| Breakout | 10/29/2026 2:15pm

Youth Advocacy in Museum Education

Ariana Katrin Katrinardottir, Education Project Manager, Reykjavik Art Museum
Runar Orn Johonnu Marinosson, Youth educator, Reykjavik Art Museum

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Learning objectives

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

1. **Identify** key approaches for engaging teenagers in meaningful conversations about climate change through contemporary art.

2. **Choose** practical ways to create a welcoming, comfortable and trusting museum environment that supports youth voice and participation.

3. **Connect** the Reykjavík Art Museum case study to broader questions of youth participation, sustainability and the role museums can play in climate engagement.

Agenda

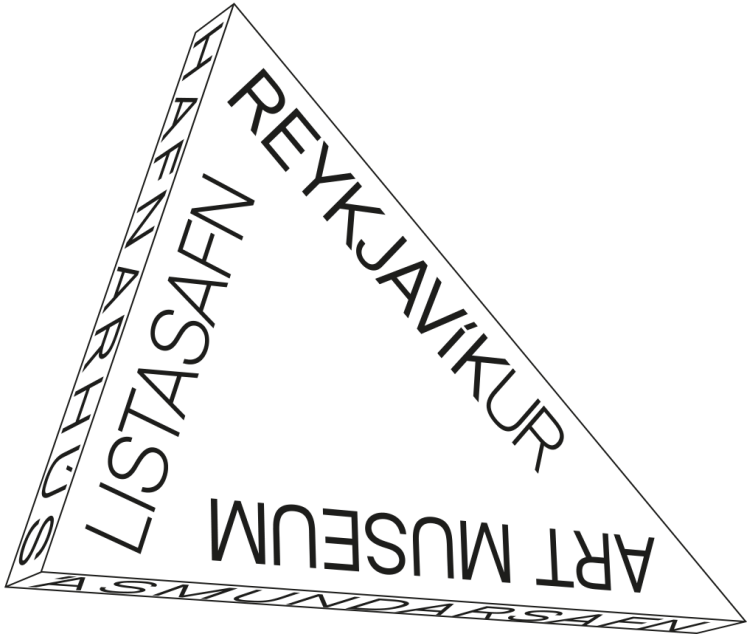
What we'll cover in this session:

1. What we learned inviting 600 teens to Reykjavik Art Museum (15 min)
2. Workshop – Creative Ice breaking (20 min)
3. Discussion and Q&A (10 minutes).

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Youth Advocacy in Museum Education

A Practice Based Case Study



Reykjavík

Reykjavik Art Museum

Listasafn Reykjavíkur

- Three locations
- Public Municipal Art Museum.
- Biggest collection in Iceland, approx 18.000 works including public art in Reykjavik.
- EU Climate-neutral and Smart Cities





The Missing Age Group

- RAM welcomes roughly 9000 students every year.
- Only a few of them ages 14-17.
- The answer: Partnership!

The Reykjavik School of Work

- Already an established network of teens.
- Inherently sustainable.
- We had already done it years ago.







Youth, Art and Climate Action

- Our mistake – theirs to solve?
- Aesthetic experiences
- Emotion turns experience into connection.
- We need connection to care.

ART MUSEUM
LISTASAFN
REYKJAVÍKUR

The Schedule

- Teens arrive.
- Chill – and icebreaker.
- Exhibition tour.
- Everyone’s a critic!
- Lunch and chill.
- Creative activity.
- Presentation of artworks.
- Decompress and chill.
- Goodbye!



„Looks like a cloud. Two figures? A smoke cloud? Packed ice. Is the tape warning us of something? “

