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Teacher training and involvement of specialists representing other domains in arts education process

Keynote speech: Professor Timo Jokela

Project Studies as a Method to promote Synergies between Arts and other Disciplines in Art Teacher-training Programme

Slowly we all have become increasingly curious what is on others European countries agendas. What are the discussion points that are important to art educators and culture policy. It is good to share these views. So that we could enter into useful discussions about these subjects.

Under the influence of social and cultural changes, art educators all over Europe are considering what position arts and culture education should occupy within education and what consequences this would have for the curriculum of degree programs for art teachers.

Art and Art Education

In art education discussion we should also notice that art itself is changing. In traditional modernistic thought art was considered a global phenomenon. The work of an artist – as well as the content of art education – was aimed at phenomena seen as universal. Furthermore, art was considered autonomous, i.e., nearly independent of other social factors. In fact, good art was locally and socially autistic: it was art for the sake of the art institution with no connection to local or social aims. Only recently has art adopted a new way of looking at itself, a way which emphasises its temporal, local, and social ties. It is more and more widely acknowledged that art is a resource not only for the individual, but also for the society and that art education can serve as a means of social change

When we understand art as social process we need to think what it should mean to art teachers training programs. Before we start to build programs we should be aware whether we are still following the modernist paradigm "the arts as a purpose in themselves" or the new one "the art as means to achieving socio-cultural goal". Then we are able to discuss what kind of interdisciplinary help we need from other subjects and arts, and what kind of experts we need to strengthen art education processes. Whose knowledge is useful and important for art teacher's basic work? What are the methodologies for effective collaboration?

My own perspective to these questions is influenced by my own experiences in University of Lapland at Faculty of art and design. Department of Art Education is the oldest unit at faculty established year 1990. As a new department we have had quite good possibilities to start the degree program planning with a clean slate. In this planning process we still have to meet a lot of resistance for change based on old paradigms and make effort to understand the essence of art education.

ART TEACHING

Experts of techniques and ways of expression

First model is still virile and lives on especially in programs in art academies in which the teachers are artists of their own field. Techniques of art and rules of composition (formalism) are regarded as the most important thing to be taught. Art teachers are seen as trainers of skills and tutoring is focused on individuals.

A conflict with the tradition is created when new art forms that require interdisciplinarity in art and social activity take over the field of contemporary art. Art forms that emphasize conceptualization such as conceptual art, environmental art and community art dispel the line between art and science. Now it is to be asked what actually is the technique and expertise of contemporary art. I claim that interaction, co-operation and interdisciplinary thinking. But who is teaching these skills and how.

ART EDUCATION

Experts of educational processes

In Finland a student of Art Education takes plenty of pedagogical studies to gain official qualifications for teaching in schools. Unfortunately these studies often are nothing but courses detached from curriculum of educational sciences at Faculty of Education. Hereby two things make the professional skill of art educator: creating art and studies in education. This division can still be seen in art teachers training -programmers. Education has underlined meaning of art in the point of view of individual development, psychology and creativity. In my point of view, the educational support that art teacher who is following the new paradigm of art needs is to be found from critical pedagogy, social pedagogy, phenomenology research etc.

Do we need to think that pedagogy is the only partner of art education? I think we can learn a lot from social sciences too.

VISUAL CULTURE EDUCATION

Experts of visual culture

In several countries art education has been widened in a way that it can be understood as visual culture education or education to visual culture. In recent philosophical discussions of both art and science, many of the so called obviousness and paradigms that build the line between science and art, have been questioned. Traditional art forms and media can today be used to collect research material, data or make analyses.

If we understand art education as visual culture education then media research, research of architecture, design and environment have a lot to offer to education processes, both as content and as working methods.

SOCIAL ACTIVE ART EDUCATION

Experts of empowerment, co-operative art processes

The change of art, from specialisation in a certain skill and individual creativity to multidisciplinary project activity, has changed the job description of an art teacher too. The field of art education is changing. Educators are starting to focus on the surrounding communities and applications of art education are in demand in our changing society.

An art teacher has to possess social skills and cooperation skills. He/she has to act within networks of people in and outside of the schools, display his/her skills in integration with other schools subjects, build networks and exchange programs with other schools in domestic and international level, seek financing, and make applications and project plans and reports.

Art projects are more and more intended to support well-being and regional development. This being the case, an artist and art teacher has to have skills to describe, evaluate and document the achievement of these goals.

Art Education Degree Program in University of Lapland

Special emphasis in Lapland

University of Lapland in Rovaniemi is being developed into the centre of northern issues. Department of art education is involved with many ways in this process. Art education, too, is seeking out its ways and line of activity in orientation to the northern issues and environment. That has challenged us to think what the new paradigm in art education means in practice, how should it effect on art teachers training program.

Curriculum in Department of art education is still kind of compromise of paradigms of past but we are aiming to social active art education and trying to use the multidisciplinary university and its Nordics framework to educate multi skilled art educator who are able to plan culture work in its large scale.

