



# Never seen before

## Objects as a joint work of art

*Evy Raes – photographer/artist*

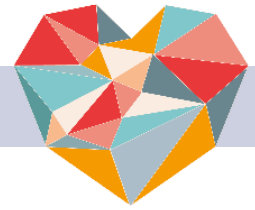


Dementia  
in Cultural Mediation



With the support of the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

# The activity



## Name of the activity

Never seen before - Objects as a joint work of art.

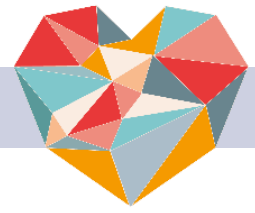
## Summary

Phase 1: The starting point is a reminiscence conversation. It is important that all answers are correct. There is no right or wrong answer. The person tells from his experience.

Phase 2: Then the activity moves on towards a creative workshop. The participants make a new object together based on the different objects available. This second part focuses on creativity in which something completely new is created.

Phase 3: The work is shared through an exhibition, which strengthens the group feeling. Or the object itself is exhibited as such.

# Content



## Target group

The participants consist of a small group of people with dementia who can still express themselves orally. When the person is hindered too much by disabilities, it is desirable to offer extra support through family members or volunteers.

## Objective

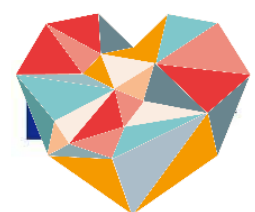
The aim is to make a new statue from various objects, provided by the participants, as a collective work of art.

## Partners

This activity can be carried out by anyone who has a feeling for artistic processes. This means that one can start with a certain context. And to start a process from this that eventually leads to a product. One cannot predict in advance what the product will be. This is subordinate to the process.

Do you feel unfamiliar with such a method? Or would you like to explore certain aspects (interests of persons, artistic techniques, ...) more in depth? Then it is possible to bring in an external person with specific expertise (e.g. an artist with experience in social projects) to supervise the activity.

It is of course also possible to engage an external organization to insert extra presentation moments of the creations (e.g. displaying the artworks in a local center). Or maybe there is a collaboration with a local art academy that can also make additional objects available. These collaborations also give the opportunity to discuss dementia in new locations.



# Practical

## Venue

The activity doesn't require a fixed location and can therefore be performed at home with family, in a day care center or in a care home.

The venue only needs a communal table in the middle, with chairs around it for the participants. Silence and tranquility are always desirable in order to understand each other clearly and to avoid distractions.

It doesn't matter where the location is. This makes it possible to perform this activity anywhere. However, the required materials are important. These will be written out more in detail in a next step.

## Day, time & duration

The activity can take place whenever one finds it desirable. An average duration of 60-90 minutes should be taken into account so that there is sufficient space and the concentration span is not exceeded.

Phase 1 (the conversation about the objects) and phase 2 (the creation of the artwork) should take place at the same time. Phase 3, namely the exhibition moment follows after the creation process.

The following duration is desirable for each of the phases:

Phase 1 – Discussion about objects + choice of object - 15-30 minutes

Phase 2 – Creation of the artwork - 30-45 minutes

Phase 3 – Exhibition moment – make it visible for the participants and external parties for 1 to 2 weeks

## Group size

This activity works best in a small group of 3-6 participants.

When working with 3-4 participants, it is best to insert two rounds in the second phase so that you have 6 to 8 objects for the statue.

In a home environment it is also possible to carry out this activity between family and friends in combination with one person with dementia. Each person then takes part actively and forms part of the collective artwork that the group creates.

## Supervisors and hosts

One person takes on the role to go through the different phases. In addition, 3 to 6 people participate. When there are limitations through disabilities, it is desirable to offer extra support through family members or volunteers.

In that case, care should be taken that they give the participants the opportunity to indicate themselves what they find important or where they want help. Otherwise, the volunteer will quickly take over the activity and go beyond the goal of stimulating the participants with creativity.

## Materials & facilities

The required materials consist of 2 types

- Various objects that are not too small (otherwise they will not be visible on the table), but they should also not be too big to fit in one hand. This gives the opportunity to study them closely.

