

# THE LISTENING FIELD



The Listening Field is a land-based art and documentary project offering a collective space of care for people impacted by sexual abuse, including those whose voices were suppressed by power, privilege, or institutional silence. The work is grounded in listening—not as passivity, but as a living, relational act

## **The Regenerative Process**

Releasing what can no longer be carried

People impacted by sexual abuse are invited to participate through a voluntary act of release. Participants may submit a message—words they no longer wish to hold. These offerings are received with care and placed, through reverence and prayer, onto handmade, biodegradable paper embedded with sunflower seeds. Each seed is planted by hand in a rural Wisconsin field.

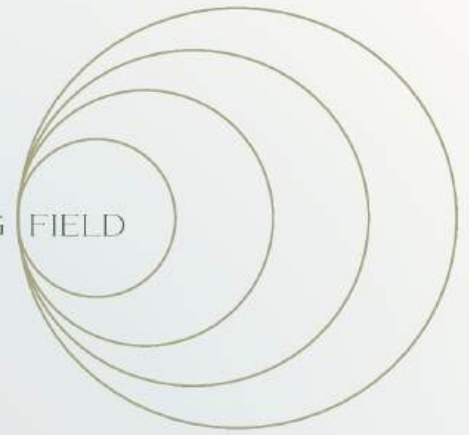
As the sunflowers grow, their roots work beneath the surface, restoring and stabilizing what has been depleted. In this way, the land becomes a site of quiet attention and regeneration. The field does not ask for stories. It does not require explanation. It listens, receives what has been carried, and allows time and earth to participate in its care.



## Bringing forward what wishes to live

Participants are also invited to share a message of light—words, intentions, or qualities they wish to bring forward into the world. These messages are generated as a unique sound signature that is added to the collective song. The sounds are gently projected into the field through a large megaphone structure once per day. Live sound sessions will also be performed by volunteer musicians and sound healers and open for guests and streamed live.

With each release and offering to the land from each participant, a healing tone signature is added to the collective healing song. This instrumental healing song, composed in conjunction with a sound healer, brings regeneration through sound for both the land and the participants. The field receives both what is released and what is offered forward—through a slow quiet reflective process, revealing the subtle power of the collective consciousness, offering an alternative pathway to healing and change—one that stands in contrast to the urgency, aggression, and extraction that often define contemporary culture.



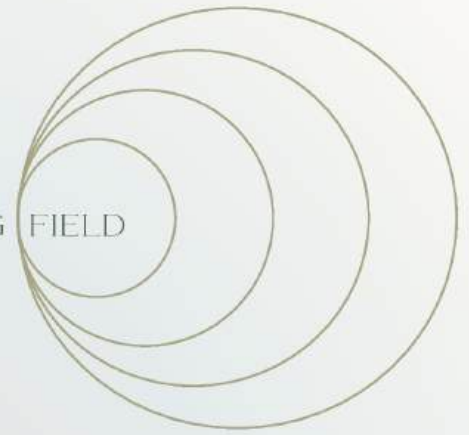
## Sound and Field

There will be four cycles that can be observed in the field and project. The first is the planting of the seeds, the second the budding process, and the third cycle is the blooming of the flowers. These first three cycles will be the only cycles where there is active engagement between us and the land. The last cycle will be that of returning to the earth as the sunflowers prepare for winter. During each cycle the sound utilized will be different in order to explore how sound can support land and plant regeneration during different life cycles.

The blooming cycle is where people will be able to come visit the land and flowers. The sunflowers will be planted on an approximately two acre field with a circular labyrinth in the middle allowing individuals to enter the field and walk on a sound journey within. Speakers will be set up along this path in the field as well as at the end where they will arrive at the megaphone.

During the blooming cycle a virtual representation of the sunflower field will be presented on the Manas Collective's website so that people from all places in the world may also engage with this prayer. This virtual sunflower field will utilize realtime footage in an artistic representation of the sunflowers.





## The Film and documenting Process

As the installation unfolds, the documentation follows a slow, contemplative approach. The film serves as a witness—attending to the prayers, the planting, the field itself, and its interactions with weather and wildlife. Through time-lapse photography and the recording of the sound-healing sounds and their performance in the field, the work traces the rhythms of care as they emerge over time.

The film becomes an archive of attention rather than a record of harm. It does not argue or confront; it observes. Through the presence of many participants, the project offers a visible expression of collective care—bringing people into relation rather than division, and making space for another way of responding to what has been carried.

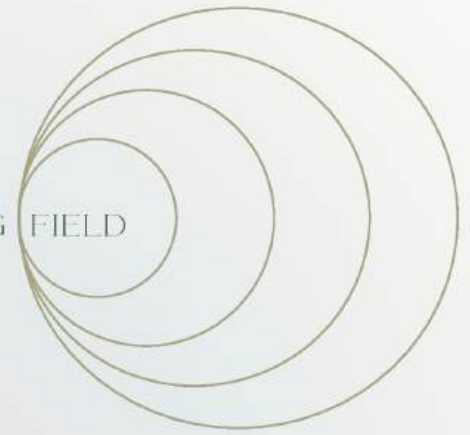
At a time when public discourse often depends on exposure, urgency, and polarization, The Listening Field offers a counter-gesture: an act of holding what has been carried by so many people, without demanding that it be named or performed. It affirms the human capacity for slow, restorative healing—unfolding through presence rather than force.

Listening here is not silence.

It is presence.

It is the decision to remain with what exists, without compelling it to prove itself or transform on command.

The work centers the dignity of those who have learned to carry experience inward. It honors ways of knowing that are patient, embodied, and often unseen. Like the land itself, the process unfolds slowly, allowing meaning to surface without extraction.



## The Seed

This project was inspired by the difficult healing journey our family went through after Mahala was assaulted while studying at the University.

