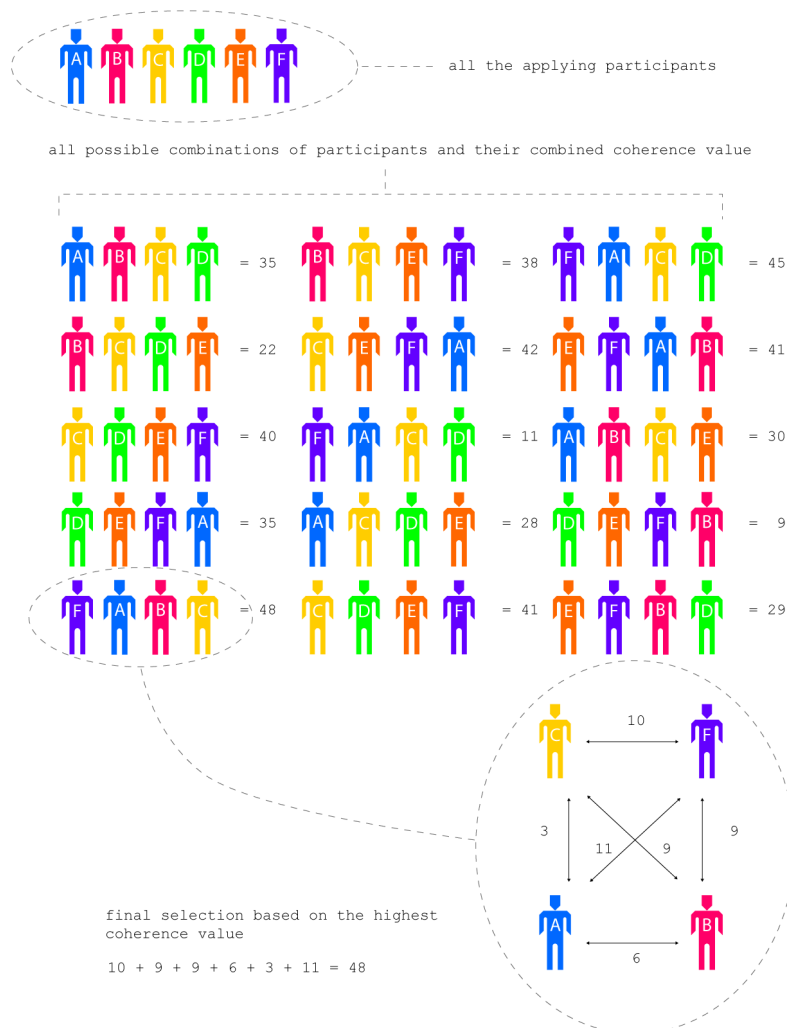
Another factor we recently introduced to the overall equation is the artist ranking calculation. This equation increases an applicant's selection power on the basis on how many times he/she has been selected. This gives applicants with more popular practices have more decision making power within the system.



Once all the applicants have created groups (producing value between practices), we run a very basic algorithm that compiles all the value-data and then outputs one final group.

For example: we send out an open call for a show with four artists plus the applicant. We let the users know that the best way to optimize selection is choosing artists who they feel have similar practices to their own. Perceived similarity allows for more overlapping choices between applicants, as shown in the diagrams.

Then we calculate every possible combination of five from the applicant pool; the group with the highest value is selected for the final exhibition. We call this group cohesion. It isn't based on the most popular artists, but on the most popular group, or which relationships between practices are perceived to be the strongest by the applicant pool. What we are trying to do is find the group that defines a significant trend in the applicant group.



RESTRUCTURING THE OPEN CALL

Curatron facilitates an alternative methodology for the open call, which creates new circumstances for social engagement between various groups. These circumstances could be separated into the selection period, after selection, during the exhibition development phase, during exhibition opening and after the exhibition closes. The social engagement happens between; the participants applying, who is selected, the managing staff of the particular venue, the people who view the exhibition both physically and virtually, the software developers, the granting bodies and me. So the way I try to understand Curatron is as a matrix of social groups and circumstances that shift social relations in a multitude ways.

