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**InSEA**

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**IMAG**



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IMAG N°. 3 VOL I and VOL II

# **Finnish Art Education on the Move**



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# The IMAG Project

The current InSEA world council members are committed to creating more channels for making education through art visible. As stated in the InSEA Strategic Plan for 2014-2017 we want to offer more opportunities for networking among members. Our hope is to make InSEA members' art education experiences more visible in the world through the launch of an interactive web site and also through the publication of the new InSEA magazine IMAG. Both of these initiatives emphasize the plurality of what makes InSEA come alive while also



recognizing our volunteer work for the organization and indeed, our field worldwide. We believe that both of these initiatives will be powerful resources for practice-led research and research-led practice in arts education. With the magazine we want to value the silent voices of art educators and art teachers from around the world who are helping new generations to grow up with the benefits of the arts to build a more sustainable society.

Creating an **InSEA e-magazine** reflects the need to take **ACTIONS**; art educators; artists and art teachers are making **LOCAL** events; experimenting with new strategies; giving new meanings to the arts in education. InSEA, and this e-magazine can be the place where InSEA members can share experiences and encourage people to act for **CHANGE**, improvement, and the cultivation of new ideas from Local to a **GLOBAL** scale. The first ideas for the e-magazine were discussed with Mousumi De as a way to adapt the former e-newsletter to become a regular e-magazine. We then enlarged the discussions and planning to include Joaquín Roldán and Ricardo Marin whereupon we envisaged a new structure that used the Internet thereby allowing hyperlinks, as well as visual and multimedia communication. The first issue of iMAG is a result of these plans. Of course it is just a starting point and improvements will be ongoing. We wanted the e-magazine to be flexible yet with a fixed editor team for the main coordination with guest editors from the different regions of the world and a team of reviewers that would evaluate and help authors to

revise the submissions in order to respond to language and graphic quality standards.

The structure of the e-magazine would include a historical piece from InSEA that we are calling 'The relic' (a paper surviving from an earlier time, especially one of historical or sentimental interest), because preserving InSEA memories and records is important for the future. This section should include visuals, photos, video essays and visual reports because we work and we want to emphasize visual forms of communication. The iMAG could also include reviews and announcements on regional and international conferences, seminars and symposiums, projects and exhibitions, calls for papers from regional and international journals, calls for project participation and collaborations, and art education programs of relevance to the InSEA community.

## **In short iMAG's mission should be:**

**... to provide a visual platform, which, in line with the constitution of InSEA, will help foster international cooperation and understanding, and promote creative activity in art through sharing experiences, improving practices, and strengthening the position of.**

Teresa Torres de Eça

Viseu, 20-06-2016





# Call For Visual Essays

IMAG invites InSEA members to submit visual/photo/video essays that focus on art education practice, research and teaching in formal and informal contexts, that is relevant to the larger worldwide community of art educators. We encourage submissions with images and in multimedia formats that provide an alternative, experimental and artistic mode of presenting research and praxis. Proposals are peer-reviewed by members of the editorial board. iMAG is an open source publication /(cc) generic licence 2.0/, by sending their proposals authors agree with the terms of the licence (see more about the (cc) Licence here).



# Guidelines for Authors

The total word limit for the Photo-essays and Visual reports is between 1000 and 2000 words, should integrate image and text in a creative way to document, evaluate or reflect on art-based learning activities, events or outcomes. Proposals should include 1) Title; 2) author(s) name and affiliation; 3) keywords or tags; 4) a critical introduction (or an abstract) which could be no less than 150 words and not exceed 250 words in length in English and in the original language, author(s) 5) the proposed layout in PDF with images and words not exceeding the established limits. This proposal should also be accompanied with images in good resolution formats and/or links to Video files. References should follow the APA norm.

## Medium/Format/Size

Send it as an editable file (doc.) with separate images (jpg format) and also as a PDF file to show your desired layout. Written text should be up to 2000 words including title, author's name and affiliation, abstract, keywords and references. Must have at least 5 images. Videos should appear has links to embody in the text or in the images.

## Sections

1. Relic article: republishing an old article from InSEA history (a paper surviving from an earlier time, especially one of historical or sentimental interest).
2. Photo essays.
3. Visual reports.
4. Reviews.
5. Announcements on regional and international conferences, seminars and symposiums, projects and exhibitions, call for papers from regional and international journals, call for project participation and collaborations, and art education programs of relevance to the InSEA community.

Note: Submitted and approved contents might be revised/remixed by the editors and graphic team.





## IMAG N. 3: VOL. I and VOL. II

### Finnish Art Education on the Move

The renewed Finnish National Core Curriculum for basic education will be implemented in 2016, calls for a broad understanding of visual, verbal, kinaesthetic, auditory, analogue, and digital texts as well as phenomenon-based transdisciplinary learning. The theme of this number of IMAG is *Finnish art education on the move* and it addresses contemporary issues that are seen as relevant in art education today. The broad field of art education in Finland has been narrowed down to InSEA members because the idea is to present Finnish affiliations, organizations and subjects that belong to the international InSEA. There was an open call for the Finnish InSEA members to write and present ideas for this special IMAG number.



The Finnish InSEA subject members are presented here in relation to their particular organizations and affiliations in order for international readers to get to know the Finnish art education field. At the same time the reader will learn what kind of practice and research is done in the various contexts. This focus also reveals accumulations of interest areas.

I start with introducing three associations that work as an 'umbrella' organizations and/or networks in offering art education and/or information about art education. Then I proceed to the museum network, and finally to the universities that offer art education programmes for subject teachers and/or generalists. There is also a guest writer from Sweden whose article is within the research context of the universities. As I consider all the members to be of equal importance I will present them alphabetically. At the end of the introduction I will summarise the most popular themes.

*Anu Hietala* presents the **Finnish Association of Art Schools for Children and Young People**, a long-term InSEA organization and a national umbrella organization for art schools for children and young people that currently includes approximately 150 visual art schools. All of these offer basic education in the arts that is regulated by a governmental Act, even though in reality they are very different from each other. *Elisse Heinimaa's* article supports Hietala's practical introduction by offering the history of art schools and the founding phase of the Finnish

Association of Art Schools for Children and Young People. The work of the art schools in practice is presented by three writers and InSEA members from different art schools, each focusing on current issues. *Pihla Meskanen* develops architecture education for children and young people with the aim that they learn to perceive, consider, understand, conceptualize and evaluate their own environment. She here presents Arkki, the School of Architecture for Children and Youth. *Heli Tienen* presents the Sara Hildén Academy, the Art School for Children and Young People in Tampere, taking as an example their current year's theme of colourful cultures. Her article shows how children and young people studied this theme in practice and how timely it became due to the unexpected Middle East crisis. *Marketta Urpo-Koskinen* presents a current project, Art Navigator 2, on contemporary and urban art in Lohja Art School for Children and Young people. The project studied and developed the teachers' and students' mutual process in co-operation with several other art schools in Finland.

*Anna Linna* presents the **Association of Art Teachers in Finland** that turned 110 years old this year and is a regular InSEA institutional member. Those Finnish InSEA members who take part in the international InSEA conferences often write about their experiences of these occasions in STYLUS, which is the magazine of this association.



In 2015, a brand new Association of **Finnish Children's Cultural Centres** was founded, although networking between these centres has been going on since the early 2000s. A nationwide portal of Finnish children's culture is maintained by this organization. This is here presented by *Saara Vesikansa*. It has now also become affiliated with InSEA. *Mervi Eskelinen* presents Lastu, the School of Architectural and Environmental Culture. Lastu's broad pedagogical focus includes the man-made environment and cultural, social, economic, ethical and aesthetical environments, with a strong emphasis on sustainable development. *Kaisa Kettunen* presents Annantalo, an arts centre for children and young people in Helsinki. Her article describes Annantalo's extensive exhibition programme with a child's focus always present and central. *Päivi Setälä* introduces the Pori Centre for Children's Culture as a network. Her article deals with colour workshops for babies where they observe colours, by experiencing them in a multisensory way.

**Pedaali, the Finnish Association for Museum Education**, is the newest InSEA affiliation and is here presented by *Saara Klemetti*. Pedaali is a strong association with already approximately 220 members and it focuses on promoting museum education. In this IMAG number there are three

examples of museum education. *Leena Hannula* writes on the adult museum visitor and writes about a senior visitor group as part of museum education at the Sinebrychoff Art Museum. *Inkeri Ruokonen* exemplifies co-operation between the Ateneum Art Museum and the University of Helsinki in her article, co-authored with *Erica Othman*. *Anniina Koivurova, Karoliina Salo and Kaija Kähkönen* write about the degree programme in art education at the University of Lapland and co-operation with Rovaniemi Art Museum.

This number of IMAG also presents research done by Finnish InSEA subject members and carried out in several universities. Two of the universities have an art department with a broad and deep programme for art educators who go on to become, for example, subject teachers for basic education (classes 7-9) and upper secondary schools. These are *Aalto University*, in the metropolitan area and *University of Lapland*, in Northern Finland. There is also a Faculty of Education for future class teachers/generalists in the University of Lapland. The other universities included here are the *University of Helsinki*, the *University of Tampere* and the *Åbo Akademi University*. These all focus on teacher education to educate generalist teachers who will teach art education as one of many school subjects. Art is taught in Finnish primary classes 1-6. I find that the universities have a range of focuses and assets: subject art teachers may offer in-depth art education because visual arts



per se has been their main study area, whereas generalists study all school subjects, with art being just one among many. They may focus on integrating visual arts into all the other subjects and, due to this, a different kind of understanding about art, culture and learning can be offered.

*Mira Kallio-Tavin & Minna Suoniemi* of **Aalto University** raise questions about current practices and approaches in contemporary art education. A hundred years of art teacher education in Finland was celebrated in spring 2015 so they have a long perspective and background for explaining the most dramatically changed issues. They also introduce the 2018 European InSEA Congress, which will take place in Finland. *Anniina Suominen* makes use of self-portraits to study immigrant and non-immigrant students' depictions of their gender roles in Finland/Europe. Her research deals with vocational college students who have immigrant and refugee backgrounds, either having themselves been born in Finland or whose parents have immigrated to Finland.

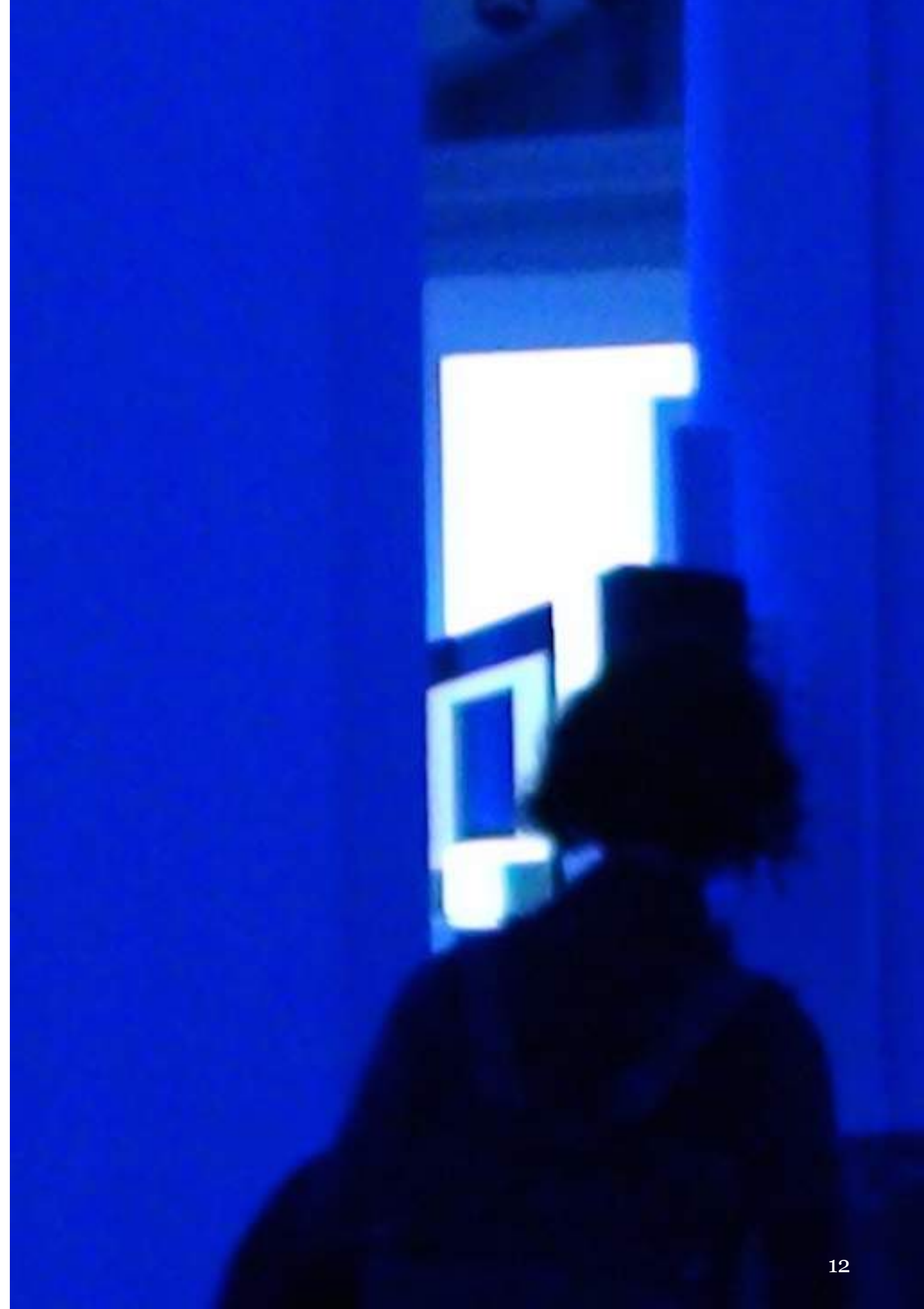
Writers from the **University of Helsinki** focus on young children and primary school education. *Seija Kairavuori and Leena Knif* explore cases involving an integrative teaching approach in art education: drawing comics and studying the environment. They conclude that the role of visual arts is justifiable in integrating active knowledge construction. *Kauko Komulainen and Martina Paatela-Nieminen* study teacher students' artworks as multiliteral accumulations of plural meanings and relations that students construct from the fairy tale of Sleeping Beauty. *Kristiina Kumpulainen* studies young children's use of

visual methods to document and share positive events in their lives. She argues that children's voices should be understood as interactional achievements shaped by their cultural, social and material context. *Martina Paatela-Nieminen & Leena Knif* study the use of ICT and show that, as a set of competences, ICT is multifaceted when integrated into art education. *Inkeri Ruokonen and Erica Othman* write about a project in interactive arts education that was done in collaboration with the Ateneum Art Museum, involving the Museum's exhibition "Sibelius and the World of Art" and art workshops. The article focuses on teacher students' design process in a collaborative arts study project in which pupils visited the art museum and experienced the music of Sibelius and of art via new technology. *Sinikka Rusanen* was a visiting researcher in the TAIKAVA project (in the City of Vantaa), which aims to support children with special needs through arts and culture in daily practices with the aid of art specialists. Rusanen explains project's artistic processes, methods and goals. *Sara Sintonen and Maj-Britt Kentz* the latter from the **University of Eastern Finland** are interested in young children as digital learners and creators. They introduce their Mopet project that strives to develop pedagogical approaches towards multimodal literacy.

There are several artists, researchers and educators from the **University of Lapland** writing in this number: *Mirja Hiltunen* writes about stretching the limits of art education through the connections between the interdisciplinary fields of art education, research and artistic activism. She describes art education practice and its contemporary



art dimensions as developed within the Art Education programme at the University of Lapland. She studies performativity and place-specific art and their potential in community-based art education within the context of art teacher training. *Timo Jokela* focuses on the art of art education as he emphasizes the Arts, Humanism, Social and Legal Sciences within a northern eco-social culture. His article deals with environmentally-oriented art and art education and he explains how adopting contemporary art practices has required art education to become critically opened up to the surrounding world and especially between art education and the northern environment of the University of Lapland. *Anniina Koivurova, Karoliina Salo and Kaija Kähkönen* write about museum co-operation between the degree programme of art education at the University of Lapland and Rovaniemi Art Museum. This co-operation has become part of museum pedagogy course. *Annamari Manninen* studies the potential of contemporary art to explore and understand European identity and citizenship among children and young people. She describes the use of a contemporary artwork database that was made in the project, Creative Connections (2012-2014), which involved several partner universities in various countries. *Seija Ulkuniemi* focuses on an interart teaching method for primary school generalist teacher-trainees. Her course is interdisciplinary, combining music, drama and dance, and its aim is to enhance the wellbeing of students and to heighten the connectivity between body and mind.





Three artist/researcher/educators from the **University of Tampere** focus on art in their articles and, in addition, we also have a guest writer from Sweden. *Tarja Karlsson Häikiö's* research is a collaboration project between Tampere University and the **University of Gothenburg** (Göteborg) in Sweden. The project deals with a community-art project with children and youth in schools in the arctic area of five Nordic countries. The children of different nationalities and cultures were given the possibility to reflect on their lives, identities and cultures through the production of both linguistic and visual narratives. *Jouko Pullinen* and *Juha Merta* present a visual essay on Academic Fables that is linked closely to their joint art exhibition in Berlin. The researchers discuss some of their ideas behind the art works, including parts of their students' writings, and urge the reader to join in the interpretation process. *Jussi Mäkelä* is interested in Joseph Beuys' ideas and his method of social sculpture. There are many ideas (e.g. freedom, creativity) that relate to social sculpture. Mäkelä describes his art exhibition, Freedom Relations, and focuses in his artworks on the theme of freedom.