1. Artistic skill and expression, including fine art and media

2. Interpretation of art, including image analysis and art history
3. Practise in art education: media pedagogy, environment design pedagogy, museum pedagogy
4. Collaborative project -based studies in art education
5. Teachers pedagogical studies: educational sciences and teacher practise in schools

Project studies as a method to promote synergie: Combining the artistic, pedagogical, and scientific approaches

The program for art teachers at the University of Lapland includes art pedagogical collaborative project –based studies. In these projects students learn how to develop processes and strategies to activate their communities, improve the aesthetic quality of the environment, and generate artistic activities. Practical fieldwork also provides empirical background for constructing art educational theory through action researches.

The essential goal of practical and theoretical studies is to note the needs and strengths of various participants: the starting point bound to stages in the lives of local inhabitants, the artists professional skills and interest, the role of the art educator as an organiser in interaction, as a producer of educational events related to art, community and environment.

Both practical and theoretical studies have a strong northern angle. Environmental art and community art are seen as based on the phenomenological relationship of humankind to the environment, and not as an art product transferable from the centre to the periphery. Art education at the University of Lapland has also enabled the cultural and societal bases of the project to be reinforced. The cooperation of art education with the different scientific fields (environmental sciences and humanistic sciences) and different sectors of society has been fruitful and productive.

The project studies allow the students to explore different trends of contemporary art, especially community art and environmental art.

It's a question of Gablik's (1995) description of new art, which embodies a new cultural paradigm embracing a revitalized sense of community, an enlarged ecological perspective, and access to mythic and cultural sources of spiritual life.

Collaborative project in Art Education

Project organization and management studies

Community art and environment studies provide the basic facilities to carry out environment and community art. The goal is to give students the facilities to plan and organize new methods that bring together art education, art and culture institutions, organizations and informal communities. The purpose of these studies is to develop students own artistic skills and reform the work between different organizations, communities and art education.

Art education professionals may have several different roles in community art activities. They can

be project responsible leaders, art experts, and a link between art professionals, hobby artists, and different active groups. Often the roles of an artist, a teacher, and a scientist intersect and even merge during the creation of a project.

Socio-cultural analysis using methods of other disciplines

Environments and communities as places of growing up

In the projects, the environment and the community are analysed from both an artistic and a pedagogical point of view. Both the environment and the community are natural, multi-layered cohesive substances of life. We can be members of several different environments and communities in our lifetime. Moreover, the environment and the community cannot be separated. The school, village, suburb, city, and even landscape are simultaneously both communities and environments for those people who live and function in them. This constantly changing connection is the basis for the existence of man and thus also a fruitful basis for art education.

An artist has to know how to inspire the members of a community. This is possible only if the artist has the skills needed to analyse the socio-cultural reality, livelihoods, traditions and stories of places, resources, possibilities, and possible problems of the community. A community art project starts with an analysis of the community, proceeds to the definition of problems and future visions, planning the activity, and creating the activity. We all know that social sciences, environmental research and culture history and anthropology can offer methods for that kind of work.

But we must always remember that art itself is a method to understand communities and places.

Planning and realization the project

Art pedagogical projects on fells and market places

Thematic projects are enriched by the cooperation of art educators, artists, and researchers from various fields. Furthermore, many art and cultural institutes, tourism and other businesses, and local communities are involved in the projects. The object is to develop pedagogical models that enable the students to approach the Nordic habitat and combine art with interdisciplinary information.

In addition to the pedagogical studies of art education, the projects involve a great deal of community activity; this includes exhibits in galleries and museums, publications, art camps for youth, children's events, and work that encourages people to be active in their community. Most of the projects have focused on the special characteristics of the northern environment and culture. In addition to the extensive academic projects arranged by the department of art education, smaller projects have been planned and carried out by the students themselves.

In the past, these student-run projects have included such themes as the use of snow in making urban environments and ski resorts more pleasant; art- and community-based planning of school and kindergarten yards; art events in suburbs; art camps produced by village communities; hiking-art in the wilderness; and street performances.

The project model developed for the northern environment has also been successfully used in other European countries.

Documentation, evaluation and report

Action research, media and virtual networking

These artistic, art educational multidisciplinary project studies have been included in master thesis which students should undertake in the end of their studies. Over the eight last years different scale of art pedagogical action research have been carried out in teachers training program to learn ways of cooperation with other sectors of sciences. University's academic environment offers a good basis for collaboration and teamwork.

In general, the educational climate in Finland has been very much influenced by experimental research designs and methodologies. Thus, knowledge, skills and dispositions to conduct and facilitate action research which are based on collaborative inquiry and teachers reflective thinking need to be further developed.

Partnerships such as building innovative links between schools and other agencies to promote art teachers professional development and encouraging teachers' professional judgments and decisions are essential elements in this support system.

The projects as bridges between the school and the surrounding community, science and culture institutions

Thanks to these projects, art education has become socially more influential both in the world of art and education as well as in terms of art and environment. The projects are concrete examples of art education at its best. As art becomes a part of real life and environment, it also brings out the expertise of an art educator. There are more and more ways to apply art education in different sectors of society. The experiences gathered in these new sectors enrich art teaching in schools as well.

