C.A.L.

Communities At Large Letter

INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES DESK

YAD TABENKIN

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Dear readers,

My name is Gabriel Freund and I am delighted to introduce myself as the new editor of C.A.L.L. After 13 faithful years at the helm, Anton Marks has temporarily departed our shores for the US, where he is guiding a new generation of young educators seeking to revitalise and actualise the ideals of the kibbutz. We wish him the best of luck in this worthiest of endeavours!

I grew up in Perth, Western Australia where I first encountered the idea of collective living in the stories of the kibbutz told wistfully and longingly at weekly meetings of the youth movement Habonim Dror. Six years ago I moved to Israel to participate in the building of a network of urban kibbutzim. Today I live in downtown Haifa, and am a member of *Kvutzat Yoreh*.

I am very excited to be bringing you this next edition of the Communities At Large Letter. In these pages you will find articles that cover topics that cross the gamut from traditional intentional communities, to startup co-ops, to a long dead commune given new life by an eccentric artist.

Truly, the global yearning for community is as strong as ever. The contents of this edition are testament to the vitality of the communal ideal, as people young and old from the four corners of the globe are seeking and finding ways to bind their lives together.

With the 21st century well underway, we have unprecedented tools at our disposal that open up fascinating new opportunities for building intentional communities. In this edition we've focused on the wide range of responses cropping up all over to the alienation of mass consumer culture and the loneliness of advanced capitalism

As violent acts of hatred continue to rock the foundations of our world, it is perhaps more important than ever to remind ourselves and each other that we are stronger, and life is better, together.

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From Top to Bottom: The Many Faces of Israel's Intentional Communities

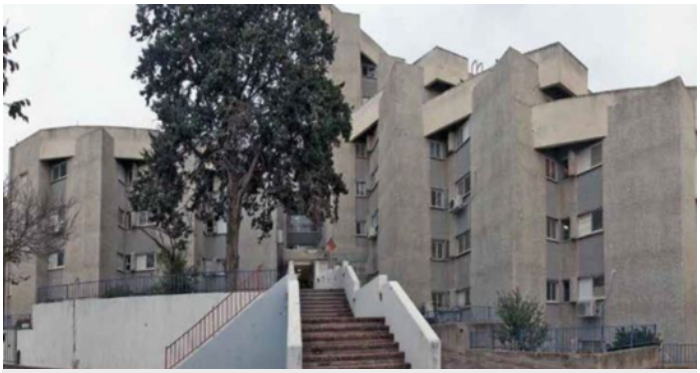
A group of Americans from a range of Jewish intentional communities visited Israel for a whirlwind tour of the thriving diversity of communal life in the homeland of the kibbutz and moshav.

***Tamar Fendel**, April 13, Jerusalem.*

IN MARCH, I had the privilege of attending the Jewish Intentional Communities Tour of Israel, put together by the US nonprofit organization, Hazon. A group of Americans who are all engaged in building Jewish intentional communities where they live came together to be inspired by the incredible communal work being done in Israel. I was invited to join the tour as a representative of Berkeley Moshav. My family and I are part of the core group of people trying to build Berkeley Moshav, which will be a Jewish co-housing complex in Berkeley, California, the first of its kind in the United States. Each household at the Berkeley Moshav will own or rent their own unit, like an apartment building or a condominium, but we will also have shared space such as a kitchen, a dining room, a garden and play areas for children. We will be a pluralistic Jewish community, jointly engaging in Jewish life and inviting others in the area to celebrate with us.

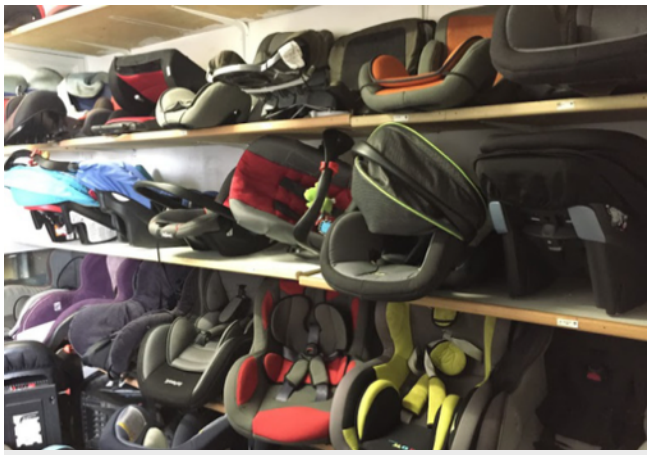
The tour took us throughout Israel – from Tzfat and Nazereth Illit in the north to Beer Sheva and Shuva in the south. We spent time learning with experts in the field about the history of kibbutzim and other intentional communities in Israel, and how the communal movement has evolved in recent years. We had opportunities to visit communities dedicated to service to others in Israel, while each manifests that idea in very different and unique ways. The number and variety of intentional communities in Israel is staggering, and we visited several of each of the main types. Each of the communities we visited is affiliated with Makom, an umbrella organization that helps grow and strengthen the movement.

One type of kibbutz that most of the Americans in the group weren't aware even existed prior to this tour, is one that is dedicated to education. A great example of this is Kibbutz Ravid, which we visited on our first day. Nearly every member works in the field of education, in communities outside of the kibbutz. They have even created a degree program in progressive education. They are a kibbutz in every respect, in that they share economic and communal resources, but they are focused on building the greater community and Israeli society, rather than being insular. Another example of this kind of intentional community – a particular highlight of the tour for me – was *Kibbutz Mishol*. Kibbutz Mishol is an urban kibbutz, located in Nazereth Illit (just north of Nazareth). It is situated in a low/mixed income town. The kibbutz has been in the area for nearly 20



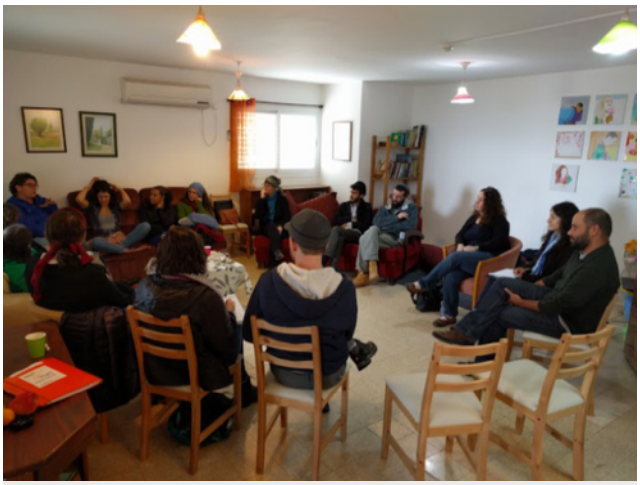
Exterior of Kibbutz Mishol.

years, having been started by a group of Anglo and Israeli young people dedicated to communal life, education and service. For many years they lived in "*kvutzot*" small groups in various apartments scattered throughout the city, which functioned jointly as a kibbutz. For years they tried to find a way to live together, but they met many obstacles. A few years ago they were able to rent a defunct absorption center (formerly used to temporarily house new immigrants). They renovated the facility to meet their unique needs as a community and finally fulfilled their dream of moving in together! Each nuclear group has their own apartment, whose size is determined by the number of people.



Cars are shared, but carseats aren't, to prevent tantrums

These apartments are not very fancy, but exceedingly functional. On every floor there is a shared kitchen and common room for the *kvutzah* who lives there. Each *kvutzah* makes decisions about how to handle meals, grocery shopping, activities, etc. Some do everything together, and some spend time and meals together once a week. Their members all work in projects that meet the kibbutz's mission. Most work in schools, youth centers, community programs and the like. The kibbutz also operates a small database company and a small baking company. All members pool their income, and major resources such as cars are shared. Decision-making is non-hierarchical and bureaucracy is almost non-existent. They have all committed to sending their children to the local public schools, which they invest in heavily as teachers, members of the PTA and volunteers. The kibbutz identifies as secular, but a rich cultural Jewish life flows throughout the community.



The group talking in one of Mishol's common rooms.

Communal, ethnic and religious diversity

We met with several organizations that were dedicated to communal service and youth development. In Beit Jean we met with a group of Druze leaders working to improve resources and opportunities within their community. The group is a nonprofit that engages in a number of different educational and service related projects and is helping to improve matriculation rates, social lives and economic success among Druze families living in the north of Israel. This group is not focused on sharing economic resources or living together, but working deliberately to improve the lives and futures of all individuals in their villages. Another wonderful community service organization we visited was *Achlit*, an organization created by Ethiopian immigrants who have flourished in Israeli society and wanted to give back to their community. The have built a working farm, mostly utilized by older Ethiopian immigrants, who had been missing the strong agricultural ties they had back in Ethiopia. The farm also serves as a place to provide education about Jewish Ethiopian culture.

Meeting with the engaging members of Tarbut.