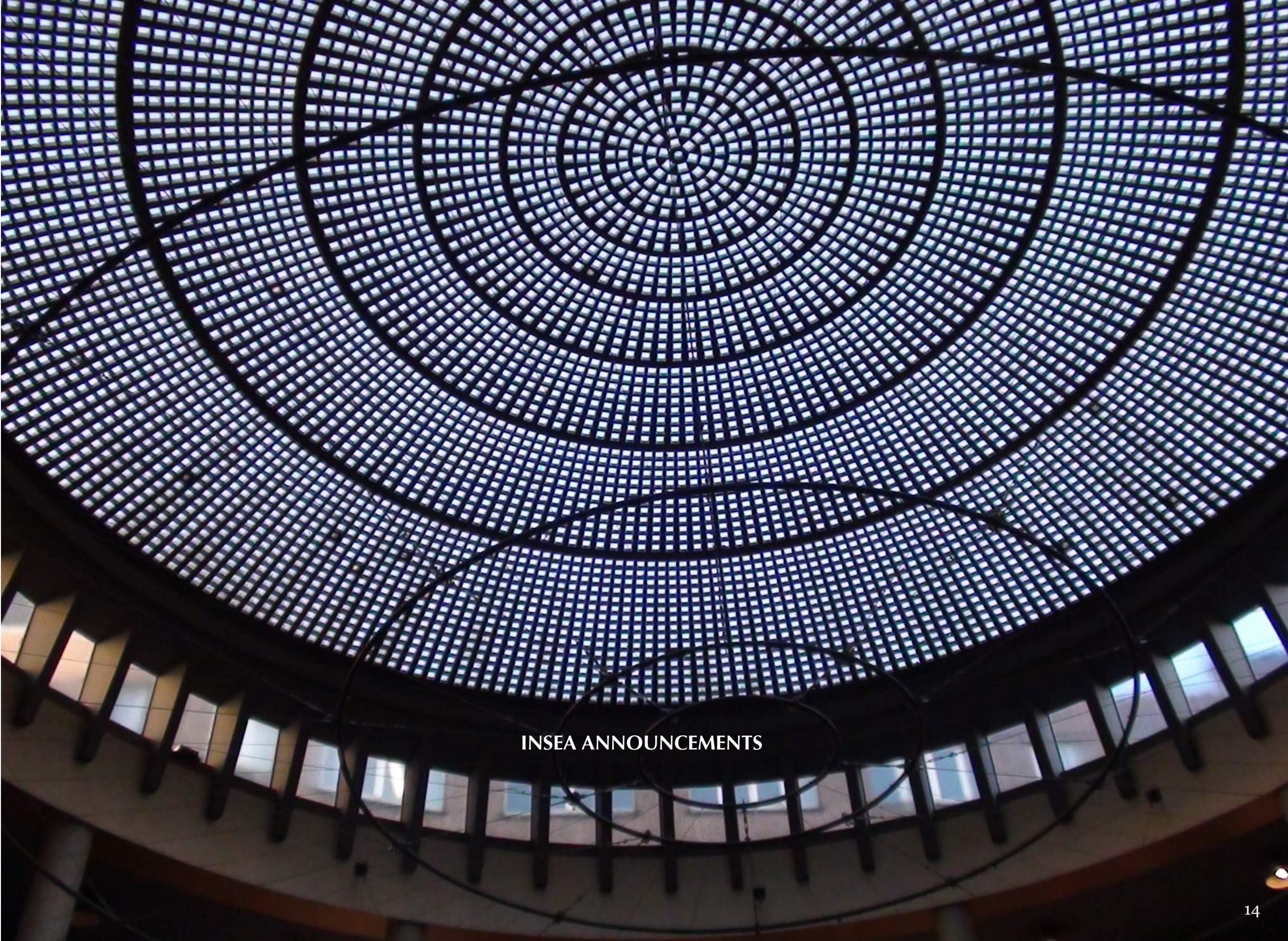
*Hannah Kaihovirta-Rosvik* and *Minna Rimpilä* of **Åbo Akademi University**, write about an art-based learning project generated by researcher-teachers in primary education. They study how a digitally-blended learning environment may develop multi-literacy learning,

understood as a set of social practices (i.e. models, social semiotics, concepts).

As a concluding remark, it can be seen that there are accumulations of certain ideas and themes in art education on the move that focus on the current time and issues, relevant to the 21st century education. For example, several writers focus on *art per se* (contemporary art, urban art, art of art education, writers' own art exhibitions, art & science), while others concentrate on *children's art* (children as viewers, children's visual methods, babies experiencing colour baths, arts and culture for children with special needs). *Cultures and citizenship* is also a popular issue (European identity, citizenship, cultures, intercultural, immigrant/non-immigrant, Nordic cultures, global cultures, community), and *integration* is referred to very often (integrate, intertext, interart, interdisciplinary, co-operation). Finally, *ICT* was studied in many combinations (media literature, multiliteracy, blended learning, digital learner, multimodal literature, ICT competences). There are also a few integral issues such as *architecture* for children and wider man-made and sustainable environments that are taught through two special schools. *Senior/adult art education* is also seen as an important future theme.

Martina Paatela-Nieminen, guest editor.





INSEA ANNOUNCEMENTS





35<sup>th</sup> World Congress  
**InSEA 2017**  
Daegu, Republic of KOREA

## | Spirit ∞ Art ∞ Digital |

- The Wheel of Diversity
- Spirituality
- Hybridity & Community
- Expanding Reality
- Matching into a New Era

The relationship between digital and art education is not just a matter of methodology nor technology, rather it is a matter of spirituality and humanity, also. What possibilities and problems does digitally imbued art education make? What roles can art education play in a better way with digital? Where can spirituality be in digital in the context of art education? Captivated by such terms as "spirit", "art" and "digital," the narratives of coexistence are defining a new zeitgeist and a key formula for survival of art education.

35<sup>th</sup> World Congress  
**InSEA 2017**  
Daegu, Republic of KOREA

Int'l Society for Education Through Art  
Date : **August, 2017 / 6 Days**  
Daegu Metropolitan City, Republic of KOREA



# INTERVENTIONS

## *Scientific and Social Interventions on Art Education*

### **European InSEA Congress 2018 in Aalto University, Finland**

The European regional InSEA congress will be held June 12.-15. 2018 at Aalto University in Finland. The congress will concentrate on European and global issues around art education and its connections to societal and scientific topics. Aalto University's main campus, originally designed by Alvar Aalto, will offer interesting sights and new possibilities to explore art education in interdisciplinary contexts. Art and its education meets with Eco/Bio/Tech/Digital/Societal connections in Aalto University, on many levels. Workshops and excursions will open doors for laboratories, design environments, and to the nature. Participants can learn from the strong Finnish art educational structures and practices through the conference program, developed together with local art and art education professionals. The venue and location nearby Helsinki, the Baltic Sea, and national parks offer the possibility to experience the Northern summer light in nature and in the urban area, with many museums and other sites

In the congress presentations, art, education, science, and society might be approached through the following themes:

- digital artistic and art educational practices
- scientific approaches to art and/or art education

- practices
- experiences in the culturally changing Europe
- contemporary approaches to diversity and immigration
- posthumanism and ecojustice
- gamification, digitalization, and the connections of games and learning in art
- research and practices on cultural sensitivity in art education
- ageing / art / education
- public art interventions
- Glocal (Local / Global) perspectives to climate change
- Arctic and Northern views to current global issues and challenges
- biotechnological, biological and other new media and new materials in arts and art education



# INTERVENIONS

The InSEA congress 2018 welcomes diversified ways of contributions. In addition to traditional academic paper and pedagogical project presentations there will be the possibility for:

- artistic participation in a curated exhibition
- round table presentations for more inclusive conversations
- “brainstorming” presentations to develop new ideas
- PecchaKucha presentations for visual perspectives
- workshops for “hands on” activities

These different types of presentations will make it possible for the audience to enjoy academic “battles” as much as visual based presentations. Debates, round table conversations and “brainstorming” sessions will offer room for new ideas to appear among researchers, teachers and project workers. Throughout the congress, the audience will be given an active role for conversations. Keynotes will be offered, as well as invited talks and debates between internationally well-known art educators and/or artists.

The congress organizing team’s passion is to create a forum for fruitful discussions, dialogical encounters, and interventions to astonish. The goal for this InSEA congress is to offer possibilities for intercultural

conversations on most current and burning issues in contemporary art education. If art education will have even a slightly renewed meaning for the participants after the congress, we have reached our target!

The call for presentations will open in August 2017. For more information, contact Mira Kallio-Tavin ([mira.kallio-tavin@aalto.fi](mailto:mira.kallio-tavin@aalto.fi)) or Tiina Pusa ([tiina.pusa@aalto.fi](mailto:tiina.pusa@aalto.fi)).



## . Annamari Manninen

From Imitation to Open-ended Process - Using Contemporary Artwork Examples in the Creative Connections Project

## . Mirja Hiltunen

Stretching the Limits

## . Timo Jokela

The Art of Art Education Increases in Lapland

## . Karoliina Salo, Anniina Koivurova, Kaija Kähkönen

Where Fragmentation and Integration Meet: Pedagogical Challenges and Opportunities for Museums of Contemporary Art

## . Seija Ulkuniemi

Interdisciplinary Intentions – Reflecting on my Teaching Practice





**From Imitation to Open-ended Process - Using Contemporary Artwork  
Examples in the Creative Connections Project**

Annamari Manninem



## From Imitation to Open-ended Process – Using Contemporary Artwork Examples in the Creative Connections project

### Abstract

In this visual essay I will present the experiences and different pedagogical uses of contemporary art in the Creative Connections project (2012-2014), which aimed to explore and develop ways of increasing understanding of European identity and citizenship among children and young people by connecting art and citizenship education. The essay describes the use of the contemporary artwork database that was made in the project. The research concentrates on how the given examples of artwork were received and used by teachers and pupils. The findings present the different approaches used in the project to involve contemporary artworks in the context of European citizenship and identity in education.

### Keywords

contemporary art, identity, art education, international project, blogging

### Creative Connections project

The research project included researchers and visual art educators from partner universities in the UK, Ireland, the Czech Republic, Spain, Portugal and Finland who collaborated with elementary teachers, art teachers and civil education teachers. The action research involved 27 researchers, 25 schools, 45 teachers and 1,080 pupils. The partner countries worked together through digital media by sharing blogs between classes in different countries. Part of the project involved experimenting with the use of online translation software to help pupils to communicate in their own languages.

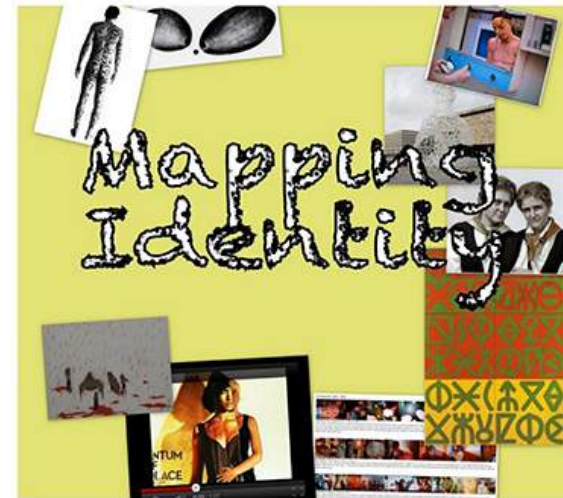
In the Creative Connection project, the artwork examples and art-making process were seen as ways to approach the abstract concepts of citizenship and identity. The main discussion was on how children and young people understand and feel about themselves in the context of Europe and how they see their own personal, local and national identities. The aim was to create space for discussing identities in social interaction, to explore the representations of identities and to create own representations.



## The Artwork database

The database was started by forming five categories based on what Lacy (1995) described as the different roles of art, developed by Hiltunen (2009): Art as A. cultural self-expression, B. cultural interpretation, C. cultural reporter, D. cultural guide and E. activism. The aim was to cover the whole range of contemporary art from different materials and techniques to different approaches and ways of working used by artists today. The categories were intended to be used for exploring different approaches to making art and learning in the classroom. The final version of the gallery has 64 artworks in the following categories:

- A: **Mapping Identity** - presenting different aspects of personal identity
- B: **Mapping Nation** - presenting different aspects of national identity
- C: **Visual Reports** - art as reporter of the cultural environment and phenomena
- D: **Cultural Guides** - art as a guide for seeing and presenting things in different ways
- E: **Action!** - Art as making a statement, expressing opinions, activism





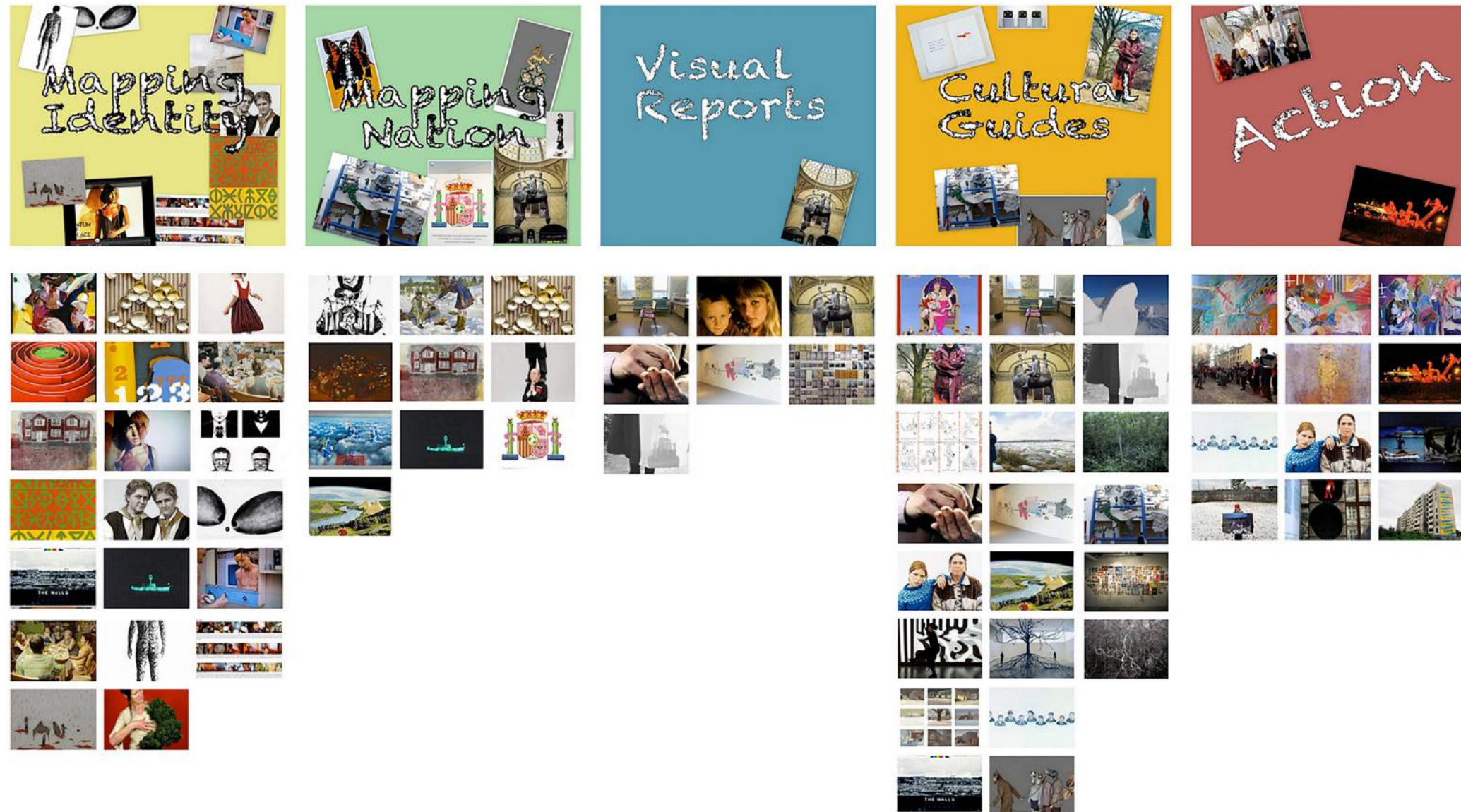


Figure 1: the Creative Connections' Artwork database



**Data and methods**

In this essay I will focus on the data from the case studies, reports from each participating school written by the country’s researchers based on observations on school visits and interviews with teachers and pupils. I analyzed the case studies using a data-based analysis method. What started to emerge from the texts created the categories: mentions of individual artworks used, mentions of who selected the artworks, approaches, uses, outcomes. Coding mentions made it possible to group the information by country, school level and category in order to draw conclusions.

**The use of the artwork database in the school projects**

The most commonly reported use of the artwork database in the case studies was to ‘generate discussion’ or ‘promote conversation.’ Other popular ways to approach the artworks were making re-interpretations or responses, which in some cases were called “analyzing and exploring the artworks visually”. This is also visible in the pupils’ works (Figure 2). In a few cases, the pupils also made written analyses. The artworks were noted in many cases to serve as examples and inspiration. They were also used to demonstrate roles of art, notions of stereotypes or concepts of how to present something. In some cases the teachers used the examples to create dialog with other images and pupils’ own art making, and to increase awareness of art and social issues.

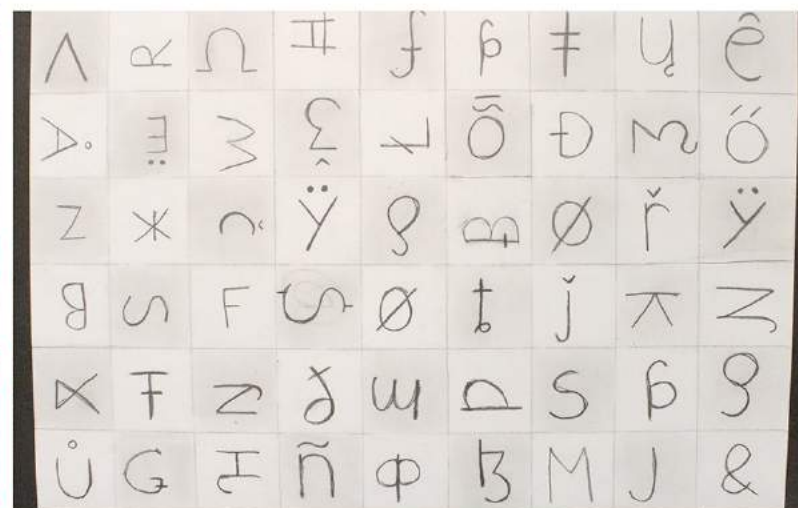
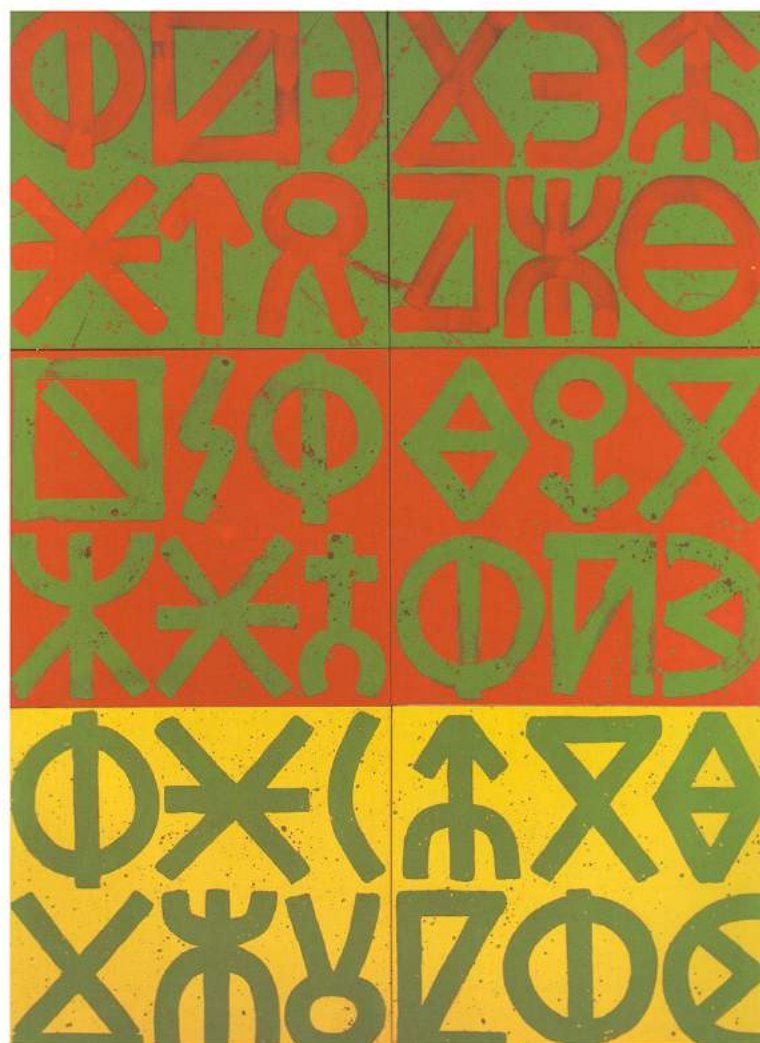
In roughly half of the cases, the teachers selected the examples and in the other half the pupils glanced through the database and selected artworks for analysis. Teachers with younger pupils more often selected the images to be explored.