The experiences from the projects have been encouraging. Students have been motivated by the artistic work as well as the research work based on the projects. Most importantly, they have had invaluable real-world experiences working with different interest groups. Successful experiences not only raise the art educator's self-confidence, but also increase his or her courage to take up even more difficult issues. In addition, the general appreciation for the field has also increased.

However, it is important to bear in mind that the experience of expansion does not work just one way: the projects have brought the experience of living and active art education to other sectors of society as well.

Virtual international networking

Art, community and Environment (ACE) Project archive for and by students and staff of the University of Lapland, Finland and the University of Strathclyde, Scotland is a final step in project studies. Students should prepare a virtual documentation and evaluation for the ACE archive.

Collaboration between the universities gives student the opportunity to share research, project experiences and knowledge of community art, environmental art and art in education through an easily accessible web archive.

The primary function of the ACE Project is as an educational resource that can be used to disseminate theories and debate current practices in the areas concerned. It is also intended to serve as a research tool where a vast array of projects can be read about, comparisons made of their methodologies and justifications, and to keep students up to date with the progression of artistic projects in both countries.

It is hoped that thorough documentation and critical evaluation of project that are undertaken by students and staff will provide others with inspiration for future projects, provide a place of reference for how to implement projects and overcome potential problems or modify aspects of projects that were successful or otherwise.

Examples

The Winter Art Education Project

The Winter Art Education Project (2002 – 2004) was a regional development project that consisted of professional training for snow and ice contractors, winter art projects in schools and education for teachers in Northern Finland. The objective of the project was to encourage cooperation between schools and inspire the creation of environmental art in schoolyards in winter. The research and knowledge of academic discipline related to winter was also studied during the project. The gathered knowledge and descriptions of the winter art projects were published.

Firefox

Finland's northernmost municipality, Utsjoki, hosted the Firefox (2004 – 2006) project, which is a joint project on science, art and education. The main agents of the project are Utsjoki-based schools, the University of Lapland, the Village Commission of Utsjoki, and the *Magga – Ikäihmisten yhteisön voimavarana* ("The Elderly as a Valuable Resource of the Community") project. Every year, more and more cooperation partners participate in the Firefox Project. For example, the University of Oulu, the Ursa Astronomical Association (Ursa), the National Center for Professional Development in Education (Opeko), and senior citizens and children's daycare centers in Utsjoki. From the point of view of art education, the project is a development of community art education that emphasizes dialogue between art and science. As a regional development project, Firefox (*Tulikettu*) seeks to increase awareness of the special characteristics of the Utsjoki parish village, to promote networking, and to build new learning models and promote lifelong learning.

Visual art education professionals possess many skills that are needed in planning, creating and reporting a community and environmental art project. A project as a whole requires artistic expertise, organizational skills, skills to inspire others, and pedagogical skills. In addition, mastery of different research methods is a necessary prerequisite for community and environmental analysis. A visual art teacher is a professional with artistic and pedagogical skills, and skills in using different research methods.

We believe that an art teacher who has had possibilities to take part in some multidisciplinary collaborative art pedagogical project, having responsibility her or his own, is able and eager to create a project later on and promote cooperation and partnership with other domains outside of

school. And furthermore build international networks and teach pupils about the open realms of possibilities of what art can offer to well-being.

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Digital archives and galleries:

Art, Community and Environment (ACE) Project archive

<http://ace.ulapland.fi>

The web pages have been developed by students and staff of the University of Lapland, Finland and the University of Strathclyde, Scotland. The ACE Project is an educational resource that can be used to stimulate debate about current practice in the field of community, environmental art and art education. ACE serves as a research tool, allowing visitors to the site to read about a vast array of projects and compare methodologies. A key aim of the ACE archive is to keep students up to date with projects in both countries. ACE will be updated during the year 2005-2006

Site Specific Art Gallery

<http://olos.ulapland.fi/mm/katoavapublic>

Site Specific Photo Gallery contains documentations of land art, environmental art, performances and community art projects by students and staff of the University of Lapland, Department of Art Education. There are about 1300 documentary photos with the background information in the gallery. Documentary photos have been collected since the beginning of the 1990.

Winter Art Gallery

<http://olos.ulapland.fi/mm/talvipublic>

Winter Art Photo Gallery consists of winter art documentations. There are almost 800 photos from snow and ice installations, constructions and sculptures in the Winter Art Gallery. Besides winter art there are also paintings and photographs presenting winter in northern areas.

Jokivalkeat (River Lights) Fire Sculpture Event

<http://ace.ulapland.fi/jokivalkeat>

Jokivalkeat is an art event that is held every year in Rovaniemi. Several communities and wide public is brought together through making and experiencing fire sculpture art. The web pages serve as an introduction to the technical and artistic requirements of fire art and bring forth an art form that's unknown to many. Finnish web pages contain an introduction also in English.

