RELATE NORTH

CULTURE, COMMUNITY AND COMMUNICATION

Edited by
Timo Jokela & Glen Coutts

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Preface

Timo Jokela &
Glen Coutts
University of Lapland, Finland

Pre

This anthology contains contributions from Canada, England, Finland, Norway, Russia and Scotland. It is the third book in the *Relate North* series, the first two (Jokela & Coutts, 2014; 2015) addressed the broad theme of 'sustainable arts and design' through the lens of subthemes: 'engagement and representation' (2014) and 'Heritage and Identity' (2015). In this volume, the interrelated themes of 'culture', 'community' and 'communication' formed the basis of the call that was issued to researchers and artists.

The call was issued at the *Relate North* symposium and exhibition of *Arctic Arts and Design Thematic Network* (ASAD) of University of Arctic which was held in November 2015 at the University of Alaska, Anchorage and the contents of this volume were selected from the proposals submitted. Each contribution, chapter or visual essay, was subjected to academic peer-review and the book you are now holding is the result of that process.

According the study of Nordic Council of Ministers (2011) themes of the volume are actual. There are certain megatrends going on in the Arctic and the North. Global warming is happening faster in the Arctic than in any other place on earth with serious consequences for local communities. Another important driver is globalization, which is connected with neoliberalist exploitation of nature resources like oil, gas, minerals and ecosystem services by tourism. The consequences will have significant implications for Arctic cultures. In the Arctic there is estimated 4 million people living including more than 40 indigenous groups and languages. Indigenous people are 10 % of the whole population in the Arctic (AHDR, 2007). Globalization leads the process where communities are transformed from rural characteristics in terms of economy, culture and lifestyle, to one, which can be characterized as urban. It leads to concentration of the population on larger places. It entails a complex set of processes, not only in where people live, but in who they are, how they live in terms of culture, economic well-being, political organization, communication and the distribution of power, demographic structure and social and cultural relations. (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2011.)

Communities in Arctic and Northern region share a number of characteristic development issues and challenges. These communities have a mix

population groups, with different languages and traditions. Simultaneously, the youth in the north, are sent to have their education in the south or in bigger cities. Arctic young people themselves expect to move from their place of origin to achieving education and position in the labour market. The educational options determine the settlement choices as the smaller communities lack opportunities for young people to realize their dreams. (Karlsdóttir & Junsberg, 2015) This has led, in many small towns and villages, to an erosion of social structures and has created series of recognized problems, including ageing of the population, youth unemployment and the disintegration of cultural activities as well as psycho-social problems often related to the loss of cultural identity and weak communication.

According to Nordic council of Minister (2011) the Arctic needs to generate more human capital by investing more in its people. The advent of what is often characterized as the "knowledge economy" needs the enhancement of human skills and creativity, which will be the key to the next development process. The service sector, administration, education, culture and social services, has become the main income source for most families in the Arctic. These sectors serve as the economic pillars for local communities and are increasingly necessary for the maintenance of many of the traditional renewable resource activities. We believe art and design higher education can have a leading role to play when new initiatives are needed to enable communities to take charge of their own development processes. A key aim of the *Arctic Sustainable Arts and Design network* (ASAD, 2016) is to promote research and academic debate on the changing role of art and design as impacting northern and arctic communities.

Since its establishment in 2011, ASAD has sought to 'identify and share contemporary and innovative practices in teaching, learning, research and knowledge exchange in the fields of arts, design and visual culture education.' (ASAD, 2016). The organisation is one of the thematic networks of the University of the Arctic, the networks aim to 'foster issues-based cooperation within networks that are focused but flexible enough to respond quickly to topical Arctic issues.' (UArctic, 2016).

Each year, since 2012, ASAD network has hosted an annual event in the form of a symposium and exhibition. These gatherings take place in a Northern or Arctic country, the first was in Rovaniemi, second in Reykjavik, third in Kautokeino, fourth in Anchorage and fifth in the Shetland Islands. Though the annual symposia, academics, artists, researchers, historians and cultural specialist come together to present, analyse and share practice in sustainable arts and design. It is important to note a unique feature of these events, each one includes an exhibition of art and design work that compliments the academic forum. In addition, the reader should interpret the terms 'arts' and 'design' widely to include, for example, crafts, indigenous making, media, product or service design. In addition to hosting the annual symposia and exhibitions, there have been numerous collaborations between organisations and members of the network, which shows that the boundaries between what constitutes 'art' and 'design' activity, especially in a socio-cultural context, are becoming increasingly blurred. What constitutes creative practice in the 21st century is a complex and fluid question that many of the authors in this volume begin to explore.

The contents of this book reflect the different perspectives and research approaches of the authors. As editors, we respect the traditions and conventions that are the norm in different countries and regions across the circumpolar north. In bringing together this diverse collection, we hope we have remained true to the authentic voice and register of each author and that the reader will appreciate the diverse ways that research is conducted, not only in the arts, but also in different cultures.

In the opening chapter, Biggs reflects on the idea of 'north' and place as interpreted through a set of photographs. He reflects on the complex relationship between environment, society and self in a northern context. Drawing in his previous research in Ireland, England and Scotland he explores the notion of understanding 'north' for the creative arts. With lengthy involvement of arts doctoral research practice on the one hand and in his years of experience of 'deep mapping' on the other, he presents a fascinating case for 're-visioning' north.

The second chapter, by Manninen and Hiltunen, reports on a large-scale

research project that sought to explore young people's notions of identity and citizenship. Entitled 'Creative Connections' (2014), the research used art as a way of stimulating debate between and across cultures. Although the project involved many northern and southern European countries, the authors focus on the Arctic and questions of living in either an urban or rural setting, a timely topic as more of the worlds' population will live in cities in the future.

Themes of marginality, cultures under threat and lost community run through the next chapter. Burnett discusses Scotland's far north and islands as a 'cultural industry of margins'. The history of the highlands and islands of Scotland is a turbulent one and the way that communities have been represented or portrayed through art tends to linger as images of romantic wilderness, emptiness and the struggle to survive or make a living. Recently however, research has examined the potential of cultural and creative practice for sustainable communities.

In the fourth chapter, the research of Zemstova and Sharapov explores the 'tradition that does not exist' peasant wood painting that has been practised for centuries in the area around the Komi republic. A rich tradition of folk art and wood painting that has largely been ignored by ethnographers and cultural historians. The authors' research and educational project "Ethnographic Mapping of the Traditional Arts and Crafts in the Komi Republic' is ongoing at the time of writing".

The penultimate chapter by Kuure, Pietarinen and Vanhanen's presents a multicultural workshop model that was developed and tested as part of a week-long intensive programme Murmansk. The participants included Finnish and Russian undergraduate students and the broad focus of the work was issues of concern to society: 'Social issues have long been an interesting topic for designers and it is an even more topical now with today's many social challenges, such as ageing, healthcare issues, and waste.(p. 104).

Design is also the key focus in the final chapter. Using design methods to collaborate and transmit cultural meaning Ivey's central theme. Using action research methodology, the author developed a web based resource that celebrated Gaelic culture and values: 'Its core principle is to reflect and reinforce

community and the cultural values that have been maintained in Nova Scotia Gaelic communities over generations. (p. 130).

The chapters are followed by two visual essays; image-text features that report and explore some of the ways that artists can interpret northern themes. In quite different ways, the two essays touch on the intertwined themes of culture, community and communication.

Bevan and Downes, working in the northern island of Orkney (Scotland), report on a research project that brought together artists, archaeologists, anthropologists, environmental scientists and community to investigate the shoreline of Sanday island.

The final contribution, by the Norwegian artist Kolostyák, presents a case study on the phenomenon that is 'tundra'. The artist's installation made out of ice transported from Swedish Lapland to France was show in the art festival «L'Art dans toutes ses états 2007» in Limay, just outside Paris.

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RE-VISIONING "NORTH"
as an ecosophical context
for creative practices

Iain Biggs
University of West of England, UK

1

Introduction

This chapter was triggered by a set of photographs taken in the north of Scotland, Gina Wall's *Lossie Forest* (Figure 1), and by her philosophical reflections on the encounter that produced them. This text offers a more than adequate academic contextualization of the 'event encounters' (O'Sullivan, 2007, p. 2) involved. However, my sense is that it *positions* the work conceptually in a way that inhibits our imaginatively placing it. This *positioning* has larger implications. I share Wall's view that in the Lossie Forest landscape we find ourselves 'simultaneously at the centre and on the periphery, in a between place haunted by others' (2013, p. 248). However, my recent research in Ireland and the UK, leads me to think through this inhibiting as it relates to our imaginal understanding of north for the creative arts.

Figure 1. Lossie Forest II,
Gina Wall, 2013
Reproduced by
permission of the artist.

What follows adopts an ecosophical perspective, understood as the thinking together of three distinct, dynamic yet interrelated ecological fields – of the environment, society, and that constellation of persona we call a self. It flows from long engagement with arts doctoral research projects, PLaCE International, and deep mapping as a practice predicated on 'disciplinary agnosticism' (Bailey & Biggs, 2012). My aim is not to critique Wall, whose insights I value, but to think through the productive tension signaled by the two aspects of her work by focusing on certain topoanalytical presuppositions. For example, those that pervade Robert MacFarlane's *Mountains of the Mind,* with its emphasis on mountains as 'a world entirely apart, an upper realm' (2004, p. 202). This focus invites exploration of the tension between assumptions about philosophical thinking as the 'peak' or pinnacle of a "northern" academic *mentalité* and its counterpoint: a polyglot, polymorphous, estuarine, "southern" or "low" imaginary.

Although informed by Guattari's ecosophy, I will largely avoid the theoretical terminology employed by an academic community that locates philosophy as the pinnacle of intellectual authority. My substitution of the term *notitia* (literally a cross between "listening" and "noticing" but see below) for Guattari's 'ethico-aesthetic paradigm' is prompted by Claire Bishop's discussion of art as a form of education. It is intended to ground that paradigm experientially and in the context of creative research. Similarly, Guattari's notion of transversality is understood here as an act of "bridging" predicated on a dynamic tension, as 'a movement, motored by a group Eros' (Bishop, 2012, p. 273), where "group" is understood both as a constellated self and a collective social entity.

My involvement in deep mapping raises questions about the overdependence of art discourse on conceptual, 'high altitude thinking' that all-too-often 'does not acknowledge its own limits as situated embodied thought' and, in consequence, is 'forgetful of its contingent roots in particular persons, places and times' (Finn, 1996, p. 93 & p. 137). A thinking that ignores *notitia*, indeed is largely unaware of its existence. What follows addresses the tension (and potential for bridging) that results when, as creative researchers, we seriously

consider the claim that 'the image cannot give matter to the concept; the concept, by giving stability to the image, would stifle its existence' (Bachelard in Guadin, 1994, p. 6).

North

When we are faced with an atlas, map, or compass, "north" appears as given, as self-evident. We choose to forget (if we ever knew) the fine distinctions between "true" or "geodetic" north and both "magnetic" and "astronomical true" north. Experientially, however, the specific qualities of any "northern" place are 'contingent, mobile and elusive' (Wall, 2013, p. 238) while, simultaneously, framed by the specific geopolitical space identified by Latin American 'Liberation Philosophy' in its engagement with 'the "other face" of modernity' (Dussel, 1998, pp. 2–3). The rural "north" of my own research is infused with psychosocial concerns. It is also grounded in some twenty years of practical deep mapping work in the Cheviot Hills of the Borders region and the Southern Uplands of Scotland that revisits a once vibrant quasi-animist upland vernacular culture (Biggs, 2012; 2010). Both shape my thinking here.

"North", unless substantially qualified, is too generic a term to be of much value when considering particular life-worlds. 'Upland, lowland and urban areas', for example, while widely dispersed in terms of latitude, tend to have 'more in common with each other' than with different areas at the same latitude (Peters, 2003, p. 3). Knowledge and cultural production, tertiary education, and banking now tend to adopt global orientations, downplaying geophysical location. Consequently, a commodity broker in Reykjavik may now have more in common with her peers in Mumbai or Jakarta than with a woman living in the rural life-world evoked by Grímur Hákonarson's *Rams*. As a result, "northern" creative research needs to understand its 'place' as tensioned; between geo-social specifics of particular life-worlds and a wide variety of other contributing framings and forces; from the pervasive *mentalité* of the northern European macro-region to the physical constraints and opportunities of specific microenvironments.

Approach

Art as creative research, long shadowed by 'monolithic modernist narratives' and prohibitions inherent in an exclusive philosophical aesthetic, is now open to 'possible transformation' (Franke, 2012, p. 2). By challenging the epistemology underwriting monolithic narratives predicated on divisive classification, we become 'bridge-makers' who generate alternative 'relations that turn a divide into a living contrast' (Stengers, 2012, p. 1). This involves both rethinking 'progress towards truth through the elimination of doubt and the application of reason, language and power in the dividing, sorting, representing and fixing of the world' (Jones, 2008, p. 1600), and the 'erroneous belief' that conceptual thought 'can encapsulate reality and truth' (Fiumara, 2013, p. 12). A rethinking necessary to overcome the dominant 'colonizing form of ego consciousness' that 'feigns singleness or unity' and to making space for a 'multiplicity of psychic voices', including those internalized 'cultural voices that go unheeded by dominant cultural forces' (Watkins, 2008, p. 425). Only by reducing our over-investment in conceptual thought can we give due authority to images generated by our event-encounters.

Rapid environmental change now prompts us to see 'the whole rather than the part' (Tracey, 2012, p. 18), to catalyze the epistemological shift necessary to face increasingly toxic psychosocial and socio-environmental situations (see Boehnert, 2015; Stengers, 2012; Jones, 2008; Guattari, 2008). This also requires us to recognise the 'polytheistic and polygamous' nature of imagination, its 'multiplicity' (Hurd, 2008, p. 36), so as to address a culture of possessive individualism that, seen for the perspective of the life-world (*Lebenswelt*) as polyverse (Biggs, 2015; Corless, 2002)[1], is 'inherently paranoid' (Quintaes, 2008, p. 90). Consequently, writing that values a life-world as polyverse requires commitment to polyvocality. Here this involves "taking note" (in the sense of *notitia* discussed below), of various distinct yet related concerns via a multitude of perspectives to indicate particular, if provisional, confluences of thinking and experience. It offers a cluster of potential vantage points in a cultural landscape, rather than a linear argument authorised by a single discipline.

The primacy of tension

Landscapes refuse to be disciplined. They make a mockery of the oppositions that we create between time [History] and space [Geography], or between nature [Science] and culture [Social Anthropology].
Barbara Bender (cited in Massey, 2006, p. 34.)

The "north" which has housed the particular *mentalité* questioned here is seen as a macro-regional landscape generated by 'tension' (Wylie, 2007, p. 1); as *placed between* multiple factors: material, geopolitical, psychosocial, cultural, ecological, etc., constituting particular life-worlds, each understood as a polyverse. Furthermore, the particular place of any such life-world, no matter how mundane, is understood as haunted, as permeated by: 'a geography of imagination writhing with memories, creatures, villains, and half-buried cultural shards awaiting discovery' (Hillman, 2004, p. 78).

Alec Finlay and Ken Cockburn's project *The Road North* (2014) evokes something of this being *between* multiple senses or qualities of place. This mediates their native Scotland afresh through the device of re-viewing fifty-three places by using the same number of stations found in the poem *Oku no hosomichi (Narrow Road to the Deep North)* by the Japanese poet Matsuo Bashō. It makes explicit tensions always inherent in place, in a *here* that is neither simply what it has been before nor identical with any *elsewhere*, which retains spectral traces of its past and which, despite its distinctiveness, is shot through with threads that weave it into innumerable other places. The resulting sense of between-ness, perhaps akin to that most acutely experienced by a "resident alien", provides the basis for cultural mediations able to bridge divides created by the dominant rhetoric predicated on 'necessity' (rather than understood as always contingent) in our political culture, thus making transversality a political possibility.

Between-ness and a re-imagining of "North"

The dominant "northern" *mentalité* is philosophically oriented and, as such, logocratic in its presuppositions and hostile to image and metaphor. It refuses

to recognise that experience which, grounded in noticing the particularities of place, constantly renovates our imaginal sense. And, in doing so, revives 'the archetype' (Jouve, 1998, pp. 195–196) as: 'a value, an attribute, a quality of the image' (Quintaes, 2008, p. 81). Its basic presuppositions echo Aristotle's view that slaves should not use metaphor lest they 'envisage changes of conceptual structures and everyday customs' (Fiumara, 2013, p. 6), thus questioning the status quo. *Notitia*, like metaphor, is engaged in just such envisaging.

North is envisaged positively, imaginatively, as *placed;* as the particular life-world of a person constituted as a dynamic polyverse, rather than as monolithically *positioned*. *Position* here is taken as 'a fixed posit of an established culture' and our experiencing of *place,* notwithstanding its normally settled appearance, as 'an essay in experimental living within a changing culture' (Casey, 1993, p. 31). *Placed* thus, a northern life-world is experienced as a flow of event-encounters that is always *between positions*, always includes a multitude of shifting psycho-geographical, cultural, and material particulars through which specific forms of research or creative *praxis* may be oriented. The constellated self that experiences a life-world as polyverse is characterised by porosity, by shared contingencies and connectivities resulting from an internalization of community constituted by multiple attachments, connections and relationships. It embodies a polytheistic *mentalité*, 'a distinct mode of thought and of universal organization', 'a fundamentally different way of understanding the mechanics of the cosmos' and 'a unique way of assessing appearance' (Napier, 1992, p. 4). Consequently, a philosophically-based 'aesthetic of exclusion' (Saito, 2007, p. 101) is no longer adequate to such a self, since a polyverse is constituted inclusively, generating multiple aesthetic dimensions, including an 'aesthetic of the everyday' (pp. 101–102), with all the consequences this has for our relations with Guattari's three ecologies.

Notitia

Notitia facilitates transversal bridge-making, a possibility latent in Kathleen Jamie's response to a question about the insufficiency of the term 'Nature' and its implicit division of life into contrary, antagonistic, categories. 'Dealing with

the socks and you hear an oystercatcher – why should these things be separate?'[2] *Notitia* is common to the creative practices of art, education, research, ethics and conversation, properly understood.[3] It enables art's 'constant flight into and across other disciplines' so as to think 'the artistic and the social simultaneously… in continual tension' (Bishop, 2012, p. 278). As 'a careful attention that is sustained, patient, subtly attuned to images and metaphor', it is able 'to track both hidden meanings and surface presentations' (Watkins, 2008, p. 419). Neither a technique nor a methodology, this 'seeing through' is 'never accomplished once and for all' (Watkins, 2013, p. 8) and has a critical socio-cultural dimension in resisting hyperactivity, including the frantic pursuit of conceptual and artistic novelty, by virtue of being 'slow, observant, and participatory'.

In a creative or research context the practice of *notitia* is best seen as 'an attempt to recover the neglected and perhaps deeper roots of what we call thinking', (Fiumara, 1990, p. 13). This is vital because we are 'inhabitants of a culture hierarchized by a *logos* that knows how to speak but not to listen'; a situation designed to restrict our acting between and across 'competing monologues' (p. 85). The ecosophical significance of *notitia* is further indicated by Kathleen Jamie's reference to caring for and maintaining 'the web of our noticing', of our 'paying heed' (Jamie, 2005, p. 109) to the phenomenological life-world. However, this aspect of *notitia* is inseparable from that exemplified by Mary Watkins' seeing the convergence between Paulo Freire and James Hillman's work of 'psychic decolonization', a transversal insight that, she adds, required her to overcome the 'deep suspicion' of each man's followers (Watkins, 2013, p. 2 & p. 24). In summary, *notitia* generates awareness of: 'the space between' our categories of 'experience and expression, reality and representation, existence and essence' and, in doing so, reminds us that: 'we are always both more and less than the categories that name and divide us' (Finn, 1996, pp. 155–156). As such, its imaginal awareness is the necessary (and much neglected) counterpoint to categorical, high altitude, thinking.

"North" and the politics of contingency

As this counterpoint, *notitia* is central to a politics of contingency predicated on: 'keeping alive local memory and imagination as a reservoir of meanings, truths, and possibilities for a different future' (Finn, 1996, p. 145), a 'psychological phenomenon that occurs at the level of the local in individuals and communities' (Watkins & Shulman, 2008, p. 3). Informed by 'testimonial imagination' (Kearney, 1993, p. 220), *notitia* provides the basis of our capacity to refigure the past 'as a contingent in-between space, that innovates and interrupts the performance of the present' (Bhabha, 1994, p. 7). As such it keeps us agnostic with regard to what is presented as given; for example, to the authority assumed by disciplinarity or the presentation of a bioregion as a 'simple fact of naturally observable regions' (Snyder, 1995, p. 139).

While it is not possible to explore the politics of contingency in any detail here, I should point out that this is: 'always ambiguous and reversible and cannot, therefore, support a politics that requires us to identify others as Others, as the Enemy *once and for all*' (Finn, 1996, p. 141). In relation to between-ness and the re-imaging of "north" this is, then, a politics that accepts no "position" as given or fixed in relation to gender, institutions, bioregions, political parties, ethnicities, national units, and so on. Rather it requires a respect for psychodiversity and a 'polytheistic ... tolerance of differences' (Quintaes, 2008, p. 75) that includes our noticing and engagement with 'the smallest, minimal daily vicissitudes' (Fiumara, 2013, p. 27) as event-encounters, rather than as codified according to conceptual or disciplinary distinctions.

Landscape as image

James Hillman (2004, p. 43) argues that the dominant twentieth century psychologies were inseparable from their originating Northern European location and from 'the German language, the Protestant-Jewish monotheistic *Weltanschauung*', and a particular 'epic heroism'. A heroism that dismisses or silences the multiple and often contradictory voices of a life-world as polyverse by imposing a unilateral perspective. This heroic fantasy underpins the

mentalité on which possessive individualism rests, internalising the attributes of 'the theological God of monotheism, anomic, transcendent, omniscient, omnipotent', and reflecting 'the splendid isolation of the colonial administrator, the captain of industry … the continental academic in his ivory tower' (Hillman, 1994, p. 33). Hillman's moving psychology 'southward' critiques its complicity with the heroic, logocentric single-mindedness of possessive individualism, offering as an alternative 'individuals-in-community' (Watkins & Shulman, 2008, p. 10). This shift is paralleled by a foregrounding of socially engaged and ecologically oriented practices in the arts, with both shifts sharing the work of educationalists like Paulo Freire as reference points. Hillman's exploration of the tension between "northern" spirit and "southern" psyche in *Peaks and Vales*, a talk originally given in 1975, distinguishes productive differences and establishes connectivities in the imaginal "north" that help place creative research in a polyverse.

In many cultures peaks serve as the location of an impersonal spirituality 'rooted not in local soul, but timeless' (Hillman, 2005, p. 77 & p. 80). This finds an echo in secular notions of "highs" that take us out of ourselves, together with assumptions about an elevated sublimely that denote 'the ego's triumph over nature in its superior capacity for reason' (Huskinson, 2015, p. 84). The vale or valley, by contrast, traditionally evokes 'the mortal, the earthly, the lowly' and the depressive, the 'mess of psyche' (Hillman, 2005, p. 76 & p. 85). Low vales, marshes, bogs, swamps and the estuarine confluence of waters topoanalytically place fluid, metamorphosing imaging, and also death itself (Psalm 23:4). Taken imaginally, the counterpointing of peaks and vales also reminds us of the 'tight connection' between place and 'assumptions about normative behaviour' (Cresswell, 2004, pp. 102–103).

Nan Shepherd's celebration of the Cairngorm mountain plateau in *The Living Mountain* conforms to Hillman's topoanalysis of peaks. It concludes with her understanding that 'the Buddhist goes on pilgrimage to a mountain' as 'a journey into Being' gifted by the mountain itself (2011, p. 108). This echoes the fourteenth Dalai Lama's insistence that: 'the relation of height to spirituality is not merely metaphorical. It is physical reality' (cited in Hillman,

2005, p. 76). While Barbara Hurd acknowledges 'the comfortable certainty of inarguable logic' provided by peak thinking, she is also mindful of 'the distance and distain' of the 'intellect, clattering up the steep face of reason' (2008, p. 36). By closely attending to the world of the swamp she foregrounds reason's counterpoint, the need for categorical porosity and awareness of the close bond between 'presence and absence, decay and the spirit' (p. 78 & p. 112).

Counterpointing 'peak' and 'vale' as components of our "northern-ness" prompts further creative differentiations. Attention to 'vale' qualities allows us to honour a low-lying, horizontal intra-psychic understanding aware of its own contingent ebb and flow; to grasp why testimonial imagination 'requires recognition of history, an archaeology of soul, a digging in ruins, a re-collecting' (Hillman, 2005, p. 81). It also identifies the psychic response to the intellect's 'clattering up the steep face of reason', its privileging of high-altitude thinking as authoritative and all seeing, as a form of 'desertion' (Hillman, 2005, p. 81). (This goes some way to explaining the discomfort many students and early researchers experience when their metaphorical or imaginal thinking is subject to critical analysis derived from high theory).

Vale images also facilitate a topoanalysis that places our creative engagement with the detritus of subjugated knowledges as a necessary courting of 'dead ideas', as it does our messy material thinking-through-making, where our hands become 'slicked with the debris of the world' (Hurd, 2008, p. 24). Here *notitia* acquires a socio-therapeutic dimension analogous to sewage treatment, to the necessary processing of the effluent, but also strange beauty, of everyday psychic mess. This encourages us to attend to life's matter in all its instability, sensuousness, its turgid or sudden flows and murky depths. In this way we both maintain Jamie's 'web of noticing' and bring "the Word" of high altitude thinking down to participate in its Other, in the everyday world coloured by anecdote, 'gossip and chatter' (Hillman, 2005, p. 86).

Importantly, *notitia* allows us to attend to, rather than "step away from", a failing logocratic system predicated on elevating the one-sidedness of 'verticalities of the spirit' (Hillman, 2005, p. 87). Following Hillman, it asks that we moisten the dryness of that thinking, bring it down from the mountain to

interact with the complexities of the vale's multiplicities, the fluid paradoxes and ambiguities of the everyday life-world as polyverse. This is a practical necessity if we are to work inclusively, creatively bridging the roles of "artist", "teacher", "citizen", "researcher" and so on. Otherwise the intellectual distance, critical reflexivity, and objectivity proper to the dominant *mentalité* risk betraying the constelled self, all-too-easily generating that sense of desertion internalised as depression, anger or paranoia.

Contingency and creative work

The politics of contingency touched on earlier relate to the cultural ecology of vales as sites of multiplicity, sites in which presence and absence, decay and the spirit interact. This politics requires us to avoid 'any totalitarian thought or unification around a single centre, a single way, a single discourse, or a single truth' (Quintaes, 2008, p. 75), committing us to living in a world of uncertain flows, 'to slide through many different places, to occupy new strands, and to create unprecedented positions to fulfil' (Quintaes, 2008, p. 79). This too has immediate consequences.