In each country half of the used artworks were from their own artists and half from the other five countries. The most popular artworks were two-dimensional, realistic and easy to imitate and understand. They presented views on personal and national identities (categories A and B). Clear visual references to some of the mentioned artworks were found in pupils' work (Figure 2), but not for all. This indicates that some artworks were especially useful in evoking conversation and others inspired visual representations.

Figure 2 (next page): Examples of the various uses of Eduard Ovcacék's painting:

- a The original work “Signs”
- b A Finnish pupil’s version of the painting in drawn form
- c A visual inspiration for exploring the signs in Spanish pupils’ group work
- d An inspiration through language and writing for the theme “Book as me” in a Czech school project
- e An interpretation in the form of a sound work – a Finnish class created a soundscape for the painting







## Different approaches to using the artwork examples

The different approaches in using the artwork examples could be categorized into four groups. The emphasis on pupils' voices was one of the project's aims and this also began to be important in the search for pedagogical approaches. The pupils' works show the variety of the amount of control the children had over the process and how much of their own voice they were able to bring out; in other words, how strictly the teachers framed the assignment in order to control the process and predict the outcomes. The categories start from assignments where the artwork example guided the outcome more strictly, moving to the more open-ended art projects.

1 **Making your own version.** The artworks were visually analyzed by making a new version, a response, a pastiche, by drawing, painting and staging photographs. These pupils' works have a clear visual resemblance to the original artwork and often imitate its composition and technique (Figure 3). This was a popular assignment and used in many schools and countries, often as individual work related to expressing aspects of personal or national identity.

2 **Inspiration for a technique, form or subject.** The topics, techniques or visual structure of an artwork served as an inspiration for the pupil's work. These pupils' works still make visual references to the artwork. One Portuguese class analyzed the work of Sean Hillen and made their own vision of a cityscape with layers of the

past, present and future, by imitating the composition of the work and using the same collage technique (Figure 4). The difference to the first category is the thought and process regarding the content and the way of working in a group. The artwork form is utilized further to express the pupils' views and thoughts.

3 **Example of a concept.** The artworks and categories showed issues that art can address and how those issues can be visually approached. The artwork database was used in dialog with their own work process and several artworks were used during the process. One of the Spanish classes made art projects in small groups with topics chosen by the pupils themselves and used different artworks from the database to reflect their topic, aesthetic style, format and technique (Figure 5).

4 **Art as a political tool.** The artworks and the categories also served as an example of the different forms and roles of contemporary art. In particular, the political side of art opened new perspectives and community and environmental art techniques took the pupils out of the classrooms. These pupils' works no longer resemble the artwork examples but present more unique processes around actual topics in their community, society and surroundings (Figure 6). The school projects in this category achieved what Varto (2012) saw as the contribution of contemporary art to art education: making art starting from its political function and ability to create a place for meeting and discussion.





**Shopping is my hobby ...**



Figure 3: Alena Kotzmannová's work: "Shopping is my Hobby" and reinterpretation by Czech pupils.



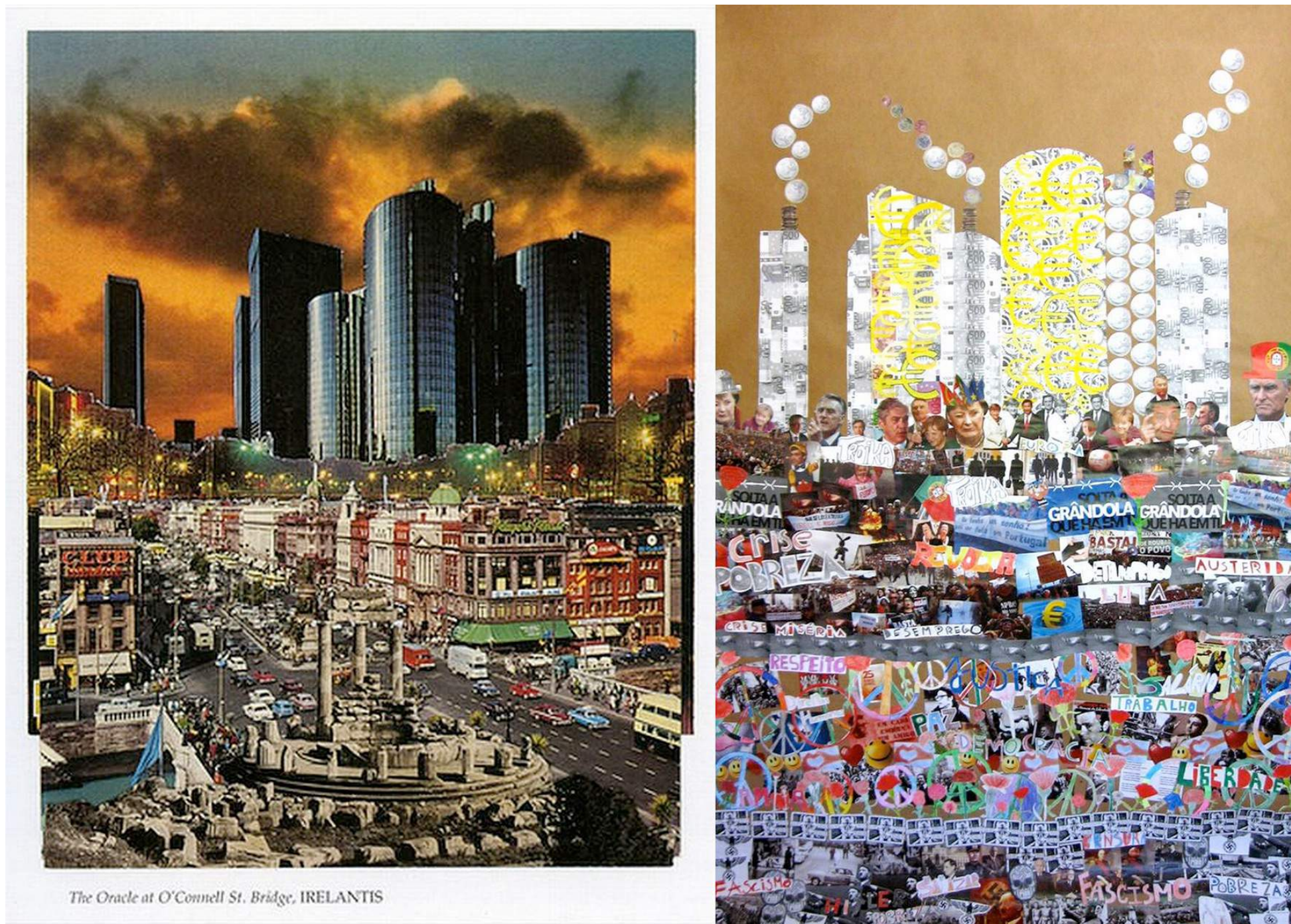


Figure 4: Sean Hillen: "The Oracle in the O'Connell Street Bridge, Irelantis" and children's work: "Money Rules in Europe."





Figure 5: Murals by the group with the theme “Art of Sport” and one reference artwork, Petri Hytönen's painting “Finland – Sweden.”





Figure 6: “Money in the sewer” comments on the economic crisis and politicians misusing money; Pedestrian crossing with the consequences of cutbacks in education, health, work, school, justice, etc. “We want the new School!” work includes pupils’ names glued to a fence that bars access to the construction site of a new school building that has been left unfinished.



## Conclusions

As a hypothesis, I was expecting to draw out the art education profiles of each partner country as the results of the study. Similar approaches were found, despite the differences in curricula, teaching arrangements, teacher education and facilities. The uses selected were more directed by the age of the pupils than the country, as the controlled assignments were mostly given to the youngest pupils and the most popular forms of assignments were used in all countries.

What difference did contemporary art make? The case studies report that the teachers and researchers found that it changed the pupils' understanding of art, and developed their visual literacy and awareness of art as a political tool. The experience encouraged teachers to show and discuss images and artworks more with the class, since image analysis was found to be an educational tool. This was new, especially for those teachers who did not specialize in the arts, but in general the pupils' open and enthusiastic response to the contemporary art surprised the teachers, who had had their doubts. Teachers had different starting points in using the artwork examples and various amounts of support during the process. Meaningful use of the artwork database was achieved either because of the teacher's expertise in art education or with the cooperation and support of the researcher as an art educator.

As intended, the artwork database worked as a space for dialog and expression, for talking about emotions and opinions. The categories of the artwork database worked in encouraging

participants to explore artworks from different countries and as guidelines for art education in the schools, since connections were found between the database categories and use of artworks. The artworks made pupils think, understand concepts and reflect their identity and social issues. Using the same artworks in different countries and schools raised the question of how the same image can be seen and understood from different perspectives and cultural backgrounds. The contemporary art methods gave freedom to an open-ended process.

## Notes

This visual essay is based on the article:

Manninen, A. (2015). *European Identity Through Art: Using the Creative Connections Artwork Database to Develop the Use of Contemporary Art in Education*. In M. Kallio-Tavin & J. Pullinen (Eds.), *Conversations on Finnish Art Education* (pp. 140-154). Aalto University publication series Art+Design+Architecture 5/ 2015. Helsinki: Aalto ARTS Books.

For more information on the Creative Connections-project visit <http://creativeconnexions.eu.eu>



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# Stretching the Limits

Mirja Hiltunen



# Stretching the Limits

## Abstract

This visual essay illustrates the context of art education practice and its contemporary art dimensions developed within the Art Education programme at the University of Lapland. The connections between interdisciplinary field of art education, research and artistic activism is a dynamic new opening with educational potential. I will examine performativity and place specific art and their potential in community-based art education in the context of art teacher training.

**Keywords:** Art education, Art teacher training, Place-specific art education, Socially-engaged Art

Photo (in the previous page): Mirja Hiltunen

The aim of the essay is to unwrap the basis through which place specific art and community-based art education is made a central part of the Art Education Programme. Community-based art education research extensively examines art education as interaction between people where cultures and ecologically and socially sustainable art education is a particular focus area where science and art become integrated. I intend to find out how the process of constructing an art event can offer an open space for conversation and collaboration – and how performative art in different northern environments can open the space for dialogue. In the end, it is a question of a possibility for change.

In the project studies (a class in the masters programme) the art education students have possibility to learn new teaching methods and approaches in a real life during their studies where activist art is considered as a potential agent of fostering sustaining, developing and regenerating communities in remote northern areas. The emphasis on the projects is on cross-sector collaboration. The action research approach during the projects have examined the potential for local schools and art teacher education to act as catalysts for developing an activist approach to art in a wider community setting.



*Utsjoki is the northernmost municipality in Finland, located next to the Norwegian border line. Department of Art Education has cooperated with the local school and other actors in many different ways over the past fifteen years. In the year 2004 we started to study Northern Lights both through artistic and scientific approach. In 2005, the significance of the first sunrise after the polar night was in focus. 2006 the main theme was water and the art activities were focusing to the memories, myths and local knowledge of the rivers and fishing-culture. 2007 the theme was wind and the activities were designed totally by locals with the help of couple of art students. Later the villagers have organized smaller summer schools for the upper secondary school, workshops for the elderly and persons with special needs, and several art and science days for the school, where winter art and snow sculpting has always been one part. (See Hiltunen 2005; 2010).*



Photo (children sawing ice) by Minna Saastamoinen.  
All other photos by Mirja Hiltunen





*Often the activity week has ended with a happening, where the villagers get together and celebrate in many ways the common achievements and experiences gathered during the activity week. At their best, the ending ceremonies of the project or activity week can be events in which speeches, performances, and artworks form an interdisciplinary artistic whole. The festive occasion it self can become an eventual work of art in its own right, which makes it possible for members of the community and different groups to present their skills and get together. The big snow sculpture was created in 2005 together with the local Sami high school students and international art students from the University of Lapland.*

*In March 2015 the theme of the science and art event organized by the villagers in Utsjoki was to celebrate the solar eclipse and ice fishing (see pictures p.36). The local astronomical association URSA and Village Association organized a joint science and art event to celebrate the solar eclipse which one experienced in Utsjoki 92% total. Two of my master students were leading a snow and fire sculpture workshop there under my supervision.*





*Solar eclipse and Ice fishing, Utsjoki 2015. Photo: Mirja Hiltunen*



The Faculty of Art and Design in general is involved in developmental research, which create new applications and innovations for business life, culture, education, the tourism sector and leisure and wellbeing services. A lively dialogue between science and art characterizes the research activities. Art education is involved in many ways in this development work by organizing multidisciplinary projects where students can do their project studies using art-based action research approach. (Jokela, Hiltunen & Härkönen 2015 a; b).

*ArctiChildren-project, a cross-border research and training program, is one example of the art department's long term projects where sustainable development has been the core element. The project aims for promoting schoolchildren's psychosocial well-being through school education in the Barents Region. In this project, the responsibility of art education was to develop environmental and community art activities using art-based action research as a method and students from the art education program were involved in many roles. (See Hiltunen 2008; Hiltunen & Manninen 2015; Arctichildren).*

Photo above: Timo Jokela





The aim of the art teacher education is the development of critical artistic and scientific thinking, where the challenge influencing change, in particular, is identified, as well as the questioning and discussion of alternatives. Since the 1990s, visual art education has been able to invite a number of cooperation partners and researchers to participate in projects, where it has sometimes been necessary to give up certainty, as well as familiar thinking and practice methods. Although art-based action research with its cycles and reflective frameworks appears to be goal-oriented and structured, art-based research also involves stepping into uncertainty, the unforeseeable future, as well as the imagination of even less existent worlds. Transition from the individualistic practices of art and sciences toward a sense of community, working together and creating together is challenging, but it also opens new horizons. When visiting the limits and stretching the limits, collisions should not be feared. (See Hiltunen 2010; Hiltunen & Rantala 2015).

In multidisciplinary projects, a rich and rewarding environment has opened up for joint consideration and active operations. The projects have taken a grip to support the well-being of young people and elderly people, as well as a variety of work places by means of art-based methods. At the same time, the scope of art education activities and cooperation with social sciences, particularly with social work, has been extended.

*The project IKÄEHYTT- supporting older adult's wellbeing and coping in Northern Finland, was held in 2011-2013 with 14 Northern Finnish municipalities in collaboration with 3rd sector actors. The aim of the project was to develop art-based models and methods that enhance older adults' wellbeing, quality of life and agency. The organizers used service design*

*and community-based art education approaches in order to promote social engagement and well-being.*

Photos: Rita Johanna Laitinen, except second photo: Elisa Ahonan







Saarenkylä 2011 photo Elisa Ahonen





*The starting point for the workshops called “At home” 2015 was multiprofessional geriatric care. Workshop was jointly organized by the Art Education and Social Work. The project focuses on interaction and respecting dignity of elderly through art based activities. In that case, it was not only a question about remembering the past but also dreaming and acting for the future. The art activities created opportunities for open interaction and working together joyfully and enjoying creating.*

Photos: Mirja Hiltunen





The 'ArtGear – Two-Way Integration of Young People 2016-2018' project addresses the challenges of increased immigration. This project is a collaboration between the faculties of Art and Design and Social Work in the University of Lapland; the Artists' Association of Lapland and the Cross-art Collective Piste. There is a perceived need for activities that integrate immigrants to Finnish culture and equally Finnish young people to a multicultural society. The aim of the project is to support interaction between young immigrants and native Finnish young people, thereby reducing racist attitudes. Art-based methods, such as community art, applied visual arts and performative art are used in close cooperation with social work to support the integration of young people in Finnish Lapland. The art workshops are designed to support immigrants who have arrived in Finland as asylum seekers and received residency permits. (ArtGear, Taidevaihdde-ArtGear). See <https://www.facebook.com/Taide-vaihde-Art-Gear-1173182562726526/>

The society changes, and the art changes as part of it, art teacher training should be included in this change sensitively but effectively. In art education, it is always a question of human growth through relevant experience. In this growth, knowledge based on perception of art and skills, physicality and experience, is considered valuable. Investigative and phenomenon-oriented working, which is characteristic of art, represents a holistic conception of knowledge, where the individual and communal nature of art learning are combined. The action is long-term and goal-oriented, it encourages

experimentation, interdisciplinary art, as well as large-scale cooperation projects. The present phenomena can be approached by applying practices that are characteristic of contemporary art. In their profession, an art teacher and educator must continue to develop their ability to imagine opportunities, which do not exist, research unclear issues, as well as develop their ability to notice new perspectives. The challenge of art teacher training and art education research is to understand and anticipate the needs for change in the field in relation to the changing world, but also believe in and defend stability, unique experience opening in art, and hence a new kind of understanding of the world, one's self, education phenomena, as well as art itself.