The system takes into consideration these social groups and facilitates the best circumstances possible for engagement in a variety of interlinked ways. Some common interconnected areas that we pursue is; decreasing workload for artists and institutions through the application process, decreasing biases that may exist in the selection process, increasing resources that can be allocated through the system, increasing functional versatility in the system and removing my own authorship over the selection process as far as possible.

Curatron	Average Open Call
Large scale profile visibility between artists.	Visibility only within the curatorial board
Artists think about themselves in relation to others	Artists think more about their own specific projects
Fast application times	Lengthy application times
Advanced automatic bias compensation	No bias compensation
Post selection defined exhibition context	Pre defined exhibition context
Fast review process	Lengthy review process
Creates high visibility for Institution	Moderate visibility for institution
Limited to group shows	Not limited

EXHIBITIONS

Curatron started as a system for exhibition production and we have had five shows with the system thus far. A lot of the exhibitions are up on the Platform website. <http://platformstockholm.com/2015/03/06/curatron-5/> In terms of analyzing whether the exhibitions went well or not I do try take into consideration all the parties involved through the system of selection right through to the final show.

When it comes to exhibition production this is the workflow generally.

Curatron selects group.

1. The group collectively selects a writer to write about their group.
2. This text is used as the exhibition text and text title becomes the name of the show.
3. The artists make or select work for the show where they take this under consideration.
4. Platform plans all the other logistical details and marketing of the show.

Because Curatron brings together a group that has a very similar practice they generally have a better idea of what each other are doing and than I do. So I take the position as a facilitator rather than a curator per say organizing installation technicians and marketing the show based on the groups request. The exhibition text is and exhibition title is also outsourced to a writer of their choosing so the process is flipped. Where as once a curator might select a group and define the title now the group chooses a writer to define the title. When we receive a selected group we also receive something called a coherence number. That number indicates how closely connected the group is or how close their practices are to each other.

The "Time Place Light Smell" show had an unusually high coherence number. <http://>

platformstockholm.com/2013/08/21/curatron-3/ They were all working with slightly altered readymades very minimal in physical scale. Some of their works seemed interchangeable between practices and it was hard to determine who made which work. When it came time to put together the show I was completely at a loss because their practices were so close to each other that it only made sense that people in that group contribute to the production of the show. Even though the artists were from many different nations at different ages coming from different schools they all seemed to have a very specific idea of how the show should be put together which seemed to be very particular to that group. This show was extreme in relation to the closeness but articulates the way in which the Curatron selections also facilitates a collective curated dynamic through the selection process as well.

RESIDENCY

I will try to give you a rough idea of how this organization structure was developed for the Flaggfabrikken residency and how our strategy worked. The residency program was designed to address all these parties through three steps.

1. The artists are selected through Curatron.
2. Each artist is placed in a separate studio in separate studio collectives in the city.
2. We then housed them in a large luxurious villa overlooking the Norwegian Fjords.

As stated above Curatron is designed to select the most popular group of artists in the application pool. So the group that emerges represents somewhat of a popular trend and they have similar practices. The residency that comes after the selection allows us to further foster the relations between this group or could be seen as further fostering the choices of all the applicants in the system. It also generates a different type of relationship between my own administrative role the group as they do have part ownership over their own selection which creates a different type of dynamic for coming together maybe something a little less hierarchical and self reliant.

One of the major aspects of running a good residency to socialize the residents introducing them to different artists and curators in the community. In order to further leverage the self reliance aspect of the residency is to outsource the artist studios from different studio collectives in Bergen. In this way the artists on residency will have the opportunity to meet other artists in the other studio communities. When it comes time to facilitate social happenings or the production of one thing or another there is the potential for quickly established network as each resident has access to different resources and different network in these different art communities.

The villa then becomes an attractive hub for interconnections not only between residents but also for the bergen art community. The Curatron residency does not only employ decentralized selection process it maintains the decentralization throughout the entire residency leading to greater anonymity freedom at the same time as fostering a fruitful networking opportunity for the artists selected.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Curatron has had limited development since the initial launch of the system in 2013 but over the last 3 years we have learned a lot about the way in which the system is used. We are constantly running a variety of different statistical analysis on the selections of the artists selecting and have received a variety of feedback about what tools our artists require. There are all multitude of areas that can be expanded on but from this initial research we have defined a few easier to achieve tasks that would increase the flexibility in the system with the least amount of development costs.