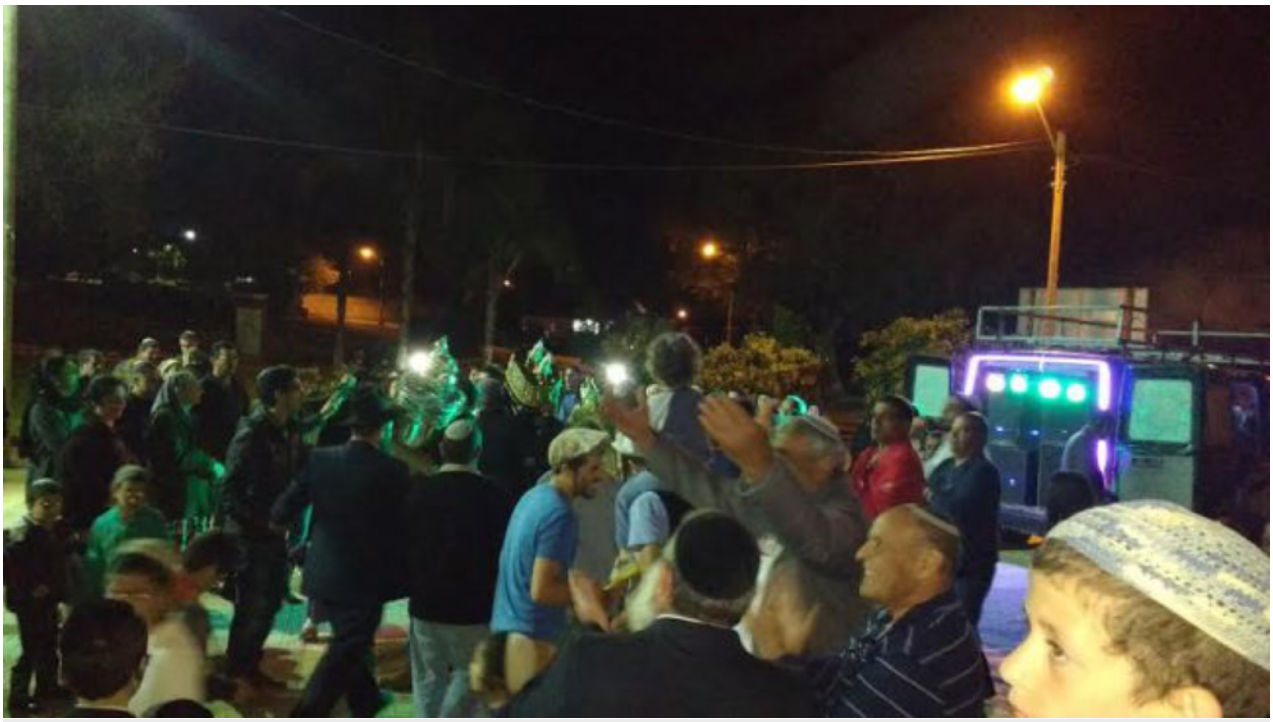
We spent a morning visiting the urban socialist community *Tarbut* (Hebrew for "culture"). This is yet another kind of kibbutz – one that is located in urban centers, shares economic and housing resources, and is completely dedicated to the development of arts and culture. It is a community of young artists, with groups in 15 different cities throughout Israel. They put on amazing festivals, community theater programs, pop up museums and more. They also maintain a significant focus on LGBT programming and inclusion. While this is already a large component of public life in Tel Aviv, Tarbut is helping spread this key concept throughout the country. They are now developing a youth movement to help support the future growth of the organization.

The farm at Achlit.

Visiting Modern Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox intentional communities was a very special part of this tour. A key aspect of the diversity of intentional communities in Israel is religious diversity – there are many secular kibbutzim, but also many that are deeply religious. For example, we visited *Elad*, an ultra-Orthodox community near Jerusalem. There we met with a rabbi who has built a community within the town, helping families, especially those who didn't grow up religious, attain social support as well as providing mentorship and other services to at-risk youth. We visited the headquarters of *Bnei Akiva*, a large Modern Orthodox youth movement active throughout Israel. We learned how they have created alumni efforts for young adults to live in groups and provide community service. Some of this has developed into young families moving together into communities to share their lives while providing service to others. A third example was in Lod, with *Kehillat Elyashiv*, which established itself in the city about ten years ago. Over the years they provided mutual support and community service, while each

member holds their own job and manages their own finances. They invested heavily in local schools and communal activities. They have attracted dozens more households to the area, and have been able to work from within to drastically improve the educational prospects for residents of the area.

Our group spent several days, including a Shabbat filled with celebration, at *Shuva*, a moshav near the Gaza border. Shuva was founded by Moroccan Jewish immigrants in the 1950s, but many families left over the years. In the last decade, a group of "eco-Hassidic" young Jews has joined the moshav, and the two groups are working to revitalize it together. The new residents have built a Waldorf-inspired preschool and lower elementary school, which we were able to visit. They are very serious about infusing ecological concepts and Jewish learning into every aspect of life.



Celebrating with the Torah at Shuva.

I was just blown away by my experience on this tour, and feel like I can learn so very much from them about what the Berkeley Moshav can be. First and foremost is the lesson that the community comes before the building. I have been thinking that Berkeley Moshav will exist when we open up our co-housing project and live there. But in reality, the community exists now and deserves nurturing and investment. I learned about the tenacity, dedication and flexibility required to actualize a project like all moving into the same building. I was impressed by the methods of working in small groups to make decisions, operating from a place of trust and respect, and putting the community before the individual. I also witnessed the extreme lengths to which many intentional communities are taking communal living – sharing jobs, income, cars, nearly everything. I realized that Berkeley Moshav does not need to be in that place to be successful. We just need to be who we are.

If you are interested in learning more about the tour and the communities we visited, please check out the Hazon blog: http://hazon.org/news-musings/hazon-blog/. Each day one of the members of the group (including me) wrote an entry about the happenings of the day.

This was an incredibly rich week. I look forward to learning more about the future successes of other members of the tour, witnessing the flourishing of the intentional communities movement in Israel, and applying lessons learned from this tour to the building of the Berkeley Moshav.

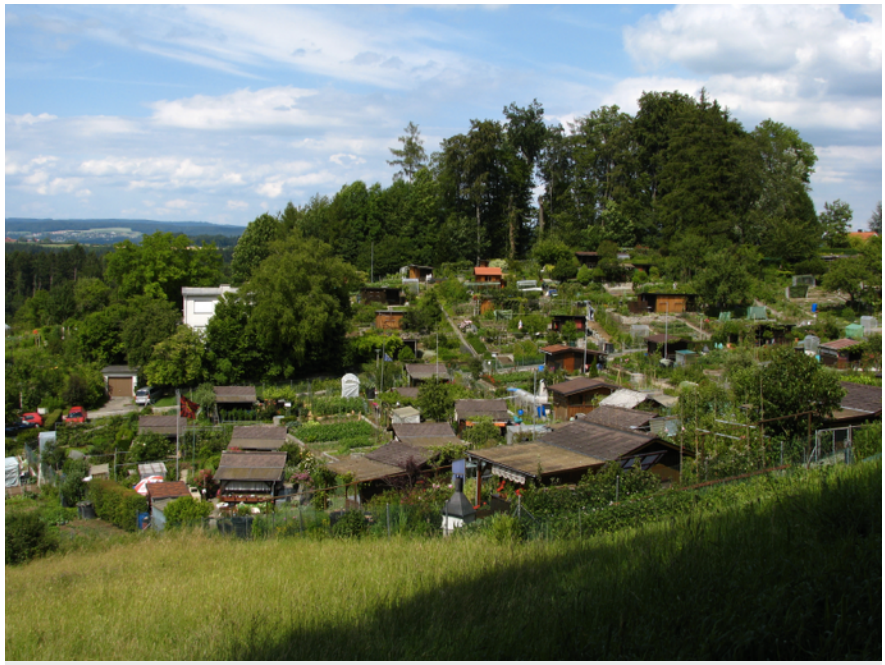
Communal Living, An Alternative To Real Estate Status Quo

More and more seek communal housing to answer soaring housing prices and the alienation of modern life.

Laura Weissmuller, *May 5th, Worldcrunch*. (First printed in Süddeutsche Zeitung)

MUNICH – For a communal housing project, there are bound to be endless discussions over commons areas before the foundation stone has even been laid. There are also financial questions such as "can I sell the apartment if I have to?" But the most pressing point is just how many people will be living more or less on top of you for a very long time.

To many people, this description of communal living sounds like a personal nightmare. But there are houses being developed in conjunction by multiple future owners who won't be given immediate occupancy by a property developer as is normally the case. The future owners also forgo the possibility of making a sizeable profit with their property later on.



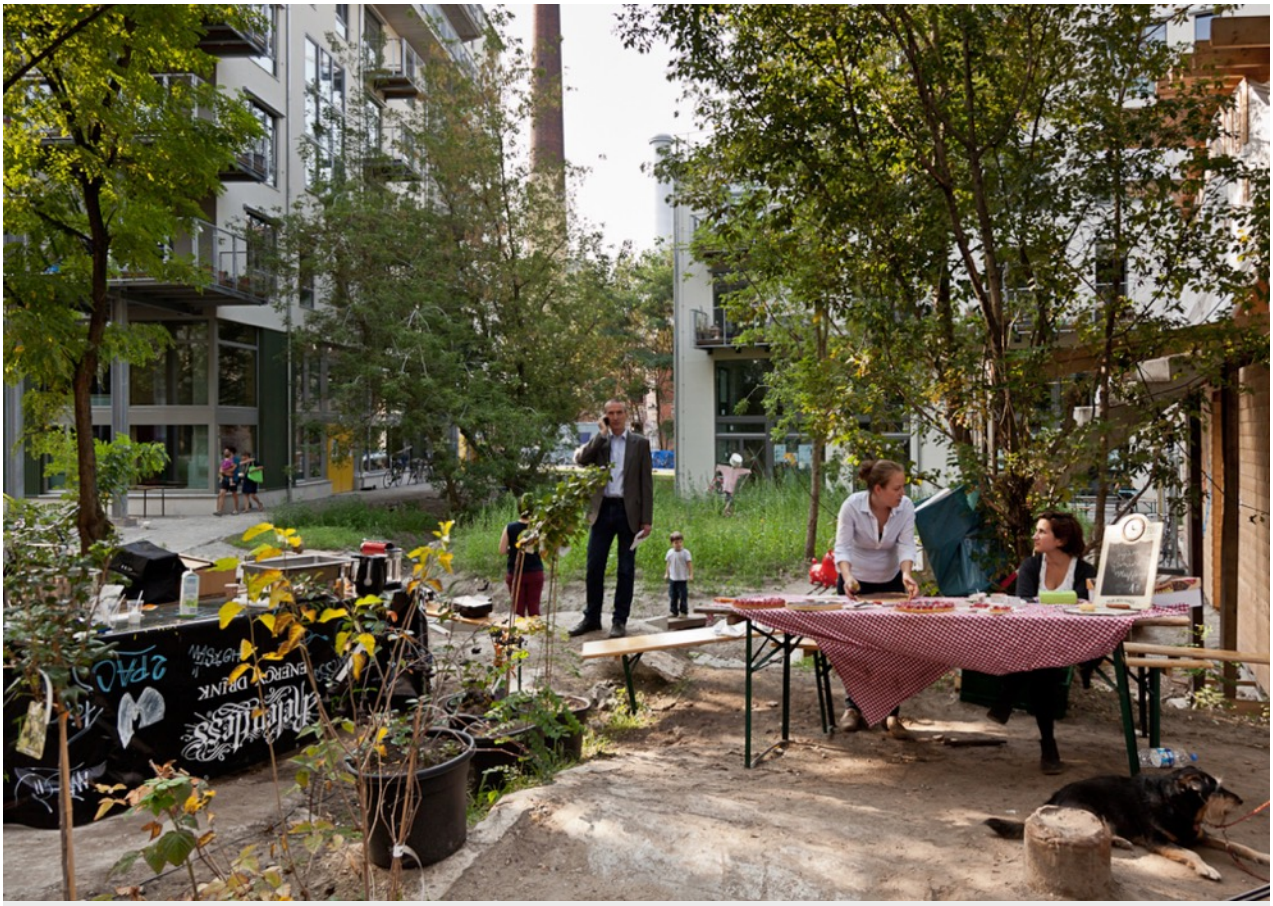
A typical community garden in Zurich (Switzerland) – Photo: Roland zh

