

BEES · HONEY · PEOPLE ·  
*Bybi* · FLOWERS

AN  
INVITATION  
TO CARE,  
CURIOSITY  
AND  
PLEASURE

**BYBI 2023**

HONEY IS AN  
INVITATION...

What is it asking of us?



**This** short report is an opportunity for us to say thank you to the community of friends and partners who have helped us in 2023, and to reflect on what our community has become this year. Many of you may only see a small part of Bybi. Across all our relationships and connections, we are much more than honey and bees.

With our regenerative approach, Bybi is a container for new ways of talking together; new ways of thinking, and a place for exploring our times' biggest questions about how people, plants and animals can thrive together in our city.

The highlights of this year include the evolution of our 'honey ceremony' into a magical performance that we conducted with over 5000 people. The honey is free – but only if you say 'thank you' to the bees.

*"I love it when knowledge and consciousness are ritualised"*

reported one participant on Facebook. We found these ceremonies to be utterly joyful for everyone!

We introduced a programme of 'conversation and soup' evenings where we invite our network to experiment with new ways of talking together. The conversation formats are inspired by other cultures – and species. The events have supported our human community and brought us in contact

with inspiring people working with regeneration across Denmark and Europe.

We made a wonderful collaboration with Det Lille Teater and Miljøpunkt Østerbro, also supported by friends at Radiometer and Declore. We worked with 15 schools all over the city. The project ended with a beautiful play, "Bi Omkring" that was shown in October and November.

And of course we buzzed backwards and forwards with the bees. For them, it has been a difficult year: Too, warm; too wet, too cold, too dry ... at all the wrong moments. But in the context of all our activities, we have tried to give them care and space to adapt. Honey is not the most important thing for us, and we can all live with a little less if the bees need a little more.

So Bybi is a container. But we are leaky: looking back on this year we have been lucky to enjoy the freedom to digest new ideas and share our perspectives with new audiences. We are a co-creation that goes both ways. We feel we are growing into a space that is growing with us. Bybi is influencing a space, but the space we are in influences us in return. Thank you for being open to sharing it with us!

BYBI 2023

# QUESTIONS FROM THE PAST- QUESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

In our report, we don't address targets hit or missed. Instead, we reflect on the questions of how we are together and what new questions have arisen during the year. At the end of 2022 we challenged ourselves to go further towards a regenerative approach. What happens when our 'products' become 'invitations'? This has led to new questions for 2024: How has our relationship with money changed? Is it more important to grow or more important to feel that we are doing the right thing?

Please help us to answer the questions in our report. If you have suggestions or ideas write to us at [bzzz@bybi.dk](mailto:bzzz@bybi.dk) or share your thoughts [@bybi.dk](https://www.instagram.com/bybi.dk) on Social Media.

Honey Ceremony with Velux, April 2023



# ARE THE BEES AND BEEKEEPERS HAPPIER?

Like many relationships, the bees confront us with an ongoing dilemma: We would like them to be happy and healthy, but how much should we intervene? Where do we draw the line between their needs, our needs and those of other species in the city? How do we support them in the face of unpredictable factors like disease and climate change?

In 2023 we lost nearly 40% of our bees to disease in the winter. The replacement colonies were too small to take full advantage of the warm May and June. Honey gathered was about 40% down on last year. However, we still prioritised letting them keep more of their honey at the end of the season and we hope a more natural diet will help them through this winter. We want to avoid a situation where poor harvests force us to take short term decisions, so Aref is experimenting and watching to try to understand how to help them best.

Aref and his team has included volunteers from Denmark and all over the world, as well as 7 interns and work-experience kids from local schools. We contributed to national research on bee health with Aarhus University. Our honey was analysed by the ministry of food and agriculture (it passed all the tests!). The bees and beekeeping connect us to global problems: from the the natural and political tragedy that hit Aref's Syrian Kurdish community in the earthquake last February to impact of climate change on our living systems at home.



Bybi beekeepers on the roof of Parken



Aref tends to the Tivoli bees

# WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED FROM THE BEES? HOW HAVE WE SHARED IT?

All the world's challenges and dreams show up in honey bees in one way or another. We have presented films, reflected on the parallels between debates about race and integration, and debates about wild bees and honey bees. An invitation to use beekeeping robots (which we have chosen not to work with) brought questions about artificial intelligence to our doorstep.