We need to avoid the type of generalised exclusion that Grant Kester uses to introduce *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, where 'object making' and 'content providers' are simply dismissed in favour of 'context providers', artists who 'have adopted a performative, process-based approach' (2004, p. 1). If we engage in the polemics of 'social practice work', we need to avoid privileging it 'over other artistic media, methods, or genres', accepting the (hopefully obvious) fact that 'not all social practice projects are interesting and relevant, just as all painting is not uninteresting and irrelevant' (Lind, 2012, p. 49 & p. 52).

Polemic is inevitable given the polyvocality of a constelled self as polyverse, but needs to be conducted so as to bring into view other, marginalised, or subjugated voices or forms of *praxis*. Polemic is best animated not by a (heroic) desire to win arguments, but rather the questioning of dominant, literalist, and monolithic positions. For example, when Rebecca Solnit questions

the Edenic "northern" Judeo-Christian and European assumptions underpinning much American ecological thinking, she does so in order to remind us that such thinking forgets that others, not only Native Americans but also various excluded European constituencies, hold alternative worldviews where, for example, creation 'is often continual and sometimes comic improvisation, without initial perfection or subsequent fall' (2001, p. 12). To think in sympathy with the topoanalysis of the vale is, then, to allow the neglected and the past to leak 'back through its own channels' (Hurd, 2008, p. 82) so as to irrigate the present with alternative possibilities. Just such a "leaking back" accounts for the reappearance of animism as an orientation in our culture, along with other modes of Being that modern history has ignored, to the point where the entire 'narrative of "the modern" is built upon this silence as its fundament' (Franke, 2012, p. 1).

Creative research in the North

In this penultimate section I offer brief accounts of creative research by individuals working in the "north" as *place*, suggesting convergence between their works and the concerns set out above. The examples used link to, or parallel, my own creative research and work by PLaCE International.

The artist, educator, ecologist, and PLaCE coordinator Christine Baeumler collaborated over several years with the Sax-Zim tamarack *(Larix laricina)* bog, the ecologist Fred Rozumalski, and Barr Engineering, to create a micro tamarack wetland restoration project. After considerable negotiation *Reconstituting the Landscape: A Tamarack Rooftop Restoration*[4] was installed on the roof of the main entrance to the Minneapolis College of Art & Design. From one perspective this complex collaboration demonstrates that even when transposed to an urban environment, a fragile ecosystem can, given the right conditions, not only reestablish itself as green roof infrastructure but also as an aesthetically attractive micro-environment. The entire project hinged on trusting the integrity of the ecological processes by which the bog sustains itself, since without this the project would very publically fail. Its location was

chosen to remind staff, students and local residents how any micro-ecology may in principle be "reconstituted" using water captured where it falls, and of the neglected beauty and fragility of local remnant tamarack ecosystems in Minnesota. The work contextualized itself by including live links to its parent bog, maps, and textual information. Despite considerable initial opposition, the project's life span was eventually extended at the request of the very individual who in the first instance had most strenuously resisted its installation.

However, from the perspective adopted here this project also represents an exemplary act of bridging, one by which the largely un-thought and "low" marginal world of the tamarack bog, a specialist category within the Taiga or boreal forest biome found only in the northern hemisphere, primarily between latitudes 50° and 60° N, is elevated (literally and conceptually), given a privileged place above the portal to a respected cultural and educational institution. Consequently, it has changed the relationship between the city and the fragile hinterland bogs it overlooked or ignored.

A. David Napier writes that: 'what is extraordinary … is not how radical artists can be, but how conservative is their sense of the artist's persona'. A persona that, he suggests, because of its assumptions about unique personal creativity always risks excluding all other activities that define: 'a person's connectedness and ontological status' (1992, p. 21). Increasingly creative practitioners are rejecting this persona so as to stress connectedness, along with ontological status predicated on the notion of 'individuals-in-community', both human and non-human. Baeumler's stress on teamwork in the realisation of the project, and on all living things' common dependency on rainwater, exemplifies this.

Another aspect of such practices is their ultimately ecosophical engagement with, and revalidation of what, in Taoist philosophy, is referred to as the 'vegetative or animal soul' (Schuessler, 2007, p. 417) or the po-soul. Sharing its name with the term "a lunar phase", the po-soul is associated with the passions and returns its energies to the earth at death. James Hillman identifies psychic life in the 'vale' with this po-soul that 'slips into the ground', seeing it as requiring that we go "deeper into concrete realities" (2005, p. 93) to animate

them through imagination. This suggests an alternative way of seeing what, in academic criticism, is referred as the "ethnographic turn" (Foster, 1995). For example, while Jorma Puranen acknowledges the role of the history of anthropology and photography in the genesis of his project *Imaginary Homecoming* (1991–1997), he also stresses that it 'was born of long conversations with Sámi people about their land and history'. His is a conversational exercise in place-based cultural *notitia* through testimonial imagination, echoing Hillman's stress on the 'recognition of history, an archaeology of soul, a digging in ruins, a re-collecting' (2005, p. 81). This investigation led to Puranen's metaphorically returning images of people 'buried in archives' to 'the landscape and culture' from which they had been separated (Puranen, 1993, p. 96). A similar enacting of imaginary homecoming as an attending to or pondering of po-soul appears in Marlene Creates' *The Distance Between Two Points is Measured in Memories, Labrador 1988, Places of Presence: Newfoundland kin and ancestral land, Newfoundland 1989–1991* and, perhaps most radically in terms of its intimacy with Newfoundland's vegetative ecology, *Sleeping Places, Newfoundland 1982.*[5]
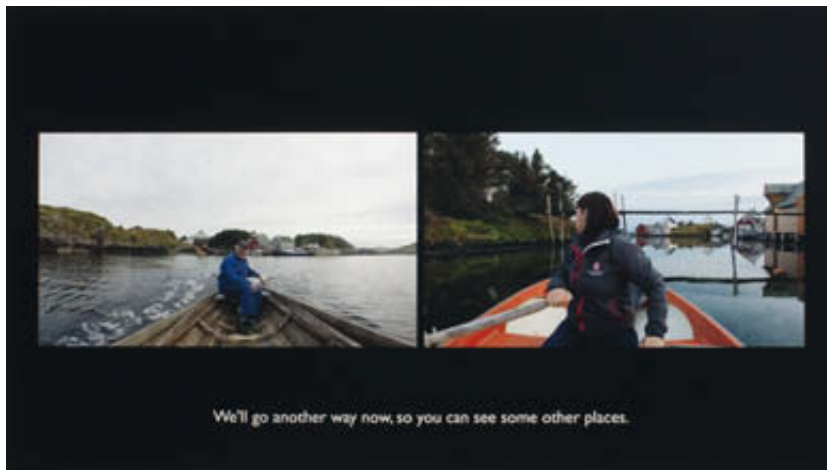
Figure 2. Still from the film Barndomshjemmet Siri Linn Bransoy, soundfilm from the island and waters of Indrevær, Norway, summer, 2015.

'Barndomshjemmet' (childhood home) (Figure 2) is a short film that forms part of a project – *Lines Between Islands*[6] – undertaken by the Norwegian artist/ethnographer Siri Linn Brandsøy and relates to an exhibition on the same topic (Figure 3). Both revolve around her return to Indrevær, a remote island on the west coast of Norway and the childhood home of her maternal grandfather Odd Kristian Indrevær. As such I see it as indicative of the revalidation of notions of po-soul touched on here by deep mapping and related creative practices.

Formally a thriving fishing community with over seventy residents, the island now only supports a single *heilårsbuar* (all-year round resident) Einar Indrevær. The other houses are occupied only for a short period each summer by visitors, many of whom (like Brandsøy herself) are returning to their ancestral place. Travelling between local islands to gather stories, Brandsøy engages with Einar and other island-dwellers in order to reimagine the area's past, present and future. The resulting deep mapping, made up of a multiplicity of related parts, includes Hans Utvær's map of eighty five place names not present on the official map of Utvær, a film with split-screen images and particular emphasis on our listening to local sounds evocative of both past and present, a text by local storyteller Jon Kvalvik, *Synstegrunnen* ("the most-southern shallow"), that remembers times when fish were plentiful and local men had a particular relationship with halibut, and a rich collage of old and new photographic images that evoke complex, and now often tenuous, human relationships. Such a polyvocal work requires both particular care in its presentation and time and attention to view and read its multiple components so as to ponder the immersion in the various connectivities and discontinuities its multiple voices evoke. (Figure 3). Taken literally, this is a highly specific project in terms of its address to place, but it is also one that for me resonates with quite other and disparate works concerned with the po-soul of communities that 'go down to the sea in ships' (Psalm 107:23), from the painter Andrzej Jackowski's *Settlement* (1986) to the consistent nautical thread running through the various works of the Scottish artist Will MacLean.

Figure 3. *Installation: Lines Between Islands, Siri Linn Bransoy deep mapping-installation of "the islands to the farthest west", Cric? Crac! exhibition October 2015, Z-arts Manchester.*

Imagining: the *Lossie Forest* photographs

Finally, I want to return to Gina Wall's account of photographs made in Lossie Forest, one that draws out its 'human shaping and flux, inscribed in the very fabric of the land itself' (2013, p. 241) and haunted, in the sense of becoming 'complicated by other temporalities' (p. 243). Wall's photographs focus on the remains of Second World War coastal defenses in the forest (itself planted in the post-war period), but I see the uncannyness of her images as amplified by other visual elements within them. The relationship between buildings being slowly enveloped by sand barely contained by thin topsoil is apparent in both *Lossie Forest I and II*. This foregrounds the fragility of this dune landscape, where the post-war plantation serves as a defense in the face of a long history of both sea flooding and violent sandstorms. A history that, having shaped this coast in the past, continues to haunt it and, additionally, now hints at new threats posed by increasingly volatile weather systems and rising sea levels.[7]

Consequently, while it is certainly the case that this landscape is 'a trace structure … haunted by both past and future' (Wall, 2013, p. 244), that haunting involves multiple scales and traces, from historically recent fears of invasion to those associated with the geological and climatic *longue durée* logocratic philosophy forgets. At one level the "overlooked" ground of these images invokes particular parallels between the present and the "little Ice Age" of the mid-seventeenth century, when economic and climatic disasters amplified local acts of scapegoating associated with the Europe-wide 'witch panic' (Parker, 2013, p. 10). A period of persecution in Scotland that, as my own research confirms, effectively ended a once-pervasive vernacular belief system that drew on ancient shamanic or animist cosmology and practices. The unstable ground of Lossie Forest thus echoes older instabilities, for example the largely unacknowledged and highly conflicted vernacular history of the early modern inhabitants of this locality. To acknowledge that instability requires that we allow high altitude philosophical insight to meet democratically with witnessing of that history as recounted by texts such as Emma Wilby's *The Visions of Isobel Gowdie: Magic, Witchcraft and Dark Shamanism in Seventeenth Century Scotland (2011)*. Doing so then allows us to grasp something of the extent of what it is that, at ground level, haunts these images of the Lossie landscape. More significantly, perhaps, it indicates how we might develop more ecosophically nuanced understandings of 'north'.

Endnotes

[1] The term "polyverse" is borrowed from the theologian Roger Corless, both Benedictine oblate and Gelugpa Buddhist, who uses it to articulate his experience of the richness of both spiritual lifeworlds without denying the irreconcilable differences between them. For my application of this term see '"Incorrigibly plural"? Rural Lifeworlds Between Concept and Experience' (2015).

[2] This exchange took place on the evening of February 17th 2015, following a poetry reading at Bristol University entitled Poetry, the Land, and Nature.

[3] I follow Rebecca Solnit in favouring a conversational approach in art (2001, pp. 5–6). Monica Szewczyk pinpoints the value of this approach: 'If, as an art, conversation is

the creation of worlds, we could say that to choose to have a conversation with some-one is to admit them into the field where worlds are constructed. And this ultimately runs the risk of redefining not only the 'other' but us as well (2009, p. 3).

[4] See http://mcad.edu/features/reconstituting-the-landscape

[5] See http://www.marlenecreates.ca/works.html

[6] See http://sirilinnbrand.tumblr.com/theproject

[7] In 1694 the majority of the Culbin estate, some twenty miles west of what is now Lossie Forest, was 'completely overwhelmed with sand in a single night' and, shortly afterwards, Nairn and a 'good part of highly productive land' were 'partly destroyed with sandbanks and partly washed away' (Wilby 2011, p. 151), just two instances in a long history of storm events that demonstrate the vulnerability of this stretch of coast. The forelands on this coastline are currently undergoing substantive erosion.

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DEALING WITH COMPLEXITY
– Pupils' representations of place in the era of Arctic Urbanization

Annamari Manninen
& Mirja Hiltunen
University of Lapland, Finland

2

Introduction

This chapter is presenting is presenting a study based on an international art-based action research[1] project entitled *Creative Connections* (2012–2014), that aimed to explore and develop ways of increasing understanding of European identity and citizenship through art among children and young people in primary and upper secondary school. As one part of the research, we focus in this chapter on the question of living in the Arctic in both urban and rural settings. We discuss the pedagogical uses of contemporary art by analyzing blog posts with artwork made by children and young people from two upper secondary schools in Northern Finland in comparison with their European peers. According to the approach of action research, we participated in *Creative Connections* –project in many roles – Hiltunen, as the national coordinator (Finland), supervisor of the art education students conducting research for thesis and for doctoral study in the project, and constructing the theoretical framework for the artwork database. Manninen was researcher in the field constructing the artwork database, and co-operating with the teachers. The study presented in this chapter is one part of ongoing research for the dissertation by Manninen. We ask whether the Arctic rural and urban divide is represented in pupils' work. The purpose of our research question was to draw attention to the changes that penetrate and transform the Arctic and investigate whether those changes are visible in pupils' representations of their daily lives and living environments.

The Artwork Database – collaborative activities and dialogue

The context for our study, the collaborative research project *Creative Connections*, involved six universities and 25 schools in six European countries. The aim of the research project was to explore the themes of identity and citizenship through contemporary artwork and art projects and provide an active inter-country dialogue among pupils of primary and secondary schools, aged 7–18. Researchers and visual art educators from the partner universities located in the UK, Ireland, the Czech Republic, Spain, Portugal, and Finland collabo-

rated with elementary teachers, art teachers, and civil education teachers to explore ways of increasing transnational understanding in European young people and children[2]. The partner countries worked together through digital media by sharing blogs between classes in the different countries. The project also involved experimenting with the use of online translation software to help pupils to communicate in their own languages. ("Creative Connections", 2014; Hiltunen & Manninen, 2015; Manninen, 2015; Richardson, 2014).

The use of contemporary art was in the core of the *Creative Connections* –project. An Artwork Database was created to introduce contemporary art for schools.[3] The artwork examples in the database offered various approaches to art with the themes of personal, local and national identity and "European connectedness" from different perspectives. Students from the six partner countries created their own artworks based on the examples and categories in the artwork database guiding to the topic and different contemporary artistic working methods. Through the images and text produced, students communicated with one another via blogs on the website. (Hiltunen & Manninen, 2015.)

The aim in selecting examples of artwork was to cover the large range of contemporary art from the different materials and techniques. The educational purpose was to introduce the different approaches and ways of working, which artists use today. Besides self-expression and visual reporting, the database presents community art, place-specific, socially engaged art and environmental art as an artistic and art pedagogical strategy (Coutts & Jokela, 2008; Hiltunen, 2010; Adams, 2002; Kester, 2004; Kwon 2002; Lacy, 1995; Neperud, 1995). The database was intended to be used for exploring the different approaches to learning demonstrated by the different roles of art. The database was divided into five categories: Art as Cultural Self-Expression, *Art as Cultural Interpretation, Art as Cultural Reporter, Art as Cultural guide, and Art as Cultural Activism.* (Hiltunen & Manninen, 2015; Manninen & Hiltunen, 2014.)

In this chapter, we explore the use of the contemporary artwork database as it appeared or was mentioned in the pupils' works in blog postings. Blogs have become an essential part of internet publication especially emphasizing the notion that anyone can have a voice. We explored the different representations

Artist's strategi	Private… ...public	Private… ...public	Private… ...public	Private… ...public	Private… ...public
The role of Art	Dimension A *Art as Cultural Self-Expression*	Dimension B *Art as Cultural Interpretation*	Dimension C *Art as Cultural Reporter*	Dimension D *Art as Cultural Guide*	Dimension A *Art as Cultural Activism*
Example Artworks, *Finland*	H.Kurunsaari, 2006, Until the Third and Forth generation		J.Heikkilä, 2004, Mirja by the river	R.Hilunen, 2008-2010, Reshuffle	
		O.Pieski, 2012, Eatnu, eadni, eana (Stream, mother, ground).			L.&P. Kanto, 2004, The favorite place of Maringa Sara (part of the series Favorite Place)

Figure 1. The roles of art. The five categories as foundation for the artwork database with Finnish examples[4].

of rural or urban. Our hypothesis was that, embedded in a large array of cultures, contemporary art challenges establish orthodoxies and reflects on the transition of cultures thus providing a focus for exploring social issues.

Connecting rural and urban schools

One important factor in choosing the participating schools for the research project was based on the idea of connecting rural and urban schools. This premise promotes discussion of the interesting point that, in the current context, the notion of urban and rural seems to be changing rapidly in the Arctic. In this chapter, we ask whether this change is visible in pupils' art works and blogs and if so, how? The focus is on experiences from two schools in Northern Finland and on examining and reflecting upon them, together with three other European schools, while the total number of the participating schools in the project were 25.

The Arctic fringe of Finland, Norway, Sweden and Iceland, as well as parts of Alaska and western Russia, may be characterized as rural regions with

urban and rural-urban enclaves. Accessibility and interaction are keywords in this connection, while the notion of urban fringe areas is also central (see Rasmussen, 2011, p. 28). Rapid changes in livelihood and utilization of natural resources cause challenges. Therefore cultural and eco-social questions relating to Northern and Arctic regions, as well as sustainability, are very relevant from the viewpoint of art education.

Figure 2. Our research environments of Utsjoki, Rovaniemi, and the City of Oulu (Nordic countries map by Jniemenmaa, 2014, edited by Manninen 2016)

Two of the schools that took part in the 'urban' category of project are located in Oulu, which is the fifth largest city in the country with a population of 200,000. *Koskela Primary School*[6] is a large multinational primary school in the city environment. *Oulun Suomalaisen Yhteiskoulun lukio* (OSYK) is an upper secondary school specializing in a broad range of arts, visual arts, drama and media. It has over 40 teachers and c. 600 students, who are participating yearly in national and international projects with many European partners.

The rural schools participating in this study are *Utsjokisuu Primary School* and *Sami Upper Secondary School*, which are located in an area that borders the European Union (Finland) and Norway. Utsjoki is the only municipality in Finland where the native Sámi people are in the majority. Of its 1,200 plus residents, more than half are Sámi. In Finland, the definition of a Sámi is laid down in the Act of the Sámi Parliament and is mainly based on the Sámi language[7]. The Sámi are considered to have the Sámi identity which is defined most often by their language (Valkonen, 2009). For this study, we collaborated with students who live in the Utsjoki village centre, which has a population of c. 600. Eight of the participating pupils were from second and third grade (8–9 years-olds) and 11 were upper secondary school students (16–18 years-olds), all from Sámi speaking classes. The pupils also have common teaching every week with Sirma, a Sámi primary school in Norway.

The co-existence of indigenous cultures with the different ways of life of other Northern nationalities is common in the Northern and Arctic region (Guttorm, 2012). This multi-national and cultural milieu creates opportunities but also socio-cultural challenges that are difficult to access and investigate. The situation also acquires political dimensions in the changing Arctic region. (Rasmussen, 2011.) Our interest was to investigate reflections of the changes in the pupils' work in comparison to the work of their urban and Southern peers. We began by defining the concepts of arctic, urban and rural. These concepts are all connected to the concept of *place*, which is also central in contemporary art and art education (Jokela & Hiltunen, 2014).

Living in the Arctic

Depending on the definition utilized, the Arctic covers between 14–20 per cent of the Earth's surface. We will use the word Arctic as it is used in the Arctic Council and the term "The North" is synonymous with it. ("Arctic Boundaries", 2015; Kullerud, 2009, pp. 234–235.) From our perspective the Northern and Arctic environments are not only approached as geographic and physical environments concepts, but also as spaces and places of symbolic community

created through art and culture (Grace, 2001). Aesthetics has gradually grown to be part of everyday lives and also influence Northern and Arctic being (Naukkarinen, 2012). The emphasis on defining the Arctic is related strongly to different political and economic development interests, which often do not share the same spatiality and temporality. We must continue to improve our understanding of the social transformations that are underway. It is important to recognize the cultural repercussions of climate change and how it impacts on ways of live and identities. Conflicts and struggles between legitimate and dominant ways of understanding the Arctic emerge and are mediated via social representations, not only in local or regional contexts but increasingly on a global scale. Today's world is more depended on the North than ever (Funston, 2009; Hattingh, 2009; Kullerud, 2009; Rasmussen, 2011). How could art and art education contribute to this progress?

Discussions concerning the economies of the North make the traditional livelihoods, emerging industries and present material cultures of the Arctic part of global norms of exchange, making them visual, debatable and highly political. Scientific research and contemporary art are part of this same process. Contemporary art, as well as local and indigenous knowledge and artistic research, are reflecting an attempted definition of place and the North. Thus contemporary art education could be used more in schools to describe, illustrate and produce knowledge on how to perceive, approach and live in the region.

Defining Urban and Rural

The boundary between urban and rural areas is not always clear. In this study we are using the geographical information-based area classification system created by the Finnish Environment Institute and the Department of Geography of the University of Oulu in cooperation with the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and Statistics Finland. This Urban-rural classification framework has been designed to be flexible, which makes it possible to identify an intermediate zone between urban and rural that can be examined as a separate entity. The classification

can be achieved by, for instance, by combining two classes, the peri-urban area and rural areas close to urban areas. (Helminen, 2014):

1. Inner urban area: a compact and densely built area with continuous development.

2. Outer urban area: a dense urban area extending from the boundary of the inner urban area to the outer edge of the continuous built area.

3. Peri-urban area: a part of the intermediate zone between urban and rural, which is directly linked to an urban area.

Each of these agglomerations has a core urban area, which is then divided into an inner and outer urban area. Surrounding the core urban area is a peri-urban area. (Helminen, 2014.) The City of Oulu satisfies the premises for urban areas, where the population centers are agglomerations with more than 15,000 residents[8].

The classification for rural areas is as follows:

1. Local centers in rural areas: Population centers located outside urban areas.

2. Rural areas close to urban areas: Areas with a rural character that are functionally connected and close to urban areas.

3. Rural heartland areas: Rural areas with intensive land use, a relatively dense population and a diverse economic structure at the local level.

4. Sparsely populated rural areas: Sparsely populated areas with dispersed small settlements located at a distance from each other. Most of the land areas are forested. (Helminen, 2014.)

The Utsjoki municipality area is 5,370 square kilometers in size with a population density of 0.24 inhabitants in square kilometer[9]. According to Rasmussen

(2011, p. 29), rural societies are often stereotyped in terms of their strong adherence to farming, fishing, and hunting, and marked with a high regard for their longstanding traditions. In our study, we explored the notions of rural and urban. We were interested in whether these notions are visible and even contrasted with the common perception that the rural perspective may be bleak and without significant options for choice and individual behavior. On the other hand, rural areas may be contrasted with urban areas often typified by alleged impersonal bureaucracy, rationalized specialization, and mechanization. At the same time, urban areas are also characterized by individuals involved in different social networks, with the option to choose between different jobs and the ability to enjoy a greater variety of cultural opportunities. (Rasmussen 2011, p. 29.)

By following the presented classification, the five schools in our sample group were identified to be located in inner urban areas and rural areas close to urban areas with the arctic region presenting the sparsely populated rural area (see the Figure 2).

The School, level, country, quad blog	Participating pupils and their age	City/ Town (inhabitants), location	Urban - rural classification
Escola de **Aver-o-Mar**, **Portugal**, QB 3	21 pupils, 14 yrs	Aver-o-Mar (8700), 2 km north of the city of Póvoa de Varzim (c. 63 000)	**Rural** area close to urban area / Peri-urban area
Larkin Community College, **Ireland**, QB 2	24 + 28 pupils, 12–14 yrs	Dublin (c. 530 000), inner city part	Inner **urban** area
Oulun suomalaisen yhteiskoulun lukio (**OSYK**), Upper secondary school, **Finland**, QB 3	7 students, 17–18 yrs	Oulu (c. 190 000), city center	Inner **urban** area
Utsjoen Saamelaislukio, Sámi upper secondary, **Finland**, QB 2	11 students, 16–17 yrs	**Utsjoki** municipality(c. 1200) village center (c. 600)	Sparsely populated **rural** area /Local center in rural area
Zs Palachova, Middle school, **Czech Republic**, QB 2	Several groups, 12–16 yrs	Usti nad Labem (c. 100 000)	Inner **urban** area

Figure 3. Rural-urban classification of the schools.

Data and methods – picturing the surroundings

We started the analysis with the posts from two quad blogs[10] which included the two Finnish upper secondary schools (urban and rural). They consist of photos of pupils' work and working processes and varying amounts of information written to accompany the image. The analysis proceeded through phases of categorizing, reading, classifying and describing, to close reading and deeper analysis (Rose, 2012). This aimed at a hermeneutic cycle of data interpretation by changing the perspective between entity and details (Gadamer, 2004; Kozinets, 2015, p. 205). The focus on the pupils' representations of urban and rural environments narrowed the closer analysis to the posts in which pupils presented their living surroundings. This left us with 44 posts from five schools (see Figure 2). The posts were divided into five groups according to technique and thus visual resemblance in order to compare their contents and means of expression (see Hall, 1997, p. 236). The Groups were: Videos (3 posts), Collages (15 posts), Photos (7 posts), Drawings & paintings (16 posts) and Socially engaged art (3 posts) (see Figure 4: *The levels of representations of the home place or area in the pupils' work*).

Each post and image was examined more closely for details and deeper meanings using a tabular description (title, author, date, visual information, written information in the image, visual means, captions, notes). Writing down the content of the pupils' works was a guide to closer interpretation of the images. This made it possible to count frequencies aiming at the hermeneutic process of starting with individual pieces of data to build gradually a broader understanding of the phenomenon (Kozinets, 2015, p. 206; Rose, 2012). Close reading and categorization of the data resonated with the categories created for the artwork database and thus found their connections to the approaches in contemporary art practices (see Figure 1: *The roles of art* and Figure 4: *the levels of representations of place in pupils' work*).