Nevertheless, these kinds of projects have their own, growing fan base since rental prices in larger cities are rising inexorably. Many of these city properties are also very similar, and give you the feeling of having been mass-produced. But what many people hope is that living within a tightly knit community will close a gap they feel modern life has created.

"These new types of living projects become more and more important as normal family systems fall apart," says Hilde Strobl, curator of an exhibition at the Munich Museum of Architecture entitled, "Don't be afraid of participating!"

Her exhibition of 12 living projects demonstrates that the communal living movement transcends all strata of society and age groups. The films that accompany the exhibition, shot by Munich-based photographer Jörg Koopmann, help to illustrate the movement. They address such varying topics as the

choir rehearsal of the "Women Living," an all-female cooperative in Munich, or children playing in the inner courtyard of the "Kalkbreite" cooperative based in Zurich, which transformed a former tram depot into a building with living quarters, work spaces and leisure zones. What all of these films have in common is the interaction of and with the people who live in these novel settings.



An insight into the Spreefeld project in Berlin (Germany). Photo: Ute Zscharnt

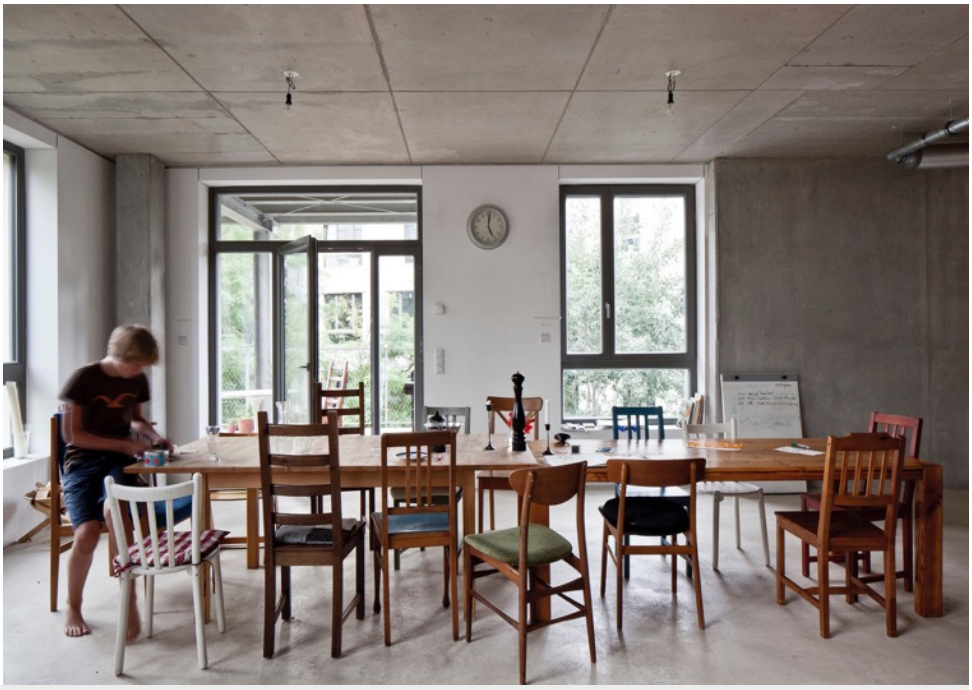
The occupants are the focus of these projects rather than the architects, which in itself is quite unusual, seeing as this is an exhibition of buildings in an architecture museum. It is clearly not about the ingenious design of a single architect and the most ecological facade or the most cleverly devised material concept. No, it's about the interaction of people who live in these buildings.

It's not written in stone that entrances and hallways have to be dead spaces in which people hope not to encounter anyone else. Nor is it imperative that the space between buildings, and which, by rights, belongs to the public, is given to the public. In fact, quite the opposite.

As costs soar

The exhibition demonstrates what a city can gain if it specifically and intentionally supports such cooperatives with financial aid and cheaper plots, as has been the case for decades in Vienna and Zurich. It's not just inhabitants who move into these buildings, but also public life itself. A good example is "Kalkbreite" in Zurich. The small workshops, shops and restaurants on the ground floor make this an attractive spot even for people who don't live there. And the large green spaces and inner courtyards make these projects hum with life, because they are also easily accessible to the general public. But conflict is nevertheless still a part of that way of life.

The inhabitants of the Berlin project "Spreefeld" weren't particularly thrilled with the fact that a growing number of homeless people began using the green areas. "This is a fight that has to be fought from the beginning to the very end," Strobl says.



Communal dining space, Spreefeld. Photo: Ute Zscharnt

So how much public life should be allowed in communal areas? How do you choose the inhabitants? And are they really willing to pay for something that, in the end, can be used by everyone? The development process is always stressful, and the exhibition addresses this. Every project is introduced not only with a Koopmann film but also with a kind of notice board where confusing words are written – things like flexi rooms, cluster apartments and speculation withdrawal, in addition to mind-boggling layouts that will baffle architecture novices.

All of this reflects the confusion that people who plan such a project will encounter along the way. But the exhibition aids the visitor with wall panels and a handy guide book that explain the meaning of all these communal terms and notions.

Flexi rooms, for example, are rooms "that, if necessary, can be rented for a short period of time," say for the aging and ailing mother or the pubescent teenager. Cluster apartments are those that surround a central, shared living room, something along the lines of a flat-share for adults. Speculation withdrawal means that "no individual profit can be made due to communal ownership."

It is precisely this relinquishment of profit that is essential for these projects to function. The basic concept of solidarity would no longer work if one person within the group attempted to sell their apartment to the highest bidder, given that it was a collective that developed the project. How would you even put a price tag on all these endless discussions? It should also be kept in mind that everyone paid for the communal areas, after all.

The exhibition only explores rental communities despite the fact that house building communities are becoming increasingly popular. These often produce architecturally stimulating and appealing houses, but these are in the end nothing more than privately owned terraced houses.

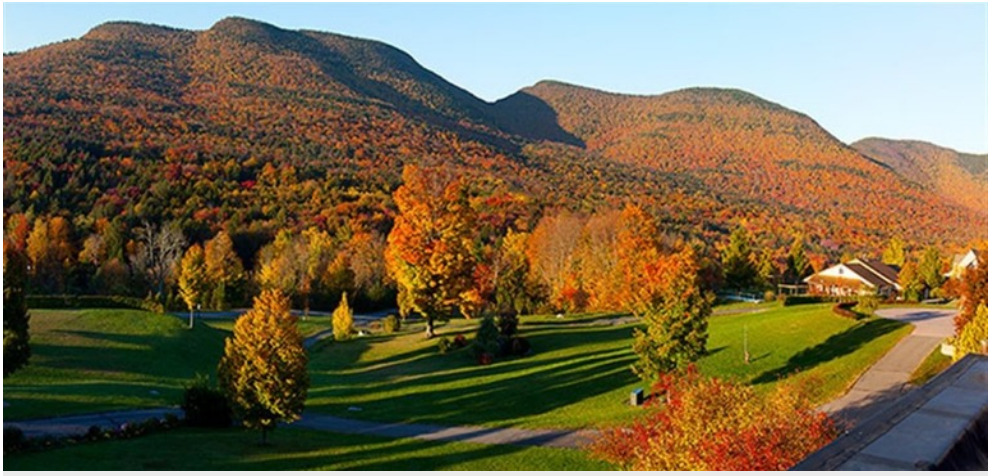
Above all, the exhibition highlights that the development of one of these buildings only really begins when it has been built and the inhabitants move in, as they grow older and their needs change. An investor wouldn't care, but a communal residency group does care. And cities should most definitely care too.

Back to Bruderhof: Platte Clove Community Close Up

Our outgoing editor writes about his family's Passover visit to the Bruderhof community of Platte Clove, NY.

***Anton Marks**, Rockville, MD*

MOST PROPERTIES come with a 'feature', an element that is aesthetically pleasing which sets it apart from other run-of-the-mill homes. It could be a fireplace, exposed brickwork, or a bar.



The beautiful landscape of the Bruderhof commune at Platte Clove, Elka Park, NY.

My apartment in Rockville is advertised as having a sunroom. In fact, this refers to the windows which make up the whole back (wall) of the lounge. The windows let in a significant amount of natural light, and being on the seventh floor, when I look out I feel like I am a part of what I see, and not separate and closed-in in my apartment.

So what is my view? A beautiful natural landscape? Not exactly. A big arterial road separates my apartment building from a large strip mall. You know the kind, there's a supermarket, a bank, umpteen clothing stores. Something that can be found all over America, and actually all the way along this major thoroughfare, for miles and miles in both directions.