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# The Art of Art Education Increases in Lapland

Timo Jokela



# The Art of Art Education Increases in Lapland

## In the beginning at the River

This article looks back on the 25 years long path of art education in Lapland University. In the summer of 1994, I was looking at River Ounasjoki at the opening of the Lapland Artists' Association's outdoor exhibition near Rovaniemi where I had art installation of my own. I had just found out that I had been chosen for the position as a Professor in Art education at the University of Lapland, when I was asked about my willingness to participate in the planning of the University's joint multidisciplinary Summer School with the theme of the River. As an environmentally orientated artist and art educator and a fisherman I immediately knew that I had come to work in the right university. The cooperation of Arts, Humanism, Social and Legal Sciences with northern eco-social culture had begun.

The next spring, as a part of summer school we went down River Ounasjoki on a log raft we had made. The concept of

community art did not exist yet those days, but we knew that in addition to the landscape, we had made an impact on the minds of the local people, the deep undercurrents of social environmental culture, with our art project. During the next years, we worked on the mountains and in the wilderness of Lapland and the shores of the Arctic Ocean in Norway, making art and building touring exhibitions using a thematic approach.

At the time, it was already clear to my colleagues and I that traditional studio working, studying of techniques, expression and art history, poorly responded to the changing education, society and contemporary art challenges set for visual art teachers. We realised that the adoption of contemporary art practices required art teacher education to be critically opened up to the surrounding world. We aimed to build a cooperation between art education and the Lapland university's northern environment. At the beginning, thematic summer schools were an ideal tool for this, and particularly the different forms of environmental art were welcomed with interest in the region. Interaction was not created just between individuals, but different organisations and cultural representatives were referred to the state of creative dialogue, as the operations expanded to the entire Northern European region with European Union funding (Jokela, Hiltunen & Härkönen, 2015a). Support for efforts to reform art education was found as the international networks strengthened. Particularly, the support of experts operating in the circles of InSEA, was encouraging from the very beginning.





*River Project's* participants rafting down the Ounas river. Finland. Photo Timo Jokela.



*River Project in spring 1995.* Testing the log raft build by students and staff of art education department in collaboration with local villagers. Ounasriver. Finland. Photo Vuokko Oja.



## **ACE - Project Studies as a Development Tool**

The profiling of the Lapland University to the North and the Arctic opened up the opportunity to look at the role of art in building social relations, developing research and artistic cooperation as well as building expertise. In this new context, environmental art became a tool, which we used to develop the working methods of contextual and place-based visual art education based on contemporary art and the encounter of the northern socio-cultural settings (Jokela & Hiltunen 2014).

At the end of the 1990s, the sense of community had become very topical, when art and culture began to be discussed in various contexts. Art became an integral part of sustainable development and general well-being, it was considered as an important economic resource, even as a promoter of health. Discussions of strengthening the civil society and the third sector strongly raised the idea of community-based visual arts education thinking. The idea that an art educator must be able to look at their own position, instead of being a teacher of skills, but also as a cultural worker and a cultural values' reformer, strengthened. We now understood the role of an art educator as the builder of arts' creative space; an enabler, curator, facilitator, producer, arranger, creator of a dialogue-oriented culture.

The expansion of the profession of an art educator opened financing possibilities for field work, both domestically as well as in international forums. Art education demonstrated its ability as the executor of projects funded by the European

Union in the entire Northern region (see Jokela et al. 2015a). The forum for development was created by establishing Art, Community and Environment (ACE) project studies at the beginning of the 2000s in the curriculum reforms at the University of Lapland.

## **Project Studies as a Pedagogical Form of Contemporary Visual Arts Education**

The ACE -project studies of the Master's Degree, where students, art educators, artists and scientists from different fields worked together within the same theme, supported the internal integration of the subject. Projects that operated on project funding often had representatives of arts and cultural institutions, tourism, business and local communities involved, in addition to schools and educational institutions. The involvement of different interest groups enabled dialogue and polyphony during activities, and coached the students for the challenges of a changing working life and society. As a phenomenon-based project pedagogy developer, we were ahead of our time.

ACE -projects became integrated with students' scientific master theses, and later to the dissertations of doctor students. Thus, arts projects received a strong research orientation alongside the functional aspect. Methodological principles and the role of artistic productions as part of research were made clearer. It is always good to remember that research of visual arts education in Finland is relatively new, and it was only developed at the





*Preparing the River Lights event - from the myths of light and fire into contemporary art. Straw sculpture made by art students and local school pupils waiting, for burning at nightfall. Kemi River, Rovaniemi. Photo Timo Jokela.*



Wintery place making. Working in schoolyard with Sami School children in Jokkmokk, Sweden. *ArctiChildren* project: Cross-border training program for promoting psychosocial well-being through school education in the Barents region: Jokkmokk. Photo Timo Jokela.



same time with the initiation of the University of Lapland's visual arts education research.

### **Art Teacher as a Researcher - Methodological Orientation Choices**

Raising the interaction between art and science to the centre of the University of Lapland's strategy was unique and bold. In this case, it was realised that artistic work and research complement each other in a significant manner. Both working methods are combined by the effort to refine the perception of the world, and express this specified understanding to others. Science and art also belong to a well-structured image of the society and people, and at their best, they are tools for the improvement of society. As art educators, we sought a place for pedagogy as well.

When searching for a methodological basis for art education research, we began to test the combination of participatory action research methods with contemporary artistic activities. The art education staff's own active artistic work created an understanding basis for the development of the method. How each person's own artistic activities had encountered the north, became a tool for many teachers to develop art pedagogy. Productions created by the staff's research projects have also constantly been set for evaluation in several domestic and international exhibitions, and thus, work has been provided significant international peer feedback.

The method we developed was also applicable as a method for students' theses that had been made in the framework of art projects. Instead of researching personal art (artistic research), the subject of the students' Master's theses, who were studying to become art teachers, was the participatory and pedagogical dimension of art. The subject is, therefore, the pedagogical arrangement and learning process based on the interaction of art, which can be developed through participatory action research. Different forms of art are the development forms of interaction and dialogue, which can in turn be developed as contemporary art. To underline this, we began to call the method Art-Based Action Research (ABAR). The method is an action research and the action tool is art. (Jokela et al. 2015a).

By means of ABAR -methods, contextual artistic approaches have been developed within the scope of the University of Lapland's art teacher training, e.g. in formal and informal education, artistic and cultural life, youth work, elderly people, indigenous cultures, as well as the tourism industry. One of the most long-term development projects that was carried out by means of ABAR was the development of winter art with the regional businesses. It still offers an interesting platform for the promotion of contemporary art, research, contextual art education and the interaction of Northern cultures and identities. (Jokela, Härkönen & Yliharju 2014).



Children working in schoolyard with Sami craft-traditions and snow in Jokkmokk Sami school, Sweden. *Arctic-Children project*: Cross-border training program for promoting psychosocial well-being through school education in the Barents region. Photo Timo Jokela.





## Visual Arts Education as a Faculty Developer

In ABAR, it is also a question of developing the participating organisations' operation culture. The development of ABAR has been a learning process for the art education training program staff and its stakeholders. And the effect does not end here. The art education staff have had a very strong role as the developer of the entire Art and Design Faculty and its stakeholders operations as well as internationalisation. A good example of this a new international Arctic Art & Design Master's Degree program (University of Lapland 2016) where the best of project pedagogy, applied visual arts and service design are combined (Jokela, Coutts, Huhmarniemi & Härkönen 2013). The programme was launched in the autumn of 2015.

To strengthen the northern profile of the university, we established an Arctic Sustainable Arts and Design (ASAD 2016) thematic network under the umbrella of the University of the Arctic in 2010. The network is an extension to the determined development work with northern art education, and it now consists of 26 arts and design educational institutions from 8 different countries. The network's annual symposiums, exhibitions and publications offer art education and applied visual art projects a good international peer review forum, and they have increased the awareness of the entire art faculty as a talent centralisation of Arctic art and design. (Jokela & Coutts 2014; Jokela, Hiltunen, Härkönen 2015b).

## The Art of Visual Arts Education

The main challenge of the University of Lapland's 25-year-long path has been to find the artistic and scientific orientation, as well as the synthesis of participatory pedagogy. In the arts, research and development projects led by staff, as well as the activities of master students, personal art expression is not so much emphasised, but instead the interactive operations with other entities communities, learners, artists and researchers. I would like to call the artistic output of this sharing and empowering process the art of visual arts education.

I believe that in this art of visual arts education, something happens which can be described as communally produced constructing of the world, something that neither looks back, nor classifies, but is open to new directions and sensitive to change. However, when created as part of research processes, is also true and responsible. In the art of visual arts education, education and research encounter in contemporary art's open, socially responsible and culturally sensitive mode. During the past 25 years, our northern and Arctic location has offered the development of art education a stimulating learning environment.

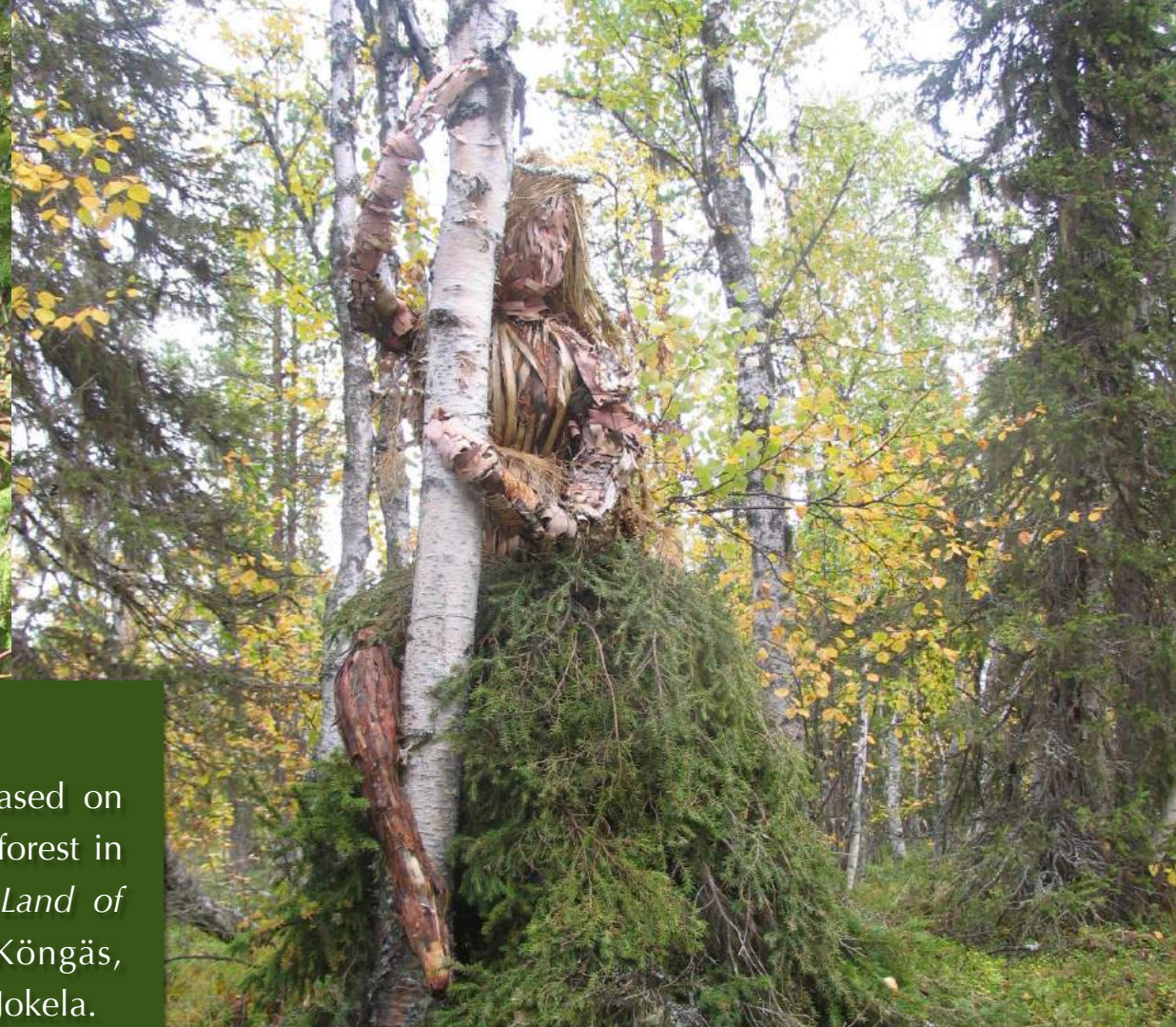
The actions of the staff and students have proven that the art of visual arts education has strengthened and matured in its northern cradle. Taking the operations to different sectors of society has brought awareness to the skills and power of visual arts education, and at the same time, has enabled contemporary art's opportunities to be realised and understood.



Creating environmental art for tourism destinations. Preparation of willow sculpture in the *Land of the Forest Folk*. Kõngäs, Finland. Photo Timo Jokela.



Environmental art based on folklore tales of the forest in tourism destination *Land of the Forest Folk*. Kõngäs, Finland. Photo Timo Jokela.



School children, teachers and local villagers building an environmental art work at a walking trail close to municipality center in Ivalo, Finland. Photo Korinna Korsström-Magga.







Place specific art work in a forgotten fishing station at Bodö, Norway. *Trans Barents Highway Symposium of Art* was a month long travelling workshop from Atlantic coast, Norway, through Sweden and Finland into Russia to Murmansk. Photo Timo Jokela.





Winter art as a method for *Salla Myrsky Community Project* in the Salla municipality, Northern Finland. With the help of art education students of University of Lapland, local teachers and other local agencies, the youth of Salla village celebrate local identity and traditions of the region. 2009. Photo Timo Jokela.



Vocational school students, nature tourism companies and art education students and teachers working on place-specific snow and ice buildings at the Arctic Ocean. *Snow and Ice Project* aims at making winter art known in the region and to develop winter art education that is suitable for Finnmark's multicultural societies. Kirkenes, Norway. Photo Timo Jokela.



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## Note

Photo page 43. Guardian figure made by art education students at the gate of the tourism destination. *Land of the Forest Folk*. Königs, Finland. Photo: Timo Jokela.





# Where Fragmentation and Integration Meet: Pedagogical Challenges and Opportunities for Museums of Contemporary Art

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## Where Fragmentation and Integration Meet: Pedagogical Challenges and Opportunities for Museums of Contemporary Art

### Abstract

Museums of contemporary art find themselves faced with a broad range of pedagogical challenges and opportunities. The art museum has to find its place in this new ubiquitous network society and, despite the trends to the contrary, ensure people space, as well as and a time and place, to be present where art is. Where this succeeds, one finds fertile ground enabling rich multisensory learning experiences. The degree program in art education at the University of Lapland has an intense cooperation with Rovaniemi Art Museum. Students complete some of their studies in the art museum, working as exhibition guides or running workshops for school and day care groups. The workshops seek to lower the threshold for engaging with art by encouraging observations, discussion and hands-on activities. At their best, exhibitions and workshops help participants to build a bridge connecting everyday life and art, enabling them to understand some phenomenon from a novel perspective. In 2016, workshops titled “Eyes in your Fingers” were held in connection with an exhibition of Tapio Wirkkala’s work. The experimental design activities drove home the importance of design in our everyday lives and encouraged the participants to try out creative processes. Personal engagement with the design process gave the museum-goers an opportunity to discover new sides of themselves, as well as new aspects of the surrounding

culture and of their place in the world. The article is based on the museum pedagogy course essay by Karoliina Salo.

**Keywords:** art museum, art museum pedagogy, museum teaching, workshop, experientiality, interaction, conception of learning

## Pedagogical Challenges and Opportunities for Museums of Contemporary Art

A museum is a place where people come to remember and learn about the past and the continuum of time. In a museum of contemporary art, the visitor’s gaze is focused more on the present moment and the future. The salience of works of art lies in how they are interpreted at the moment of viewing. The main reason why people come to an art museum is to experience art and through that experience learn about themselves, the world and culture. An art museum is not an end in itself; it is primarily for its visitors, and tailoring the museum experience for different visitors is the hot topic in art museum discourse today. Visitors are regarded as active agents who construct their own understanding of what they see, with the museum there to offer them additional food for thought (Levanto & Petterson, 2004).

Karoliina recalls her days in school back in the early 2000s, when the structure of a museum visit was very straight-forward: pupils wandered around on their own and afterwards the teacher asked them what their favourite work was.



Skill from Art. Promoting Art Museum Pedagogy: collaboration between the University of Lapland and Rovaniemi Art Museum.

Art education students are a familiar sight at the Rovaniemi Art Museum. From autumn to spring, one will find groups of two or three students acting as exhibitions guides and running workshops for groups from schools or day care centres. The students' presence there is the outcome of a long process of planning in which they familiarize themselves with the exhibition, prepare appropriate learning materials and plan workshops for participants of different ages.

The master's programme in art education at the University includes a course titled Art Museum and Exhibition Pedagogy. The special feature of the course is that the students work intensively with Rovaniemi Art Museum, a tradition of collaboration going back to 1993. The course spans the entire academic year in a process that gives the students a chance to become familiar with how the museum operates, to plan and carry out the pedagogical dimension of exhibitions and to run workshops related to them. All of this is done in collaboration with museum staff. The aim of the collaborative approach is to use the art museum and contemporary art as part of, and as the basis for, art education. The museum's curators and lecturer talk to the students about the museum's activities and their work. One resource students have at their disposal through the museum, exceptional in scope in Finland, is the database of the digital images in the collection belonging to the Jenny and Antti Wihuri Foundation. Yet another benefit is that students occasionally have opportunities to plan and put together exhibitions using works from the Wihuri collection. They cooperate closely with museum staff and help the exhibiting artists display their works.

Responsibility for learning was placed squarely on the learner, as was the motivation. This approach reflected the museum-centred mentality of the past, when museums sought to enlighten the public. They put together exhibitions as they saw fit and the public's task was to drink in the wisdom the intelligentsia put before them, engaging in silent reflection as they viewed the works (Pettersson, 2004, 10-19). With culture becoming fragmented, museums no longer plan their activities for a single public but cater to various smaller publics and their needs (Levanto & Pettersson, 2004, 52).

Historically, art museums have accommodated different publics largely based on social class, with less well-off visitors offered discounts or free admission at particular times. Today, publics are differentiated mostly by the way they process information, and their habits in doing so. Museums plan their work with an awareness that people have different ways of perceiving reality depending on the things they encounter in their daily lives; for example, members of different professions will see things differently. This fresh perspective is

welcome indeed if we think of the future of the art museum, as it offers a range of practical means for planning and renewing the museum experience.

Current thinking holds that developments in technology will largely dictate what our future looks like. Futurologists say that we are headed for a ubiquitous network society. Ubiquitous technology –intelligence that is present everywhere – will change humankind; the notions of past, present and future will become meaningless because we can (re)visit any of them. Place will have a more social and fluid meaning than it does today. Physical location will no longer have the same significance it once had; the importance of a place will be primarily social, defined through encounters (Rönkkö, 2004, 122-124). The role of art museums will change accordingly: they will go from being places where art is stored to being places where people and art meet.

