



BUILDING SUSTAINABLE EGALITARIAN COMMUNITIES:
*CROSS-FACULTY, TRANS-HIERARCHICAL COLLABORATIONS AND
LEARNING NETWORKS*

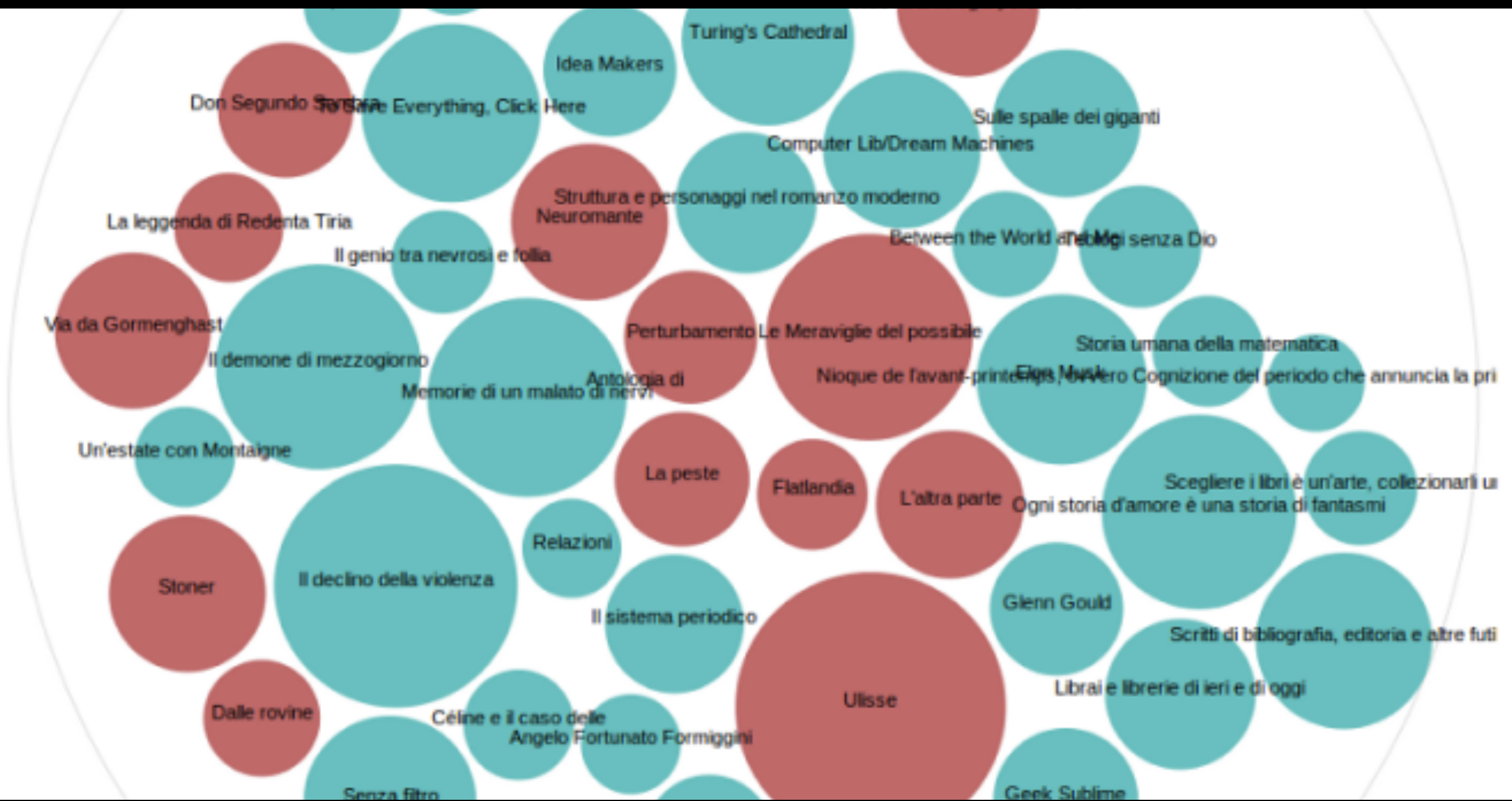
SUSAN GEROFSKY, UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

THE CONTEXT: THREE LEARNING GARDENS AT UBC

- All are largely student-led projects together with faculty, staff & community
- We grow food and art materials, teach and learn from each other, cook and eat together, make art (sculpture, drawing, poetry, music, dance,...), do research, teach courses, hold conferences and more.
- All are egalitarian and cut across lines of age, status, university disciplines and faculties, communities, ethnicities, genders, ...



(My original intention: to present 8 years of participation data as a 'clustered force' scatter plot using rawgraphs.io open source software. But coding 5 factors X 500 participants X 8 years = 20,000 data points to enter and convert on Excel spreadsheets...so this has not been completed yet.)



WHILE WE ARE UNDERTAKING GARDEN- BASED LEARNING:

- We are developing life-long friendships
- We are building academic skills and confidence
- We are learning from those who are different from ourselves
- We are learning from the gardens and greater-than-human world as teachers
- We are making community



IMAGES FROM THE UBC ORCHARD GARDEN, ROOTS ON THE ROOF & LANDED LEARNING

- September 2017 - March 2018
- Students: Undergraduates, teacher candidates, Masters, PhD and post-doctoral students from Education, Land and Food Systems, Landscape Architecture, Forestry, Engineering, Arts, Science, Computer Science
- Faculty members and staff from all these disciplines
- Students from other universities
- Non-university community members
- International conference delegates







































THREADED SOWN GROWN GIVEN

Julia Ostertag,
PhD Candidate

School Garden
Installation Events
November 13-30

These events are part of Julia Ostertag's PhD research, an art- and garden-based exploration into the history and contemporary practices of school gardening to better understand the relationships between land and teaching. During the opening on November 13 and at daily "threading conversations," you will be invited to participate in the research process.

For consent forms and to RSVP, email:
julia_ostertag@yahoo.ca

NB: The student lounge is a public space and the installation is open to everyone. Participation in the research is not required to attend installation events or be in the lounge.

November 13
2012, 3-5pm:
Research Installation
Opening

Threading
Conversations,
Daily events:
10am - 12pm



<http://theorchardgarden.blogspot.ca>

Student Lounge,
Room 10, Neville Scarfe
UBC



WHAT BUILDS COMMUNITY?

- Working, making and dreaming together
- Planting, harvesting, cooking and eating together
- Enjoying & appreciating life
- Respecting everyone, regardless of superficial rankings of age, status, etc.: "all my relations", extending to the greater-than-human world as well
- Teaching and learning through mutual participation



WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BUILD AN EGALITARIAN COMMUNITY IN A UNIVERSITY?

- Humour and humility
- Taking joy in life & learning
- Willingness to share decision-making and control — and not always to be in control
- Openness to surprises and contributions from everywhere
- Embracing our involvement in biocultural ecosystems
- Willingness to help out and work hard



WHY IS THIS KIND OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANT FOR A SUSTAINABLE CAMPUS?

- It brings hope, joy and possibility to everything we do.
- It allows for a future lived together with respect, curiosity and enjoyment, in harmony with the living world.
- It cuts across all kinds of borders and allows for truly transdisciplinary work, inspired by embodied emotion as well as intellect.

