

Articles on Experiences 5

Arts & Experiences

Edited by

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Lapland Centre of Expertise for the Experience Industry (LCEEI)
The Experience Institute project

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Art is one of the most powerful tools in constructing experiences and meanings. Different forms of art offer meaningful experiences both ubiquitously and consciously. Actually the role of art in both our every-day lives and peak moments is so important that questions can be raised whether arts and experiences can be even separated in the first place.

The fifth Articles on Experiences focuses on Arts & Experiences. The collection of articles targets to bring in deeper and wider approaches to the discussion on experience economy. Especially a more thorough perspective on the fusion of culture and economy is offered. The collection shows that in the context of experience co-creation, culture and economy should not be discussed apart.

Lapland Centre of Expertise for the Experience Industry (LCEEI) with its Experience Institute project wishes to take the debate further by highlighting experiences not only from the economical perspective but also from the socio-cultural and the emotional view. The collection calls for a holistic, experience society oriented approach to understanding meaningful experiences and experience co-creation.

The 5th Articles on Experiences introduces nine articles under the topic of arts and experiences. Especially different forms of art co-creating experiences, collective experiencing through art, meaning constructions of artistic performances and experiences, the role of myths and fairy tales in experience co-creation, and combination of different fields of expertise in evoking experiences are highlighted.

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Introduction

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Articles on Experiences 5 – Arts & Experiences

You are most welcome to the fifth Articles on Experiences article collection. The AoE5 continues the extensive series of article collections published by the Lapland Centre of Expertise for the Experience Industry (LCEEI), Rovaniemi, Finland, between years 2004–2007. The purpose of the series of collections has been to invite different academic fields to an integrative forum, where different dimensions of experience industry, experience society, and co-creation of meaningful experiences are being highlighted.

The first collection, *Articles on Experiences* in 2004, was published mainly in Finnish. Due to the international nature of the quickly extending discussion on experience production, LCEEI decided to accept only English language articles in the further publications. International success and demand for the collections has proven the decision right. As a whole, the series of five books – including over forty academic articles – have gained a special position not only *among* experience discussion but also in *creating* and furthering it. Over the years, the collection has been able to establish a forum for discussion between the experience economy believers and

the sceptics with a more critical view on the fusion of culture and economy. It has also proven to be a concrete instrument for inviting a more academic perspective into the somewhat practical- and consultant -oriented debate on experience economy.

The fifth Articles on Experiences focuses on Arts & Experiences. The collection of articles aims to bring new approaches to the discussion on experience economy. Especially a more thorough perspective on the fusion of culture and economy – the foundation of the whole transition from manufacturing of goods to delivery of services to co-creation of experiences – is offered. The collection shows that in the context of experience co-creation, both cultural and economic considerations are essential.

Lapland Centre of Expertise for the Experience Industry (LCEEI) with its Experience Institute project wishes to take the debate further by highlighting experiences not only from the economical perspective, but also from the socio-cultural and the emotional point of view. The collection calls for a holistic, experience society oriented approach to understanding meaningful experiences and experience co-creation.

The new upcoming Centre of Expertise Programme in Finland coordinated by the Ministry of the Interior offers a great deal of potential to widen and deepen the international discussion through involving more experts. Experience industries are firmly present in the programme period 2007–2013 through the Tourism and Experience Production Cluster. The national cluster will continue the triple helix model (see e.g. Leydesdorff & Etzkowitz 2001) combining industry, public sector, and education and research. This will advance the unique work within the fastest growing industries. However, before developing the field one has to first understand the multidimensional specialities of it. And this is where AoE collection comes in.

Culture and Economy

Since the publication of Richard Florida's book *The Rise of the Creative Class and How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life* in 2002, the discussion on creativity and cultural economy has gone through the roof. Suddenly every business wanted to be part of the creative industry. Particularly in regional development, culture and creative buzz have become the new saving graces in a time when much of the blue-collar work is moving into lower cost countries. Culture and creative individuals suddenly became highly priced and sought after. This has certainly had positive effects on the understanding and appreciation of art and culture, which previously often have been seen just as expensive luxury to be enjoyed when all other needs are satisfied. The potential of culture as a resource for economic and social development has been overlooked.

The discussion has, however, also taken a few unwelcome turns. If culture was earlier mainly seen as frivolous luxury, it is now in danger of becoming a slave to economy. The Finnish philosopher Jukka Relander (2006) reminds us of the very nature of art as necessarily the critic of the society. If art is perceived only as a resource for economic value, it loses its very nature. In the feverish search for quick profit in creative industries, sometimes even artists themselves have begun to justify their existence primarily on the ability to create economic value. The potential of art and culture to create economic value should certainly be studied and developed, as in the best case the co-operation of art and commerce is beneficial for both sides. However, it is essential to remember that art and business operate on very different assumptions. Art cannot be evaluated on its profit-creating potential. It is, first and foremost, valuable in itself: Art for art's sake. Art, much in the same way as press, must remain independent of the status quo, in order to fulfil its vital role in the society.

As the previous Articles on Experiences collections have shown, especially tourism industry operates both as a good and a bad example in commodification of culture, such as the traditions, history and everyday lives of communities. On one hand this can be seen as a valuable way of transferring traditional knowledge between generations, nations and regions, and maintaining the possibilities of communities to survive in terms of both economy and culture. On the other hand, however, commodification of traditions transforms the culture displayed or performed. This can even lead to homogenisation of culture – places and spaces – and thus to the loss of attractiveness or, moreover, to the devastation of local cultures. In conclusion, combining culture and economy is highly sensitive work that requires integration of different fields of expertise.

Remembering that, in the following articles we can see how for example art education and cultural studies can play a role in creating experience products. In the best case, the added value of high quality and understanding of story, narrative, interactivity, flow, and communal art can produce not only increased direct economic benefit, but also social and cultural benefits in for example strengthening the bond between local actors and tourists.

The Power of Stories

As the articles *Poetics of Thrill: Combining Underground Music, Video Arts and Spectator Sports on a Sport Festival* and *Family Attractions – Attracting Families, Staging Experiences* show, theories of storytelling and narrative can be applied to a variety of experiences, including shopping malls and art museums. Storytelling is an ancient art, and as the leading Hollywood scriptwriting guru Robert McKee (1997) writes, stories are essential in the way humans seek to order chaos and gain

insight to life. Through stories, we can *crystallize the formless reality* into understandable bites. Stories also carry the ethical and moral guidelines of our society, and bond individuals to our respective communities – our families, the companies we work for, or the countries we are born in.

The spectators at a Norwegian sports festival consume the experience twice: First in real time as the event is taking place, and in the evening as edited highlights in Today's video. This is the essence of storytelling: Building a community, telling and retelling the stories that bind us together. Every story must touch the experiences of the listener; else it will not be meaningful. We can see how the basics of Aristotle's *Poetics* are still valid and relevant, though the mechanics and economics of storytelling may change.

In experience industry, the story, the content of the experience is increasingly significant. For instance, in the special Experience Pyramid model that aims to understand the experiential elements of products and to define experientialism, story is one of the six important elements that lead the person from different level to another, and finally from meaningful experience to change (Tarssanen & Kylänen 2006). A good story tells the customer as well as the producer why one should buy and consume the specific product offered by the specific service provider at this specific moment (see Tarssanen & Kylänen 2006; Kylänen 2006). In a world where most westerners have all the objects and products they could possibly want within their reach, difference is made with the significance of a product or experience. What we want to spend our money, or more importantly, our time on, depends on what the product can offer us beyond utility or entertainment. People have not changed much in a thousand years: We still yarn to make sense of the world and our place in it. If an experience, whether something we encounter in our everyday life or a specifically built product, can offer us a deeper understanding of ourselves and emotionally touch us, it will be worth the time and money.

Good example of the necessity of understanding story on all the different levels of perception is the observation in the article *Family Attractions* of the girl following the curve of Aalto vase with her body. Children's desire to experience things on a physical level should be seen as an opportunity for learning. It also applies to adults, though convention and prohibitive environments often tell us touching and feeling is not appropriate.

Art Education and Experience Co-Creation

Mirja Hiltunen states in her article *Embodied Experiences – Constructing a Collaborative Art Event in the Northern Environment* the well-argued case that art educators have a lot of expertise and knowledge that experience industry and tourism can benefit from. Art attempts to observe everyday things, events and routines from a new perspective and shed light to the mundane. This way an individual can change their perception and perhaps worldview. Traditionally, tourism and experience industry attempts to bring about something irregular and extraordinary, to remove you from the shackles of routine. Distancing oneself is a way of discovering something new in the world. Can these opposite approaches have a meaningful dialogue? What kind of experience products could be constructed for culture tourism? Perhaps the tourist should be not just a spectator, but also a participant. In the case of the Shaman's Drum, the presence of the silent and lantern-carrying audience, tourists, was quoted as a major factor in creating the magical atmosphere. That is experience co-creation.

In the article *Fire Art as an Experience*, Huhmarniemi asks how can the Rovaniemi-based annual art event River Lights be developed in co-operation with the tourism industry? Involving tourists in a communal event not only pro-

vides added value to the tourist, but it can also create a meeting place for the tourist and the local population, a meeting place of equals building an event or an experience together. Huhmarniemi quotes Jokela that the event should be developed in co-operation with the tourism industry in order to ensure its continuity. In this case, the benefit of co-operation is mutual: A high quality art event can create a deeply relevant experience to the tourist, and the commercial benefit would ensure the existence of a locally significant event. The perspective of the tourists can also bring a new dimension to the work of art.

However, in his article *Winter Art as an Experience*, Timo Jokela outlines the underlying contradictory assumptions that eventually led to a clash between the international and the local level in the Snow Show art event in Lapland 2003-2004. While it is obvious that art education has expertise and tools that could prove invaluable in the building of experience industry and experience tourism, the inherently different goals need to be clearly spelled out. For the tourism industry, art is valuable primarily as a means for creating more business; for the art community, business is a way of enabling art. If the contradiction is accepted and respected by both parties, fruitful co-operation is possible.

The Human Experience

As Sisko Ylimartimo shows in her article *Roses in the garden, flowers for eternity*, artists have the ability to document and narrate the environment and culture through an artistic or aesthetic experience. In the case of the Laestadius triptych, the artist Bror Hjorth documents the religious experience and nature experience through deep empathy and the ability to feel what another person is feeling, like a role game or role switching. For the creation of meaningful experience, it is vi-

tal to understand the constructions of myths and fairy tales, as demonstrated in *Constructing Experiences of Sacred and Eternal*. Myths, fairy tales and legends all share something very central to the human understanding, and as pointed out by Nina Kokkinen, these understandings are very close to experiences of religion and the sacred. If constructed experiences wish to be meaningful to their consumers, something about the logic of myths needs to be understood. Kuukkanen and Ozturk introduce in their article *Colour as Information Carrier* the mechanics of how colour is perceived and interpreted by humans, and how this needs to be applied in design of experiences.

Here is the third way art and artists have something to offer for the creation of experiences. In the article *Human Experience and Ubiquitous Art – The Concepts of Experience Society and Experience Landscape*, Thijssen, Boswijk and Peelen argue that the focus in experience production needs to be shifted from the product to the individual. The internationally marketed dance event White Sensation can be seen as a form of community art. Without dancers the DJ's, lights and music would be nothing. In the Shaman's Drum event, audience carrying lanterns in silence created the atmosphere that was important for the performers. Both are examples of experience co-creation, and in both cases the participants' openness to the experience is helped by the physical environment and the perception from all senses.

For the authenticity and acceptability of the art or experience, the concept of experience co-creation is central. As Thijssen et al. pointed out, the authentic and acceptable skating bowls can only be built by the skaters themselves. In the Snow Show case, a large part of the local community was strongly involved in the event. Had it not been disappointed by the underlying colonialist ideas, it is likely the event would have been a source of great pride for the locals involved in it.

For the experience industry, a more involving process is perhaps needed in which the tourist or consumer is strongly involved in the creation of the experience. We need to understand the mechanics of human experience in addition to the experience product. Perhaps in addition to the Experience Pyramid and focusing on the experience product, we also need to focus on the individual or the consumer. His or her openness and ability to receive the experience is central in the success. Strong involvement in experience co-creation is essential. As Thijssen et al. point out, we must switch to a human-centred approach – to invite and engage.

Nine Articles

The collection also aims to understand art – different forms of art, communality, meaning constructions, myths and fairy tales, and combination of different fields of expertise – from the point of view of experientialism, meaningful experiences, and experience co-creation.

The book, edited by Mika Kylänen and Anna Häkkinen, introduces you nine articles approaching the complex and multidimensional topic of arts & experiences. AoE5 continues the series of Articles on Experiences by taking a challenging task of bringing arts and experience discussion closer to each other. The collection shows that although arts and experience economy – production and commodification of culture – are being discussed mainly apart and seen as opposite debaters, culture and economy are highly intertwined. Moreover, the understanding gained from studying arts contributes remarkably to discussion on experience co-creation. But the relationship is reciprocal as the understanding gained from observing meaningful experiences adds in to construction of artistic performances and events.

The collection builds on nine articles by different authors and with different but nicely connected topics. The connecting denominator for the first two articles is *interpreting art*, and especially how artistic illustrations attach to essential truths and deepest, contextual meanings. Then the following three articles are in line with *construction of events*, and especially the power of art as content in community-based experience co-creation in the Northern hemisphere. Finally, the closing four articles discuss the *experiential elements in different attractions or experience products* with a special emphasis on mediating, packaging and consuming meaningful experiences. Also the role of art – and the obviousness and therefore the implicitness of it – is being highlighted.

AoE5 helps you to understand the role of art in experience co-creation and to find new aspects for realizing the importance of combining the fields of culture and economy in order to co-create meaningful experiences in both our everyday lives and peak moments.

All articles are collected on the basis of invitations and contributions. They have been collected in September and November 2006. As a whole, the collection emphasizes the holistic logic of experience economy – experience society, to be specific – by deepening and widening the understanding the intertwined nature of arts & experience. The authors represent different fields of science from arts to psychology, from tourism to ethnology, and from management to engineering. All articles are copyrighted (©). References are asked to be made as following:

Author 2006. The Name of the Article. In Kylänen, Mika & Häkinen, Anna (eds.): Articles on Experiences 5 – Arts & Experiences. Lapland Centre of Expertise for the Experience Industry. Rovaniemi, pp.

Nina Kokkinen, Master of Arts, is a PhD student at the University of Lapland, Rovaniemi, Finland, and the researcher at the University of Turku, Finland. Her PhD will discuss religion in Finnish fine or visual arts between the 19th and the 20th century. She has gained her Master's Degree in Audiovisual Media culture at the University of Lapland in the Faculty of Arts in 2004. Her Master's Thesis focused on the mythic-psychological analysis of Disney's *Fantasia* animation movie. Her article in the collection – *Constructing Experiences of Sacred and Eternal, Visualisations of Mircea Eliade's Archetypal Centre in Fairy Tale Illustrations* – is about demonstrating how Romanian religion historian Mircea Eliade's ideas can be used in interpreting art. Kokkinen's article proves the power of fairy tales in meaning construction and the role of quality illustrations in representing reality.

Sisko Ylimartimo, Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Arts, works as Senior lecturer of art history at the University of Lapland, Rovaniemi, Finland, and is also Docent of children's literature at the University of Oulu. She has written books and articles about picture book illustration, fairy tales, arts and crafts and sacral art. Ylimartimo is specialized in research of illustration of fairy tales and children's picture books. She has also contributed to *Articles on Experiences 3 – Christmas Experiences* with two articles. Her article in the fifth *Articles on Experiences* collection introduces an altar painting from the old church of Jukkasjärvi, Sweden, painted and decorated by a Swedish Bror Hjorth in 1958. Ylimartimo analyses the triptych as well as Hjorth's painting and orientation process. The triptych inspired by Lars Levi Laestadius is an absolute masterpiece combining both historical piece of northern culture and universal religious themes. It also shows how art and artistic intentions connect to the Arctic nature of seasonal changes and other specialities. The metaphors of reformatory and cleansing Laestadian message as well as the Lappish and Samish mythology are solidly pres-

ent in the poetical triptych, which can be seen e.g. from the topic, *Roses in the Garden, Flowers for the Eternity*.

The third article written by **Mirja Hiltunen**, Licentiate in Arts, discusses embodied experiences. Hiltunen is Lecturer of art education at the University of Lapland, Rovaniemi, Finland, at the Faculty of Arts. She is doing her PhD on community-based art education in the Northern socio-cultural environment. Hiltunen's article *Embodied Experiences, Constructing a Collaborative Art Event in the Northern Environment* approaches similar issues. Especially the article examines the process of constructing an art event and its possibilities to offer a forum for combining different socio-cultural contexts and fields of expertise. In terms of experience co-creation, the article offers new insights to holistic experiencing with an emphasis on being in the world through the body by sensing and perceiving holistically, and moreover, together with others. The article also stretches the applicability of the Experience Pyramid model, developed by Sanna Tarssanen and Mika Kylänen in the Lapland Centre of Expertise for the Experience Industry, as the art event in question, the Shaman's Drum (*Noitarumpu*), in Fell Pyhä (*Pyhätunturi*) is analysed through the framework.

The fourth article is written by **Maria Huhmarniemi** who works as Lecturer of art education at the University of Lapland, Rovaniemi, Finland, at the Faculty of Arts. Huhmarniemi has co-authored and co-edited several books and authored several articles discussing different forms of art. She has also participated in many art projects and art education projects, for instance *The Snow Show – Winter Art Education Project* that was a true success in advancing learning and community-based art in Northern Finland. Her article in the collection, however, introduces fire, instead of snow, as form of art and as a mode of experience co-creation. Huhmarniemi guides the reader to the cultural meanings and beliefs attached to fire. The main emphasis is on two special

contexts, namely the River Lights in Rovaniemi, and the Easter Bonfire in Central Ostrobothnia, which are being analysed through the techniques and forms of expressions used in fire sculpture.

The fifth article discusses winter art and its development in Northern Finland. The author, **Timo Jokela**, is Professor of Art Education at the University of Lapland, Rovaniemi, Finland, at the Faculty of Arts. Jokela is also an experienced environmental artist. Jokela has authored, co-authored and co-edited several books on community-based art education, winter art and environmental art. He has also worked determined in order to introduce wintry elements – snow and ice – as a significant form of art, and as a valuable forum for building communality. Jokela's article offers an interesting, both philosophical and practical standpoint to the past, present and future of winter art as an experience in the context of constantly growing experience industries.

The next article Family Attractions – Attracting Families, Staging Experiences written by three Danish academics, **Lars Holmgaard Christensen**, **Malene Gram**, and **Thessa Jensen**, takes the reader to Denmark. In the article families are being observed in three different locations and analysed in the framework of meaningful experiences. Especially the authors lean on Mihaly Csíkszentmihályi's optimal experience, Flow. The three attractions have been chosen for they all consider families as their target groups, either present or hopefully in the future. The article ends up finding thought-provoking differences between the three chosen locations: Randers Rainforest (Randers Regnskov), the Northern Jutland's Art Museum (Nordjyllands Kunstmuseum), and Aalborg Shopping Mall (Aalborg Storcenter). The article offers new insights to the engagement of families in experience co-creation.

Lars Holmgaard Christensen works as researcher and PhD student at the VR Media Lab of the Aalborg University,

Denmark. VR Media Lab is VR Media Lab is one of Europe's largest virtual reality (VR) installations with an overall object of creating a forum for the research and educational environments of Aalborg University as well as partners in development projects. Holmgaard Christensen has published several books and articles e.g. on media technology, interactive media communication, and media ethnography. Currently he is in on InDiMedia research project, and his PhD discusses socio-cultural construction and consumption of interactive TV. Malene Gram is Associate Professor at the Aalborg University, Denmark, at the Department of History, International and Social Studies. She is also the study coordinator of the Culture, Communication and Globalization Master's Programme. Gram holds her PhD in Cultural Analysis, and her academic special interests are intercultural communication, globalization, and non-profit and public marketing. She has published numerous books, reports and articles relating to these topics. Thessa Jensen works as Associate Professor at the VR Media Lab of Aalborg University. Jensen holds her PhD in interactive digital media. She is specialised in interactive digital media, information technology, and computer games.

Poetics of Thrill: Combining Underground Music and Video Arts and Spectator Sports in a Sport Festival by **Szilvia Gyimóthy** and **Reidar J. Mykletun** approaches a specific adventure sports festival, Norwegian *ExtremSPORTVEKO*, in the light commodification of thrill and play through individual-collective relationship of flow experiences and co-consumption of meaningful experiences. Szilvia Gyimóthy, PhD, works as Associate Professor in Service Management at the Department of Service Management, in Helsingborg, of Lund University, Sweden. She is specialised in marketing and consumer studies in tourism/ leisure management, phenomenology of tourist experiences, services marketing and qual-

ity management, branding and image studies, and nostalgia and post modern consumption. Reidar J. Mykletun, PhD, is Associate professor and Dean of Norwegian School of Hotel Management, Stavanger University College, in Stavanger, Norway. He is also the Editor-in Chief of the Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism. Mykletun's areas of research discuss mostly either public or private service organizations. Especially organizational culture with notions of leadership, organization psychology, empowerment, and working abilities are close to him. As the article shows both of these acclaimed authors are also interested in adventure tourism, nature based tourism, and cultural heritage.

The eighth article with the topic Human Experience and Ubiquitous Art – The Concepts of Experience Society and Experience Landscape: Defining the Art and Principles of Human Centred Experience Design proposes that art is ubiquitous and is part of every-day human life and experience. In the article three examples are presented that illustrate the ubiquitous nature of art in experience and meaning co-creation. ID&T's and Q Dance's *dance events*, Apple's iPod *portable media player*, and MU Bowl's *skating facilities* – all – help to clarify the special concepts, experience spaces and experience contexts, and the role of art, and the ubiquitous forms of it in experience society. The authors come from the Netherlands. **Thomas Thijssen**, PhD, works as Research Director of the European Centre for the Experience Economy, in Bilthoven. Thijssen is also senior researcher at the Prima Vera Research Group, at the University of Amsterdam. He is specialised in co-creating meaningful experiences through learning-by-sharing, an approach that shed light on academics and practitioners co-creating meanings.

Albert Boswijk is the CEO of the European Centre for the Experience Economy, in Bilthoven. Boswijk is one of the European forerunners in experience economy. He also works as a business consultant. Boswijk's special interest is in gen-

erations of experience economy and experience business practices. **Ed Peelen** is Professor of Direct Marketing at the Centre of Supply Chain Management and Executive Management Development Centre at the Nyenrode Business University, the Netherlands. He is specialised in direct marketing, customer relationship management, account management and marketing in general. He has written numerous books and articles in both managerial and academic journals.

The closing article, Colour as Information Carrier in Immerse Virtual Reality Spaces, brings in an engineers' point-of-view to arts & experience. Their diverse article discusses some dimensions of digital technology as form of art in virtual reality spaces. Especially digital colour management as a subset of experience co-creation is emphasised. The article is divided to two parts, and the first part by **Hannu Kuukkanen** opens up e.g. the triangle of light, colour, and human perception. The second part, contributed by **Aydin Ozturk** introduces different techniques and technologies designed for instance for graphic management and the modification of surface properties with special shaders. To an interesting extent, the article explains the reality behind the actual human experience, especially the techniques and modes of artistic production. Hannu Kuukkanen is senior research scientist at the Department of Content Engineering and Visualization of the VTT, the Technical Research Centre of Finland. He has also contributed to the previous Articles on Experiences, AoE4 – Digital Media & Games. Kuukkanen is project manager and co-ordinator of the CADPIPE research project funded by the European Union Sixth Framework Programme. CADPIPE stands for Cad Production Pipeline that refers to production chain automation through 3D technology. Aydin Ozturk is the Professor of International Computer Institute at the Ege University, in Izmir, Turkey. Ozturk's research interests are statistics, simulation and modelling, computer graphics, and image compression. He is also an acclaimed advisor of both

Turkish ministries and national and international networks. Ozturk has also won Thomas L. Saaty Prize for Best Paper in Journal of the Mathematical and Management Sciences, in New York, in 1997.

We as editors hope the collection will give you further understanding about the nature and interpretations of meaningful experiences and promote a multifaceted debate about the future and practicalities of experience industry, and wider, the fusion of culture and economy. We propose the AoE5 – Arts & experiences article collection helps to build a deeper and wider approach to experience co-creation that goes beyond the traditional experience economy oriented view. Especially art in its multiple forms has a great role to play in this process.

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Constructing Experiences of Sacred and Eternal

Visualisations of Mircea Eliade's Archetypal Centre in Fairy Tale Illustrations

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Art is one of the most powerful tools in constructing experiences and meanings. This also applies to myths and fairy tales, which are commonly understood as stories that somehow connect with essential truths and deepest meanings hidden in the midst of reality. One of the most important religion historians to conceptualise mythical stories in this manner was Romanian Mircea Eliade (1907-1986). His widely known writings about cosmological myths, shamanism and yoga (among other themes) have had an enormous influence on the ways in which myths, rituals and other religious phenomena have been understood – both in general and in the academic field. From the 1950's onwards Eliade worked as a professor of History of Religions at the University of Chicago Divinity School – this legacy of his is still vividly alive in the Chicago chair that was named after Eliade in 1985. During his lifetime Eliade concentrated mostly on studying religious experience and similarities between different manifestations of what he called the Sacred. (See Laitila 1993, xvii-xxvii; 2003, 7-16.)

In this article I will demonstrate how Eliadean ideas can be utilized in interpreting art. How can images visualize something that Eliade considered as sacred or eternal? And what possibilities are there, from the Eliadean point of view, to construct meaningful experiences in art? The visual material that I use to show how the Eliadean interpretation and meaning-construction could work comes from the inspiring realm of fairy tales – namely from the illustrations of Swedish John Bauer (1882-1918) and Danish Kay Nielsen (1886-1957). These artists worked during the golden age of illustration. At the turn of the centuries (about 1860-1930) a publisher produced expensive and highly decorative gift books, in which well-known fairy tales met elaborate artwork. John Bauer illustrated an annually published Swedish fairy tale collection *Among Elves and Trolls (Bland tomtar och troll)* in 1907-1915. These fascinating images of forests populated with gnomes, heroes and princesses made him one of the most beloved Scandinavian illustrators. Pictures that I have chosen as examples of this article are part of the *Among Elves and Trolls*-series – and one of them, the illustration of princess Cotton-grass, is probably the best-known artwork Bauer ever made. Kay Nielsen's illustrations I have picked from his second gift book, which visualises the mythical world of Nordic fairy tales: the collection called *East of the Sun and West of the Moon* (1914) by Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe. These illustrations with desolated milieus, heroes and heroines wearing costumes with Scandinavian decorations, wolves, bears and northern winds are full of arctic atmosphere. (Agrenius 1996, 39-49; Ylimartimo 2002, 5-7, 16-17.)

Nielsen's illustrations are interpreted in the last two chapters of this article. The next chapter focuses on Mircea Eliade's thinking and explains more widely his comprehension of religious experiences, archetypal patterns and the difference between the sacred and profane. Interpretations of John Bauer's illustrations are mainly discussed in the third

and fourth chapters, which show how the Eliadean Centre can be visualized through the symbols of World Mountain and Cosmic Tree. Eliade's ideas about initiation rituals are also present. The conclusion opens with questions and suggestions that really are not at all that Eliadean – at the end one of my aims is to point out that we should not forget there is always something critical at stake, when meaningful experiences are being constructed.

Understanding Eliade: Experiences of the Sacred Manifest through Archetypal Patterns

Experiences have a significant role in Mircea Eliade's thinking. He separates two different kinds of humans according to the way they experience reality. The first type is connected with the universe. Humans in this category understand their part of "the bigger picture" and therefore they are also aware of their own value and meaning. The higher consciousness allows them to experience reality without the limits of time and place – or as Eliade (1991, 33) himself has put it "the more a consciousness is awakened, the more it transcends its own historicity". These people experience the world in certain cultural-historical situations, but they can also live in another rhythm of life – they can experience the absolute reality beyond any temporal or spatial limits. For Eliade these people are the authentic ones: they are religious and experience the world in a sacred manner. In opposition to this type is the modern man, who cannot see his own meaning or cosmic connections. He can experience the world only in a profane manner and because of that; he never perceives reality as it really is – its holiness, its wholeness, its true meaning. This type of human is always bound to the limits of his own historical and cultural existence. (Eliade 1991, 32-37; 2003, 36-40, 221-223; see also Laitila 1993, xvii-xix, xxviii-xxix.)

An important notion to make here is that Eliade separates two different ways of experiencing the reality – sacred and profane. From now on I will focus on “the sacred manner”, because Eliade himself thought that it was the authentic and original way of experiencing. For him it was a significant and the most natural part of humanity. The sacred experience itself is divided by Eliade into two different levels, the core and the surface. At the very heart of this experience is the universal feeling of some transcendent power or force – the sacred. This feeling forms the foundation for all religions and religious experiences. Although the core of the experience is universal, expressions of the similar feeling are bound to cultural-historical limitations. That is why religions seem to differ from one another at the surface. Eliade (1975, 125) himself pointed this out by saying “Jesus Christ spoke Aramaic; he did not speak Sanskrit or Chinese”. When the powerful universal feeling (the sacred) is manifested – in symbols, rituals or myths for example – it has to go through temporal and spatial limitations. (Eliade 1975, 123-134; see also Anttonen 1996, 62-63.)

As a conclusion, on the basic level the experiences of religious humans, *homo religiosus*, are the same. Eliade also thought that the ways the universal feeling is manifested are somehow guided by certain patterns. For some reason, people always tend to express their experiences and make some sense to them in a similar way. At least on one occasion Eliade referred to Vladimir Propp – the Russian structuralist, who analysed the basic elements of folk tales – and suggested that something similar was going on in both religions and folk tales. As fairy tales always seem to follow some sort of a structure, there were also certain patterns through which the religious experience was expressed. (Eliade 1982, 142; Anttonen 1996, 62-63; Laitila 2004, 89, 97-99.) One of these patterns is concerned with the idea of the Centre, and to this specific pattern I will return later in the next chapter. At this

point it is only necessary to notice that if one analyses different historically formed religious symbols or myths, one can find certain elements or patterns, which shape the manifestations of the sacred experience repeatedly to the same model.

The Eliadean comprehension of the universal core of the experience, its historically formed surface and the idea of the patterns, resemble in many ways depth psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung's (1875-1961) thinking. In his writings Jung wrote about the collective unconscious, which he considered the universal level of the human psyche. This level contains archetypes – forms or structures – that direct the way people think and act. Jung also makes the same kind of division between universal and historical levels as Eliade: in every culture the archetypes are always the same, but archetypal images or symbols (the surface), through which they are expressed, may vary largely. For example when a person with a Christian background is experiencing the Mother archetype, it is likely that he sees or feels it through the symbols of Virgin Mary. (Jung 1980, 3-7, 42-48; 2003, 67-69; see also Kokkinen 2006, 135-136; Perttula 2006.)

The similarities between Eliade and Jung are not at all that unexpected, since Eliade (1991, 14, 29-37) seemed to think that Jung's work had made an important contribution to the study of myths and symbols. Eliade also met Jung on several occasions, for the first time in the 1950's at the Erano Conference held in Switzerland (Laitila 1993, xxii). In this sense it is very interesting, that Eliade used the word archetype repeatedly when he was explaining the concept of patterns. There is, however, a difference in the way Jung and Eliade understood this word: when Jungian archetypes are more unambiguously situated in the human psyche, Eliadean archetypes (or patterns) are clearly connected with both the subconscious *and* the transconscious (see Eliade

1991, 17). Eliade used the word more in a neoplatonic way – archetypes were higher ideas or images, which were imitated and repeated continuously. They are an essential part of actual humanity that precedes the historical human condition. (Eliade 1975, 54-55; Laitila 1993, xv).