The objects preferably belong to one theme and are on the table:

- Food: fork, knife, cups, spaghetti, pans, ...
- Forest: nuts, leaves, blades of grass, ...
- Color:
  - or everything in one color (which gives a nice monochrome result)
  - or very bright colors (when one would like to investigate which colors are experienced as attractive)

You make the choice yourself whether you go for

- Reusable materials
- Consumables (paper tissues, plastic forks, ...)
- A mix of both

When you use materials that still have to be used afterwards, it is recommended to take a photo of the result in phase 3 to share the work of art. When the materials used are no longer needed, you can exhibit the statue itself in phase 3.

- Different materials to assemble the artwork: glue, rope, (double-sided) tape, paper clips, clothespins,...

You only get this in phase 2. You can offer a limited choice yourself if necessary.

## Costs

There are no obligatory costs if you organize this activity with objects that you have at your disposal and provide the necessary guidance yourself.

## Name tags

Preferably, the supervisor is a person who knows the people by name so that name tags are not necessary.

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## Memento

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Phase 3 consists of a presentation moment in which the joint artwork is shared with the participants and external parties.

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## Afterwards

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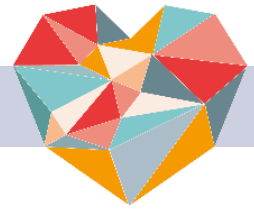
The digital pictures can be shared on social media.

When you work on a specific theme (e.g. Christmas) you can print the picture as a personalised greeting card.

In case you have a serie of pictures, you can use them in creative ways.

- Make a **calendar**
- By printing each picture twice you can use this as a **memory game** (A5 and A4 format work well)
- Print a picture on A4 format or bigger. Cut them into pieces to use them as a **puzzle**.

# Communication & Registration



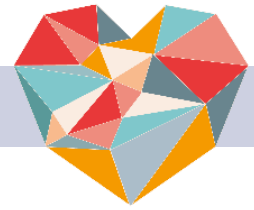
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When organized with habitants in a care centre, you invite the participants when they feel like joining for the activity.

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# Description & Program



Phase 1: The starting point is a reminiscence conversation. It is important that all answers are correct. The person tells from his experience. So there are no bad answers.

- The participants have a group discussion about the objects that are present, especially what they see. They recognize a number of things that attract them to participate.

Here you can choose a specific theme with which they may or may not be familiar: cooking tools, reading material, clothing, ...

- Each participant chooses an object. Take this and tell what he sees. The facilitator can ask additional questions to get to know the person's interests and what they see. What color is it? What attracts you? Does it have a specific shape? What else does it remind you of? How many angles does the object have? Count with your eyes, count with your fingers (Is there a difference?)

Phase 2: Then the activity moves on to a creative workshop. The participants make a new object together from the different objects. This second part focuses on creativity in which something completely new is created.

- One person gives his/her object to his/her neighbor. The facilitator asks how they can combine those two things.

- When the person offers a solution (e.g. adhesive tape), this material is offered.

If the person has no idea he/she can give me a suggestion with all kinds of fasteners (tape, rope, glue, ...) If necessary, help is provided to fix the 2 objects.

- This is passed on to the next neighbor. Again you are asked how it can be attached. This is also carried out as described above.

- This process is repeated until everyone has been addressed.

With a small group, a second round can be enabled.

- Combining different objects creates a joint work of art.

The facilitator shows this to the group and asks what the people see.

It's important to let people fantasize and go with what they see.

If the answer is not forthcoming, the object can be shown closer to the people and from different angles.

Give them the time and space to come up with something.

- Ask them if there might be something missing. For example, in the example below, there was only one fork on the left that was missing as an arm for the character. The participants indicated that an extra arm (the fork on the right) was needed.

- The group assignment is only closed when everyone agrees that the object is finished.

It is possible that different objects are added and the object transforms again.

Possibly you come up with a name for the work of art together thanks to associations (shape, color, meaning of the object for the participants, ...)



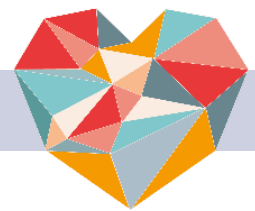




Phase 3: The work is shared through an exhibition moment, which strengthens the group dynamics. Or the object itself is exhibited. Certainly when this is done with several groups, a series of objects is created.

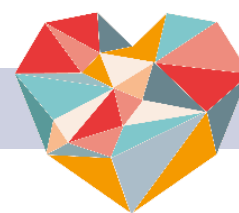
For this, one can use photography to capture the artwork through pictures. This gives the opportunity to share the result with family members and employees in multiple ways, both via social media as projection or printed as posters on the wall.

