

Collecting, Constellating, Contemplating [Sangenjaya-Shizuoka]:

An Arts-Based Research Journey “Out There”

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Abstract

This exhibition is the result of an interdisciplinary experiment conducted by researchers at Kasahara Laboratory at Tokyo Gakugei University. The focus of the exhibition involved expanding education in a larger context, utilizing both artistic practice and considerations from architectural research to devise ways to use the natural and built environment to create embodied modes of knowledge “out there.”

Six arts educators, three architects, one urban planner, and one engineer came together in Sangenjaya, Tokyo, on July 13th to spend the day together, observe the city, and create a small manifesto of their experience. On July 14th, 5 arts educators and 1 architect continued their journey to Shizuoka, where they spent 2 days in nature, next to the ocean, in the mountains and everywhere in between.

Collecting: Inspired by fieldwork studies of Tokyo that emerged in the 20th century, collecting is expanded to not only consider items that could fit a typical collection, such as an art collection, but to involve aspects of the built and natural environment. Such artefacts can be captured through different means and assembled into a grouping of observations, making a mental collection. Collecting in this way is an act towards embodiment, serving as a mode for practicing agency “out there.”

Constellating: Art education and Architecture, Sangenjaya and Shizuoka, Education and Experience

Contemplating: The workshop-exhibition format allows the participants to assimilate their observations into a new entity. Calling upon the contemplation and communication of the experience, the experiment aims for the participants to see in their observations a pathway towards a different way of being in the city. ^[L]_[SEP] The interdisciplinary experiment involves three research methods from Art Education and Architecture: fieldwork, Art-Based Research (ABR), and A/r/tography.

Fieldwork is used as a methodology to explore how contemporary issues about life may manifest in the built environment. If we consider buildings no longer solely physical structures but vessels carrying personal, social, and cultural expression, how can we use the built environment to think critically about life in the 21st-century city? ^[L]_[SEP] A/r/tography explores ways in which the visual arts can be used as a means of representation for

educational research. ABR "...addresses complex and often subtle interactions and... provides an image of those interactions in ways that make them noticeable."

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