The idea of art museums focusing on interaction and visitor experiences raises concerns that they may become carnevalized.



The cooperation between the University and the Art Museum has intensified and the museum pedagogy course has firmly established itself in the curriculum. Students bring a breath of fresh air and new ideas to the museum. In return they get exposure to working life, as well as experience with contemporary art and how education works in museums in practice. The children, young people and adults who take part in the exhibitions and workshops provide the students with insights into how people engage with art. These are crucial lessons given that there is almost no telling what today's staggering technological development will lead to when combined with contemporary art.

The scope and intensity of the cooperation between the University and the Art Museum is second to none in Finland, and museum pedagogy features prominently in this achievement. Over the years we have seen master's theses on the topic and many graduates have gone on to pursue careers in art museums. The students' experiences and expertise follow them into the professions they take up, where they develop and help to shape the museum pedagogy of the future. They are well equipped to answer key questions such as: Where do we engage with art? And, how can perspectives on art be translated into action, bring art to life and help museum-goers feel that the art they see becomes part of them?

#### Literature:

Happonen, E. & Kähkönen, K. (Eds.) (2006): Miksi aurinko on vihreä? Lapset ja nykytaide. Rovaniemi: Rovaniemen taidemuseo.

Immonen, H. (2006). Sininen torni. Rovaniemi: Rovaniemen taidemuseo.

Kähkönen, K. (Ed.) (2011). Flying Stories. Lentävät tarinat. Rovaniemi: Rovaniemi Art Museum -Rovaniemen taidemuseo.

Suikkanen, S. & Kuusikko, R. (Eds.) (2001). Meidän taide. Lapset ja nuoret nykytaidetta kohtaamassa. Rovaniemi: Rovaniemen taidemuseo, Lapin yliopisto.

Will the world of art and the value we place on it vanish altogether if everything is geared to visitors and enriching their lives? A good example is the case where a ball pit set up in a church was frowned upon. Art, like churches, has a certain sanctity about it; the enjoyment of art should not be too hedonistic (Levanto & Petterson, 2004). The variety of light-hearted activities that accompany encounters with art temper its elitist nature as an institution,

but a café-cum-gift shop circus may overwhelm the works we came to see. A place designed to provide the profound intellectual experiences that the Enlightenment valued is now full of easy-to-learn playgrounds and high-tech amusement parks (Levanto, 2004, 61-62).





Art museums have no inherent link to what its cafés and gift shops do: these are unconnected to the art collections.

An inspirational example of this is a work by Marina Abramovic, a pioneer in the field of performance art. The work, still in the planning stages, involves people coming to the Institute of Immaterial Performing Arts to engage in performance exercises, the idea being that they leave their other lives behind, outside the museum, and focus on the moment. They dress up in lab coats, making them researchers rather than spectators. All mobile phones and other electronic devices are left at the door and the participants commit themselves to being at the museum for six hours. Under Marina's direction they focus on the present moment and reclaim all the personal time that constant use of electronic gadgets has taken from them. Once in the museum they walk around, have a drink of water, stand around, sit down and lie down, all the while focused on the moment. They are then ready to look at something more sustained, such as immaterial art (Abramovic, 2015).



Marina Abramovic at a TED talk telling people in the audience to look into the eyes of the person sitting next to them for two minutes.

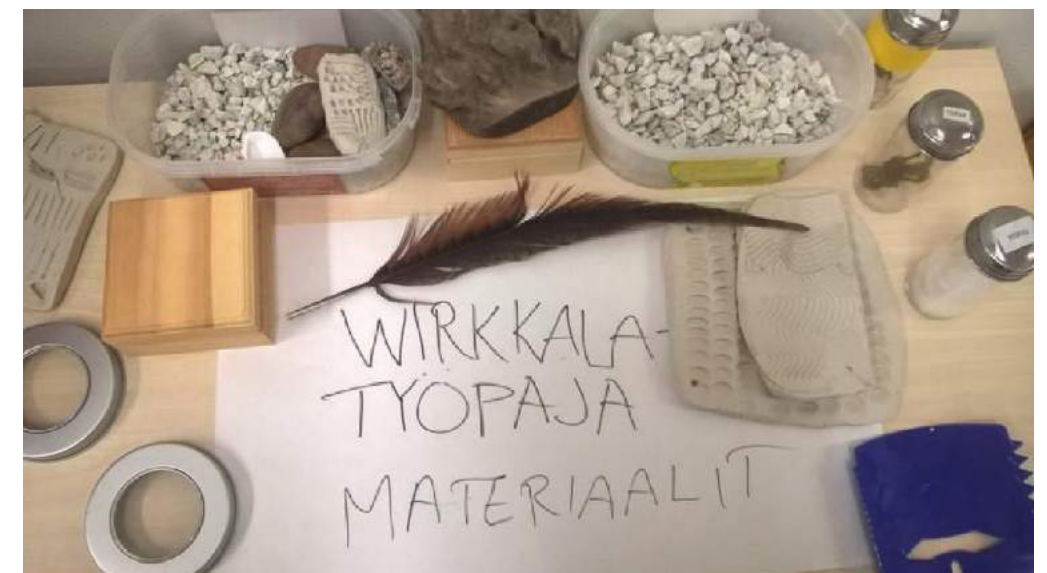
See: [https://www.ted.com/talks/marina\\_abramovic\\_an\\_art\\_made\\_of\\_trust\\_vulnerability\\_and\\_connection](https://www.ted.com/talks/marina_abramovic_an_art_made_of_trust_vulnerability_and_connection)

A museum does not necessarily need to give the public what the public wants; it is welcome to challenge them. Where this occurs, people do not remain trapped in their own world of beliefs but are given an opportunity to learn something new. A museum should not bend over backwards to cater to its visitors' every whim but should engage them in the work going on and the experiences to be had there. A sincere effort to accommodate different people naturally requires different approaches; for example, some visitors will need help in overcoming sensory deficits.





At the beginning of 2016, art education students Karoliina Salo, Elisa Huhtinen and Kati Konkka planned a series of workshops entitled “Eyes in your Fingers” (see sidebar). The workshops were held in conjunction with the exhibition Still/Life–Tapio Wirkkala Retrospective (31 October 2015 – 28 February 2016) commemorating the 100th anniversary of the birth of the successful Finnish designer Tapio Wirkkala. Informing the planning and implementation of the workshops making up “Eyes in your Fingers”, as well as the process underlying Wirkkala’s design, is the idea of being present in a certain place at a certain time.







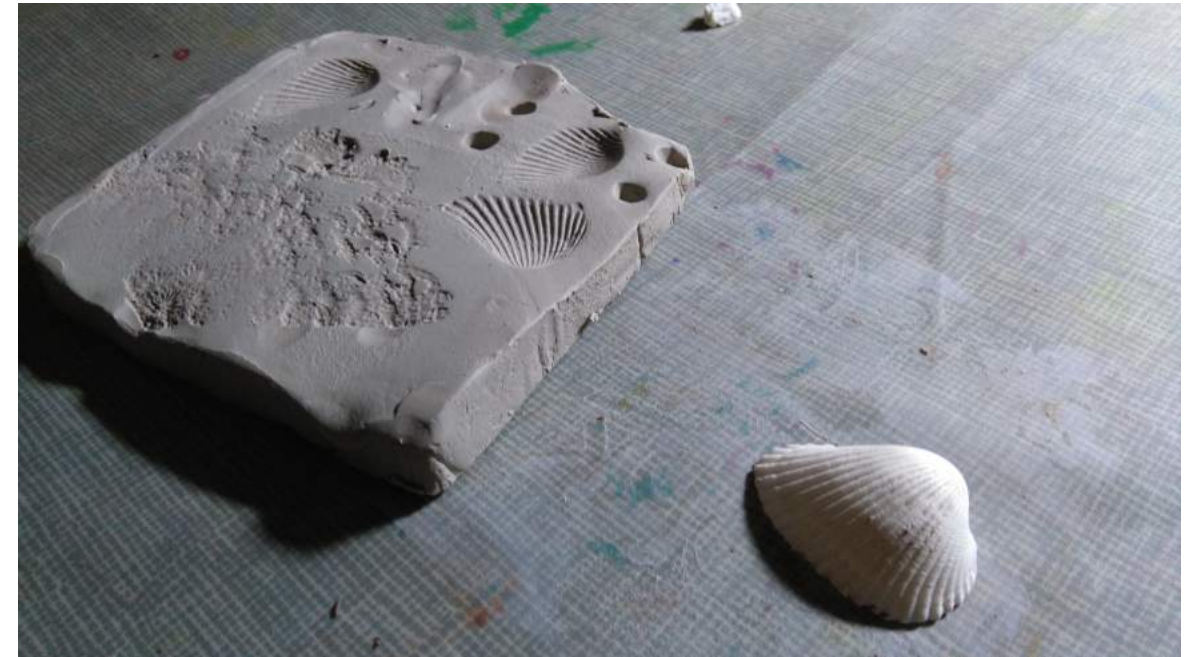
Searching for elements of nature as a part of 'Eyes in the Fingers' workshop





Designing a surface as a part of the workshop

The participants had the opportunity to experience the initial stages of the design process. They were first told that Tapio Wirkkala was a well-known designer internationally in his lifetime who returned to Finnish Lapland time and again to relax and find inspiration in the nature there. Participants put their hands in “inspiration pouches” containing bark, pine cones, feathers, leaves and other natural materials. They were then divided into smaller groups and went to view the exhibition. Each group was given an element to look for: water and ice, wood, plants or animals. They were then given the task of looking for objects among the practical and artistic objects on exhibit which brought to mind their elementor which they thought might have been inspired by it. The findings were then shared with all of the participants. The moderator of the workshop augmented the discussion with additional information on the work. Then, in the studio space, the



participants were given clay, traditional tools for working with clay and various natural materials. They went on to study the contours of clay surfaces by freely experimenting with the tools provided.



Photos of the workshop:  
Elisa Huhtinen, Kati  
Konkka and Karoliina  
Salo



The participants ranged from five-year-old pre-schoolers to teenage students and adults. They all had the same aims but, given their diverse interests, the way they expressed themselves and the things they highlight differed. The workshop moderators engaged with the participants as individuals, using means appropriate to each group to keep their attention and to discuss what it means to be a designer. The children found it easier to listen and explore the contents of pouches when sitting on cushions on the floor; the teenagers were happy to reflect on the objects they found that represented the different elements; and the adults gladly listened to details of Tapio Wirkkala's personal life, wife, children and artistic creations.

Instead of tailoring activities to suit different user groups and fragmenting the museum experience, it might be preferable to think of the work museums do as bringing a wholeness to our humanity. This means planning activities for the human being in all of us and planning them so that they can be adapted to suit all visitors. The educational aim comes first, the means second. A museum-centred educational aim could be defined as genuine engagement of the public in constructing culture and making it visible. In the ubiquitous society of the future, many different facets of our lives will proceed simultaneously and overlap. This trend presents museums of contemporary art with a new task: to offer people a "temple of the mind" that provides the tools to enrich their humanity, to achieve a feeling of wholeness as a person and construct a shared culture.

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# Interdisciplinary Intentions – Reflecting on my Teaching Practice

Seija Ulkuniemi



# Interdisciplinary Intentions – Reflecting on my Teaching Practice

## Abstract

This article is my reflection on various visual art courses that I have taught to primary school generalist teacher-trainees. The students I taught were studying to become teachers for grades one to six. Surprisingly, the interart teaching method, e.g. integrating the arts, was new to most of the students. I introduced tasks that were designed to get the students involved in expressing themselves visually and verbally, with sound, music and movement. Examples of student work from the basic 5 ETCS course (visual art education), and from the optional 25 ETCS course (art education as a minor subject) are presented.

**Keywords:** art education, interdisciplinary, interarts, performance, generalist teacher training

## An interdisciplinary approach to enhancing body-mind wellbeing

The visual arts include aspects of music, drama and dance. All of these involve 'reception, emotion, and the creative processes: a love of manipulation (of both forms and materials), a delight of sensations, and considerable pleasure in the contemplation as well as creation of structured experiences' (Gaitskell, Hurwitz & Day, 1982, p. 403).

The qualities of these arts correspond to the learning outcomes listed by Hoffman Davis (2012, 13):

- 1 Tangible product – imagination and agency
- 2 Focus on emotion – expression and empathy
- 3 Ambiguity – interpretation and respect
- 4 Process orientation – inquiry skills and reflection
- 5 Humanity connection – engagement and responsibility.

My main pedagogical aim is to organize classes that use these outcomes to enhance the wellbeing of students. To heighten the connectivity between body and mind, I often start the class with some kind of relaxation exercise. My classes also contain many other exercises that use all the senses and encourage bodily movement.

I enjoy taking students outside of the classroom; for example, in an environmental camp, I led a project in which Niina built





a totem with red strings and asked other students to search for energy by walking in and out the marked 'rays' (Figures 1–3. Niina Larikka: *Totem*, 2012).



## Say it with words: ways to verbalize

Verbal expression is often used to reflect upon works of art, to evaluate them or to explain their meaning. I prefer tasks that ask students to ponder their personal values, an exercise which, according to Fleming (2012, 117) is one of the foundations of art. For example, in 3D design class, I asked students to choose their idol, then plan and create a chair for this person and explain the design. Student Sanna Koivisto wrote:

The chair suits my big brother's style.

Here he can sit when watching TV or playing games. Also, his mates can sit down on this chair when visiting him.

My big brother likes modern furniture with some elements differing from tradition. For this reason, the materials are chosen to be black cloth and metal net.

(Images 4-5 (next page). Sanna Koivisto: *Chair for My Big Brother*, 2012).



## TUOLI ISOVELJELLE

Tuoli on isoveljen tyylinen.  
Tässä hän voi istua katso-  
essaan elokuvia tai pelatessaan  
pelejä. Myös veljen käverit  
voivat istahtaa tälle tuolille  
tullessaan kylään.

Isoveli pitää moderneista huone-  
kaluista joissa on vähän jotain  
perinteisestä poikkeavaa. Siksi  
tuoliin on valittu materiaaliksi musta  
kangas ja metalliverkko.

Sanna Korvisto R2





Sometimes a poetical approach helps to deepen the message of the work. In the environmental camp, the students created 'kingdoms of senses', and wrote related poems that offered something to all the senses (Figures 6-9. Pirjo Tolonen: *A Kingdom of the Senses*, 2005).

Water itself is my kingdom.  
I leaned on the pine at the tip  
of the point,  
looked at the glimmering of  
the water.



I knelt on a hummock  
by the pond.  
'What fragrances!'  
I offered the visitors some  
pungent cranberries,  
my favourite berries.



Breaking into song, I asked  
the visitor  
to grasp the oar.



'Row, row to the island...!'





A personal *punctum* (piercing) photo is another starting point for integrating poetry with other art forms (Image 10. *Anu's punctum photo*, 2001). Anu accompanied her ensuing photo triptych with a long and touching poem that dealt with her connection with her mother, first as a caressed child, then as an independent young woman not needing anyone to comb her hair, though still longing to be touched, and finally, portrayed Anu's mother as caretaker to Anu's grandmother, with thoughts about Anu's possible future as a mother (Images 11–13. *Anu's Triptych*, 2001).



Figure 10. *Anu's punctum photo*,



Figures 11–13. *Anu's Triptych*, 2001



Sometimes, poetry can be based on the work of a fellow student. Irene Heikkilä responded to Hanna's painting (Image 14. Hanna Sipilä: *Silence*, watercolour painted in silence, 2012) with a poem:

Glow of morning,  
hue of light.  
Its gaze is flooding  
softness embracing the heart,  
that leaves behind,  
in the depth,  
pulsing warmth.  
Beauty touches,  
and from far away  
I hear  
the unique song of my life.

Gradually, I realize:  
for me, I have  
only this moment.



Figure 14. Hanna Sipilä: *Silence*, watercolour painted in silence, 2012



Words or stories may also serve as a good starting point for a visual work. I introduced a method of making a visual poem based on a peer student's story (Ulkuniemi, 2010). I combined student Inga Annala's *kurotus* (reaching out) idea with memory work and private photographs. First, a student told a story based on another student's chosen photograph (Image 15. 'Valma's photo', 2007). The pair of students wrote the story down, and then created an interpretative visual poem based on the story (Image 16. *Darja's visual poem based on Valma's story*, 2007). Darja's work included the words 'one day...more skilled', because she found a theme of envy in Valma's story.



Figure 15. 'Valma's photo', 2007



Figure 16. *Darja's visual poem based on Valma's story*, 2007



An international interdisciplinary experiment took place when Finnish art education students worked in pairs with Slovakian English literature students. They interacted via the internet to design visual poems, starting from the question 'where do I come from' (Ulkuniemi & Husárová, 2015).

Graphic design often offers a natural impetus to combine words and images. In our three-year international project, Spanish and Finnish students designed posters that included at least one word about their urban heritage, such as public sculptures. The results were shown on the internet, and verbal comments were provided by the pairs of students, then the work was explained by the makers (People and Heritage, 2016).

### **Music as a starting point for individual responses**

One way to encourage students to make music based on art is to ask them to choose an element in an abstract picture and assign a sound to it. The teacher can then lead an orchestra playing the painting as a partita, showing the duration of each element by pointing it out.

More often, I use music to evoke feelings, associations or memories. This easily leads to unique results because all the students have a personal way of interpreting music. If the task is very open, the student may also draw from the rhythm instead of revealing their inner self. Here are some drawings that students made in 2012 after listening to Ulla Pirttijärvi's Sami music.