## Evaluation



*Will the activity be evaluated? How and with whom?*

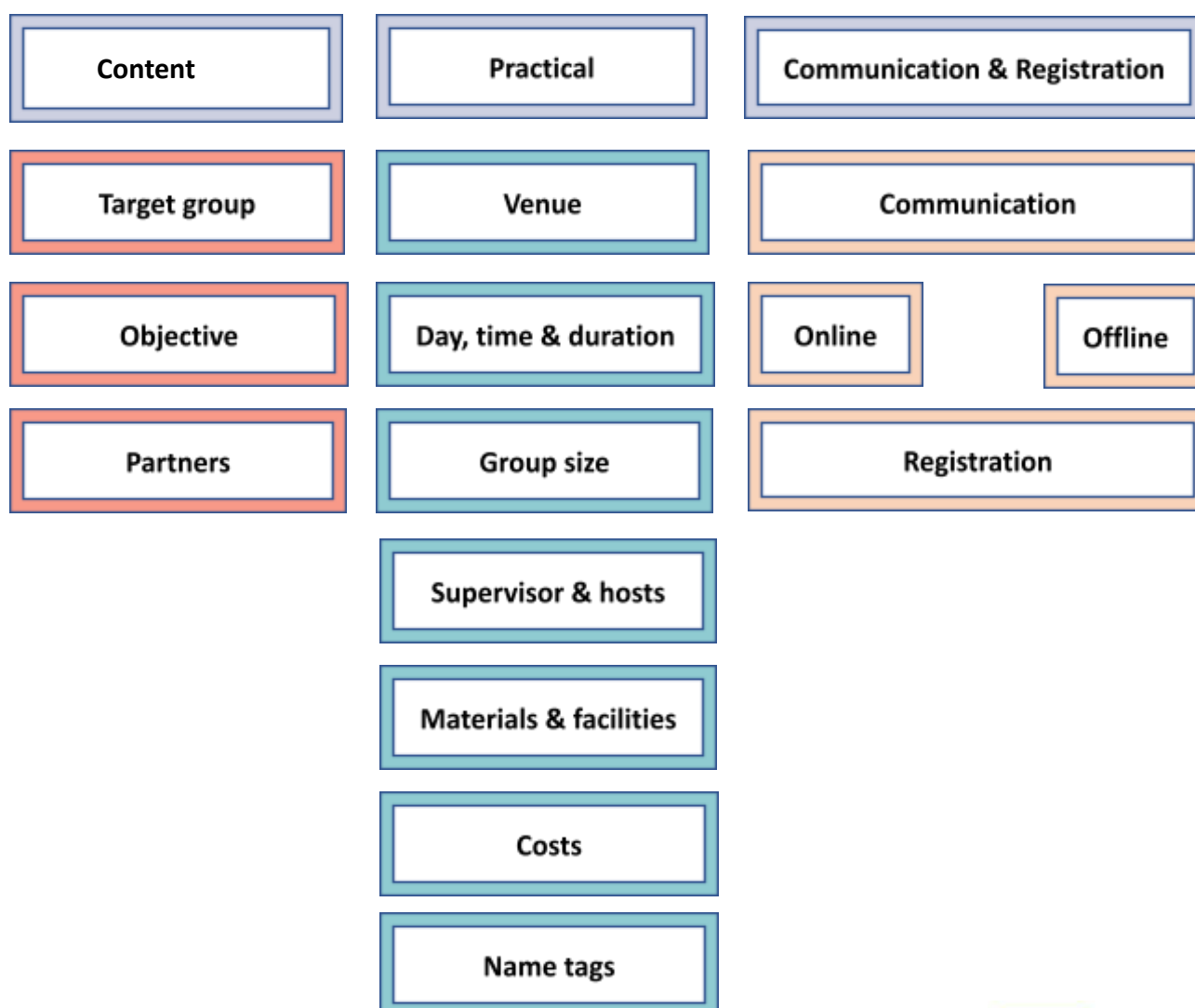
There is no formal evaluation. It is an artistic project where you cannot determine the outcome or quantify the effects.



## Corona

This activity focuses on personal guidance and interaction. If the safety of the participant can not be guaranteed within the required safety measures, this activity can not be organized.

# Points of attention



**Memento**

**Afterwards**

**Evaluation**