Algorithm Development

The algorithm we have presently is have for Curatron requires updating in relation to the growth of the platform. The original design was for around 200 users and with the growth of our applications at over 1000 per open call processing times are very long. We also want to design the algorithm to take into consideration other factors like biases that may exist between gender, nation, or race.

Filtering Sorting Applications

We need to find some way to deal with high application rates, or some way to make the review process

less intimidating for applicants reviewing applications in the database. When one artist comes into the system they are presented approximately 1000 profiles to review. One option is to present each applicant with a randomized subset of applicants, a segment of the larger pool that would still give us enough data to maintain a workable algorithm. This option would reduce the amount of control the user has over their own selections. We could also create a search function, but this might tempt applicants to rely more on existing connections, which would limit the potential for visibility outside of the pre-existing structures.

Filtering and sorting capabilities in the selection process to reduce selection time for the applicants but also create a more versatile system and lead to possibilities of cultural transformation in the international art community.

Increasing Networking - Applicant Feedback

The selection process of Curatron increases the visibility between the applying artists and this inter-visibility provides networking opportunities that may not have existed under a regular application process. We are currently developing methods for leveraging these networking opportunities such as giving each applicant an output of what their optimal group even though they are not selected for the final group. We could give applicants an example of what their perfect group is using the same algorithm we use to define the selected groups but with some minor adjustments. Feedback for applicants would be an essential developmental step towards developing relationships between artists practices through Curatron.

Single Signon with Facebook

This function will allow users to sign on using their facebook profile which will increase the speed in which they can enter the site. It would also give us an idea of how much of the selections happening in the system are based on already existing networks. We could then redesign the system in order create more equality through the selection process.

Security

With the expansion of the system and the new level of applicants the increased threat of a security breach has become a reality. Recently we had one user create a multitude of fake profiles in the system in order to increase his own chances of being selected. With increased security measures in the system we will be able to track ip addresses so that gaming the system will be much more difficult in the future. Can also be used with Art Engine Integration.

Connection Curatron and Art Engine

Art Engine is another software system designed in Platform. It can run websites, control administration workflows and collect all administrative tasks into one overarching system tailored to fit a medium sized arts institution.

Connecting to Art Engine would create an explosive amount of functionality between the two systems. Each system would be able to exchange information and control the other. For instance, Curatron has an emailing system embedded in it which curatron does not and Art Engine has a sophisticated workflow management for the post selection process that could be used for Curatron exhibitions to make the process of making exhibitions even more efficient. *More information about Art Engine in the Art Engine Document.*