Figure 17. Anne Niskala





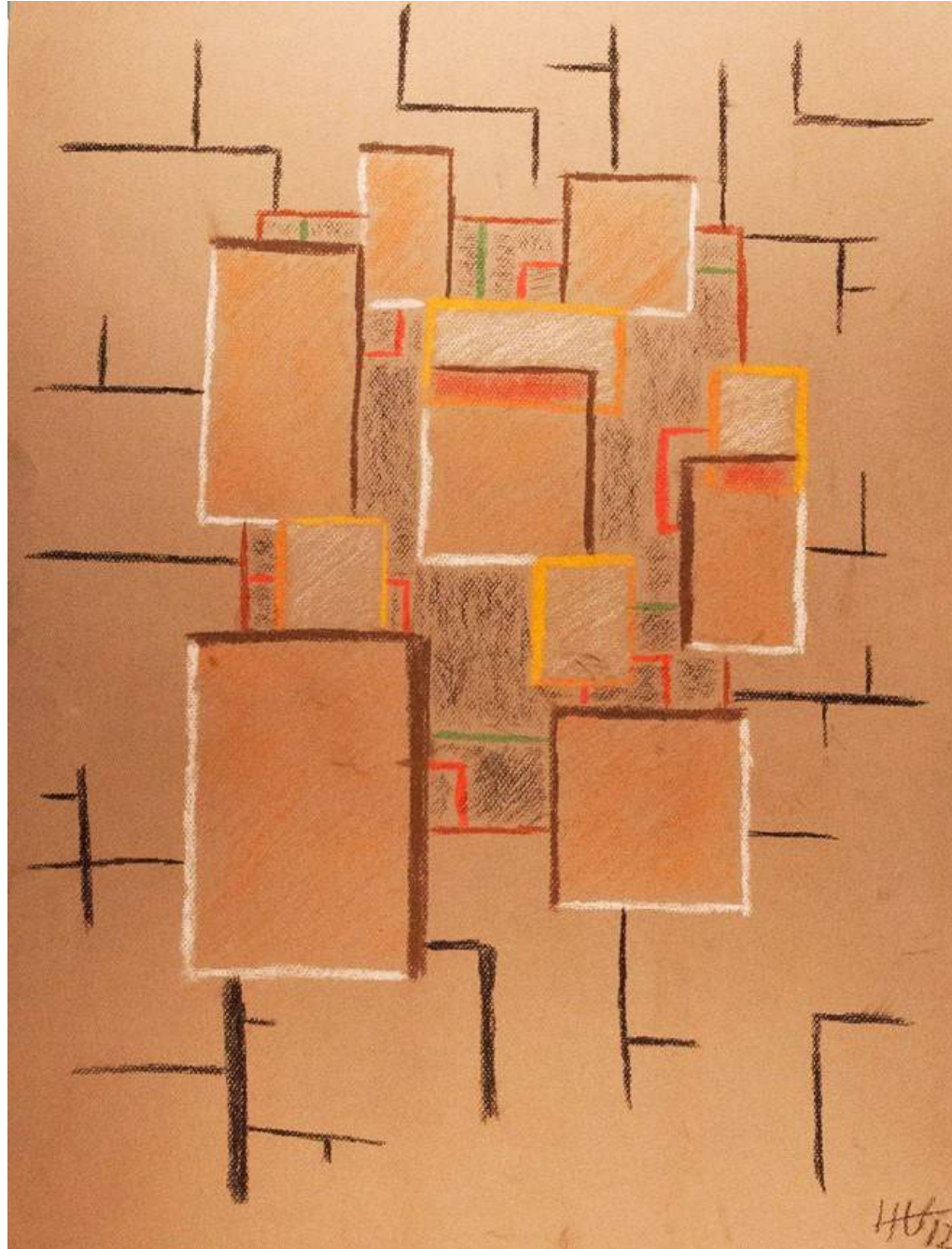


Figure 18. Hannu Ulvinen

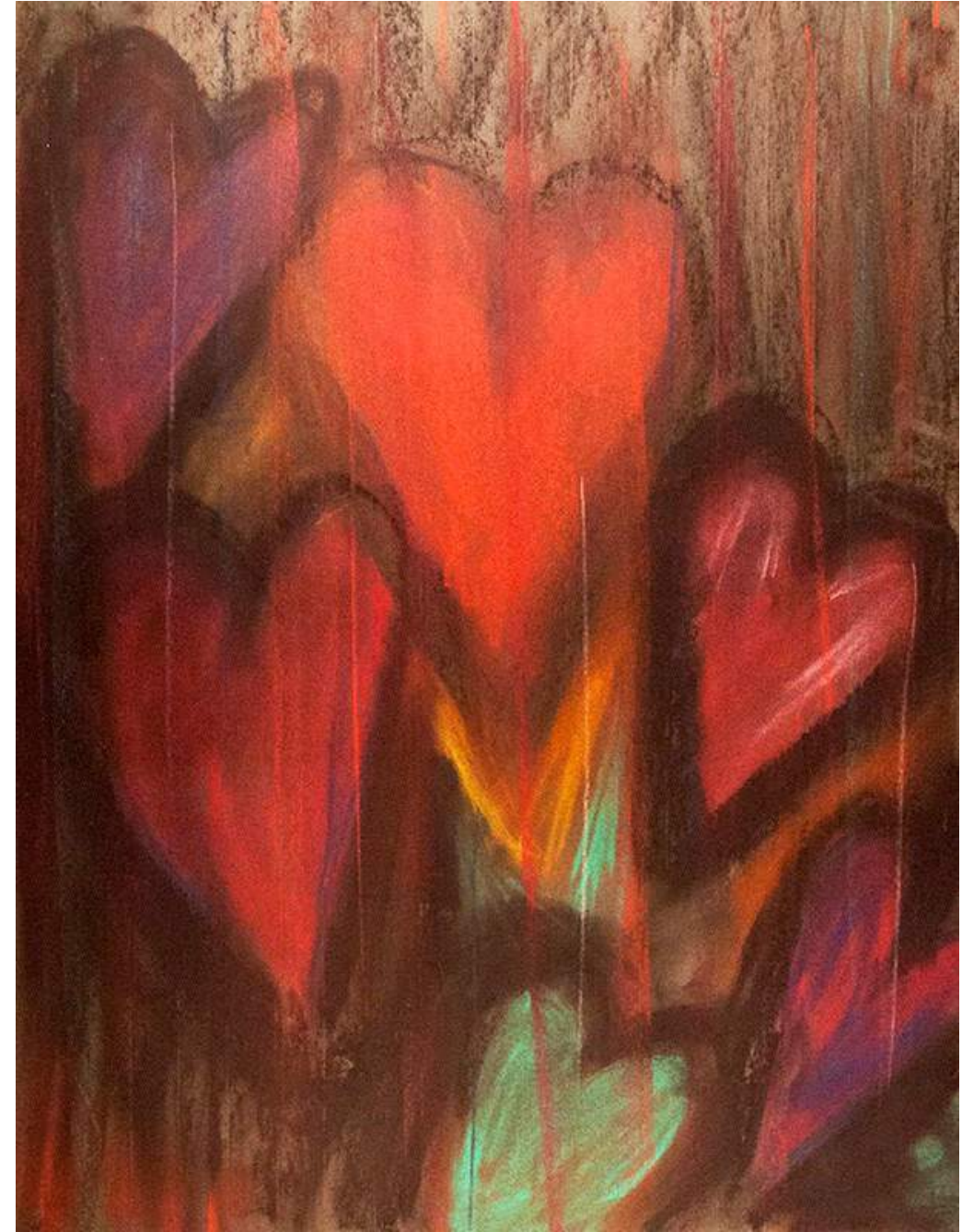


Figure 19. Ilona Kyngäs



## Using performance to engage the body and conquer the space

Combining verbal and visual expression with sound and movement is typical in various kinds of performances. Pembleton and Lajevic (2014, p. 41) wrote that performance art helps students make personal connections with art, stating: 'Embracing bodied experiences as a way to understand one's self and others, we are continually engaged in a process of becoming.' Horn (2009, 170) considers performance art and interactive experiences as catalysts for creative production and lateral thinking. I encourage students to use this approach and to show its results, for example, in meetings with pupils' parents and on stage in school festivities.

In another exercise, I asked students to construct new animals from natural materials and name the species (Image 20. *Examples of never-before-seen animals*, 2012). They performed the animal's locomotion and the sounds it made, and the rest of the group imitated them.

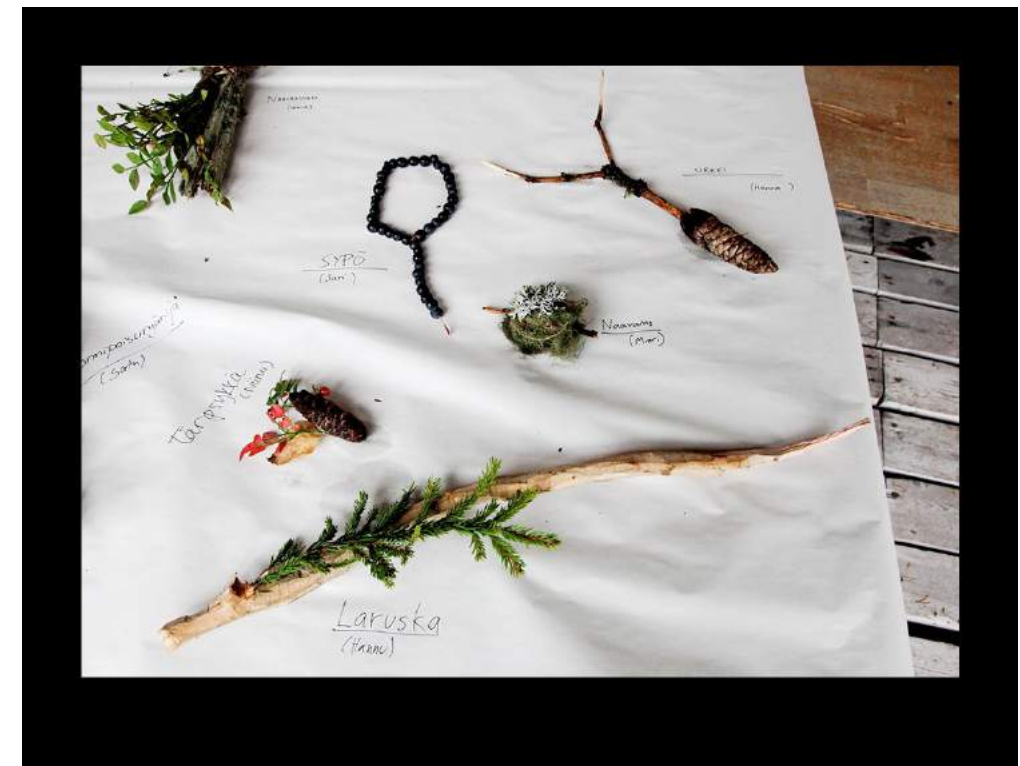


Figure 20. *Examples of never-before-seen animals*, 2012



In a related project, students pondered themselves and created a mask of the animal they would like to be, or one that could represent them (Images 21-23, 2012). They also used the mask in a performance where they turned themselves into the chosen animal.



Figure 21. Kati Oikarinen: *Reindeer mask*



Figure 22. Marika Annala: *Bear mask*



Figure 23. Ida Ala-aho: *Cat mask*



Performances can also be based on paintings made by students (Image 24. A group of students in 2004: *Blue-feeling paintings circling and swinging*). I introduced a project where an interdisciplinary group performance was based on the emotional experiences and ideas arising from the paintings (Ulkuniemi, 2007).



Figure 24. A group of students in 2004: *Blue-feeling paintings circling and swinging*

In a different camp, students first visited 'Nests of senses'—sites created by fellow students, and then made expressive paintings about the experience. Then, other students wrote words evoked by the paintings (Image 25. Päivi Sassi: *Painting based on her own and Hannu Ulvinen's nest*, 2012.) Finally, students created an individual performance based on a peer student's painting.

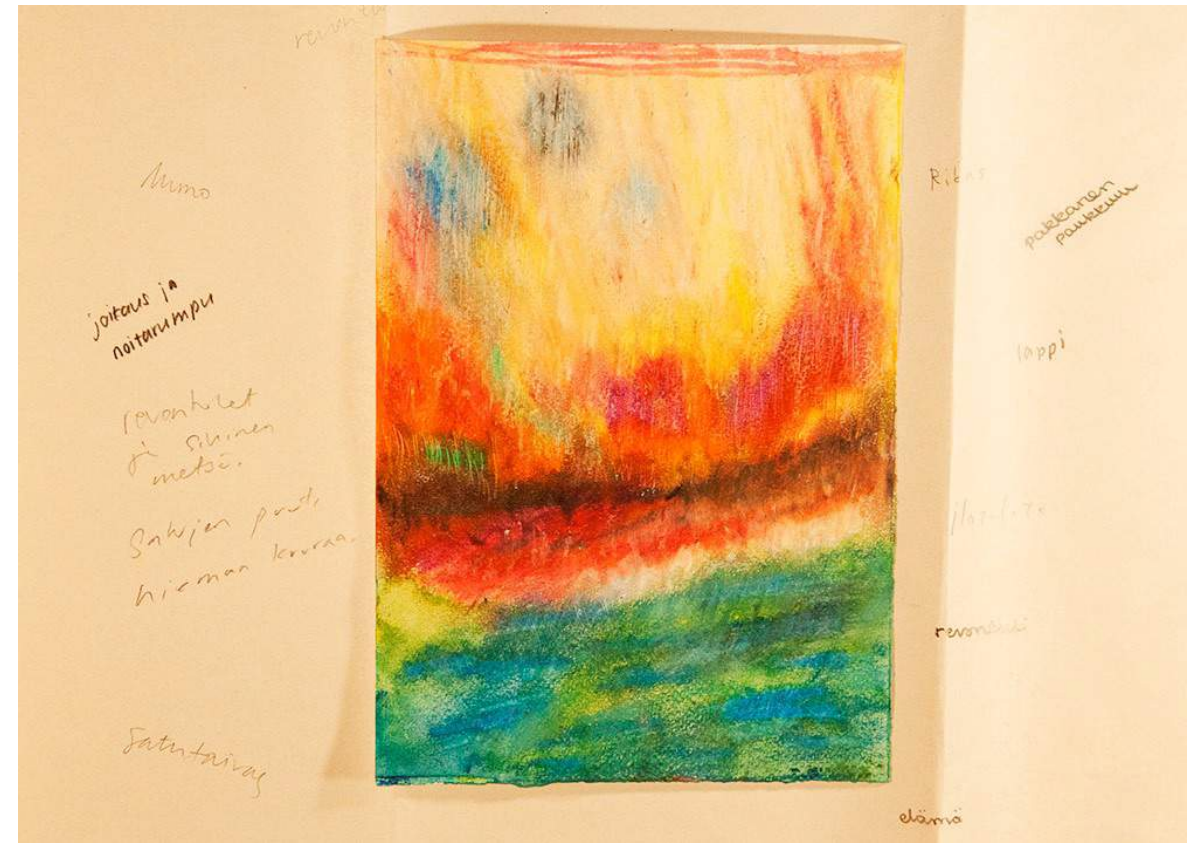


Figure 25. Päivi Sassi: *Painting based on her own and Hannu Ulvinen's nest*, 2012



Miho Shimohara and Kazuji Mogi from Japanese Kagoshima University taught my students how to make an emakimono, a story roll. The participants were offered costumes, and while playing a role, they were photographed (Images 26-28. Students taking roles under Viking theme, 2010). Finally, they collected the photos on a storyboard. I later added to this idea by combining the picture roll with a soundscape in a video.



Figures 26-28. *Students taking roles under Viking theme, 2010*



One co-operational experiment (Ulkuniemi & Holmberg, 2013) was performed in Second Life, an internet platform that offers interaction which may be more honest than face-to-face conversations, and raises questions about the meaning of virtual space (Taylor, Ballengee-Morris & Carpenter, 2010). Students first chose a pupil's work from the digital archive (Taidekasvatuksen, 2016). Then, they created a photo connected to the pupil's work. Finally, performing in the guise of their avatar, they shared and discussed the photos with students from a peer university who were also represented by avatars, creating a virtual exhibition opening (Images 29-30: *Computer screen shots from the opening of the Second Life exhibition, 2009*).



Figures 29-30: *Computer screen shots from the opening of the Second Life exhibition, 2009*



## The future is (at least partly) in the hands of future teachers

Student teachers who were taking art as a minor subject also did little projects in kindergarten classes, where they put their interart knowledge into practice (Images 31-32: *An infant painting when listening to a student drumming*, 2008).



Figures 31-32: *An infant painting when listening to a student drumming*, 2008

Unfortunately, only a few of my students have taken the optional 25 ETCS course in visual art education, even though, as future primary school teachers, they will be expected to teach almost all the compulsory visual art courses offered in Finnish comprehensive schools. They could also benefit from artistic approaches throughout the rest of the school day, if they are capable of recognizing that! To give everybody at least a hint of these possibilities, I will continue to use an interdisciplinary approach.

*All photographs but 26-28 (photographer unknown) were taken by the author.*



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**. Jussi Mäkelä**

**Freedom Relations – Reflections on  
Sculpture, Space and a Human Being**

**. Jouko Pullinen & Juha  
Merta**

**Academic Fables**

**. Tarja Karlsson Häikiö**

**My Culture, My roots – A  
Community Art-project with Nordic  
Children**

**University of Tampere**





# Freedom Relations – Reflections on Sculpture, Space and a Human Being

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## Freedom Relations – Reflections on Sculpture, Space and a Human Being

**Keywords:** Joseph Beuys, social sculpture, freedom, relativity

### Prelude

*“I cannot understand the idea of creativity where it is not related to the self-conscious ‘I’ which stands in the field of inner freedom”* (Beuys 1990, p. 54).