As researchers we must be aware of our cultural background when searching for representations in the images (Gadamer, 1997, pp. 472–473). Our position in Northern Finland and visits to Finnish schools during the project made us more sensitive to the cultural meanings that Finnish pupils

present in their work. Yet we are not from a Sámi background and needed to refer a Sámi–Finnish dictionary to understand all the information. We look at the cultural representations in the pupils' work from outside the community and build our interpretation on our existing cultural knowledge. The texts accompanying the posted images played a key role especially in understanding meanings in the pupils' works from other countries (Hall, 1997, p. 228).

Contemporary art approaches and representations of place

With the data analysis, we found a variation of individual, communal and cultural representations of pupils' surroundings (see Figure 4). As Jokela states: "Community and environment cannot be separated from each other when discussing the places of our everyday lives. […] The foundation of the life-world is the network of places, where we operate as actors." (2008, p. 165).

Figure 4. The levels of representations of the home place or area in the pupils' work with examples.

Place	1) Experienced, personal	2) Represented, collective	3) Documented	4) Cultural	5) Issues
Techniques	Drawing, photo	Collage	Video	Painting, drawing	Socially-engaged Art
Urban	*Larkin, IR*	*Larkin, IR*	*Larkin, IR*	*OSYK, FI*	*Zs Palachova, CZ*
Rural	*Utsjoki, FI*	*Utsjoki, FI*	*Utsjoki, FI*	*Aver-o-Mar, PT*	*Utsjoki, FI*
The role of Art	**Self-expression**	**Interpretation**	**Reporter**	**Guide**	**Activist**

The levels of representations of the home place or area found in the pupils' works are: 1) Experienced/personal place, 2) represented place, 3) documented place, 4) cultural/ historical place and 5) conflicted/problematic place. These representations cover the different dimensions of individual to collective, from personal views to cultural representations and those shared by the community. We experience our environment as perceived and personally meaningful emotional content, as social and functional content, and one that evokes cultural significance. Thus, we understand our environment as experiences that we create with our own actions and perceptions. (Berleant, 1997; Jokela, 2008; Jokela & Hiltunen, 2003; 2015; Ingold, 2003).

The different approaches in making artwork produced different representations of place and pupils' relationship to it. The levels of representations resulting from the analysis can be reflected in the matrix of roles of contemporary art (Figure 1: *the roles of art*). The connections, discussed more closely in the following examples, indicate that the contemporary art approaches introduced in the project through the Artwork database have succeeded in inspiring variation in producing representations of a place. According to Relph (1974), we perceive the environment as places; it becomes concrete in places. In the human world of experiences, the places are overlapping, parallel and nested. Emotional ties to and memories of places create the local identity of a person.

1. Experienced place – My place, My home

The Utsjoki students presented their important places or childhood places with drawings and photographs. The Czech pupils processed the photos they took from the neighborhood into line drawings and put them together as a coloring book of their favorite places (see the Figure 5). What is visible in the images is the children's and youth's perspective on places and their importance through action (sandbox, slide, stairs, fishing, swimming). The drawings show more personal relation to the place, the memories, and meanings.

Figure 5. Example page from the Coloring book from our town (Zs Palachova) & Our home place (Utsjoki).

2. Collective and communal place – Postcards from my area

In the collages, most of imagery was taken from the internet and therefore repeats the general representations of the area. Pupils selected the images for their collages, what they wanted to show and what was relevant to them. The Larkin school from Ireland and Sámi upper secondary pupils specifically picture their surroundings by photo-collages. With a quick overview the urban surroundings are dominated by the built environment and important buildings, and the rural students have chosen images of natural landscape, river, fishing, and snowmobiling. The ways of telling these visual stories were similar with the photos and text.

Four of the Irish pupils' collages used identical images: church, convent, their school and the swimming pool (example in Figure 6). The similarity indicates either strong guidance from the teacher or the close interaction between these pupils.

The Utsjoki students' collages (example in Figure 6) are connected by images of the river and salmon fishing (boats, fish, salmon dams). This is understandable because the village is located at the Teno river, the largest and most productive natural state salmon river in Northern Europe ("Teno-info", 2005).
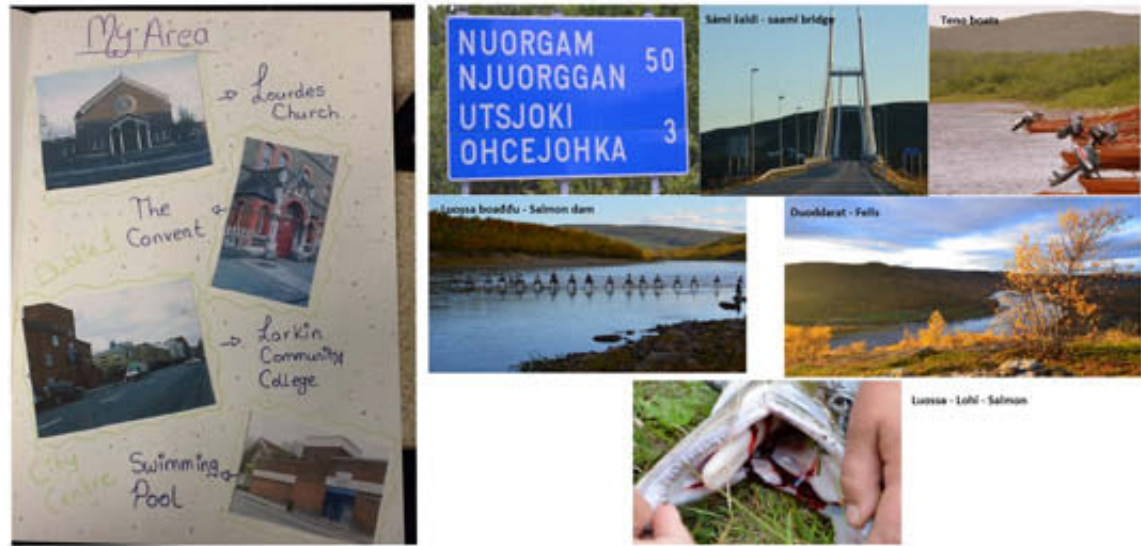
Figure 6. My area D1 (Larkin) & Ohcejohka (Utsjoki).

Besides reindeer herding, fishing has a major role there in the local culture and livelihood. There are also indications to the several languages and cultures in the area – photos of road signs with village names in Finnish and Sámi, Finnish, Sámi and Norwegian flags, and indications to the placement of the village on the Finnish–Norwegian border.

The collages also included stereotypes: Irish music, dance and beer, Sámi reindeers, northern lights and kota, which is a traditional Sámi hut. As one of the Sámi students wrote in her post:

> *I made a new postcard by using pictures from the old postcards. I used pictures what aren't stereotypes of Utsjoki/sámiland, but they are on display in local people lives almost daily.* (In Post: 4. Poastagoarta Ohcejogas. 4.4. Utsjoki.)

The student wants to point out that even though the images might appear stereotypic, they are part of the way of life in the village.

3. Documented place – This is where we are!

The videos capture the actual environment and the authors chose what to show and tell for viewers. Two of the videos were made by students in Utsjoki, where they presented their school. One of the videos was compiled using photographs, information in subtitles and traditional Sámi singing (*joik*[11]) as music. The photos show the position of Utsjoki in the Northernmost corner of Europe, classrooms, swimming hall, library and snowy school yard. The other video is a tour of the school building with three boys guiding, one in Sami, one in English, and one in Finnish. This version is more humorous and also includes music made by the students themselves. The third video comes from Dublin and is made by researcher Tony Murphy. The video shows the city views, traffic and crowds around the school, the school building, and the pupils working in the art lesson.

The students from Utsjoki emphasized what facilities are available to them in one building, from a kindergarten to a swimming hall. The Irish video shows the researcher's view, as objectively presenting the surroundings and class. The post also includes a group photo of the pupils in the end. This led the other pupils watching the video to a misunderstanding of the author, who was actually the researcher visiting the class.

Figure 7. Documented places: Video presentations (Larkin & one of the two from Utsjoki).
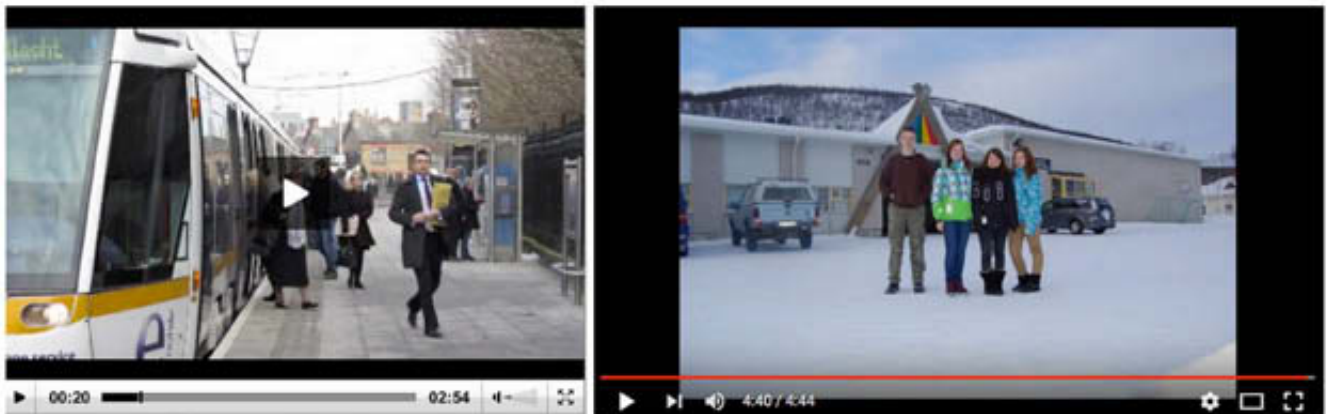
4. Cultural and Historical place – painting and drawing signs

In some of the drawings and paintings, the pupils used more metaphors, symbols, and signs to present their area instead of an actual landscape. These often have cultural and historical meanings connected to their place and symbolic or significant features of the local or national culture related to the environment. These works were also separate from the personal representations of places in drawings of the first category.

Figure 8. Cultural places: Untitled (Aver-o-Mar) & a postcard from Utsjoki (Utsjoki).

The Portuguese pupils connected the artwork examples with the cultural and environmental features of their community. The characteristics of their place become part of the story "who we are". This is explained in a text accompanying a drawing (the Figure 8: Untitled):

> *What are the human figures, in a typical landscape of Póvoa de Varzim, the beach. Are arranged in order to convey the people's Union, their interaction with the sea and the predominant economic activity in this region, fishing. This work aims to make known the area of Póvoa de Varzim to all the people who see it.* (Post: untitled. 14.5. Aver-o-Mar.)

5. Dealing with local issues through socially-engaged art

Socially-engaged practice in the arts is an evolving area that uses community participation, reciprocal organizational relationships, and collaboration in public contexts to promote civic dialogue and investigate pressing issues of our time.

In socially-engaged art projects, the pupils were dealing with conflicts or issues in their area, approaching the issues and making them visible through art. The pupils of Zs Palachova made sculptures of the outcasts and documented them with photos. Teacher reported on their project (related to the figure 9: Homeless):

> "Strange" people live in every city across Europe. We talked about those from our town. Some of them are mentally ill, some of them are just "crazy"– they wanted to be different. Some of them are very poor and maybe therefore they are doing "sad things" (prostitution, drinking alcohol, taking drugs). But they belong to our society too, they belong to our town…--. We created the figures from different materials and then we placed them on their "special places" in the street. (In Post: teacher, Zs Palachova.)

The students of the Sámi upper secondary school had an assignment to plan community art or environmental artwork. One of the two works presented in the blog shows a design for a large painting on the road with the flags of Sámi and Finland side by side. The other plan is an activity for school children to solve a giant puzzle by searching for pieces and forming "*an environmental art picture of Sámi*" with the aim of reinforcing Sámi identity (Figure 9).

The differences between these socially-engaged art projects show the issues in these rural and urban areas. Whereas in the Czech city the teacher wanted the pupils to understand the strange people on the streets and see them as part of their community, the student works in Utsjoki point out the multicultural dimension of their municipality and the struggle to preserve the cultural heritage and identity.

Figure 9. Homeless
(Zs Palachova) & Plan for
community art (Utsjoki).

Urban – Rural –is there a difference?

When analysing the pupils work, It needed to be clear what the urban and rural stereotypes were for us. We expected the rural schools to struggle with poor access to internet and media devices, poverty and their images to reflect innocence, traditional culture, fishing and agricultural elements. We thought that the urban schools would have more up to date media devices and picture busy, crowded, populated, superficial environment and lifestyle.

In the selection of techniques and media, there was no gap between urban and rural. The rural students produced videos and used digital photo editing tools, while urban students chose traditional drawing and painting and vice versa. From the difference in the number of postings or comments, we cannot confidently indicate differences in internet access. Instead the differences lied in the role of teachers and their control over blogging, as in some schools the teacher handled the documentation and posting to the blog due to available technology or security issues. However, this didn't indicate a division

between urban and rural. All the schools also made bold use of contemporary approaches to art making.

In the *Creative Connections* project, we proposed that the pupils and students would apply different contemporary art strategies introduced in the art work database (see Figure 2) and act like as contemporary artist' researchers. In the Utsjoki and Oulu schools, the process of using the artwork database was a good example of contemporary art's ability to promote a reflexive, dialogical space. The variation in representations shows the complexity of rural and urban definitions.

The differences between works by urban and rural pupils come from the environment itself. It is natural that urban pupils depict city views and rural pupils the countryside, because that is what is around them. With a closer look there were also few urban students representations of quiet rural landscape. In one art project from urban Oulu, the student painted a depiction of the melancholic, empty countryside: an old man sitting in front of a small wooden house next to a harvested field in late autumn. In her caption, she points out the depopulation of rural areas. At the same time the representations of rural environments by students at Utsjoki were not empty and sad, but full of activities: they were places for fishing, swimming, playing and snowmobiling. The contrast between the old man giving up and the active young man riding a

Figure 10. Students representations of the rural area: Couldn't anybody love him (Oulu) – Here I am, I and my beloved sled (Utsjoki).

snowmobile pictures the contrast between the assumption of the rural area (and also one representation of it given in the media) and its reality (Figure 10).

While the urban surroundings were defined in pupils' works by district, buildings, streets and monuments, the home place for Sámi students was not only the house, but many square kilometers around, where the forests and river shores were full of places with functions, memories and meanings. Pupils' works from the rural areas depict traditions, culture and the beauty of the surroundings. The relation of the urban pupils to their environment did not show the same attachment in our interpretation of the data. They lacked the sense of community and pride in the roots and culture found in the rural pupils' representations. The pupils of OSYK, an urban Finnish upper secondary, could choose their art project topic. None of them felt a need to present the uniqueness of their home city for the others. This need to tell about "us and our way of life" connected the rural pupils from the communities of Utsjoki and Aver-o-Mar.

Conclusions

The complexity of defining the urban or rural appears in our study in the multiple natures of local identity. One clear indication was the fact that the Czech school from Usti nad Labem was enrolled in the *Creative Connections* project as a rural school by the Czech research team, but was categorized as urban in our study according to the urban-rural classification, with the population density of 1,000 inhabitants per square kilometer. Also, the history of the town and pupils' representations were linked to the urban environment. The students' sense of being rural or urban is not simple. The works show the rural students' connections to bigger cities and urban phenomena through friends, relatives and popular culture. The urban pupils' works, for their part, include representations of rural areas as experienced and important places or as quiet and imagined empty opposites of their surroundings.

The pupils' work shows that with the teachers' guidance and artwork database examples the students have used art for expressing personal

experiences, reporting communal values, regarding their history and traditions and to address local cultural issues. This shows the potential of contemporary art practices to address various phenomena in school work and the encouragement of the collected artwork database for the different approaches. As shown in the students' work, the artistic process can make visible personal and communal values and meanings (connected to places). Processing the values and meanings is a key factor in coping with changes in life. The access to often hidden values and meanings to address contemporary phenomena is the contribution of art education. (Jokela, Hiltunen & Härkönen, 2015b). It can be seen in the way students works showed the invisible functions and meanings of the places in this research project. Our findings also highlight the possibilities and challenges involved in sharing the artwork examples and student's own visual works with peers in international group blogs. Digitalization can bring the art education and international co-operation of schools in remote areas into an equal position and provide fruitful interaction with others.

The representations of places in the pupils' works in our study showed how complex the idea of urban and rural is in the North. Complexity is shown in the Sámi students´ work as pictures of everyday life with strong connection to traditions, nature and community mixed with phenomena of global popular culture and hi-tech. While the Arctic might be thought as the deserted periphery, the young people from the area show they are living in the contemporary society with their everyday life and environment full of activities. What distinguishes them from their urban peers and connects with the rural ones is the sense of belonging to the local community, culture and environment and the strong need to have their voices heard and stories told in the global arena to get their existence and way of life generally known. As eager as the young people from the rural areas in our sampling group appeared to be in presenting their life and area, equally there is a need for an updated and more versatile view on the Arctic (Funston, 2009; Hattingh, 2009; Kullerud, 2009; Rasmussen, 2011). As curator Julie Decker (2012, p. 7) states in her forewords

in *True North. Contemporary art of the circumpolar North* exhibition catalogue when talking the artist' researchers:

Their North is not the romantic North of that belonged to former generations. It is the next North. Their North is connected, pivotal, and conflicted, both rarefied and ubiquitous.

Endnotes

[1] For a definition of arts-based action research, see Jokela, T., Hiltunen, M. & Härkönen, E. (2015a).

[2] The action research involved 27 researchers, 45 teachers and 1,080 pupils ("Creative Connections", 2014).

[3] With the given guidelines, the national teams each proposed about 20 artworks for the database. The Finnish team coordinated the creation of the database and made the final selection of 74 works from almost 120. The aim was to have a balanced selection of topics and different media and nationalities presented. After the selection, the artists were approached for permission to use their work; some refused, so the final version of the database currently has 64 artworks. (Hiltunen & Manninen, 2015).

[4] Artwork examples: 1. H.Kurunsaari: Until the Third and the Fourth Generation 4. O.Pieski: Eatnu, eadni , eana, 5. J.Heikkilä: Mirja by the river, 7. R.Hiltunen: Reshuffle, 10. L.& P.Kantonen: Maringa Saran lempipaikka.

[5] Urbanization as a global trend is shaping human life also in the Arctic. The Current trend of concentration in urban settings has become common for both indigenous and non-indigenous groups. (Rasmussen, 2011, p. 22–24).

[6] There are 260 pupils, of whom 48 are immigrants, with 13 different nationalities, 14 languages, and 28 teachers.

[7] According to the definition, a Sámi is a person who considers him– or herself a Sámi, provided that this person has learnt Sámi as his or her first language or has at least one parent or grandparent whose first language is Sámi. ("Sámi in Finland", 2014).

[8] Minimum size threshold 5,000 inhabitants for urban area. ("Urban-rural typology", 2016).

[9] A population density threshold of an urban area is 300 inhabitants per km^2. ("Urban-rural typology", 2016).

[10] Quad blog as a term refers to the number four, which is the number of schools/ classes participating in one quad blog.

[11] Joik (or Yoik) is a unique form of cultural expression for the Sámi people and can be understood as a metaphor for Sámi traditional culture itself. Joik is a traditional form of song of the Sámi people of the Nordic countries. In English the word is often used to refer to all types of traditional Sámi singing. As an art form, each joik is meant to re- flect or evoke a person, animal, or place. The yoik both reflects and helps to reinforce the Sami cultural values of community and cooperation. (Burke, 2016).

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PLACE APART:
Scotland's north
as a cultural industry of margins

Kathryn Burnett
University of the West of Scotland, UK

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This discussion explores artistic imagining of Scotland's highlands and islands as a place both 'north' and 'on the margin'. Cultural representation of Scotland's highlands and islands and processes of communicating these representations are subject to ongoing interrogation and debate. What and how remote communities, cultures and places are represented through art is undoubtedly informed by debates on survival, sustainability and responses to marginal status. The account presented here examines some of these themes from a Scottish perspective, including how art informs cultural production and creative economies in and of Scotland's remote communities.

Arguably it is the *lack* of community that has been celebrated historically in Scotland's visual art. Tropes of exile, absence, or emptiness abound in 'North British' and Scottish 'highland and island' as a "place apart" imagining. Indeed the conscious situating of art in the 'empty' or 'beyond' spaces of remote rural Scotland informs the narratives of artists living and working 'in the north' (Harling Stalker & Burnett, 2016; Burnett & Harling Stalker, 2016). The representation of Scotland as a 'north' place, and most especially the *Gàidhealtachd*,[1] of marginal communities and cultures, at the *periphery* of the British Isles is well documented (Anderson, 1997; Maclean & Carrell, 1986; Maclean & Dorgan, 2002; Morrison, 2003; Mulholland, 2003; Macdonald, 2000, 2010; Blaikie, 2010; Richardson, 2011; MacLeod, 2012). Art depicting Scotland's highland and islands is dominated still by tropes of remote, empty wilderness and romantic 'highlandism' imagery albeit moderated by contemporary critique and response not least the "cryptic cultural landscapes" that emerge from such legacies (Macdonald & Macdonald, 2009). Empty landscape and 'places apart' depictions are political in Scotland, however, informed as they are not least by the inequity of land ownership and continued concerns over cultural elitism (and imperialism) informing the narratives (artistic, tourist, visual and enterprise) of Scotland's remote rural spaces.

Critical endeavours examine the legacies and sustainable futures of art, culture and creative practice within Scotland's northern communities, as well as revisit what and how aspects of Scotland's 'north' inform national and international accounts of Scotland more generally.

Figure 1. Isle of Canna, Inner Hebrides. Once Canna had a population of just over 430, the island now is home to less than 30 people. Sustainability and survival is a central concern for small remote island communities such as this in Scotland. Photo: Kathryn A. Burnett.

Art and the embodied narratives of individual artistic practice inform and refract ideas of Scotland's north as 'other' and as margin. In this regard a number of excellent inter-disciplinary endeavours have sought to bring greater focus to the relationship between culture, community and the nature of communicative practice in Scotland. These include *An Leabhar Mòr*, The Great Book of Gaelic (Maclean & Dorgan, 2002), and the *WINDOW to the West – Towards a redefinition of the visual within Gaelic Scotland (2005–2010)* project, a collaboration between the Visual Research Centre of Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art (University of Dundee) and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig (University of the Highlands and Islands Millennium Institute). *The Northern Communities* project at Heriot Watt University,[2] and Gray's School of Art's *On the Edge: developing the role of the artist in society* research[3] are two more examples.

Configuring a relationship between artists and artistic practice within Scotland's northern margins invites reflection on what is culturally shaped and formed in, of, and outwith these communities, spaces and places. *Relate North* 2016

extends these commentaries further within Scotland where the communicative acts of artistic practice and its education engage and bring into relief or indeed negate the bounded and shifting aspects of what contains and what confirms 'us' as ourselves and the 'us' of our neighbours beyond (Jokela, 2008; Macdonald, 2010).

Scotland's sense of its boundary as a community is subject to a long history of complex interrogation, challenge and assertion by social and political scientists (Cohen, 1982; 1987; McCrone, 2002; McCrone & Bechofer, 2015). Artists and cultural intellectuals offer their own interrogation (White, 2006; Moffat & Riach, 2008; 2014). How we present our art as a nation is an important aspect of how we educate and collectively seek to examine our sense of culture and arts via channels of communication and media (Blain & Burnett, 2008; Blaikie, 2010) This includes the synergies between art, cultural expression and the economy of remote margins. Scotland's evolving yet inevitably complex relationship to the land is both tangibly and intangibly crucial to note in this regard.

Less than 500 people own more than half of Scotland's land. Such stark inequity despite important moves to empower local communities more widely across Scotland remains at the heart of how Scotland's places are accessed, represented, and developed. Art, culture and design are central to this empowerment. Furthermore, issues of asset ownership and governance underpin creative representation and cultural sustainability more widely and education must continue to play a key role in questioning this (Anderson, 1997). Currently debates on how we sustain *empower* and *engage* Scotland informs much civic and governance agenda. The role of the arts and culture in articulating, embodying and remaking communities is widely and vigorously debated and performed, not least through Scotland's tertiary education sector community partnerships.

Margins provide Scotland with rich resources for innovation, learning and shared practice not least to explore, enhance and interrogate the industries of art, culture and arts education (MacDonald, 2012a; 2012b; Coutts, 2014). Scotland is an acutely *historical* nation: that is, our arts and culture continue

to position and challenge against backdrops of iconic narratives and images of pasts and what new and alternative futures are possible. What past and what futures are key questions for art education and practice in Scotland not least in terms of responding to challenges of sustainability, engagement, and inclusion. *Who* represents *us* to ourselves and to others remains a key debate for Scotland as we contend with our complex peripheral situation to the "rest of the UK". Furthermore, art, design and cultural expression *within* the margins must negotiate tensions, complexities and complicities of difference locally, including the role of cultural elites or shifting policy demands, for example. Margins and the identities and communities of peripheral places nevertheless must work hard to counter their reification as places 'static', 'past' and singular. Educating to bring forth expression from *within* communities for all remains a key aspiration. A focus for local communities to perhaps (re)claim and participate more fully in art echoes Stöckell (2015, p. 57) who states: "If we want art to speak to us and others, people and communities, it has to have such elements for narratives that people feel they can use in their own narratives."

Questioning what is community and who or what might speak for 'us' is an important focus for all who inform and participate in arts and cultural development, creative economies and identity expression.

As with the salmon swimming upstream to their source, Scottish artists, it is often contrived, *connect* back to a sense of origin. Often Scottish narratives are therefore of 'us' and of 'belonging'. This may well be something good, to be celebrated, yet it is also suggestive of ethnic, primordial and potentially problematic essentialist ties. Baillie and Mulholland (2011) critique Richardson (2011) in this very regard. Here Neil Mulholland describes the inherent tensions of defining 'Scottish art' as an act of ethnicity:

> *NM: [on Richardson] He's chosen works and artists that he considers exemplars of 'Scottish art'. That's problematic on so many levels. […] Exemplars of what we might ask? Of their time and place? How can anyone be certain of this, that we have chosen the correct canon? We can't convincingly argue that some artists (those included) are any more exemplars of 'Scottish' art than others (those excluded). To do that we would need to have an ethnic, possibly essentialist, understanding of the 'Scottishness' of art, as if there were somehow degrees of 'Scottishness' by which we might evaluate matters. This act of territorialisation is Arnoldian, Leavisite even. It implies that the ethnic constructions of 'Scottishness' that we find in and around art, imaginaries that need to be deconstructed, are the method by which we should judge this art.* (Baillie & Mulholland, 2011, p. 4.)