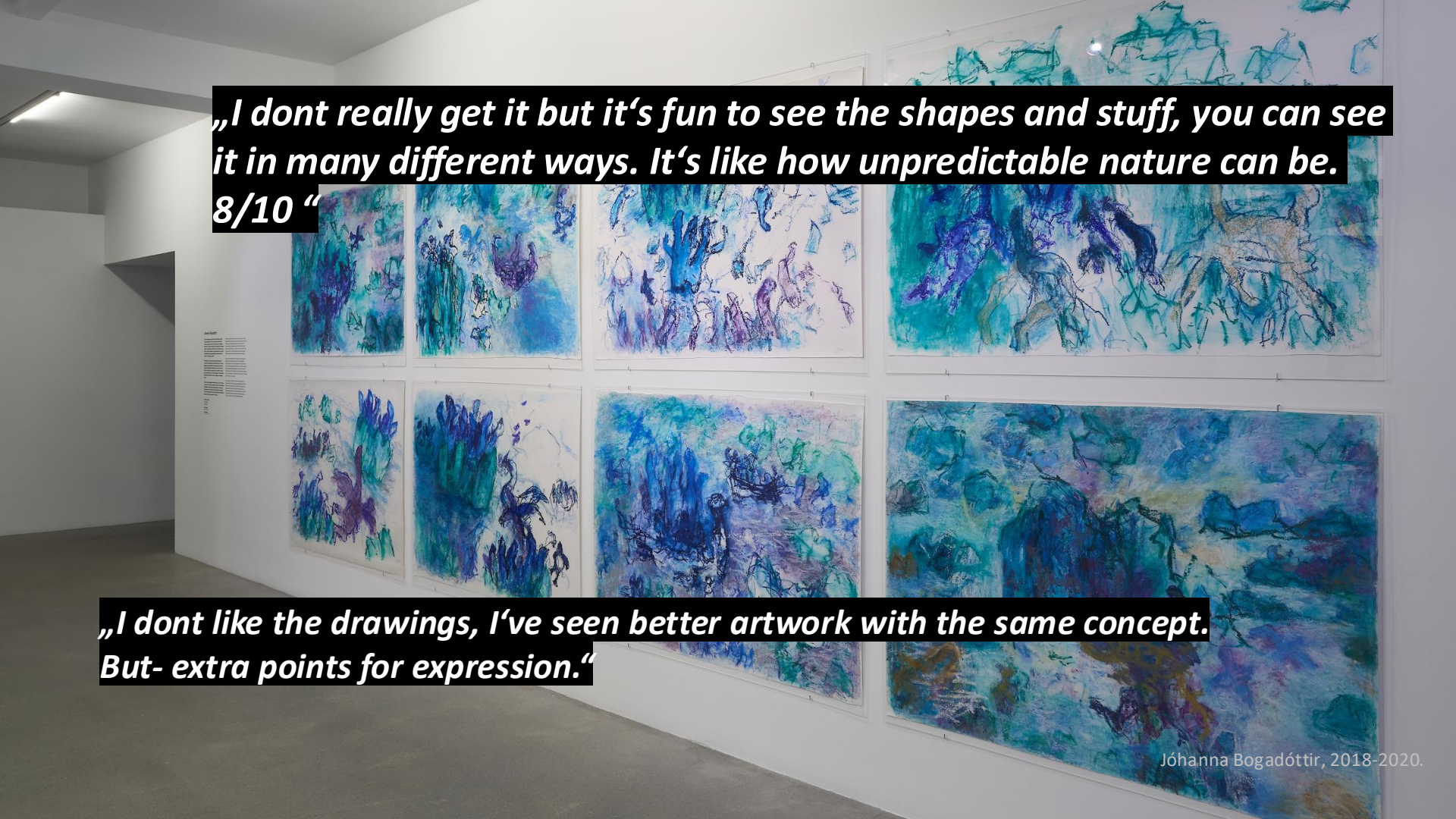




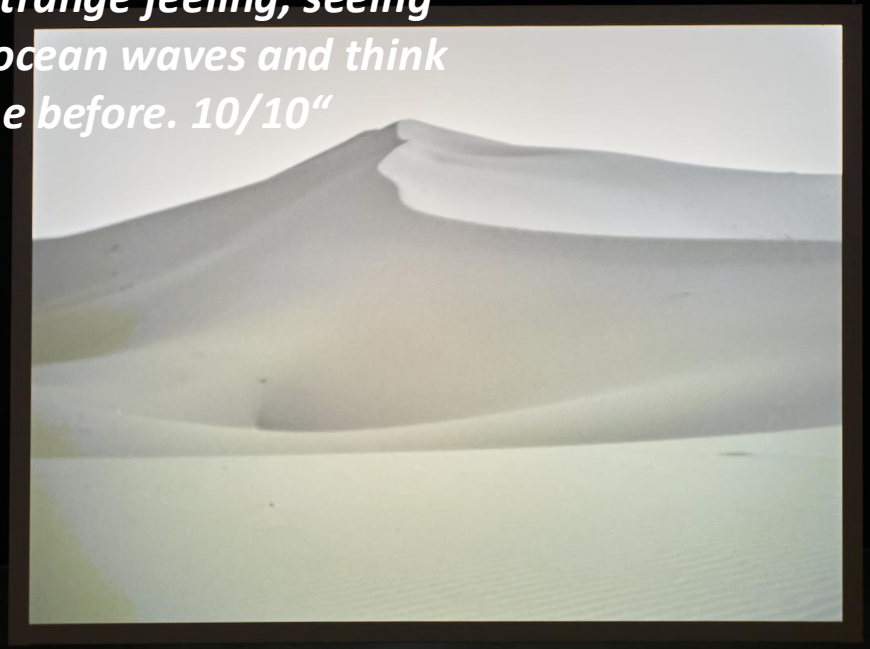


„This is cool. Shows us that nature and humans can make something cool together without it being harmful 7/10“

Hrafnkell Sigurðsson, 2025.