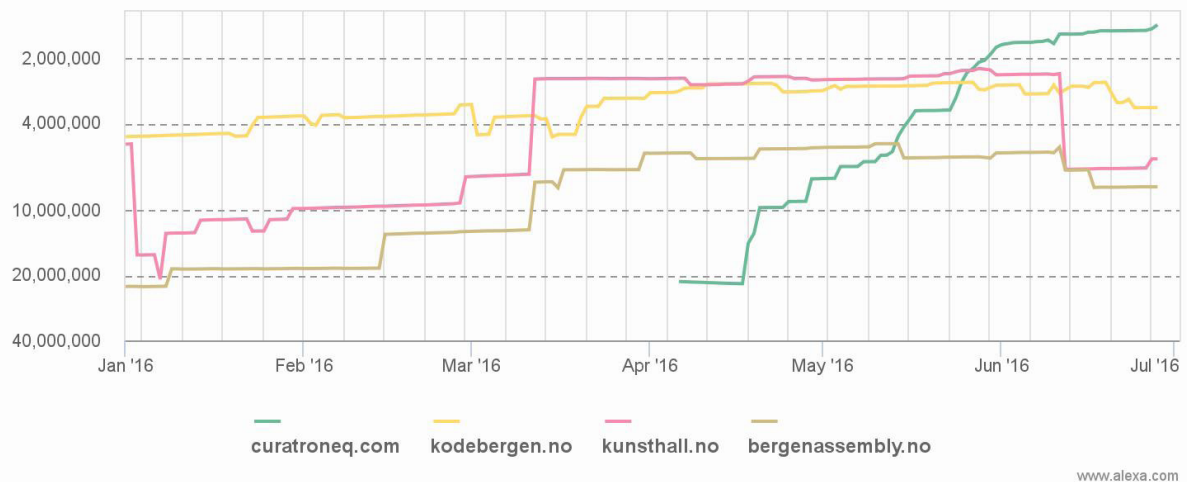
~ CURATRON STATISTICS ~

Currently I have processed 7 open calls with Curatron two of which were group residencies at Flaggfabrikkens residency program in Bergen, Norway.

Curatron statistics May 30th, 2017

- Number of Users in System - 4186
- Number of Open Calls Processed - 7
- Number of Open Calls on the Site - 14
- Number of Norwegian Users - 110
- Global Website Internet Ranking of Artistic Insituions in Bergen Currently - #1

Historical Traffic Trends: Alexa Traffic Rank



The Calculation of Time a normal user Applies to Curatron and how much his/her time is worth. Although application numbers are very high in Curatron the time to apply is much less.

Factors	Curatron	Average Open Call
# users of positions available	3	3
# of applications	1400	300
avg. time to apply in minutes	15	360
value in money	10000	10000
1 hour to get possiby	40000	1666.666667
1 out of X chance of acceptance	466.6666667	100
wage per hour if your odds are as good as all others	85.71428571	16.66666667

Previous and Upcoming Events

Instituion	# participants	# applicants	Submission Close	Exhibition Open	Exhibition Close
Rogaland Art Center	3	914	Sep 1, 2016	May 1, 2017	Nov 1, 2017
FABRIKKEN	2	419	Jun 28, 2016	Dec 1, 2016	Dec 1, 2016
Entree	2	920	Jul 2, 2016	Jan 20, 2017	Feb 19, 2017
Nida Art Colony	3	373	Jun 30, 2016	Oct 1, 2016	Oct 30, 2016
Platform Stockholm	3	1123	May 30, 2016	Nov 1, 2016	Dec 1, 2016
Platform Stockholm	3	142	Apr 30, 2016	Jun 15, 2016	Jul 15, 2016

Flaggfabrikken	3	892	May 25, 2016	Oct 2, 2016	Oct 31, 2016
Flaggfabrikken	3	342	May 18, 2016	Sep 1, 2016	Sep 30, 2016
Flaggfabrikken	3	1409	May 30, 2015	Sep 19, 2015	Oct 19, 2015
Platform Stockholm	4	689	Jun 19, 2014	Oct 3, 2014	Oct 24, 2016
Flaggfabrikken	4	981	Jun 18, 2014	Oct 14, 2014	Nov 11, 2014
Platform Stockholm	3	112	Oct 25, 2013	Feb 8, 2014	Mar 7, 2014
Platform Stockholm	5	92	Oct 10, 2013	Jan 10, 2014	Feb 2, 2014
Platform Stockholm	8	55	Sep 20, 2013	Nov 30, 2013	Dec 22, 2014
TOTALS	49	8463			

~ PUBLICATIONS ~

- » Monica Holmen ~ Curatron ~ KunstForum
- » Emily Levy ~ Math Takes the Guessing Out of Artistic Collaboration ~ Vocativ Magazine
- » Rachel Mason ~ Cloud Galleries: The Rise of the Virtual Art Establishment ~ Huffington Post
- » Vivir Uy Comer ~ Columna Clase Ejecutiva: El retardador (Curatron) ~ El Financiero
- » Karl Lydén ~ Curator ersätts av algoritmer ~ Kunstkritikk
- » Oscar Carlson ~ sex saxar i en saxask ~ Bon Online Magazine
- » Karl Lydén ~ Curator ersätts av algoritmer ~ Kunstkritikk