And indeed as David McCrone (2002) and others suggest we must interrogate identity more fully as something 'made, not born': there can be no 'essentialist' ethnicity of Scottishness. As with Doreen Massey's observation of place being a 'constellation of processes' (1994, p. 156; 2005, p. 141) our cultural expressions of community identity should not be predicated on essentialising tendencies of 'Scottishness'. In turn, those who make and educate through 'Scottish art' need not necessarily find themselves defined by, or required to answer to an iden-

tity as *Scottish*. Communicating this through various artistic media and narrative forms is encouraged and is largely embraced but ideas of who speaks for margins (and how) is not without its challenges. Furthermore, the very nature of policy focus has generated a counter effect whereby particular places, communities and experience are at risk of becoming the new hegemonic iconography of art making within Scotland's margins to the exclusion of less fashionable (or perhaps less critically 'valid') art practice, experience and expression.

In *Culture and Society* Raymond Williams (1958) wrote that communication is "not only transmission: it is reception and response"; furthermore, he fostered an embracing of the global reference of our shared lived experience in terms of culture and communication (Couldry, 2000). Williams offered his observations on culture, on community and indeed communication from a consciously negotiated position from and of the margins. A working-class Welshman, Williams become a towering figure of Western political and educational intellect, declaring himself 'Welsh European' and proffering the necessity of hybrid identity that Scotland not only recognises but increasingly (if not always successfully) embraces as the default position (McCrone, 2002; Blain & Burnett, 2008). What it means to be in, and of Scotland following 2014's independence referendum, or to be or not to be "European" following the 'Brexit' vote in 2016, are important questions. It becomes incumbent upon all of us in Scotland to reappraise the various boundaries of community that frame us, as well as the nature of communication and culture that appear to give shape and form to such expressions. How we situate ourselves to a sense of place, and of expressions of identities, cultures and practices in places remains ideologically charged (Massey, 1994; 2005) and is not without controversy (Gunn, 2016).

Artistic expression and creative endeavour is inherent to this articulation process. As Williams noted, communication is key. The visualising and transmission, the reception and response, frames through the interplay of *otherness* (Blain & Burnett, 2008). Communicating Scotland as a 'north' place (or not) is an ideological act as: it is by nature an act of situated debate and negotiation. As Massey suggests we must embrace more fully the contested nature of the qualities of 'place':

What is special about place is not some romance of a pre-given collective identity or the eternity of the hills. Rather, what is special about place is precisely that throwntogetherness, the unavoidable challenge of negotiating a here-and-now (itself drawing on a history and geography of then and theres); and a negotiation which must take place within and between both human and nonhuman.
(Massey, 2005, p. 140.)

Consequently one of the singular achievements of art education is embracing community and culture as complexity, and to offer accessible tools for all to negotiate ideas of the 'pre-given' and the *throwntogetherness* of history and geography.

Scotland as a territory of 'the north' is a complex character dominated throughout modernity by its charged relationships and socio-political axis with the 'south'. The nation as place, physical elements and expressive experience dances between a differential realm of otherness – the remote, the margin,

*Figure 3. East coast of the island of Benbecula, Outer Hebrides. The remote rural remains a working environment for many different sectors.
Photo: Kathryn A. Burnett.*

the lost – and an increasingly confident claim to certainties and the necessary connectivity of modern communities via culture expression and its communication. Within this Scottish expression of north, remote rural spaces and perhaps most especially islands and coastal margins, figure greatly in both literal and littoral form. Ideas of Scotland's north as *Gàidhealtachd*, but also complexly as Scots, as Norse, and Celtic are established tropes with powerful imagery and narrative forms evolved through history yet interpreted freely and variously through media, locally and globally. Contesting what is our 'north' is an important unfolding identity project for Scotland as too is our sense of the 'margin'. Kenneth White offers a *geopoetic* commentary of "the Atlantic edge" and most especially the margins of coast:

> *Geopoetics breaks familiarity, and recognizes a strangeness. Beginning with the lie of the land, remaining close to the elements, it opens up space and it works out a new mindscape. Its basis is a new sense of land in an enlarged mind.* (White, 2006, p. 52.)

A sense of communities and culture both bounded and enriched by margins of land (mountains and glens) and water (lochs, coasts and oceans) is core to Scotland's visual imagining and its oral cultural traditions. The interplay across arts in Scotland is valuable not least within education where policy actively beds in practice to continually inquire, empower and 'open up' both mindscapes and landscapes (Coutts, 2014; Jokela & Coutts, 2014; 2015). The Caithness writer Neil Gunn spoke of an eternal landscape of his beloved north Scotland but so too of the landscape of self and the potential of consciousness: of the need to 'see lovingly' one's world as it is in the moment of itself (Hart & Pick, 1981; Pick, 1991). The poet Sorley MacLean, *Somhairle Macgill-Eain*, writing in his native Gaelic, offers a politically potent frame of reference for the deep visuality and tonality of our Scottish north, most especially but not exclusively of the *Gàidhealtachd*. MacLean's poetry continues to offer artistic inspiration of place and people, a historical internationalist frame of cultures and communities both sustained and denied. Crucially MacLean through his

poetry and prose centred the 'north' experience of both the *Gàidhealtachd*, and Scotland itself within Europe and beyond, as a culture and community deeply *connected* through time in oral tradition, landscape but also *across* the international experience of community and cultural struggle and survival elsewhere.

Figure 4. Pictured here is Scotland's National Gaelic college, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. Located on the Isle of Skye it is a University of Highlands and Islands campus. The original Gaelic college opened in the early 1970s and spearheaded a critical turn in the renaissance of Gaelic language and culture. In the foreground is Will MacLean and Arthur Watson's culpture, Crannghal. Photo: Kathryn A. Burnett.

No contemporary account of what informs a sense of Scotland's imagery not least that of the north could ignore the impact of the poetry of Sorley MacLean. Undoubtedly an artist of words and the imagery of words, MacLean's capacity to reflect the doubts and passions of his own time provides a restorative conduit to the re(generations) that follow: "A large part of Somhairle Macgill-Eain's greatness as a poet lies in his restorative work: this can be properly celebrated as a triumph of regeneration" (MacInnes, 1986, p. 138). Community and cultural rooting in place was deeply important to MacLean's work, as the 2011 centenary celebration – *Ainmeil Thar Cheudan* so richly explored (Bissell, 2011). Recently Moffat and Riach (2014) revisited the legacy of poets and artists such as Maclean in their treatise on the relationship between art and independence but also on knowledge and education. Following Beer (2014) on the Canadian landscape imaginary, we recognise how we too in Scotland continually look to our 'conflicted assemblage' of both traditional and contemporary art forms; questioning and destabilising through praxis the processes of informing and elucidating whether it be through cultural exchange events, residencies[4] or indeed critical articulation and debate. It is helpful to therefore observe that in Scotland the creative and cultural industries are championed as solutions to challenging economic and social legacies and art is increasingly recognised as the praxis of much sustainability and solution.

Artists at Scotland's margins: 'territories of difference'

Artists and arts practice in communities generate economic effects. High profile accounts of the artist in the margins assist in this. These Scottish edges of north Atlantic Europe have fascinated many, including German filmmaker Werner Kissling (Russell, 1997), the celebrated American photographer Paul Strand (both to the Hebrides), Joseph Bueys (Rainbird, 2005; Gibson, 2010; Macdonald, 2010) and American artist Jon Schueler to Mallaig, and many others to the 'Highlands'. In each case the artists offer a mapping effect of what is considered of value and an asset to the place, people and locale to which artists are drawn or indeed return: this adds value to each marginal space. As with Schueler

(Salvesen and Cousineau, 1999; MacKenzie, 2006; Coburn, 2016), Strand was *drawn* to the 'northness' of Scotland's islands and west coast (Stange, 1990; Macdonald, 2010; Lyden, 2015). Strand's *Tìr a' Mhurain* collection remains one of the singular iconographic statements of a visualising language of the Hebrides, of Scotland's remote rural modernity[5] and a creative response to its tensions:

> "… *in the 1950s the crofters of South Uist were witnessing change to their own remote community, most notably with the siting of a missile rocket range on the island. While Strand opposed this facility and indeed his portraits may be seen as a protest against the Cold War, the works should not be read as propaganda. They are part of a life-long quest of his to capture something of humanity's essential character focusing on communities whose precarious existence was under threat from the modernising world. His photographic journeys took him all over the world—America, Mexico, France, Italy, Egypt, Romania, Hungary, Spain—but in considering the Tìr a' Mhurain work, literally and figuratively, all roads led to Scotland.*" (Lyden, 2015, np.)

Engagement with the artistic responses of the past remains imperative if re-visions of Scotland's remote and rural places of the north are to recognise current contexts as historically contingent. Art and cultural praxis offer voice, innovation, and interrogation of the ideas of place. Art as knowledge are accounts (narratives) – exhibition, study and archive – offering insight to artists in and of places, speaking of and for communities (Burnett & Grace, 2009; Stöckell, 2015).

In Scotland's northern places – the highlands and islands region – there is a confidence of debate and expression within art and education networks and evidence of sustained art-making within all remote and rural communities. Policy is often mapped to regional structures in this regard, not least the multi-campus *University of Highlands and Islands* (UHI) but also *Highlands and Islands Enterprise* (HIE) the agency for economic, cultural and social development. White (2006, p. 59) is dismissive of the term 'region' for the highlands and

islands of north Scotland, preferring in 'place of region, to speak of territory'. Territory is distinguished from region, according to White (2009) by its 'aura' and its 'relationship to totality, to the cosmos if you like'. White quite rightly alludes to the overly imperialistic histories of regionalising places into administrative spaces and the highlands and islands of Scotland undoubtedly have experienced considerable economic, social and cultural policy brutality in this regard (Burnett, 2011; Hunter, 1976/2000). White has argued that regionalism (as the necessary outcome an 'administrative region') fosters an *ideology of identity* that replaces creative energy, and will 'drag along with it a harping on history, and a cultural localism attached to local figures simply because they are local, interpreting their limitations as the very characteristics of the region' (White, 2006, p. 59).

But places and their people are in their everyday ordinariness (to return to Raymond Williams) *unavoidably* defined by administrative function. Art and cultural expression are entwined with White's aura of territory. Territory too is nonetheless complex and complicit. For artists who live and work in Scotland's highlands and islands the creative energies of place are undoubtedly central to the *communion* with place. The regional entities that underpin the structural realities of functioning communities *for all* in Scotland's north are nonetheless critical to the current requirements of ongoing sustainability agenda. It is in the very 'globalised localism' of place and people that perhaps the more resilient, creative, empowered and confident artistic responses from within and *with* communities have emerged.

Scottish art: community, culture and communication

Scotland as community and as place is sustained through art (Zeiske, 2013). The contextual reference of community in and of art is recognised as variously important and controversial in Scotland. It is nonetheless useful to suggest that it is with a view from and within the margin – the periphery – that awareness of the inequities of representation and of expression but also access and audience are brought into relief (Burnett & Grace, 2009; Permar, 2013).

Figures 5 and 6. Creative work is expressive of the energies of a place and cultural practice engages within and beyond the communities of remote and rural north Scotland. Photos: Kathryn A. Burnett.

Finding a connect with the arc of communities and cultures past and present was an important driver for the *WINDOW to the West – Towards a redefinition of the visual within Gaelic Scotland (2005–2010)* project, as was a smaller undertaking in Uist with the *Island Cultural Archives* project (Burnett, 2007). Speaking at the Sorley Maclean centenary event on Skye, Professor of Scottish Art, Murdo Macdonald repositioned the depth of articulation of Scotland's northern and north western communities as cultures both marginal yet powerfully connected to Europe and beyond. Macdonald has commented more widely on the need to recognise the *complicities* within which art and its education are place in Scotland:

> "*I think one of these unconscious agendas is an unwillingness to fully accept the degree to which Gaelic culture has been suppressed by colonial techniques ranging from military intervention to the appropriation of land to education policies. No one likes to accept complicity in acts of cultural destruction, but most of us are indeed complicit. So particularly with respect to indigenous cultures – and this applies throughout the world, not just to the Gaidhealtachd – it is easier to stereotype and deny than it is to work out one's relationship with what has been suppressed*". (Murdo Macdonald interviewed; Coburn, 2007.)

Political events such as voting in referenda can 'charge' a scene and in Scotland there is little doubt that artists and creative endeavour actively mobilised around 2014's Independence Referendum as to what was and could be Scotland's culture, ideas of community and the nature of the communication. Art finds itself closely entwined with policy: Cape Farewell's Sea Change (*Tionndadh na Mara*) was one such example of engaging the sustainability agenda (Haley, 2011). A programme of research and art making across Scotland's western and northern isles sought to promote the professional development, capabilities, connectivity and ambitions of Scotland's creative practitioners and organisations by looking at "how artistic and other communities could potentially find common ground to interrogate climate change and broader sustainability concerns".[6] A reconfiguring of the communities of craft and the ecologies of past has led to a celebration of various arts knowledges phenomena (Heim, 2015). This offers a welcome interface of both our communities of time and space (that is 'places') and of artistic and educational practice (that is 'cultures') where materials and knowledges are reconvened as part of a new cultural landscape of art, policy and enterprise (Jokela & Coutts, 2014; 2015).

Industries of sustainability: community, culture and communication

Creative arts and cultural heritage economies are important to Scotland (Danson & Burnett, 2014; MacDonald, 2012a) such as industries of 'creativity' in and of the marginal spaces of Scotland's north.[7] Stuart MacDonald (2012b, p. 125) makes the following observation:

> "In a chapter on Illich looking at the wider economic context, Schroyer (2009) depicts the vernacular space as the sensibility and rootedness that emerges from shaping one's own space within the idea of the commons and local-regional reciprocity, and is central to those places and spaces where people are struggling to achieve regeneration and social restorations against the forces of economic globalization."

Figure 7. Uist machair. Paul Strand's collection of Hebridean photographs takes its name from the name given to Uist, Tir a'Mhurain – the land of bent grass. Photo: Kathryn A. Burnett.

Our global localism is acknowledged here as we reflect on what communities and aspects of culture are 'lost' as others are brought into being through new expressions of form and different boundaries of meaning not least in our highly digital, increasingly marketised art economies of the margins. Communicating such engagement is powerfully reliant on a media world to bring and build audience. Today, broadcast communication and media is negated from the everyday activity of artistic practice yet the very considerable shift to the digitally mapped landscape of artistic and cultural workers more generally across Scotland offers impressive global reach, despite material limitations of remoteness (Burnett & Harling Stalker, 2016; Harling Stalker & Burnett, 2016). Nevertheless, questions should be asked of the nature of the digitally and consumerist mapped landscape of artistic presence and to what end? It is incumbent therefore to critique past and current tendencies for "place apart" creative narratives across all channels of communication including our educational praxis.

Policy is central to Scotland's sustainable artistic heartbeat. Within the communities and spaces of Scotland we contend with inequities of wealth, of access and of representational voice:

> *"Creativity has become a cornerstone of national policy in Scotland not only as an opportunity to build confidence, develop knowledges and foster expression and inquiry but also as a strategic commitment to undertake transformation through harnessing Scotland' creative resource across all communities: Just as crucial is the impact on people's lives and those of their communities. Untapped potential is unforgivable human wastage on a grand scale. That potential, released and harnessed, is nothing less than transformative."* (Wishart, Creative Scotland, 2013.)

Policy is also core to nuancing of arts educational practice. Artists and the communicative acts of art in all forms remain at the heart of how we relate to these ideas. A sense of 'north' and the interplay of 'margin' can inform Scot-

land's sense of this consciousness and it may offer artists and art educators a comparison for the future here in Scotland as well as to inform accounts of small nations creative 'margins' elsewhere (Danson & Burnett, 2000; Danson & Burnett, 2014; Burnett & Danson, 2016). Scotland has embraced connectivity with Europe not least with northern European partners in terms of culture as transformative (Coutts & Jokela, 2008) and arts more generally informing sustainable remote rural development. Ideas of what are marginal peripheral communities and places of Scottish – European connectivity has made an informed difference not least in terms of funding and shared good practice but also in terms of offering interpretative dialogues with place and people. Exploring aspects of 'north' throughout the region have both explicitly and implicitly exposed our cultural sites as an opportunity for increasingly communicative sharing (not least through digital media and literacies) but also instances of refraction of what remains different or disconnected here in Scotland from our northern neighbours elsewhere.

Conclusion

Understanding histories of Scotland's arts and crafts in terms of articulation of community will inevitably require an incomplete charting through what is positioned as dominant accounts and narratives of certain practices, places, individuals and indeed portrayals. The co-production of knowledge in this process has become one of the more attractive and welcomes shifts within research communities and academia more generally. Projects are encouraged to work in collaboration with non-academic gatekeepers of knowledges and practice and in doing so restore a greater sense of a shared mapping of Scotland's arts and craft histories and indeed current activities. Examining arts and crafts of the past today via education and research projects communicates an appreciation of place and people. Furthermore, dialogues open up over what has been arguably 'lost' within our national narratives revealing how certain dualisms have loomed large not least ideas of 'North' and 'South' and of 'urban' and 'rural'. Through a questioning of certain romanticisation, 'indi-

vidual' artists and artisans are better understood as networked communities of identity and practice. It might also be argued that examining further the histories of artistic and craft practice in economic, social and cultural context, will reveal too the vagaries of gender, ethnicity and most certainly the material conditions and dispositions of people variously making, accessing and experiencing art in Scotland's margins.

Our physical north as lived and worked community spaces are continually resisting and responding to both natural and human forces of change. These spaces are reimagined through art and industry not least by the very forms and materiality of communication and cultural technologies variously available. The transmission and representational practice – our *communication* – of 'seeing lovingly' the contemporary spaces and communities across Scotland's north are made available and brought into being through art and cultural media and ongoing tensions and delights are noted. Creative and cultural economies inform and are the art world; they do not sit beyond it. Artists and educators in and of 'the north' stimulate connectivity across all Scotland's margins engaging communities locally and globally with an ever increasing informed assembling and sharing of old and new aspects of cultural form.

Endnotes

[1] *Gàidhealtachd* is the Scottish Gaelic term that refers to the communities and culture of the Scottish highlands and islands that are recognised as historically Gaelic-speaking and the heartland of Gaelic tangible and intangible culture.

[2] See work taking place in Heriot Watt University's Intercultural Research Centre, for example. Available online at: http://irc.hw.ac.uk/research/groups/groups-heritage/northern-communities.html

[3] On the Edge (2001–present) is a research programme at Gray's School of Art, Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen. Available online at: https://ontheedgeresearch.org/

[4] For a global comparison see 'From Surviving to Thriving: Sustaining Artist Residencies', Alliance of Artists Communities (2012). Available online at: http://www.artistcommunities.org/sustainability

5 Paul Strand's photographs have become iconic of a 'northern Scottish' way of life, and most especially of the Hebridean north west but they also speak to institutional tensions over the choices made within Scotland and as to what 'is' art of Scotland as well as how might artists motives be examined.

6 Various examples of the Cape Farewell Sea Change creative project can be viewed online at: http://www.capefarewell.com/latest/projects/sea-change.html

7 See for example the research work undertaken within the University of the Highlands and islands (UHI), Centre for Rural Creativity initiative. Available online at: https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/research-enterprise/centres/centre-for-rural-creativity

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"TRADITION THAT DOES NOT EXIST":
wood painting of Komi-ziryans
(ethnographic descriptions
and methods of artistic enskillement)[1]

Irina V. Zemtsova
Institute of Culture and Art,
Syktyvkar State University named after Pitirim Sorokin

Valery Sharapov
Institute of Language, Literature and History,
Komi Science Centre, Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences

An analysis of review works by Russian ethnographers and culturologists on peasant wood painting in the European north (Bernshtam, 2008; Sheleg, 1992), and in the region of Volga and Ural (Baradulin 1987; Baradulin, 1988), shows that the territory of the Komi Republic outside the Pechora river basin is the least studied area in this huge region. This becomes particularly clear if one takes a look on the attempts to map the folk painting traditions these works contain (Taranovskaya, 1968).

Furthermore, throughout the 20th century, Russian ethnographers and specialists in folk arts generally agreed that the Komi people lacked any original tradition of wood painting. Despite painted wooden items that were found in the Komi area throughout 20th century, most researchers believed these were adoptions from other ethnic groups. They believed that these items were either imported and bought from fairs or the local craftsmen who produced them just imitated decorative designs they have seen among other peoples (see, for example Bernshtam, 2008; Belitser, 1985, pp. 45–343 or Sheleg, 1992, p. 140).

It is remarkable that famous Finnish ethnographer U.T Sirelius ignored original peasant wood paintings during his fieldwork in Komi villages of Vychegda River in 1907 despite producing a detailed description of Komi woodcarving. The great specialist in material cultures of Finno-Ugric peoples was interested in discovering the "authentic Komi traditions" and disregarded wood painting as "a latest innovation" which was borrowed by the Komi from the Russians (Sirelius, 1907, pp. 175–177 & pp. 186–187).

At the same time, ethnographic facts recorded as early as the beginning of 20th century in Ust-Sysolskij and Yarenskij Uyezds *(district)* of the Vologda Province showed that the Komi people of Vychegda and Udora regions did have an original tradition of wood painting. These facts have been collected in 1889 by W.W. Kandinsky, a student of Law of the Moscow University, in villages of River Vychegda (Kandinsky, 1889, pp. 102–108; Kandinsky, 2008, pp. 373–393). The fieldwork materials collected in 1911 by Hungarian ethnographer Benedikt Baratosi-Balog (Barátosi-Balogh, 1931) in Udora region also contain evidences of original wood painting's existence (Forshungriesen, 1911, p. 30)

W. W. Kandinsky, who was later to become a famous artist, has recorded some of his impressions of Vychegda wood painting in his fieldwork diary. Later he incorporated elements of traditional Vychegda wood paintings into some of his artistic works (Weiss & Kandinsky, 1995, pp. 10–26; Aronov, 2010, pp. 44–94), (Figures 1–4).

Figure 1. Vychegda wood painting: Distaff. Beginning of 20th century. Kerchomja village, Ust-Kulom Region, Komi Republic. Flax scutcher. Beginning of 20th century. Don village, Ust-Kulom Region, Komi Republic. Photo made by V. Sharapov, 1989. Compare to "Rider St. Georg" by W.W. Kandinsky, 1915 (http://www.wassilykandinsky.ru/work-100.php).

Figure 2. Concentric color circles form traditional Vychegda wood paintings. Ust-Kulom Region, Komi Republic. From the funds of the National Museum of the Komi Republic. Photo made by V. Sharapov, 1989–1997. Compare to "Squares with Concentric Circles" by W.W. Kandinsky, 1913 (http://www.wassilykandinsky.ru/work-370.php)

Hungarian ethnographer Baratosi-Balog took a number of photographs of wood paintings in Udora region. He also bought a collection of painted wooden items and brought it to Hungary (Barátosi-Balogh, 1931, pp. 43–57). Unfortunately, most of these photographs and the material collection, which are nowadays preserved in funds of the Ethnographical Museum in Budapest, have not been published and remain unknown to the international scientific community. The single exception is the few examples of the unique painting on birch bark, which were collected by Baratosi-Balogh on Vashka River in 1911 and published in 1977 (Racz, 1977, pp. 65–66).

It was only in 1940 and 1950 that a systematic research on traditional Komi folk wood painting was initiated by Vera N. Belitzer from the Institute of Ethnography, Academy of Science of the USSR (Moscow) and Marina A. Braun

from the Ethnographic Museum of the USSR (Leningrad). These researchers recorded and described in detail the complexity of painted pottery and spinning wooden tools. They also created a unique museum collection of painted wooden distaffs and brakes from Vychegda. The composition and stylistic peculiarities of the so-called Vychegda folk wood painting were described in detail in 1960 and 1970 by Nadezhda S. Koroleva from the Research Institute of Art Industry in Moscow and Lubov S. Gribova from the Komi Scientific Center Academy of Science of the USSR in Syktyvkar (Zemtsova & Sharapov, 2014, pp. 119–125).

In comparison to the Vychegda folk wood painting, the folk wood painting tradition of river Vashka is still rather poorly studied. In the ethnographic literature of late 1980s, Komi peasant wood painting of Udora region is mentioned only in passing (Taranovskaya, 1968, pp. 58–59; Zherebtsov, 1972, p. 111; Gribova, 1980, p. 59). The only place one could see Udora wood paintings were school museums in villages of river Vashka. In the 1990s, several examples of this painting were exhibited in the National Museum of the Komi Republic and published in the illustrated Atlas of the Komi Traditional Folk Arts (Gribova et al. 1993). The first publication describing the decorative style and compositions of the wood painting of Udora Old Believers in the context of the artistic tradition of Russian North were also published in this period (Sharapov, 1997a).

In accordance to modern informants, there were four local centers of peasant wood painting in Udora region before the beginning of the 20th century: villages of Chuprovo, Ostrov, Toima and Verhozerije. Painted distaffs, elements of wooden weaving looms, and cart and birch-bark containers are particularly valuable objects of research on decorative peculiarities of the Udora wood painting (Figures 6–10).

Figure 3. Construction of the traditional painted wooden distaffs from Udora. End of 19th century, Udora river, Udora district, Komi Republic. (Computer model by P. G. Mikushev)

Figure 4–5. Sketches of the ornamentation of an Udora wooden distaff. Vashka river, Udora district, Komi Republic (a water-color sketches by I. V. Zemtsova).

Figure 6. Sketch of decorations made on a wooden weaving loom. End of 19th century. Vashka river, Udora district, Komi Republic (a water-color sketches by I. V. Zemtsova).
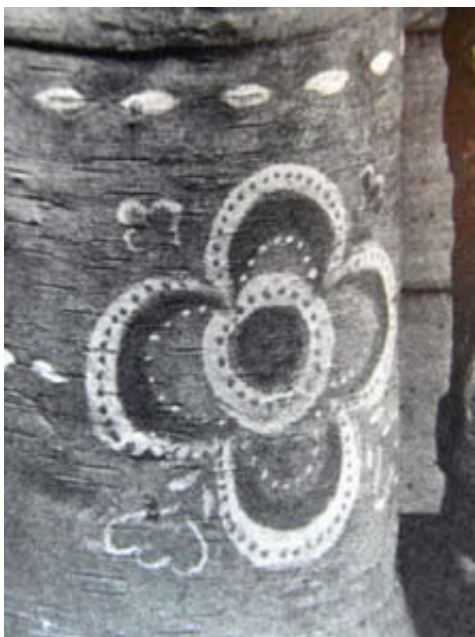
Figure 7. Element of wood painting on a birch-bark container. End of 19th century. Vashka river, Udora district, Komi Republic From the collection of the Budapest Ethnographic Museum.
(Racz, 1977, p. 65.)

