



Introduction
Hear! Here! project

The classic idea of a debate is an exchange in which opposing arguments are defended and discussed. The British House of Commons is a Eurocentric example, where speakers use rhetorical devices to persuade their audience. Often, in politics, debates lead up to a vote and therefore, ultimately, are about winning or losing, as curator and programmer Amal Alhaag states: "A debate is structured to start with two opposing opinions, and end with two opposing opinions – a process formalised by elaborate rigmarole in competitive and parliamentary debates. There is no evolution of thought or mutual learning, only the strengthening of positions. [...] Debates are like battling, and not even fun like a rap battle where you can enjoy the punchline at the end."⁽¹⁾

How to move from the outdated concept of 'debate' towards 'dialogue' in which differences are embraced? According to Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, "Dialogue is the encounter between men, mediated by the world, in order to name the world. Hence, dialogue cannot occur between those who want to name the world and those who do not wish this naming –



between those who deny others the right to speak their word and those whose right to speak has been denied them."⁽²⁾

THE HEAR! HERE! PROJECT

For the Hear! Here! project, we decided to focus on offering teacher workshops that explored different approaches to teaching and holding dialogue in the classroom. The lessons from these teacher workshops were then put into practice during the schoolwide events which were open to both students, teachers and staff.

The project was run by Sekai Makoni and Rosa te Velde together with an editorial board consisting of Philip Coyne, Becket Flannery, Elif Özbay, Eloise Sweetman, Iskra Vukšić, Simone Zeefuik, Tobias Karlsson, Martine Neddham, and Jason Hendrik Hansma, which

¹ Nadine Botha in conversation with Amal Alhaag in: 'A Safe Space to Redesign Reality', in: *Design as learning: A School of Schools Reader*, 2018, p. 157.

² Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 1970, p. 61.