I am in capitalist America, and it's almost impossible to miss it. From the fast food industry to wage labor, from begging on the streets to private health care. Kids on tablets, PCs and phones whilst adults amass their own inordinate amount of screen time.

I miss my kibbutz. A place where we value human relationships over material goods, where we live together with other people, sharing our lives, sharing in conversations. Being together.

This Passover holiday, where the Jewish people celebrates our liberation from slavery, I too sought liberation from the slavery of the American Dream of the 21st century.

My acquaintance with the Bruderhof goes back many years. As a keen enthusiast of the communal movement, it always struck me that the similarities between two of the largest and oldest movements – the Jewish kibbutzim and the Christian communities of the Bruderhof – both roughly 100 years old – far exceeded their differences.

And so it was that I arrived with my family to Platte Clove Community, to be welcomed by Becky and Ephraim Ben-Eliezer. Now I hadn't actually met them before, but having hosted Ephraim's brother, his sister-in-law and his father at my urban kibbutz in Israel, I felt that I already knew them. They have visited my kibbutz themselves, but it was when I was out of the country due to a family bereavement.

Upon arrival, we were immediately taken to a guest apartment which included everything we could possibly need for our stay, including tasty home-baked cookies, a welcome note and our names on a poster on the door.

Suffice it to say the next couple of days were spent listening, talking, meeting, seeing, experiencing, tasting, working, singing and visiting.

Communal meal at the Platte Clove Community.

Listening and talking: A considerable portion of our visit involved conversations with Ephraim and Becky – learning about their belief system and how it shapes their way of life. They were very open in explaining not just what they do, but also why they do it. There was also precious little sugar-coating, in that they were honest about the challenges they face. I sometimes found myself telling them how "we do it," and they listened intently and were never inclined to try and prove themselves "right." I thoroughly enjoyed these conversations, finding many similarities to my life choices, and yet it was also fascinating to explore the very significant differences in terms of motivations for living in community.

Meeting: We met different generations of the Platte Clove Community, and each and every person who we met was happy to stop what they were doing to introduce themselves and inquire about us. I felt a genuine sense that people, and the connection between them, is a high priority for the Bruderhof. I

guess this is one of the positive manifestations stemming from the minimal use of televisions, computers and phones in their communities.

Seeing: We were shown around the lovingly cared-for Platte Clove community: the main hall, the kindergarten, the cemetery, the factory and we even had a chance to take in an impressive nearby waterfall and lake in the beautiful Catskill Mountains.

Experiencing: Adi attended a community-wide meeting one night, and on another evening I participated in a community-wide work mobilization in the factory. Eating together with the community in the dining hall and spending time in the pre-school also added to the experience and gave us a good feel for the social fabric of the community.

Tasting: The food was wonderful, made from fresh produce – much of it grown by the Bruderhof themselves. From the homemade cookies mentioned earlier, to the homemade jams, milk and yoghurt, maple syrup and even burgers. The meals in both the dining hall and those cooked by Becky in one of the shared kitchens, were simply delicious – and deliciously simple.

Working together in the gardens.

Working: I spent some time working in their factory, which makes equipment for those with special needs. Not only do they run a very profitable business, which enables them to devote people and resources to extensive volunteer work, but the products they make are also congruous with their desire for service – to help those in society in need.

Singing: Each meal begins with a song, sung with gusto as a communal thank you for the upcoming repast. One evening we sat with the Ben-Eliezer family and a couple of young members of the community to sing Hebrew songs. A very emotional way to spend an evening when we are so far from home.

Visiting: We managed to visit two other Bruderhof communities in the area: Rondout and Maple Ridge. Rondout is an urban community, situated in the City of Kingston. A multi-generational commune, they run a pre-school for the kids of the community and of the neighbourhood. They also made us feel very welcome, and as someone who was until recently responsible for running the pre-school of my urban kibbutz, I found the visit inspiring and it reminded me very much of home.

And finally onto Maple Ridge, where we met Ephraim's mother, and our dear friends Martin and Burgel Johnson, who we have also had the pleasure of hosting in Israel.

In summary, we had a wonderful time with Ephraim and Becky and the rest of the people we met. I see them as real and close partners in the work we are all doing in trying to make this world a better place.

And what is the 'feature' that sets Platte Clove apart?

Community, of course.

Could Co-Living Be the Next Big Trend?

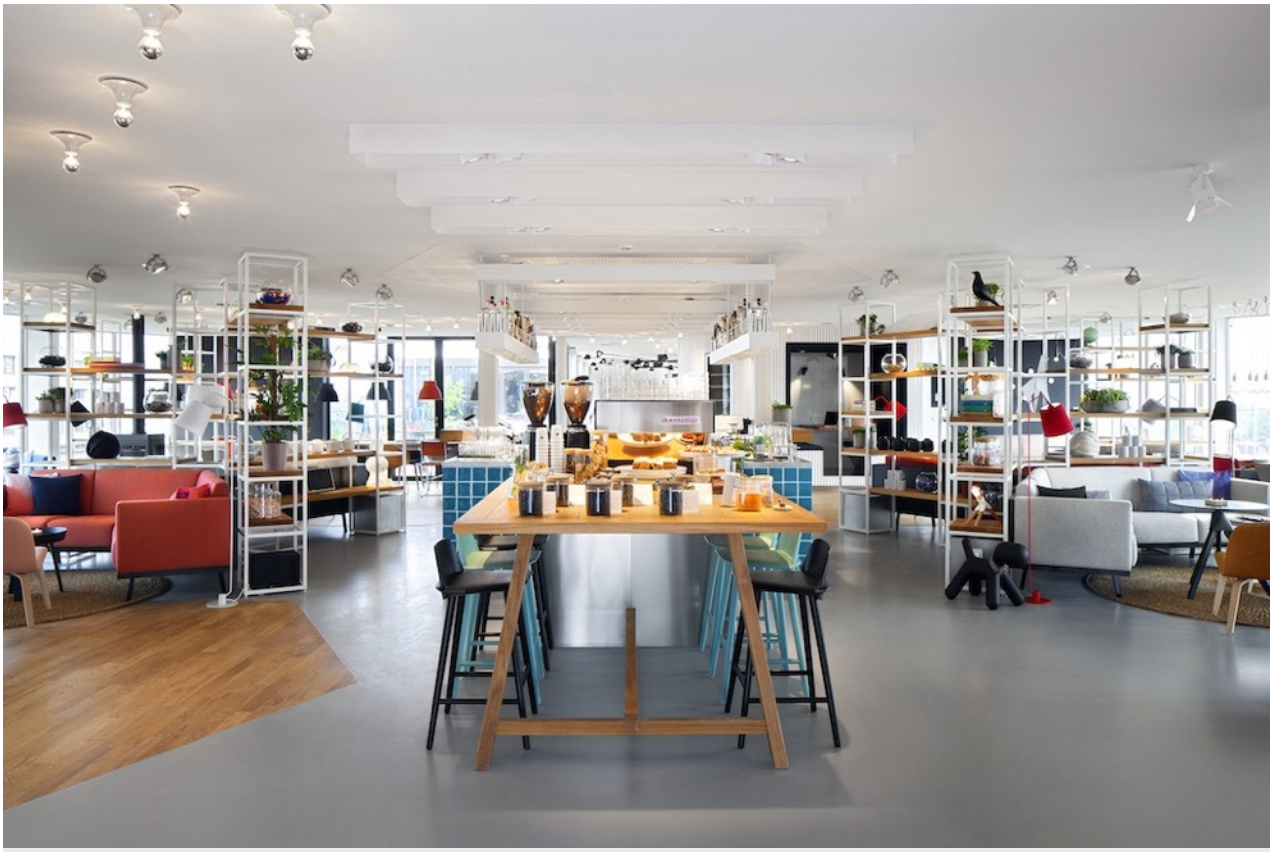
Recent years have seen a growing trend in the startup world: social enterprises focused on collectivism and "co-living." What, if at all, do these enterprises share with communes and intentional communities?

Deanna Ting, *June 6th, New York.*
(*This article appeared in full at*: www.skift.com)

THE CONCEPT of "co-living" has been described in many ways: Dorms for adults. The modern equivalent of the commune/kibbutz/boarding house. A solution for the urban housing crisis. A remedy for lonely Millennials seeking out true connections in this all-too digitally connected universe. A new live/work alternative for remote workers and global nomads.

At its most basic description, co-living is about community and developing connections among those who occupy that particular co-living space. Common elements include shared kitchens, living areas, and social programming. Essentially, it's group living, and it's being expressed in a multitude of variations, from purely residential constructs to much more nomadic ones. Ranging from ultra-luxury to basic budget, today's co-living spaces are, in many ways, blurring the lines between residential and transient, social and private, hotel and home share.

But however you choose to describe co-living, one thing is certain: It's becoming a bigger trend, or a movement. And it's likely only a matter of time before it starts to emerge in the hospitality



The shared living and kitchen area at Zoku Amsterdam. Photo: Zoku Amsterdam

sector. In some cases, the early signs are already here.

Here's a closer look at some emerging co-living startups and businesses and how this trend might impact the future of hospitality.

Wallet-Friendly Co-Living

At first glance, Los Angeles-based PodShare may not appear to be all that different from a hostel or pod hotel. Individual "pods," or custom-built bunk-style bed spaces with TVs, outlets, and a light, line the walls, and there's hardly any privacy – and that's all by design.

"You can't sleep with a closed door," says founder and CEO Elvina Beck. "We don't have that option and we don't want that option. The only doors are on the toilets and showers."

Why? Because doors would inhibit the creation of a diverse, social community, and that's something that isn't necessarily given as much emphasis in some of the other co-living spaces that may cater to a more homogenous group of individuals with shared or similar interests and backgrounds.

Beck said MTV's The Real World was an inspiration to her when developing the concept for PodShare. Beck says she "loved how everyone lived under one roof. Being different colors and shapes and sizes under one roof creates acceptance. You become more accepting of others."

