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Introduction

In this paper I would like to know how I can use Drawing workshop as data in my research. I also wonder if I can change my focus from teaching towards research?

Here is my experience.

In spring 2009 I organized Drawing workshop at Konstfack, University Collage of Arts, Crafts and Design for students from University of Art and Design Helsinki, Bergen National Academy and Konstfack. I was familiar with both schools in Sweden and in Finland and I had also been exchange teacher in Bergen for making this workshop.

The aim of this workshop was to ask at least these three questions:

Can you have drawing as a method in your artistic process?

Can you travel in your memory by help of drawing?

Can you think by drawing or do you have to think first before drawing or afterwards when you have finished your drawing?

Drawing is often compared with writing. By writing you formulate your thinking. Can you develop your ideas by drawing?

I wanted to ask this question about travelling in memory by help of drawing, because this is something what I have been working with in my art since 1997. I started to draw places in Stockholm like Sergel Square <http://www.marjanurminen.com/maalaus/maalaus51.html> and my home in my studio <http://www.marjanurminen.com/maalaus/maalaus61.html>. I did not allow myself to use photographs nor draw at the place. I used to stop by Sergel Square on my way from Konstfack to my studio. Then in my studio I tried to remember how it looked like. I found central perspective not interesting at all for these drawings and I also found that paper never could be big enough. In the beginning I taped more and more paper together and then I had to start cut these papers. I found my way to form cut my paintings so they had only that form left where important parts were to be seen.

Tasks I gave for students were three.

Draw an important place (drawing by memory) Try to show the place to people who haven't been there. Use different projections, not only central perspective.

Draw an important happening in your life.

Draw a dream! A dream you have dreamt or a dream you would like to come true.

Afterwards I can see that these were the tasks I had given to myself in my art, though I don't work that way. I don't give me any tasks. Important place from my childhood was The Control Tower where I could draw while my father was working and then send my drawings by pneumatic tube to the secretary below.

<http://www.marjanurminen.com/maalaus/maalaus62.html>

An important happening was when we children saw a rain border not only once cut our house so that it was raining and sunny in the backyard and dark with huge shadow and not raining in the front yard. This memory I have tried to paint in many times, so many times that I sometimes think that this is why I needed all these years at Art Schools.

<http://www.marjanurminen.com/maalaus/maalaus65.html>

A dream I had round 1990 I was drawing Equestrian statue of Gustavus Adolphus at Gustav Adolfs torg at Stockholm. My former art teacher came to see my drawing and he was very impressed and said "What a power a pencil has!"

<http://www.marjanurminen.com/maalaus/maalaus56.html>

In this workshop I took tasks very near my own artistic work and thinking. I was very surprised when so many students were interested to take part in this workshop and they were interested to work with this problematic.

I also showed a videotape called David Hockney at the Tate, where Hockney shows one of his paintings called A visit with Christopher and Don, Santa Monica. He is inspired by the narrative of Chinese scrolls. This painting is also a map.

I will also show some of students work here.

Here is what I am going to do and why

Spring 2011 I will organize Drawing workshop 2 in Helsinki together with Roayl Institute of Art in Stockholm, University of Gothenburg Valand School of Fine Art and with Bergen National Academy. This time I have contacted teachers who I know from my former school Nordic School of Art. I want this workshop to be more like a masterclass in music where musicians meet each other and students and play together and talk about music. Visual artist and senior lecturer at Valand School of Fine Art Peter Ojstersek and painter and senior lecturer Filippa Arrias at Roayl Institut of Art and senior lecturer in visual communication Kate Madsen are willing to take one day each in this new workshop.

How can I use this workshop as part of my research?

Here is what other people have said about the topic

Action research is an inquiry method that teachers can undertake to understand and improve their own practices. Teachers acquire their personal theory of practice through everyday, experimental learning based on series of small experiments they make in classroom. (Räsänen 1997, 154)

Marjo Räsänen has used multiple methods for data collection and analysis. Data was gathered through audio and videotaping photographing, and reflecting journaling. (1997, 164)

In Visual Culture and Esthetic Learning Strategies was a research and development project led by professor Karin Becker 2001 – 2003 at Konstfack, University College of Arts, Crafts and Design and Department of Art education. This project had three primary goals

- 1) To develop forms of documentation which could be used to identify and reflect over the esthetic learning strategies and forms of knowledge that arises in the practice of visual art;
- 2) To use these forms of documentation to help identify and describe steps or stages in the learning process and to assess the quality of the work; and
- 3) To develop proposals for applying the project results in doctoral-level work in the visual arts, toward a long-term goal of establishing a doctoral program integrating research and artistic practice (Becker 2003, 5)

Under this project I organized a workshop together with Arijana Kajfes. Because documentation was important we discussed it a lot. Kajfes says in report: For visual artists it is not clear to use documentation, some artists use process documentation but not all and for some it could be also disturbing moment (Ulla Lind & Kersti Hasselberg 2003, 79)

That's why our documentation were done by one camera which was built as a car and by another camera which had no photographer but a foot and everyone in a group could go and take photographs when ever they wanted.

In my pedagogy course for university teaches I wanted to use a diary as pedagogic documentation. In this diary which I wrote every day I had three columns in each page. There were first What will happen? / What did happen? Second column were Aim and third was Reflections column. I wrote this Diary in September 4th until October 3rd 2003 while I was having two courses at the same time for Art Educators Drawing and Painting 1-5 points and 6-10 points. What makes this Diary so different is that it shows that there are happenings which change a focus in course. Minister of Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh was attacked with knife 10th of September and died following day.

I could also ask if students would like to make these kind of Diaries too, but only if they want to.

Here is what this means and why it is important

In my research which is called *Thinking or Technique – Teaching Drawing at Konstfack, University Collage of Arts, Crafts and Design in Stockholm and in Aalto University, School of Art and Design* research questions are:

How is drawing education?

In what theories, ideas and tacit knowledge teaching is based on?

Is education in drawing necessary?

One part is workshops, second part is interviews and in the third part I will analyze degree requirement and course programs.

I interview alumni and teachers to find out if there is a need of teaching drawing at these schools. How drawing education has been and how it is nowadays?

References cited

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Lind, Ulla & Hasselberg, Kersti (red.) 2004. 4 dagar 2003. Konstnärlig forskning & Estetiska läroprocesser. Institutionen för bildpedagogik Rapport # 4

Räsänen, Marjo 1997. Building bridges. Experiential art understanding : A work of art as a means of understanding and constructing self. Helsinki: Publication Series of the University of Art and Design Helsinki UIAH A 18.

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