In the months before speaking her truth in court, she prepared her mind and spirit to bring clarity and strength. Many of these lessons came from teachers with Indigenous roots, guiding her to reconnect with the land.

One important practice was releasing to the earth what she no longer needed to carry. She explained to her mother, who was struggling with anger and sorrow, that those emotions could not shape what came next. She was not releasing them for anyone else—she was returning them to the earth so they could decompose and give way to new growth.

The installation expands this private act into a collective one—inviting others to return what has been heavy, without spectacle or explanation, and to bring forward what wishes to live.

*Mahala's experience — of releasing what could no longer be carried and trusting the earth to hold it — became the seed of The Listening Field.*



## The Manas Collective

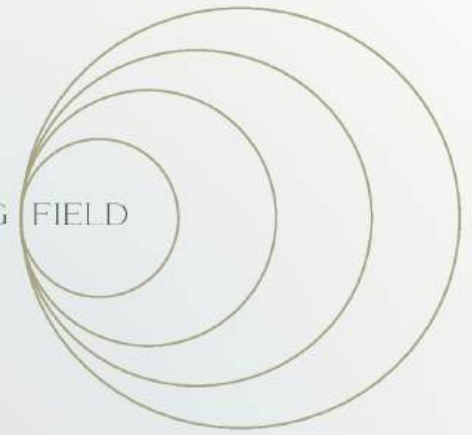
**Mahala Berry**, Founder of the Manas Collective, a non-profit organization created to support healing through art and nature. Mahala Berry is a bilingual speech-language pathologist and artist whose work bridges science, spirit, and art. Her career has taken her across the globe—from U.S. schools and military clinics in Germany to public hospitals in Guatemala—to learning from elders and healers in the New Mexico, Philippines, Nepal, Guatemala, and the Yucatan in Mexico.

**Kelly Gatzke-Jelle**, Mother, Artist, and Technologist, lives in the Driftless region of southern Wisconsin. In collaboration with a local conservation organization, she is restoring land that endured decades of monoculture farming. Kelly has spent her career developing technology tools in the wellness space. As a life-long artist, Kelly sees art as a way to reach people that other channels cannot. She has invited her four children into the creative process and they work as a team. Together, they use installation, sound, videography, and storytelling as a way to explore healing — not only of soil, but of memory, relationship, and the spaces between generations.

**Ella Shaw**, sister of Mahala Berry, is a filmmaker and visual storyteller whose work explores the relationship between nature, art, and human experience. Her practice draws on documentary filmmaking and an interest in the social sciences to examine how personal stories exist within broader cultural and systemic contexts.

She is particularly interested in how media shapes public understanding in an increasingly polluted digital landscape, and how individuals can remain thoughtful, independent thinkers while still seeking collective truth. Her work asks how trust can be rebuilt in a time of widespread manipulation, silence, and imbalance in systems of power.

The documentary becomes an extension of the installation itself, bearing witness to acts of collective care and regeneration as part of a broader cultural conversation about listening, responsibility, and healing.



## The Manas Collective

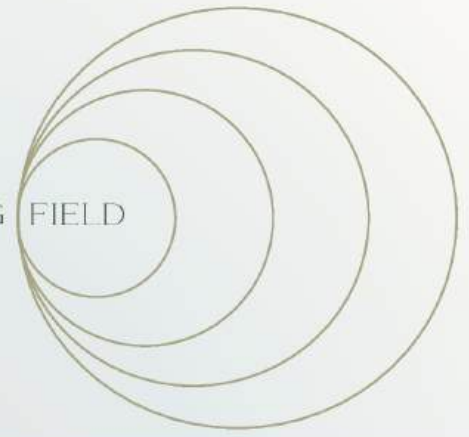
**Dominik Vinko** is a Slovenian marketer, designer, and creative collaborator, whose work is rooted in a deep connection to sustainability, land, food, and traditional knowledge. Growing up in Slovenia, where sustainability, connection to the land and cultural traditions remain closely tied to daily life, he developed an early understanding of how nature nourishes both body and spirit.

Dominik is also the Co-Founder in Open Flame, a creative visual storytelling, marketing and design studio he runs with his wife, Ella Shaw. Within the project, he assists in creative work, filming and marketing, helping to capture the unfolding story of the field.

**Mrityunjay Sathyanarayanan** is a sound practitioner, artist, and researcher, based in Pondicherry, India. His creative work spans a variety of mediums and genres: composing for contemporary classical ensembles, films/documentaries, dance, as well as electronic music and sound art for audio-visual installations and performances. He holds a degree in Music Composition from the Boston Conservatory, and has been faculty of composition at the Conservatory's HSCI, and lecturer of Electronic Music at Wellesley College (Massachusetts). His current practice explores new forms and modalities of artistic expression (New Media Art) with sound as the predominant medium. Deeply informed by Indian philosophy and its confluences with Western thought, his practice takes the shape of a research-informed, pedagogy-oriented creative practice.

**Vinay Khare** is a creative technologist and new media artist based out of Pondicherry, India. With a keen drive for experimentation, he enjoys conceptualising and creating multisensorial experiences that evoke awe and wonder. His interests are multi-disciplinary, and typically so is his work. Working across analog and digital worlds he creates interactive installations, multimedia performances, audio-visual art and immersive experiences. He works with global clients on site-specific installations, bespoke creative technology solutions, multi-media productions and commissioned generative artworks. In his independent creative practice, his work has been showcased at music and arts festivals.

THE LISTENING FIELD



The Manas Art Collective is a non-profit created to support healing through art and nature.

## *It's a family thing*

As a family of creatives, they have used art to inspire transformation and reconnect people to their true essence and nature. This project brings that work home to their farm in southern Wisconsin.



## *Contact Us*

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