In 2023 we participated in 6 major festivals and delivered keynote speeches to 4 conferences. We delivered 48 tours, talks and events and worked with 15 schools.

We also distributed 35000 packets of flower seeds and 8000 organic flower bulbs.

Our ambition last year was to work with more arts organisations and more schools. We achieved this in our partnership with Det Lille Teater and Miljøpunkt Østerbro: Together we created 'biernes by' – bee city – in physical space, in the minds of city children, and in a theatre performance in October and November.

"Pleasure", "Care" and "Curiosity" are the words we learn from the bees. How can we promote and explore these values with new artistic collaborations next year?



Children create Bee City



Bees at a climate demonstration





Bi Omkring at Det Lille Teater

# HAS THE HONEY BECOME MORE OF AN INVITATION?

Our honey ceremony has become a beautiful demonstration of how to turn a product into an invitation.

In September we were approached by the local Coop supermarket with an interest in our honey. We refused to sell it. Instead, we invited them to let us give it away for free – on the condition that people “say thank you to the bees”. The resulting installation in the Kvikly carpark returned most of the Amager harvest back to the people, along with hundreds of flower bulbs. The event was financed by Coop on whole other terms than the producer-supermarket relationship that turns people into consumers and ‘producers’ into cost-cutting capitalists.

We made 14 honey ceremonies this year, involving over 5000 people, 1 ton of honey and associated flower bulbs and seeds.

Still, we continue to work with chefs and restaurants who value the honey, wax, fermented honey and it’s message. Our honey, wax and fermented honey was served at Noma, Barr, Lola and other top restaurants. Some of our honey was baked into snacks sent up to the International Space Station with Andreas Mortensen in September.

In 2024 we would like to scale up the honey ceremony and find ways to make it a more public event, associated with new ways to bring food to people. What insights about food, consumerism, environment and care can our experience offer other small regenerative producers in our community?





08.02

4G



Olympia Strunch

16 t. · 🌐



Lotus og jeg var til en sød lille honning seance nede ved Kvickly Sundby, hvor @coop\_danmark i samarbejde med @bybi.dk uddelte honning, når man gennemgik et ritual hvor vi sagde tak til bierne, og lovede at plante et blomsterløg (det var krokus), som kan vokse frem til foråret, til bierne. Herefter malede vi en pose til vores honningkrukke. Lotus var yderst dedikeret og lavede en fin pose. Det var sødt at der både var børn, unge og gamle som kom hen og fik honning, gennemgik ritualet og lavede deres pose, selv en flok teenagedrenge. Jeg elsker når viden og bevidsthed bliver gjort lidt rituelt, og synes det var så fint at der blev brugt tid og energi på at sprede information på denne hyggelige måde 🐝🍯💛

#aavethebees #bybi #bier #bierneogblomsterne #honning #amager #familie #barndom #forældreskab #morskab #moderskab #ritual #ceremoni #hverdagsgudinde #naturligoverflod #moderjord #blomster

Mest relevante ▾



Carl Madsen

Kæmpe Stort 🍀 ...- sådanne aktioner burde det være naturligt ( & oplagt ) at ha over hele landet , og helst så mange som muligt...- det ville gøre bæredygtighed meget bedre 🍀💛  
🍀 Tak for at blive inddraget i så smuk en livscyklus - flot bi , Lotus fik tegnet 😊

13 t. Synes godt om





## HAVE OUR PARTNERSHIPS BECOME MORE REGENERATIVE?

In 2023 we welcomed FCK to the family with bees on the roof of the Parken football stadium. L’Oreal and Declore joined us for product launches and an employee teambuilding day. We made honey ceremonies with IKEA, Rockfon, Velux, Frederiksberg Kommune and DIS among others. Radiometer helped sponsor our schools project and invited local children into their grounds to meet the bees.

We spent some time developing the scenography and materials of our partnerships. How can the packaging, furniture, actions, sounds, smells and “invitations” of our meetings with partners support our regenerative and collaborative approach? How can we improve our communication with partner organisations and invite the curious people who sit in offices all over the city to learn more about what happens in the Bybi community?