Because the main focus in this article is art and its Eliadean interpretation, it is important to understand how Eliade (1991, 9-21, 163-164, 172-178) himself decoded symbols. In his thinking every symbol has two levels of meaning: (1) the common or the universal meaning and (2) the cultural-historically limited local meaning. As with experience, the symbols also have a permanent core, which is covered with temporal-spatially constructed layers. For Eliade the first meaning is the essential one, since the true function of the symbol is hidden underneath its historical expression. This meaning and the archetype (or pattern) it imitates should be the main issue in any interpretation: regardless of how a certain symbol is represented in its current context, it is always connected with the deep meanings and the eternal parts of humanity. In other words, symbols are always manifestations of the sacred, transcendental reality. Although it is still possible to find the true meaning of symbols, it is more challenging in the modern world, where the symbols usually appear in a degraded or diminished form. In the following chapters I will use Eliade's comprehension of symbols to interpret fairy tale illustrations, which could be understood as symbolic images in a degraded form. I will show how these illustrations are repeating one particular Eliadean archetype or pattern, namely the idea of the Sacred Centre.

Experiencing the Sacred Centre: the World Mountain as the Place of Higher Consciousness

In 1911 John Bauer made an illustration to a Swedish fairy tale called *The Maiden in the Castle of Rosy Clouds*. The story tells about a young man, who tries to find a castle – the home of a white maiden with starry eyes of whom he once dreamed of. The road to the castle is unknown and the rumour says that whoever wants to get there has to own three things: a sword, a red cloak and a grey horse. During the years, the hero encounters troubles and eventually manages to get all the required items. He is already an old man when he finds the road to the castle of Rosy Clouds. At the end of the story he meets the white maiden of his dreams, who restores his long lost youth. In his illustration Bauer has pictured the moment, when the hero finally finds the place he has been looking for. A narrow path leads to the top of a cloudy mountain, where a golden castle shines brightly. A boy with a grey horse is just about to start climbing up and his red cloak is flickering in the wind.

From the point of view of Eliadean interpretation, Bauer's illustration is a perfect example of a mythic image, since it demonstrates so well how works of art can imitate and repeat certain archetypal patterns. The most important Eliadean symbol in this picture is the castle at the top of the cloudy mountain. This motive appears continuously in Eliade's (1959, 3-17; 1991, 39-47; 2003, 54-66) writings. He thinks that people are universally interested in finding archetypal Centres, where they can attempt to connect with the higher transcendental reality – in other words experience the sacred without any temporal or spatial limitations. This celestial idea or archetype usually tends to manifest itself through certain patterns: (1) The Sacred Mountain situated in the centre of the world and (2) temples, palaces, royal residencies or cities imitating this mountain. Since these



Figure 1. The Maiden in the Castle of Rosy Clouds.

sacred spaces form the meeting point for three cosmic regions – heaven, earth and hell – through them it is possible to reach higher levels of consciousness. In Eliade's thinking mountains and castles are then regarded as Centres, where humans can find their salvation: the eternal experience of the true and sacred reality.

The Eliadean idea of the Centre fits well into Bauer's illustration. The Castle in the Rosy Clouds is situated high up in the sky as if it were some kind of a gateway to heaven. The clouds form the World Mountain, which promises the salvation to the hero of the fairy tale. At the top of the mountain he reaches the sacred reality, where the limitations of the temporal world no longer prevail: historical time becomes insignificant and the hero gets his youth back. This

fact is probably anticipated in the Bauer's picture, because the riding boy does not really appear to be very old. The illustration suggests that the castle represents the higher state of consciousness, since both the mountain and the castle are shining in a bright white-golden light. Eliadean Centres do not always have to be drawn in this bright manner: sometimes The World Mountain is more connected with the underworld and darkness (see Kokkinen 2004, 25-26). In this case, however, the meaning of the shining mountain castle is clear. The motive of the horse in Bauer's illustration may also be connected to the symbolism of the Centre, because Eliade (1975, 60-66) believed that humans reaching for the higher consciousness and the experience of the Sacred every so often got help from the animals. Bauer has pictured the horse – the bearer of the hero – as powerful and pompous, just as the spiritual helper should be.

The path to Bauer's castle of the Rosy Clouds is narrow and full of twists and turns. It is a perfectly visualized example of the route to the Eliadean Centre, because the way to the sacred reality is rarely easy. When someone is going to the Centre, he also goes through some kind of an initiation ritual: he shifts from the profane to the sacred reality. The dangerous nature of this transition is often symbolised with the motives of narrow bridges or gateways. (Eliade 2003, 199-204.) Bauer's path (or bridge) connecting the earthly and heavenly plains seems to emerge out of nowhere. Compared to the size of the horse and the hero it is amazingly thin – a real challenge so to speak. At the very least, in this point the true Eliadean meaning of Bauer's illustration becomes clear. The hero – as all the humans universally – is reaching for the higher consciousness and the sacred reality, which in this picture are visualized in the archetypal form as the castle on the top of the World Mountain. The horse helps the boy to go through the initiation process by carrying him across the dangerously narrow

pathway. The limitations of historical present are revoked in the Centre of this microcosmic fairy tale world, in the Castle of Rosy Clouds.

Experiencing the Symbolic Death: World Trees in Connection with the Underworld

In the previous chapter I showed how the Eliadean Centre manifests itself through the symbols of World Mountain and castles. Now I will focus on another aspect of the archetypal Centre, namely the symbolism of the Cosmic Tree. This time I will also use John Bauer's art to explain how the Eliadean interpretation proceeds. The Swedish fairy tale called *Leap Elk and the Little Princess Cottongrass* tells about a heroine called Cottongrass, who asks an elk to show her the world. The elk carries the princess into the woods and warns her not to let go of his horns. Since Cottongrass cannot obey this rule, she loses her crown, clothes and finally her golden heart jewel into the dark pond. When the little princess wants to go after the jewel the elk forbids her, because he knows the water is dangerous: if Cottongrass touches it, she will lose both her memory and her mind. Yet the princess wants to find her golden heart and starts to stare into the pond. The spell of the water reaches her and finally Cottongrass turns into a flower – she can never leave the forest again. In Bauer's illustration (1913) Cottongrass is still a little girl, but she has already fallen under the spell of the pond. She sits in the middle of the shady forest and stares at the bottom of the dark water. It seems like everything, including time around her stands still.

The illustration is framed with two massive trees. Since the dark pond reflects their shadows, the trees seem to extend all the way from the bottom to the top of the illustration. They could easily be understood as Cosmic Trees – Eliadean archetypes or patterns that belong to symbolism of the Centre.



Figure 2. Leap Elk and the Little Princess Cottongrass

For Eliade these kinds of trees represent *axis mundi*: they are situated in the Sacred Centre and connect heaven, earth and hell as the World Mountain. These trees mark places, where humans can experience the sacred and communicate with the transcendental reality. (Eliade 1991, 44-47.) Yet the atmosphere in Bauer's illustration is somehow unpromising. Darkness surrounds Cottongrass and the roots of the trees seem to be silently reaching her. Archetypal Cosmic Trees certainly point out that the heroine sits in the Sacred Centre, but what kind of a Centre is this forest with the dark pond really? And why does it seem to be threatening?

The answer to these questions lies in the Eliadean comprehension of ritualistic processes. In the previous chapter I already mentioned the transition from the profane to the sacred territory to be a kind of initiation ritual. These rituals usually have one phase in which the initiative falls into the underworld – in other words he dies in a symbolic way. According to Eliade one typical place for this death is in the dark forest, which symbolises “the beyond”. The initiative

falls into darkness, becomes motionless and forgets all about his previous life. He descends into a state of pre-creation and chaos. In many cases this fact is symbolised with the motive of water, known for its destructive qualities. All the preceding forms are demolished by the chaotic element of water in order for something new to be reborn. The true Eliadean meaning of the initiation ritual lies here: humans have to go through the symbolic death before they can be reborn for the new spiritual way of living, and experience the sacred reality as it really is. (Eliade 1975, 192-228; 2003 150-157.) In Eliade's (1975, 223-224) own words: "[...] *what it means above all is that one liquidates the past, one puts an end to one existence, which like all profane existence is a failure, to begin again, regenerated, in another*".

These ideas apply well to Bauer's illustration. Cottongrass sits in the Sacred Centre surrounded by Cosmic Trees that stretch all the way from the upper heavens to the aquatic underworld. In this picture, the heroine is certainly more connected with the cosmic abyss: she stares into the world of death symbolised by the chaotic water, and the otherworldly roots of Cosmic Trees are just about to reach her. The pond has washed away the heroine's memories of the previous life just like the Lethe, river of forgetfulness in the Greek underworld. Darkness has fallen into the forest and time stands still – as it should be in the Eliadean Centre, where the limitations of temporal and spatial existence cannot prevail. Cottongrass is connected with the transcendental reality, but at the same time she is experiencing her own symbolic death in the middle of the dark woods. From this death, the new spiritual awakening should arise, but in Cottongrass's case the fairy tale ends here. Although she transforms into a flower, this could hardly be understood as a desired change. She shares the destiny of the Greek Narcissus and is cursed to stare at her own reflection forevermore. Cottongrass gets stuck in the dark underworld and stays there forever.

There is certainly something confusing and irritating about Bauer's illustration. Why is the heroine condemned to stay in the Eliadean Centre "turned upside-down"? How come she gets to experience only the abyss of the transcendental reality, but cannot move to the next phase of the initiation? At least in my opinion, this seems to be some kind of a punishment for her. Bauer's illustration raises many questions and in the following chapters I will try to give some answers to these questions by interpreting another set of images made by Kay Nielsen.

Experiencing the Transcendental Reality: the Initiation Ritual Completed

In 1914 Kay Nielsen illustrated *The Lassie and her Godmother* for the Norse fairy tale collection called *East of the Sun and West of the Moon*. In one of these pictures a reflection of the young heroine is visualised on the surface of a dark forest pond. The Lassie herself is not illustrated, but according to the story she sits quietly in the big tree that curves above the water. So far the fairy tale has told how she has broken her godmother's instructions and how she, as a result of this disobedience, loses her ability to speak. Since the girl is also driven away from her home, she wanders into the woods and climbs up to a tall tree to spend the night. What is important here is to notice the similarity between Nielsen's and Bauer's illustrations and between the fairy tales they visualize: forest, Cosmic Trees alongside the pond, darkness and the reflections in the water. In Nielsen's illustration, however, the central figure is not the heroine, but a local prince, who notices the reflection of the beautiful Lassie in the forest pond.

From the Eliadean point of view, the two heroines, Lassie and princess Cottongrass, are both experiencing the same symbolic death. I have already pointed out how the dark forest, Cosmic Trees and the element of water are connected to the initiation phase, in which the heroine descends into the under-



Figure 3. *Lassie's Reflection in the Forest Pond.*

world. Besides these motives, there are also two additional facts in *The Lassie and her Godmother* that refer to the symbolic death of the heroine: she loses her ability to speak and climbs the Cosmic Tree (see Eliade 1975, 192-195). At this point she is clearly in the same situation as Cottongrass, who is condemned to experience the eternal death in the Eliadean Centre. But as Nielsen's illustration suggests, Lassie's story does not end here. After a while, the local prince finds her and carries her into his nearby castle, which seems to be the final Centre of this story. In the castle Lassie gives birth to three children. The godmother she had earlier betrayed takes the children away, but finally returns them and forgives Lassie her past sins. The heroine restores her ability to speak and lives happily ever after with the prince-husband and their three children.

Nielsen has also illustrated the moment of the godmother's – who in the end happens to be the Virgin Mary – forgiveness. In this picture Lassie is clearly connected with the heavenly aspect of the Eliadean Sacredness, since Virgin Mary, standing over the cloud and surrounded by great halo blesses her. The initiation approaches its closure as the holy man behind Lassie puts the final touches to her transformation ritual. She is now ready to experience the transcendental reality, the true essence of the universe. Although the castle is not pictured in Nielsen's illustration, the story tells us that all this happens in the castle – in another Eliadean Centre. Unlike Cottongrass, Lassie finds her way out of the otherworldly abysses, ascends from her symbolic death and reaches the second Eliadean Centre, where she can finally live in constant contact with the divine and the sacred. She is indeed spiritually reborn.



Figure 4. Completion of Lassie's Initiation Ritual.

Questioning the experience: who gets to enter the Sacred Centre?

The question about Cottongrass's destiny still remains: why does she get stuck in the symbolic death, when Lassie reaches the true Eliadean Centre and arises into the higher spiritual consciousness? And why did she fall under the aquatic curse in the first place? The answer to the second question is seemingly easy: Cottongrass broke the rules that the elk had given her, as she loosened her grasp of the horns. The motive of disobedience is significant also in Lassie's story. The godmother forbids her to go to certain rooms in the house, but Lassie's curiosity takes her over. One by one she opens three forbidden doors and lets the sun, the moon and a star to fly away. As I have already mentioned, this is the reason why she loses her home and her ability to speak – and the reason why she ends up at the otherworldly forest pond. Both heroines have to suffer, because they do not know how to follow certain rules. In Lassie's case her mistake is underlined in one of Nielsen's illustrations. The heroine has just opened the second forbidden door and released the moon. A picture on the door declares clearly the meaning of this situation: she is compared to Eve who broke the rules of Paradise, when she picked the apple from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil (one well-known example of the Eliadean Cosmic Tree). Although Nielsen's illustration suggests that disobedience leads only to suffering, one has to wonder. In Cottongrass's story this certainly is the case, but what about Lassie who ends up to be initiated, who finally reaches the Eliadean Centre and connects with transcendental reality? From the Eliadean point of view her disobedience leads, in the end, to salvation.

If the motive of disobedience is the reason why both heroines fall into the underworld and experience their symbolic death, why does one get stuck in it while the other may proceed to the next phase in the initiation process Eliade has



Figure 5. Heroine's fall.

described? This question I keep asking is not really very Eliadean at all, since it has a certain political echo to it. In his studies of religion and myths Eliade tended to focus on the similarities between the stories; the diversities were not so important to him. Nor did he pay much attention to the aspects of power and politics in his writings. This is why he probably would not have asked the question concerning the difference in the destinies of the two heroines – the question I consider to be a relevant one. Eliade's lack of interest towards these kinds of (political) questions could be added to the list of things for which he has been criticised. Among other things, scholars of religion have blamed Eliade for supposing some ontological transcendental sacredness and hiding his own agendas. From my article's point of view, the

most important critical aspect is connected with the way Eliade conceptualises “religion” as a totally autonomous *sui generis* -phenomenon: when religion is solely understood to be an individual feeling or experience, the ways in which this “spiritual” phenomenon is connected with historical, social, material and political issues are ignored and erased. (Strenski 1987, 109-122; McCutcheon 2001, 3-12; 2003, 191-212; see also Laitila 2004, 94-101.) In other words, it is easy to forget to ask certain questions, when myths and mythical images are interpreted in the Eliadean way.

In this article I have shown how fairy tale illustrations can visualise Eliadean Centres (in their diminished forms) and cause some deep experiences – for the hero(ine), but also in the heart of the reader/ recipient, who follows the hero(ine) to his (her) experiences. When heroes and heroines of fairy tales are looking for mountain castles or wander to the solitary trees growing near forest ponds, Eliade’s comprehensions about centrality and the initiation ritual could be useful tools for interpretation. Still the criticism towards Eliade’s thinking should not be taken lightly: there are several highly problematic issues that every interpreter has to resolve, if he or she wants to use Eliadean archetypes or some other part of his theories.

For me the second (and in some ways the more important) aim of this article was to raise curiosity towards questions that are not precisely Eliadean, and to indicate that by asking these questions one can probably make interpretations that are more interesting than the “purely” Eliadean ones. In the cases of princess Cottongrass and Lassie who disobeyed her godmother, one possible question is surely the one I have already repeated many times: why are the destinies of the heroines – visually too – so different? Although I do not intend to answer this or any other un-Eliadean question in the frames of this article, I will honour them as the final words of it. I can only hope that others can also see the relevance and attractiveness of these questions as I at last make them vis-

ible: how come Nielsen's Lassie needs the prince to carry her to the Centre, when Bauer's hero can clearly reach it by riding a horse all by himself? Is it possible that also Cottongrass would have been freed from the abysses, if there only were a prince involved? Why are "the ultimate experience" and "the true and authentic reality" of the Centre drawn with the symbols of Christianity (the Paradise and Virgin Mary)? How is the line between "sacred" Centres and more inferior regions actually drawn? And who, in the end, gets to make the rules that others have to obey?



Figure 6. Who Gets to Ride to the Sacred Centre?

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Roses in the Garden, Flowers for the Eternity

Laestadius Triptych in the Old Church of Jukkasjärvi

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Even though the summer was cold and rainy, all flowers came out simultaneously: spring flowers and summer flowers, cloudberryes were blooming and ripening at the same time. All flora and vegetation had so much stronger colours than I was accustomed to, and as my botanic knowledge was thin, I had to ask what they were, these exotic flowers which were glowing so red or blue or yellow. The light nights with the midnight sun created the local colours into the nature, and the clouds with their many colours were enchanting. Never had I seen such richness in the forms of the clouds with so fantastic colours... (Hjorth, B. 1967, 81.)

I am sitting in an old church and looking at the enchanting altar painting. It looks monumental and intimate at the same time. It is a pity that neither a photo nor any words can fully express the power of this work of art; it must be experienced in the place. I understand well how the artist has wanted to capture his first and deep experience of the northern nature, light and colours in this work of art. He painted a historical

piece of northern culture combined with universal religious themes, too. He left the work to be understood and experienced by us. I let the colours, forms and contents carry me...



Figure 1. Laestadius Triptych by Bror Hjorth in Jukkasjärvi, Sweden, Photo by Sisko Ylimartimo.

It was 1952 when Bror Hjorth (1894–1968) from Uppsala, southern Sweden, went to Swedish Lapland for the first time. He was surprised and delighted, because from the north he found a totally new world. It was a powerful experience for him to see a red wooden church located on a small cape and the fells bending behind it. He saw that no architect had damaged or banalized this old building. He did not want to do it himself, either. He wanted to keep its original beauty even in the altar wall, which he had to decorate. (Hjorth, B. 1967, 81-82.)

Hjorth was one of the leading church painters in his country. LKAB, a mining company from Kiruna, had ordered an altar painting for Jukkasjärvi church, which would be 350 years old in 1958. The idea of choosing something from the

history of the Laestadian reform as its theme came from his friend, writer Stina Aronson (1892–1956), who knew this arctic religious movement. (Hjorth, B. 1967, 81-82.)

So Hjorth familiarized himself with the life and writings of Lars Levi Laestadius (1800–1861). He got facts from Fredrik Pappila and Wilhelm Tawe, too, who were priests in Kiruna and Jukkasjärvi. He found out that Laestadius was not only a priest and reformator but also a very well-known and gifted scientist and botanist, who collected plants and mythological Samish stories. Hjorth himself saw Laestadius as a preacher of law and morality but also of love and grace. This view formed the central contents of the triptych. (Hjorth, B. 1967, 82.) The result is an interesting image from the landscape of the northern mind and culture.

The opening ceremony of the altar triptych was held in August 1958. Some people liked the painting, others did not: a priest complained that people were so strongly affected by the triptych that they forgot to listen to a sermon. (Hjorth, M. 1978, 81.) Lennart Segerstråle, a well-known Finnish church painter, visited Jukkasjärvi church in autumn 1958, when he was painting an altar fresco for Vuollerim chapel in Lapland. Because his views of art and religion were different, he thought that the triptych was strange because of its colours and contents. (Ylimartimo & Uusikylä 2005, 67.)

In his own memoirs, Hjorth says only a few words about the deep resistance which local people expressed against the triptych when he was working with it. But in her memoirs, his wife Margareta tells more. The Chapter of Luleå and the Royal Building Board received letters and lists with tens of signatures. People resisted most the ecstatic woman in the right panel: how can an outsider understand the religious emotions of this figure? Bror Hjorth pressed the woman's joy for atonement and said that Laestadius himself described the joy felt by people when they became free of their sins. (Hjorth, M. 1978, 60.)

It is true that for an altar painting, the triptych is exceptionally colourful, decorative and illustrative. As to its style, we can see references to naivism and popular art in the colours and intentionally awkward expression. With their “tubic” limbs, the figures also refer to Fernand Léger’s art in which Hjorth was interested (Hjorth, B. 1967, 79). The lush paradise and inscriptions, “speaking stones”, remind of the art by Frida Kahlo. However, we do not have to look for very distant contacts: it is enough, if the same glowing and deep blue, red, yellow and green tones are picked from the colours of Sámi folk costumes. (Ylimartimo 2001, 19.) Hjorth was also influenced by skilful, colourful and decorative wood carvings and box paintings of peasant art. Coloured wood reliefs are very typical of Hjorth’s art. In the triptych he used teak. (Hjorth, B. 1967, *passim.*; Hjorth, M. 1978, *passim.*)



Figure 2. Laestadius Theme as a Sculpture by Bror Hjorth in Karesuando, Sweden, Photo by Sisko Ylimartimo.

Hjorth made a painted cement sculpture as well, an alternative piece of art for the relief. In it we can see Laestadius, Maria of Lapland and Raattamaa standing below crucified Christ. He thought that the sculpture would stand on the altar in front of a window, through which the visitors could see a view of the lake near the church. When, however, the triptych was chosen to decorate Jukkasjärvi church, the artist donated the sculpture to another Lappish church, Karesuando, in 1961. Even though it is about a metre high, it is one of his most monumental works. (Hjorth, M. 1978, 29-31.)

Winter of Law and Spiritual Darkness

In Jukkasjärvi church it was the altar wall which fixed the form of the relief. The two vertical and two horizontal wood beams confined it to a triptych: in the middle it became a square, and the wings got their bowed upper side along the ceiling.

In the left wing we see Laestadius, who is preaching to Lappish people. There is *kaamos*, a wintry and cold darkness. Jukkasjärvi church is standing behind the figures. The fells are not like the real ones, because they are high, steep and angular like the Alps. With them, the artist wanted to convey a feeling of Lapland (Hjorth B. 1967, 82). As to the church building in the painting, even the situation is not historically exact or real, either, because Laestadius did not work as a priest in Jukkasjärvi, only in Karesuando and Pajala, which are also parishes in Swedish Lapland.

The winter, fells and stiff, ribbon-like aurora borealis tell that Laestadius is preaching merciless law to his audience. He is also in the same anxious darkness, because he has not yet felt the grace of God himself. But his sermon affects the sinners: a spirits seller breaks his keg; a reindeer thief wants to compensate his deed; and a couple regret their

frivolous life. To the adulterer the artist sculpted and painted his own face (Hjorth M. 1978, 68). On the speaking stones Hjorth has painted Swedish fragments of Laestadius's severe repentance sermon for drunkards, thieves and adulterers. Laestadius fought against the vices which were about to ruin the health, moral and culture of the Sámi people (Lohi 1989, 143).

The milieu is snowy and dead. The trees, which symbolize God's will in Christian iconography (see e. g. Becker 1994, 305–308), are lifeless logs pressed by winter. A sinner is symbolized by fruitless and dry trees. In one of his sermons, Laestadius is speaking about trees, which suffer during the long winter and hard coldness in the North:

“And who ever knows, how long those few trees, which are growing here under the fell, who ever knows, how long they will be healthy and fresh, if the Lord does not give dew from the heaven and let his merciful sun shine. The few trees, which are found here, will soon wither and become dry. Here, growing is slow and the summer is short. So keep fresh, you few trees, who have grown under the fell!” (Laestadius 1953, 136-137.)

Laestadius's figure dominates the picture space. His right hand is upright, the left one horizontal. This gesture combines the heaven and earth and it is repeated in the cross of the church. The spirits seller's mirror-like figure balances the whole composition in the left wing. (Ylimartimo 2001, 20.) The image of Lapland is strengthened by two figures wearing colourful Sámi costumes. In Jukkasjärvi, Hjorth drew into his sketch book Sámi people in their beautiful dresses (Hjorth, M. 1978, 21-24). The other human figures are peasants, who are wearing their simple brown and grey clothes. Here we can see the meeting of two cultures: northern and nomadic Sámi culture and southern agricultural culture of peasants and farmers. Both were deeply influenced by the reform of Laestadius.

When Hjorth at first sketched Laestadius's figure, he used as a model an old lithograph by Ch. Giraud from the year 1839 presenting Laestadius (see e. g. Lohi 1989, 140). He sketched many figures, which were more youthful with dark and curly hair than the one in the final work of art (see sketches: e. g. Hjorth, M. 1978, 31, 66-67). In the artist's interpretation, a realistic portrait was replaced by a more stylized visual archetype of a preacher with ardent eyes, brush-like hair and a strong figure. In visualizing the archetype, an exact outer appearance does not matter any more. It is interesting to make comparisons between the sketches and the final work. The more Hjorth reduced its resemblance with Laestadius's figure, the more he seemed to add his own or other real persons' features to the figures in the left and right panels of his triptych.



Figure 3. Christ, a Real Man of Pains, Photo by Sisko Ylimartimo.

Christ between the Winter and Summer

In the middle part, Christ sweating large red blood drops divides the work of art into winter and summer. If we read the triptych like a book, from the left to the right, the spiritual winter stops at Christ and the summer begins from him. The Swedish text in the speaking stone below him, "Jesus sade: Ske din vilja" refers to Christ who is praying in the garden of Gethsemane: "*Thy will be done.*" (Matt 26: 42).

In the interpretation of Hjorth we can see Christ, who is at the same time both in the garden of Gethsemane and on Golgotha and crowned with thorns. We see his eyes and face. They are full of ache and agony. The artist, who created a real man of pains of our time, is like a mystic (Stengård 1986, 161); he wants to express visually our deepest feelings and experiences in the figure of Christ.

In the whole composition of the middle part the summer is stronger than the winter: little by little grace wins the law. Even though Christ is looking straight at us, he has turned himself more to the right and summer. On the left side, behind him, there are two evergreen trees as a gate to the summer and a paradise-like garden. (Ylimartimo 2001, 20.) We can see, however, a strong motion from the upper part: does the yellow aurora borealis turn into a lightning of the law, which strikes Christ? In him it is changing as a flower-like halo: the law must give way to atonement, because it has lost its power.

The Edenic garden symbolizes Christ's atonement. A fountain and green trees can be seen as symbols of life. His big blood drops turn into red flowers. There is also a big, yellow daffodil, a flower typical of Easter. As a botanist, Laestadius used in his sermons many symbols from the northern nature, which his audience, his "children of the parish" (Saarisalo 1970, 133) knew well. Especially he liked metaphors, which he, like St. Francis of Assisi, picked from the local flora and fauna and which gave poetical glow to his sermons:

“Go and get beautiful and lovely flowers from the valley of Sharon, from the garden, where the Saviour sweated blood. You will find there some flowers of the eternity, which do not lose their leaves or change their colours and over which the Saviour’s blood has dripped. This blood has turned some flowers alike with the roses in the valley of Sharon, which are growing between thorns and thistles.” (Laestadius 1953, 141-142.)

A Christian is a flower of the eternity. This metaphor refers to everlasting flowers which keep their colours even when dried. Laestadius’s Swedish children of the parish knew *evighetsblomster* (‘flowers of eternity’). These plants belonging to *Gnaphalium* flora grow in some parts of Lapland. (Saarisalo 1970, 133.) In the symbolical garden of the reformator there were also roses:

“Thorns and thistles have stabbed many wounds into Christ’s head, a red stream has run out of them, and the blood has turned thorns and thistles into red and beautiful roses. So, go and get those roses from the garden, you daughters of Zion, who always want to be lovely, and look at the flowers which have grown from the thorns and thistles, for they are the most beautiful flowers on the earth.” (Laestadius 1953, 142.)

As Saarisalo has stated (1970, 134), red and beautiful flowers of thorns and thistles may have been well-known plants in Laestadius’s time, even if not with this name. The plant is maybe *Rosa cinnamoea*, which is known locally as the moor, grass, wood or cinnamon rose. The last name comes from the cinnamon brown colour of the plant stem. Hjorth illustrated the agony of Christ with red flowers, the petals of which are like Christ’s blood drops. A red rose with its five petals has been interpreted to refer to Christ’s five wounds (e. g. Becker 1994, 116). The three red flowers can also be seen as metaphors of faith, hope and charity.



Figure 4. *Laestadius Kneeling in the Right Wing*,
Photo by Sisko Ylimartimo.

The Summer of Grace and Spiritual Light

In the right wing it is northern summer. In the foreground we can see Laestadius, who is no longer as severe as in the left wing. He is kneeling and seems to be praying. He is wearing the cross of *Légion d'honneur* which he received after having been a guide and translator for a French expedition in Lapland in 1838 (Lohi 1989, 139). Together with him, there are two human figures known in the dawn of the Laestadian reform and three figures that describe its views and habits.

One of the key persons of the movement was Maria of Lapland. She is standing behind Laestadius. Hjorth gave the characteristics of his young wife Margareta to this doll-like female figure with a tender face. Maria, who is dressed in a colorful Sámi costume, reminds of a saint with her halo which is formed by the midnight sun. Maria of Lapland was not her real name; Laestadius used it as a kind of metaphor, because

she opened his eyes to grace and forgiveness. She was Milla Clementsdotter, a modest and brave Sámi woman. He met her in Åsele, Sweden, in 1844. This meeting changed the course of his religious life and thought so completely that he wrote later (cit. Lohi 1989, 177): *"I will remember poor Maria as long as I live, and I hope to meet her in the lighter world after my death."*

A remarkable person was also Juhani Raattamaa (1811–1899), who became the closest pupil and fellow for Laestadius. He crystallized some important doctrinal views in Laestadianism. (Lohi 1989, 326–330.) As the model of white-haired Raattamaa, whom Hjorth (1967, 82) called "the apostle of love", he used a portrait painted by A. S. Töyrä in 1897. The painting by Töyrä is highly admired by H. Ahtela: *"It was like a van Gogh! The man is standing there en face, his hands with their high knuckles resting on his stomach and chest, and the background formed by Gogh-like flowery wallpaper. One cannot do anything but be astonished by the creative power of the artist."* (Ahtela 1970, 59.) The flower field of the triptych is just like flowery wallpaper. Flowers look as if they had just been taken out of Laestadius's herbarium press. The red house in the background may refer to the house where Raattamaa begun his mission school in 1848 (see Lohi 1989, 258).

The woman who is leaping with her hands up refers to ecstatic experiences typical of the movement. In Finnish they are called *liikutukset* ('emotions'). Hjorth made a combination of a self-made Finnish-Swedish form *liikutuksian* and Swedish *kvinna* ('woman'), when he wrote that "*kvinnan i liikutuksian*" got Stina Aronson's face (Hjorth, B. 1967, 82). The woman's dress can be seen as a subtle reference to Sámi people, who may have been tender and emotional as to ecstatic experiences. Margareta Hjorth, however, states that Stina Aronson's face was given to the wife to the right (Hjorth, M. 1978, 68). This peasant wife and her husband are blessing each other in the Laestadian way, and she is more controlled (Ylimartimo 2001, 23).

As to Stina Aronson as a model, this detail is very interesting. Which of the two women really got her face in the painting? I surfed in the Internet and found two photos about her: one from her younger and another one from her older days. Younger Stina Aronson seems very self-confident with her long neck and raised chin – I understand that she was a woman who could write powerful novels about northern people living in the wilderness. Maybe it is possible to see here some features of the ecstatic woman? When Stina Aronson is older, however, she looks very much like the peasant woman. Aronson died two years before the triptych was finished.