The fieldwork materials collected in the 1990s show that the artists who practiced wood painting in the Vashka river basin as recently as the first quarter of the 20th century were old believers[2] from Rokhmanov-Matev, Palev and Korovin families. Alexei Pavlovich Davydov (1890–1953), a carpenter, painted wooden objects in Chuprovo village; Vasili Prokopievich Palev (died in 1940s) did the same in Toima village, while Fedor Romanovich Korotaev (died in 1950s) worked in Ostrov. A rich collection of painted wooden objects (distaffs, elements of weaving looms, wooden scoops, large wooden caps (bratina), wooden plates and chests) gathered in 1960s and 1970s by school children and their parents under a supervision of B. A. Petrov, the school teacher of history, is currently stored in the school museum of the village of Vazhgort, Udora raion of the Komi Republic (Sharapov, 2000).

In the last decade of the 20th century, several wooden houses with paintings on the frontal walls have been described in the currently abandoned village of Verkhozerie and in Ostrov. Nowadays most of these houses have collapsed or were deconstructed. The paintings on their walls consisted of schematic depictions of animals (lions), trees, flowers as well as multicolored circles. Drip caps were decorated with red, blue, yellow and white rhomboids, while balconies had geometricized plant ornament on them (Chudova, 2012, p. 104).

Figure 8. A painted wooden house in Ostrov (Di) village, Udora raion of the Komi republic. The photo was made in 1999, currently this house is deconstructed.

The artistic tradition of Udora Komi also includes painted birch bark containers (see Figure 10). It is interesting, that other territorial groups of Komi did not have the tradition of painting on birch bark. In the case of birch bark containers, the decoration was made on the previously painted background. There are three relatively narrow rows of ornaments, one under the other. The uppermost row represents a "chain" of s-shaped lines. The bottom row consists of vertical lines of different colors. The middle row is filled with a plant ornaments consisting of curls and ringlets fulfilled by straight strokes.

The painting was made with oil paints and was not covered by varnish.

Painted wooden distaffs are particularly exemplary for the Udora wooden painting. These distaffs were used up to the 1950s and were divided by the Komi themselves into two types:

1. «Piroga Kozal» or «Ladia Kozal» – a paddle-shaped distaff resembling karelian and pomor distaffs by its shape and decoration. The upper part of such a distaff is wide in the middle and narrows to the top and to the bottom. In the place the upper part of the distaffs joins its tetrahedral leg, a round "bead" is often curved out. The similar "bead" is curved on the top of the distaff. Distaffs of these types were decorated with geometric paintings made with oil paints of 2–3 colors. The inner side of the "paddle" was divided into 3 parts by horizontal lines. The upper and the bottom parts had heart-shaped curves, while the "beads" had multicolored rosettes painted on them. The outer side of the paddle had complicated ornamentation consisted of rosettes, while the leg had ornamentation consisting of tilted lines of two colors. The inhabitants of the Vashka river basin name this type of distaffs "korennoi koz'al" meaning "real" or "traditional distaff" and say that this type of distaffs is more archaic. (see Figures 6–8).

2. «Pin'a Koz'al» – a paddle-shaped distaff with 3 to 5 rhomboid "teeth" (pin') on the top of the upper part. These distaffs were painted with strokes similarly to the distaffs of Mezen river (Sheleg, 1989). However, the Komi informants from the Vashka basin villages, indicate that these distaffs were different from those from Mezen in the following respects: Mezen distaffs have wider upper part (paddle) and more dense ornamentation in comparison to those from Vashka. On Vashka distaffs, the Mezen canon of ornamentation of the frontal side of the paddle is violated: the upper row of zoomprhic figures is absent (as the informants say "there are no reindeer on the top"). Besides that, there are thematic compositions and images that cannot be found in the Mezen painting tradition of the Russian North. In accordance to the informants, "pin'a kozal" appeared in Udora much later then the "piroga kozal".

It can be said that the Undora graphic wood painting with plant and zoomorphic ornamentation "imitates" the Mezen painting style. The Vashka river basin is adjacent to those territories of the former Archangelsk *gubernia* where there were situated such famous centers of the late 19th century northern Russian painting as the village Paloshelie on the Mezen river, villages of Nizhnaia Toima, Puchuga, Rakulka, Verhnaia Uftuga on the Northern Dvina river as well as villages of Sogara and Nukhcha on Pinega. L. N. Zherebtsov has published evidences of close contacts, including mutual marriages, between Vashka Komi and their Russian neighbors from Severnaia Dvina, Mezen and Pinega (Zherebtsov, 1972). However, in accordance to V. N. Taranovskaya and V. A. Sheleg, the Mezen painting tradition itself emerged in the middle of the 19th century from the interplay between earlier Komi and northern Russian traditions of folk arts (Taranovskaya, 1968, p. 50; Sheleg, 1992, p. 65). This interpretation, in our opinion, deserves attention.

The same Mezen painting style was imitated and reinterpreted in the wooden painting of Vym and Izhma Komi. In the Vym river basin, this "imitative" painting was practiced in villages Koni, Lugi and Otly. In Pechora river basin, it was practiced by artists Yakov Istomin in the Izhma village, Lazar Mikhailovich Arteev (born in 1884) in Mokhcha, Pavel Federovich Konov (died in 1943) in Nashabozh, Franz Kononovich Smetanin in Kelchiyur and Kapiton Martynovich Arteev (born in 1909) in Vasilyevka. These artists painted distaffs with yellow, black and red inks using graphic technique and geometric plant and zoomorphic ornaments. Their paintings had compositions consisting of several parts as it is common in Mezen tradition. However the ornamentation was much simpler and the painting technique was less refined.

Isolated examples of the so called "individual" painting have been found in Syktyvdin (villages of Sludka, Prokopievka, Ipatovo) and Sysola (Kuratovo) regions of the Komi Republic (Gribova et al. 1993, Figures 22, 23, 36, 37). However, no sustainable local tradition of painting, composition, style, and/or technique has emerged in these regions.

Therefore, wood painting that existed in the territory of the modern Komi Republic in the second half of 19th – beginning of 20th centuries belongs to the

ethnographic zone of northern peasant paintings that stretches from Karelia to Urals. At the same time, these wood paintings differs significantly from painting traditions of Russian North and Urals: Komi paintings are unique in their techniques, canons of ornamentation, artistic and stylistic peculiarities.

Figure 9. Students are copying elements of Vychegda wood painting. Komi National Museum of the Komi Republic. Photo: Zemtsova I. V.

After several unique examples of traditional wood painting from Vychegda and Udora were published in Ethnographic Atlases in 1990 and the beginning of 2000s, a popular interest toward the artistic tradition of wood painting has finally arisen (Sharapov, 1997a; Zenovskaja, 2001, pp. 30–43; Sharapov, 1997b). This concerns not only ethnographers but also folk artists working in the Komi Republic. Techniques and composition of Komi folk wood painting have been included into the curricula of two educational institutions of the Komi Republic: The W. T. Chistalev College of Culture (Serditova, 2007) and the

Institute of Arts and Culture, Syktyvkar State University (former Department of Folk Art and Crafts) (Zemtsova, 2003; Zemtsova, 2011; Zemtsova, 2010). It is interesting to mention that teaching Komi traditional wood painting to students presupposes an independent research (ethnographic fieldwork, laboratory work with museum items) on the part on these students. Therefore, the future teachers and artists contribute to the scholarly research on the Komi traditional wood painting.

The students can study traditional arts and crafts, including the "unknown" and forgotten traditions of northern painting, in the framework of several courses and trainings offered by the department of arts and crafts, Syktyvkar State University. During the first study year, the students receive training in graphics aimed to develop skills of building compositions on paper while making ethnographic sketches as well as learning techniques of sketching, drafting, and using graphic materials. This training occurs in the framework of courses offered by the department of fine arts. The block of special professional courses offered by the Department of Arts and Crafts allows the students to learn the traditions of known and little known folk crafts. The course, "Artistic work with wood and wood painting" as well as the theoretical course, "Methods of studying folk artistic culture" are most directly related to the topic of this article. The knowledge and the skills acquired from these courses are further developed in the course of practical work in museums (Zemtsova, 2014).

The research experiences and skills obtained by the students from ethnographic practices are developed further during their individual work. This individual work consists of finishing the practical tasks started during the university classes. These classes are designed to provide students with initial instructions and supervision of the initial stages of their work: this work can be later corrected by the student individually. Making presentations and demonstrations of materials is also a part of the individual work of the students. This activity can often result in a student's making presentations for a scientific conference or symposia, Thus, our students have made presentations for the International Finno – Ugrist Student's Conferences that took place in

Gottingen (Germany) in 2014 and in Pecs (Hungary) in 2015. The study of wood painting finished by a student's making a creative project, which should be based on traditional elements, compositions, and color sets; these should be creatively re-interpreted to show the individuality of the artist.

Every year some of the students graduating from the Department of Arts and Crafts choose northern wood painting as the object of their graduation research and qualification works. These works are not limited to designing and/or producing souvenirs or items for decorating modern interiors, etc. In 2011, for example, one of the graduation works was titled «Multimedia project aiding the study of northern wood paintings on chests» (Author – Evegenia Arbuzova, supervisor – I. V. Zemtsova (Syktyvkar), co-supervisor S. N. Zykov (Izhevsk)). This work was designed to be used in teaching three types of northern painting. In its methodological part, Evgenia Arbuzova worked out a plan for several study hours (workshops), which included, among other things, demonstrations of three study cartoon films (2–3 minutes each). This product can be used in a university course as well as during exhibitions, in museums, workshops, etc. to make those less educated about this genre aware of the wooden painting and its peculiarities. In September 2013, the cartoon film "Vyatka and Vychegda paintings" was shortlisted for the 3rd International Festival of Fino-Ugric Visual Arts "Tuivezh" organized in Syktyvkar. In this festival, the work was awarded a diploma "For artistic realization of a study topic" (Zemtsova, 2014).

In 2015, the authors of this paper have started a research and educational project "Ethnographic Mapping of the Traditional Arts and Crafts in the Komi Republic", which was jointly funded by the Russian Humanitarian Scientific Fund (RHSF) and by the government of the Komi Republic. In the course of this project, students and staff of the Institute of Culture and Art, Syktyvkar State University, headed by I. Zemtsova, have studied collections of folk art in the Russian Ethnographic Museum (St. Petersburg). V. Sharapov studied collections and catalogues related to Komi folk arts and crafts in the National Museum of Finland in Helsinki. Many of these collections and catalogues have never been published. A number of previously unpublished photographs and

sketches depicting Komi folk arts have been found in the scientific archive of the Komi Science Center, Ural Division, Russian Academy of Science as well as in the National Museum of the Komi Republic.
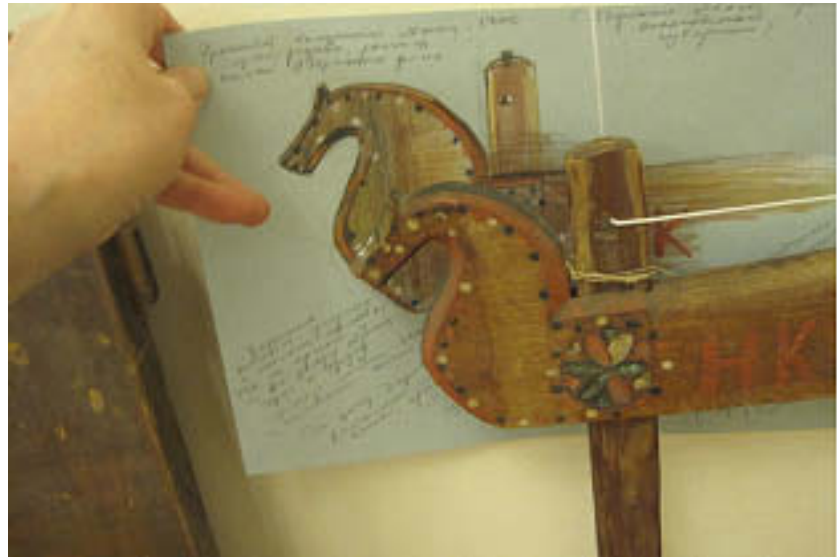
Figure 10. Sketch copy of a waiving loom fragment from the collection of the National Museum of the Komi Republic. Photo made by I. Zemtova.

Most of them have been produced by researchers of the Komi Science Center in the second half of the 20th century. The results of this archival work as well as those of the field study performed in 2015 have been presented in the form of 15 ethnographic maps depicting the spatial distribution of different arts and crafts over the Komi Republic. These maps, which are produced in the GIS environment ArcGis 9.2, are supplemented by a number of sketch copies and photographs made by the students and staff of the Department of Arts and Crafts. Therefore the maps represent a unique resource both for studying and teaching traditional arts and crafts including the traditional wood painting. The maps will be made accessible free of charge over the Internet in

the autumn, 2016. The preliminary results of the project can be found in the art book "Zyriane – narod darovity" (Zyrians are gifted people) published in Syktyvkar in 2015.

Many former students of the Department of Arts and Crafts, Syktyvkar State University, stay in the North-Western Region of Russia and try to re-establish the tradition of wood painting. For example Valentina Zhurina, who graduated from the Department several years ago, currently teaches artistic wood painting to students of the W. T. Chistalev College of Culture. Graduates of our Department work in different institutions related to culture and education: art schools, craft houses, centers of folk culture of Vologda, Archangelsk and Kirov provinces and the Komi Republic. There they contribute further to preservation and development of the traditional cultures of the Russian North.

Endnotes

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[2] Old believers (in Russian – starovery) are an religious group (or, more correctly, several groups) that separated from the official Russian orthodox church as a protest against the liturgical reforms by Patriarch Nikon (1652–1666). The Old Believers continue to follow the pre-reform liturgical practices and strongly distinguish themselves from the adherents of the official Russian Orthodoxy. In the Russian Empire, the Old Believers were suppressed and prosecuted by the state for their religious views and often had to settle in sparsely populated northern regions. In this way, large groups of Old Believers formed in what is now the Komi Republic.

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EXPERIMENTING WITH ARCTIC SOCIAL PHENOMENA
A multicultural workshop model

Essi Kuure,
Heidi Pietarinen
& Hannu Vanhanen
University of Lapland, Finland

Introduction

This chapter reports on experiences from an intensive course focused on fostering the discussion of social issues in the Arctic through the creation of art and design solutions. This course was carried out as a weeklong workshop in Murmansk in November 2014. The course was organized by the University of Lapland's Faculty of Art and Design in co-operation with Murmansk State Humanities University, both members of Arctic Sustainable Arts and Design Thematic Network of University of Arctic. During this course, students examined social phenomena of the Arctic territory from the perspectives of service design, graphic design, photography, video, textile design and fine arts. The course was funded by CIMO (Centre for International Mobility) from its FIRST-ARTSMO programme, which supports the student and instructor exchange between Finland and Russia.

The aim of this chapter is to contribute to the educational field in the form of a Multicultural Workshop Model (MWM). The chapter first reports on how the theme of the course and created model are in connection to wider arctic discussion. In the second part it presents the experiences of the instructors and students of the course and workshop. As the multicultural workshop model is based on these experiences and happenings, next the model is presented. Finally, the chapter concludes with lessons learned and conclusions.

A case study approach (Yin, 2014, pp. 9–15; Eriksson & Koistinen, 2005, pp. 4–5) was used as a research strategy for investigating the course and its outcomes. This method of study was especially useful because of its flexibility and focus on the practical point of view. Case orientation allowed students to introduce and encounter new and unexpected results together. This lead to cultural collaboration through which their cases developed much further from the initial expectations.

The MWM is an attempt to visualize and explain the complexity that happens in courses where students and instructors from different cultural and educational backgrounds come together to work around a mutual topic. As the course was planned and realized in 2014 a need for a mutual framework emerged. The model is a proposal to enhance multicultural conversa-

tion in art and design studies: offering methods and possibilities to express the local culture and identity, and the dialectics between cultures. The model was created through the practical design case of planning and running the ARTSMO course.

Background

In the Arctic, the focus of developing societies should be in investing more in its people. The Nordic Council of Ministers (2011) have identified nine megatrends of the Arctic areas. These trends have the potential to transform society at all levels, and eventually to change our ways of living and thinking (Hansen et al., 2012). The focus of the course was especially in two of the megatrends; urbanization and demographic challenges. While urbanization leads to a further concentration of the Arctic population on fewer and larger places, like Rovaniemi and Murmansk, demographic challenges are mostly linked to out-migration of young persons (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2011, pp. 9–10). Many of them are moving to bigger cities in the South after study or in search of job opportunities.

The one week intensive course to master level art and design students aimed at understanding and proposing change to these particular challenges that arctic environment poses to us. Course was a part of FIRST-ARTSMO network activities. The goal of the FIRST-ARTSMO network is to strengthen the links between the central and the periphery and the focus is on the arctic and northern issues (Nurmela, 2013, p. 1). The network was established in the year 2000 in order to develop the range and quality of student mobility between Finnish and Russian higher education arts and design institutions. At the moment there are six member institutions from Finland and six from Russia. The institutions are among the leading national higher education institutions in the fields of arts and design. In Finland, the University of Lapland is one of the founding members of the network.

A one-week intensive workshop in Murmansk allowed 13 Finnish and 13 Russian art and design students to explore the social aspects of Arctic life.

During the course students chose an arctic social phenomena that interested them. They worked with that topic through the week, first by aiming to understand the phenomena more deeply and then by generating solutions or making comments based on the findings. Students came from different educational cultures and artistic traditions which raised the possibility of learning from each other and to create new kinds of multidisciplinary results. Design and art provide opportunities for expressing the regional culture and identity and opening up a dialogue between cultures (Miettinen & Tahkokallio, 2014).

Social issues have long been an interesting topic for designers and it is an even more topical now with today's many social challenges, such as ageing, healthcare issues, and waste. The Arctic perspective on these issues is somewhat different because of our special conditions, such as long distances, particular weather conditions, and a sparse population. During the time of globalisation and globally shared habits and meanings, designers and artists should still find ways to move towards locally based, rich and native traditions, rituals and symbols. It is necessary to look further and include values such as authenticity, aesthetics and compatibility, and to see the real value of culture as designing through the lens of humanity, to create memorable experiences, and emotionally rewarding objects (Carlson & Richards, 2011).

One of the aims of the workshop was to encourage the students to focus on local issues and knowledge for a while. "Designers are interested in culture. But sometimes they treat it in a way corporations used to treat design: something consulted too little, too late; it is odd when we consider how often designers have shaped culture" (McCracken in Carlson & Richards, 2011, p. 6). The course provided a 'playground' to explore and experiment cultural facts, habits and beliefs of the Arctic. The educational goal of the course was to learn ways of finding, seeing and respecting cultural facts and to use this knowledge to create some kind of impact in communities through design and art solutions. During the course students explored how to use design process and multidisciplinary team forces to develop arctic design and art solutions, which might have influence on the ability of people to live and prosper in the region.

The ARTSMO Course at Colourful Murmansk

The ARTSMO intensive workshop was held at Murmansk State Humanities University from the 27th to the 31st of October in 2014. Students were selected for participation in the course based on their pre-tasks and motivation letters. Instructors from Murmansk and Rovaniemi prepared the pre-task together. The pre-task had multiple phases. First, students were invited to read and see websites, which dealt with Arctic issues and especially cultural and social activities in Murmansk. One of the webpages was Mr. Pink[1], which was an active communal meeting place for young people that offered support for creative initiatives. Secondly, students chose a phenomenon which interested them. Topics were varied, like the use of individualized media in public spaces, the connection between waste and nature, and the phenomena of silence. After this, students made an A4 size presentation with words and images. The pre-tasks and review process was completed separately in both countries. Instructors in Finland read all the motivation letters and assessed all the presentations. All the applicants were accepted to the course as the quality of the pre-tasks was so high.

Before the workshop instructors from Finland and Russia had three Skype meetings where practical matters of the course and the student group formation were discussed. Students were divided in six groups based on their initial interests. The community of this course included instructors and students from Finland and Russia. The community was formed at the stage of applying grant for the course. Then as it was received, instructors gathered and a call for participation was launched to students in different art and design schools. As students applied, instructors were discussing what group formations would be the most beneficial. Also the theme of the course "Murmansk – A Social Phenomenon" implies a wider connection with the arctic people and community.

At the beginning of the workshop, the goal of the student groups was to share their interests and pre-task ideas in order to find a common goal. The next stage was to find deeper ways of understanding the chosen a social phenomenon, for example, polar light and how it affects people. After this, they proposed a solution to or a comment on the current situation by using

design and fine art as mediums. The aim was to create an installation piece that reflected their understanding, thoughts, and ideas. Together, the six student groups produced an exhibition at Murmansk State Humanities University. The exhibition was held on last day of the workshop.

Figure 1. Colours of Murmansk in the evening. Photo: Hannu Vanhanen.

Murmansk provided an interesting setting for the workshop. Most of the Finnish instructors and students travelled to the Kola Peninsula for the first time. While crossing the bridge over the fjord to Murmansk city centre, the view was impressive in the evening light (Figure 1). After the bridge, on the coastal road, beside the railway tracks, there were endless queues of tank wagons, followed by extensive garage, suburban and port areas.

The colours of the apartment building windows were a picturesque sight: light blue, red, and yellow. The suburbs looked like a decorative mosaic. Every window and apartment building looked different, unlike in many Finnish town houses, where the custom is to keep white venetian blinds tightly closed in the evening. These open windows were like stories of ordinary people and their northern lives.

Traveling 400 kilometres from one culture to another, from Rovaniemi to Murmansk, the colours change from natural to festive. Murmansk city traffic appears in all shades of dusty grey, and as the night falls, the urban air smells like a combination of fuggy coal and oil. Science journalist Marjo Laukkanen (2013, p. 11) writes in the University of Lapland Kide magazine that northern art is like a bar of soap. Just when you imagine you have caught it, it slips elsewhere. Contrasts are present all the time. Like rapid weather changes from the sunshine to snowfall. On the opening day of the exhibition, there was ten centimetres of snow. For a while, everything was like a black and white photo, but then the colour feast started again.

Intensive Week of Workshop

The ARTSMO intensive course involved fine art, design, and media students from Finland (the University of Lapland, Rovaniemi; Aalto University, and the University of the Arts (Academy of Fine Arts), Helsinki; Lahti University of Applied Sciences) and Russia (Murmansk State Humanities University, MSHU). The instructors were also from both countries. All the student groups included Finnish and Russian students. Murmansk State Humanities University's Philological Education and Pedagogy students assisted as interpreters in the groups. This made overcoming the language barrier much easier, even though many expressed a desire for increased English language proficiency among all students in the final feedback.

Opening Round

The workshop lasted for five days and prior to that a timetable for those days was created. Every day had a theme: first day was about planning, second focused on collecting data, ideation happened on third day, during fourth day prototypes and exhibition pieces were built, and last day was for presenting. During the first day of the workshop, after the students were divided into groups, a questionnaire based on their initial expectations was completed.

Each student filled the questionnaire independently. The questionnaire sought information about their individual feelings towards making change in the chosen phenomena. As the aim of the course was to make impact on some social phenomenon through artistic representation, the questionnaire asked students how they felt about their own role and possibilities in affecting the current situation and how confident they were that they could make a difference.

The questionnaire included seven questions that were asked before and after the workshop. The questions were:

1. I feel like I can have an effect in the current situation,

2. I feel like I can help with my actions,

3. I feel like I have means to have an impact in the situation,

4. I feel like my role is important in solving this challenge,

5. I feel that I have ideas how to make the situation better,

6. I feel like my ideas and comments are being heard and

7. I feel like I can easily tell or show my ideas to others.

Answers were given in a scale of one to five, one being "*not at all*" and five being "*a lot*". This questionnaire was completed anonymously because it is part of data collection for Essi Kuure's dissertation thesis and the same questionnaire was also done in other workshops.

Overall, before the workshop, students felt that they could help with their actions, but did not see their own role in solving the challenges connected to the social phenomenon as very important. In the beginning of the workshop students felt that they already had a fair amount of ideas to test and means to execute them. In addition, they did not feel very strongly that their ideas and the results of the workshop would be recognized by wider audience. One of the students expressed his expectations: "*I think taking part would teach me a lot about international cooperation, experimental design, and about my own identity as a designer.*"

Students in Action

In this chapter we concentrate on three of the student cases that best express the richness and diversity of the group work. These three cases focus on the social phenomena of (1) the challenge of outflow of young people through the eyes of local people, (2) northern bionic, the effect of polar night through the lens of cultural stories and history and (3) environment challenges through the eyes of kittiwake and humans.

Case 1: Mapping the outflow of young people

In the *My Murmansk – My Rovaniemi* group, the main theme was outflow of people from Northern areas. Students chose this very topical theme and described that outflow in many of the Northern areas share the same challenge: younger people want to move to larger southern cities. For many people, this is a question of work or discovering oneself. Some feel they are forced to leave; others feel that the city does not have anything to offer anymore.

During their data collection, the group performed journalistic face-to-face interviews and photographed local people. It highlighted the Northern dimension, location-specific problematic and interactivity. It also gave student a direct link to the community of residents who all had a story to tell. This kind of perspective created the idea of the local residents functioning as a form of everyday aesthetics and thus highlighted their relationship with the northern surroundings.

During the local interviews, various perspectives to the outflow were revealed: *"I like the city itself, the people here, but I would prefer to live in another climatic zone"* and *"In general I like Murmansk, but I haven't seen many cities, so I can't be objective. I suppose that I would prefer to live in a town in the central part of Russia. Here, it is mostly ok, but people are gloomy, and natural resources are poor."* The interviews conveyed the idea that beauty is created during the interaction between people and the environment. According to Rautio (2010), beauty should not be thought of only in terms of artefacts but also in terms of what we do.

Students described in their report that *"In the first place, we had the idea to make a huge map of Murmansk, showing how people express warm feelings*

towards their city. As the workshop proceeded and interviews were conducted, the idea developed into a more interactive direction." (Haapanen, Salo, Tatiana, Fomina, Aleksandrova, & Galleva, 2014.) Ultimately, in the exhibition, there was much more than just a map. There was a three-dimensional piece with two boxes (Figure 2). The squares inside the boxes are covered with pictures of local people and their comments from the interviews. The boxes represent the Arctic area and world in general. The exhibition visitor can decide if the people in the photos will stay in the northern region or move. As it says in one of the boxes: *"Should I leave or should I stay? It is your decision."* The installation also included stickers that the visitors could take with them and that way disseminate people's comments also outside of the exhibition space.

Figure 2. My Murmansk–My Rovaniemi group's installation at the exhibition. Photo: Hannu Vanhanen.

Case 2: Story of the Effects of Polar Night

In the *Trendy North* group (as they called themselves), the theme was Polar night as a social phenomenon. Modern science explains that our visual perceptions is not based on the quantity of light, but on the quantity of contrast, so that

our sight senses are contrast-sensitive. The light creates an atmosphere, forms shadows and defines space, it also gives information about three-dimensional forms, distances and depth (Edwards, 2011, p. 158 & p. 160). A designer Ettone Sottass takes this idea still further. He considered that light express sense of drama: *"Light does not illuminate, it tells a story. Light gives meanings, draws metaphors and sets the stage for the comedy of life"* (Malnar & Vodvarka, 2004, p. 207).