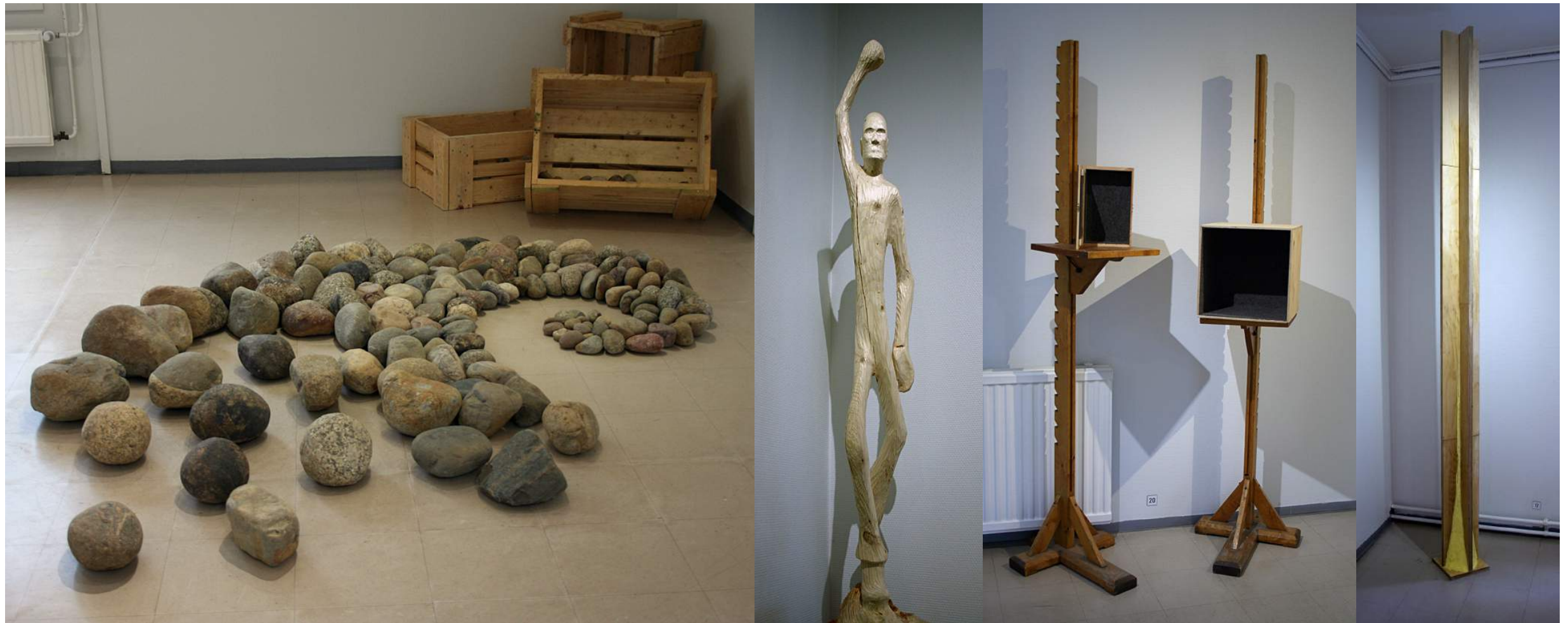
Extending our understanding of art through presenting various forms of his philosophy, was a key interest for Joseph Beuys. For Beuys, art was the only “evolutionary-revolutionary power” that

was “capable of dismantling the repressive effects of a senile social system” – said system referred to both socialist and capitalist societies (ibid.). *Social sculpture* was – and still is – a conceptual method of regarding the social organism as a work of art. There are many essential concepts relating to the idea of social sculpture, such as freedom, creativity, volition, warmth, thought and – of course, unavoidably – the concept of sculpture itself as a core metaphor.

This essay documents an exhibition called *Freedom Relations*, focusing on several central artworks on the theme of freedom. The exhibition was about human–world interrelationship in general, especially about the concept of freedom and its complex relational nature. More pointedly, the exhibition investigated how space can work as a medium demonstrating freedom as a relation. The exhibition is one of the artistic parts of my arts-based research on Joseph Beuys’s social sculpture which took place in April 2016 in Nokia, Finland.



In the text I have chosen to use the word “visitor” instead of “spectator” or “audience”. This is to highlight the role of a person entering the exhibition: not to remain as an outsider but to become involved. Another possible word could have been “experiencer”.







# Freedom Cage: Giving and Limiting Freedom

At first glance Freedom Cage gives the illusion of freedom: the visitor can quite freely move in the space and go inside the cage and leave it as (s)he wills. It appears that the cage doesn't limit the freedom of the visitor. But this is not true.

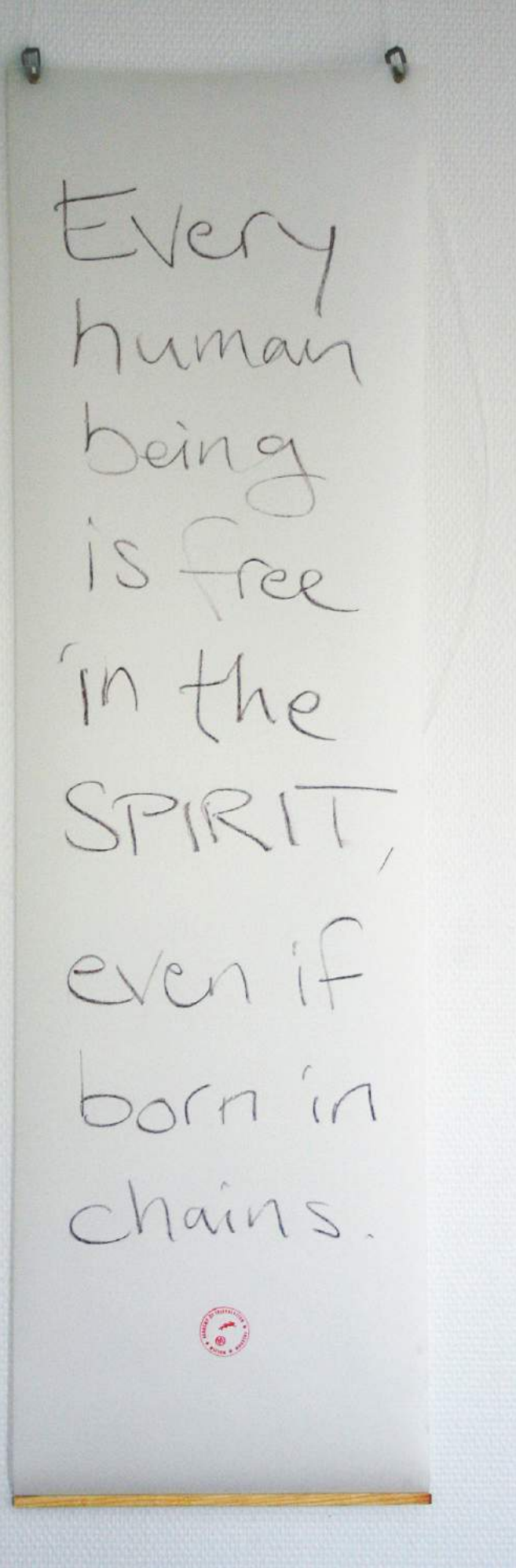
Upon entering the room that the cage inhabits, the visitor is forced into a relationship with the installation. It is impossible for the visitor to avoid having a relationship with the cage. The freedom that is left for the visitor is the freedom of choosing the nature of the relationship: Do I position myself inside or outside the cage, or maybe somewhere in between? And why does one choose this particular relational positioning?

## Interlude: Of Space and Mind

I am suggesting that sculptures, and three-dimensional artworks in general, form more clearly and unavoidably a relationship with the spectator because of their spatial nature of existing. Compared to two-dimensional artworks they more easily become "beings" as opposed to "objects". One can pass by a painting without paying any attention to it – that is, without forming relationship – but entering a room where a sculpture exists it is impossible not to have some relationship with it (Mitchell 2010.)

This connects to a notion that has occurred to me recently. It took me a while – and this is obviously not very original – but I have gradually understood to consider the mind as being something that is not limited within our bodily limits. It seems impossible to define the boundaries of the mind – if they even exist. In this regard it is obvious that experiencing a sculpture is inevitable when in the same room with it. This gives an interesting nuance to the concept of social sculpture.





The room where Freedom Cage exists is otherwise almost completely empty. There is only one handwritten text hanging on the wall, offering one more perspective to freedom. The text says: "Every human being is free in the SPIRIT, even if born in chains" – a slogan that I have composed as a synthesis from various Beuys's propositions about freedom. Below the text there is also a small red stamp claiming this text to be connected with "Academy of [R]evolution".

The text sets an existential challenge. The cage shows us, how we are never truly free. But the text indicates we are always free. It is not a paradox, but a change of ontological level or existential position. There is a quality in us that cannot be imprisoned or limited by any external actors. Only we ourselves are capable of limiting the possibilities of our spirit, soul or mind – call it what you will. Here lies our creative potential, our constitutive capacity. It lies in the fact that we have the freedom to form meaningful relations to all other beings, to coexist in and with the more-than-human world. Beuys (1990) says: "[Man] is free in his thinking, and here is the point of origin of sculpture. For me, the formation of the thought is already sculpture" (p. 91). The point of origin of social sculpture is in our spiritual freedom that allows us to choose how we coexist in the world. Through this free creative potential, it is possible for us to change the world, to heal it.







### Interlude: The Ultimate Bond

Existing in the world consists of a rhizome of relations. We cannot position ourselves without other beings, and the relations to these other beings form the meanings of our existence. Ultimately, it is quite safe to say that on a very constitutive level we are never absolutely free.

Water is a definitive metaphor for our holistic relation to everything that is alive – at least in the known universe. Contemplating water opens our understanding to realize how we are not the kings of all creation but just a part of something much greater: the more-than-human world (Abram 1996). In this world we are never free of it, but we have the freedom to choose how we exist in and as a part of it. However, I regard that on the existential level we do not have the freedom of not choosing the quality of that relation. If we try to avoid acknowledging the necessity of choosing, it still does not make us free. We become prisoners of not acknowledging, we become empathetically cold and existentially unborn – or dead.



### Concept Office: Forge of [R]Evolution

Concept Office: forge of [r]evolution is paraphrasing Beuys's The End of the 20th Century, focusing on the ideas of living sculpture and constant change. Being explicitly unfinished, it aims to evoke in the visitor an urge to act, to do something – maybe clean up the place, or maybe build up something. However, visitors are not allowed to touch the installation, which brings about a tension. This tension aims to exemplify that the formation of the thought is already sculpture (Beuys 1990) and thus generate a [r]evolution of the mind. Optimistically thinking, instead of satisfying urges through the exhibition, the visitors are expected to be moved to action upon leaving the exhibition.







## Postlude: Academy of [R]Evolution

Since 1967 Beuys founded or co-founded several political organizations, such as the DSP German Student Party, Organization for Direct Democracy through Referendum, and Free International University for Creativity and Interdisciplinary Research (Beuys 1990). Academy of [R]Evolution, an imaginary organization developed for this exhibition, refers obviously to the Free International University but also to Beuys's notion of art as an evolutionary-revolutionary power. Its ultimate aim is to spark a social sculpture mindset by challenging people to imagine and realize what – within the more-than-human world – is our holistic position and our responsibility to choose our freedom. That is why in the stamp of Academy of [R]Evolution there are words Freedom and Holism.







“Freedom is man's capacity to take a hand in his own development. It is our capacity to mold ourselves”  
(May 1953, p. 138).



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## About the author

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# Academic Fables

Jouko Pullinen & Juha Merta



# Academic Fables

*The scorpion sat by the river and watched the incoming wildfire. The flames were drawing closer and the riverbank was no longer safe. At that moment, the scorpion saw a frog sitting on a water lily...*

This visual essay (1) is linked to our Berlin art exhibition “Die Eselsbrücke (2) – Academic Fabeln”. In the essay, we present some images of the artworks and the ideas behind them. The names of the pieces also serve as keywords. In addition, we have included some of the interpretations our students have written about the artwork. While in Berlin, we had a productive discussion with our students about the factors that influenced the birth of our artworks. Nevertheless, we persuaded our students to throw themselves into their own subjective interpretations, and we warmly invite our readers to do the same.



Figure 1. The Horizon of Fear

## (Academic) Fable

In the fables of Aesop, life experiences are reflected on as a kind of pessimistic life wisdom; the stories represent a practical philosophy of the meek. Constructive virtues, such as diligence or honesty, are rarely praised. In the struggle to survive, one needs a different set of features. The morals of the fables can be summarized thus:

- 1 The world is dangerous and ruthless;
- 2 Selfishness is reasonable;
- 3 The weak cannot hope for justice;
- 4 Goodness is rarely rewarded;
- 5 The dead stay dead;
- 6 Love makes one weak and foolish;



## 7 Wickedness is mundane and open.

Societal criticism is hidden as satire behind the delicate fable stories. The fables do not genuinely criticize the current circumstances, but human nature in general. In the fables, the animals create a courtlike structure, but the fables hit to the immoral individuals rather than the court.

The term “academic” usually refers to universities; topics related to or characteristic of higher education; or something theoretical, abstract, formal, and unfamiliar to practice. When used with negative connotations, “academic” can denote something conservative, petrified, conventional, and rigid.

The concept of academic art is usually used when one speaks critically about any kind of stationary art or especially the tradition in painting and sculpting that was maintained according to the instruction and education of European Art Academies when the new trends of modernism, such as realism, naturalism, and impressionism, emerged at the end of the nineteenth century.

Although the fables are unkind at their worst, we want to give another perspective and tell stories specifically with the voice of the oppressed and the undervalued. Even though we do not consider ourselves to be oppressed or undervalued ourselves, in our fables, we want to smile at ourselves more than at others.

Why are fables so appropriate to universities?

1. We both have a long experience of working at a university in different positions. This gives us plenty of rich material for academic fables. We are as *The Buck at the Spring* (in Finnish the word ‘lähde’ means both spring and reference) followed the life at the university. Life has absurdity, wickedness, amusement, and elements of the tragicomic – features the fables also share.



Figure 2. The Reference

2. The hierarchical structure of the university as an institution is the inspiration for many of the stories. Its structure resembles the idea of the court presented in the fables. The professors enjoy completely different kinds of benefits compared to the assistants, while the students are the runts of the litter, even though the university is an institution created for them. For example, the mission of the University of Tampere is to educate shapers of the future, people who understand the world and will change it.





Figure 3. The Assistant

The hierarchic structure enables various power structures, but also beneficial relationships between people. Getting to know the right professor or promising young researcher can lead to fruitful results, and the enthusiasm can be mutual. The situation is similar in the world of art. Getting close to a master can have determining effect on one's own artistic development as well as on one's career. The late professor Pentti Kaskipuro, who has educated many of the most noted Finnish graphic artists, stated at the opening of his art exhibition: "For a long time, my most talented students have held me up." (3)



3. The university is characterized by strong specialization: we all have our own allotment. In the field of educational sciences, one specializes in order to stand out from the crowd, even though at the same time the understanding of phenomena requires a broader range.

Figure 4. The Allotment



*Today (4), we followed in the footsteps of Jörn Donner by visiting the Karlshorst allotment area in Berlin. Donner tells us: “new houses are being built. In the open spaces, the land has been divided into small fenced patches (laubekolonien). One grows useful plants and flowers there. On Sundays, the families sit in front of their small huts and admire the flora... Just as the backyards with their darkness are part of Berlin, the gardens equally belong to the city.” (5)*

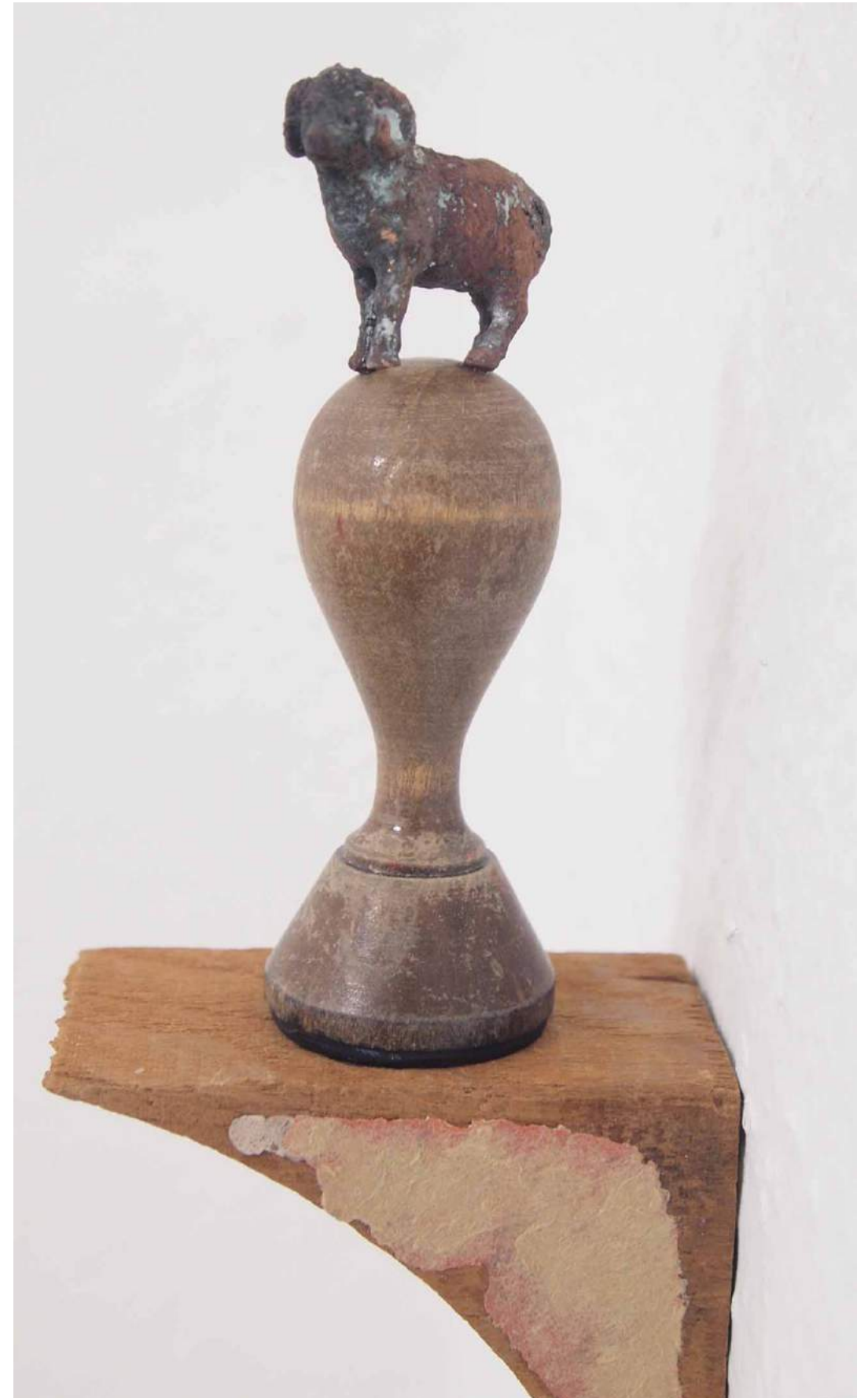
Even though the allotments have their strict communal rules, the hard-working bumblebee scarcely cares about them and flies from bush to bush.



4. The hierarchic structure attracts mutual rivalry. This is especially evident now due to the cuts in university funding. This is manifested as the almost uncritical production of articles. Quantity replaces quality, and meaningful research and traditional, academic, profound education is lost in the mass production of articles. A substantial list of publications can lead to a good position at the university. If one instead wants to concentrate carefully on what one is doing, and even strive to do something meaningful, one is left to wait for better times in *the ranks of the substitutes*. One must understand the dramatic structure of academic success.

Somehow, we are left with a feeling that the academic world is now in need of black sheep, those who challenge the dominant practices and have the courage to be jesters –mischievous and critical towards themselves and their court.

Figure 5. The Black Sheep





## Die Eselsbrücke, constructing the exhibition

We made all the works of the exhibition via a dialogue, a method of working we have created over the years. The creation of the works is not bound to a specific place. We have both contemplated and developed the ideas on our own and discussed them together at the university or via email. The execution of the work required different conditions. It is more natural to work in suitable places with familiar tools and materials in Hämeenlinna. The dialogue means working at the same desk, one being the hand and the other the eye. This dialogue is founded on the tactful and respectful encounter of the other. Sometimes one also has to leave one's own thought to wait, lingering in one's mind or on the desk. We aim to combine our respective strengths and weaknesses, one as a painter and the other as a graphic artist.