If we, however, read Bror Hjorth's memoirs very carefully, we find from there an odd sentence which partially solves the question: "*Det (...) slutar med den vackra och fridsamma laestadianhålsningen hos paret i liikutuksian*" (Hjorth, 1967, 82; *emphasis by the author*). It seems that Hjorth misunderstood the meaning of the Finnish word *liikutukset*, because with this expression he did not really mean the ecstatic leaping of the Sámi woman but the silent joy of the calm peasant couple. It is, however, notable that the word *liikutukset* comes from the word *liike* which means 'motion' (compare e.g. the words 'motion' and 'emotions').

The landscape in the right wing also has its spiritual and religious meaning. As the preacher of the law in the left wing is surrounded by the cold and severe winter, it is now the summer of grace and atonement – warm and flourishing. The fells are low and gentle and the fountain of life is rippling all unfrozen.

The milieu conveys Hjorth's feelings of Jukkasjärvi. Even though summer 1952 was cold and rainy, he had extremely deep experiences of the exotic arctic flora. He complained about his poor botanic knowledge, as he could not identify these colourful plants. (Hjorth, B. 1967, 87.) Into his relief, he carved yellow fell poppies, which with their Latin name *Papaver laestadianum* refer to Laestadius's botanic work.

They shine like small golden suns. The artist was also enchanted by long light summer nights. He took a bus to Pajala and Vittangi where he made some water colour paintings of the sun and a nearby fell. He used them as sketches for the background of the right wing. (Hjorth, M. 1978, 22-24.)



Figure 5. Two Speaking Stones and the Northern Flora, Yellow Cloudberries, Photo by Sisko Ylimartimo.

Enchanting and Experiencing Art

What did the artist think about the Laestadian movement? Hjorth clearly felt great sympathy for Laestadius and the northern religious reform. He thought about his own faith in his memoirs, because he made many altar paintings and sculptures. His view was that an artist must internalize the theme – also a religious one – in the creation process. Otherwise the result is not good. (Hjorth, B. 1967, 83). He could only paint themes which told about his life and which he

liked (Gahrén Annersten & Sydstrand 1994, 9). The right feeling of the themes was very important to Hjorth. One of his friends said that his art is sometimes a tearing lion paw, sometimes a tender female hand. (Hjorth, M. 1976, 64.)

Did Hjorth think he had become more or less Laestadian when he made altarpieces for the Jukkasjärvi and Kautokeino churches? Elisabeth Stengård, who has studied Swedish sacral art, states that Hjorth did not use faith as a working method (*"tron som arbetsmetod"*). It was empathy: the artist pursued to experience the Laestadian way of thinking so deeply and intensively that he could interpret the origins and early history of this movement. (Stengård 1986, 159; see also Hjorth, B. 1967, 83.) Hjorth took part in Laestadian assemblings and listened to sermons in Jukkasjärvi (Hjorth, M. 1978, 24).

The triptych of Jukkasjärvi church is a piece of monumental art which comes close the spectator and touches anyone even without an idea of this reformation, which had its origin among fell people. It touches like a sermon by Laestadius. Bror Hjorth was very influenced by Laestadius's way of speaking, which was poetical and full of symbols drawn from the arctic nature. It seems that the artist was particularly touched by the farewell sermon which Laestadius, "the voice of one crying in the wilderness", held to his children of the parish when he was moving from Karesuando to Pajala in 1849 (Hjorth, M. 1978, 20):

"Farewell, all you titmice and little swallows! May merciful Lord Jesus protect you against the nails of hawks and feed you with mosquitoes. Farewell, you lambs of Christ, which the High Shepherd has pulled from the teeth of a tearing wolf! May Lord Christ bring you to the best pasture and feed you with the best grass when the winter comes. Farewell, you little ripe grains, who are still growing in the field of God!" (Laestadius 1953, 158).

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Embodied Experiences. Constructing a Collaborative Art Event in the Northern Environment

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Abstract

This article examines the process of constructing an art event and its possibilities to offer an open space for conversation and collaboration. It also deals with performative art in the Northern environment and the ways in which it can activate senses and lead a person towards embodied experiences. The bottom line of the article concerns the possibilities of effectuating a change.

I will concentrate on the Shaman's Drum (*Noitarumpu*) event in Fell Pyhä (*Pyhätunturi*), located in Northeastern Lapland. The material of this paper consists of conversational interview with young art educators who organised and steered the latest event in September 2006. The topics of the discussion handled the experiences gained from the project. I combine the conversation and examine the theme in relation to the current discourse on art education and the interdisciplinary discussion on the theme. In Lapland, art education

has started to develop multifaceted interaction with cultural tourism on both the practical and the theoretical level. This article aims to continue the dialogue and inquires about the role of art education in the process of producing an experience product.

“For the eighth time I am sitting in the auditorium built into the rocky ravine of Aittakuru. The duckboards leading to this place served as a light workout. There were sound worlds and light installations accompanied with performances along the path, intertwining with the almost solemn procession of the audience, their movements, footsteps, and the whooshing of pants and jackets. An occasional cough – not a word uttered. I am sharing the experience with dozens of people, with backs ahead of me and faces approaching from behind. I am following a trail lighted by hundreds of lanterns, my senses tune into another frequency.

A flight of challenging stairs rev up the pulse, I am in the last group climbing up; the others are already seated on the rows. Down on the stage yet another story begins to take shape through music and motion. A thought enters and leaves my art educator’s consciousness: ‘How cute!’ I zip up my jacket, isolating my skin from the chill of the autumn night. Suddenly, the motion stops, the dancing figures stand still. A profound silence takes over the massive gorge, my breath feels like a distraction. Gradually, from an almost complete darkness rises a subtle sound, hardly discernable: water. Is there movement in front of the stage below? A dim and dream-like figure reaches the gleam of light and approaches the petrified group on the stage.”

Over the last two decades, the province of Lapland has been the venue for a range of outdoor productions in which the Northern environment and socio-cultural context have played a leading role. In this article I emphasise the significance of a multidisciplinary and multi-artistic process in Northern art events. There are no clear boundaries between

environmental, performance, conceptual, and other media of art. Art students, artists, and other co-operators are increasingly working in projects together with experts of different fields, groups of citizens, and other communities. In addition, different events, exhibitions, and festivals are an important part of the working process. The concept has many similarities with the social active art and the working methods of a community artist.

Community art as part of Northern art events can be created in highly heterogeneous groups in which the group members share the same goal with regard to the activity. The aim of the activity is to help build and strengthen the sense of community. Art can be seen as a tool for socio-cultural inspiration (Kurki 2000), but at the same time some events have strong connections to cultural tourism, too. Very often the final productions, such as the Forest Theatres or other outdoor performances, are performances for the tourist. Since the late 1990s, I have examined projects that focus on multidisciplinary and multi-artistic activities. (Hiltunen 1999; 2003; 2004; 2005; 2006.) In my forthcoming dissertation I will examine embodiment, performativity, and site-specific art and their potential in community-based art education in the context of art teacher training. 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 the Northern environment can open the senses and lead one towards embodied experiences. At the end, it is a question of a possibility for change (Heim 2004):

The experience of change may be unpredictable, postponed, fragile - brought into being by tenuous and complex methods. The capacities of language, reflection, memory, metaphor and imagination are raised in the ancient relation between human performer and participant. Performance, which is face-to-face, must balance the demands of the poetic and the ethical – to be free to imagine all pos-

sibilities and to be answerable to the lives and suffering of others. The experience is immediate and sensuous; it is the creation of a world and a comment on the world.

In this article I will concentrate on the *Shaman's Drum* (*Noitarumpu*) event in Fell Pyhä (*Pyhätunturi*), in Northeastern Lapland, where I have been tutoring the participating art students in their project studies. The material of this paper is based on conversational, interview-based discussion of five persons. I have invited four art students (aged 24 to 31 years) to discuss with me their own experiences on the latest Shaman's drum -event, which they organized and guided themselves in September 2006. As teacher educator, I am interested in what they have learned from working as art teachers in the project.

Tiina Turtiainen is a fourth-year student of art education at the University of Lapland, and she is doing her project studies in the Shaman's Drum project. Anna Pakkanen's main subject is graphic design; Shaman's Drum is part of her minor studies in community art and environment studies. Tiina's and Anna's field of instruction was the visual setting and environment around the performance. Jukka Hannula is a musician and a student of music education. He directed the event and was responsible for the music. Jaakko Posio is studying to be a dance teacher; he was the choreographer and the dance teacher in the project. Later in this article I will call these four art students as *the Team*.

The topics of our discussion handled the experiences gathered from the Shaman's Drum project; first, from the art educator's; second, from the pupil's; and third, from the audience's point of view. In my article I will compile the conversation and treat the issue in relation to the current discourse on art education and in the interdisciplinary discussion on the theme.

The Shaman's Drum

The Shaman's Drum event (called *the Fire Drum in 2002–2005*) has been organized in Pyhätunturi since 1992. Its starting point is the unique, rugged natural setting where it takes place. The adjacent fjeld and the stories relating to the place provide a framework for an interdisciplinary artwork developed as a joint project between experts from different branches of art and the local youth and amateur groups. The annual performance draws around a thousand spectators into the darkening autumn evening. The art education students have worked as instructors in this outdoor event consisting of environmental performances, installations, music, dance, and fire art. In the year 2006 there were four Shaman's Drum performances, arranged between 14 and 16 September.

The main coordinator at the organizational level has been executive director Ulla Laine, who was the originator of the happening at the beginning of the nineties and has been the soul of it ever since. During the last 15 years the organization has changed and taken different forms. Between the years 2000 and 2005 there have been seven longer vocational training courses for young unemployed people in *Tunturin taidepaja*, the Fjeld's Art Workshop, supported by different sources, such as the local government and the European Social Fund. Each workshop lasted from 5 to 6 months and the focus was on art, culture and cultural tourism. The Workshop has provided essential cultural programs and substance for local tourism throughout the year (see www.tunturin-taidepaja.net/). At the moment, there are no larger projects going on. This affects the financial background, education, the scale of the activities, and the whole infrastructure. However, the Fjeld's Art Workshop still produces many events, such as concerts and theatre performances at the Fjeld Theatre and in The *Maahistenmaa* (the Land of the Gnomes) environment, especially during the summer season.

In the year 2006 the Shaman's Drum camp lasted five days and the production was somewhat reduced compared with the productions of the previous years. The camp's basic idea about multi-artistic, holistic, and collaborative artwork was still alive even though no workshops were offered to the participants on music or fire sculpture. Five pupils from *Pelkosenniemi* and four from *Kemijärvi* (aged 13 to 16 years) took part in the camp, making environmental art, performances, and soundscapes in the forest and along the kilometre-long path leading to the main stage. They also danced on the main stage in the last act. Also eleven youngsters from *Sodankylä's Jutarinki* folk dance amateur group and eleven dance students (aged 16 to 18 years) from *Lapin urheiluoipisto, Santa Sport*, (the College of Physical Education) in Rovaniemi were performing on the main stage. Four musicians from the folk dance group *Siepakat* had composed the music and also played it at the event.

About 80 people take part in the production arrangements each year: besides the local pupils and students there are volunteers, trainers, employed personnel, and people from amateur theatres at the camp. Some guide the audience along the path, some are responsible for the accommodation and catering – everyone is important in the construction of the event. This year, 70 persons were involved altogether. People from earlier camps take part as well, which is a telltale sign of the fascinating atmosphere of the camp and the intensity of the main show. Some of the volunteers come year after year and a couple of them have taken part in the longer vocational training courses for the young unemployed organized by the Fjeld's Art Workshop. One of them is Jimmy Perttunen, who works at the Workshop nowadays and is responsible for all the magnificent fire sculptures, pyrotechnics, and lighting settings. Everything is done using fire, without any electricity. Normally, the pupils in the Shaman's Drum production also take part in the fire workshop,

but not this year. Instead, there were three local young men, Timo Heikkilä, Markus Perttunen, and Tero Takkunen and a small group of foreign students helping Jimmy out.

Sacredness and Flow

Before the actual Shaman's Drum camp and the event itself, a number of things had to be done. The main art educators, *the Team*, met several times, accompanied by Ulla and Jimmy. They made plans, school visits, and a one-day workshop at *Pelkosenniemi* Primary School. The dancers from *Sodankylä* practiced already during the summer when the music was also composed and trained. The environmental art and performances were created on the site by the youngsters participating in the camp. This was done under the guidance of Tiina and Anna. The Team put all the environmental elements – installations, dance, music, and drama – together during the five-day camp with the participants. Four weeks after the whole project I met the Team and asked them about their own experiences, what was impressive. The first thing that came to Tiina's mind was the darkness. Jukka continued that it was the whole environment, the darkness, the fire, and the silence that was part of it.

Tiina: *"There is something sacred in it."*

Jukka: *"Yes, somehow it would feel terribly wrong to destroy it."*

Seija Tuulentie, who has explored the authentic experience in nature, noticed that even though the human being is nowadays able to increasingly control nature, it still offers intensive, sacred experiences (Tuulentie 2002, 78). Jaakko said that the calmness and atmosphere of the consecration during the over kilometre-long path towards the main stage were impressive each time. Especially the soundscape with the way the voices behaved in the rocky ravine was an experience.



Picture 1. The Duckboards Leading to the Rocky Ravine of Aittakuru in the Daylight, Photo by Anna Pakkanen.

The whole Team agreed that one of the most impressive points along the way towards the main stage was the *Birth of the Stone* performance. One of the participants had created a multisensory, minimalist vision about the birth of the stone. The installation dealt with the human being, movement, and the sound of stones rolling down into a fire. Tiina emphasizes that Jeff, who created this fascinating event, really invested energy to planning and constructing the installation: “...*He concentrated, he worked hard, he had passion to do it properly, and he really worked on it the most.*”

In the Shaman’s Drum camp all the activities are designed to help the students apprehend sensory perceptions. For example, haptic visuality consists of both touching and seeing, and it involves not only the hand but also the entire body. The exercises were an attempt to put theories of embodiment into practice, especially the ideas of Maurice Mer-

leau-Ponty. The essential feature in Merleau-Ponty's way of thinking, regarding education in general and art education in particular, is his understanding of the pre-reflective level of knowing, which implies being in the world through the body by sensing and perceiving holistically. For Merleau-Ponty, the pre-reflective level of knowing is the basis of other types of knowing and precedes reflection and theoretic thinking. (Merleau-Ponty 2004/1945, 473-475, 502-503; Matikainen 2003, 186-205.) "The solution of all problems of transcendence is to be sought in the thickness of the pre-objective present, in which we found our bodily being, our social being, and the pre-existence of the world, that is, the starting point of 'explanations', in so far they are legitimate – and at the same time the basis of our freedom" (Merleau-Ponty 2004/1945, 503).

Understanding the Northern environment directly by experiencing it physically is both meaningful and enjoyable for young people and that is a good starting point for learning. When the body performs an activity unconsciously, individuals tend to experience the most optimal experience, a flow. The flow helps to integrate the self because in a state of deep consecration the consciousness is unusually well ordered. There is no shortcut to the flow experience. One has to work hard before the body learns to perform an activity unconsciously. It is a question of setting challenges to oneself, tasks that are neither too difficult nor too simple (Csíkszentmihályi 1990.) According to the Team, Jeff worked through the body a great deal – the process was a holistic and sensual one. The intensity of his performance was deep. Also the audience, walking along the narrow path in a darkening autumn eve, watching and sensing, underwent an aesthetic experience.

The ideology of Shaman's Drum performance is based on establishing a direct, physical relationship with the environment, developing a keen sensitivity in students. It is also based on enabling the audience to see how closely their existence is related to everything around them. At its best it can

lead to a flow experience where: “Thoughts, intentions, feelings, and all the senses are focused on the same goal. Experience is in harmony. And when the flow episode is over, one feels more `together` than before, not only internally but also with respect to other people and to the world in general” (Csíkszentmihályi 1990, 41).



Pictures 2a and 2b. Students Working with the Installations and Environment Art, Photo by Anna Pakkanen.

Jaakko describes the atmosphere on the way from the buses to the main stage. He guided the spectators during the trip and found it exiting to notice how the environment and settings influenced the audience. The total silence started straight after Ulla Laine had wished the audience a good journey and they had stepped into the dark forest. Jukka continues that the darkness and the whole atmosphere influenced the performers as well, including him. He had never seen such concentrated group of performers waiting for the performance to start as the one at the stage in that ravine. The intensity with which the audience was present was also impressing:

"It was awesome how quiet they were. When they went up the stairs, the only thing you saw was when they passed the lantern, you know, and you saw some feet there. It was really kind of like inexplicably baffling: 300 people, and all of them passing you by without a single sound! I had to strain my eyes to see that now, now I saw movement and feet, so, there has got to be something happening, see; it was really baffling."

The Shaman's Drum event offers the participants and audience a contrast to everyday routines, an experience of something out of the ordinary. In Tiina's opinion this is important and leads to the sanctity of silence.

The Team starts to discuss the aspects of everyday life, and they sum up that a meaningful experience does not have to be anything gigantic. According to Jaakko, it is not necessary for an experience to be exceptional compared to everyday life at all, to participate in a warming up exercise can be an experience. An experience can be present in very small things in everyday life. It may be in that moment when you are at home washing the dishes and suddenly recognize the beauty of some detail on a dirty plate. The problem is that normally you do not concentrate enough; the routine distracts your attention. Tiina notes that an aesthetic experience occurs if you awake into recognizing something in the middle of everyday life, but it demands the presence of all your senses.

Tuulentie notes that it is a common finding in the field of tourism research that people attempt to distance themselves from everyday life using different places and activities. For her it is more interesting to see tourism as a part of life and as a phenomenon that strongly influences the structures of people's everyday lives. (Tuulentie 2002, 85.) Already John Dewey has emphasized the idea that the basic problem dealing with experience saturation can be solved merely by increase of hours of

leisure is absurd, it only merely retains the old dualistic division between labor and leisure (Dewey 1980 /1934 , 343).



Picture 3. The Morning's Warming Up Exercise Gathered All the Students to the Main Stage, Photo by Anna Pakkanen.

Confidence and Work

Anna contemplates on the importance of confidence; she and Tiina had a deep discussion on it during the camp. They both had their own ideas about how things should be done. However, the most rewarding thing was to define a mere frame and leave space for the students and pupils and help them to develop ideas by themselves. Sirkka Laitinen regards art teaching as pedagogy of failure and risk taking. If you play it safe, there is no room for creating new, the unforeseeable, in teaching and learning. There should always be a possibility to make mistakes. (Laitinen 2003, 145.) Taking a risk and giv-

ing enough freedom was exactly the thing that Anna felt as a rewarding experience. During the dress rehearsal she understood – and it was a very emotional moment for her – that she did the right thing giving the pupils enough freedom to realize their vision in no one else's but their own way.

It is commonly agreed in the theories of art and art education that contemporary art is based on individual experiences and activities, which are directed from private towards common and public. Artists do not state ready, universally applicable solutions, but receivers themselves have to create the answers that are meaningful to them. This requires participation from the audience. Very often contemporary art is also cooperative, and the authorship is shared. Social relations often function as material for community art. This is connected to aesthetic experiences and the ways in which they can challenge conventional perceptions and conventional cognitive schemes. Community art functions by creating an operational space, in which the participants can communicate without the tensions of everyday life. The role of the artist is to organize a process that can give a form to and reflect cultural complexities and also alleviate cultural breakages and differences. An artistic process should be planned in a way that it proceeds according to its own terms, not the terms of the final product. (See Lacy 1995; Sederholm 1998; 2006; Kester 2004; Jokela 2006.) This proved to be a phenomenal experience for the art educators themselves at the Shaman's Drum camp.

But it is not enough for the process to give an impression of movement. Instead you learn to make decisions, clarify your own perception, and face things from different point of view. (Sederholm 2006, 57.) The roles of an art educator and a community artist come closer to each other in communal forms of contemporary art. The expertise of an art educator lies in the dialogical skills of supporting and guiding the learner's decision-making and ability to recognize and accept multiple perspectives and resolutions. This

is at the core of art education, and Tiina and Anna felt they had been successful in it.

Before the camp the students had practiced the dance and musical elements in Sodankylä and Rovaniemi. Jukka thinks it was an experience for the students to fix all the pieces together on the site during the camp:

"...Every group did their share independently, and when it was done, no matter how small a part it was, it was important for the whole, and the whole was made up of all the small pieces which were done in advance. And what was created on the site."

In Jukka's comments the experience was connected to work; he mentioned the concept of work several times in different contexts. Only after making an effort to learn could the participants see the meaning of the whole. Also Tiina stressed the importance of effort while describing Jeff's working process on the Birth of the Stone installation. Reijo Kupiainen and Juha Suoranta have contemplated the concept of experience from critical pedagogy's point of view. According to them, experience-society offers various materials and external stimuli for identity building but gives only a few if any guidance on how to do this or with what goal. The hunger for experiences can not be satisfied. All time-consuming, efforts and strength demanding things and activities are getting impossible to do, which is paradoxical for education. The ideological basis of education includes the acquirement of civilized values. This requires considerable efforts, training, and the ability to conquer oneself. (Kupiainen & Suoranta 2002, 121.)

The Team saw an experience being created in the Shaman's Drum event as a conclusion of work and effort. Also the spectators have to be active. They must walk in primitive nature conditions and endure cold weather in a darkening evening. Regardless of the weather they must walk more

than two kilometers along a relative demanding, narrow route including hundreds of stairs.

Kupiainen and Suoranta think there is a social demand for experience pedagogy in experience culture where nobody dares to ask grounding questions on the state of culture and people. Everything is covered under `amusement parks, hub-bub of home theatres and hamming the trees` in Kupiainen's and Suoranta's (2002, 124) words. Anna ponders the overwhelming information stream and thinks that the experience in the Shaman's Drum project is connected to the sensitization of the senses, since the flood of extraneous stimuli is cut out:

"...Everybody is nowadays used to getting so much information – visual, audio, all kinds of things ... and then when suddenly, it's almost as if one part of the senses is being removed, the darkness comes – you can't see everything, you can hear everything but you don't necessarily see where the voice is coming from, you only see those things that are lit up. So then, then all the possible senses kind of become sensitive, kind of multiply.

The process of the Shaman's Drum may have similarities with experience pedagogy, but not in a narrow meaning of the concept. Experience pedagogy has been criticized of relying on methods and disconnected didactic dogmas. In the Shaman's Drum event the socially active spirit of contemporary art is combined to the theory of experiential art learning and critical pedagogy. These approaches offer the project perspectives and a deeper base missing from experience pedagogy.

Change

At best, Lappish experience products are designed with cultural, social, economical, and ethical aspects in mind. The Lapland Centre of Expertise for the Experience Industry has

developed a model for making an experience product and the criteria for it. Sanna Tarssanen and Mika Kylänen have presented a framework for the experiential products in the Experience Pyramid (figure 1). They have focused on six characteristics, or principles, which are seen as the elements of an experience. According to their findings, the experientialism of a product is based on individuality, authenticity, story, multi-sensory perception, contrast, and interaction. An experience proceeds from an impulse via interest to the actual undergoing and conscious processing of an emotionally rich experience leading to mental change. In the Experience Pyramid we can find five levels, and on each level all six experiential elements should be involved. (Tarssanen & Kylänen 2005, 130-145; 2006.)



Figure 1. The Experience Pyramid (Tarssanen & Kylänen 2006, 139)

Tiina, Anna, Jukka and Jaakko familiarized themselves with the Experience Pyramid during our conversation. The Pyramid is meant to function as a concrete tool for designing experience products. I asked the Team to use it as a tool to point out where the experience lies in the Shaman's Drum event. The pyramid approaches experience production from two perspectives: the customer experiences and the elements of the products. We concentrated on both perspectives. The customer is the audience, but so are also the pupils and students who took part in the Shaman's Drum production. In addition, we approached experiences from the point of view of *producers*, or art educators, in our case.

The Team pursued to define the most important levels and elements of the Shaman's Drum process. One can find in the Shaman's Drum all of the six characteristics, or principles, considered to be the elements of an experience. Anna thinks the event progressed on an *emotional level*, and all the rest was included in it. Tiina presses ahead by pointing out the *multisensory* element and *the emotional level of the experience* that were important to all the participants as well as the audience. Jaakko said the following: *Personally, I have been straight on the top here, so, I have changed my activity after it. I have learned something.*

The Team was quiet for a while, and then Anna said it might be the case with her, too. She and Tiina started to ponder whether the change had happened in that very moment of handing out the responsibility and confidence. Also Jukka agreed that there is a mental change going on all the time. All his experiences and thoughts had led to changes, both as a director and as a human being. Tiina and Jaakko had a conversation about the role of nature in experiencing the change. Both of them spend a lot of time in nature and have had strong experiences there. For them the experience of change had been caused not by the environment but by the working process of the Shaman's Drum event.

Jaakko: *Yes, not the forest but the working and everything. All the working methods and so, as a choreographer, teacher as well as a human being; you think about things a little bit more. And as an educator, too.*

The aim of experience production is to have the tourist experience something permanent, to bring about a change. In the Experience Pyramid, learning is placed on the rational level, on which a good product offers the customer the potential to learn something. Experiences are placed on the emotional level, and change is on the highest, mental level. In art education we think that learning covers all the levels, from the motivational, physical, rational, and emotional to the mental level. Further, learning calls for an ability to transfer from one level to another. The concepts of transfer and transformation are central on experiential art learning. In artistic, experienced-based learning, the ability to transform an inner or outer experience is essential. It aims at meaning giving, recognition, understanding, and acting. The experience is transformed using mental and material tools and it is grasped through words, pictures, and other artistic means. The goal is a shared, conscious experience that leads to emancipation and new activities. (See Räsänen 1997, 38-39.)

Ethos

The Shaman's Drum is a performative event; something is brought into existence and made recognizable, and this involves collaborative and contextual relations between the work and the participant and the spectator. We can consider the Shaman's Drum event as an operational space occupied by ideas of communicative processes. However, if we compare the Shaman's Drum to some contemporary art modes, such as conversational pieces (Kester 2004), it is a more or less

traditional performance, based partly on narrative and fictional identities. Social practice art encompasses works that are hybrids of varied forms of performance, image-making, activism, and social research. According to Wallace Heim (2003, 185-186) they can be marked out as aesthetic works and be indiscernible from everyday activities; they can exist as transient events or be settled in a location over an extended timescale. But, these art practises share the same method, the dialogue between the artist(s) and the participant(s). "The political perspectives and moral accountability of the artists have become part of the critical remit, as the artists' skill in creating equitable, dialogic situations, in creating public spaces for conversation imbued with the aesthetic" (Heim 2003, 186-187).

Even if there is no clear social or environmental statement behind *Shaman's Drum*, the ethos is there as a result of the way it was put together. It is constructed as a collaborative process by children and youths, hobby groups, artists and art educators, volunteers, unemployed and tourists, in deep interaction with the environment. The purpose is to produce a performance for tourists but at the same time to give the participants an equal opportunity to learn art, and through art – to raise their self esteem and empowerment. The production is arranged annually in a tiny rural village in Northeastern Lapland, where the decline in population due to emigration and the unemployment rates are among the highest in Finland. Also, a debate that has been going on for two decades seems to rise into the headlines again: whether or not to sink all the problems under an artificial lake for electricity production purposes.

I suppose that if the spectators/tourists know something about the art educational background and social ties of the performance, the experience may become even stronger for them. In addition, the tourist could actively take part in the working process itself. Environmental art, fire art, and

performance workshops could also be organized for groups of cultural tourists. The Shaman's Drum production could evoke new ways to cooperate with experience production and the experience industry, but at the same time it should be faithful to its art educational and artistic roots and intentions.

During the recent years, Fjeld's Art Workshop has developed the concept in many ways with different partners: *Opintokeskus Kansalaisfoorumi* (the Study Centre for Vocational Training), and the Department of Art Education have been among the main co-operators. For example, besides the Shaman's Drum project Fjeld's Art Workshop organizes a musical camp, *Maahismusikaali*, for families. The concept is based on old beliefs and fairytales about a folk called *maahiset* (the gnomes or *Kufitars*) living beneath the surface of the earth. The camp itself is held in a picturesque forest in the Pyhäntunturi area.

Unfortunately, the future of the Field's Art Workshop is uncertain at the moment because of a lack of financing. The concepts should be developed further; the educational, cultural, artistic, and economical aspects should meet each other. In this work, different kinds of expertise are needed and multiple fields must cooperate. In my opinion the Fjeld's Art Workshop has not succeeded in finding a way to really cooperate with the local business people. These kinds of cultural activities will not live, and stay alive, with external support from the EU and local government only. I also think that because of their marginal position in the tourist industry they will not survive if they only rely on the tourist market.

In any case, in arts education, it is important to assess to which extent the tourist can act as an active learner, not only as a passive receiver. If we perceive the tourist as a learner, it opens up new perspectives on the experience industry and may offer work opportunities for art educators and other professionals but also rise up many different questions.

B. Joseph Pine and James H. Gilmore have explored today's consumer expectations. According to them staging experience is not about entertaining customers, it's about engaging them. A person who takes part in an experience production wants to accomplish something more permanent than just a memory, something more desirable and valuable than the experience as such. The customers want to experience a change; they desire new, permanent qualities. (Pine & Gilmore 1999, 29-43.) Soile Veijola deliberates the idea and asks how the transformers themselves are transformed during the process, who exercises power in it, and how the power is used (Veijola 2002, 104-105). All these questions are crucial for community art, community-based art education, and for education in general.

Starting a Conversation

I see it fruitful and necessary to widen up the dialog between art education and tourism, especially here in Lapland, where the experience industry is one of the fastest growing fields of business. At the same time, contemporary art has increasingly started to step out of studios and galleries. Artists are working more and more in different kinds of collaborative projects, not only selling their productions, art objects, but selling their expertise and knowledge of art in general. Project-based art education in Lapland has strong ties with tourism, and community art as a method offers a variety of possibilities to work with different sectors of society; the art world, local people, and the tourist industry are working together to construct events and productions.

Art education has started to develop multifaceted interaction with tourism and experience products both on the practical and on the theoretical level. It is important to deepen and evolve further the basis and the way in which

this collaboration will be put into practice. What is the role of art education in the process of producing an experience in tourism industry? This is not a simple question. It is obvious, as Elliot Eisner states, that we do the arts no service when we try to make their case by touting their contribution to other fields. There is a risk that arts become handmaidens to ends that are not distinctively artistic and the process undermines the value of art's unique contribution to education. (Eisner 1999, 158.)

I share Eisner's interest in the contribution of art education to the arts and to life beyond them. According to Eisner, this contribution brings about four outcomes. First, students should acquire a sense for what it means to transform their ideas, images, and feelings in to an art form. Second, arts education should refine the students' awareness of the aesthetic qualities in art and life, students' sensibility should be applicable not only to so-called fine arts but to the qualities of the general environment. And even more, arts education should influence what psychologists call the conative aspect of cognition, that is, the desire to frame the world as an object enjoyed perception. The third outcome is that arts education should enable students to understand that there is a connection between the content and form that arts take and the culture and time in which the work was created. It is important because the quality of experience that arts make possible can be enriched when the arts are experienced within a context of ideas relevant to it. Eisner states that understanding the cultural context is an effective way to achieve such enrichment. (Eisner 1999, 155-157.)

The fourth outcome, pertaining to community-based art education, is also valuable. Eisner speaks of dispositional outcomes, such as a willingness to imagine possibilities that are not now but which may become; a desire to explore ambiguity and to be willing to forestall premature closures in pursuing resolutions; an ability to recognize and accept

multiple perspectives and resolutions that work in the arts celebrate (Eisner 1999, 157).

It is challenging to write about art education's contribution to the experience industry or vice versa. Already, the concepts of industry and education are contradictory. The setting brings together many different discourses and practical worlds and intentions. How could one map the area of intersection where tourism, art, and education meet? Does not tourism contradict with the other two concepts? If we look at content a bit closer, the question may not be that paradoxical.