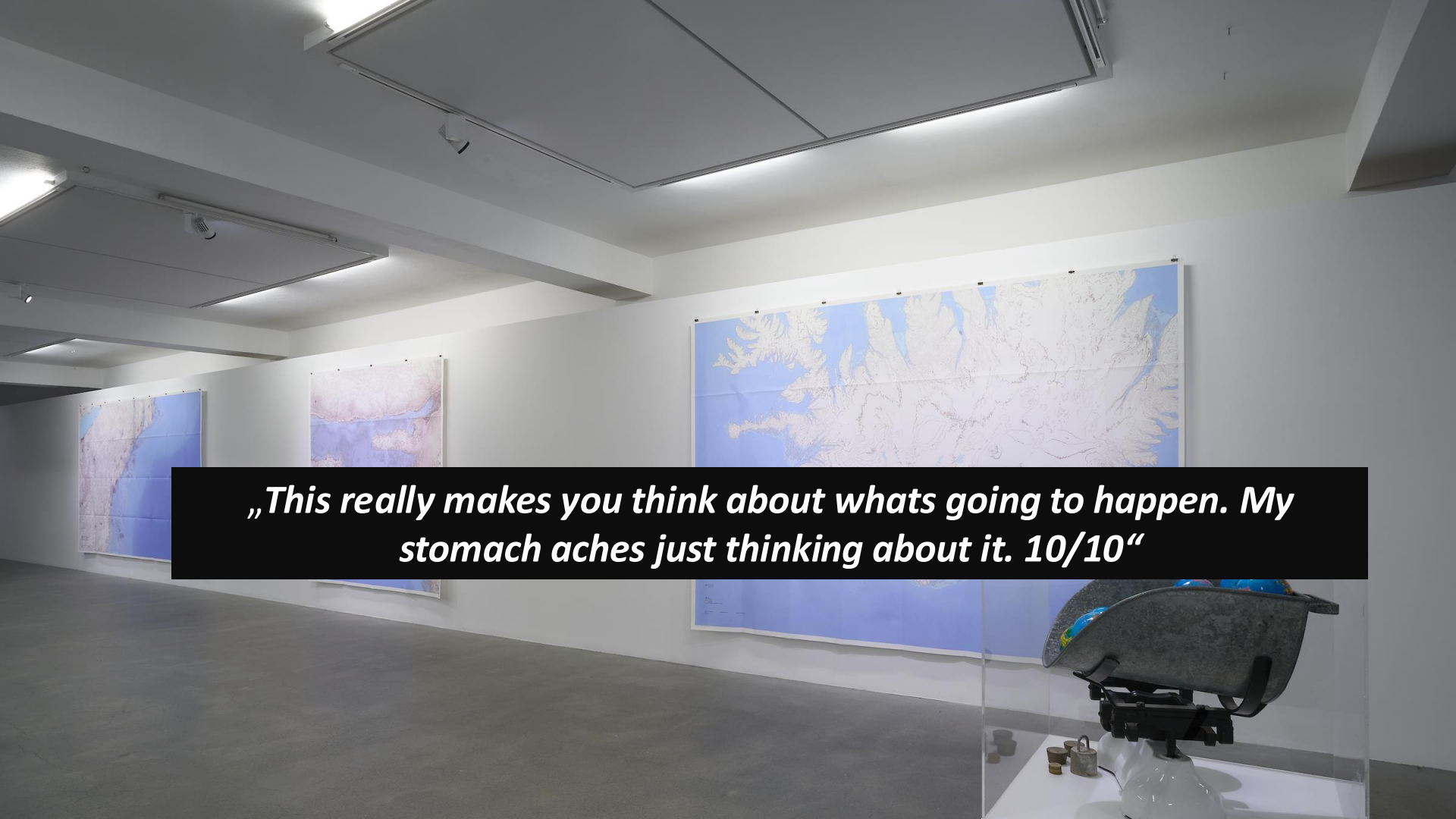

„I dont really get it but it‘s fun to see the shapes and stuff, you can see it in many different ways. It‘s like how unpredictable nature can be. 8/10 “
„I dont like the drawings, I‘ve seen better artwork with the same concept. But- extra points for expression.“
Jóhanna Bogadóttir, 2018-2020.

„It‘s somehow so amazing to experience how this desert was once an ocean with the sound. This is a really strange feeling, seeing sand dunes instead of ocean waves and think about the life that came before. 10/10“



„Sure I get the message but the video likes to think it‘s a lot deeper than it actually is. 6/10 “

Þorbjörg Jónsdóttir, 2018.


„This really makes you think about whats going to happen. My stomach aches just thinking about it. 10/10“

Practical lessons

- All staff is included and informed.
- Use public transport.
- Time based – low waste art.
- Chairs, beanbags and more chairs.
- Do not answer every question with facts – give them time and they will answer themselves.
- Do not push the “right” conclusion.
- Listen.
- Laugh.





Workshop Time!

The Rúnar method to getting teens talking!

1. Split into small groups of approx. five people.
2. Each group has 10-15 minutes to create a performance and film it.
3. Get creative! Use whatever you can find around you to create your artwork and express yourselves.


VÍKING
GYLLTUR

Questions?

Takeaways

1. **Engagement:** Teenagers can engage deeply with complex climate issues when given space to explore, interpret and respond.

2. **Environment:** Welcome, comfort, fun and trust are essential parts of meaningful youth engagement.

3. **Bigger picture:** Sustainable museum practice is not only about materials and energy. It can also involve participation, access, dialogue and shared responsibility.

Contact

Ariana Katrín Katrínardóttir
ariana.katrin.katrinardottir@reykjavik.is
Rúnar Örn Jóhönnu Marinósson
runar.orn.johonnu.marinosson@reykjavik.is

Reykjavik Art Museum
www.artmuseum.is
listasafn@reykjavik.is