Beck founded PodShare in 2012 as a response to Los Angeles' affordable housing crisis, and as a way for "digital nomads" to have a place to stay and/or work throughout the city via a "social network with physical addresses." Guests are "podestrians" and the mantra of "access not ownership" reigns supreme. Currently, PodShare has two locations in Los Angeles, with a third on the way.

Memberships come in two forms: a 12-hour pass and a 24-hour pass and Beck said they were designed for both local L.A. residents and

A look inside the PodShare communal space. Photo: PodShare

"travelers, transitioners, and temps" alike. She added that 87% of her guests are solo travelers and that PodShare appeals to them because it's a "money saver" and a "social experience."

Since opening, more than 5,000 podestrians have walked through PodShare's doors, and 17 even have tattoos of the PodShare logo. The nightly rate for a pod starts at $40 and it includes access to a co-working space. The average length of stay is three nights, but some guests have stayed for months.

If PodShare sounds a bit like a hostel-style model, you might not be mistaken. The principle of diversity and building a sense of community upon which Beck built PodShare, is shared by hostels, too.

"The hostel community is all about sharing, interaction, and understanding of cultures and breaking down of cultural differences between people who are staying there and the local community," said Aaron Chaffee, vice president of hostel development for Hostelling International USA. "We want to take steps toward a more tolerant world through awareness of different places and cultures."

Beck and her COO, Kera Package, are quick to point out the differences between a traditional hostel and PodShare, however. Package said, "The ecosystem is totally different." Whereas traditional hostels cater to "cheap young travel," PodShare "is for digital nomads" in the age range of 25 to 35 years old. As Beck described, "Bunks are for kids. Pods are for adults."

What about comparisons between PodShare and Airbnb? Beck says consistency is a big differentiator. "You can stay at two Airbnbs on the same block and have totally different experiences," she said. "That could be adventurous for some and it could be a learning curve for others. [PodShare] feels like a home but it's a kind of turnkey operation, a real business."

Blurring the Lines Between Work/Life Balance

Many of today's new co-living arrangements, PodShare included, have deep-rooted ties to the concept of co-working, and providing people with opportunities to work remotely from virtually anywhere around the world.

Sabbatical, which is opening its first location in Puerto Rico in August and plans to expand to Mexico City and Montenegro in 2017, is focused on appealing to remote workers by forming partnerships with companies that will encourage their employees who want to be able to work remotely from time to time and, well, take a sabbatical. "We want to be the provider of spaces that companies can trust to send their employees to," said Daniel Mason, co-founder and CEO.

For its pre-launch, Sabbatical worked with a variety of startups to send those companies' employees to San Juan to experience Sabbatical for themselves. Mason said the company is currently working with other companies' chief marketing officers, CEOs, and culture officers to develop more partnerships.

"We want to be welcoming to the majority of people," Mason said. "Not just people who are always working remotely but also people have a certain sense of wanderlust but also hold down a normal 9 to 6 job; we want to be an accessible bridge to those two worlds."

Minimum stays at Sabbatical are seven days, and the community programming will be centered around networking, professional education, and, of course, exploration. All rooms and bathrooms are private and the co-working spaces and fiber-optic Wi-Fi are a main focus. For non-members, a week stay costs $950; for members, it's $500, and membership applications are available online.

Co-Working & Co-Living Become One

On the other end of the spectrum is New York City-based Common, which isn't designed for tourists or travelers or occasional remote workers, and where minimum stays are 90 days.

"We do that to benefit the community," said founder and CEO Brad Hargreaves, who previously co-founded General Assembly, a global education company. "If there are a lot of people there short-term, it feels like a hotel and people are less willing to share space and less

willing to chat with each other on Slack [a messaging service] as well as in person. When you arrive, there's a real sense of community so you immediately feel plugged into a group of fellow New Yorkers. We want people living there to look at it as a home."

Pricing for Common starts at $1,340 a month and Hargreaves said the company received more than 5,000 applications for only 100 or so available, fully furnished spots in its three Brooklyn locations. Membership includes weekly cleaning services, high-speed Wi-Fi, shared kitchen and bathroom staples, utilities, co-working spaces, and free on-site laundry.

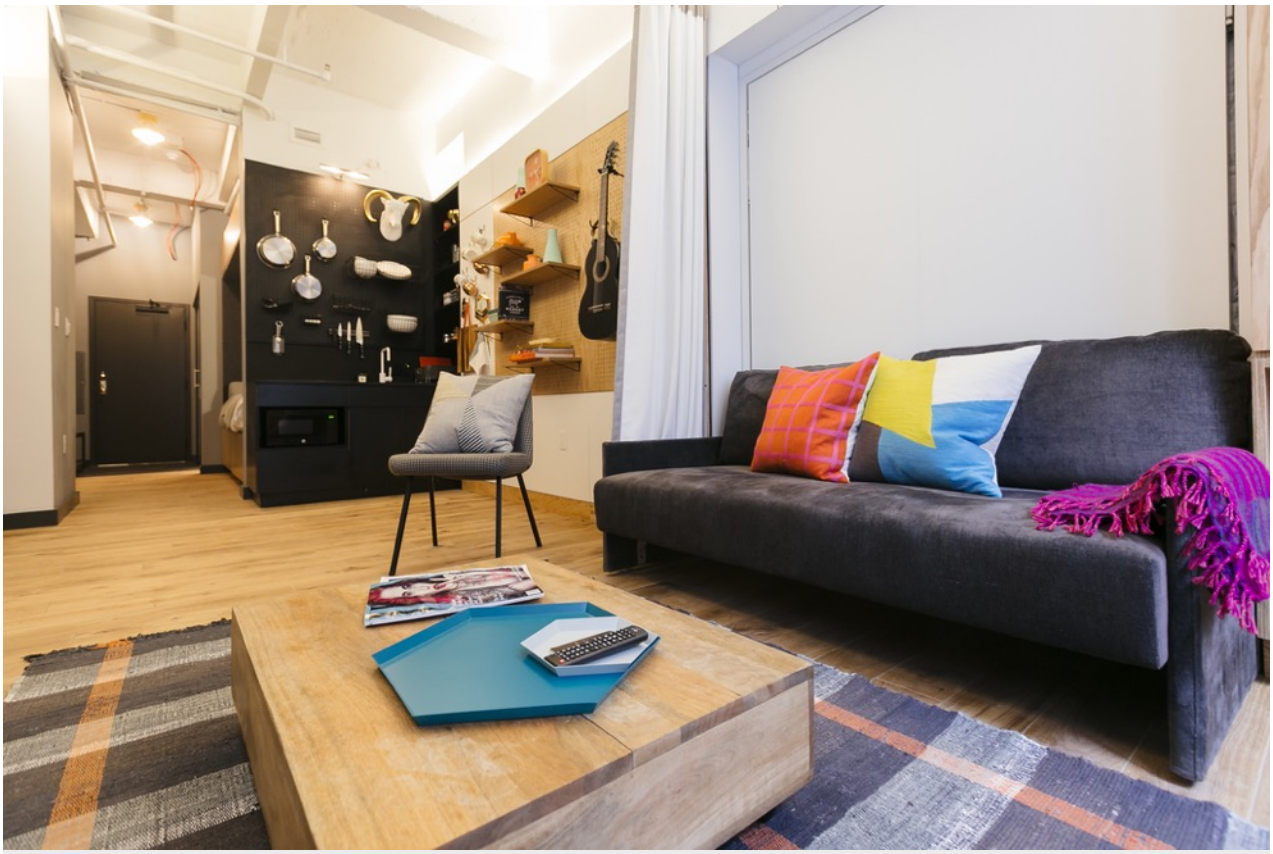
Upstate, in Syracuse, New York, Commonspace is following a somewhat similar residential model to Common, but two of its 21 rooms are being specifically set aside for nightly $100 rentals on Airbnb for travelers, especially business travelers who may be in town for a project.

Founder Troy Evans said that while most of the units will be for month-to-month leases, six-month, or year-long leases, the two Airbnb units will be an experiment. "We want to study this and see what people really want because there are a lot of people who travel who want to travel in a way that's more ingrained in the local environment. Will our members like the fact that there are new ideas and new people being brought in constantly? That's something we're going to try to learn from."

Unlike traditional accommodations for corporate travelers like extended stay hotels or serviced apartments, Evans said Commonspace isn't as formal, and it's not just a place to stay. "People want more social, curated experiences.

With Commonspace, you get more community engagement."

On the second floor of Commonspace is Syracuse CoWorks, a coworking space that Evans co-founded. Monthly memberships for Commonspace start at $800 a month, and the units, all of which have their own private



An apartment in WeLive's first location in Manhattan.

bathrooms, are located in the heart of downtown Syracuse in a refurbished building.

Like Commonspace, WeLive, the new co-living concept from the founders of WeWork, the popular co-working startup valued at an estimated $16 billion, is also seeing whether it wants to have a mix of both long-term residents and more transient travelers.

Co-founder Miguel McKelvey said, "We're working on It, and trying to figure out the right mix … we're excited about the possibility of bringing in new people to the community and seeing what they have to offer. If you have the same 10 people around the dinner table every night, it may expire in terms of how interesting that is. If there's a new person, getting that new perspective is a cool addition to the equation."

WeLive's Manhattan location occupies 20 floors of WeWork's Wall Street location, and the D.C-area location in Arlington, Virginia, is also connected to a current WeWork location. WeLive residents communicate with each other using the WeLive app, and all units are private. Monthly rates for the Manhattan location begin at $1,700 per person, and for the D.C. location, it's $1,200 a person.

Following our interview with McKelvey, WeLive added short-term stays for its newest Wall Street location. Nightly rates range from $235 to $495 per night.

The beauty of WeLive, says McKelvey, is that it facilitates "real-life connections." "You don't have to go on social media, you don't have to plan all of your interactions. Things happen spontaneously, and they evolve from there."