In the experience industry, not only economics but also cultural encounters and identity matter. Since tourism and tourist performances also play a vital role in the construction of cultural identities, we should consider what the output of art education could be in that process. The construction of cultural identities is essential for the arts. Many performances of cultural identity today take place within the intercultural framework of tourism, and they have also been examined. In art education, the question of inter- and multiculturalism is now one of the main themes of discussion. Tarja Pääjoki (2004) has explored the meanings given to multiculturalism, especially in the contexts of art education and its practical applications. She notes that multiculturalism is connected with ethnicity but also with age, gender, health, and social class. It also has its ties to tourism. It would be interesting to continue examining the issue in relation to current art-educational and tourism-related discourses but in this article I have focused on the *experience*, which is the key concept in the experience industry and in this publication. It is also central in art education. According to John Dewey the most important goal of art education is to pursue the aesthetic experience. For him the importance of the arts is related to the recognition of a possibility for aesthetic experiencing in all learning.

To sum it up, art's unique contribution is in its ability to open up new worlds. Art reveals something that already exists, but at the same time hides something. Art can lead to unexpected directions; the ending in art is never decided beforehand – quite the opposite. The role of art is to open a space for a *dialogue* between the artist and the spectator, over boundaries and communities, between locals and visitors; art can be understood as a space for cultural encounters. In this open space individual and cultural preoccupations and prejudices are challenged, too. This might look like a risky business, but in the long run it is a risk worth taking in the experience industry provided as it acts in balance with cultural, social, economical, and ethical aspects.

Conclusion

At the end of our discussions, I asked the Team to put in a nutshell all the things that made Shaman's Drum an experience. The Team decided to spell out one word each, and the words in given order were: *the place, nature, the senses, and physicality*. The Shaman's Drum event gave credit to all of these aspects. The connection between the content and form in both the working process and the product was based on the different levels of the place. To transform the participants' ideas, images, and feelings into an art form, nature was explored through all the senses and through physical activities connected to the culture and stories of the place. The awareness of the aesthetic qualities in art and the environment was present. In addition, in Eisner's words, there were possibilities to increase the ability to recognize and accept multiple perspectives and resolutions that work in the arts celebrate. All these aspects led the Team to *feel* that they had an *experience*, they *learned* something and they *changed* during the process, both as art teachers and as human beings. I think

that whether dealing with art education or with experience production, there is something to be learned from the process. This year was the eighth time for me to participate in the Shaman's Drum process as a tutor, a lecturer in art education, and a researcher. In addition, I was one of the spectators in the performance of 14 September. This article starts with a rendering of my experiences on that evening.

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Fire Art as an Experience

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The Department of Art Education at the University of Lapland has developed fire sculpture into a method for community-based art and art education. From the year 2001 the Department of Art Education has collaborated with cultural actors in Rovaniemi to invite and engage local associations, unions, groups of students, and school classes in realizing fire sculptures for an annual event called River Lights. The event aims to refresh and strengthen the sense of unity in the town and among its inhabitants. In action research conducted by students of art education, fire sculpture has been seen as a suitable method in collaborative children's art and socio-cultural animation. Fire art is experienced as a phenomenal, communal, and cross generational art form. However, not every target of application has been studied yet. In this article I discuss the cultural meanings and beliefs attached to fire, explain how fire has become a part of fine arts since 1970s, and describe techniques and forms of expression in fire sculpture. Furthermore, I discuss the results of fire art

experiments, such as River Lights and art in the context of Easter bonfires, and the targets of application in art education, northern culture, nature tourism, and experience production.

Fire Art as a Topical Phenomenon

There has been a vogue for fire art in the recent years. Circus performers and enthusiasts practise fire acrobatics, fire eating and blowing, while pyrotechnics and fireworks have maintained their place in cross art festivals and shows. Fire art covers also fire sculpture, in which artists try to control the shape, rhythm, volume, and duration of fire. In this article I concentrate on this kind of sculpture art. As a phenomenon, it has many roots. In addition to circus, it originates in modern sculpture and performance art as well as in community art, such as light festivals, lantern parades, and community events.

I became inspired to fire sculpture in the first River Lights event in 2001. I was a student of art education at that time and felt that fire sculpturing had some potential for my profession. After that, I have graduated and started as a lecturer in art education at the University of Lapland. I have been tutoring the fire sculpture workshops annually in the River Lights event and arranged and taught in fire sculpture workshops for young people in Kirkenes, Norway, and in Haparanda, Sweden. I have also supervised projects in which master students of art education run fire sculpture in their home towns and villages. These experiences have convinced me about the possibilities of this art medium.

Unfortunately, also fire-raising is a topical object of concern in contemporary society. According to Mats Wahl (2006), for instance in Gothenburg, Sweden, the fire department received 152 alarms from schools in 2005. Pupils try

to use fire to get a voice in the school and in society. In Finland two medieval churches have been burnt down as acts of arson: in 1997 in Tyrvää and in 2006 in Porvoo. Due to these events a common question is whether fire art causes fire-raising and arson in schools and in the suburbs. In my experience, there is no connection between these practises. Arson is committed by people who suffer from being treated as outsiders in their communities and who feel anger and frustration toward the society.

Fire art aims to produce experiences that build a sense of unity; it aims to support the participants' connections to the community, the local environment, and nature. There is a demand for fire art events in contemporary society.

Celebrating with Fire

Fireplaces, bonfires, fireworks, and candles all help us break free from our everyday routines; they help us relax, sensitize, and celebrate. We gather together around campfires and gaze into the fire, letting our minds flow. Fire is usually experienced as a calming element that soothes both our body and our mind. In addition to conversations, storytelling, and ritualized traditions, fire has an essential power of confirming community and strengthening a common worldview.

One way or another, fire is present in most of the festivals in Finnish culture. Easter bonfires are a cultural heritage reminding us about witches threatening the farmland and efforts to drive them away. In the same way the bonfires of the Midsummer Night and May Day keep their place although the original reasons to light them have been forgotten. (See Talve 1997, 209-215.) Usually, the whole community is involved in building and burning the bonfires. While there are regional differences in following the traditions, new festivals are also born. Around the world people celebrate the New

Year with fireworks, and local lantern festivals commonly take place in the autumn. On top of it all, Advent candles lead us to Christmas festivities. Some of the festivals have origins reaching as far in the past as the Middle Ages¹.

Altogether, fire carries meanings to the changing seasons and transitional actions. It is a symbol of leaving something behind and moving on. Against this background, fire art contains great potential for experience co-creation and new festivals. It is important for the cohesion of communities to build new traditions, or to reshape old ones, because in the course of time some of the traditional festivals have become somewhat empty practices and the participants no longer consider them a meaningful part of their life. Presently, multiculturalism also poses a challenge to the development of fests. Fire art can modernize festivals and retain a connection to traditions as well.

Cultural Beliefs on Fire

On the one hand, human beings have considered fire to stand for warmth, safety, and the sustaining of life throughout the ages. On the other, fire has its destructive side, which is shown for example in runaway blazes and arson fires. Fire is seen as a boundary between life and death. Because of its dual power, fire carries numerous kinds of beliefs varying from one culture to another. In general, fire has played a role in fertility, funerals, purification, and sacrificial rituals (see e.g. Lippard 1995, 172-175).

In Finnish folk poetry fire, birds, elks, pikes, and fiery rivers have an essential role. They are often connected to the sun loosing its strength in the autumn, to the northern lights

¹ Among Celts the "new fire" was kindled at Halloween, and another fire ceremony was Beltane, the first of May. Lippard 1995, 175.

and to the god of thunder, *Ukko*, the hub of all the heavens. In several poems a bird, strictly speaking the eagle (*kotka*), is synonymous to a bonfire (*kokko*). According to one poetic version a bird came from North and lit fires². In some versions the role of the bird is taken by a Lapp, wind, or a sea monster. In the main part of the poem below a big oak grows on a mountain and covers the sun. (Honko et al. 1993, 668.)

*A Lapp came from Turja's land
burnt the hay to ash
and the wind came from the North
bore the ash away
to a mountain slope
on which grew a frightful tree
an incomparable tree
that was bushy with branches
was spearing with leaves:
it stopped the sun from shining
to moon from gleaming
from it cold came to the corn
frightful for the water-fish.* (Honko et al. 1993, 98.)

Brita Polttila assumes that our forefathers observed the sun, the moon, the stars, the Milky Way, the northern lights, thunder and lightening, rainbows, and halo phenomena when interpreting the world around them. She believes that the various stages of the Milky Way, which appears in the sky in autumn, are associated with the image of a tree. (Polttila 1992, 169.) An elk eating the branches of a tree is a typical figure in Sámi drums, which illustrate the cycle of the year, the eight directions of the universe, and the eight seasons (Pentikäinen 1987, 26). It is often understood as the mythical elk that can re-

² *Tuli kokko Turjan mailta, laskise lapista lintu; Ilman Lintu Taivolasta, Kokko kaunis kaukomailta, iskee tulta tuikahduttaa, valkeata valahduttaa.*



Picture 1. A Sun Elk in River Light 2005, Photo by Richard Wetzel.

lease the sun in the spring. The Sun Elk can also carry the sun on its horns (see e.g. Autio 1993, 64–67), which may originate from the fact that elks drop their horns in autumn. In poems the Sun Elk, Hiisi Elk, or Great Elk has to be skied down. Juha Pentikäinen (1987, 32) explains that the skiing takes place in a cosmic zone in the heaven. He assumes that skiing down the Hiisi Elk is a description of the heavenly journey of a shaman. Fire is present also in lines on skiing.

*He, wanton Lemminkäinen
kept skiing after the elk:
he skied on swamps, skied on lands
he skied upon open glades;
fire swished from the skis
smoke from the tips of the poles [...] (Lönnrot 1989, 151.)*

In addition to the bird and elk, a pike can set the cycle of the sun. An enormous pike or sea monster can eat the sun. The

poems also often refer to the nine seas. The sea can be burnt, or it can burst into flames, which can be an interpretation of the red northern lights in the winter sky. On the way to the centre of the cosmos, located far in the north, heroes and divine figures also encounter a black or raging (Tuonela) river and fiery rapids. (Polttila 1992, 170.)

Fire in the Fine Arts from the 1960s to the Present

The attractiveness of fire art is often explained by the fact that it serves as an interface to ancient art forms, such as dances and painting ceremonies in caves in the light of campfires and torches. The audience is thought to have an unconscious memory of and association to these prehistoric times (see e.g. Niemi 1995; Ahlroth 2003). Anyhow, the traditions of using fire in the fine arts are not older than half a century.

During the 1960s and 1970s the artistic process and its documentation became the central aim and content of the fine arts. Artists were interested in new means of expression. Yves Klein, among others, experimented with fire, gas, and fireworks in his art. Charles Ross used a large-scale prism and solar energy in his *Solar Spectrum* and *Solar Burn* artworks. (Levanto 1990.) Several movements, such as feminism, the Mother Earth myth, the Hippie movement, and the concept of total artwork, affected the development of art as well. Artists started to work in nature and in other outdoor environments. They created environmental art, happenings, and performances where fire was used as a method of focusing on a moment.

Some contemporary artists use fireworks, gunpowder, smoke, and explosives as well. Chinese-born artist Cai Gua-Qiang is well-known for working with gunpowder in his political art. He has done gunpowder explosions carving burred lines onto paper and large-scale explosion projects

creating smoky black “drawings” or richly coloured “paintings” into the sky in New York, Berlin, Edinburgh, Valencia, and London. The works concern themes of destruction and peacemaking. (Goodbody 2004.) Finnish photographer Jyrki Parantainen has kindled abandoned houses and set interiors, and documented them while they were in flames. The photos are often interpreted to represent control, uncontrollable forces, the sublime, and the barrier between poetic beauty and destruction (Krappala 1999).

Ana Mendieta and Mary Beth Edelson were female artists who used the body, fire, and ceremonial rites in performances in the 1960s and 1970s. Ana Mendieta worked in Mexico creating signs and tracks of her own body into nature (Karjalainen et al. 1996). Mary Beth Edelson performed private and public rituals that were shown to the public through photographs. In her private works she performed in spectacular places, such as isolated caves, ruins, beaches, and barrens, using time-lapse photography. In public participatory rituals she used stone and fire as her basic elements to generate emotions, ideas, and actions. (Lippard 1983, 158-179.) Contemporary artist Cherie Sampson has followed these artists and used fire in meditative rites in nature. Bonfires, torches, and small-scale fire sculptures create environments and sound spaces for her performances. Her works are based on experiences from nature and its seasons of generation:

Through my experience of the raw forces of nature and its seasons of generation, decay and renewal, I seek to re-member in my art a primal link between human life, culture and nature, being aware of all aspects of an environment from sensory and elemental to historical and even mythical (Sampson 2006).

In performances and land art the purpose of using fire has often been to return materials ritually into basic elements:

air, water and earth³. Also in Nordic contemporary winter art events, fire is often combined with snow and ice. Ice strengthens the light of fire when ice, water, and fire come together in sculpture. A large-scale experiment on the combination of fire, snow, and ice was done in the Snow Show art event in Rovaniemi, Finland, in 2004. Architect Zaha Hadid had designed a huge snow and ice installation and Cai Guo-Qiang poured a vodka mixture over the shapes of sculpture to set the liquid alight in a cool blue flame that wraps the structure in warmth. (Liikkanen 2004, 22-29.) The fire event was a spectacular part of the Snow Show Art Event.

The reflections of fire on snow or water as well as the sound fire creates are essential elements of an experience. Timo Jokela has explored the relation of fire sculpture to its surroundings. In his first fire sculpture, "Wall of Empedokles" in Luleå, Sweden, in 1998, he placed pieces of ice between fire structures. At that time he was influenced by Zen aesthetics and concentrated on creating art that makes the moment of change visible. In Luleå he met Swedish artists who had established The Swedish Fire Sculptors' Association "*Svenska Eldskulptörförbundet*" to promote fire sculpture and came to be aware about the variations of fire art. Later, Timo Jokela started to build sculptures based on local motifs and community participation. He brought the idea about a fire sculpture event to Rovaniemi. (Jokela 2006.)

In the 1980s and 1990s fire sculpture separated from performance and land art into a distinctive art form with its own character. Symposiums and contests were organized to promote the development of fire sculpture. Artists from all fields were invited to participate as sculptors in these events. In the contests they had to create a sculpture in limited time and scale

³ See e.g. *the Burning Tetrahedron* by John Willenbecher in New York in 1978 and *the Icicle Circle and Fire* by Christine Oatman in California in 1973 (Lippard 1995, 172).



Picture 2. Timo Jokela, "Ad Terrum Ad Adstra" 1999; The sculpture is completed and finished by the reflection of the sculpture on water.

from given materials. At that time some groups of artists, such as the "Action Society" formed in 1994 in Latvia, specialized in fire sculpture (Action Society 2006). In 1998 the first European Fire Sculpture Championships was held in Stockholm, Sweden, and the second in 2000 in Luleå. These events had a positive effect on fire sculpture, when artists got to meet each other and the aesthetic nature of fire sculpture was clarified. However, it soon became obvious that fire art can not fulfil its potential in events where the rules of the method, such as the limited size of the group, materials, and schedule, subdue the expression. In contemporary symposiums artists get more freedom. For example, the Austrian town Ischgl organizes an annual fire festival in which artists from many countries take part. The festival includes both fire performances and fire sculpture. (Ischgl Feuer-Festival 2005.) Also in the Luleå Vinter Biennial, where fire installations as well as snow and ice sculptures have been created, artists are supported to use all of their creativity (Luleå Vinter Biennale 2006).

In 1998 Stockholm was the European Cultural Capital. The strategy of their arts programme was interdisciplinary, increasing the interaction among citizens and crossing the limits between high culture and popular culture. In addition, the darkness of winter and the uninterrupted summer light, as well as the temperature changes from winter's cold to summer's heat, were the theme of the Stockholm Culture Year. The theme was reflected on ice, fire, and kite events. The Fire event was held at the end of November, the kite event in June, and at the end of May 10,000 young people organized parades and performed music, dance, and drama at 100 sites. (Taylor-Wilkie & Brown 1998.) In Stockholm the power of aesthetic actions in the everyday outdoor environment was understood and exploited very well. Similar principles can be found in community art events, such as the lantern festivals of Lanternhouse International (former Welfare State International) in England and the light festivals of Valon Voimat "*The Forces of Light*" in Helsinki, Finland. Lanternhouse International promotes celebratory, participative arts and performances created in dialogue with communities and audiences (Lanternhouse International 2006). The Valon Voimat event is organized annually in November and December in Helsinki. It seeks for outdoor installations, artist networks, and processes to meet the environment through art. (Valon Voimat 2006.)

In the 21st century fire art has gained new popularity. Several fire circus and fire dance associations have been formed in Finland, such as the Flamma Fire Collective in Tampere and Tulikansa in Helsinki. (Laine 2006.) Their purpose is to promote and develop fire art through performances, training, and workshops (Fire Collective Flamma 2006; Tulikansa 2006). Characteristic to these groups are collages of dance, drum, and electronic music and fire sculptures. Flamma describes their performances as follows:

“The art of Flamma is very many-faceted, and different people experience the performances in different ways: there are elements of circus, theatre, modern dance, performance art, sculpture art and eastern martial arts all woven together around the central element, fire. When the drumming coming out of the dark night sets an ancient shamanistic ritual in motion and the field surrounded by fire sculptures is filled with strange creatures playing with fire, the audience will participate in an experience which will continue to glow in their hearts long time after the flames have faded from the stage.” (Fire Collective Flamma 2006.)

Lucy Lippard, who has researched the art of 1960s and '70s and its connections to prehistoric sites and symbols in the United States, highlights that in happenings, performances, and rituals the aim was often to reintegrate art into the fabric of society as a whole, as in prehistoric times (Lippard 1983). This aim remains the same although the forms and methods of art have changed in contemporary art. In community arts, art is increasingly brought to the grassroots of society by involving and encouraging groups of people to engage in creative activities together.

Expression and Technique in Fire Sculpture

The beauty of fire sculpture is in the moment of change. Fire sculpture has a spatial and temporal dimension and it is strongly multi-sensual action. The work can be seen, smelt, felt, and heard. It invokes feelings and heightens the flight of imagination. People in the audience have their freedom to interpret the sculpture through their own experiences. Thus the works are often realized and decoded through several kinds of creatures and figures (see eg. Sallinen 2002; Ranta 2003).

The aim of fire sculpture is to control the shape, rhythm, volume, and duration of fire. Already when designing a sculp-

ture, the focus is on the directions in which the fire is supposed to expand and on the speed of expansion. Commonly used materials are wooden bars, straw, wire, and lighter fluid. Wood and wire are used to make frames which are filled with wood and straw that have been made fluffy but compact. A fire sculpture can also be built of rags and old fabrics within a wooden or metal frame. A moment before the beginning of the event, the sculptures are moistened with lighter fluid. Sometimes tar is used together with lighter fluid to extend the burning time. The work burns from a few minutes up to ten or fifteen minutes. When the supporting structures fall apart, the pieces that are left can be burnt in a campfire, and the wire and nails that remain unscathed are collected as waste.

The making of a fire sculpture starts with choosing a site. It is an integral part of the design to consider the size of the sculpture, the safety factors, and the places for the audience in relation to the site. In sketches the major aim is to define the shape, scale, and construction of the sculpture. Also, the progress of the burning should be scheduled. Making a scale model from wire, Styrofoam, or wooden blocks is helpful in order to refine the dynamics, weight, and balance of the sculpture. A fragment of the construction, in real size, can be built and burned as a test sculpture. It helps to revalue the functioning of the design.

Burning depends on the direction and strength of the wind; fire grows only downwind and skyward. Relative humidity and temperature affect the sculpture as well. Cold and dry weather provides the best conditions for fire sculpture. Some wind is desirable if the burning is to progress sideward. Usually the works are kindled upwind of the sculpture with the help of a long torch.

Fire proceeds from a large flame to a smaller one. Thus the sculpture is first in a big blaze, but after a while the shape becomes more perceivable. A visible frame structure is one means of expression. It is possible to use frames as dark shapes

in front of a bright fire. It is also possible to get sparkles onto the frames as a consequence of fire eating the wooden parts.

There are many possible ways to create a fire sculpture. A *three-dimensional construction* almost seems two-dimensional when it is burning, and the fire draws the shape of the sculpture against the dark sky. A *silhouette-like sculpture* whose parts are, say, burning drawings, is the easiest to create and often very attractive. It is important to have structures big enough, as well as empty spaces inside the sculpture, so that they are visible when the sculpture is in flames. On the other hand, there should be enough flammable material for the fire in order to get the whole sculpture burning and to make it collapse in the end.

In *functional sculpture*, designed series of events take place. The sculpture can be mobile, for example. In this case, the balance changes during the burning process. Models for technical solutions can be found from playground designs, such as swings, seesaws, rocking chairs, and wheels. The structure itself can control the events in the sculpture. There can be pipes to suck up the flames fast and strings that hold some pieces of the sculpture together only at the beginning of burning.

In a *movable work* the movement is created by carrying the sculpture or by making it move with the help of some mechanism. Crank handles and lever arms help to keep a distance to the sculpture while moving it. A metal wire can also be attached to the sculpture. When pulling from a distance, some parts fall and the sculpture gets a new shape. Functional sculptures and movable works unify fire sculpture with performance and circus art.

Expression in fire sculpture is typically formal, and simple shapes are suitable for flames. Learning composition is essential in fire sculpture. Nevertheless, multi-sensory experiences, a ceremonious atmosphere, collaborative working, and community connections add other levels to the



Picture 3. The sculpture, the symbol of a barrier, was pulled down with a wire, giving form to a new sculpture, a fire line in the snow. The new sculpture symbolized a river on the border of two countries, dividing but also uniting. The theme at the Barents Spektakel event in Kirkenes in 2006 was Concrete and Cultural Boundaries, Photo by Annamari Koski.

process. Discussions about art, nature, cultural beliefs, immaterial values, and attitudes toward materialism are part of the process. Fire sculpture could thus be used in art education, experience co-creation, and nature tourism involving small groups that can build sculptures themselves.

Fire sculpture also has potential for large-scale artworks and spectacles. It can be used, for instance, as an effect on outdoor theatre stages. Sculptures can be realized as a collaborative effort so that parts of the work are built by small groups and joined together. Finally, when the sculpture has been burnt, there are no problems of storage and waste disposal. The process continues after the event through reflection with the help of documentation. Photographs and video documentation are part of fire sculpture, and they remain as mementos.

River Lights as Northern Community Art

At the University of Lapland, fire sculpture has been used as a method of art education and community art. The action has been based on local themes and site-specific design. The central aim has been to create events and festivals that bring together townsfolk: old and young people, artists, art students, enthusiasts, and the wide public. Since sculptors of fire art need not be technical experts, have special tools, or know art history, fire sculpture is a suitable forum for art in several kinds of communities. Development work on applying fire sculpture to art education has been done in the River Lights event in Rovaniemi, the Shaman Drum and the Witch Drum theatre in Pyhänturi (Jokela & Hiltunen 2003), and the Fire Fox event in Utsjoki (Hiltunen 2005). In the following chapter I describe the methods and results of the River Lights events.

The first River Lights event was set up in 2001 through cooperation between the City of Rovaniemi, the Student Union of the University of Lapland, and the Department of Art Education at the University of Lapland. The secretary for cultural affairs in Rovaniemi took the responsibility of the event arrangements, while Professor Timo Jokela functioned as the artistic leader. Lecturer Maria Huhmarniemi worked as a tutor in the fire sculpture workshops at the University of Lapland. During the firsts years the budget of the event was nominal. It only covered the materials for the sculptures. In 2005 Norden (Nordic Culture Fund) granted funding for the three following years for inviting Nordic artists to participate in the events as sculptors. In practice, the whole event is based on voluntary work, which supports the idea that the event is organized by local people and for local needs.

In addition to artist associations and art enthusiasts, the fire sculptures in River Lights have been created by several societies. The union of unemployed people and the Rovani-

emi Karelia Society, among others, have brought their sculptures to the event. In 2005, when the City of Rovaniemi and the rural municipality of Rovaniemi united, the village communities were invited to create their sculptures. Thus, River Lights was a celebration of the new, larger town. The diversity of the participants is seen as a strength of the event. Fire art has brought art closer to schools and local associations closer to academic students and sculptors closer to those experiencing the event. During the last four years the River Lights event has established its position among the cultural events in Rovaniemi. It is not profiled for any particular age or social group, and thus the audience, from 1,000 to 4,000 people, represents the whole of Rovaniemi. In the dark evenings in the middle of November, River Lights celebrates the approach of the winter and welcomes the dark heart of the year. It is a transition rite realized through contemporary art. During the first few years it has become a new tradition and a sign of the passing of the year for those living in town. Town folk and journalists have already started to talk about the “traditional fire event” in Rovaniemi (see e.g. Lappalainen 2005).

According to the name, River Lights is held by the Kemijoki River on the shore of Ounaskoski. It is probably known by everybody in Rovaniemi as a beach, a park, and an outdoor recreation area. During most of the year the area is lively, but in the autumn before the snowfall it quiets down. In November the place is barren and dark. Thus River Lights can literally set the beach alight and give new meanings to a familiar place. The river itself plays an important role in northern myths concerning the period of darkness and disappearance of the sun, which makes the waterfront a natural venue for a northern fire art event. The freezing river bank has had an essential role in the themes of River Lights. The subjects of the sculptures have been derived from folk poetry, showing the importance of rivers to the Finnish culture and worldview.

In the recent years it has been interesting to follow how well sculptures by children, young people, and art students fit in the same event with sculptures by professional artists. Often school classes from high schools, the Rudolf Steiner school of Rovaniemi, and the art school for children and young people in Rovaniemi have made some of the finest sculptures of the event.

However, River Lights needs to be developed as an event. According to Timo Jokela, the River Lights event should be linked with other culture and tourism products; it shouldn't be separated from the profile of culture and tourism in Rovaniemi. At this moment River Light is arranged only for the local community, but it should be developed in cooperation with the tourist industry to ensure its continuity as a regular event. Thus River Lights could have economical and cultural significance in the future. (Jokela 2006.)

Renewing the event from year to year is one of the most serious challenges. The following years will show whether fire sculpture can engage the same artists and audience every year. Interest has been build by experimenting with new materials, inviting different groups and Nordic artists to work as sculptors, and changing the theme annually. So far, the themes have been the river of fire, the sun, and the Sun Elk. Developing the arrangements is another challenge. Music, sound systems, and cross art performances have been used as a way to bind the sculptures into a single story in the event. Furthermore, there has been a need for educational material because no instructions have been available. Educational material on the basics of design, composition, three dimensional shapes, and means of expression in fire sculpture would be very useful in events that are based on the involvement of the community in creating the sculptures. Similar educational material could be used in applying fire sculpture to nature tourism and experience production.



Picture 4. A Fire Sculpture by the Rovaniemi Rudolf Steiner School in River Lights in 2002, Photo by Timo Jokela.

Fire Sculpture in Easter Bonfire Events

In Central Finland there is a tradition of burning Easter bonfires. The whole community gathers around them. In Easter 2006 two master students in art education realized a fire sculpture project in their home villages in Central Finland. One of the events was called “Kokoo Koko Kokko”. It was organized by teacher and art education student Auli Palosaari in Isokylä village in Kokkola. The school’s eldest pupils, including a special needs class, collaborated in the project and created a sculpture together. The other project, “Noitavalakioota”, was carried out in Kurikka, where art education student Virpi Syväoja invited local associations and unions to create sculptures. The subjects of the sculptures were Easter beliefs and traditions.

The “Kokoo Koko Kokko” project dealt with cultural heritage education with diverse cooperation partners. The project focused on interaction between elderly people, pupils, and people in the neighbourhood. The pupils interviewed the

eldest family members and students at the University of Third Age on their bonfire experiences. Based on the interviews, an exhibition on Easter traditions was set up at the school. The pupils also sketched fire sculptures, and one of the drafts was chosen for realization. The pupils built the sculpture together and invited the local community to the Easter event. Altogether, the event was very visible in the community and in the media as well; the community gave a warm reception to the event. The leader of the project, Auli Palosasaari, reported that the pupils' parents evaluated the project as follows: *"aesthetic, magnificent, fine, interesting, joyful, one that develops hand skills, one to open up the educational contents of fine arts, one to increase co-operation, a refreshing variation and modern action to break the schools' routines, and a means to connect the village"* (Palosaari 2006). Although the project had demanded great effort from the teacher, she felt that the success encouraged her to create another fire sculpture event the next year at her school.

The "Noitavalkioota" event took place in Lussankylä in Kurikka. The sculptures were created by schools, educational institutes, youth societies, and associations in Kurikka. In this region Easter Bonfires are a notable and important tradition. Every village has their own bonfire. In open low-lying land the bonfires can be seen from far away, so that you could see several bonfires at the same time in the distance. People living in the area go from one bonfire to another while the fires are kindled in turns. Coffee stands were organized as an additional programme in the events, and people got to meet each other. Bonfires gather up families, elderly people, as well as youths who are spending their Easter holidays in their home villages. This context is an admirable opportunity to practice community art and fire sculpture. Thus "Noitavalkioot" was a success and more fire sculpture events can be expected. (See more in Syväoja 2006.)

The parents and people living in the neighbourhood were invited to the school, where fire sculpture was being

practiced. For the participants, fire sculpture meant social interaction, sharing, and joint experiences. The objective was to make art accessible to people, also to those who are not familiar with high art for economical or social reasons. In this process the school took an active role in the region, increasing well-being and taking part in discussions about local topics. The possibilities of fire sculpture are thus worth experimenting on at schools and in small communities.



Picture 5. A Fire Sculpture by Art Education Student Virpi Syväoja in Kurikka in Easter 2006. The subject of the sculpture was Easter bonfire tradition. The facilities to realize fire sculptures were great in the countryside. There are materials, tools, vehicles, as well as skilful people in the villages, Photo by Maria Huhmarniemi.

Further research should be done on expanding the use of fire sculpture in experience co-creation. Phenomenological studies on sculptors and audience experiences would be useful to increase the understanding of how people esteem fire sculpture. Action research should be carried out to investigate the potentials and problems of fire sculpture.

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Winter Art as an Experience



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Abstract

This article discusses winter art and its development in northern Finland. I will introduce the background of my own artistic work with the winter element and the Winter Art Education project run by the Department of Art Education at the University of Lapland. In the project successful, winter art opens up new perspectives on contemporary art as well on how winter is experienced and understood locally and how winter-related experiences and activities might be developed. This article also includes a critical perspective. Cooperation with the international Snow Show art event offered a challenging opportunity to work simultaneously in a local and an international environment. Furthermore, it was an excellent opportunity for analyzing and learning from the possibilities and problems of producing artistic experiences.

Winter's Art and Winter in Art

Winter art is based on nature aesthetics. According to Sepänmaa (2004, 87-95), winter's art is art made by winter itself – its natural forces and conditions – that we look at as art or through art. There is not only metaphorical art - there is also the metaphorical artist. Winter is personified as an artist who works with snow and ice, mist, frost, and light. Winter art, on the other hand, is made by a human being, an artist, using the materials and means offered by winter.

Winter in Lapland is an impressive phenomenon as such. Snow covers the landscape for eight months a year, from the middle of October to the beginning of May. The solid states of water in winter – snow and ice – are central aesthetic elements in the northern landscape. Through aesthetic experiences winter touches the deep, basic human emotions (Lehari 2004, 78-84). The way we experience winter is culture related; our environment affects it, and art conditions our understanding. Stories in art related to winter are varied, encompassing such emotions as fear, respect, or piety.