Light plays a crucial part in the arctic and northern life. In the group's

Figure 3. Trendy North group presenting their outcome. Light and jacket as wearable products as well as on the video. Photo: Hannu Vanhanen.

video installation students considered lightning as a key element in observing and visualizing the effects of polar darkness from the urban point of view (Figure 3). The group described their work as follows: *"Our installation of a video, a jacket, and a light is a symbol of the circle of day and night in the north during the winter time. At the same time, it reflects the feeling and thoughts of the people regarding Polar night. The Polar night is not only a physical state but a mental state also."* (Khomutova, Olenina, Viinikainen, Salo, Magileva, Kupa, & Popova, 2014.)

In the video installation a person who is wearing an embroidered

woollen coat and holding a light, which symbolizes the circle of day and night, is walking around in the city centre of Murmansk. With the video students wanted to reflect their feelings and thoughts of how light affects our emotions, our physical and mental well-being especially during winter time. Through considering the role of daylight and artificial light, the installation moved viewers to contemplate the key issue of human needs and role of lightning in meeting these (Edwards, 2011, p. 157).

Actually, the group produced two different versions of the video installation in which the city of Murmansk became an environment or a happening. In the first video installation the cool and dark atmosphere was filled with the sounds of loud music and the closeness to hectic city life were most apparent. In the second video the mood was different. It showed a new kind of view to city where life is calm, bright and slow. For the viewer it was interesting to see two different interpretations of the same story. Working in this way, students managed to show both Finnish and Russian identities and demonstrated the dialogues they must have had between cultures during the course.

Students described their approach to the theme in their report as follows: *"Polar night is a geographical phenomenon happening in the arctic. The sun is not rising above the horizon, so there is only a slight difference between day and night. The constant dimness and darkness is lasting almost all winter time. That [video installation] is one perspective on the phenomena of how we feel and see the darkness. Darkness is effecting on people in many ways."* (Khomutova et al., 2014.)

In this case the focus was on youth and their relationship with the ongoing urbanization. In a broader context the local talents could become an asset for northern communities. For example a company called *Flatlight Creative House* in Rovaniemi is an excellent example of what may represent a future trend of succeeding with local talents who know their surroundings and communities. This company creates stories and experiences with passion and cooperate with for example, the University of Lapland and Lapland University of Applied Sciences. (Flatlight Creative House, 2016; Tervonen, 2016; Hansen, Rasmussen, Smed Olsen, Roto, & Fredriksson, 2012, p. 185).

Case 3: Environmental challenges: Birds and people

The *Environment group* worked with the theme of the kittiwake and how the actions of people affect these bird populations. The group was interested in a particular bird in the Murmansk region and how its population has changed over time. This social phenomenon is a macro level challenge, but the group limited their focus to a micro level which makes their approach feel very personal and close. The students ensembled different pieces for the exhibition. One of the students made an infographic of the effects of overfishing (Figure 4), while one produced a news article of the situation. The exhibition also included video material of the areas where you can see kittiwakes and a fine art piece (stitches in paper) where fish, people and kittiwake become one.

Figure 4. Illustration of the Kittiwake population at the exhibition. Infographic: Annika Jaakkola.

After the workshop, the students reflected on their projects and the outcomes. Annika Jaakkola (2014), a graphic design student from the University of Lapland describes her own approach as follows: *"In my work, I visualized the*

effect people have on the kittiwake population in the city of Murmansk. Over-fishing causes a decrease in the bird population because there is not enough food for the kittiwakes to eat. By the means of infographic design, I am attempting to make people realize their power over nature and to consider whether their everyday actions are sustainable."

Antonina Gorbacheva (2014), a student of Murmansk State Humanities University, describes group's collaboration as follows: "*This project was very interesting not only in terms of meeting new acquaintances but also in terms of gaining a huge amount of knowledge. The selected theme has opened our eyes to the environmental situation in the Murmansk region. I am very pleased that we and our foreign friends are concerned with the same problems. Even the language barrier was not an obstacle to our study of the materials. The environmental theme of the North concerns everyone who lives there.*"

It was inspiring to see how large scale environmental issues and awareness of the changes that humans are doing to nature were innovatively integrated into group's work through a concrete example of the amount of kittiwakes. Although there were challenges, especially in gathering accurate data, students did not change the topic. A diligent interview method helped them to achieve a greater awareness of living space of the northern bird species in a short amount of time. Students did individual interviews to local birdwatcher as well as to ornithologist. This broadened their range of knowledge and gave them room to work with individual strengths. Lively dialogue between qualitative research and art and design was present in this group's project.

Iiris Tuisku (2014) from the University of Lapland sums up the work of the team as follows: "*First, we searched for information on endangered birds, their natural habitats, and the changes in their behaviour. We used articles and books as our sources of information. We also interviewed a local ornithologist and a local birdwatcher. I think it was interesting that we started with scientific research and the end result was art and design.*" The group had also fourth member, Charlotte Clark, exchange student from Aalto University. She made a sound diary and video documentary of the current situation at the Murmansk port area. Through their works the group aimed at showing the cause and

effect relationship between humans and kittiwakes. In a bigger scale to maintain cultural diversity is to maintain also the diversity of the nature.

Reflections on the Results

As the three group work examples reveal, students achieved a lot during five days. Most of the students did not know each other before the course start. An open minded attitude, ability to 'go with the flow' and also to make quick decisions was needed from everyone especially during the workshop. The course structure forced all the students out of their comfort zones. Although it was intensive and sometimes wearing experience, students learned new skills and new ways of looking and approaching their profession. One of the students wrote in the feedback, *"The week was really intensive but gave a lot, not so much content wise, but more as culture stuff and communicating."* Another student wrote, *"Overall it was a good and useful course with lot of surprises."*

During the course, cultural and educational differences were present. Teaching culture and learning perspectives differ between Finland and Russia. In Finland when working in a Master's level course, it is normal that students will work independently and instructors will operate in the background as mentors. Also, differences in process-oriented design workshop culture (Finnish) and a solution-oriented artwork style (Russian) were seen. Ultimately, this proved to be a source of strength for the workshop. For example, the *Trendy North* group´s collaborative part of the design process did not include many models, sketches, or written documents. In a 'normal' thinking process sketches could have been used to analyse, to experiment and develop ideas (Brown, 2012, p. 109). Three-dimensional sketches could have suggested spatial possibilities of the final garment they made. The lack of alternative representations of materials (like fabric, print, pattern, surface ornamentations, embroidery and measurements) and conversations complicated a shared understanding of textile and clothing design intensions. The idea of a student "making" according to the instructions given by the instructor rather than designing together suggested that only the instructor had an full understanding of materials. In any case, this way of working also made it possible for

the group to move quickly towards building the video installation.

After the exhibition, a feedback session was held. Students returned to the questionnaire that they had filled out before the workshop about their feelings. In all of the seven questions the scores were improved. The biggest changes was in how important the students felt that they role was in solving the challenge. It seemed that the workshop structure gave students more confidence and opened their eyes to see that they can make a difference through art and design solutions. One student said that *"I learned many things about group work, art work, process and creating an exhibition."* The workshop enhanced students' feelings of making an effect in the chosen phenomena. Students also felt that their ideas and comments were heard during the course. *"It was a great team work which I enjoyed",* one of the students said.

The students were also asked what the main things were during the workshop that effected their feelings. The answers were multiple like *"different ways of work between Finnish and Russian",* and *"discussing the ideas and issues with other nationalities."* The workshop provided students with some challenges and also a feeling of success when those were overcome. One student mentioned *"the hardships of accessing information"* and also *"language barrier"* in their feedback. Although the course provided students a great opportunity for cultural exchange, some felt that the ways of working did not have a big impact on their artistic practices.

A Multicultural Workshop Model

As a result of the collaboration and the course a multicultural workshop model (MWM) was created. The model is a result of analysing the material created during the course, like instructor notes, sent e-mails, documents that were created during the collaboration (like the course invitation), student work and exhibition result as well as student feedback, student reports and project reports. The focus in analysing was in the process (what happened and in which order) but also in understanding the elements of complex multicultural collaboration.

The model aims to highlight the main phases in planning and executing such art and design workshops where multidisciplinary participants from different cultural areas meet. In recent years we have seen a rise in demand for organizing these kind of multicultural workshops for university students and during different kind of courses. A model for executing those workshops in a clever way is needed. Our workshop model is, on the one hand, based on the five day structure of the Murmansk workshop where different days were identified with tasks: planning, data, ideation, building, and presentation. On the other hand, Markus Schröppel's research was inspiring when creating the initial model after the course. He states in his dissertation thesis, that in the cognitive process 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approaches to information processing are often distinguished. In top-down approaches, knowledge or expectations are already given and used to guide the information process (Schröppel, 2015, p. 68). This kind of learning and teaching model has been prevailing for a long time also in art and design education. During ARTSMO course one of the main ideas was to try to break down the old "school model" in which teachers are saying what to do and how. By providing students opportunities to choose and create freely, although sometimes with confusion, it is possible to embrace the 'bottom-up' approach in teaching.

In Schröppel's (2015, pp. 76–77) opinion contemporary designers have to integrate the growing complexity of our changing social, economic, environmental and technological conditions and opportunities to their work. He also adds that collaborative design skills are not just a sort of magical, spontaneous event, they are much more the result of a close and fruitful cooperation in terms of planning, optimization and implementation. The multicultural workshop model aims to help students to learn these necessary skills in today's professional world.

The careful planning of the workshop theme, in this case social phenomenon, helped collaboration in a successful way and gave focus to collaboration. The philosophical idea of multicultural workshop model is to understand what happened in a holistic way. Not just as a one week intensive workshop, where students come to face new culture and people as art tourists but as continuum

of art and design education and communication. Also Schröppel (2015, p. 220) emphasizes the importance of defining the problem and its careful research. The problems art and design student work with should be significant and such that visual communication can contribute to propose solutions.

Schröppel gives an example to introduce the design process using the situational awareness tests. He divides the design process in four steps: 1) Definition, 2) Divergence, 3) Transformation and 4) Convergence (2015, pp. 219–222). His situational awareness test is a detailed step-by-step model and concentrates in the design and visual communication process. It begins from problem solving and finishes in tests and recommended improvements of the case. His process has some similarities with MWM. In MWM there are also four steps: 1) Definition, 2) Discussion, 3) Artwork and 4) Presentation.

Philosophically speaking, MWM aims to be a research-oriented model for the collaborative art and design working process. The model has similarities to artistic research practises (Hannula, Suoranta & Vadén, 2005, pp. 100–118), both emphasise dialog between practise and theory in the process. MWM promotes workshops as a foundation to where it is possible to anchor the process. Workshop structure works as a platform for co-design and action. From this point of view one could see similarities in MWM to action research models, where the research happens as an iterative, self-reflective cycles of planning, acting, observing, reflecting, and then, again, planning (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, pp. 184–186).

The process of the Multicultural Workshop Model (Figure 5) can be understood as a dramatic arc, in which the climax is between artwork and presentation. It is the most intensive part of MWM but without profound planning, data collecting and generating ideas, the presentation phase could be more or less a result of spontaneous artistic reflections of the new culture. During the workshop week, participants either worked slowly or fast, depending on whether it is concept thinking or creative art, design or media work. In Murmansk social phenomena as a workshop theme definitely asked students and instructors to understand that art, design and communication are cohesive elements of the social, cultural and political life. During the intensive

Figure 5. *Multicultural workshop model. Infographic: Annika Jaakkola.*

artwork phase the different approaches and styles will be discussed and debated. Skills of negotiation and compromise will be needed. Critical evaluation and feedback of the workshop need particular effort in order to understand and reflect critically what the students and instructors have done and how to continue the multicultural dialogue between the Universities and how to adapt new ways of working in art and design education. In MWM education and communication are seen as a developing continuum.

Definition.

Definition is the first step of the model and could be also called as pre-orientation. Here it is crucial to know who the students are, what their interests are and how they see their own impact to the workshop. This phase is the first chance for student to develop his or her own concrete idea of the main theme. Because most of the students and instructors visited Murmansk for the first time, we put quite a lot of effort into information about the environment, political and cultural life of Murmansk and Kola Peninsula beforehand and of course during the workshop as well.

Discussion.

The second step includes the actions of discussing the concepts and statements with the students. We started this phase already on the bus on the way from Rovaniemi to Murmansk. Students presented their ideas to each other using a microphone. The second phase of the discussion happened at the Murmansk State University on the first morning. Russian students presented their ideas and interests before starting group work. Being in Murmansk and discussing with local people, made it much clearer to everyone what can and can't be done in a short period of time. At the end of each day we had time to discuss with every team how they were progressing and what they might need help with. During these discussions instructors pushed the students to take a strong role in the project. The bottom-up approach helped students to be responsible for the team work, although for some students this kind of working seemed to be pretty new and hard. The cultural differences and artistic opinions clashed but it is an integral and fruitful part of this kind of working process.

Artwork.

The third step as a creative process is the core element of workshop. The teams are in action. Often in workshops there is far too little time to reflect on the work students are doing. That is why a task of writing statements and concepts throughout the workshop was created. It is important to define together criteria for assessing whether the purpose was achieved and how well. As groups were forced to verbalize their work, their ideas and concepts developed much more quickly. It helped to avoid some communication breakdowns. Workshop model has to be flexible but it can help students to understand each other's doing whether they are working individually or in smaller teams. To adapt to this kind of open working culture was not easy for students and even for instructors it was a challenge.

Presentation.

Presenting is the fourth step and the final goal of the workshop. The aim of this phase is to finalise and publish the results. The whole exhibition was designed

and built by the students with a little help from the instructors. There groups presented their works and heard from the other teams, how their main statement developed during the workshop. Students, instructors, visitors and local media were invited to the exhibition. The exhibition was followed by a feedback session. Instructors also wrote feedback to each group after the workshops and sent it by e-mail to students. This is an important part of the last phase of the multicultural workshop model. Here is a great opportunity to learn from the experience and intensive days spend defining, discussing and creating. In this case also the questionnaire completed before and after the workshop enabled the collection of up-to-date, straight and anonymous feedback from the students that represented different fields and working cultures. This way it is possible to document experiences, write publications and use those in the future planning of similar activities. By seeing the workshops like an integral part and a continuum of art and design education, we can build together a working platform for cultural cooperation.

Conclusion

For an instructor, the workshop week gave a possibility to see the cultural similarities and differences of Finnish and Russian academic life but also local city life. Murmansk is a city of great contrasts. The city area includes the huge merchant and military port of the windy Arctic sea but also a mix of neoclassical and Soviet architecture and beautiful boulevards lined with trees in the city centre.

The main elements of the experience can be condensed to few sentences and a picture (Figure 6). "On the last day of October it is raining snowflakes, which embellish everything on Lenin Prospect of Murmansk. I am surprised of the cube heads who are passing me by. Russia today is astonishing. I am forced to take a picture. I will reveal the hybrid truth. The carriers of these white exhibition stands are coming from the Finnish and Russian art and design schools. They are on their way to erect the First Artsmo Network workshop exhibition called Murmansk – a social phenomenon." (Vanhanen, 2014.)

Figure 6. Carrying exhibition stands at Lenin Prospect. Photo and above text was first published at Kide Magazine 4/2014, 28–29. Photo: Hannu Vanhanen.

The presentations and exhibition phase of the workshop was crucial. It gave student groups a mutual focus point as they knew they should have something to present on fifth day of the workshop. The exhibition was organized in order to communicate, not just in order to showcase finish final works of art. The communication between participants but also towards the outside community has continued long after the intensive week. Students and instructors have continued official and unofficial communication not only through academic connections but also via social media (e.g. Facebook and LinkedIn). Russian instructors invited Finnish colleagues to write an article about the workshop experiences to MSHU's conference publication. (Pietarinen, Vanhanen & Kuure, 2015). Finnish instructors wrote articles also in Finnish publications (Pietarinen, 2015). Also Russian partners wrote about the collaboration for example to their University webpages (Murmansk Arctic State University, 2015). The results of Trendy North group were also exhibited in Rovaniemi in February 2015 during the Arctic Design Week.

The ability to run and participate in workshops seems to be important skill in today's art and design field where participatory approaches and co-design methods are popular. In this kind of intensive workshop the importance of face-to-face meetings is highlighted. This requires an ability to meet people, discuss and communicate, even compromise to and use one's own strengths in order to produce good results together. It is also practical to use mobile technology in the communication after and before the real workshop at the local environment. As the groups worked intensively with the chosen social phenomena, they also became more responsible for the result they are producing. Students reflected which kind of story or comment they want to propose and understood how art and design solutions can support the current way of doing things or propose change. The workshop model also supported different levels of communication, namely between instructors, between students and between students and instructors.

The communication can be seen as a collaborative sense-making process through action, practical and collaborative art and design work. The created model promotes a collaborative and practise-based view to communication where the learning and creative ideas happen and are developed in the relationship between the participants not only by the individual. Larsen and Friis (2005) have studied communication through theatre in an organizational context. They state that communication is no longer a tool for sending messages but the essence of becoming who we become, and creating what we create together. The MWM aims to provide building blocks for valuing interplay between people, not only the individual work, in art and design courses.

The MWM can be applied to different kind of learning situations where it is important to do multidisciplinary and multicultural art and design work in a short time period. The model is flexible and its development is an ongoing process. In future the workshop model needs to be tested in other workshops. Overall it is important that workshop and course outcomes are presented, but also that those results are taken further, evaluated and then connected to a wider perspective.

The multicultural workshop model also provides tools to bridge the working cultures of research and design. The documentation tools are built in to the model. This way it is possible to open up and make the workshop culture more transparent. We believe that organizing such multicultural workshops offers lot of potential. MWM provides a platform for mutual learning for instructors and students, but more importantly it can change the way we see, appreciate and design the surroundings we live in.

Endnotes

[1] Mr. Pink was an independent youth house in Murmansk. It provided funding and guidance for more than 80 youth-run creative initiatives during 2012–2015. But after a long, unsuccessful struggle to gain financial and political support from the municipal government it was closed in May 2015.

[2] Kittiwake is a bird which nests in Murmansk region. It is a species of gull. The name is derived from its call, a shrill 'kittee-wa-aaake, kitte-wa-aaake'.

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DESIGNING FOR NOVA SCOTIA
GAELIC CULTURAL REVITALIZATION:
Collaborating, designing
& transmitting cultural meaning

Marlene Ivey
Nova Scotia School of Art and Design, Canada
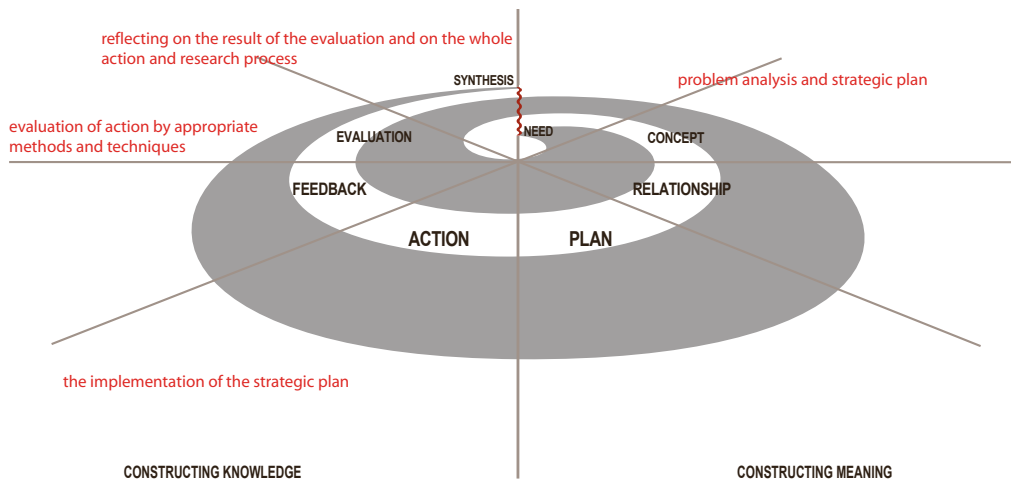
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Introduction

Design education at Nova Scotia College of Art & Design University (NSCAD) Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada acknowledges the students' need to better understand the nature and purpose of creativity and endeavors to develop the students' perspective as:

> *…something that more accurately recognizes the absolute need for design/creativity to arise first of all from an analysis of a context; the identification of design problems or issues and a consideration of the social dimensions.* (Barr, 2001, p. 21.)

NSCAD design students are engaged in exercises that encourage structured thinking, concept generation, team working, design development and project outcomes within a social, economic and cultural context. In addition, students are encouraged to take risks (and play!) as a means of generating innovative approaches to design; however, innovation is tempered by pragmatic enquiry – for example, is the innovation culturally acceptable to the stakeholders? The response assures or denies potential for real world application.

Mindful engagement with the complexity of real world scenarios involves enhancing student intellectual and practical skill along with the ability to conduct research and analysis to uncover new knowledge or develop innovative approaches to existing knowledge. Developing their ability in complex decision-making, the ultimate goal is to increase their capability for transferring design knowledge and understanding into design practice and to build their capacity for working within collaborative and interdisciplinary frameworks.

Design research and teaching at NSCAD focuses on the visual nature of designing and engaging, at the same and at different times, with theory and practice. This is not a linear process, but a 'messy business' of dynamic generative enquiry. The challenge is to transform this 'messy business' into a structured and coherent whole, progressing through an increasing complexity that needs to be managed and formulated "through a spiral of cycles of planning, acting, observing and reflecting" (Swann, 2002, p. 55)

reflecting on the result of the evaluation and on the whole
action and research process

SYNTHESIS

problem analysis and strategic plan

evaluation of action by appropriate
methods and techniques

EVALUATION

NEED

CONCEPT

FEEDBACK

RELATIONSHIP

ACTION

PLAN

the implementation of the strategic plan

Figure 1. Design
Research Methodology
© *M.Ivey 2005.*

CONSTRUCTING KNOWLEDGE

CONSTRUCTING MEANING

to construct meaning and knowledge. Figure 1 illustrates a design research methodology integrating the design process with the four major moments of action research (Ivey, 2005, p. 277).

In constructing meaning, design research and design teaching explores territories through contextual search and review as a way of learning, discovering and examining, and is carried out in tandem with experiments conducted through practice. The purpose of these experiments is to discover what the territory might look like, how it might behave in practice and to gain a methodological perspective on practice led research, (for undergraduate students this translates as gaining an understanding of their design process).

In 2009, following a return to Nova Scotia from a lengthy period living and working in Scotland, my research became quite naturally rooted in the Nova Scotia Gaelic milieu. Between 2010 and 2012 this professional and scholarly research focused on a project to create an online audio visual version of *Stòras a' Bhaile* (Treasures of the Village), a four day annual Gaelic folk life school held at the Nova Scotia Highland Village Museum, Iona, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, Canada. Working with Seumas Watson, Manager of Interpretation at the museum we developed the concept for an online prototype and

working with a Gaelic Community Steering Committee completed the final website design. This interdisciplinary research was made possible by the generosity, knowledge and collaboration of the Nova Scotia Gaelic community, supported by provincial and federal government funding. The project resulted in an interactive website that transmitted the social reality of Nova Scotia Gaelic culture using modern communication technology. The outcome, *An Drochaid Eadarainn*, (The Bridge Between Us), was launched at Province House, Halifax, Nova Scotia on 2 May 2012 by the Nova Scotia Government Office of Gaelic Affairs (Androchaid, 2016).

Designed as an online educational experience, visitors to the site can witness Nova Scotia living Gaelic culture, engage with its values and identity, experience its arts traditions and may interact with one another. Its core principle is to reflect and reinforce community and the cultural values that have been maintained in Nova Scotia Gaelic communities over generations. Generational connectivity is enhanced and authenticity is maintained and transmitted through a 21st century medium, as Gaels from the past join with Gaels of the present through a technology that spans time, place and space in an unvarying flow. Communicating authentic social aesthetics and art expression is fundamental to the revitalization and sustainability of the Nova Scotia Gaelic cultural nation, or as conceptually proposed by Seumas Watson in 2014 – *Nàisean Ghàidheal na h-Albann Nuaidh*.

Mention of *An Drochaid* is significant because it generated a strong interdisciplinary partnership between the Nova Scotia Gaelic Community and myself as an Associate Professor at NSCAD University. Its' success as an online teaching and learning tool for culture-based language teaching and learning and, as a portal for non-Gaelic speakers to witness authentic Gaelic culture, prompted further questions. For an endangered minority language traditionally transmitted orally, we pondered if we might design another type of platform to resonate culturally with a broader community? For example, individuals who identified as Gaels (whether they spoke the language or not); Gaels who no longer identified with their heritage – in a sense culturally orphaned; and individuals with no knowledge or awareness of living Gaelic

culture. The purpose of addressing these questions was to use design to contribute to strengthening the foundations of Gaelic cultural sustainability.

This chapter will discuss two projects that address these emergent aims and questions. Firstly a 2014 pilot study to prototype a visual timeline recording a pathway to Gaelic language fluency to construct meaning that might not be apparent in any other way. The aim of the prototype was to use design to visually depict the cultural and social processes through which individuals achieve Gaelic language fluency, while confirming their Gaelic identity.

Secondly, a 2015 exhibition of posters designed by students in my Designing for Cultural Revitalization class taught at NSCAD in 2015. The exhibition, titled *Léirsinn* (meaning perspective, insight, or vision) integrated imagery, symbolism and bi-lingual text to visually communicate the mental landscape of Gaelic Nova Scotia – specifically the aspirations of youth; proverbs from the wisdom system, and the storytelling and song traditions. Lodaidh MacFhionghain (Lewis MacKinnon), Executive Director, Nova Scotia Government Gaelic Affairs, commented in a press release for Month of the Gaels 2015 as follows:

> *Communicating the language and cultural identity of Gaels in Nova Scotia through visual art is largely unexplored. In addition to the intricate sounds associated with its' speech, music, song, storytelling and lively dance, Léirsinn takes Gaelic identity into another realm conveying the Gaels fundamental values through stimulating and thought provoking visual creativity.*

Background:
Nova Scotia Gaelic Community Cultural Decline and Renewal

In the mid nineteenth century, the third most spoken language in the whole of Canada was Gaelic. The eastern counties of the province of Nova Scotia –

Pictou, Antigonish, parts of Guysborough county and the greater portion of Cape Breton Island with the exception of Loyalist and Acadian districts and the reserves of the Mi'kmaq Nation, were predominantly Gaelic speaking from the early decades of the 19th century to the turn of the 20th century. It is difficult to pinpoint the number of speakers in any static way across that period of time; however, Kennedy (2002, p. 26) documents an 1867 Department of Education report indicating that in Cape Breton County the '…vast majority of the population of the island was Gaelic speaking'.