As a new feature, we have subcontracted some parts of the works. The designer Pekka Koponen from Lahti Design Institute cast the small bronze sculptures we designed. For us, as a graphic artist and as a painter, it was important to use a traditional sculpting method with as high a quality as possible. The casting made by Pekka Koponen resulted in a rough and colorfully vivid exterior structure that strengthens the content and the interpretative dimensions of the sculptures: they absolutely tempt one to touch them.

Our colleague at the university, Outi Stüber, has served as our social media consultant. She has created and maintained our blog ([mertaetpullinen.blogspot.com](http://mertaetpullinen.blogspot.com)). We wanted expand the

visibility of our works that are on display in Berlin, but at the same time, we wanted to offer people the opportunity to comment on the work.

## Die Eselsbrücke, artworks, and student's stories



Figures 6-7. Der Wanderer über dem Nebelmeer<sup>7</sup>

### A. *Der Wanderer über dem Nebelmeervii*

*I am sailing*

*I am sailing*

*Home again*

*'Cross the sea*

*I am sailing*

*Stormy waters*

*To be near you*

*To be free*





## ***B. Head in the Bush***

*No need to hop  
when one can reach  
Listen for and sniff at  
from one's own spot*

*The thought is already far away  
how can one catch it anymore  
and put it on paper*

*The thought refuses  
to draw explicit lines*

*Hopping here  
and there  
and time runs far away*

Figure 8. Head in the Bush



### *C. Chained to Tradition*

*Chained to tradition*

*Devastated*

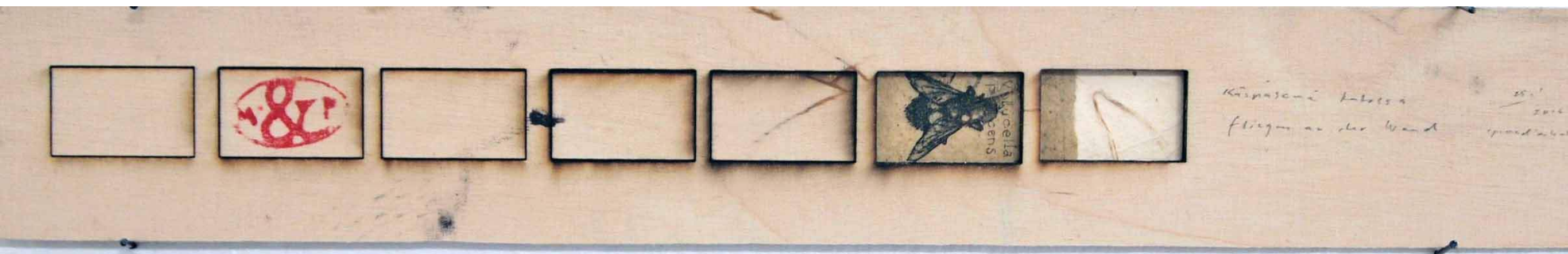
*howling in pain.*

*Why does no one hear?*



**Figure 9. Chained to tradition**





## D. Fly on the Wall

Figure 10. Fly on the Wall

*People have talked about the importance of making observations*  
*And I do notice things*  
*With two thirds of my whole capacity*  
*Would that not be enough to be recognized as a participant?*

*Joining*  
*Daring*  
*Facing*  
*Interaction and withdrawal into oneself*  
*That is my everyday routine*  
*I am a fly*  
*On my own wall*

*People have talked about the importance of making observations*  
*And I do notice things*  
*Deeper via my awareness*  
*Would that not be enough to be recognized as a participant?*

*Joining*  
*Daring*  
*Facing*  
*Interaction and withdrawal into oneself*  
*That is my everyday routine*  
*I am a fly*  
*In my own life*



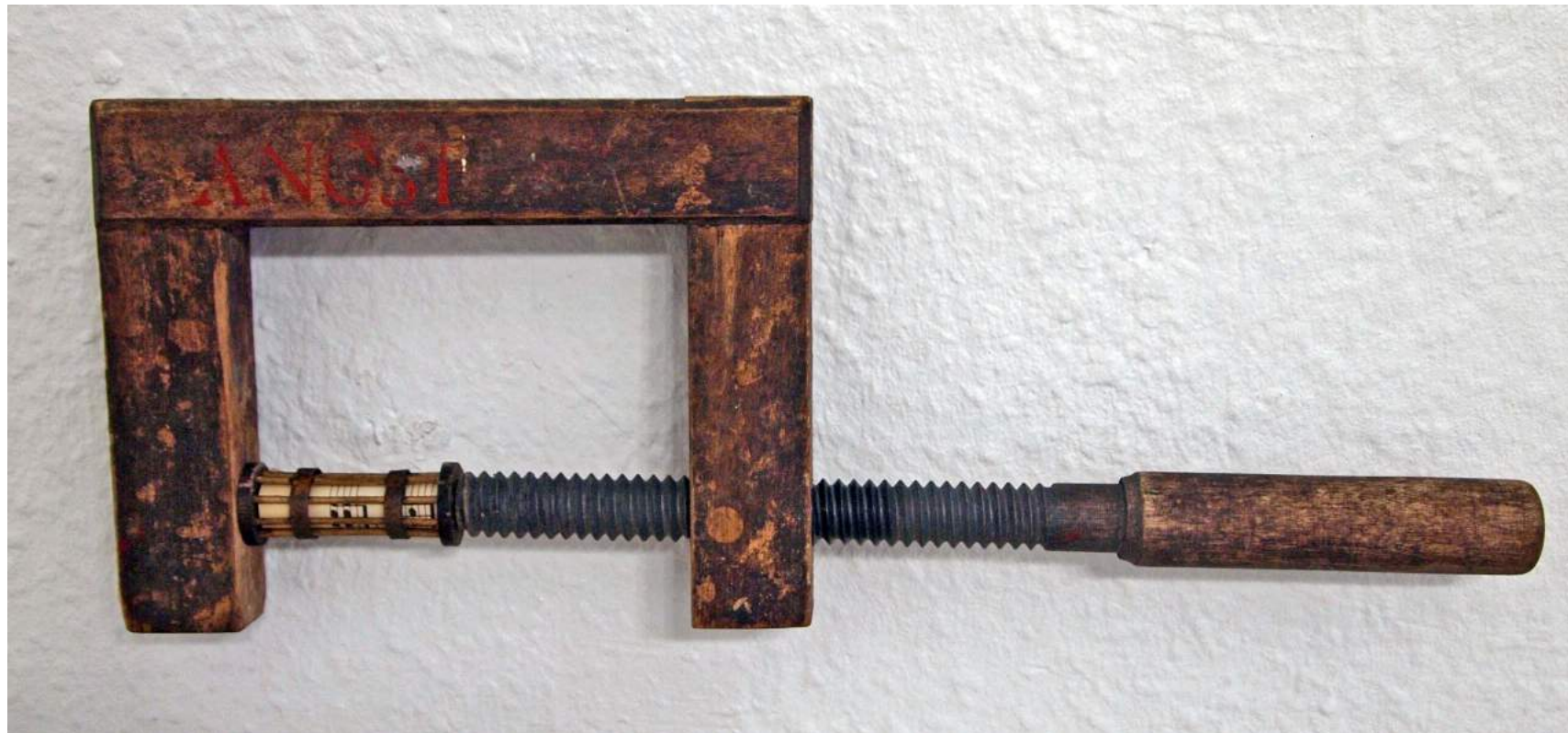


Figure 11. Die Angst





Figure 12. Post Scriptum

### Post Scriptum:

*The scorpion knew that it had no other choice than to ask the frog for help. "Take me across the river," said the scorpion, "Otherwise, I'll die."*

*The frog hesitated and refused to help, because he was afraid of the scorpion and its deadly sting.*

*"If I sting you, I'll die too," the scorpion said.*

*The frog thought about the matter and gathered that the scorpion could not harm him and was at his mercy.*

*"Okay, get on my back and I'll take you across the river". The scorpion thanked the frog and said that he would not regret this kind gesture. So, the scorpion jumped on the frog's back and they began the journey across the river. Halfway across, the scorpion slowly lifted his tail and stung the frog's neck. The frog felt a stinging and invasive pain.*

*"Why?" asked the frog. "Now I'm going to die and you'll drown!"*

*The scorpion answered, "It is my nature".*



- (1). The art exhibition was arranged and the article written at Galerie Pleiku in Berlin, 16-26 February 2016.
- (2). Die Eselsbrücke = mnemonic.
- (3). Restaurant Laterna, 2000. These talented students included Outi Heiskanen, skanen, Marjatta Hanhijoki, Esa Riippa, and Inari Grönholm (the so-called Mestari K:n koulu, School of Master K).
- (4). 23 February 2016.
- (5). Donner, Jörn (1989) Berliiniraportti [Berlin report]. Keuruu, Otava.
- (6). In the animal world, being different is usually fatal. Camouflage. Chameleon.
- (7). The name of the work (Wanderer above the Sea of Fog) refers to perhaps the most famous painting by Caspar David Friedrich: the mountaineer looking out over a sea of misty summits. The driftwood theory.

Many thanks to Tarja Eteläinen, Anna Niemi, Jenni Pollari and Jenny Salonen.

#### **Artworks:**

1. The Horizon of Fear	5. The Black Sheep	11. Die Angst
2. The Reference	6.-7. Der Wanderer über dem Nebelmeer	12. Post Scriptum
3. The Assistant	8. Head in the Bush	
4. The Allotment	9. Chained to tradition	
	10. Fly on the Wall	





# My Culture, My Roots – A Community Art-project with Nordic Children

Tarja Karlsson Häikiö



## My Culture, My Roots – A Community Art-project with Nordic Children

### Abstract

The theme of the project *My Culture, My Roots* was cultural identity where the participating children between 7–17 years old had the possibility to reflect upon their cultural roots and create meaning through art workshops about their daily life, their interests, their identity in the cross-roads of their own traditional culture and a contemporary world. The project consisted of participatory workshops with creative writing and both analogue and digital visual art work. In the art workshops the children and young people could use different kinds of creative visual methods such as drawing, painting, mixed-media, collage, digital media and photography. Children and young adults, as well as other audience members, were invited to visit exhibitions and learn more about the participating Nordic countries sharing thoughts about their cultural identity. In this way, the project investigated the cultural activities and visual learning strategies of children.

**Keywords:** community art, art workshops, cultural identity, elementary school

### Introduction

*My Culture, My Roots* was a community art-project with children and youth conducted during years 2013–2014 in compulsory schools in the arctic area of five Nordic countries; Faroe Islands/Denmark, northern Finland, Greenland/Denmark, Iceland and northern Norway. The project was funded by the Nordic Cultural Council. In total, over 100 children participated in the project on six schools. The aim of the project was giving children and youth the opportunity to express themselves and share their cultural identity through art and writing workshops. The elementary school pupils were supposed to reflect on their unique cultural affiliation and gain in-depth understanding of their heritage, since most of the participating children either belonged to minority groups or lived in minority cultural areas. The aim was for children from various minority cultures to get in touch with, see, and read other children's art work, but also to give them the possibility to be creative and participate in their own culture based on the Child Rights Convention Article 13. The idea was that becoming aware of how one's cultural background, in an increasingly globalized world, gives perspective to their own lives and can boost the self-esteem of children and young people in a time of differentiated contemporaries. Leading the project were an artist, also master degree student in Cultural Sociology at the



University of Tampere in Finland, and an art educator who work as visual art teacher educator at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden and have a Ph.D. in Art History and Visual Studies.

### **Art project process and methods**

The schools in the project were from Faeroe Islands, where one school with 23 children of Faeroese and Faeroese-Danish background in school year 3 participated, from Finland, two schools with 8 respectively 18 children of Finnish and Finnish-Sàmi background, both school year 1-6, from Iceland, one school with 19 youngsters, mostly Icelandic, from several year 7-9 classes, and on Greenland participated one school with 21 children of Inuit and Inuit-Danish background from several year 1-9 classes. In Norway a museum workshop were held with a small group of youngsters, school years 1-7 (In the article the results from the workshop from Norway is not included). In all countries were held follow-up exhibitions of the workshops. The final exhibition of the project was held at the Parliament House Library in Helsinki in Sep 2014.

The participating children were able to write texts and create images by using artistic methods based on their life-world as young citizens in their culture but also as participants in various children's cultures. The writing of their own texts about their life was based on their personal experiences. Work in the art workshops was a way to express these experiences, but also provided a basis for reflection. Subsequently, they first wrote about their everyday lives, about their interests, their hobbies

and what they do with their peers, their families and other things such as what is important to them, to the culture and the place they live in. After the writing workshop the children and youngsters were offered to paint an individual artwork with acrylic paints on a white wood panel of size 35 x 27 cm. They could also work in groups on a white fabric or with other imaging techniques like collage or free drawing.

Before the workshop the children were introduced to what the project was about, why they had been selected to participate in the project and to be able to get to know who the two external leaders of the workshops were. The teachers had been contacted beforehand and agreed to join the project. The main reason for their interest had been the possibility for their pupils to learn and create in another context and to come in contact with other children's art work from similar cultural environments. The teachers supported the introduction, which, depending on the children's language skills, was held in English, Finnish or Swedish besides their mother tongue. In addition to the project leaders, at least one teacher from each school was always involved in the workshop. The teachers also helped to translate the children's texts for the exhibitions (Figure 1).





Figure 1. Children reading texts from their writing workshop at Greenland.  
Photograph: T. K. Häikiö, 2013.



The workshops often were two hours for two consecutive days and the exhibition of the art works and texts were arranged either in connection to the workshop-days or arranged at a later occasion in public spaces. In the exhibition the children were able to see their own work as well as their peers' work, but also works from the other participating countries to get in touch with other children's experiences. The schools could also be linked to an internal project blog where the participants were able to publish their own selected photographs after the workshops. In this way the children's thoughts and cultural expressions were given voice. Parents and the public were invited to visit the exhibitions to learn more about the participating countries and share in the thoughts of the children about their cultural identity. The exhibitions, for example, were held in public spaces like the Nordic Houses at Faeroe Islands, Denmark and in Reykjavik on Iceland as well as cultural centres such as Skierri, in Enontekiö, Finland (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Children in Greenland looking at art works of children from Faeroe Islands and Iceland at the school exhibition. Photograph: T. K. Häikiö, 2013.



## Results

In the project the children produced approximately 100 paintings and other art works such as collages and photographs. The childrens' art works can be categorized in topics, some more specific for the different schools and countries like national costumes or rituals, and some more general for all the partaking pupils, such as nature and natural phenomena, sport activities, animals and pets and cultural expressions. The differences in the topics between the schools may be due to differences in the introduction, the translation made by the teacher, or by other events that affected the children like group settings, peer culture, child and youth cultural influences, local special conditions as nature and geographical surroundings, media surveillance, school thematics and practice as well as curriculum content. However, the instructions given in the workshops were very similar in every country and the children's own interests were emphasized to have importance by the project leaders.

In Faeroe Islands typical topics were animals like birds and sheep, boats and fishing, houses, the sea, the national flag and peace (Figure 3), but also favorite food like hamburgers (Figure 4).



Figure 3. Paintings from workshop on Faeroe Islands.

Photograph: T. K. Häikiö, 2013.



Figure 4. Painting of favorite food at Faeroe Islands.

Photograph: T. K. Häikiö, 2013.




The children discussed that they are privileged because the Faroe Islands are not at war, has low crime, and they have access to necessities such as water, electricity, food, clothing, and health care in the form of hospitals and medicines. They also talked about different kinds of natural disasters and storms that are common on the Islands. In the Finnish schools the children chose to depict topics as nature and natural phenomena like fall colors in the mountains, but also sport activities such as skiing, snowboarding or racing with scooters. Several children focused on trying to capture the flow of the northern lights (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Painting the flow of the northern lights in Finland.

Photograph: T. K. Häikiö, 2013.





A photograph of a child's hands holding a smartphone, recording a painting. The painting depicts a person in a red and white patterned costume against a green background. In the background, another painting with horizontal stripes of green, red, yellow, and blue is visible on an easel. A small blue cup sits on a white surface next to the easel. The child is wearing a red long-sleeved shirt.

Other common topics were animals and the retention of cows, sheep and especially reindeers. Some of the children depicted their own reindeers and talked a lot about how they took care of them and an upcoming reindeer race soon taking place. On Greenland the group was more mixed both in age and nationalities with children born in other countries such as Denmark, the Faroe Islands, England, Australia and Thailand. Animals like crows, deer, polar bears, whales – animals that are common on Greenland – and pets, different national flags or costumes (Figure 6), sport activities such as snowboarding and swimming are some of the favored topics here.

Figure 6. A child documenting a painting with national costume, Greenland. Photograph: T. K. Häikiö, 2013.



In Iceland the school has had experience cooperating with other countries and the pupils were accustomed to cultural exchanges in visual arts. The pupils seemed to choose motives that were particularly Icelandic and also representative of Iceland on a symbolic level, like pictures of volcanos. Typical topics among the youngsters were nature and natural phenomena like mountains, northern lights, volcanos, waterfalls, but also flowers, Icelandics (small horses), lakes and images from sport or advertising like football logos, snowboarding (Figure 7) or the yoghurt Skyr. (More can be read about the results from the project, see Karlsson Häikiö, 2014 pp. 38-39).



Figure 7. Snowboarding on Iceland. Photograph: T. K. Häikiö, 2013.



## Conclusion

The children from different nationalities and cultures were given possibility to reflect on their lives, identities, culture through the production of both linguistic and visual narratives. Many of the partaking schools were situated in minority cultural contexts. Meanwhile, the minorities are woven into secular and multicultural social contexts where there for a long time been a mixing of cultures between for example Danish and Inuit communities as well as between Finnish and Sàmi cultures and where the mix of cultures is the everyday life the children grow up in. Many of the children, as Sàmi and Inuit children, are in a social situation where they are captured in-between preserving the richness of their traditions as a source of surviving, and an increasing secularization of the society they live in. The community art-project aimed at creating knowledge between children in the arctic parts of the Northern countries and to contribute to, and increase, the recognition of cultural diversity. An overall aim of the project was giving children and youth the opportunity to work with their conception of their cultural identity and in this way empowering children's awareness and agency through creating conversations about children's art work. In this way the project also highlighted school as a part of the active community and as a civic arena: a meeting place and generator of dialogue and participation.

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**IMAG**