The North has been associated with coldness since Aristotle. In medieval times, winter and a cold climate were seen as shaping people's behavior, making people in the North hostile and animal-like. In descriptions of Hell during the Renaissance, one of the worst punishments was to end up in eternal coldness, amid ice and frost. The explorers, tourists, and adventurers of the 1600s and 1700s described winter in the North as an extreme experience: the only thing worth drinking was hard spirits, since everything else froze! (Hautala-Hirvioja 2003, 12-15)

In more recent times western arts, i.e. painting, literature, movies, and even children's fairytales, such as Zacharias Topelius's *Sampo* Lappalainen, considered the principal elements of winter – coldness, ice, and snow – to be negative.

Winter and the North have, for western art, been metaphors for death or at least for a cold emotional climate for quite some time. This is also the image that western culture has given to the Northern people: a model with which to build their identity. The same western education system taught us that in our landscape, in our homeland in the North, there lived darkness, evil, and death. There is a major conflict between the western way of looking at winter and the North and the one of local people's who live there. Just as it illustrated the North, western art colonized it. The South projected its own fears, prejudices and misconceptions on to the North and winter.

Savolainen (2004, 50-59) demonstrates that whiteness, snow, and winter receive different meanings depending on cultural and geographical location. In general, we can say that while in the white mainstream culture winter is seen as a cold and oppressive period and snow as the antagonist, the native peoples of the North see snow as an ally and a friend. As an example of this, Savolainen notes that confrontations with or analyses of whiteness in American literature are associated with the forming of the American man and masculinity, its defiance, self-satisfaction, accentuated individualism - and potential self destruction.

Winter in Finnish Art

If we look at winter from a Finnish rather than a Western European viewpoint, we see a different picture. The picture is not of death, fear, and defeat. Finnish artists such as Akseli Gallen-Kallela and Pekka Halonen made the beauty of winter, snow, and the brisk but hard outdoor life famous at the end of the 1800s, sowing the seeds of 'winter tourism' through art. Artists discovered the light, the fairness, and the delight of winter. The beauty of summer flowers had their equal in

snowy trees and frosty branches. Winter was no longer the mark of struggle and death.

According to Lukkarinen (2002, 86-91) Japanese wood-carvings with snow-covered, silent, and desolate winter landscapes provided an important model for illustrating winter in Scandinavia. There was also a social and political need for 'discovering' winter in Finland. To build an identity for a nation that had recently gained independence, the terrifying winter was transformed into a victory and snow became a symbol of the fatherland and even an ally in wars. Winter and snow became part of the Finnish identity and features of the homeland - they became national characteristics. Winter was a source of national pride and a testimony to survival under difficult conditions.

Winter in Lapland - Locality Found Again

From a common Finnish identity and a collection of national pictures of winter we can move closer to real winter, to Lapland. Culture in northern Finland has developed in a very close relation to winter. Winter has been a severe challenge, but also a friend, a source of security and an essential element that has made life possible. Winter has provided a rhythm for the cycle of the seasons and, at the same time, for people's lives and work.

Olaus Magnus, who in his book *History of Northern People* described living with snow and ice in incredible detail, had noticed the 'know-how' of winter already in 1555 (See Linnilä 2002). Winter has always been a time of activities. According to Tuisku (2003, 66-69), indigenous people in the North do not see snow as an obstacle or handicap but as an essential part of life. In getting around, snow is in fact a joy, since travelling with dog or reindeer sledges is easy. Forestry, reindeer herding, winter hunting, ice fishing, and

transportation between trading places have traditionally been winter tasks and defined people's relationship to winter. This practical connection to winter also included a rich tradition of observing nature. Snow was not just snow; there were dozens of different names for describing its various forms. The understanding of snow and the ability to read it were transferred as tacit knowledge from one generation to another. Children's plays have also been a very important way of passing on this kind of cultural knowledge (Nyman 2004, 40-49). According to Niemi (2004, 32-39) it is not merely about adapting livelihoods to the change of the seasons, but also the northern mind. Winter has, indeed, shaped the northern mentality. Being the time of togetherness and storytelling, winter has also strengthened communal identities.

The culture of traditional village communities, shaped by winter's terms, has become a diverse and distinctive way of life. With technology and urbanization threatening the link between traditional livelihoods and winter, our cultural relationship to winter is changing. One manifestation of this change, a positive one, is the brisk increase in winter festivals, winter theatres, snow and ice sculpting events, and snow architecture. At their best, these phenomena can be called winter art.

Winter art experiences in Lapland seem to have two parallel development paths. At first, winter art opens views to winter nature's culture-related experiences. The local significance of winter art in Lapland is exceptional because it seems to be strongly connected to the characteristics of local identity, self-expression, and cultural tradition. Northern Finland can represent itself by means of winter art. (Hiltunen 2003, 45-49; Jokela 2003, 30-35.) According to Kurki (2004, 122-131), making winter art together, for example in community art projects, is an excellent way of helping people connect with their own immediate environment and each other in the spirit of dialogue and sharing.



Roots of Winter Art: Snow and Ice Sculpting

Snow and ice sculpting as art forms are based on Far Eastern tradition. The Japanese Zen Shinto village rituals, celebrated with works of snow and based on respect for moments of transition in winter, and Korean-Chinese celebrations, with their ice sculptures, have been transformed into the snow and ice festivals we see today and have spread throughout the Northern hemisphere. Winter events have contributed to making winter art well known but, by the same token, have channelled snow and ice sculpture into standardized competitions. On the one hand, decorativeness and demonstration of technical skill, and on the other, a formalistic language of shape have become recurrent features. The events have become detached from their original closeness to nature and community spirit. At their dullest, snow and ice sculpture competitions produce “winter Disneylands” or modernist sculpture parks that repeat the same motifs in Japan, Canada, Russia, and Finland, irrespective of the culture or venue. At their best, the events are open and innovative occasions characterized by a search for new forms of expression, new content, and means of interaction for winter art.

Winter Art as an Environment-Based Experience

Winter art can be examined in the framework of environmental art rather than sculpting. Here, the environment has to be understood as a “stream” which goes through us in the form of substances, sensations, observations, experiences, meanings, and values. The environment does not flow merely in individuals but in the entire community associated with the environment at any given time. Every place – a village, marketplace, school, neighbourhood, and even a landscape as experienced by the actors involved – is at once an environment and a community. Environmental art is thus not a question of sculptures located outdoors but of recognition of the physically and culturally bound character of the environment as the point of departure for and content of a work. In other words, environmental art takes its site into account, first in terms of objective proportions, substances, materials, and their lifespans, second as subjective multisensory experiences, and third as an intertextual place known and understood in the culture. (Jokela 2004, 47-54.)

Environmental artists have used the “flow” of winter elements, such as the lifecycle of ice, snow, and cold, in their works. In the site-specific works of Andy Goldsworthy (see 1989), snow and ice retain their own character as part of the cycle of nature and are not forced to mimic marble or any other material used in sculpting or architecture and their traditions with regard to the language of form. The works gain their expressiveness and existence from the falling snow, ice piled up by a river, icicles frozen together, or snow that melts as one looks at the work. Goldsworthy’s environmental art represents site-specific art that takes the processes of nature into account.

Let me take a look at my own artistic activities in nature. They are based on work with the materials at the site and the inspiration and content the materials provide. I enter the winter landscape with the relation between the corporeal and

the aesthetic becoming a central factor in my art. Winter also brings about experiences of the world of sound and time, not to mention the touch of coldness and icy wind. The dimensions associated with the experience of time and place are important to me as an artist who mainly works with winter. I do not stand before the landscape examining it visually, nor do I frame what I see; I experience the landscape with all of my senses. Winter becomes concrete thorough spatial and temporal experiences. Here I follow the phenomenological and existential ideas of philosopher Merleau-Ponty (1962), in which a corporeal being in the landscape is the cradle of all thought and thus art.

The building of snow and ice installations, which requires physical labour, becomes a form of meditation, with the action of the body opening the way for sensory experiences and for the flow of the environment into one's consciousness. In this stopping, in this winter effort, the understanding of light is crucial. It is precisely the changes in light that cause the landscape itself and the mood of the person in it to appear in a new and different fashion. One of the principal forms of expression in my winter works is to capture the light of the landscape. Light and shadow are in a constant state of change: the mid-day sun of January illuminates the landscape from below the horizon; the first rays of February cast halos through ice crystals suspended in the air until a snow squall comes along, softens the landscape, and destroys the contrast between light and shadow. When May comes, the snow-covered land glows in the Midnight Sun. A successful snow sculpture captures the essential beauty of the landscape by framing the light to make the landscape easier for the viewer to observe and understand.

Snow and ice installations as environmental art are not associated exclusively with the aesthetics of nature. Like art in general, they can touch and enliven the everyday life of communities. In my own art I strive to examine winter in the North, my own experiential world, as an intertextual narrative. The story interweaves Western art and science and the narratives,

meanings, and truths of local people. In this way I hope to build up and offer experiences to the audience too. (See Jokela 2004.)



Winter Art as a Community-Based Experience

It is now widely acknowledged that art is a resource not only for the individual, but also for the society and that art education can also serve as an agent for social change. Models of winter art education have been developed to influence people by use of this new paradigm of art education (see Hiltunen & Jokela 2001; Jokela 2006, 71-85). Art education that takes notice of environmental and community factors adopts a new attitude towards winter too. In emphasizing environmental and community values, winter art can, in my view, combine the aesthetics of winter nature, local culture, and contemporary international high art. From this perspective, winter can be understood as an intertextual narrative in which research findings, artistic work, and communal activity all play a special role.

In my winter art, I have sought as an artist to create bonds with people living in northern villages, their traditions and even that which they themselves have perhaps forgotten. I hope my works help the people of the region to recognize the values in their own lives and environment and in building a northern identity. The formal motifs of my sculptures in fact often draw on local history, such as the initials of families and houses that were used to mark everyday objects; these are symbols of the identity of older generations. Using these marks in snow and ice sculptures I create contemporary art in which the aesthetics of winter nature and dimensions of local culture combine. Successful art opens up new views on experiencing, understanding, and developing them both.

My winter art is often a process or project to which people in the area commit on my request. A work begins with an analysis of the environment, in which I survey the opportunities available at the site where I intend to work. The point of departure might be the socio-cultural situation of the place, for instance. Most often, I begin by developing an understanding of the cultural traditions and history of the place. What is most important, however, is communication with the site, its history, the place names and the stories of the local people. In other words, I compile an intertextual account of the place and the community as a basis for my works. This process of collection often prompts active involvement of the local community. In fact, making large snow and ice installations requires a great deal of cooperation with different people and organizations. In this light, winter art can be seen as occasionally coming close to Suzanne Lacy's (1995, 171-185) "new genre public art", in which public participation and commitment is the basis for and the objective of doing art. New genre public art is defined not only by winter elements but also by its public. The focus is not merely the specific place or area in which the art is located but also the aesthetic expression of values activated in the public.

The Snow Show Art Event and Winter Art Education Project

The department of Art Education at the University of Lapland has been working with the development and implementation of winter art since 1996. A need for winter art related education had gradually become evident, and the educational project had practically been prepared in advance. The planning of winter art education got off to a quick start. Cooperation between the Department of Art Education and The Snow Show art event began in winter 2001 - 2002 as New York based gallerist Lance Fung visited the faculty to introduce his idea for an art event.

The Snow Show is a unique cultural art event that took place in the Finnish Lapland in the winters of 2003 and 2004. The event brought together some of the world's best-known contemporary artists and architects. These professionals paired up to design works that combined art and architecture and were built using snow and ice (see Fung 2004; Liikkanen 2004a). The construction of these works in Rovaniemi and Kemi using local resources was in itself an enormous challenge for snow and ice know-how in northern Finland. Participating in the art event seemed to suit the program of the Department of Art Education for developing winter art as well as environmental and communal art projects. What the Snow Show art event offered the educational project was a concrete framework and schedule.

The Winter Art Education Project was designed as an independent project, although related to the art event. It was a training project run jointly by the University of Lapland, the Rovaniemi Polytechnic, and the Kemi-Tornio Polytechnic, and funded by the European Union and the State Provincial Office of Lapland. The focus of this collaborative effort was to increase know-how on the use of snow and ice in the North. A special emphasis was placed on regional education and content production. The project not only collected, assessed, and documented existent knowledge but also

produced and disseminated new knowledge in the field of winter art implementation. In pursuing this aim, the project organized lectures and seminars open to the general public, provided technical training in the use of snow and ice as building materials, offered a module entitled Media Production in the Arctic Environment, produced the SnowNow media channel, and had a variety of snow and ice workshops. The project program was designed mainly for teachers, people working in the cultural fields, artists, professionals in the construction sector, and entrepreneurs in the travel industry. The Winter Art Education Project also went to schools of all levels to carry out winter art projects that create a model for winter's presence in teaching (see Huhmarniemi 2004, 108-121; Huhmarniemi et al. 2004b).

The underlying idea of the Winter Art Education Project was art education with an emphasis on communal and environmental values – values in which winter is considered a material and mental framework, a resource, and an identity builder in our culture. Furthermore, knowing the history of winter and winter art furthers the understanding and appreciation of one's identity. These in turn further well-being and supports survival in the globalizing world. The innovations of winter art can then spread art through education to other sectors of society, such as schools, tourism, and areas focusing on the well-being of the environment and the people of the region. (See Kurki 2004, 122-131; Hiltunen 2006, 25-37.)

The project program consisted of four chapters: The Culture of Winter and Winter Art, Technical Training in Snow and Ice Construction, Winter Art in Schoolwork, and Producing Publications and Web-based Learning Material dealing with winter art as well as snow and ice construction. The project segments were carried out as planned and they were linked with the art event as far as possible, given its slightly chaotic, ever-changing progress. The Snow Show Winter Art Education Project was evaluated later as one of the best Structural

Funds project in the administrative sector of the Ministry of Education 2000–2005 (Ministry of Education 2006, 40). The material produced by the Winter Art Education Project has been in active use and will probably be useful in future winters as well. (See Huhmarniemi et al. 2003a; 2003b; 2004a; 2004b.)

The positive result of The Snow Show Art Event was that it served as a high-standard artistic pilot project that proved that it is possible to organize a winter art event in Rovaniemi and Kemi. The wide positive publicity during the event both in the international and national media proved that winter art can serve as a means to develop the experience industry in Lapland. According to Liikkanen (2004b, 98-107), the artistic goal was achieved successfully despite the chaos before and after the event. The works received a great deal of positive publicity in several professional cultural publications, daily newspapers, travel magazines, and television shows around the world.



The Changing Market in Art and Responsibility

The preparations for The Snow Show art event aroused intense local debate. There were great expectations concerning the encounter between local expertise in snow and ice construction and the international art world. Many were also interested in

the relationships between art institutions, the business life, and the regional development funding. Some worried that funds assigned for supporting Lappish art would end up supporting international art. Those defending the art event saw it as an opportunity to promote Lapland and its businesses, especially the tourism industry, in the international media. For others, it was an opportunity to develop a new kind of regional culture. In some ways, the concerns of all parties were justified.

The event's planning and marketing were executed by a marketing and administrative project funded by the EU. The construction was managed by The Snow Show Organization, founded in December 2003. The Snow Show Art Event was a high-profile event and received a great deal of attention in the international media. Afterwards, however, a substantial shortage of funds was revealed, and it was discovered that the victims were the local entrepreneurs - whose employment, in fact, had been a topic of lively discussion prior to the event. The organization went bankrupt in June 2004, and while this paper is being written, there is an ongoing investigation on how the shortage of funds accrued and who is responsible for it.

The ways of funding art and the grounds for applying for such funding have changed in the last few decades. It is no longer necessary to market art to the rich and the powerful as in a class society or to an educated group of enlightened consumers as in the age of Modernism. Today, marketing is targeted at the decision-makers in funding organizations and appeals to the benefits of sponsoring art. This was the case in the preparation of the Snow Show as well.

Traditional political-administrative systems of funding art have emphasized the independence of the artist and art institutions according to the Modernist idea of art. But when an art institution is financed by regional development funds, art can no longer act autonomously. Then we must recognize the social effects of art and develop ways of assessing those effects.

The Center and the Periphery Meet

Bringing international art to an area in the margins and creating interaction were the important achievements of the Snow Show art event. Curator Lance Fung's objective of generating a new, creative dialogue between architecture and fine art was challenging and timely. The Art Event received the attention it deserved in the art world. The central question was, however, how to prompt interaction between the art world and the local community.

Winter 2003–2004 was unprecedented in terms of activity in the fields of snow and ice construction and winter art. In addition to The Snow Show art event and The Winter Art Education Project, tourism entrepreneurs, village communities, schools, and private citizens alike produced several events around Lapland. This shows that there was expansive faith in the development of the field and that it has not been just a question of tourism-oriented endeavours.

According to Stuart Hall (1999, 19-79), the characterization and presentation of the self through art are the central characteristics of culture. This holds true for Lappish snow and ice activities as well. They form an essential part of the image Lappish culture presents and of what it tells about itself. In the community-oriented education project these phenomena were considered the local foundation of winter art and a positive experience. However, there was also a conflict within the art event. It is well-illustrated by the fact that at first, curator Lance Fung wanted to ban all simultaneous winter projects as distractions from the artistic image of The Snow Show.

After the art event it was disappointing to watch how, for example, the local participants and sponsors were removed from the official Snow Show website and publication (see Fung 2004). The Finnish participants were no longer highlighted, even though the local benefits of The Snow

Show art event had been emphasized – at least to the sponsors – throughout the event. Those who had had doubts rightly detected some signs of cultural imperialism and colonialism in the event.

Socio-politically and regionally unfair historical factors have formed the practices of art (Shusterman 2001, 27-55). The age of Modernism produced a pattern of thought concerning universal art in which the connection between art and its surrounding environment was practically denied. Art was considered an autonomous phenomenon radiating from the centre to the periphery, removing it from the local producers and communities. The Snow Show art event seems to have been based exactly on this kind of Modernistic idea of art.

Professor Mauri Ylä-Kotola (2004, 144-149) explores the philosophical background of winter art in terms of the ideals of Romanticism and Enlightenment. He observes a clear philosophical difference between the principles of The Snow Show Art Event and the related educational project. The Snow Show was linked with the ethos of Enlightenment that is also characterized by cultural imperialism and colonialism, in which art is being defined as being at the top of the universal art pyramid. In the educational project, snow and ice art were seen as an autonomous art field whose understanding is bound by the qualities of snow and ice and whose study forms the basis for expression. The project thus combined the ethos of the Enlightenment and Romanticism.

The conflict was obvious. For The Snow Show art event the ice and snow expertise of Northern Finland became a mere workforce to realize international artists' perceptions of snow, ice, and art, while for the Education Project the central issue was how winter art could best support Lappish art and improve its ability to produce its own culture from its own starting points.

How to make an Evaluation

The danger of an art-institution-oriented situation is that art and its effects are evaluated only through a power competition within the art world. Therefore, large-scale art events should inspire discussion in which art is also seen as a part of the public service sector. The quality of art is measured not only by its noteworthiness in the art world, but also by its holistic - cognitive, aesthetic, and moral - effect in the world. This requires a new kind of readiness for cooperation, as exemplified by The Snow Show art event with its successes and failures.

Of all the trends in contemporary art, community and environmental art are especially effective in reattaching art to the surrounding community. This creates a need for combining the goals of art institutions, art support systems, social sector activities, environmental administration, and regional development funding (Jokela 2006, 71-85). The Snow Show required large-scale preparations and cooperation between various fields, which created new possibilities but also problems due to the separation of the art world from the rest of society. The problems could be explained as a mix-up in the artistic or financial responsibility or practical organization. Moreover, understanding the intentions of the various participants can be difficult. Learning how to discuss extensively the effects of art is a major challenge for community art education as well as for the education of artists and cultural workers.

In terms of tourism development, Professor of Geography Jarkko Saarinen (2004, 150-159) points out that the Snow Show shouldn't be seen as separate from other services offered by Rovaniemi or its profile and structures of tourism. The event should be linked – whatever the form and extent of the possible future event – with other tourism products in the area and the inhabitants' recreational environment and leisure time. According to Saarinen, the weaknesses of The

Snow Show were in its non-recurrent nature and its image as an international and largely “high-brow” event aimed mainly at serving global and mostly “unknown” objectives. Saarinen advises organizers of similar events to carefully consider the event’s relationship with the locality.

Conclusion

The purpose of this article has been to introduce the notion that using the methods of environment- and community-based art it is possible to create winter art in which the aesthetics of winter nature and the dimensions of local culture and experience industry combine. Successful art opens up new views on experiencing, understanding, and developing them both.

Winter art will certainly have a future in Lapland. The community approach makes winter art a permanent part of local identity in villages and the winter city mentality increases the enjoyment of the residents of cities and towns (Jokela 1999). The event- and performance-oriented approach makes it possible to relate winter art to contemporary phenomena in the critical but at the same time celebratory manner of the experience industry. I believe winter art is a good means to develop a new type of socially, culturally, and ecologically active art form. This means the creation of an art form that adheres to the new social paradigm, which Suzanne Lacy (1995a), Suzi Gablik (1991; 1995), and Lucy Lippard (1997), for example, have called for in their work.

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Family Attractions - Attracting Families Staging Experiences¹

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Abstract

Families are composite units with different needs and desires. This paper is about attractions that offer entertainment or education for parents and children. In spring 2006 three researchers observed families in three different locations: A typical child-friendly attraction, Randers Rainforest (Randers Regnskov), a not so typical child-friendly attraction, the Northern Jutland's Art Museum (Nordjyllands Kunstmuseum) and – finally – a large shopping mall, Aalborg Storcenter, which is not a classical attraction but which attracts many families. Randers Rainforest represents a place of edutainment where families can learn about the rainforest and its

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fauna and flora from three different continents. The attraction has many sensory and playful elements. The Art Museum of Northern Jutland is not a typical family event but an attraction which seeks more visitors. It is mainly based on art, which can be observed and consumed visually. Aalborg Storcenter is a shopping mall with small shops, restaurants and a very large supermarket. It is not an attraction in a classical sense of the word but a place where people go to shop. The mall often offers special attractions for children e.g. Christmas exhibitions or fairytale exhibitions. The mall offers sensory experiences. Findings show that the shopping mall and Randers Rainforest offer the most sensory experiences, whereas this kind of experience is not significant in the art museum. In computer game terminology where the term "flow" is often used to describe a successful experience it is the shopping mall, which seems to offer the most flow and the longest experiences to the visiting families. The question is raised whether tourism attractions can learn anything from commercial shopping malls?

Introduction

In a time where the world around us is characterized as an experience society and the economy as an experience economy, the aim of this article is to take a closer look at experiences. How are experiences being staged and how are experiences perceived by the individuals who actually expose themselves to experiences? This article is based on an observational study in three Danish attractions. The aim was to examine what the attractions offer families, because families are considered the target group for several attractions.

The observational study consisted of 9 days of observations at three attractions during the Easter 2006: Randers Rainforest(Randers Regnskov), Northern Jutland's Art Mu-

seum (Nordjyllands Kunstmuseum) and the biggest shopping mall in the Aalborg area: Aalborg Storcenter. During the observational study the three authors followed several families in these attractions as “flies on the wall” and noted the families’ meeting with the attraction and the many offers of experiences.

The three attractions were chosen because they appear to offer different experiences and expectations. Randers Rainforest appeals to families with children and seeks to offer an “edutainment” attraction, where families can experience the rainforest and its flora and fauna in three different continents. It is largely non-profit. The family can explore the artificially created rainforest and in this way be immersed and have a bodily feeling of how it is like to be in the rainforest.

The art museum is not a typical place to visit for the family with children but an attraction which wishes to attract more families. The museum is an attraction, which demands cultural or aesthetic skills to be able to immerse one-self and to be entertained. Pierre Bourdieu has described the art of going to an art museum as a part of a process of distinction (Bourdieu 1995).

The Aalborg mall is not what in tourism and experience literature would be perceived as a typical attraction. It is a commercial shopping mall, a place where families go, and where the attraction is to shop together. Furthermore the shopping mall offers special exhibitions for children e.g. Christmas- or fairytale exhibitions and in this way children seem to be considered as an important target group.

In this article the focus is to explore how these three attractions can offer optimal experiences. Therefore an analogy to games and particularly computer games seem to be a fruitful way of describing the ‘levels’ and the ‘gameplay’, which the attractions offer to the consumers. The attraction is like the computer game ‘a universe’, where a dominant story or ‘game ideology’ is prevailing and where the participants

must go through specific routes. The criteria of success is to hold the user in one or more good experiences which is why certain conditions must be fulfilled and certain artefacts must be offered to the user in the meeting with the attraction.

In the comparison of attractions and computer games in this article the focus is on how the user is held in good experiences and how he or she is brought to optimal experiences. In the following the relationship between the consumer's individual motives and interests in the attraction is theorized with a particular emphasis on the significance of the attractions and the context of the experience for the consumers' meaning production and attitude towards the experience. With a point of departure in this theoretical framework the rest of the article will go on to present the analysis of the observed attractions and frame the interpretations in the light of a computer game metaphor.

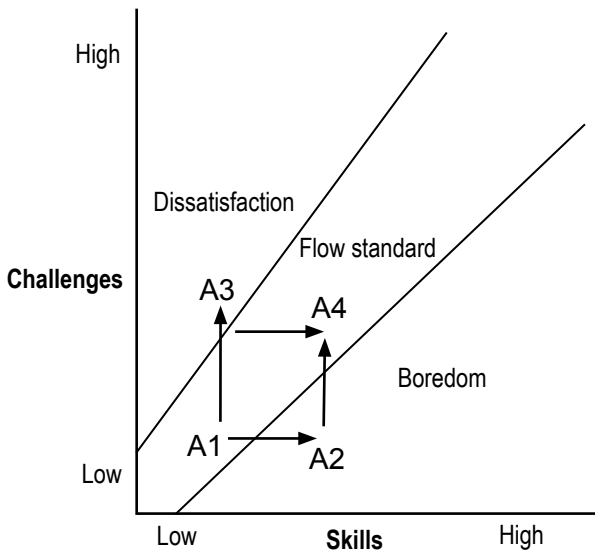


Figure 1. Prerequisites for Optimal Experiences and Flow. (Csíkszentmihályi 1989/2005,89)

Flow and the Experience Offers of Attractions

Mihaly Csíkszentmihályi has introduced the concept of flow, when it comes to achieving optimal experiences (Csíkszentmihályi 1989/2005). Being in flow and having an optimal experience is about getting the feeling that one's skills are in an appropriate relationship with the challenges one meets. To be able to achieve this feeling requires that the challenges take place in an environment which has rules and which signals whether or not one's skills are sufficient and whether or not the challenges are demanding enough. Such a rule managed system for flow activities is illustrated in Figure 1.

In the Figure 1 A is a person who is learning something new (A1, for example having to visit an amusement park for the first time). A has no prerequisites in relation to the chosen amusement park, but A draws on experiences or skills in relation to the amusement park which is being visited. After having visited the amusement park and tried the various activities offered by the park A obtains experience with the attraction. The excitement will, however, possibly disappear and A may not any longer be challenged by the amusement park's offerings, which is why the person might experience boredom (A2).

But if A has not noticed and tried a given activity in the amusement park, e.g. the biggest roller coaster in the amusement park, this might again create a challenge for A. If A does not dare to try the rollercoaster, not having the skills or the courage to do so, a situation of frustration and dissatisfaction will occur (A3). Neither boredom nor dissatisfaction is a positive feeling, so A will seek to change the situation to get back into flow.

This means that if A is bored the challenges need to be increased in a way that the person can get back into flow. Alternatively A can stop going to the amusement park and in this case A disappears from the figure. If, however, A has a

feeling of frustration or dissatisfaction because of not daring to go try the rollercoaster, A has to develop his/ her skills, find the courage or maybe A will become aware of the fact that the rollercoaster has some safety features, which then means that he or she finds courage and takes the challenge and again, gets back in flow. By either increasing or lowering challenges or skills depending of the perspective, A gets into a new flow standard (A4). A is not in the same place as earlier, but has achieved growth through the experience. The figure has a built-in dynamic growth, underlining that optimal experiences constantly demand new experiences. One person might be happy to have dared to try the rollercoaster, but does not care about learning to hit the bullet's eye in the shooting booth, whereas another person is not interested in the rollercoaster, but is enthused by having success in the shooting booth.

A person's position in a flow activity at any given time depends to a very high extent on objective circumstances. However, at any given time a person is able to make his or her own assessment of the situation. Therefore flow cannot be given to a person, but depends on the way a person approaches an attraction and the way this person makes the attraction relevant. From the side of the attractions it is possible to respond to customers' needs with attractions by taking a point of departure in how a person typically and most likely will act when they are offered various objects in certain environments.

There seem to be social definitions (Thomas & Thomas 1928), which function as dominant frames of understanding and as a way of organising experiences. Through analysis of the subjective ways in which people organise their sensory 'raw material', the conclusion most often is that people, who are confronted with the same stimulus, act and create meaning in different ways. Of course it can be argued that individuals in given situations act ritually and that certain

situations invite to some kind of 'pre-formatting' of action. This pre-formatting of action is a significant source of optimisation of the quality of the experience, because it offers focus of mental energy, which according to Csíkszentmihályi is central for optimal experiences.

Recipes for Optimal Experiences

In traditional societies e.g. class barriers and perhaps most significantly the religion have been dominating 'recipes' for social actions and have been 'institutionalised' ways of focusing mental energy, but in a post-traditional society (Giddens 1991) religion does not play quite the same role or at least it appears in a more secular disguise, where it, to a higher extent, is the task of each individual to find the religion, ideology, tale, which most successfully can produce a condition of flow.

Paul Willis (2000) has noted that fixed perceptions of action seem less accessible today than earlier. It demands hard work to obtain a satisfying degree of security in social action, he argues. He concludes that more than ever it is the role of each individual to assure that the experiences in the social reality are meaningful. Willis argues that culturally anchored tales and various manuscripts for action is not a standard commodity any longer, but is a multi-faceted and changing phenomenon. The problem for Willis seems to be that these cultural tales no longer offer the script as to how each individual should live 'the good life'. For this reason the good life depends on the experiences one ventures into and how these are integrated in the construction of self.

Summing up the relationship between people's motives and interests in certain situations, it can be said that people visiting an attraction are on the one hand directed by completely individual interests and motives and have to focus their mental energy themselves, but at the same time the ste-

reotype of the situation invites to certain cultural recipes for action, in other words the attraction suggests a manuscript with rules and culturally mechanical rituals, from which the consumers can pick and choose. In this way attractions have a quite significant role to play when it comes to framing and giving direction to the mental energy, which the consumers have to focus during the visit.

Csíkszentmihályi has a reference to the French functionalist Emile Durkheim, who introduces to concepts which can help explain this relationship (Csíkszentmihályi 1989/2005, 101). The two concepts are "anomie", which signifies a lack of structuring social rules and the concept "alienation" which points in the opposite direction, towards a condition where persons are pushed into a set of rules for social action, which goes against their own aims. Flow is inhibited in a condition of anomie because the lack of social rules creates a situation where people do not know where they should focus their mental energy. Flow is also inhibited in a condition of alienation, because people are pushed against their will to invest energy in something they do not want to. Durkheim's concepts designate conditions in society, but Csíkszentmihályi argues that the concepts in relation to the human mind correspond to attention deficit disorder and egocentrism. To end where we started anomie corresponds to a more or less unsatisfactory and frustrating feeling of anxiety, whereas alienation corresponds to boredom.

There is a difference between the tourists who prefer to seek their own routes 'off the beaten track' rather than the package tour holiday, but still, with tourism research and research in experience economy, the balance is discussed between giving the tourist some freedom, without making the situation without rules and thus avoid creating anomie and at the same time avoid that the tourist have to follow the rules of an attraction totally and in this way running the risk of creating alienation (O'Dell 2005, 127).

As a conclusion, flow depends on the prerequisites, motives and interests the individual in question has. Still in the situation, in the meeting itself with the attraction, dominant and well-defined definitions exist of what the situation is about. The attractions themselves for example seek to establish these understandings by the artefacts which are available in a given environment, and the people who guide the visitors into the universe of the attraction influence these understandings as well. It will be interesting to see how the “culturally mechanical” rituals and recipes for actions are staged in the three attractions.