As Mertz (1989) has shown in a comparative attitude study of Inverness County's Mabou area and Victoria County's North Shore, Gaelic as a language of family choice in Cape Breton had begun to fade in earnest during the 1920s. Under pressure of a changing socio-economic environment, the advent of an English school system that punished children for speaking their Gaelic language, perceptions of being ethnic and negative associations with rural lifestyles were significant components in the abandonment of Gaelic as a hearthstone lingua franca. Gaelic language and culture in eastern Nova Scotia continued to die-hard.

Following World War II, Gaelic Nova Scotia became a source of exploitation for cultural tourism based on external interpretations that had come to Nova Scotia by way of the British army and Victorian romanticism. Throughout, the value that the Gaelic community placed on their culture was phenomenal. Members of the community compiled private collections recorded at local occasions, contributing to a considerable audio, and sometimes video, resource of regional Gaelic representation in Nova Scotia. They advocated on their own behalf, organized themselves, pushed to restore the place of Gaels in Nova Scotia's cultural landscape and gave serious consideration to transmitting traditional culture as a factor in its future survival. Advocates challenged the absence of Gaelic from meaningful representation and the systemic undermining of the Nova Scotia Gaelic cultural identity.

By the 1970s, Cape Breton Gaelic was evident, for the most part, in that generation born in the 1920s and loosely distributed throughout communities in rural Cape Breton. This generation of Gaels included well documented

tradition bearers such as Joe Neil MacNeil, Collie MacIntyre, Mickie Bean Nilleig, Margaret MacLean, Katie Margaret Gillis, Alex Frances MacKay, Joe Peter MacLean, and Peter Jack Maclean, to name a few of the hundreds of tradition bearers remaining in this period of decline, where previously there had been thousands. During the1980s it was clear, even to the Gaels themselves, that there needed to be some interface between those remaining tradition bearers, the collected and archived materials and an entire generation of the Gaelic community who were, in essence, culturally orphaned. From the 1980s there was a concentrated effort by Gaelic advocates and activists to renew Gaelic culture and language in Nova Scotia – most specifically in Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia.

The 2011 Canadian census tells us that at that time there were 1,275 individuals in Nova Scotia claiming to be able to speak Gaelic. Though fluency and cultural abilities of this statistic are unqualified (the census records quantitative not qualitative data), it is certainly of interest that this number is approaching three times that of the 490 Gaelic-speakers enumerated in 2001. Today, the eastern Canadian province of Nova Scotia, (920,000 population), has approximately 2,000 Gaelic speakers and 230,000 people who are descendants of Gaelic settlers.

Gaelic Nova Scotia is on the edge of a 'tipping point' (Gladwell, 2000) with a number of advocates in position, fulfilling different roles and bringing different skill and perspective to the task at hand. Nova Scotia is a small province on the Atlantic coast of Canada suffering economic difficulty with a population that historically migrates out of province to seek employment. The province is characterized by competing social, cultural and economic mandates. In such an environment, failure to understand the value of authentic cultural expression in experience economies is problematic. Added to this are polarities regarding issues related to Gaelic language and culture. Clearly, the Nova Scotia Gaelic cultural nation faces a number of challenges. However, it also holds opportunity for the social, economic and future cultural landscape of the province. A Gaelic cultural nation invites all who endorse living Gaelic culture and its attendant socio linguistic cultural distinctions.

Watson (2015, p. 5) observes,

> *The boundaries of Nova Scotia Gaelic Nation extend over horizons*
> *that encompass multiple levels of interest and skills. Citizenship is not*
> *defined by language ability, but rather a consensus that continuity of*
> *language dependent cultural expression is valued for its transmission*
> *and generational significance*

The remainder of this chapter returns to discusses the two interdisciplinary design projects that aimed to contribute to strengthening the foundations of Gaelic cultural sustainability in Nova Scotia and beyond. The projects were conducted in partnership with Seumas Watson and members of the Nova Scotia Gaelic Community, without whom this work would not have been possible.

Pathways to Fluency: Visualizing Culture-Based Language Learning in the Gaelic Community

> *Look at it, when you've actually looked at it you can begin to see it, and*
> *when you can see it, then you can begin to describe it – quite difficult*
> *– and when you can describe it, then you can begin to analyze it. And*
> *only after looking, seeing, and describing and analyzing can you begin*
> *to interpret it, to construct meaning from it.' (Kennedy, 2010.)*

A pilot light is a small flame that is used to light a larger flame. In that spirit, Watson & Ivey (2016) collaborated in a pilot experiment to visualize culture based Gaelic-learning opportunities specific to Nova Scotia. Was it possible to use design to visually discover meaning and knowledge that might not be immediately apparent in any other way?

The aim of the experiment was to generate a visual timeline that depicted the framework within which Gaelic cultural identity might emerge through

a collective of interlinking domains in Gaelic learning scenarios. After some consideration, Séidheag MacMullin (b. 1976, in Upper Grand Mira, Cape Breton County, Nova Scotia), was selected because she had reached fluency primarily through community scaffolds for Gaelic culture based social learning in a short period of time. Essentially, a path of learning through transmission, albeit in a 21st century context.

Underpinned by the remaining tradition bearers and digitized archival materials, the transmission of Gaelic cultural traditions was, and is, fundamental to the cultural renewal happening today within the Nova Scotia Gaelic community. Watson & Ivey (2016) argue that the reason, in part at least, for this Gaelic renewal in Nova Scotia lies in culture-based language learning in social contexts, not just learning language. And it is within these social learning environments that the grandchildren of Gaelic speakers in Nova Scotia are making a cultural transformation, re-finding their Gaelic identity in social learning scenarios, blossoming in the Gaelic traditions of their grandparents and claiming their Gaelic birthright. In interview, Séidheag, a Nova Scotia Gaelic secondary bilingual, was prompted to reflect on her pathway to fluency and the impact on her sense of identity (Watson & Ivey, 2016, p. X).

> *Culturally I had no awareness of my being Gaelic until I was an adult. I had grown up …thought we all grew up the same but eventually I came to realize that we hadn't. A sense of identity began to emerge. I didn't have a name for it. I first started with long immersions in summer and continued to be reinforced through learning something more than vocabulary. … little by little, this is us, this is me… I am drawn to be in a live experience with a higher register of Gaelic especially in the context of Stòras with its' social experience and native speakers…working on traditional skills with native speakers. Living culture, sharing your stories or songs and having people who care about them listen. If the only thing you want to do is language then you're not really in the culture….*

Figure 2. Timeline visualization of Séidheag MacMullin's path to Gaelic language fluency. Design: Lee Yuen Rapati, NSCAD 2015 (Watson & Ivey, 2016, p.)

A timeline was generated from CV and photographs provided by Séidheag, followed by a series of interviews. Pulling all of this information together and reflecting on the content informed subsequent conversations with her. It was possible to identify, in this example, two main drivers; Gaelic medium social learning scaffolds and Gaelic medium culture experience, and query/understand how these served to establish or re-discover identity. The timeline was
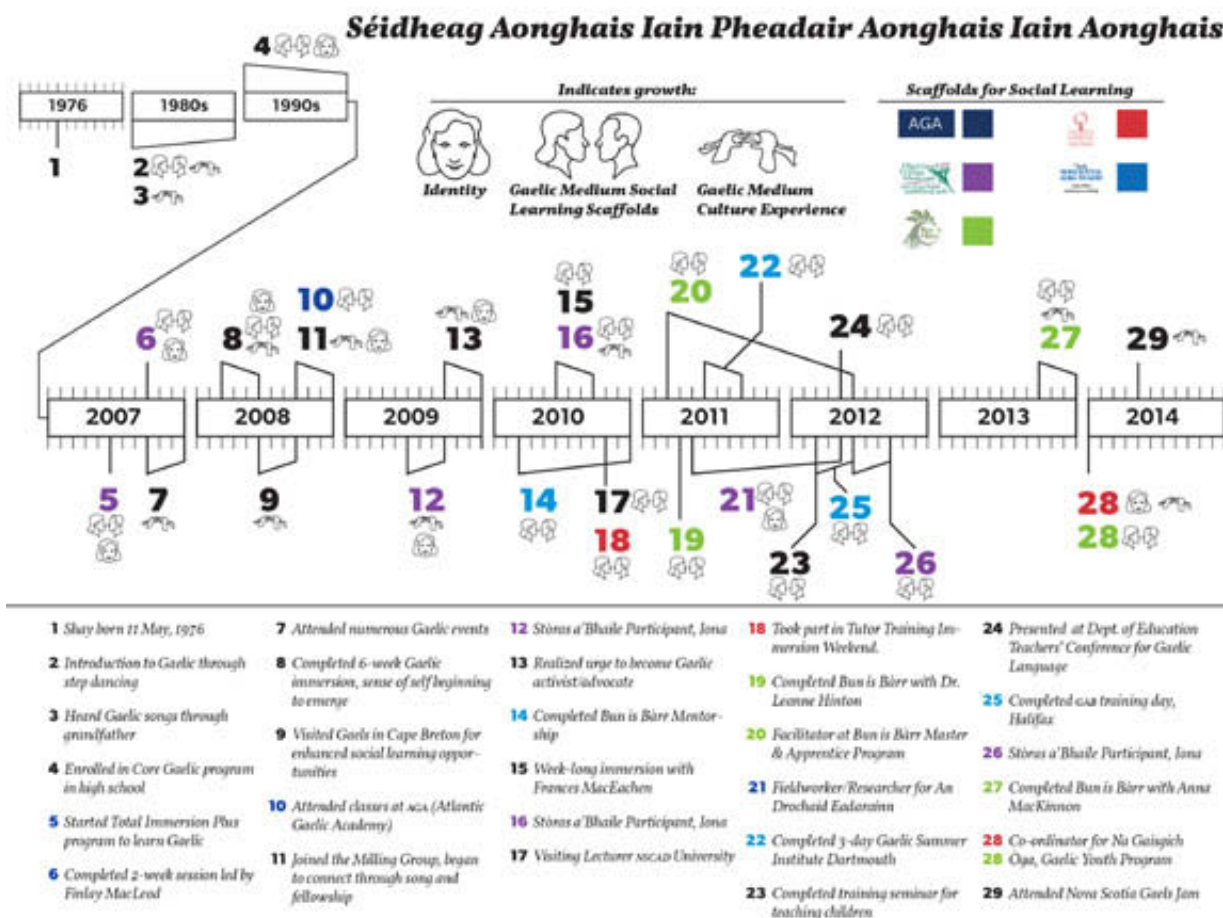
established and with flexible intention, the prototype – essentially a framework for a portrait of learners' experience – was developed to inform further iteration of visual timelines and/or infographics. By plotting firstly one, then another, and another and so on, it will be possible to look, see, describe, analyze, interpret and construct meaning that might not be apparent in another form. The aim is to demonstrate the benefit of social learning for bringing secondary bilinguals to fluency in a culture-based, not language based, scenario.

Following the final iteration of the time line visualization (Figure 2), Séidheag was asked why there appeared to be less recorded activity in 2013 and 2014; prompting her to respond (Watson & Ivey, 2016. p. X),

> *Once I have language and cultural knowledge I have self. My identity is established, I know who I am. I have an awareness of my cultural identity and so does everyone else…so cultural experience is an everyday event. I am just living it and passing it on.*

This time line was shared on numerous occasions and garnered much interest. Feedback suggested that rather than having a designer visualize the path to fluency, more meaning would emerge if the learners created their own timelines, together in conviviality in a céilidh-house[1] environment. This prompted a welcomed and significant shift in the design approach. Future work with learners plans to integrate various methods, including auto-ethnographic engagement (process of understanding cultural experience through personal experience) and design-based cultural probing (a designed object used to gather inspirational data to better comprehend a peoples culture, thought and value), alongside internal-cultural models of expression such as seanchas (an intra-cultural form of discourse linked to the expression and transmission of identity and tradition among Gaels).

In the long term, the development of this pedagogical approach may demonstrate an effective path to linguistic competence that restores identity, revitalizing the Gaelic cultural nation, preparing communities to contribute to cultural, social and economic health, as well as Canadian diversity.

Looking at applications of social learning theory to language learning, and especially minority language, it is interesting to observe some of the work being done to maintain aboriginal languages in North America. Investigating models for teaching aboriginal languages has drawn attention to two contrasting perspectives: psycholinguistic methodologies, most often employed in formal classrooms settings, and sociolinguistic approaches arising from sociocultural views on language learning. In sum, the former can be thought of as the pedagogy designed for individualistic language learning (psycholinguistic), and the latter as applied to creation of learning environments, rich in cultural collectivism and dynamic interpersonal engagement (sociolinguistic). As Warford (2011, p. 76) delineates,

> *The teaching of indigenous languages, as is the case with the teaching of all languages, cannot and should not ever be divorced from its vibrant cultural heritage. [...] Learning a language for its abstract linguistic properties (grammar) to the exclusion of the social contextual particularities of its meaning and usage only exacerbate the devastating work of conquest and colonization. New directions in foreign language learning research recognize and value the social context of language instruction.*

Speaking in Antigonish, Nova Scotia in May 2011, linguist Dr Lee Anne Hinton referred to how people are drawn to engage with living language cultures. She said 'lots of people feel it by seeing it in action' and went on to say 'we can intellectualize it, but it is only when people feel the connection that they are motivated to learn'. Embracing kinship and identifying through living Gaelic tradition to become culturally complete. Empathy, feeling and/or experience connects the grandchildren of Nova Scotia Gaels to their culture and appears to motivate individuals to engage with the mental landscape and become part of it. Witness, feel, engage, become – a process of re-connecting with one's socio-cultural identity.

Pathways to Understanding:
Visualizing Gaelic Cultural Traditions

Across the summer and fall of 2014, collaborating with Seumas Watson, Manager of Interpretation, Baile nan Gàidheal (The Nova Scotia Highland Village Museum); Lodaidh MacFhionghain (Lewis MacKinnon), Executive Director, Iomairtean na Gàidhlig (Nova Scotia Government Gaelic Affairs); and Tonya Fry, President, Comhairle na Gàidhlig (The Gaelic Council of Nova Scotia), we worked to develop and deliver a 2015 NSCAD University undergraduate course focusing on Gaelic cultural traditions entitled *Designing for Cultural Revitalization.*

Introducing the course subject matter, contextual information was provided for students through a series of films and documentaries, including *The Wake of Calum MacLeod; St Kilda Wedding; The Immigrants; Flight: Searching for Scotland*; slide presentations and TED Talks. Most importantly, the students listened to Gaelic tradition bearers relay the cultural values and identity of Nova Scotia's living Gaelic culture; tell stories, sing songs and dance.

Following the first class (8 January 2015), ten English speaking Canadian design students were assigned a project probing their identity – who were they? Their parents, great grandparents etc.? The students were asked to trace their ethnic origins and comment on the cultural traditions of their ethnicity, presenting their findings in a visual format. The intention was to sensitize them with regard to identity and cultural tradition. The out of class time for this project was approximately six hours.

The students all managed to map their ethnic origins (some as far back as the 17th century) but few mentioned cultural tradition. Of the ten students participating, five were from Nova Scotia, three from Ontario and two from New Brunswick. The students reported ancestry from Ireland, Scotland & Wales. France, Italy, Germany, Madagascar, Ukraine, and Iran also featured. Within this group, ancestry emerged from diverse cultures. Detailed records of family ancestry informed visual diagrams of ethnicity.[2]

The students' attempt to explore their own cultural identity appeared to engage them. For the most part, they failed to reveal cultural traditions

Figure 3. Examples of students' mapping their ethnic origins.

associated with their cultural background. However, four students did address this part of the assignment. One student cited poetry, art, science, winemaking, farming, cheese making and crafts such as copperwares and thick woven textiles (first generation Canadian). Another student referred to the family motto ' to know, to love, to help others'. Fishing, farming, food were cultural traditions for one student and for another, athletics, art, music and scholastic achievement.

So, for Canadian youths, with a pluralistic (and assimilated) cultural heritage, what do they perceive as 'their' culture of origin? What do they perceive as their generational traditions? What do they perceive as their historical cultural identity? In what way does holding this knowledge impact on how they live their lives and how they understand and perceive other peoples' cultures, languages, traditions and human expression? Identifying with a particular ethnic origin, apart from identifying strongly as Canadian, was not present in the students' mental landscape.

The following week the class explored living Gaelic culture through the *An Drochaid Eadarainn* website. The workshop emphasized that, in the absence of fluency in a culture's language, it is very difficult to access information regarding that culture. The significance of not knowing through lack of linguistic and cultural knowledge is an important lesson. In not knowing, how do designers engage with the mental landscape of a culture other than their own?

It is important not to make assumptions about values, expressions, creativity and aesthetics that may not have parallels in the cultural experience of the designer. However, in the absence of linguistic capability, the students admitted that they relied on their intuitive skill to navigate the website. One could 'hear a pin drop' in the classroom; students were intensely engaged in the challenge of exploring unfamiliar content. They were confident in the sense that they were digital natives and this confidence supported their investigation into unknown territory.

Thereafter the course was structured by a series of briefs representing three themes: *Òigridh* (youth) using *Beàrnan Brìde* (the dandelion), as a metaphor symbolic of the Gaels renewal, hardihood and resilience; *Seanfhaclan* (proverbs), the Gaelic wisdom system and *Na h-Òrain*, Nova Scotia's living Gaelic song tradition. The briefs included cultural background information, out of class assignments and a timeline for deliverables.

Visits to the class from leaders in the Gaelic Community were essential. Bringing deep cultural knowledge, Gaelic language, and experience into the classroom established am ambience of conviviality and humor, establishing an interface between social learning and the atelier method of teaching art and design.

Seumas Watson visited the class on numerous occasions, conducting song and storytelling workshops, participating in give and gather sessions (critique) of student work in progress, advising on Gaelic content and keeping us right with our bilingual aspirations. Seumas, along with Lewis MacKinnon, also a class visitor, spoke about the cultural markers of identity specific to Gaels in Nova Scotia. These included a unique sense of humor that is conveyed via irony and rhythm of speech and the importance of general social interactions including social conventions associated with understatement, hospitality and time. A particular etiquette prevails in tandem with the pleasure and enjoyment gained from listening to a good story well delivered.

Stories, songs and poetry are made to tell the tale of the heroic in Gaelic culture, the beauty of landscape, importance of relations, reverence for animals that provide sustenance; immanence and otherworld beliefs. The students

especially enjoyed singing a song that involved the designation of Gaelic speech to wild animals.

Designing in action, the students witnessed living Gaelic culture, sang choruses to Gaelic songs, listened to stories with attendant translation and learned a dance set. Lee Anne Aucoin, teacher, Scotch fiddler and step dancer joined the class to teach the students the Halifax square set and within an hour everyone was up dancing!

The class learning was reflected in the output of thirty three posters, integrating imagery, symbolism and bi-lingual text to visually communicate the mental landscape of Gaelic Nova Scotia – specifically the aspirations of youth; proverbs from the wisdom system, and the storytelling and song traditions. Below are a few examples of the posters.
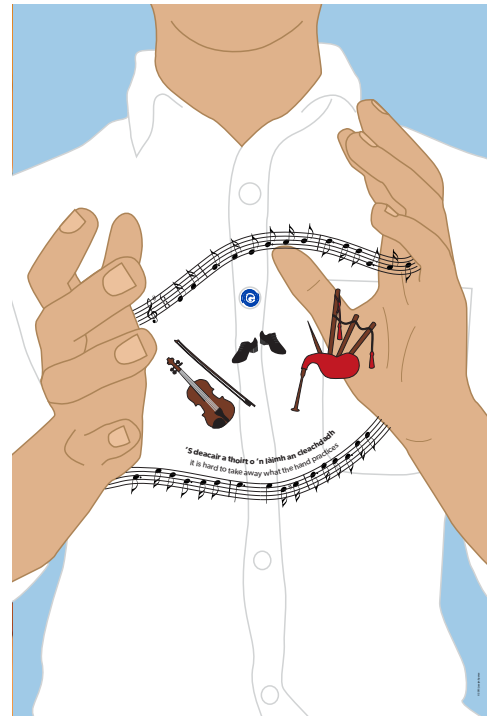
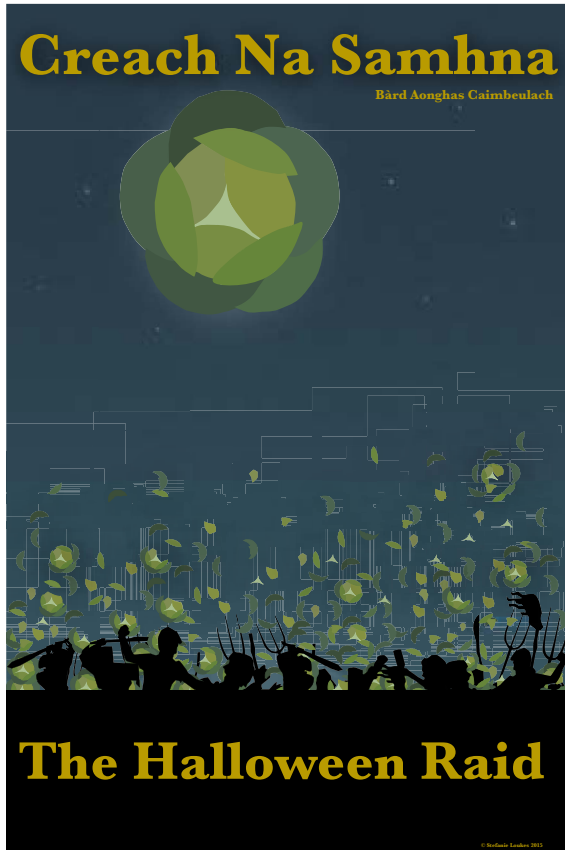*Figure 4. Visualizing a proverb from the Gaelic Wisdom System. Design: Jocelyn Spence NSCAD 2015.*

Figure 5. *Visualizing a song from the Gaelic Nova Scotia song tradition. Design: Stef Loukes NSCAD 2015.*

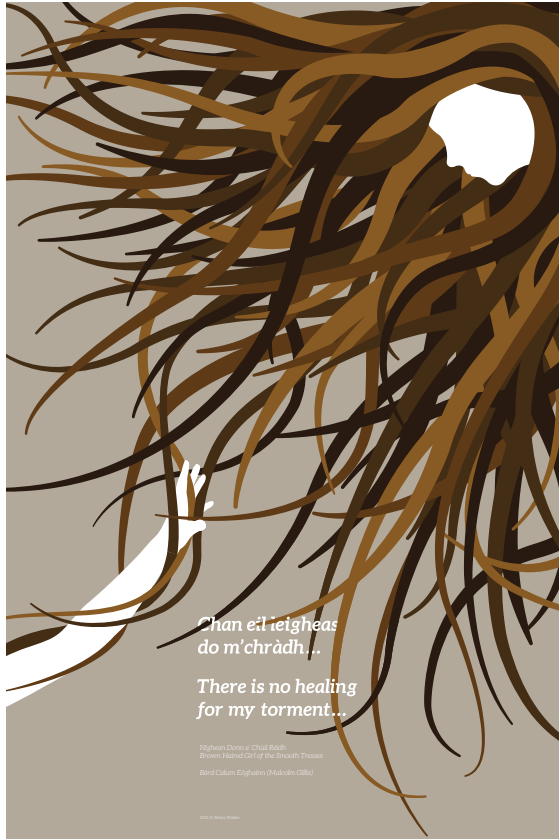**Figure 6.** *Visualizing a proverb based on the Gaelic wisdom system. Design: Brina Frenette NSCAD 2015.*

Figure 7. Visualizing a song from the Nova Scotia Gaelic song tradition. Design: Kelsey Walker NSCAD 2015.

Chan eil ieigheas
do m'chràdh…

There is no healing
for my torment…

Nighean Donn a' Chùl Réidh
Brown Haired Girl of the Smooth Tresses

Bàrd Calum Éisgeann (Malcolm Gillis)

An nì chì na big,
's e nì na big.

What the
little ones see,
the little ones do.

Nàisean nan Gàidheal   Gaelic Cultural Nation

Shea Mandolesi, 2015

Figure 8. Visualizing a proverb based on the Gaelic wisdom system. Design: Shea Mandolesi NSCAD 2015.

On the last day, students were asked to comment further on what they had learned across the term from the class. Here is a selection of responses to the evaluation:

> I learned…how to work quickly and at the same time be more sensitive and at the same time trying to be sensitive to a different culture and trying to portray their values and what their desires are…

> It opened my eyes to different cultures and learning how to represent a different language visually.

> I definitely learned a lot …I knew Gaelic heritage was big in Cape Breton but I never really knew anything about it except for hearing the music… it's really interesting knowing more about it…I'll probably take note of a lot more stuff next time I am in Cape Breton.

> I learned a lot about Gaelic culture – I didn't know anything about Gaelic culture before this project. Now… I am really more interested in my own heritage.

> I knew there was a strong Gaelic presence in Cape Breton…I learned that   the youth are really interested in keeping up with the language and getting it   and they are struggling to get… teachers to teach them. But they are really interested in sharing their culture.

> Definitely really fun, wasn't expecting that in the beginning. I am glad that it surprised me.

> …my proverb was, 'It is hard to take away what the hand practices', so for me that's really an embodiment of how the Gaelic culture has survived because the things that are important to them – all the amazing traditions that they have, music and storytelling are things that you

can't take away from them, they are not a physical thing that can be destroyed, it lives within them, so the visual of holding those elements close to their hearts is a representation of how they survived and how precious it is.

Gaelic is an oral culture – there are no images…that's the challenge… you have to …think about a concept and find a way to visualize and that comes and manifests itself in tons of different forms so I guess it comes down a lot to individual interpretation but also have to take in how the Gaelic are viewing these concepts as well. People who are not Gaelic…? …well – me – basically! I don't know, I think, I think they are going to be able to understand the English text and they are going to gather as much from that text and the imagery as they can and hopefully that will give them some insight into Gaelic thought and their culture.

Gathered together in an exhibition entitled *Léirsinn* (meaning perspective, insight, or vision), the posters from the class were exhibited at Province House, Halifax during the launch of the Month of the Gaels on 29 April 2015. *Léirsinn: An Taisbeanadh* traveled to other venues across 2015, including the Angus L Macdonald Library, St Francis Xavier University and *Baile nan Gàidheal* (The Nova Scotia Highland Village Museum). The *Léirsinn* exhibition with added posters from the 2016 Designing for Cultural Revitalization class will travel to the Eptek Art & Culture Centre, Summerside, Prince Edwatd Island in January/February 2018.