# HAVE WE IMPROVED THE FINANCIAL STABILITY OF THE ORGANIZATION?

How has the new approach we have adopted in the last two years changed our relationship with money? Of course we still need money to pay for salaries, rent and development of our organisation. But where does it come from when we take “product” out of the equation?

Our turnover has been about the same as last year at just under 3 million DKK. Again, we expect a ‘profit’ of about 300.000 DKK. We have not had any grant funding, external investment, or loans. It feels like a dramatic improvement in stability.

Our revenue from sales at markets is falling, but projects, activities and sponsorships are growing. The money that is coming in to the organisation is becoming more of a shared commitment to explore the idea of how people, plants and animals can live better together. We’ve used some of the extra to support events, conversations and honey ceremonies that are free to join.

It feels odd to write this report and not be aiming for conventional growth. But it is also a mental shift that is necessary in our economic system.

Honey has become a co-creation, transforming our role and itself in the process. Can we change our relationship with money in the same way? So that money becomes a nourishing force that can help us to provide a different kind of space for each other and other species?



What can we learn about Money from the bees?



# HAVE WE IMPROVED THE DIVERSITY AND ENGAGEMENT OF OUR SOCIAL COMMUNITY? HAVE WE USED IT BETTER?

In 2023, our group of staff and volunteers – 25 people from 12 countries – has felt more welcoming, engaged and fizzing with commitment and initiative than ever. We installed a kitchen and installed a huge wooden table made by the homeless shelter from a fallen tree in the back yard. It is the focus of our meetings, discussions and meals.

Our interest in regeneration, art, and how we speak together have led to 'conversation and soup' evenings that are open and free for everyone. We held 14 events in 2023. We have also created space for self-organised gatherings, where we make spoons, candles or experiment with what the bees give us. You can find out more about our social events on Bybi's Facebook page.

One ambition for 2024 is to improve the organisation and communication of these activities. How do we make it easier for people to join? How can we make it easier to administer? What can these events feed into outside the Bybi 'container'?





# DOES THE WAY WE TALK INFLUENCE THE FUTURE WE CREATE?

In 2023 Bybi has been involved in supporting and creating a new platform for dialogical practices in Denmark. Through connections with artists, researchers, and facilitators in Denmark and Europe we have been looking at the question of how we talk together. The initiative has worked with Building Conversation, a Dutch art group, to gather conversational traditions from other cultures and philosophies and stage them together.

Those of us working in regeneration have often been frustrated by how conventional decision making misrepresents living systems and excludes non-human voices. The conversations we have been conducting help to correct that balance and introduce new ways of talking together. We have had 12 events this year, with businesses, social projects, arts organisations and citizens.

We see a huge potential for these conversations growing in 2024. As an organisation, we have an ambition to nourish this practices and share them with other organisations. Perhaps you would like to join?



New conversations about people, plants and animals at GRASP festival, September 2023

# HONEY GATHERED IN 2023

<b>Partner Organisation</b>	<b>Bee Colonies</b>	<b>Honey Gathered in 2023 (kg)</b>
3F	4	162,5
Bella Center Copenhagen	3	152,3
Copenhagen Botanical Garden	6	248
Danish Institute for Study Abroad (DIS)	3	68,9
Fagbevægelsens Hovedorganisation (FH)	2	32
Frederiksberg Kommune	3	91,7
FX team	2	61,5
Ikea Gentofte	2	32,7
Kongelund Forest	4	132,8
Københavns Rådhus	2	46,6
L'Oreal	4	92,8
Lederne	5	113,3
Niels Bohr Insitut	8	264
Parken / FCK	2	75,6
PensionDanmark	2	82
Radiometer	3	86
Rockfon	4	70
Sundholm/ Københavns Kommune	4	62
Tivoli	2	76,8
Valby, HOFOR	5	283,2
Velux	4	124,7
Ørsted	4	157
Blend and Other partners		855,8
<b>TOTAL (Kg)</b>		<b>3372,2</b>

# THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS!





Each spot in the painting is made by a person who commits to planting a flower for the bees. Over 5000 people participated in 2023

[www.bybi.dk](http://www.bybi.dk)  
Sundholmsvej 34  
Copenhagen 2300 S  
Tlæl: 41275544 Bzzz@bybi.dk