Affordances of the Attractions

The relation between having control oneself and allowing oneself be directed can be linked to a discussion between interactivity and narrativity (Crawford 2005). Interactivity and narrativity are often considered as each others’ oppositions, but they should perhaps rather be seen as an interplay where each of them help assuring that neither a condition of anomie nor alienation occur. The narrative element is central when brochures and other advertising material propose ways of experiencing an attraction or when tour guides and other tourists are mediators (Ooi 2005, 55) and in this way communicate the attraction’s social recipes and manifest the way a given attraction wants to be positioned and understood.

The interactive element means that the visitor within this universe has the possibility to achieve optimal experiences or rather to be offered options for adjusting challenges and skills in relation to the attraction’s rules for social actions. But the interactive engagement can differ very much e.g. depending on whether the visitor is an adult or a child.

Tourism research has in connection with family holiday experiences noted that there is a special emphasis on

sensory experiences (Nickerson and Jurowski 2000; Gram and Therkelsen 2003), where particularly children to a higher extent than adults are attracted by physical activities rather than sitting down and where children much less than adults seek to relax (TUC 2000). Nickerson and Jurowski (2000) examined children's (between 10 and 17 years of age) and adults' perceptions of two historic gold-mining towns. The study shows that children enjoy and remember those activities best where they can participate actively (digging for gold, watching a play or fishing in a fishing pond). Nickerson and Jurowski argue that whereas walking, reading signposts or watching buildings possibly are considered as "active" by an adult, this very quickly becomes boring for a child, who needs and wishes more stimulation (2000, 27). McNeal (1999, 23), known for work on marketing to children argues in a similar vein that children experience in a different way than adults: that they are "wired differently" than adults. Also in a study of German and Danish families with children it was found that when children were asked what they wanted to do in their holiday they most often mentioned activities and preferably sensory activities involving e.g. water, speed and movement (Gram and Therkelsen 2003).

A sensory experience means an experience involving more than just the eyesight, such as reading e.g. a signpost explaining an exhibition; feeling water or sand, touching or smelling animals, feeling the wind, being thrown around by a rollercoaster.

When theorising the experiences attractions offer visitors, the concept of "affordances" seems very useful. The concept was originally invented by the psychologist William Gibson, who more or less objectively wanted to determine the use one can have of a certain object when it appears in a certain context (Gibson 1977). The use we have of a bench is to sit on it; the use of a door is to walk in and out of it. When we talk about an object's affordance, it means its possi-

bilities of interaction. Gibson's understanding of the concept was rooted in a tradition within visual perception and thus focused on cognition. Roughly speaking it can be described as an understanding where context and the object itself offer information which can be "picked up" and processed cognitively. "The design phenomenologist" Donald Norman has, however, drawn the concept into a more sociologically oriented sphere by nuancing the concept; instead he talks about perceived affordances (Norman 1999). In Gibson's definition there is also room for the fact that a person actually can throw the bench or kick the door frame because this is possible objectively speaking, but for Norman's perception of affordances it becomes the most probable way a bench should be used and this builds on earlier obtained experiences. In other words affordances are about objects being perceived through the definitions social actors have agreed on.

Objects offer something through their materiality, but they are surrounded by conventional understandings which are either culturally embedded, handed over by mediators in the form of signs and guides or simply generated by the user him or herself. In Randers Rainforest e.g. a mother generated excitement when she with her youngest child looked at a very little green frog from South America: "This is the world's most poisonous animal. They can kill human beings!". Her son aged 2 responds terrified: "Don't like it, don't like it". The boy has the necessary skills to understand that poisonous and being able to kill means that the frog is dangerous, but he is not really in flow because the excitement is a bit too much.

Randers Rainforest – A 1st Person Shooter Game?

Randers Rainforest consists of three domes each representing a certain part of the world (Africa, South America and

Asia) with the flora and fauna belonging to each of them. The three domes are attached to a large entrance hall with a reception, shop, cafeteria, toilettes and wardrobe. The visitors are primarily families with both parents and also grandparents and grandchildren and finally groups with three generations. The temperature is high in the domes and for this reason the wardrobe and the locker service are important because the visitors can leave their overcoats and do not have to carry too much around on their way through the domes. On the occasion of the Easter special Easter festivity assignments are handed out. In connection with one of the domes there is a room where visitors can eat their brought picnics, which several families do.

Most families seem to go through the domes one by one and walk on the narrow paths through these. Inside the domes there are no fences (most places). The animals can hide, and the visitors often need time to spot the animals. A tree top walk is hanging high under the roof in the newest dome, South America, which is a bit different in several ways from the other two domes: it is bigger and offers more options of walking around in various directions. The paths and other constructions are carried out to imitate natural constructions. In between there are various exhibitions e.g. a "snake television", which illustrates how the snake perceives the heat of the spoil or a crocodile jaws with teeth the visitors can touch. During the visit some families take a break in the cafeteria, others in the picnic room and finally many families pay a visit in the shop to buy ice cream or commodities.

Regarding the structure and route through the Rainforest remarkably few opportunities are offered for rest. There are very few places where the visitor can sit down and immerse him or herself in what is going on. At the same time the paths are relatively narrow in a way that any stop on the path with a family of 4 or 5 would cause a queue. The concept of having to spot the animals by looking carefully

into the rainforest is thus contradicted by the structure of the attraction.

Randers Rainforest has a more or less linear narrative structure. The three domes only offer limited possibilities of walking in different directions on the paths. Very few places hold the possibility to choose alternative routes, just as the direction for the visitor's way through the domes seems fixed. It is very difficult to walk against the stream, or as exemplified by a family, where a mother and her little boy are descending stairs in the Africa dome:

Boy: *"Up again!"*

Mother: *"No, we can't do that. We have to take the whole way round again!"*

Another boy expressed that he was sorry that the family had now seen it all and could not get into the domes again. The father told his son during lunch that it actually is allowed to go through the whole exhibition again. One family passes over the tree top walk and descends on a path where they have apparently already been once which seems to frustrate them. The father comments this: *"We have already been here."* Another father gets out of the Africa dome and exclaims: *"Now we are back where we started; now we have made the tour"*. A final example is a family who walks so quickly through the domes that the observer cannot follow. With a map in their hand this family walks very goal-directed through the domes without spending time to watch the various species.

In places where the Rainforest offers room for alternative routes an opportunity for interaction occurs and consequently dialogue and decision-making take place. This is interesting because not much conversation between the family members is observed in the rest of the rainforest.

This structure and composition can be compared with a so-called 1st person shooter game, which is a common

genre designation within computer games. It is a type of game where the player has the feeling of being in the game, moving around in the game in real time. Apart from this the game's composition is relatively simple. By the use of various more or less realistic weapons the player shoots, kills and mutilates everything which could be perceived as an enemy on his or her way through a route which is pre-determined by the creators of the game. The points are earned according to how many are killed and how quickly.

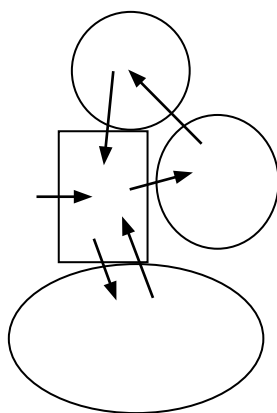


Figure 2. Randers Rainforest: A Typical Route.

Obviously the Rainforest is not about killing or mutilating visitors or animals between the trees. But just as in the game the visitor follows a certain route, a course, through the forest, the universe of the game. On the way the visitor should try to spot as many animals as possible. In different places extra excitement is provided for such as the "snake sight" or the tree top walk. All this has to be conquered before the goal is attained, the tour is accomplished. To experience the rainforest the visitor just needs to be there. He or she does not need to be able to read, have knowledge about the animals or the rainforest to accomplish the visit.

The Rainforest's Bombardment of the Senses

Randers Rainforest offers many sensory impressions. The attraction aims at imitating a rainforest climate with a high temperature, drops dripping from the dome and the plants, smells, high air humidity, the sound of waterfalls and sounds and smells from animals. Several signposts are drawn instead of written. For instance one sign illustrates that visitors should not put their fingers into the water because the fish might bite.

When entering the first dome, straight away the visitors feel that this is different than the cool Danish April weather outside. One mother tells her son *"Take of your coat otherwise it will be too warm in here"*. Right after she gasps and tells that a drop of water ran down her back. The eyesight is of course important, and visitors have to watch carefully between the trees to spot the animals. The members of the families point out animals to one another: *"Look"* and *"Come and see this"*.

Randers Rainforest also offers the grotesque e.g. the sea cow which is huge and eats impressive amounts of salad, a true freak show. The sea cow represents the spectacular. Comments are heard from the visitors: *"It is big"*, *"It is close to us"*, *"It is dangerous"*, *"It can eat people"*. These comments are in line with the type of user generated excitement applied by the mother about the poisonous frog mentioned earlier. There are, however, also more sensory affordances *"It smells of shit"*. In a special snake area double security doors mean that a special atmosphere is created by the visitors themselves, they look around nervously to check if a snake is waiting somewhere ready to attack.

Several objects are exhibited, which are meant to be seen and touched, such as the crocodile jaws peaking out of the wall. A seven year old boy touches its teeth, fascinated. His five year old sister is scared, but their mother says: *"It is*

dead, it won't harm you". The girl says: "Is it dead?" Mother: "Yes." The crocodile jaws give a shiver. On the tree top walk the users can also get a shiver. A boy observes a kind of a crocodile. "It eats me" he says.

Finally the shop outside the domes offer a wealth of sensory impressions, baskets en masse are filled to the brim with colourful little things, plastic animals, stuffed animal toys, pots, drums and many other items. The visitors are attracted and touched. Randers Rainforest indeed offers a genuine wealth of sensory experiences to the visitors.

Northern Jutland's Art Museum – An Encyclopaedia and a "Play and Learn" Game?

Northern Jutland's Art Museum is a huge building with light walls and many surfaces covered with white marble. The visitors enter through a reception area and a little ship with wardrobe, locker service and toilets. Here families with children receive a small "picture hunt task" which has to be solved in the first part of the exhibition by matching small extracts from the paintings with the real paintings on the walls.

Typically the first part of the exhibition is examined very thoroughly, and after this the speed tends to be a bit higher. The paintings hang in small open folds. Two computers are available two thirds through the exhibition with possibilities for searching information about art in the 20th Century. A quiz can also be found, primarily for older children and adults. In the basement, on one of the days where observers are present, there is a special children's exhibition with children's drawings from a project called "Children's adult friends". The other two days there is an exhibition of paintings and sculptures made by children from schools in the local area.

The linear tendency is not as distinct in the art museum as it was in the Rainforest, but every room has some

coherence. Furthermore a certain determination of direction is found meaning that visitors walk the same route through the museum. In opposition to the Rainforest the art museum offers several possibilities to sit down and immerse oneself in the paintings and art objects in the various rooms. The café is situated outside the “normal” route and is not used as the standard ending of the visit. Several visitors do not even look into the room, which is also in strong contrast with the white marble walls and the light in the exhibition rooms. Hardly any of the observed families visit the café, so there are no experiences of taste at the art museum.

The art museum’s composition and content, paintings and sculptures through various periods and styles give the museum the touch of an encyclopaedia. Considered as a computer game this composition corresponds to a typical play and learn programme, particularly aimed at children – which is not the case of the content of the museum. However, a play and learn game is marked by the fact that a very general tale is told which aims at creating a connection between the parts of the game. These parts are smaller assignments which typically do not influence the other smaller assignments. In other words the play and learn game is marked by a lack of coherence and a lack of meaning creation related to the assignment the player is working on.

In each fold paintings by a certain painter, in a certain style or from a certain period are exhibited and little coherence is created for the visitor.

The visitor is not “nursed”, he or she needs to create coherence and challenge by him or herself by the knowledge of art, which the visitor brings along. Nothing in the museum helps, and just like in the play and learn game the museum does not create a larger coherent understanding of learning or a coherent tale, where the solution of each of assignment actually signifies whether or not the player can proceed in the game.

only – just as the rest of the exhibitions in the museum. The “picture hunt” offers some excitement for older children and in this way assures goal and direction for the first part of the exhibition. The hunt is awarded with a small present, which appears to be very important for both adults and children.

In Northern Jutland’s art museum the sensory element is not dominant in a children’s perspective particularly. The shop in the entrance area attracts all children and adults: they snoop around and touch the colourful commodities – in strong contrast to the exhibition where nothing can be touched. Obviously a dilemma exists between the fragility of the art objects and the desire to touch. A girl in the shop is very taken by one of the tables exhibiting the commodities for sale: the table has the form of the famous Aalto vase. She lets her body follow the round curves of the table with her back against it – a sensory experience.

Aalborg Shopping Mall: Pac-Man

Aalborg Shopping Mall is a shopping mall with several small shops and a big “Bilka” hypermarket. Besides the shops there are also restaurants and cafés, and inside Bilka there is a bistro. Because of the Easter holiday happenings are arranged in the centre of the shop-streets in the mall. Here children can get an animal made of balloons and they can build with Flexitracks (making toy car lanes).

As visualized in figure 4 there is no one route through the whole shopping mall, but various pedestrian streets meet in the same square, which is the main square of the mall. Whereas the route around in the shop-streets seems unstructured, there appears to be a fixed route through Bilka. There is thus a determination of direction in the experience during the hypermarket visit, which more or less stops when the visitors go out into the mall’s shop-streets.

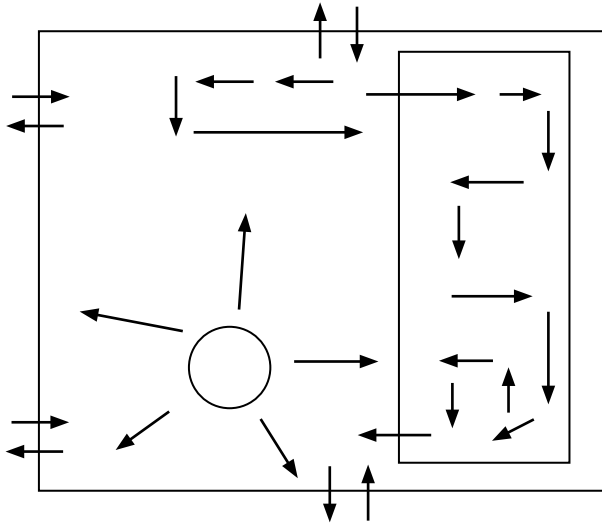


Figure 4. Aalborg Shopping Mall: An Example of a Route.

The observations show that in Bilka a number of choices is made in a very goal-directed way, and that the family sometimes split up to follow their favourite goals. Negotiations about where to go do appear. Outside Bilka, in the mall, a different shopping culture is seen. The families have time to look at various exhibitions and shops. The direction is not pre-decided and negotiation takes place and decisions are made. There is more interaction going on, but also a demand to make choices. The families cannot cover everything, and that is not the point of the visit either. But it has to be decided what should be seen and what should be bought. The families converse and negotiate with each other. The challenge of the lack of rules in the mall seems to demand that the coherence is found by the family as a unit, and the family stick together with the shopping trolley as their base.

The mall including Bilka can be compared with the popular game Pacman. Pacman is about letting a small cheese eat itself through a maze of tracks containing small bits of cheese.

To enhance excitement Pacman is chased by four monsters, which can “kill” Pacman. Only if Pacman eats a special cheese Pacman is for a short while able to eat the monsters.



Figure 5. Screen-shot of the Pac-Man game.

The aim of the game is to keep eating cheese and complete several tracks. The level of complexity can be enhanced by increasing the speed for the movements of the monsters. Just as in the shopping mall there is no actual ending to the game or to the visit (except getting the credit card cut!). The visitor chooses his or her target, but is aware from the start that he or she cannot get through everything. The aim of the visit is consumption, either money exchanged to commodities or experiences through testing of food, clothes, as well as participation in small activities in the mall.

The composition of the mall corresponds to a small maze which the visitor can “eat through” – either randomly or on purpose: going for special offers (corresponding to the special cheese bits giving Pacman his special power).

The Abundance of the Shopping Mall

The mall is a true inferno of sensory impressions: music, a crowd of people with shopping trolleys, samples of food and commodities which the visitor can and is allowed to touch or buy. The observed children following families are allowed to get small or big presents, toys or computer games they find on their way. Several children get something to eat. It is really busy days, but a friendly atmosphere reigns among costumers: they smile at each other if they get in each others way. There is light as on a sunny day which is in contrast to the grey weather outside.

In the middle of the mall there is a special arrangement for children because of the Easter. In the middle of the square there is a "Flexitracks" toy arrangement, with plenty of bricks to build with, much more than there would ever be in a standard children's room. Two boys are lying on the floor playing within a special fence. There is a small house "Create your own Easter egg" surrounded by a smell of melted chocolate. Children sit by special children's tables and benches, with chocolate around their mouths (even relatively big children). The children receive two chocolate egg halves which must be put together with the melted chocolate and decorated with feathers, chocolate buttons and caramels. Parents stand in the background commenting. Two young brothers have had their eggs nicely wrapped in yellow cellophane. The biggest boy says to his mother as they are leaving *"I've got to show this to dad"*, and the mother answers *"Yes, you are happy about it"*, and everybody beams.

By the Easter egg stall another couple of brothers are seated, while their mother helps them. The big boy is building his egg; the little boy is just sitting blissfully dipping his index finger into the chocolate, sucking the chocolate afterwards. A clown is standing nearby making animals of balloons, and four young helpers in T-shirts from a toy store help and play with the children.

At several occasions it is observed that the trip to the mall is also about emotional relations; parents are kissing, children are caressed or teased in a loving way. Children get presents and the parents enjoy the children's happiness. A small situation at the baker department illustrates this. A 3-4 year old boy has just received a huge soft-ice. The boy shows it to his father: "Look", the father smiles and says "Yes, how lucky you are". The boy eats his soft-ice happily. In the mall more bodily contact, kissing and caressing is observed than in any of the other attractions.

In the mall all senses are stimulated: you can touch and feel, try on, see one's child or one self in new clothes, taste meat, mackerel spread, and cheese and even bring things home. There is a relaxed atmosphere and no special expectations: no one paid to get in, and one could leave again without spending a dime. It is guaranteed that there are commodities or exhibitions which will interest both parents and children.

Conclusion

In this article a number of theories were introduced in order to understand how optimal experiences and flow are obtained, and thus getting into a condition where challenges and skills match each other. By making an analogy to computer games a foundation was established for analysing "playing" skills and behaviour of individuals experiencing experiences, on three attractions. Computer games are, if anything, geared towards offering the user a good experience, which lasts for a while and by preoccupying the user.

It is obviously a provocation to compare a commercial shopping mall with attractions run by largely non-profit organisations. Funds and aims are not in any reasonable relation. Still the comparison between the three places and the computer game metaphor appears to be thought-provoking.

The shopping mall reminded the observers of the most interactive game, having the most varied offering of affordances and offer challenges and stimulation to mother, father and children. Different parts of the track are varied and ask for varied behaviour. Randers Rainforest seems like the 1st person shooter game, exciting and with strong sensual impressions, but the levels are monotonous. There is also a risk of becoming a little boring without much possibility for existential interaction, in spite of affordances. Finally, the art museum, which is compared with the encyclopaedia, offers one level that demands high skills which particularly children have difficulties in matching. The family is in flow, but not for long.

The following table summarize the significant findings in relation to the theoretical framework presented earlier.

	Randers Rainforest	Northern Jutland's Art Museum	The Aalborg Mall
Flow	<p>The challenge in finding the animals is too big ► frustration and anomie, which are encountered by the parents who tell stories themselves and point and create meaning.</p> <p>The challenge in 'exploring' the rainforest is too small = boredom. A need to step away from the paths or walk against the stream.</p>	<p>For children the challenge is too little: there are 'only' pictures and things not to touch ► boredom</p> <p>At the same time the challenge is too big for some because pictures and things not to be touched demand knowledge of art, and aesthetically oriented skills.</p>	<p>The challenge seems to be well-balanced: there are many offers and therefore it is also possible to increase the challenges, but particularly in Bilka, the supermarket, there are also routes, so that anomie is avoided.</p> <p>Consumers' 'everyday' skills are demanded.</p>
Affordances in relation to moving	Paths, delimited areas. One-way direction.	Individual rooms, but open – few limitations but also few possible choices.	Paths in star shape, delimited areas (shops), multi-track.
Mediator	Maps, guides, installations.	Attendants, however, only in "emergencies".	Signs with offers, exhibitions.
Structure	Narrative: linear like a book.	Narrative: but interactive as an encyclopaedia.	Interactive: like surfing on the Internet.
Senses	Vision, smell, feel	Vision	All senses, including tasting.
The body	Is part of the experience.	Only the mind.	Is part of the experience.
Transaction of money	Before the experience.	Before the experience.	After the experience.
Aim with the visit	Defined by the attraction.	Defined by the attraction.	Defined by the user.
Family behaviour (observations)	Little interaction, no physical contact.	A lot of conversation (whispering).	Conversation, cosiness, bodily contact.

Compared to the expectations for the observations held before the study Randers Regnskov appears less family friendly than expected. The art museum manages – contrary to expectations – to engage the children, just not as long as the parents would like. The shopping mall on the contrary – and also contrary to expectations – seems to be a success for the whole family!

The mall's way of aesthetising the banal and turn the everyday-like into an attraction seems to be a success which is why one might ask if conventional attractions are too conceptually intangible and needs a touch of the everyday life? Such a way of thinking would be an alternative for the attractions in the attempt to capture the family.

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Poetics of Thrill: Combining Underground Music, Video Arts and Spectator Sports in a Sport Festival

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Abstract

This paper examines how adventure experiences are mediated, packaged and consumed by analysing various venues during a Norwegian extreme sports festival (Extrem-sportsveko). The focus of the discussion centres round the commodification of thrill and play, by analysing practices of turning individual sensory experiences “collective”, i.e. available to a wider audience. In particular, we analyse the audiovisual structure, editorial style, and symbolic speech of Today’s Video, which is a permanent venue on the Ekstrem-sportsveko programme. Our intention is to initiate a debate on commercialised adventure with particular focus on co-consumption of experiences.

The Commodification of Adventure

Adventure tourism is usually described as a physical recreational activity arising from interactions between the adventure tourist and a natural environment away from her/ his usual place of residence (cf. Sung et al. 1997, 48). Motives behind these activities include an experimental quest for the unknown or discovery described as the Ulysses factor (Anderson 1970, 17ff). Adventure demands sensory alertness from the participant in order to react to unexpected or risky situations. The presence of heightened senses may be explained by Langer's (1987) theory of cognitive minimising, explaining how individuals actively acquire and process information under novel and non-routine circumstances. Furthermore, adventure activities are often discussed in relation to arousal or the mood of exaltation (Cater 2000; Gyimóthy & Mykletun 2004). Extreme sports, such as base-jumping, big wall climbing and river rafting encompass intense physical and psychological challenge and may provide deep euphoric states as a result of increased adrenaline, endorphin and dopamine production. Inspired by theoretical concepts such as peak experiences (Maslow 1968), optimum level or flow experiences (Csikszentmihályi 1988) or deep play (Ackerman 1999), the majority of researchers have so far approached adventure as an individual psychological phenomenon.

However, from a socio-cultural perspective adventure sports can also be regarded as a serious leisure activity (Stebbins 2005), that deeply engages individuals as a life-long learning project during their free time. Besides immediate psychological and physiological rewards described above, recreational activities may also mark social status and position or highlight an individual's belonging to a subculture (Green and Chalip 1999). Hence, choosing a certain type adventure sport, for instance, snowboarding expresses one's identity or personal style just as much as other hobbies or

leisure activities (e.g. whisky-drinking, golf or dog-training). Thus, the explanation to an explosive growth of numbers among participants in adventure sports may be found in the associations related to them (risk-tolerance, thrill, tenacity, courage etc.), which fit particularly well with today's individualist consumer values. Over the last fifteen years, skydiving, mountain climbing and rafting have evolved into a lucrative area of leisure sport and retailing, and trend researchers foresee adventure races to be the next fitness craze (see Puchan 2005) because of its lifestyle connotations.

This development is a result of a technology-driven diversification among extreme sports disciplines, each of which may cater for various participant needs and skills. For instance parachute jumping has (after the Second World War) evolved into activities like skydiving, paragliding, BASE-jumping, swooping, kite-surfing and more. Some of these need years of training, expensive equipments and a formal license, while others can be sampled and enjoyed with the assistance of leisure professionals or a sports club (for instance a team-building rock-climbing event). Customers may now buy instant or "drive-in-adventure" which does not demand greater skills other than good condition (Backley 2004). There is a gamut of commercial agents, who design experience packages with minimised objective risks and maximised psychological tension. Adventure tour operators, outfitters and wilderness guides are thus the merchants of thrill (Cater 2006), selling intense multisensory experiences through bungee-jumping, tandem-jumping or rafting courses.

We believe that this is only the beginning of commercialised adventure experiences. As Puchan (2005) and Frollich (2005) demonstrate, adventure is increasingly mediated and thus accessible for all, for instance through advertising, music videos or mountain film festivals. "Vicarious" adventure experiences are not new; the wider public has always

been fascinated by extreme endeavours of a few adventurers. Since the 19th century, these discoveries have been mediated to laymen through a particular narrative genre, intertwining documentary with romantic plot of quest or conquest. Today, with the proliferation of computerised media techniques, it is possible to turn direct sensory experiences of adventure (tactile, olfactory, sensing and motricity) into vivid and engaging experience audio-visual products. Our goal with this paper is to demonstrate and analyse the commodification techniques (packaging, narrative, symbolism) used to promote thrill and adventure under the Extreme Sport Festival (*ExtremSportsveko*) of Voss, Norway.

Case ExtremSportsveko: A Hybrid Event Concept

In 2007, *ExtremSportsveko* will celebrate its 10th anniversary of operations. Since its establishment in 1997 as a non-profit foundation by four local sports clubs in Voss, this event has developed from being a small, informal meeting for extreme sportsmen into a commercially viable festival product, attracting over thousand visitors (active sportsmen, spectators and volunteers) in 2006. The festival concept is unique, uniting elements of spectator sports and professional championships in 16 extreme disciplines (BASE-jumping, BigAir (Ski and snowboard), Climbing, MTB/BMX, Hanggliding, Paragliding, Kayaking, Rafting, Skydiving, Riverboard, Longboarding, Kiting, Multisport, Rafting, Mountain running and Swooping). Officially acclaimed competitions (both Norwegian and European Cups in some disciplines) and national television broadcasting may indicate that these (traditionally underground, discriminated or prohibited activities) are now legitimised and formalised through the festival.

However, the festival is “more than just about extreme sports. It’s about music, playfulness and the amazing nature

of Western Norway” claims the foundation, whose additional goal is to promote Voss as an extreme sports destination. This is achieved through an unparalleled, hybrid festival concept combining spectator sports, adventure sports and urban street culture (manifested in the festival’s concert genre and recently added new activities on the programme). Passive spectators (up to 3000 paying guests this year) may follow various competition venues in the daytime, buy an all-inclusive Try-it!-package and visit the evening festivities. While daytime venues are free and scattered around “natural” spectator areas (lakeside, cliff towers, small rivers) in a 60 km diameter, the organisers charge high fees for the festival pass. This covers entry to the evening programme (located in Voss centre), including the showing of Today’s Video (an edited version of actual highlights, accompanied with techno-music), medal ceremony and live concerts. Today’s Video is indeed a merchandise of “thrill”, an audiovisual product that has been used since 1997 to summarize, enhance and promote adventure experiences to the spectators of the festival. These video highlights (about 20 minutes each) are shown in the festival tent every day at 8 p.m., and a compilation of the entire week’s Today’s Video can be bought at the end of the festival.

Research Design

This paper is a part of a larger project focusing on adventure tourism consumption and production based empirical data from Extremsportsveko. First, the authors conducted participant observations during the 2006 festival, collecting field notes, photographs and interviews with the spectators. Furthermore, we have also compiled secondary material from different media (NRK reportage, Hordaland Avis, Bergens Tidende, Fri Flyt Magazine, festival and community websites), as well as 2006 Today’s Video. In this paper, we will

turn our attention entirely to Today's video; by analysing its role in experience production and mediation.

The Poetics of Thrill

In order to describe and analyse a story, narratologists must identify standard elements of a narrative, such as its ideology/message, plot, spectacle (scenography, choreography), casting, conflict, event pattern and rhythm, and dialogue (dramaturgy). It was possible to track several elements of this narrative septet (Boje 1999), which together paint a picture of the poetics of thrill, or a dramaturgical recipe of staging adventure. In the remainder, we look at the ideology, plot, spectacle and casting strategies behind the video highlights.

Ideology

Extremsportsveko is a niche festival celebrating playfulness through physical leisure activities. Targeted at youngsters and serious sportsmen, it combines core values of hedonism (to feel good, to have fun) with responsibility and discipline (sobriety, healthy living, respecting nature). This dual ideology or message can be traced in Today's Video, although the playful, hedonistic tone is dominating. There are several close-ups featuring athletes or spectators smiling and flirting with the camera, screaming "yeah", giving thumbs-ups or "high five" to appreciate each other's performance. Furthermore, fun is also manifested in staged "gags". For instance, a team of chefs were transported by helicopter on a local mountain top to cater for the participants in the mountain bike race, or presenting a (yet) unofficial discipline. The episode with "Chinese heather and bush downhill" features three skiers making their way down on the summer slopes of Voss with winter equipment,

and concluding the day with a naked bathing in a waterfall. At the same time, there is good portion of political correctness, provided in small portions. The majority of the video features extreme sportsmen during action and in high spirit; which indirectly points at the benefits of an active lifestyle. Before the showing of the video highlights, a sober driving campaign (“Sei ifrån”) was put on view every night. Furthermore, the festival management has consciously chosen a non-frills philosophy, which implies limited sponsor exposition in the visual documentation of *Extremsportsveko*. There are no sponsor ads, giveaways, banners or merchandise scattered around the destination, connoting environmental respectfulness.

Plot

The narrative genre of Today’s Video is closest to satire. The Greek word satire stands for “mixed courses”, implying that the plot or story line becomes extremely episodic. There is no apparent red thread, although sometimes it is possible to identify referential elements of an original story that has been satirised. Satire copies the narrative plot of the original story, but its tone is superficial, negativistic or parodying. For instance, one of the winning amateur videos during *Extremesportveko* portrayed a kayaker’s dilemma forced to choose between his girlfriend and his hobby – inspired by Bollywood musicals. Satire also uses intercontextuality, in this case, exporting fragments of a classic romantic comedy plot from their original context, into an adventurer’s environment. For instance, a dialogue featuring the main character consulting his friends about the problem was replaced by a dancing chorus sang by kayakers, playing air-sitar on their oars. The more knowledgeable spectators were about the original Bollywood musical style, the better they understood understated references in this satirised love story.

Today's Video is a carvery table of mixed courses, and can best be described as an MTV music video. It shifts rapidly between images, extreme sport disciplines (maximum 3 minutes by same activity), camera angles and musical subtitles, giving an impression of speed, intensity and enjoyment (jouissance). And similarly to a carvery buffet which signposts the name of the different courses, the shift between sport disciplines in the video highlights were indicated by a title images featuring headlines, like "paragliding" or "climbing".