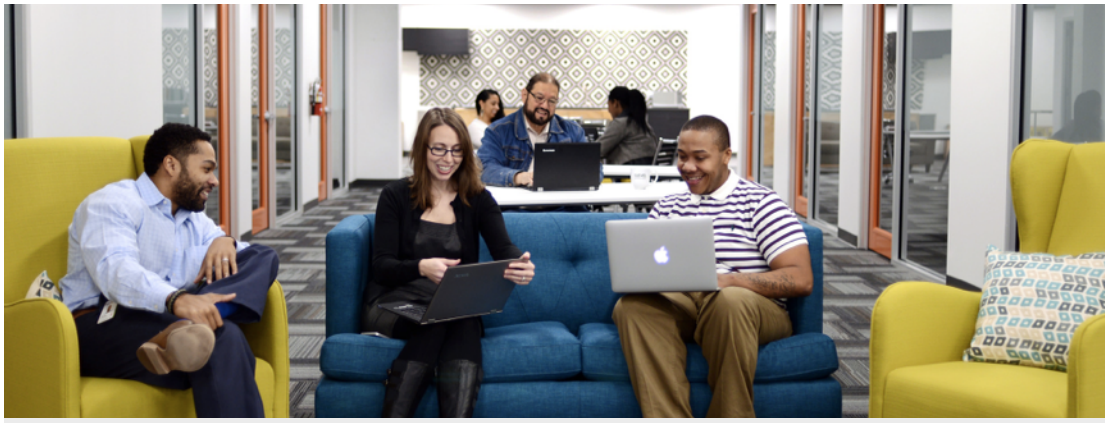
Can Co-Living Work?

Most of the aforementioned co-living spaces are very new and have opened within the past few months or within the past few weeks, with the exception of PodShare, which turns four this year. There are some doubts as to whether this type of residential/temporary housing/accommodation is really sustainable, and for good reason.

Not all co-living experiments have been able to succeed, financially. Silicon Valley's Campus Coliving, which was founded by Tom Currier, a former Peter Thiel fellow (yes, that Peter Thiel, the cofounder of PayPal and sworn enemy of Gawker) in 2013.

Campus closed in 2015 because, as Currier wrote, "Despite continued attempts to alter the company's current business model and explore alternative ones, we were unable to make Campus into an economically viable business."

Time will tell if these businesses will be able to thrive, but perhaps, one way for them to become "economically viable businesses" is to look toward traditional hospitality.



Co-working and co-living are gaining steam among millennials. Photo: Level Office

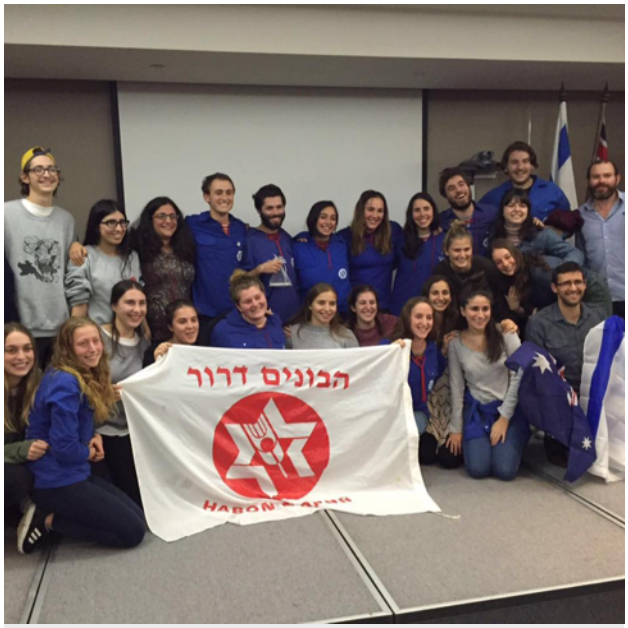
An Urban Renewal of the Pioneering Dream

One of Israel's newest immigrants writes about his journey from Australia to join a network of urban communes and kibbutzim working towards social justice and equality.

***Rapha Tamir**, June 1st, Haifa.*

EARLIER THIS MONTH, in a Jewish community centre in Melbourne, Australia, an *aliyah* ceremony was held. This annual event recognises the Jewish Australians seeking to relocate their lives to Israel. Year after year the ceremony has seen a slow trickle of Jewish Australians moving to Israel, but this time brought many fresh young faces and a positive energy. Among the soon-to-be emigrants were six members of the Socialist-Zionist youth movement Habonim Dror. A large crowd of Habonim Dror movement leaders came to the ceremony to send their friends off.

These young twenty-somethings are not uprooting themselves from their lives and families in Australia simply to resituate themselves geographically in Israel. The group is choosing to join a community of urban communes under the banner of Dror Israel.



Young faces dominated at 2016 *aliyah* ceremony.

Speaking at the ceremony were two members of the group of young emigrants, Ellie Bouhadana and Adiel Coheny:

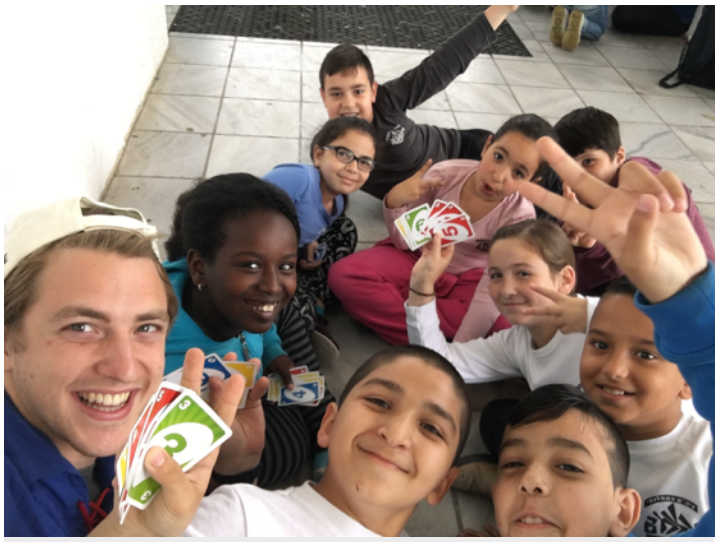
"For us to move to Israel is not only to say that we want to be members of the country, but to shape and drive its future."

The six *olim* (this is the Hebrew term for Jews who return to Israel) will be greeted by a larger core group when they arrive in late June. Altogether, the group numbers 13 members: two North Americans and 11 Australians, myself included. All members of the group are between 22 and 25 years old.

Together we have decided that we do not want to take the path that many of our peers choose to take, which involves completing academic studies, finding a well-paid job, settling down in Australian or American bourgeois society only to perpetuate the nuclear family model. We grew up in a youth movement that placed the *equality of human value* and *shituf* (collectivism) as its central pillars – and we are choosing to base our lives around those ideals, even as we grow beyond the youth movement that we are (were) a part of.

Breathing new life into the pioneering spirit

In the spirit of the old kibbutz, the adult movement Dror Israel, which I have been a part of since I settled in Israel in January of this year, is attempting to affect and shape the character of Israeli society. Inspired by the kibbutz enterprise of the 20th century, and dismayed by the retreat of its values from the forefront of 21st century Israel, the urban kibbutz revival is working to shift the direction of Israeli society away from the dominant principles of greed, racism, inequality and competition, which as I see it, haunt the horizon of the Jewish state of 2016.



Tamir working with local youth in Kiryat Yam.

Our group is striving to live according to the values we hold so dear. We are working to develop a collective economic framework that meets each and every member's needs irrespective of their financial past. We are reaching out to each other as life partners in a way that transcends the paradigm of normative couplehood. We want to make shared life choices that positively impact the society we have joined, the wider Jewish people, and the world.

Left behind by capitalism

Since arriving in Israel, I have been working in a branch of the youth movement *HaNoar HaOved VeHaLomed* (Working and Studying Youth) in Kiryat Yam, a few kilometres north of Haifa. Although my Hebrew is not perfect, and I was not born here, I am coming to learn the lived experience of Israeli kids.

Working with 14 and 15 year olds from the neighbourhood has taught me about the reality of what it is like to grow up on the periphery of Israeli society. Economically marginalised families – many of whom are themselves *olim* from Russia and Ethiopia – grow up out of touch with the rest of society. Many do not have access to the economic opportunities that privileged, establishment Israel has to offer. They do not feel connected to the people around them, as their world has taught them that making it, succeeding, means making enough money to leave their communities, leave the neighbourhood, even leave the country.

Though these children are left out of its supposed rewards, the capitalist system's results are painfully evident in their lives. They are driven by competition. Appearances are of paramount importance. *Who has the best haircut? Who has the newest bike? Who has the best shoes? Who lives in the nice part of town?* These are the questions faced daily by the teenagers I work with. Sadly, the questions they face aged 15 do not drastically change as they grow older.

Informally educating the way

Like myself, the new group members joining us in June will continue to work with young Israelis and Jewish youth from around the world as informal educators.

We have deliberately chosen to engage in youth movement education, as it is clear to us that the needs of Israeli society will be best addressed by values-based education. I want to show the teenagers I educate that there are more important things in the world than appearances and social status. I want them to feel connected to the place they live in and feel responsibility for its future. I want them to see their friends not as people to triumph over, but partners to work

with. I want them to feel like their society values them. I want them to be able to believe in a future that is greater than the reality they were born into.