According to Watson (2015, p. 5),

Léirsinn exemplifies the range of that inclusivity beyond being an undergraduate classroom project. It is a model for applying the creative energies of a provincial arts and design institution, supported by an international faculty and student body, to inspirations so redolent in Nova Scotia Gaelic culture. The themes…expressed in metaphoric

visuals, take us across the threshold from every day mass culture to a
place of celebrating in the Gaelic Nova Scotia context.

Conclusion

Visually communicating the mental landscape of Gaelic Nova Scotia through *Léirsinn: An Taisbeanadh* – met the aim of the Designing for Cultural Revitalization course which was to introduce students to Gaelic language and culture and to guide them as they visually communicated their learning through the practice of designing. By engaging with Nova Scotia living Gaelic culture, the students explored, experimented and experienced designing for a culture that differed from their own. In doing so, we hope, in future, they will apply their knowledge, understanding and learning experience to designing for other cultures.

Visualizing culture based learning in the Gaelic Community was a pilot experiment that has indeed ignited a larger flame that burns inside and out: in Nova Scotia collaborating with the Gaelic community and reaching out to form partnerships with researchers in minority language learning in the Scottish and Irish Gàidhealtachd. Through an interdisciplinary discourse of discovery we invest in and gain further purchase for a Nova Scotia Gaelic cultural nation.

Referring back to Seumas Watson's (2014, p. 5) proposal for a Nova Scotia Gaelic cultural nation – *Nàisean Ghàidheal na h-Albann Nuaidh*, he commented further in 2015:

> *Nation building is not an easy thing to do. Its requirements are many.*
> *A steady hand on the rudder guided by conviction and perseverance is*
> *elemental. So too is the need for an encompassing vision that joins all*
> *stripes to subscribe to foundational tenents. In its social being, Nova*
> *Scotia's Gaelic nation has experienced rupture and manipulation of*
> *its cultural representations for at least a century. The situation is now*

less dire, as we enter an era with supporting apparatus and a degree of acknowledgement unknown in the near past. And so the question arises, how do we muster our resources to build a Gaelic-speaking cultural nation with universal support? (p. 5)

Watson (2015, p. 5) argues that preserving a language for its own sake is not the full story. Language and culture go hand in hand and the loss or undermining of either dilutes the other, 'The beating heart of the matter becomes for the want of both a people is lost'.

Endnotes

[1] In the Gaelic milieu, céilidh-house meetings have evolved as a participatory method for bringing community representatives together to develop concepts and ideas for cultural restoration

[2] Time constraints…last minute hurried decisions regarding familial connections prompted amendments/additions in a manner that undermined the aesthetic potential of the student's visual communication. A technique for visually expressing concept and idea, in a short timescale, was a topic for discussion in peer/staff review.

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WILDER BEING:
Destruction and creation in the littoral zone

Anne Bevan & Jane Downes
Orkney College, University of the Highlands
and Islands, Scotland, UK

7

I n this visual essay we tell the story of Wilder Being[1], an inter disciplinary art and archaeology project that focused on the eroding coastline of an island in Orkney, in the far north of Scotland.

Both fragile and resilient, the Orkney archipelago is particularly affected by climate change, most visible in the littoral zone, where increased storminess and rising sea levels are causing destruction of internationally significant archaeological sites (Gibson, 2008). We focused on the shore as a vibrant place and as a place to think about past and future sustainability.

Initiated and led by researchers and students from the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI), the project involved a collaboration with the local community in this unique and specific context. By combining contemporary art and archaeological techniques, our aim with the *Wilder Being* project was to highlight innovative participatory approaches to visualising and imagining environmental change.

Figure 1. *Coastal flooding, Orkney. Photo: Frank Bradford.*

Figure 2. Wilder Being workshop at Pool beach, Sanday, Orkney September 2014. Photo: Rebecca Marr.

Art, archaeology and environment are central to life in the Orkney islands in Scotland, not simply as creative and academic disciplines, but as integral to the social and economic wellbeing of the island communities. The project described here springs from this strong culture of interdisciplinary collaboration (Thomas, 2015) and community involvement.

The *Wilder Being* art and archaeology project was undertaken as an emerging series of activities: a participatory workshop, a creation of a film, a student project, an exhibition, and talks. The workshop was held over two days on the island of Sanday in Orkney at a prominent archaeological site being eroded by the sea (Figures 2 & 3). The event, which was publicised through academic networks and through local press, involved around 50 people, bringing together artists, archaeologists, anthropologists, environmental scientists and community, from Sanday, Orkney and further afield.

Figure 3. Wilder Being workshop. Photo: Rebecca Marr.

The island beach workshop was a novel form of experience; participants observed and recorded artefacts and materials – both ancient and modern – using archaeological techniques of 3D laser scanning, GPS survey, artefact recording combined with photography, drawing, sculpture and text to explore impressions of place, environment and moments in time.

We based our workshop at the eroded beach section of Pool, a multi-period site where settlement from the Neolithic through to the Viking periods are superimposed on top of one another (Hunter, 2007). Cut through by sea, this vertical bank exposes remains of buildings and occupation deposits: shells, bones, stone artefacts and pottery spill onto the shore, fuel ash and midden mingle with dead sea creatures and sea debris – tangles of rope, plastic bottles and the soles of single shoes. The past merges with the present, culture and nature become confused.

Figure 4. Pool beach, section of bank. Photo: Rebecca Marr.

Using trowels, we explored the boundaries between the complex layers: traditionally, archaeological methods create a matrix that rely on formulaic and dry description of 'contexts'…here we spontaneously created words and phrases to capture the essence of deposits and events, creating an imaginative matrix with concrete poetry (Figure 5).

*Figure 5. Pool beach, section with words. Photo: Rebecca Marr.*

Figure 6. Finds from Pool beach. Photo: Rebecca Marr.

In a pop-up laboratory and photographic studio Rebecca Marr worked with community participants to sort, categorise and photograph 'artefacts' and 'ecofacts' using archaeological recording methods in creative ways; objects of beauty emerge under the microscope and through the photographer's lens (Figure 6).

Figure 7. Wilder Being 3D Laser Scan. Photo: Dan Lee.
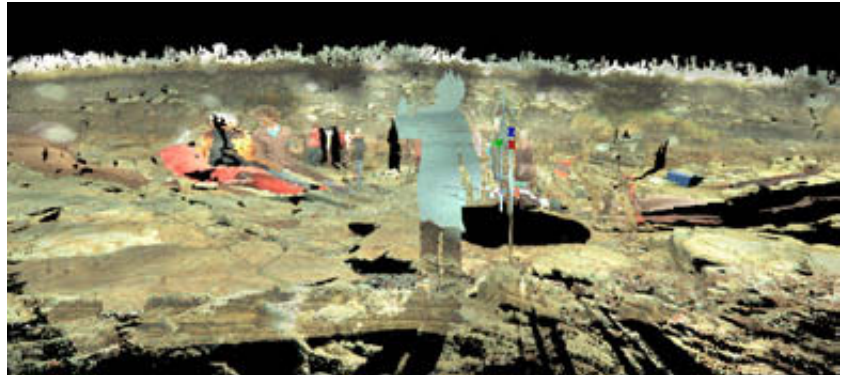
As a rapid recording method, 3D laser scanning is increasingly used in coastal erosion sites. Using the laser scanner Dan Lee captures the movement of people and things, of the event itself. The *Wilder Being* emerges in the playful use of the scanner revealing an unexpected sinister figure (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Wilder Being 3D Laser Scan. Photo: Dan Lee.
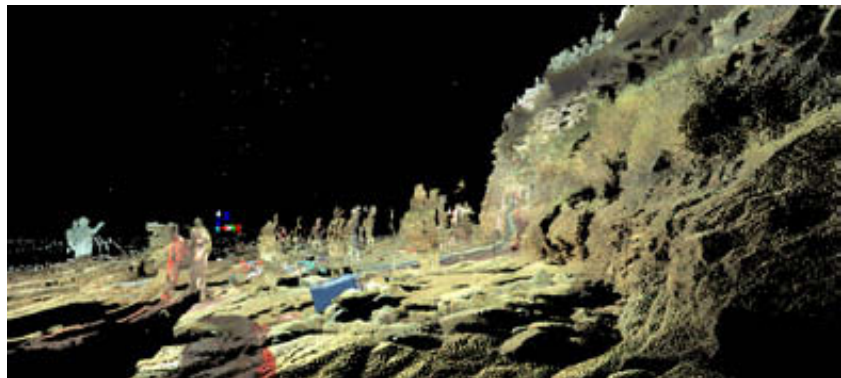
Materials from the shore were collected, analysed, interpreted, and then re-interpreted and configured into a new form, partly influenced by the idea of the 'Wilder Mann' (Fréger, 2012). Folklore around the dreadful 'Knuckalvee'[2] inspired a creature, our 'makelore' created the 'Lopness monster', who inhabits the sea and recovers detritus from the coast.

Figure 9. *Wilder Being, sculpture made by workshop participants. Photo: Rebecca Marr.*

The film created as part of the project by Mark Jenkins documents the Sanday workshop and, with Orcadian storyteller Tom Muir, reveals the story of the Lopness monster[3].

Further responses came from Fine Art & Textiles students from the local Orkney College UHI, who created *'wilder being'* sculptures and costumes. These artworks and the film were exhibited along with material developed from the workshop at the Pier Arts Centre in Stromness, Orkney.

Figure 10. Wilder Being, costume made by Norna Sinclair.
Photo: Anne Bevan.

Low lying islands such as Sanday in Orkney are particularly susceptible to coastal erosion and with each storm the people who live there can see the past and present being washed away into the sea. Through the *Wilder Being* project our aim of highlighting and imagining this change was effected through these experimental responses and artworks, made visible both to the local community and, through the film, to a much wider audience. We feel participation

in the project was enhanced by combining a relational approach to art and archaeology together with participatory art and archaeology, both in practice and in theory (Bevan & Downes, In press.)

Our place-based event highlighted the connectivity between arts, humanities and sciences as much as it stressed the blurring of lines between land and sea, culture and nature, setting a creative and artistic exploration of place, community and archaeological heritage within wider contexts of climate change and sustainability.

Endnotes

[1] Wilder Being was undertaken as part of the UK-wide 2014 'Being Human' Festival of the Humanities (http://beinghumanfestival.org/).

[2] A mythical creature, a terrifying half-man half-horse, associated with the north isles of Orkney, who emerges for the sea to wreak havoc and revenge (Orkneyjar n.d.)

[3] The video, "Wilder Being Creation and Destruction in the Littoral Zone", can be viewed online: https://vimeo.com/112154339

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Acknowledgements

A TUNDRA PROJECT
and melting ice as an
artistic material

Laila Kolostyák
Norway

From North to South

Ice is one of my preferred materials in my artistic practice. In 2004 I was invited to Copenhagen to create an outdoor installation during the manifestation of Sami art «The Samis are coming». The «Guovvte Ilmmi Gasskas» installation was a part of a festival celebrating Sami culture. The installation was made out of 15 tons of ice from Lapland brought from the outskirts of the once Danish kingdom to its' centre. The artwork was built on Fredriksbastion, forming a part of the old fortress protecting Copenhagen. It was inspired by an ancient sacrificial site in Lapland. «Guovvte Illmmi Gasskas" means between the two worlds. The past and the present, the solid and ephemeral, illusion and reality, the distant and the near. The connection of two worlds.

In the final stage of construction, warm strong winds and sun made the working conditions difficult as the ice was melting fast. Protecting the precious ice was hard and our work was transforming at high speed and taking on a life

Figure 1. «Guovvte Ilmmi Gasskas» (Between the two Worlds) February 2004 Copenhagen. 15 tons of ice falling apart in hot southern winds. Photo: Laila Kolostyák

of its own. The unwanted weather was taking part in shaping and adding its impact on the installation. This experience made me realize the true potential in ice as a mean of expressing my ideas. The artistic practice gave birth to the idea of a melting ice installation.

I asked how could the melting process of the ice, the circle of water and earth and grass be an installation itself? The creative process led to the project with a title TUNDRA – melting ice precious earth project. The nature that we live in is fragile. Yet the notion of nature itself is far away, the opposite to the notion of civilization. It was therefore important to place the installation so people far away from the melting ice could feel, touch and see the ice disappearing for themselves. I was looking for a location for my installation in Europe when I was invited to the art festival «L' Art dans toutes ses états 2007» in Limay, just outside Paris.
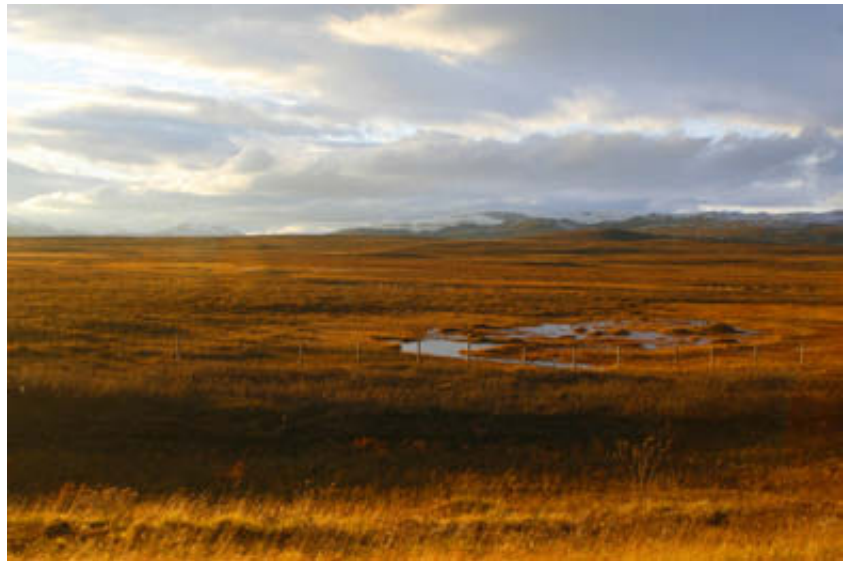
Tundra

Tundra refers to the area where the subsoil is permanently frozen. The area includes northern Russia, Canada, Alaska and the treeless plain of northern

Figure 2. Front page project catalogue by János Kolostyak and Laila Kolostyák. The arctic circle and the tundra.

Lapland. The Tundra holds one third of the world's soil-bound carbon. When permafrost melts, it releases carbon in the form of carbon dioxide, which is a greenhouse gas. The more CO_2 that is released into the atmosphere the higher the global temperature and consequently the melting process will speed up even more. The Tundra soil is frozen from 25–90 cm down and trees cannot grow. The winter temperatures can fall down to -50 degrees Celsius and the summer lasts 6–10 weeks. The land supports low growing plants and there are two main seasons, summer and winter. Because of the frozen ground, the water cannot sink so it forms shallow lakes and marshes. Thousands of insects and migrating birds populate the plains in summer. There are also large populations of reindeer. The polar Tundra is home to nomadic reindeer herders such as Nganasan, Nenets and the Sami. The arctic tundra is changing dramatically because of global warming. New species are moving onto the tundra. There has been little industrial activity in these areas. This is now changing with the exploration for oil, gas and minerals, including uranium. (Kerr, 2007; Ravni & Vylka, 2001; Tundra, 2016)

Figure 3. *The tundra of Sennalandet in Norwegian Lapland. Photo: János Kolostyák.*

Water, vapor and ice

Water is essential to all known forms of life. It covers 75% of the Earth's surface. Human beings consist of 72% water. Water continuously moves through a cycle of evaporation, precipitation and runoff to the sea. Water is the only common, pure substance found naturally in all three states of matter; ice (solid), water vapor (gases) and water (liquid phase). Water in all of these substances is apparent in the sculpture. The water cycle has no beginning and no end. The time it takes from water to move from one place to another varies from one second to thousands of years. Despite continuous movement, the amount of water stays the same. The water cycle is powered from solar energy. Most of the solar energy warms tropical seas. The vapor is condensed as rain in another climate zone where it releases latent heat that warms the air. This drives the atmospheric circulation. In addition, toxins follow the water cycle and the atmospheric circulation. The icecaps of the Polar Regions are of significance for the global climate and the water cycle. (Tollan, 2016; Water Cycle, 2016)

Figure 4. Limay and the river Seine, France. Photos: Laila Kolostyák.

Earth and grass

Soil consists of solid, liquid and gas. The solid part consists of mineral and organic matter including living organisms. The plants take up nutrients from the liquid. The gaseous phase supplies oxygen to the roots for respiration. The way agriculture exploits the soil and its biodiversity plays a part in the context of climate change, greenhouse gases and the release of carbon into the atmosphere. Grass and grass like plants have long been important to human beings. They provide majority of food crops and have numerous of other uses like feeding animals and turf houses. Grasses are familiar to most human cultures. (Grasty, 1999; Schärer, 2008.)

The sculpting process

The project recreated a piece of the arctic tundra in one of Europe's largest metropolitan area, Îls de France, (Région parisienne) with more than 12 million inhabitants. The idyllic Seine valley is home to many of France' largest industries like the car industry. In Limay recycling and destruction of industrial waste are a growing business.

Figure 5. The Torne River in summer. The ice storage of Icehotel in Sweden. Ice blocks of 3 tons cut out of the Torne river in March to be used the following winter. Photos: Laila Kolostyák.

Figure 6. The wrapped ice blocks at the ice storage of the Icehotel in Swedish Lapland ready to be transported to France. The ice arrives in France: -28 C inside the truck outside +24 C. 2 photos From the preparation of the site of the installation. Photos: Laila Kolostyák.

The natural ice brought to France came from the Torne River in Swedish Lapland, 200 km north of the Arctic Circle. The ice was harvested in March towards the end of winter when the ice layer was at its thickest. The ice was stored in an ice warehouse during summer and cut into building blocks before sent off to France in the autumn.

The ice reflects the site where it's formed. The slow running water of the Torne River forms crystal clear ice between 80–100 cm thickness. The Torne ice

Figure 7. The fitting of soil, grass and light together with the technical team from the city of Limay. The Seine river at the background. Photos: Laila Kolostyák and Josée Coquelin.

Figure 8. The Tundra by the river Seine. The ice blocks form a 6 meter and 1,20 meter high circle. The ice is covered by local soil and grass. Photo: Laila Kolostyák.

has few air bubbles and few natural cracks. The winter temperature is visible in the ice structure. Mild weather in early winter created a layer of opaque white ice. This gave the sculpture an extra natural dimension. 12 tons of natural ice was brought from Lapland to France to create a compact ice circle protected with a layer of French soil and grass on top.

Time is an essential part of the sculpting process. The time it takes for the ice to melt is given by the circumstances. As we built the sculpture the ice was already beginning to disappear. The ice melted despite its protection, and

Figure 9. The unwrapping of the the installation at the opening of the festival. (+24 C). Photo: Laila Kolostyák.

the size, mass, power and strength of the material was diminishing. No matter how much ice there was, the delicate metaphor for nature, cannot take heat. The ice disappeared in front of our eyes, and the process was irreversible.

The Tundra sculpture intends to raise awareness of the melting process which is taking place globally on an incomprehensible scale and with globally devastating consequences. The polar ice, glaciers and permafrost are melting at a high speed, with dramatic and tragic effects that many of the world's population have already experienced.

Figure 10. *The Tundra sensation.Photo: Laila Kolostyák.*

Figure 11. Headlines cut outs assembled Headlines cut outs assembled by Laila Kolostyák.

Figure 12. Outside ice is melting fast in the hot sun but inside the sculpture the grass and the earth protects the ice. Photo: Laila Kolostyák

Figure 13. Close up photo of grass and turf falling apart as the ice is slowly melting inside. Ice turns into water an disappear into the ground and the erosion of soil and grass change the shape of the sculpture. Photo: Laila Kolostyák.

My art is more of a catalyst to provoke questions and allow the viewer to explore personal meaning. Even though many of my artworks draw attention to environmental issues, my attention is also on the phenomenon of change itself. As ice, water takes on a temporary material existence. Its' ability to constantly transform according to given circumstances is the very essence of life. Nothing is certain other than change, and our ability to adapt to our surroundings, or change the world to suit our lives, is what intrigues me. By focusing on the moment of change, I try to confront the transitions of everyday life that none of us can escape. Questioning the nature of change also questions the essence of being.

Figure 14. Smelting process of the installation. Photos: Laila Kolostyák and Claudine Coquelin.

Figure 15. *The installation took one month to melt down. One year after the the circle shape was still visible in the new grass growing on the site. Photo: Josée Coquelin.*

The change that turns water into ice and vice versa is a matter of degrees. The slightest shift in perception can have huge consequences and possibilities for change. The impossible is nothing in this context; a few degrees north and we can walk on water.

Accomplishing the project was a great artistic challenge. The aim was by artistic means to focus on the global warming crisis by making it tangible. The basis is both ethical and political and the sculpture is an artistic adaption of the ecological process.

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Contributor Details

Anne Bevan is a visual artist and Head of Art and Design at Orkney College, University of the Highlands and Islands. Her research and artwork explores hidden or unseen things, histories, systems and change within our environment. Combining sculpture with photography, video, sound and text, she often works collaboratively with writers, poets and people from other disciplines, most recently with marine scientists and with archaeologists in Orkney.
Email: Anne.bevan@uhi.ac.uk

Dr Iain Biggs RWA is Visiting Research Fellow at UWE Bristol, Bath Spa, and Dundee universities. A former university employee, he now works as an independent maker, writer, doctoral supervisor, and researcher with place-oriented concerns, focused by his engagement with deep mapping. Relevant recent publications include 'Incorrigibly plural'? Rural Lifeworlds Between Concept and Experience in the Canadian Journal of Irish Studies (2014). In 2015 he won the RWA's Annual Painting Prize. He lives between Bristol and St. John's Chapel, Durham.
Email: iain.biggs@uwe.ac.uk

Glen Coutts is a Professor of applied visual arts and a docent at the University of Lapland. He was Reader in Art and Design Education at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow until April 2010. He write regularly about issues in art education, is currently Vice President of the International Society of Education through art and Principal Editor of the International Journal of Education through Art. In 2016 He was awarded the United States Society of Education through Art Ziegfeld award for outstanding international leadership in art education
Email: glen.coutts@ulapland.fi

Jane Downes is a Professor at the University of the Highlands and Islands, where she directs the Archaeology Institute based in Orkney. Jane has research interests in burial archaeology, particularly cremation, and in prehistoric and landscape archaeology. She also has research interests in the management and sustainable development of landscape and cultural heritage resources, and has involvement in the research of several World Heritage Sites in connection with this.
Email: Jane.downes@uhi.ac.uk

Mirja Hiltunen (Docent, Doctor of Art, MEd) is professor of Art Education in the Faculty of Art and design, University of Lapland, Rovaniemi, and a Visiting Professor of Art Pedagogy, Aalto University, School of Arts, Helsinki. She has been leading community-based art education projects in Lapland for over twenty years. The place-specificity, performativity and social engaged art are particular interests to her. She has presented numerous international research papers and published her work in journals, books and art exhibitions.
Email: mirja.hiltunen@ulapland.fi

Marlene Ivey is Associate Professor of Interdisciplinary Design at NSCAD University and an independent consultant (Creativekit). Interested in designing for sustainability of intangible cultures, her research is footed in the Gaelic milieu, where she has collaborated with Seumas Watson since 2011. Co-operating with members of the Nova Scotia Gaelic community, they created An Drochaid Eadarainn (The Bridge Between Us), an interactive online social space for Gaelic

language acquisition and cultural restoration. Ms. Ivey has published work in UK, Asia, Europe, Canada, Mexico and the USA.
Email: mivey@nscad.ca

Timo Jokela is Professor of Art Education and Dean of the Faculty of Art and Design, University of Lapland. He is leader of Thematic Network on Arctic Sustainable Art and Design, University of Arctic. Jokela works actively as an environmental artist and community artist, often using natural materials and the cultural heritage of the North and the Arctic as a starting point for his works. He has been responsible for several international and regional art-based research projects in the field of art education, visual art and design.
Email: timo.jokela@ulapland.fi

Laila Kolostyák studied art in Norway, Great Britain and the Netherlands. Many of her artworks draw attention to environmental issues. Since returning to Lapland ice has been one of her preferred materials. She often involves other artists, musicians, architects and entrepeneurs in her projects. In recent years she has completed several film projects and taken up drawing.
Email: lailakolostyak@gmail.com

Essi Kuure is a Researcher in the Culture-based Service Design Doctoral School at the University of Lapland, Finland. She has worked for several years at the University on multiple local, national and international design projects, focusing on knowledge and methods of service design. She holds a master's degree in industrial design and is currently pursuing a doctoral degree at the University of Lapland. Her research has emphasis on knowledge and methods of service design, social design, and co-design.
Email: essi.kuure@ulapland.fi

Annamari Manninen (M.A.) works as a lecturer in art education (focus on media education) and is also a PhD researcher in the faculty of Art and Design, university of Lapland, Rovaniemi Finland. Her current research is focusing on teachers and pupils perspectives on identity, contemporary art and using blogs as a learning environment.
Email: annamari.manninen@ulapland.fi

Heidi Pietarinen is Professor in the Faculty of Art and Design at the University of Lapland, Finland. She holds a PhD degree in textile design and her research has emphasis on knowledge and methods of textile design, textile art and textile history. She is curious about the complex narratives of multiple cultural influences told by textiles. They challenge the opportunities in writing, designing and mediating stories - designs can tell a story.
Email: heidi.pietarinen@ulapland.fi

Valery Sharapov (Candidate of Historical Sciences, Ph. D. equiv.), Senior Researcher of the Department of Ethnography (Institute of Language, Literature and History of the Komi Science Centre of the Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences). Field of research: traditional world view of the Khanty and the Komi, folk fine art traditions of Komi Old-Believers, ethnosemiotic, Finno-Ugric identity. In 1989-2014 took part in a field work in the Komi Republic, Tyumen and Archangelsk regions. Author of more then 150 scientific publications (articles and book chapters in collective monographies, encyclopedias, ethnographic atlas).
E-mail: sharapov.valery@gmail.com

Hannu Vanhanen holds a PhD in the field of photographic communication. He has worked as an acting Professor for Graphic Design 2014-2015 and Adjunct Professor for Visual Communication in the Faculty of Art and Design, University of Lapland since 2008. Before that he worked as a professor and senior lecturer at the University of Tampere. He has written several books and articles on visual communication, photography and design.
Email: hannu.vanhanen@ulapland.fi

Irina V. Zemtsova, (Ph.D., Professor) Head of the Department of Arts and Crafts, The Institute of Culture and Art, Syktyvkar State University named after Pitirim Sorokin. Member of the Komi Republican Union of Artists the Board of Artistic Experts in the Government of the Komi Republic. Professional interests: folk arts and crafts of native northerners, folk toys, wood painting of the northern regions as well as methods of teaching folk arts and crafts. She is also interested in cross-cultural comparisons and cultural anthropology.
E-mail: zemtsova56@mail.ru

LAPIN YLIOPISTO
UNIVERSITY OF LAPLAND

ASAD

UArctic