Spectacle (Choreography, Soundscape)

Today's Video soundscape is characterised by rhapsodically shifting musical subtitles, representing a wide variety of musical genres by contemporary artists (techno, dance, rap, funk, reggae, heavy rock). A common denominator for these is a high pulse or a seductive beat underscoring the adrenaline rush in the visual material. The title theme features a visual countdown from 100 to 0 accompanied by percussion solo and a monstrous voice whispering "touch the devilish one". Extremsportsveko's video highlights use a reverse choreography; i.e. the editors select musical subtitles that match the rhythm or atmosphere of the filmed activity. Extreme sensory impressions of flow are aptly captured in most of the selected lyrics. These may include text strings like related to border-lining craziness ("you make me crazy", "I can't go fast enough", "out of control"), encouragement ("let's get it started"; "get on track before we begin") and delirious experiences ("flashlights, nightmares, explosions" or "I lost myself") and many more. However, there also are video episodes accompanied with gentler easy-listening melodies and even classical pieces, contemplating the splendid nature around Voss from a bird's eye perspective.

The choreographic design aims at steering and accelerating spectator gazes (in a similar manner than an MTV

video clip bewitches its viewers). Camera perspectives shift between steady or palm held camera to cameras attached to airplane wings or helmets, bringing the adventure at extreme close hold for spectators. This is a sensory seduction which is more manipulative than the enduring tourist gaze (Urry 1990) or the fleeting travel glance (Larsen 2001). One of our interviewees described being spellbound in the following way:

"The best is Today's video, especially skydiving... I love watching skydiving.... I just get this sinking feeling in my stomach, and I'm ready to try any of these things." ("Sissel", 45, service worker)

Casting

The *Today's video* character gallery includes three groups playing different roles to enact "thrill" and "play". Traditional heroes, i.e. extreme sportsmen are filmed before, during or after their performance, either as absolutely playful (making funny comments, or flirting with the camera) or absolutely concentrating: exhibiting control and professionalism (perfect technical solutions, precise landings, security checks). This peculiar *duality* of order and chaos is a characteristic of adult play (Kerr and Apter 1991), emphasizing a constant switching between two exalted motivational states, the playful and the serious. By documenting both facets of extreme sports activities, *Today's Video* invites spectators to immerse in flow experiences through the edgework of high level athletes.

The second group of characters consists of "goofy" or untraditional role models (e.g. a local skydiver in his late seventies or a 5-year-old boy going hang-gliding with his dad), symbolising that extreme sports are available to all. Finally, intermezzo scenes also included almost voyeuristic gazing of young female visitors (camera close-ups into cleavage or elevator gazes on their legs). This is the gaze of the "mook",

i.e. a perpetual adolescent characterised by infantile, boorish and sexist behaviour (Rushkoff 2006). However, the coincidental casting of young attractive women in today's video is not only about providing cheap fun for the contemporary male teen, but also an expression of youth festival symbolism, connoting party, hedonism and easy summer living.

Mediating Adventure Experiences

One of the reasons for the success of the Extreme sports festival lies in its essence as a cultural hybrid. It is at once folksy and underground, allowing mingling among generations, but also appealing to a young urban underground musical taste. It is also both eccentric and inclusive: targeted at the perpetual, playful teenager (or wannabe teenager), but also invites local inhabitants, children and seniors to participate. Finally, it is both respectful and politically correct and, at times, politically incorrect and sexist. Looking at Extremsportsveko's mediated adventures through music and video, we can conclude that there is a symbiotic relationship between festival media and its young visitors, as each looks to the other for their identity. A festival which wants to position itself as a meeting platform for cool communitas and good vibrations turns to underground popular culture to get some inspirational alternative to mainstream festivals. Young people searching for their own identity (aptly termed as *Letande Ludvig* in Norwegian) are looking for truly unique "gadgets" on the experience market, which have not yet been commercialised. Extreme sports week is a commodified and mediated experience product, co-creating adventure and thrill by a number of actors.

However, the commodification of adventure cannot be fully approached by the concept of co-creation alone. An important aspect of festival visitor satisfaction may be rooted in shared experiences of vicarious adventure. Spectators *co-*

consumed the experience twice: first, when watching it as a real time event during the day, and second, when watching, applauding and whistling at the video highlights of the day. Together with the video editors and the featured athletes, spectators formed an instantaneous nostalgic community in the festival tent, which makes the unclear boundaries between provider or consumer roles even more blurred.



Picture 1. Documentation of the kayaking competition. In order to imitate the individual competitor's adrenaline rush, the editors of video highlights' mix musical subtitles with an intense beat onto the raw video material.



Picture 2. Mastering a waterfall descent: a delicate balance between staying in control and having fun.



Picture 3. The co-consumption of extreme sports: spectators watching and filming BASE-jumpers at Gudvangen (Norway).



Picture 4. "BASE jumpers congratulating each other after a successful performance.



Picture 5. Sharing the intense extreme experience. Two BASE-jumpers reviewing helmet-camera videos immediately after landing.

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Human Experience and Ubiquitous Art – The Concepts of Experience Society and Experience Landscape:

Defining the Art and Principles of Human Centred Experience Design

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Abstract

In this article we propose that art is ubiquitous and is part of every day human life and experience. The notion of 'ubiquitous' is defined according to the Oxford Dictionary as present, appearing, or found everywhere. Human experiences are defined in both physical and virtual spaces and in various contexts: personal, social, cultural, economic and ecological. Humans give meaning to their life through a process of seeking, sensing, sharing, shaping and sustaining meaning in interac-

tion with subjects and objects. Many of the meaningful encounters include objects of art. 'Art' is defined as (1) the expression or application of human creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form such as painting or sculpture, producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power; works produced by such skill and imagination; creative activity resulting in the production of paintings, drawings, or sculpture. 'The Arts' is defined as (2) the various branches of creative activity, such as painting, music, literature, and dance. The third meaning of arts is defined as (3) subjects of study primarily concerned with the processes and products of human creativity and social life, such as languages, literature, and history (as contrasted with scientific or technical subjects). We will use the notion of ubiquitous art as *any creative form, process and product of human skill and imagination that we encounter everywhere in the world around us*. A longitudinal study (Thijssen 2006) identified design categories and principles for co-creating meaningful experiences through learning-by-sharing. A number of case studies illustrate the use of these design categories and principles as well as the role of ubiquitous art in human experience and the process of co-creating meaning. Implications are indicated for further exploration of the use and impact of art in experience design in the Experience Industry.

Key words: Human experience, ubiquitous art, experience society, experience landscape, experience co-creation, human centered experience design, learning-by-sharing, human centered design

Introduction

This chapter focuses on understanding human experiences and the role of ubiquitous art in every-day life. In this section we will define human experiences in general and discuss the experience landscape of experience spaces and contexts. We

propose that art is ubiquitous and shapes our daily experiences. In the second section design principles are introduced for co-creating meaningful experiences and the role of art. In the third part three cases are discussed and interpreted. Finally, the fourth part indicates the implications for the Experience Industry.

Defining Human Experiences in General

Human experiences can be defined as a process of meaning making (Köster 2004) involving perception through the senses, leading to emotions (Frijda 1986), leading to an experience (Boswijk et al. 2005) and thereby generating meaning in a specific context. An optimal experience (Csíkszentmihályi 1990) includes the following aspects: a sense of play and a feeling of control over one's actions, pleasure in the activity itself, high concentration and losing one's sense of time, a balance between challenge and personal capacities, and a clear goal. We define human experiences as human actions in a specific spatial and temporal setting. It can be seen as a process of doing and undergoing (Dewey 1938) as an interaction between ourselves and the people and objects around us. In this chapter we will particularly focus on the role of art as an expression of human experience. We see ubiquitous art as input and product for meaningful experiences.

The Experience Society and the Experience Landscape

If we combine the various contexts (personal, social, cultural, economic and ecological) with the various experiences spaces that we visit almost every day, we come to the following holistic interpretation of an experience society (Thijssen et al. 2005). Understanding the dynamics of the complex interrelationships may enable us to learn and shape the future and the quality of our life in such a way that we may be able to support meaningful experiences and better appreciate the role of ubiquitous art.

A Holistic Model on the Experience Society and the Experience Landscape with Experience Contexts and Physical and Virtual Experience Spaces

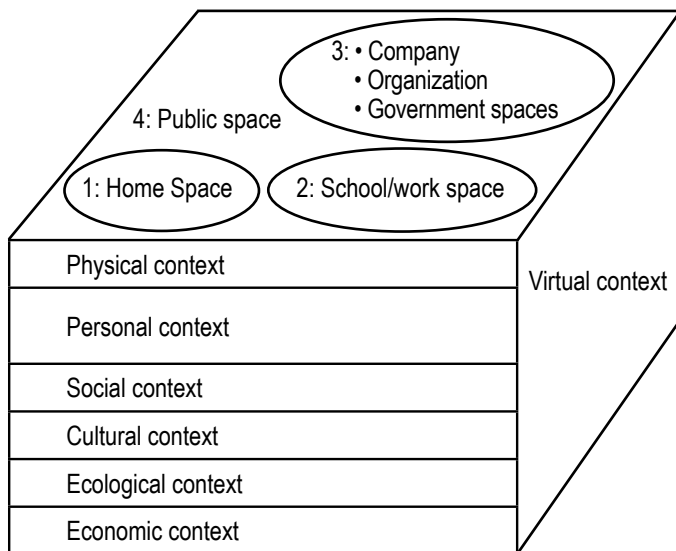


Figure 1. Experience Society, Experience Spaces and Experience Contexts.

In this section we describe the relevance of the various experiences contexts ranging from a physical, virtual, personal, social, cultural and economic context and to a lesser degree the ecological context. The ecological context we define as nature, animals and wildlife, water supply, natural resources, agriculture, woods, lakes, forests, parks and rivers etc. Now we will turn to the physical and virtual experience spaces where we shape our daily lives and the role of ubiquitous art.

Ubiquitous Art in Physical and Virtual Experience Spaces

The relevant physical and virtual experience spaces we visit almost daily, in order of importance that follow from our explorative research are:

1) Home experience space and art

Our personal home where we connect and share experiences with our (extended) family in the first place and where our identity takes shape through meaningful experiences. We act in the role of family member. The physical space is the home where we meet in person. The virtual space is the connectedness to the extended family through new media as telephone, SMS, MMS, e-mail, chat and more recently our personal blogs. Art and design play an important part in our life as we listen to music, watch video, TV and film, enjoy sculptures and paintings in and around our home and read books and magazines. Even the objects that we use to shape our day-to-day life are designed for functionality but more and more for immaterial values that enhance our identity. The choice of architecture, interior design, fashion and lighting help us to shape our home to fit our identity.

2) School/work experience space and art

Our teachers, fellow students, or colleagues and managers where we study or work, allow us to establish our identity through interaction and value production. We gain value through the application of our competencies in voluntary and paid for work. We act in the role of (knowledge) worker through a full range of cross media. Schools and offices as architectural art and design allow us and facilitate us to learn, connect and work with others. The spatial design is designed for inspiration and for various forms of human interaction. Often paintings and floral art are part of the interior decorating.

3) Company/organization/government experience space and art

When we shape our future and strive for quality of life we need goods, services and paid for experiences that we use as tools to satisfy our needs. Examples are shops, restaurants, hotels, banks and insurance companies, car companies, real

estate agencies and other commercial providers where we relate to as the *customer*. But also organizations which support us at a fee where we can be a *member* such as Green Peace, World Wild Life Fund, museums, concert halls, sport venues etc. Also government agencies where we are *citizens* who provide services such as pass ports, social security, waste disposal, building permits, police protection etc. We can visit these spaces in person and seek meaningful experiences and more and more we can access websites for on-line delivery of products, services and experiences. For companies, organizations and governments to differentiate themselves in a global world, art and design is ubiquitous. In our role as customer, member or citizen we interact with companies, organizations and government, often on a daily basis.

4) Public experience space and art

The fourth experience space can be described as the natural world in which we travel from home, to school, to work, to company, to organization and to government. It includes our cultural heritage in the form of landscapes, cities, villages, and rural area's with our cemeteries, churches, roads, rivers, woods and other infrastructure. We act in the role of visitor, traveller, sports person etc. We stay in contact with our extended family and or colleagues through on-line communication.

Rural planning and urban planning and architecture as art are ubiquitous in all areas of public space in the western world. The cycles, cars, buses, trains and planes we travel with are produced for their functionality, but are at the same time all expressions of industrial art. They enhance not only our mobility but express who we are and shape our identity. Landscaping and garden architecture are forms of art that shape our living environment and thereby the quality of our lives.

5) Virtual experiences spaces and art

The above holistic view of the Experience Society comprises both experience contexts and physical experience spaces. This model is complemented with virtual experience spaces, where we connect to other worlds and leave our body behind. The virtual context enables us to link ourselves to relevant contexts and cross boundaries of physical spaces through the use of interactive media. The issues of virtual spaces, virtual communities and virtual mobility are new to us. We can be anywhere at any time and still be connected. This can be considered an opportunity for individuals shaping their life and expressing themselves. The art of designing interactive media is booming as bandwidth growth is boosting on-line gaming and entertainment as well as user generated content in for instance Flickr (photo sharing) and YouTube (video sharing).

We as humans, in different roles, live and shape our identity. But in fact *we are one and the same person in different experience spaces and contexts*. We apply our talents together with other human beings to create value for ourselves and for others. We propose that as humans shape their live, ubiquitous art plays a significant role in the process of human experiences and meaning making. Humans are not only experiencing art as passive receivers, in today's world people actively construct works of art as they publish their texts, their photographs, their videos, their music and other forms of self expression via Internet and rate the works of others.

The Art of Seeking, Sensing, Sharing, Shaping and Sustaining

To capture the above notions of human experiences, the relationship with art and the process of meaning making in a comprehensive view, we see life itself as a form of art in *seeking* meaning, through using our *senses*, *sharing* experiences, *shaping* and *sustaining* our lives. Both physical objects of art and virtual objects of art are part of us and allow us to enjoy

experiences of togetherness, convenience, pleasure, beauty and wellness. In this view art is ubiquitous. In section 2 we will describe the process of co-creating meaningful experiences and the role of ubiquitous art.

Ubiquitous Art and Co-creating Meaningful Experiences

As we argued in the previous section art is everywhere and playing an important part in human day-to-day experiences. Based on extensive literature research and empirical research, design principles are generated for co-creating meaningful experiences (Thijssen 2006) through learning-by-sharing. The model of learning-by-sharing is developed over the past 20 years at the department of Information Management of the University of Amsterdam aiming to bridge the gap between theory and methodology (rigor) and practice (relevance) by introducing the world of practitioners in the academic world to co-create meaning (Thijssen et al. 2002). For practitioners in organizations *meaning* can be described as developing and implementing new and effective strategies. For academics *meaning* can be described as developing and testing new theory. For humans in general *meaning* can be described as the pursuit of happiness and the quality of life itself. This way the products and processes of thought are integrated in communities of practice with a common purpose aiming for meaningful human experiences. The design categories and principles have been developed using case studies, interpretative studies and longitudinal action research in complex social settings and in human centred business innovation.

In this section we will provide an overview per design category for co-creating meaningful experiences, including the context, the problem complexity, the timing, the purpose, the people, the processes and the performance. In each design category we will highlight the role of ubiquitous art. These design principles of co-creating meaningful experiences through learning-by-sharing have been gener-

ated over the past 20 years at the University of Amsterdam (Thijssen et al. 2002). Here we provide a list of relevant design categories and principles that can be applied for human centred experience design. In section 3 we illustrate how these design principles can be applied in practice to design, describe, explain, shape and evaluate meaningful experiences.

Context

- Place the problem (lack of quality of life) at hand in context.
- Client-infrastructure: Place the project in the client-infrastructure system of specific organisations and individuals *using the experience landscape* in section 1 of this chapter.
- Unit and levels of observation and analysis: Identify the units and levels of analysis in the specific context. Identify the initiator for co-creating meaningful experiences.
- Regulatory Issues: Take into account the influence of regulatory issues.
- Competencies of people in the context: Take into account the competencies of people.
- What role do art, architecture and design play in this context?

Complexity

- Problem Complexity: Determine the dynamic and behavioural complexity of the problem in the context.
- How can art, architecture and design help reduce complexity?

Timing

- Sense of Urgency: Timing is key in initiating, hosting and completing projects. Through quality relationships the sense of urgency can be measured and if the sense of urgency is high then the timing is right. If the sense of urgen-

cy is low, political entrepreneurship is applied to create a sense of urgency.

- *How can art, architecture and design help to create a sense of urgency?*

Purpose

- **Common Purpose:** Define the common purpose of creating meaningful experiences.
- **Common language:** A common purpose is expressed in a common language. In particular the language of the constituents served should be leading.
- **Learning as a social process:** Shape learning as a social process to explore and exploit the potential value of diversity.
- **Define Transformation:** Transformation from an 'undesired state' to a 'desired' state.
- *Define how art, architecture and design can assist in defining a common purpose, envision the desired state and enhance the transformation process to the desired state.*
- **Real world issues:** To study real-world fundamental issues *that enhance the quality of life and meaningful experiences.*
- **Roles:** take into account the role of initiator and negotiate the role of all other participants.

People

- **Inclusiveness:** Include artists, academics, practitioners and constituents served (customers, members, citizens) in every setting and promote role switching.
- **Diversity:** A variety of different talents and means add to creative problem solving.
- **Connect:** Connecting all units of observation: individual, team, organisation, network, society.
- **Quality relationships:** Quality relationships build on care for other, trust, openness and transparency and flattening power.

- Quality of expression: Quality of creative expression to enhance cultural exchange.
- Power and cultural change: Deal with the issue of power balance and power equality and the requirements for new mental models, learning, innovating and cultural change.
- Roles: take into account the role of moderator and the roles of consultants, artists, designers and researchers and other participants.
- *Define how art, architecture and design can assist in inspiring people to develop a common purpose, envision the desired state and enhance the transformation process to the desired state.*
- Research skills: In practice researchers should become reflective practitioners and acquire consultancy skills. Theories are only welcomed by participants in a trusted situation enabling practitioners to see things differently and adjust their actions. *Art, architecture and design* are means to help people to see things in a different way. Reflecting on actions may prove or disprove the theory. Practitioners do not solicit grand theories in theoretical and abstract terms. Humans pursue happiness and quality of life.

Process

- The co-creation process of meaningful experiences is based on Action Research (AR): Action learning (Learning by Sharing) and action research (AR) coincide.
- Common frame of reference: Use a common theoretical frame of reference based on the common purpose of co-creating meaningful experiences as the desired state.
- Mental models: Participants define the solution or the desired state (mental models, common purpose, future vision and mission). *To imagine desired futures art as expression of meaning can assist the process.*
- Combine organisation and university: Combine business and university in action learning programs to study the real-world fundamental issue at hand.

- Fundamental theories: Apply fundamental theories to diverse and complex practices.
- Human action: Pattern of human action of building trust, enabling and enacting.
- Quality relationships: Include and maintain openness, authenticity, listening, affirmation and empowerment.
- Power balance: Pattern of balancing and flattening power relations.
- Entrepreneurship: Through entrepreneurship defined as: engaging, Learning-by-Sharing, innovating and accounting for aimed at experience value creation.
- *How can art, architecture and design help the process of co-creating meaningful experiences?*
- Roles: Take into account the role of moderator, the roles of consultants, artists, researchers and other participants.

Performance

- Culture: Performance is based on norms and values of people. It is cultural based. Prevailing mental models may enhance or hinder performance. The performance gap should be made explicit in terms of mindsets about the desired situation for people.
- Experience return on investment: For a sustainable project the experience benefits should be balanced against time and money spent.
- Experience value for clients: Reflect on and define experience value for the clients in the specific situation in terms of quality of life.
- Experience value for employees: Reflect on and define experience value for the employees in terms of quality of working life and organisation requirements.
- Learning to learn capabilities: Focus on cognition, skills, and attitudes to stimulate generative learning and learning-to-learn capabilities and generate competencies required by the employees and the organisation to support the client.

- Connect human action: Individuals connect and use 'means' to an 'end' as a new co-creation approach to generate meaningful experiences.
- *Define how art, architecture and design can assist in defining a common purpose, envision the desired state and enhance the transformation process to the desired state. How can art visualize the performance of meaningful experiences?*
- Power balance and politics: Reflect on the political performance and the equality of power and identify the requirements for the flattening of the power structure to improve client's life.
- Accountability: Accounting for aimed at experience value creation.
- Roles: take into account the role of initiator, the roles of consultants, artists, researchers and other participants.

The above design categories and design principles for co-creating meaningful experiences are based on the Learning-by-Sharing model developed at the University of Amsterdam (Thijssen 2006) and are tested and evaluated in diverse settings of experience co-creation such as education and research, social value creation and business innovation. In the following section we will illustrate the role of ubiquitous art in the co-creation of meaningful experiences according to the design categories and principles above in three cases. As is indicated above, art is present in each of the design categories to enhance the meaning making process.

Case studies

In this section we will discuss three cases to illustrate the design categories and principles from section 2 in the setting of Dance, Apple iPod and Skating.

ID&T, Q Dance and Art

Context

In 2006 ID&T and Q Dance as market leaders (Stutterheim & Tavecchio 2006) in the Dutch dance market merged to host over 25 themed dance festivals with in total more than 550.000 visitors per year in the age group of 18 to 35 years. These dance experience providers aim to provide a 'moment of release' for dance and music lovers, offering a line-up of famous DJs in often spectacular locations inspiring all senses before, during and after the event.

Timing

Youth dance culture is growing and expanding throughout the world. The aim is to expand and export a major dance festival White Sensation throughout Europe and later to other parts of the world. The art of music, staging performances, dance and distributing music is the key of the business concept. The timing for international expansion appears right as was proven during recent dance events in Germany and Poland. Youth dance culture appears to be part of a global culture driven by on-line access to favourite forms of musical art and dance.

Complexity

The art of inviting and engaging youth in mega dance festivals of up to 40.000 visitors is a major and complex operation. After 13 years of experience ID&T and Q-Dance master the art of staging such events in great detail. Research supports

the future strategy development understanding the impact on youth experiences and guarding the interest of visitors to provide meaningful music and dance experiences.

Purpose

Young people are involved in day-to-day routine activities as school and work. To escape from these day-to-day activities they listen to music and visit clubs with their favourite dance music with their friends. They connect and share information and music, select and rate major events for entertainment and enjoyment. The purpose is to provide a preferred experience moment of “release” to match the cultural dance and music preference and to delight visitors.

People

The people involved are the DJs who enjoy a great reputation and provide for the music with just the right sound and beats per minute. This can be considered as a new form of art. It attracts millions of people worldwide. To cater for the dance and music lovers the experience provider employs 40 staff to design, develop and implement major dance events and sub-contractors in many fields. The organisation is flat and the teams are guided by entrepreneurial leadership, aiming to be the first choice in international dance experiences by the target group in Europe and other parts of the world.

Process

In the process the experience chain of youth with over 40 experience touch points (points of meaningful interaction between the individual and the organization) who love dance and music is leading. The process of *seeking* release moments, engaging all the *senses*, *sharing* information and music, *shaping* a dance event together and *sustaining* the identity as dance and music lover is fully described and understood in over 40 meaningful touch moments. The true art is to pro-

vide access to information, music, tickets, food and beverage and facilities to enhance the dance experience per meaningful touch moment.

Performance

The word performance and dance go together very well. The art of dance and music is a form of 'user generated art'. It is a form of self-expression and co-creation. It provides intense pleasure, togetherness, celebrating life with people like myself. It provides a true release moment in contrast to day-to-day routine activities. For ID&T and Q-Dance performance also means business performance, excellence and growth.

Evaluation and the role of ubiquitous art

Youth culture, dance and music go together well. In this particular case the art of designing, developing, implementing and evaluating meaningful dance experiences is a combination of art as music, art as dance and art as design of the setting with light, colour and sound. Art is ubiquitous in each of the 40 steps of the dance experience chain, before, during and after the event both in physical spaces and virtual spaces.

Apple iPod and Art

Context

The success story of Apple with G4 desktop and notebook computers and the recent introduction of PowerBooks, with the appealing design is overly known. Apple, in fact, is migrating into the entertainment industry through the introduction of iPod and transforming from a technology provider to an entertainment and experience provider. Apple entered the entertainment industry and took advantage of the convergence of digital media. Microsoft is only responding now with the introduction of the Zune in the US in 2006 presented as the iPod killer and only coming to Europe in 2007. Apple

dominates the market by 75% in the US for portable music players and Microsoft aims to take a share of this market (Jobs 2006). Access to music and video content is key.

Timing

Apple has had a head start in the portable music players market. Providing that Apple keeps up the attractive design and improves the functionalities of watching videos on larger and better screens with excellent sound and picture quality it will stand a chance to stay ahead of competition.

Complexity

The complexity of the music and entertainment market is high, especially when it comes to digital rights and deals with content providers. Also the technological complexity is high as new technical developments present themselves continuously.

Purpose

Music lovers seek access to their favourite music and want to listen to it immediately as a new release comes out. Peer influence drives the sharing of information and music. For apple the purpose is to expand in the portable music player market and making money on the sales of singles, albums, video's and movies through excellent quality and design. Providing access to music and video experiences, anytime and anywhere is the key purpose.

People

Music artists and movie stars play an important part in the content. The market of music lovers of all genres is fast and globalizing. Top designers and developers at Apple provide for the Apple identity and image. Users of iPod and other Apple products and software enable people to seek, sense, share, shape and sustain their lives in a meaningful way.

Process

The process of generating meaningful experiences is fully understood. The process of *seeking* music, *sensing* the sound and images, *sharing* information and music, *shaping and sustaining* meaningful music experiences anywhere at any time is explored and exploited to the full. Music lovers all over the world fall for the iPod experience.

Performance

Again a portable music player as iPod and performance go together well. The art of the design, the quality and sound of the music and the images, the ease of access and the ability to share music with friends all enhance a great performance. Both in experiencing music and video and in terms of commercial performance.

Evaluation and the role of ubiquitous art

Digital entertainment as a ubiquitous form of art is driven by new technology. The Apple iPod case is an excellent illustration of meaningful experiences and ubiquitous art.

Underground Culture, Play, Art and Skating

Context

The MU Bowl can be considered as 'skate artwork' annex 'sports facility' and is designed by Maurer United Architects (Maurer & Maurer 2002) in the city of Eindhoven, the Netherlands. The design of the skate facility is an important part of the skateboarding culture. The philosophy behind skateboarding is based on the fact that at all times it is the skateboarder himself who determines the rules and the challenges of his actions. Therefore a skate facility can only be designed and built by (the community of) skaters themselves. Authentic skaters would never approve of a facility designed on the desk of an architect and built with municipal money.

Timing

To develop a 'skate bowl' in the city of Eindhoven in 2002, is an example of correct timing. Youth culture in skating is an international culture and skaters in Europe travel to skating rings to experience their sport to the max. For the city marketing of Eindhoven skating would add to the identity and image of innovativeness in younger target groups.

Complexity

Designing and authentic skating experience is a complex process that can only be achieved by co-creating meaningful experiences and involving the skater community.

Purpose

The realisation of a skating bowl by and for skaters with an authentic skating experience, in short is the purpose of the design project.

People

The designers from Maurer United Architects involved the skating community through collaboration with the students of the Building Technology Group of the University of Eindhoven as an educational project. Many of the students were active skaters themselves.

Process

The process of *seeking, sensing, sharing, shaping and sustaining meaningful and authentic skating experiences in a skating bowl* could be fully realised through the concept of co-creation with the skater community. Art, design and culture are integrated in the process of design and realisation to generate an authentic skating experience.

Performance

The skating bowl in Eindhoven is realised as the largest skat-

ing bowl in Europe and attracts thousands of visitors from all over Europe to experience authentic skating.

Evaluation and the role of ubiquitous art

The MU bowl is an excellent example of co-creating a meaningful and authentic experience. As an educational project the design included many skater students and the art of understanding skating culture was fully incorporated in the design. Art is ubiquitous in every aspect of design.

Interpretation of the Cases and the Role of Ubiquitous Art

Individuals, in their personal, social, cultural, economic and ecological contexts seek meaningful experiences in day-to-day life at various experience spaces at (1) home, at (2) school and at work, (3) with businesses, organisations and governments and in (4) public spaces. Experiences come about in physical and virtual worlds as part of making meaning and shaping identity. The cases illustrate that the model of the Experience Landscape as explained in section 1 can be applied to better understand the temporal and spatial co-construction with others of meaningful experiences. The process can be described as seeking, sensing, sharing, shaping and sustaining meaningful experiences. The design categories context, complexity, timing, purpose, people, processes and performance allow us to describe, explain and understand the process of designing, developing, implementing and evaluating meaningful experiences through learning-by-sharing. As we see art is part of our daily life and is ubiquitous. If the details of meaningful experiences are well understood by the experience provider, the meaningful touch points can be identified before, during and after the experience and ubiquitous art can help shape and enhance the experience. The cases show that art is ubiquitous in shaping and sharing meaningful experiences and in arousing all senses.

Implications for the Experience Industry

The hardest part of this study is to define the experience industry. One can raise the question if *one* experience industry exists or can be defined? From a human centred design perspective any human action involves human experience. In this definition any industry could be an experience industry if only the industry includes the notion of meaningful human experience in their strategy and experience delivery. It requires a different lens from a supply driven perspective to a demand driven perspective (Boswijk et al. 2005), putting the individual in his/her context in the centre of thinking and not the offering of the company or organisation. This requires a lot of unlearning as we have developed many refined supply driven marketing techniques to try and capture the consumer. This push strategy of 'tell and sell' loses terrain as people more and more design their own life (pull strategy) as expressed by, amongst others, IKEA and the philosopher Arnold Cornelis (1999). The answer to any industry is to adopt a pull strategy of 'invite and engage' and of 'co-creating meaningful experiences' together with the people served. New competition in a global market space will drive the demand driven movement as Apple, Maurer Architects, ID&T and Q-Dance demonstrate.

As can be seen in this chapter art is ubiquitous in the world of meaningful experiences. The implication can be stated as follows: Include artists, academics and practitioners as well as the target group in co-creating meaningful experiences and generating high performance as quality of life. The design categories and principles of learning-by-sharing can be seen as a roadmap to the art of co-creating meaningful experiences. The hardest part is to change the lens to a human centred co-creation and design approach through learning-by-sharing. Can we unlearn the company and product driven design approach? If we aim at quality of human experiences, we must. Ubiquitous art can inspire us to do so.

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Colour as Information Carrier in Immersive Virtual Reality Spaces

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Introduction

Today, in many cases, the art will be made by digital technology. Digital photography as art and commercial has changed to digital excluding just some enthusiasts. Video technology is changing in very short time to digital as well. The quality is high and editing possibilities are wide and software is very good and even not so expensive any more. 3D animation sections and digital effects to movies have been seen for years.

The most thresholds in changing the film industry to full digital is the expensive investment to a professional quality digital production line for high density and high resolution technology and the new delivery channels rebuilding and new technology for viewing the movies.

To understand the digital colour management some basics have to be known at least on the level one could note what's important to learn more. We hope this article would be the activator for this.

The first section by Senior Research Scientist Hannu Kuukkanen handles the basics of the colour and colour vision. The last part, Surface Properties – Shaders, written by Professor Aydin Ozturk describes the short introduction to shading in 3D visualisation technology.

Light and Colour

“Light is the mother of colour”, said Goethe in his times. Goethe knew well what he was talking about. When you turn off the light by (winter) night you will come to the same conclusion. Human eye has its physical limitation not to be able to see colours in a low light. This is due to the colour blindness of the more sensitive light sensors of the eye, called *staff cells*. Other problem in colour vision and vision in all is the very small area of human eye for sharp and respective colour sensing in the eye. (See also Kuukkanen 1978.)

There are about 137 million receptors or nerve endings in human eye. Only 5% of them are available for clear sight (fovea), and 95% available for peripheral vision. The visual information passes through the nerve into the brain and into the visual cortex. This is the part of the brain where the vision becomes understood as a picture.