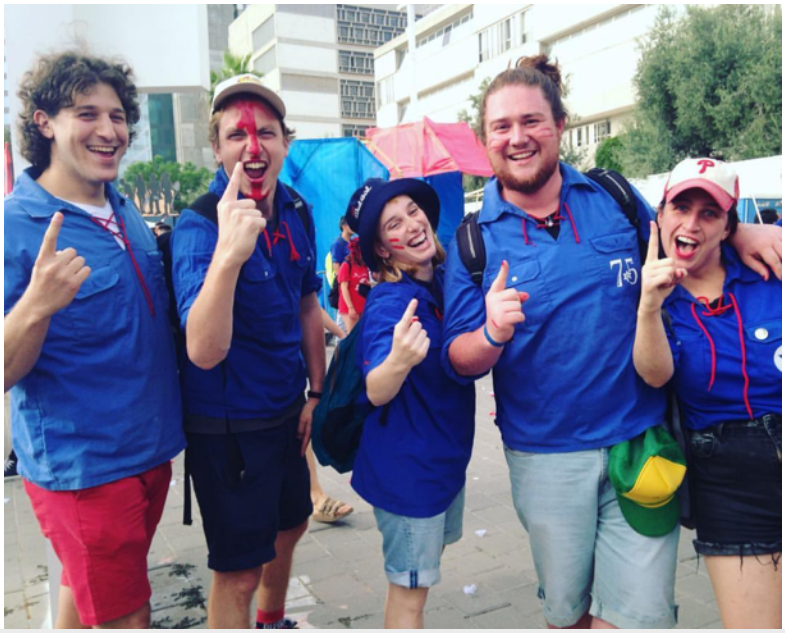
Through values-based educational activities and group building experiences, the branch of HaNoar HaOved VeHalomed has a profound impact on the lives of these young people. We place before them a different vision of Israeli society, one that is based on equality, peace and social solidarity. We who work at the branch spend our days encouraging the youth who come there to be our partners in helping to build it.

Pioneering is still alive

Speaking to the Jewish community back in Australia, Ellie Bouhadana and Adiel Coheny reminded their friends and community-members not to forget that pioneering exists "not only in the orchards of the Galilee, but in the schools of Haifa. Don't forget that it exists not only in 1926, but also in 2016."

We do not want to be a blip, or a random spike, in the numbers of Habonim Dror members or Australian Jews choosing to live this intentional shared way of life in Israel. Some Habonim Dror *olim* came to Israel in the years preceding us. They paved the way for this collective way of life to be a realistic choice. We want there to be many more who follow us.

For each of us, moving to Israel to build our lives has been a complex and difficult decision to make. It has been a choice to live in a new society, one that we were not born into, away from our parents, families, friends and familiar communities. The difficulties are not only geographical but social – we are choosing to live in a way that is different from that chosen by our families and friends. Many of the people we love in our lives do not understand the choices we are making or why we are making them. It is, however, exciting and immensely supportive to be welcomed into a vibrant community of young people making similar life choices, who are placing the same values at the centre of their lives. We are motivated to work together with our partners here in Israel to build a country that is just, peaceful and a shining light of morality. We have a long road ahead of us.



Tamir (second from left), with group mates at May Day rally, Tel Aviv.

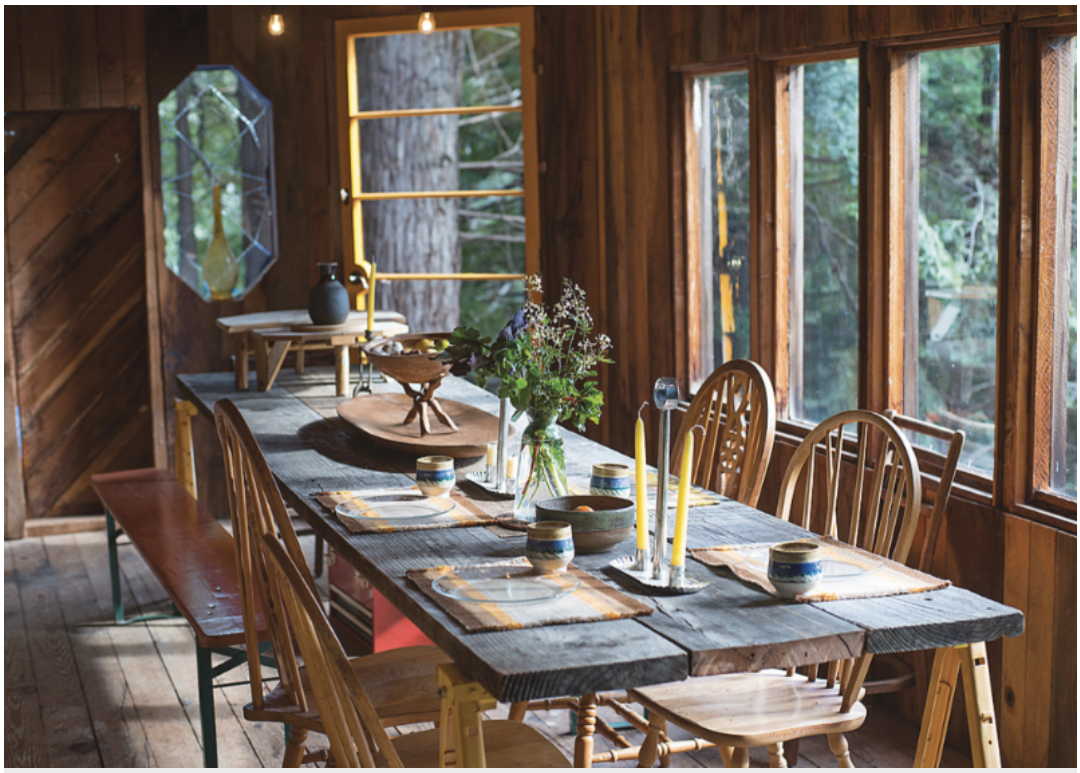
Communal Living, the 21st-Century Way

Los Angeles artist Fritz Haeg is using his art to restore life to a long-abandoned Californian commune.

***Tom Vanderbilt**, March 10. New York Times.*

TWO YEARS AGO, the Los Angeles artist Fritz Haeg, perhaps best known for his 2005 Edible Estates project – which exhorted people to replace their front lawns with kitchen gardens – went looking for land of his own. For the past decade, he'd been living on the road, doing urban art projects in an itinerant way. Now, he felt the dialectical tug of the opposite: "A settled, rural situation, where I could live full-time with a community of people."

He did not want raw land; rather, a place with "an interesting history." A realtor called about a 35-acre parcel in Mendocino County, and "as soon as I saw the pictures and read the description," Haeg tells me, "it was like a revelation: This is it." Salmon Creek Farm is a rugged, mostly sloping expanse shrouded in second-growth redwood forest in the town of Albion; it was also a commune in the early '70s. The property was still owned by its original members, even though it had ceased being a functioning community in the late 1980s. Haeg had come looking for land, and found a legacy instead.



The dining room at Dawn Cabin. Photo: Andres Gonzales.

We are sitting in the Orchard Cabin (named for the abutting grove of apple trees), one of the property's eight "on the grid" structures, and Haeg is spooning stewed apples, made from a recent harvest, into a bowl. Hard cider from those same apples ferments in a huge milky jug under the kitchen table. A wood fire hisses, pour-over coffee drips. His dog, Ivy, a 17-year-old Australian shepherd, lies at his feet. The walls of the cabin are lined with canned fruit and an eclectic range of books, from ones on Modernist architecture to "Mushrooms Demystified" and "Cider," co-written (who knew?) by Annie Proulx. Outside, the only sound is the Pacific Ocean, two miles away, deep, raspy and constant. Haeg calls the landscape "enchanted," and I am inclined to agree.

The view toward Orchard Cabin. Photo: Andres Gonzalez

Haeg, who has been here for 15 months, has mostly been trying to bring the place, with its range of idiosyncratic cabins in various states of disrepair and its homespun yet surprisingly effective water and power infrastructure – one original communard had been an engineer – up to some level of rustic comfort. All of this preparation is "setting the stage" for his latest work, a revived Salmon Creek Farm. He has no illusions of recreating the original commune. "That was life," he says. "This is also an art project." Haeg imagines something between an arts colony and a gathering place, somewhere to come when you want "to take a step back from contemporary society."

IT MIGHT BE EASY to dismiss Haeg's commune as an artist's folly, some "cabin porn" exercise fit for Instagram consumption, had his entire career not signposted him toward Salmon Creek. There was his 2001 Sundown Salon, a monthly gathering (organized around themes that ran from "knitting" to "political ennui") which operated for five years at his William King-designed hilltop geodesic domestead in Los Angeles; and 2012's "Domestic Integrities" at the Walker Art Center. With its participatory fruit

Haeg in a cabin at Salmon Creek Farm, California. Photo: Andres Gonzales

canning, wild food foraging and huge, hand-knit circular rugs made from recycled textiles – the center of one occupied the cabin in which I was staying – that piece hadn't been dissimilar to the activities of the young communards.

Haeg's vision is to bring together artists whose work, he says, ''goes beyond conventional studio practice,'' and who, rather, are ''responding to wilderness and the basics of daily life.'' There is a sense, as with the original commune, of a kind of withdrawal – from the cities, from the overheated, rigorously professionalized art market – if only in the name of a deeper engagement. Salmon Creek: the land, the cabins, the whole temporarily communal aspect, is at once muse, studio and exhibition space. It's not hard to imagine environmental sculptors like Andy Goldsworthy, Patrick Dougherty or David Nash having a field (and stream) day here. Or artists like Andrea Zittel (a friend of Haeg's), who is vaguely affiliated with the ''social practice'' movement, and whose High Desert Test Site near Joshua Tree National Park is also a place where daily life becomes a ''site of exploration.''

And so Haeg has invited a young Los Angeles artist named James Herman to turn a huge, burned-out stump of a redwood into an outdoor shower. The San Diego-based artist Keenan Hartsen, meanwhile, is building a site-specific xylophone for the sauna so that, as Haeg describes it, ''you can play the structure.'' And a Point Reyes-based sculptor, woodworker and abalone diver named Ido Yoshimoto has been fashioning furniture from the abundant fallen tree matter. Others will work on the future dining hall, currently staked out with pink ribbon in a clearing next to the meadow.

One spiritual antecedent might be Food, Gordon Matta-Clark's influential SoHo restaurant-as-performance-piece, which opened in 1971, the same year as Salmon Creek. Like Matta-Clark, Haeg wants to essentially curate people, to see what happens when you put them together in a new space. In the beginning, at least, this was an extended group of his artist friends. Now, though, he's beginning to accept letters of interest from students and recent graduates. They will come two or three at a time and propose individual projects. There are no fixed plans as to how long they will stay or their specific chores – beyond helping out with the cooking and the running of the place – but guests in general, he says, should remain at the site at least a week. Any shorter, he says, ''is disruptive for whoever the community is.''