To see the colours human eye contains colour sensing pigments which make possible the reaction to certain light wave. *Rod cells* contain chemical which is called Rhodopsine. Its amount is changing with the value of light. This chemical is participating to the vision of yellow colours and night vision. *Cone cells* contain two other colour sensitive pigments / chemicals which are sensing other colours. Light causes over loading so the Chemicals participating in vision changes more labile state in certain colour sensing cells and receptors. They cannot take more light for a while. This chemical lability is important to scale eye to resist damages (with retina)

and makes possible the scaling of vision by the amount of light but as well causes temporal regional blindness in the eye. Human eye is most sensitive for the colour wave length 555 M μ which is the area of yellow-green. In low light the eye is most sensitive on the wave length area of 507 M μ .

Young and Helmholtz (1802; see e.g. Young 1985) have made the Trichromatic theory about colour vision where they think there are three different types of cone cells which can formulate the vision of the different colours Red- Green - Blue. Actually the computer screens bases on this RGB theory and seems to be working fine. Hurvich, Jameson and Hering (see e.g. Hurvich & Jameson 1957; Hering 1964), have the opponent-process theory. According to them there are four different types of light sensing cells each sensitive to opposite colour components: Yellow – Blue and Red – Green. This is more likely and explains several faults of colour vision like the colour blindness. CIE Lab colour model utilises this theory. Lab is the reference colour model when transporting image data between all other colour models.

Colour vision needs certain amount of light. The light meets the surface you are looking at. Part of the light will be absorbed – caught by the atoms of this surface material (opposite colours) and part of the light spectrum will become reflected from the surface or material. What you will see is the reflected part of the light which refers to the colour of the material, even though this is a philosophical question if the material is the colour it absorbs or the colour it's reflecting away.

The reflection can be a mirroring type (gloss); it may also be a diffuse type (non glossy) depending on the surface properties. If the surface is transparent, part of the light penetrates into and through the material turning its path by the bending factor of this material. By crystal prisms you may see a pure spectrum because of its high light bending factor.

Why you see a spectrum, why not just bended white light? This is due to the nature of light. Different colours

represent different wave lengths of the electromagnetic spectrum. Reds are bending more than blues and all the colours between these border colours of the part of the electromagnetic spectrum called visible light bend by its own wave length in the spectrum. This effect makes the rainbow.

Separate colours refer to different wavelengths of the electromagnetic spectrum: purple (380-440 M μ), blue (440-485 M μ), cyan (485-505 M μ), green (505-560 M μ), yellow green (560-568 M μ), orange (580-600 M μ), and red (600-780 M μ).

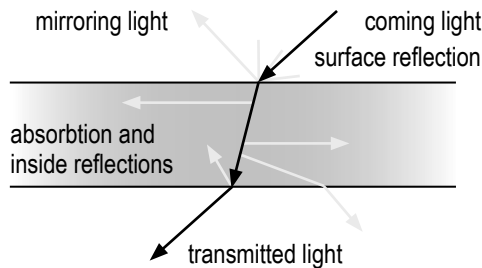


Figure 1. The Light Meeting the Surface.

The nature of the reflected light depends on the material the light meets and becomes reflected. There are several different dependencies called material surface properties. Material may be highly reflective, such as mirror and chrome metal or it can be matt one, like black coal or some textiles. Material may be transparent or opaque. Material can be single coloured or pattern of several colours. Material surface can be flat or bumpy.

Diffuse reflection means that the surface is not totally reflective, it causes colour vision. Metallic colours are very special because their reflection varies from their “real colour”. This is called by the name “selective reflection”. You may see this if you look through a sheet of gold against the light source. The colour you’ll see is green.

Interference is an effect caused by thin layers. This effect you may see in soap balloons. Light is bending for the

first time when it enters the material and for the second time when it comes out. The light slows down inside the material and gets double intensity by meeting one wave-length later the new equal colour wave when reflecting out. This colour depends on the colour wave length the surface thickness is equal to. Two light rays meet on a reflective surface – one which is reflecting immediately and the second which has loosed speed inside the material.

Bending effect will be visible on the surface of the old vinyl LP records. This effect is caused by the tiny hill tops where the light is bending all around so that blue will bend most. From certain point you will see the bended blues at one time while the other colours are reflecting to other directions. When you'll change your view point you will see other colours as well one after one even though the vinyl material itself is black.

Diffusion can be visible for example in dusty air full of tiny particles or clouds full of water molecules. The light stays white (or the colour it has) as long as the size of the particles are bigger than any light wave. In the air, air molecules are the size of blue light waves, and this causes the colour of sky. If there are any bigger molecules they will make the air lighter by the amount they are. The sky becomes yellowish and reddish when the sun sets. This is due to the yellow and red part of white sun light to become bended visible by the lens of atmosphere.

Colour temperature of light is very important factor even though eye can calibrate it quite well. Colour temperature affects to the white- and grey-balance of any taken picture by any camera. Modern digital cameras have automated function to do this "colour-balance" adjustment but in some cases they will fail and manual adjustments should be done. If you'll do the adjustment later in the picture editor, you'll loose image content (shade information). The result will be lower quality. The colour temperature can be measured best on a light cloudy day. The reference value is 5000 to 6000oK (Kelvin degrees). On a very clear day the measured value

can raise up to 60 000oK. One of the most unreliable light for photography is fluorescent light. This is because of the non-linear nature of its spectrum even though the colour temperature would be correct. Some colours in the light of fluorescent light may act well but some colours may be difficult or even impossible to catch.

Eye in Colour Vision

Eye is not very respectable when studying colours. Human brain has good facility in scaling the grey balance of vision depending on the light spectrum of the light source. On the other hand, eye will also scale the colour itself depending on surrounding colours. This makes the colour comparison a bit tricky and normally to make respectable colour comparison, all surrounding colours should be covered away from sight.

This test is very critical and needs a lot of colour printing accuracy but after all its worth to try. If all goes fine you may test this property by these pictures below. Try to find a light with good white balance. Normally this will be available near by the window in natural daylight without direct sunshine. One of these tiny blue squares in the middle of the coloured squares on the left seems to be a bit different colour. In the right hand picture the reality becomes visible when the surrounding colours have been turned off.

One trick of the eye-brain co-operation is seeing the things

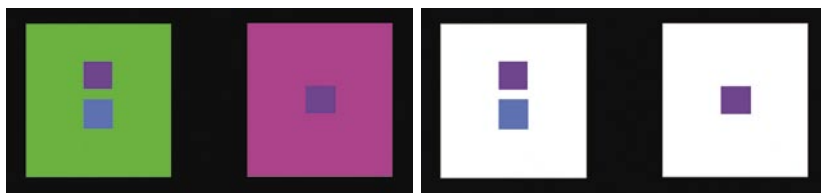


Figure 2. Eye in Colour Vision.

that do not exist. The next set of black squares should bring this out. When looking a while this net of white lines between the squares you'll see dark spots in every cross you are not directly focusing on. This effect is called the contrast effect. The next test you may do when you are in bed and – for ex-

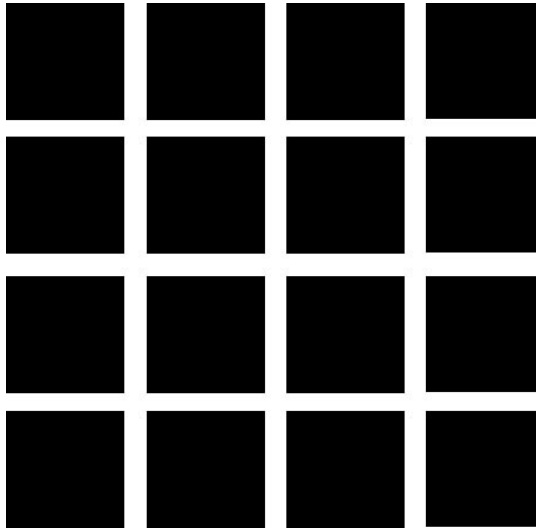


Figure 3. The Contrast Effect.

ample – reading a book in low light. Read a while your head on the pillow and turned to right or left. Stay still, just shut one eye and look the page for a while, then shut this eye and open the other one. The result of this test should be a slightly different colour variation of the page you are reading. Middle gray sheet of paper should work best but normally this isn't available at home for tests.

One more contrast effect by colour will be visible on the following web page: http://www.patmedia.net/marklevinson/cool/cool_illusion.html. Just stare at the black cross for a while and you will see how pink spots turn to green in this animation. This is relative to the after image effect which you have seen

several times as your own experience. After looking a while to some bright spot and then turning away from the light you'll see black spot or opposite coloured spot as after image. The colour sensitive shells in your eye have been over loaded and after the irritation it takes some time to scale back to the balance.

Basics of the Colour - Colour Systems

There are several colour worlds and colour controlling and reference systems like CMYK, PMS, Lab, HLS, HSB, ETC. The colour system used in digital image processing is RGB. This colour system bases to the additive colour formation which means all the colours in spectrum will be produced by the three basic colours R = Red, G = Green and B = Blue. Additive means that if you are adding Red to Green you will have Yellow colour, and if you will add Blue to Green you will have the Cyan, and adding Blue to Red you will have Magenta. When all RGB components are added together by about same values you will have White or Grey colours. By this method all 16, 7 million colours of your computer tube or display can be made visible for you. The additive colour production can be used only in devices using the light as colour formation. Print media for example uses the CMYK system which is subtractive method and opposite of the RGB theory. If you do not know precisely what is happening when the colour space from RGB will be turned to CMYK for printing – do not do it. It's called the colour separation in reproduction and to become a professional colour separator will take three years of studies. For instance Adobe Photo Shop's default adjustments will point out rubbish because they have been adjusted for the SWOP (American news paper industry standard).

RGB colour space can be controlled and adjusted by several means. One of the most well known is the direct adjustments of the R, G, B components of some colour. To help this,

there are several other possibilities to adjust the colour depending on the result you will need. HLS or HBS system is very powerful tool when you want to change the whole colour space of the RGB picture. H means Hue and Hue means the real colour, the most intensive colour of the colour spectrum. They are the colours which have names like: Red, Blue, Green, Yellow, Cyan, Magenta, Orange, Purple, and Blue Green etc. They are pure colours and their most intensive colour values following the spectrum. In HLS system the Hue is positioned to the middle of the colour space as a colour circle. The easiest way to change the colour space is to rotate this Hue circle. Colour balance can be adjusted by minimum steps of Hue rotation.

When you will need to lower the intensity of the colour from bright colour to greyish tones you'll need the S = Saturation-value. Saturation means movement between the full colour intensity to grey. All colour components change together in balance. Handy isn't it? When you'll need to lighten the colours you will need the L = Lightness (in HSB system this is B = Brightness). L-value adds all other colour components to some specific Hue raising the colour intensity to produce pastel colours up to White. Opposite direction will lower the amount of other colour intensity of the specific Hue to make dark colours down to Black. All grey colours are between the Black and White in the centre of the HLS colour space consisting equal amounts of each RGB component.

On the left in the middle of this image of a spectrum is the

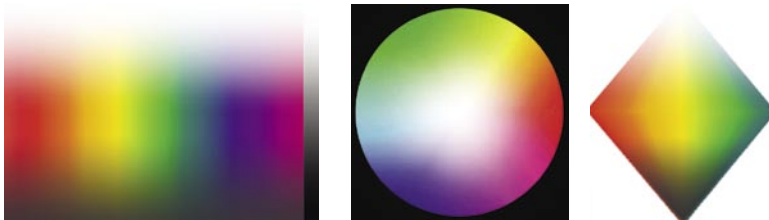


Figure 4. The HLS Colour Model.

Hue circle of the HLS (HSB) colour model presented as a strip. Up wards is affecting the balance of other colours up to white and down wards the Lightness is reducing down to black. On the right end of this picture the Saturation value is zero, so there isn't any colour present any more. This is the situation in the middle of the colour model. In the picture on the right you see the Hue colours like they will be seen when looked from the top of the HLS model. If we'll cut the HLS colour model right from the middle, the middle colour should be 50% grey not white. On the bottom side of the HLS model cone the middle is black. On the right there is the HLS (HSB) colour space seen as side projection.

Adjusting separately each RGB colour component will be handy when some "sticks" in colour must be corrected or adjusted. This is close to filtering in photography. The well known "old photo" feeling can be adjusted by RGB components when starting with grey-scale black-and-white picture – change it to RGB and then add few steps of Red and reduce some steps of Blue (= add Yellow).

CIE 1976 L*a*b* is the reference system for all others. **CIELab** has been designed by the CIE (The 'Commission Internationale de l'Eclairage'), or in English, the ICC (International Colour Consortium) – in France. The Lab is based on the careful research of the way human eye catches the colours. Lab is in use when all the colour models should be adjusted together for example in colour reproduction. ICC colour correction profiles will be helpful when pictures will be transported for editing or inspection between various terminals and colour spaces.

CIE has done a huge set of tests with natural persons about their capability to separate different colour tones from each other. This test has been described as a colour space in y/x co-ordinates.

CIE colour space represents a shape of a curve. The pure

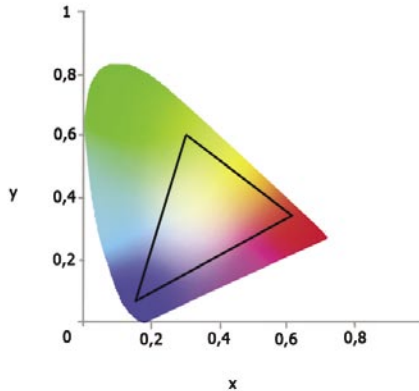


Figure 5. The CIE Colour Space.

Hues - the pure spectral colours -starting from purple at the bottom left through blue – green – yellow and orange to red at the other end of the curve. The straight line joining the two ends of this curve adds the mixtures of blue and red which are not actually clearly visible in the spectrum produced by light. This set of colours can become visible as surface colours or reflected as light to some suitable surface material. This CIE's colour space seen by an average human person is the reference for colour gamut (the colour area some applications can produce) of different applications and terminals. On this picture above, we will see the gamut of a common RGB monitor (black triangle). One can see easily, that RGB monitors are not very good at Cyan colour at all.

Colour as Information Carrier

Colour adds readability, attention, activity level and helps to remember. One of the most important issues for colour is the information it contains. Colour is an important information carrier to produce immersive virtual reality (VR) spaces. Users and spectators (audience) should catch the real feeling of space even without the huge and expensive cave-install-

tion or stereo equipments. Even in stereoscopic viewing the depth illusion is far stronger when the colours on the screen are correctly designed.

The other important issue is carrying information with the colour. Red is easily combined with the information concerning fire. Green contains the information of caring of the nature and environmental issues. Purple is religious colour in western countries. White and blue are cold, fresh and sterile colours used with water and pharmacy. Yellow is the colour of creativity and creative craziness but as well it's been used as the warning colour of the cholera epidemic on ship.

Colour carries certain information in certain context. We know far well that some enterprises have their symbol colours: IBM Blue. The verbal format "Big Blue" about IBM, tells a lot. Nearly everyone knows the story that the red coat of Santa has its origin from Coca-Cola's advertisement. Pepsi has spent a lot of money to get the colour combination of Red and Blue with White strip its own. Also Shell's Red and Yellow with the sea shell figure is well-known over the world. McDonald's has owned the Red and Yellow combination in fast food domain etc. If we just take the colour out off its context the information ends.

There are several internationally, widely accepted colour symbols like the colours of traffic signs, traffic lights, navigation marks, driving lights of ships: White light on the mast and rear, Red to the left and Green to the right side of the ship. Cars and other vehicles in traffic should use certain colours in their rear lights and winker. In several countries the fire brigade has bright Red painted vehicles which are using Blue signal lights.

Important issues in design are:

- target group, to what kind of audience we are designing for – what kind of colours we should use
- what is the purpose of our design – how should it act

- VR or any other artificial space compared to reality – should it imitate reality or not
- we should take account the content we are working with
- the feeling we are aiming to evoke

Some simple laws of space colours are:

- in daylight the distant objects are lighter
- in evening and less light the distant objects are darker
- intensive Red is coming forward (jumping up)
- intensive Yellow is coming up (shining)
- Blue as a colour is sinking down
- colour is surrounding dependent, the eye will scale the colour compared to the background colour it exists
- colour is context independent. Mind will scale the colour compared to the background and experience of the spectator

Simple laws for readability of colours:

- avoid contrast colours in background and text
- avoid intensive Blue and Purple in text for they are difficult for the eye to focus to
- take care of the contrast between the background and text, this is important for any spectator but critical in case of colour blindness
- the best colour combination for informative content is some warm shade of Yellow and Black
- the best contrast is not Black on pure White but Black on light Grey – too much contrast may be irritating

Some colour information issues to become notified:

- one should carefully take account the colour information in designs to special religious and political groups, these colours are very content and context dependent
- seeing and understanding colour is always subjective, so avoid “critical” or very special colours and opposite colours
- colour information is a life-long learning process, but the

meaning of the colour can be bought (enterprise image and logotype colours)

- there are only few (about ten) informative colours used for information purposes, the basic rule is that when you mention a colour name your audience should have an idea and meaning of this colour respectively

This stripe of colours (below) is used as information colours in electric component industry. Colours are referring to numbers 0 - 9 which cannot be written in very small size components. Please make a test with your friend by an information colour

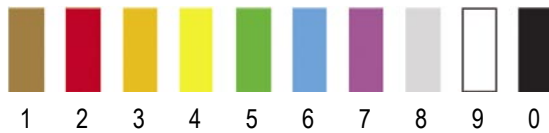


Figure 6. A Stripe of Colours.

of a one well known product. Cover the pictures below leaving just the first from the left visible and ask whether he/ she can recognise any product? Then (if not) uncover the second picture from the left and so on.

This set of colours represents information colours of a well known product. Combined with some shape with colour the label becomes certainly visible if not yet in the first

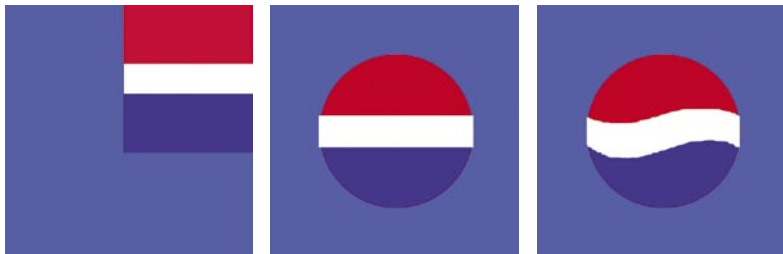


Figure 7. Identifying a Product by the Colour Information.

picture on the left. The product is *Pepsi*. If not recognized; they have spent billions of dollars in vain. Buying colour information may be expensive.

These objects have been designed by the Finnish DeskArtes



Figure 8. Objects Designed by the DeskArtes©.

[DeskArtes] Industrial Design System (IDS). It is a software package which has been specially developed as a design tool for industrial designers. This software has been sold all over the world.

Colour as Design Component

When using the colour in design we are coming to the domain of lot of speculation. Still some basic rules can be seen which will be usable for persons by not so advanced skills in colour design.

- note the contrast issues (amount of black and white in colour = Lightness adjustment) if you want the colour become separated from the back ground
- use the neighbouring colours of the colour circle to sustain the colour harmony
- use carefully the opposite colours of the colour circle in fore and back ground objects; as this is the most critical issue and may cause even headache or sickness in some cases to some persons
- notify the jumping colours and sinking colours when designing background and objects
- to produce a very usable colour pallet for design is to choose the colours you will need in design and then add same amount of light or black to the colours (the Lightness adjustment); this is one way to harmonize colours, and happens in VR in shadows and high light of the objects; if the premium colours are well chosen the harmonization in VR will be no problem
- colour harmonization can be done as well by adding a common colour to your colour pallet with the same amounts on each colour in it (the RGB balance adjustment); in VR this can be made for example by adjusting the light source colour balance
- be careful in colouring textures and patterns

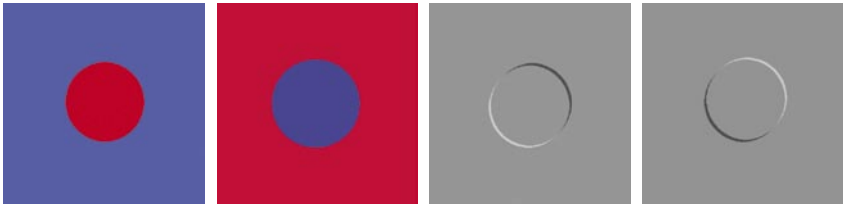


Figure 9. *An Illustration of Space Illusion.*

This pair of pictures shows the space illusion of the red/ blue combination. These colours will act by the same way with other colours. The Red jumps out in the first picture on the left and the Blue makes a hole in the second picture. The same issue by grey surface and its shades will be visible in the third and fourth picture. This effect bases on the “common idea” of the light direction from the top left. The dark borders in the colour pictures are full of equal circles – not wide to any direction - you just see it a bit more up or down.

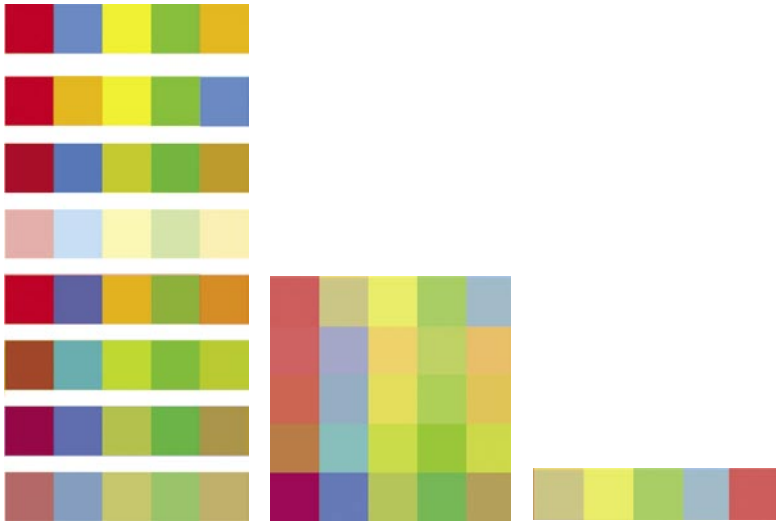


Figure 10. *Some Colour Harmonisation Examples.*

Figure 10 illustrates how the eye reacts to colour harmonization. There is a difficult set of colours on the top line. The 2nd row = just arranged by spectrum values; the 3rd row 30% Black added to each (by lightness control); the 4th row 40% Lightness added (White); the 5th row some red added by RGB colour balance; the 6th row some Green added by colour balance; the 7th row some Blue added by colour balance; the 8th row greyness added by Saturation adjustment. Picture in the middle: the set of colours on the left has been “pixelated” into large size. The last picture on the right shows a pick-up pallet of five colours from the previous arranged by colour value from light to intensive.

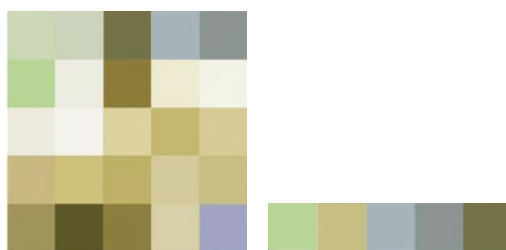


Figure 11. A Pixelated Picture.

Figure 11 shows another example. One photo has been pixelated in the first picture on the left. The second picture is just a pick-up from the large pallet arranged by colour value from light to dark.

Nature as the source of colours cannot be so wrong. Sometimes it may happen that the digital image is too intensive because it may strengthen some colours for some reasons. The saturation adjustment will be very helpful in this case.

3D Software and Colour



Figure 12. VTT's VR Cave, Lumeportti.

In 3D design software you may control these previously listed properties or at least most of them. You can change the type of light from ambient (sun) to a spot light. You can also change the colour balance of the light by its RGB components. You can adjust the parameters of the surface to make them look like you want them to (in most cases by most software). You will see most effects in real time but some of them will become visible only after rendering the picture. Rendering means the full ray tracing calculations which may take some time depending on the rendering settings, amount of data the accuracy and the complexity of the scene.

When designing colours for VR applications you will meet the affects of rendering. They'll be a combination of all the previous parameterisation of your work so the result may be unexpected. In all cases you have a possibility to do the re-parameterisation so there will be no problem after all. The number of iterations is straight referring to your professional skills.

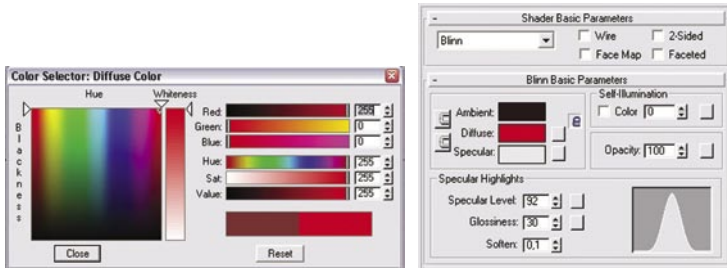


Figure 13. Designing Colours.

Surface Properties – Shaders

By Professor Aydin Ozturk, ICI

A shader is basically the set of rules on how an object looks. There are rules that can describe how objects react to lighting, functions to read texture maps, fetch reflections and refractions and so on. Shaders can be formulated to look like real physical materials or they can be written to look like artificial surfaces or even output technical data, such as distance from camera. (OdForce.)

Most renderers have a fixed shading model. That means a single equation is used to determine the appearance of surfaces and the way they respond to light. RenderMan brings the concept “shaders” that modify the shading model. The programs describing the output light sources, and how light is attenuated by surfaces and volumes are called shaders, and the programming language that we use is known as

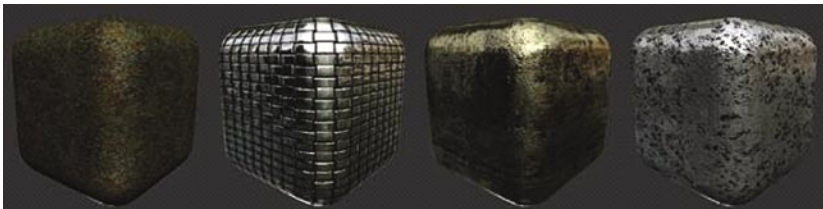


Figure 14. A Set of Material Examples of 3DMax.

Shading Language. All shaders answer the question “What is going on that spot?”. (Advanced RenderMan 2000.)

The RenderMan Interface Specification describes several types of shaders, distinguished by what quantities they compute and at what point they are invoked in the rendering pipeline. Firstly, Surface Shaders describe the appearance of surfaces and how they react to the lights that shine on them. Secondly, Displacement Shaders describe how surfaces wrinkle or bump. Thirdly, Light Shaders describe the directions, amounts and colours of illumination distributed by a light source in the scene. The fourth type of shaders is called Volume Shaders that describe how light is affected as it passes through a participating medium such as smoke or haze. The fifth type is Imager Shaders that describe colour transformations made to final pixel values before they are output. The addition of programmable Vertex Shaders and Pixel Shaders makes visual quality in real-time graphics take a quantum leap towards cinematic realism.

Effects that can be created with shaders:

- Hair and fur
- Per-pixel lighting
- Underwater effects
- Clothing
- etc.

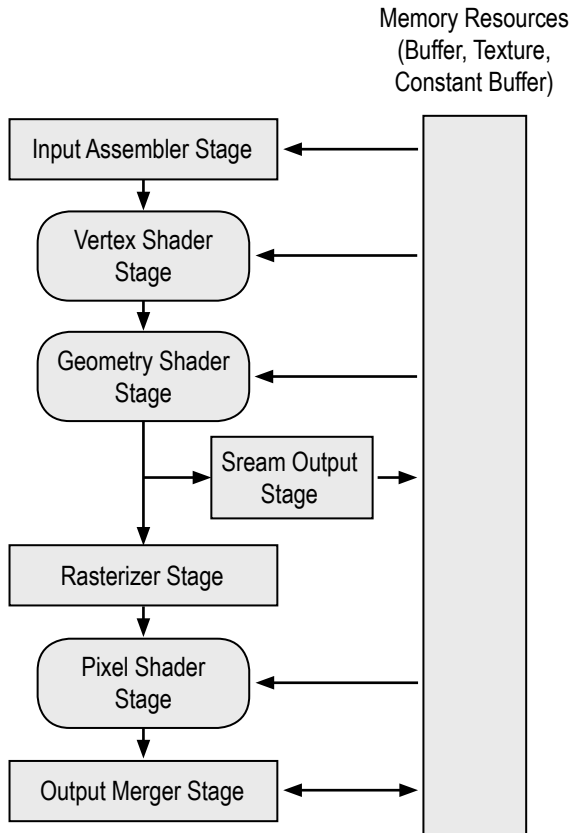


Figure 15. An Illustration of Shaders.
 (<http://msdn2.microsoft.com/en-us/default.aspx>, Microsoft Developer Network Homepage)

Vertex Shader

A vertex Shader is a graphics processing function, which manipulates vertex data values on an X (length), Y (height) and Z (depth) 3D plane through mathematical operations on an object. These variations range anywhere from differences in colour, texture coordinates, orientations in space, fog (how dense it may appear at a certain elevation) and point size.

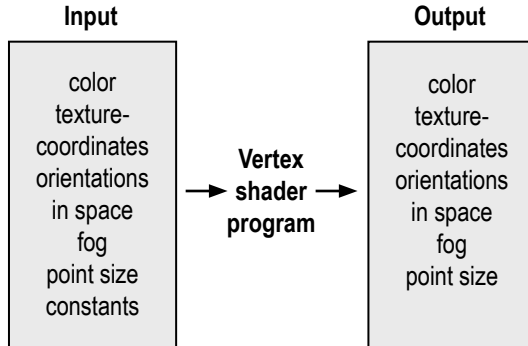


Figure 16. A Vertex Shader Programme.

Vertex Shader effects include:

- Procedural Geometry (cloth simulation, soap bubble)
- Advanced Vertex Blending for Skinning and Vertex Morphing
- Texture Generation
- Advanced Keyframe Interpolation (complex facial expression and speech)
- Particle System Rendering
- Real-Time Modifications of the Perspective View (lens effects, underwater effect)
- Advanced Lighting Models (often in cooperation with the pixel shader)
- Displacement Mapping
- etc.

Pixel Shader

A Pixel Shader is a program which processes pixels and executes on the Graphics Processing Unit. Pixel Shaders often require data from the Vertex Shader. Moreover, Pixel Shaders often have to be “driven” by the Vertex Shader. For exam-

ple to calculate per-pixel lighting the Pixel Shader needs the orientation of the triangle, the orientation of the light vector and in some cases the orientation of the view vector.

Pixel Shaders can fetch texture from graphics memory and process it

Pixel Shader Effects are:

- Single pass, per-pixel lighting
- True phong shading
- Anisotropic lighting
- Non-Photorealistic-Rendering: cartoon shading, hatching, gooch lighting, image space techniques
- Per-pixel Fresnel term
- Volumetric effects
- Advanced bump mapping (self-shadowing bump maps (also known as Horizon Mapping)
- Procedural textures and texture perturbation
- Bidirectional reflectance distribution functions
- etc.

Shader Model 3.0 can be described as follows:

- Shader Model 3.0 is the set of instructions that contain both Pixel Shader 3.0 and Vertex Shader 3.0. All previous versions of Shader Model are subsets of the greater instruction set. So, SM3.0 incorporates SM2.0, SM1.1, and other previous pixel and vertex instructions sets (HardOCP)
- Only supported by NVIDIA GeForce 6 Series (for now)
- Next generation ATI GPUs will support.

What's New in Shader Model 3.0?

- Vertex Texture
- Allows displacement mapping, particle effects
- Long Programs
- Allows more complex shading, lighting, and animation without performance drop.

- Dynamic Branching
- Saves performance by skipping complex processing on irrelevant pixels/vertices.
- Geometry Instancing
- Allows many varied objects to be drawn with only a single command

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