During my visit, the cast included Niki Ford, a former line cook at Chez Panisse who is working with Haeg on a Salmon Creek Farm cookbook; Alex Tieghi-Walker, an itinerant Londoner who edits the Anonymous Sex Journal; Chelsea Wills and Devon Sampson, a pair of scientist-artists from Geyserville who were compiling a field guide to the local flora and fauna; and Rachael Hawkins, who perhaps best fit the spirit of the original commune. A 40-year-old wardrobe stylist who most recently lived in L.A., she had, two years before, decamped for a vagabond life. Here, she was sewing, canning, excavating the history of the place, but come spring, she told me, she was gearing up for an ''all punks boat float,'' a ragtag expedition of homemade rafts set to travel down the Mississippi River.

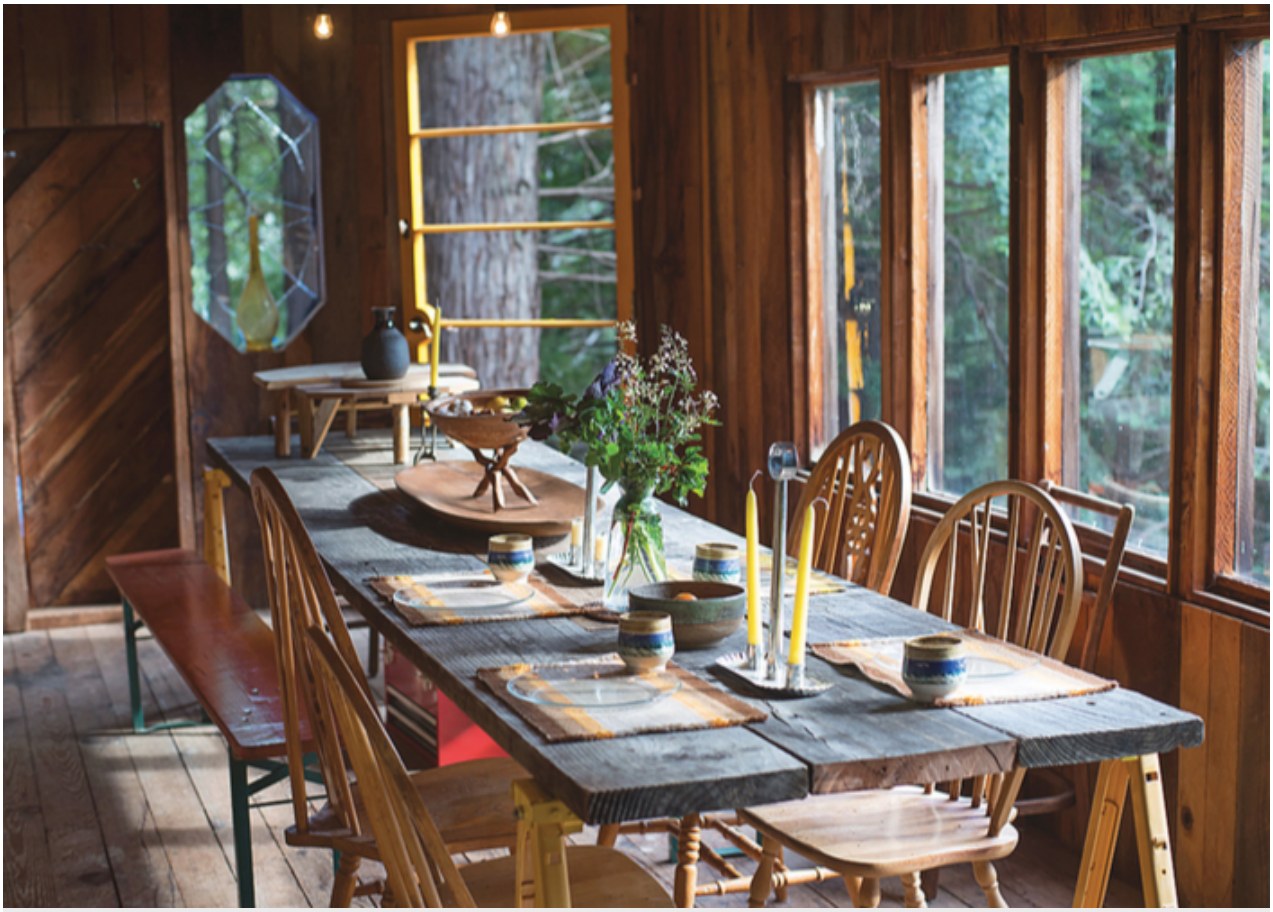
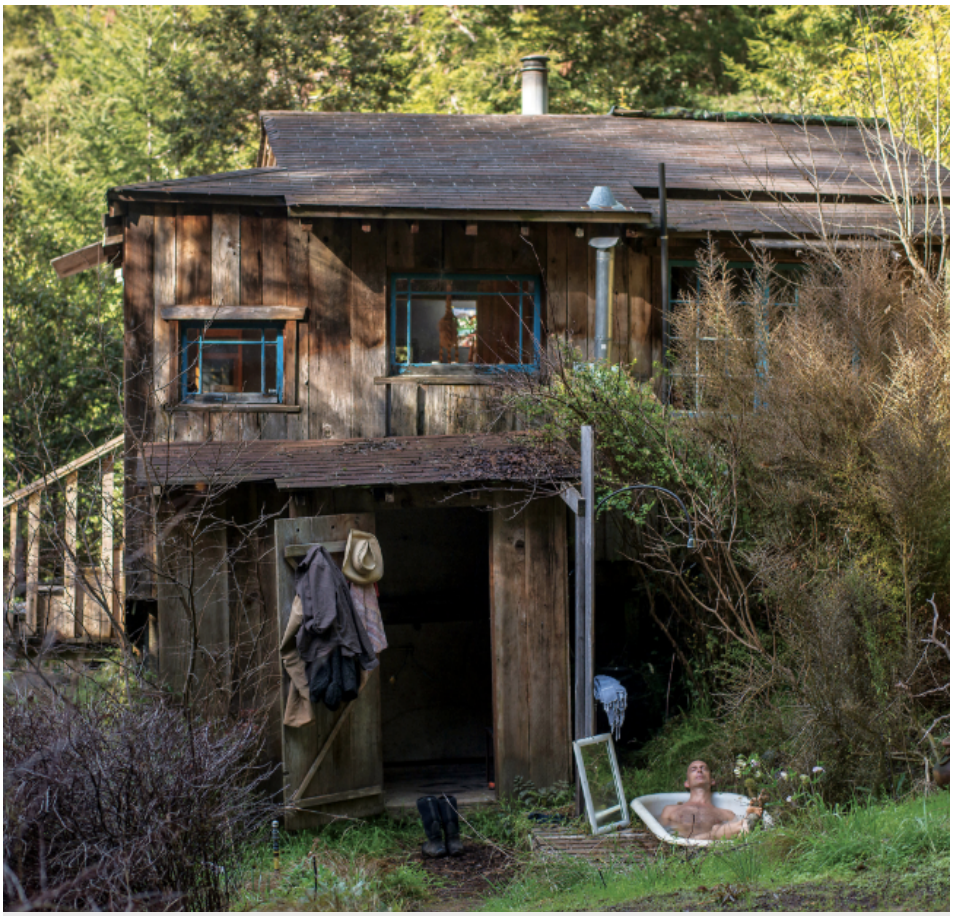


Photo: Andres Gonzales

COMMUNES EXIST all over the world, but it is in the U.S., with its bountiful land, fluid personal identities and DNA of self-reinvention and social experimentation, where the idea appears most potent. They seem of the '60s, but this could just as easily mean the 1860s; history is rife with examples of seekers, united by some thunderous religion or utopian ideology, pining for a fresh start in some new Eden. There are scores of so-called intentional communities in America today; some of them are early 1970s holdovers with reburgeoning populations. Even the co-working spaces that have blossomed in cities speak to the idea of finding community amidst the always-connected-yet-isolated vagaries of free-agent economic life. In a shared space, people engage differently. Or as Haeg puts it, ''When people are here, they are really here.''

Last December, to celebrate the one-year birthday of the newly revived Salmon Creek, Haeg invited a group of the original communards for a potluck Sunday lunch in the cabin he had christened ''Dawn,'' after the woman who built it. Dawn Hofberg is a petite, youthful-looking sexagenarian, who gave birth to



Haeg in an outdoor tub at Cedar Cabin. Photo: Andres Gonzales

two children in this cabin, and with whom I chatted about recent New Yorker articles and long-ago peyote circles.

She and the others had all come in their early 20s, from lives in quiet East Coast suburbs and California college towns, to this place that Robert Greenway, a psychology professor, had purchased with his companion River. It was not ''dropping out,'' argued River, in her 1974 book ''Dwelling,'' but an active search for ''a new pattern of - living'' that does not ''rip off the planet or any of her inhabitants.'' Her son, Salmon, built his own cabin here at age 13.

In the 1960s and 1970s, this area north of San Francisco had the country's densest concentration of communes, both because of the proximity to countercultural hubs and its mild climate. Mendocino County became pop-cultural shorthand for a longhair Shangri-La, while the area near Salmon Creek was so thick with communes it was half-seriously referred to as ''Albion nation.'' Over time, people slowly moved away, drifting into more conventional living arrangements. Yet the impulse has not entirely vanished; in addition to Haeg's project, a new ''Radical Faerie'' commune named Groundswell has opened nearby, in a former Catholic boys camp.

Later that evening, we sit in Haeg's cabin, listening to the local station KZYX – the only one that comes in, and for Haeg, who grew up in a Midwestern radio family, the virtual town square knitting together the dispersed community. With its placidly voiced surf reports and announcements of local lost and found pets, it is at a soothing oneness with the snapping fire and Ivy curled at our feet. Haeg mentions the Scandinavian propensity for this kind of coziness, exemplified in abstruse Danish concepts like hygge. In his stark modern cabin he says, ''I was always jealous of the coziness of other people's houses.'' Not any longer.

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C.A.L.L.

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