Every drawing is a testimony

Evelina Dovsten
Abstract

A self portrait. With an auto ethnographic study method and my own craft; glass making I examine tacit knowledge. A portrait not only of me, but also the human in need of control. An invite to look at our society and see how the measurable is in charge and positivistic science have the leading position in knowledge production.

I aim for the subjective, the knowledge stored in my body which is passed on through making, in to the glass to be kept.

Keywords: self portrait, tacit knowledge, craft, glassblowing, auto ethnographic, positivistic science, subjective, measurable, philosophy of science
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1. Introduction

Every drawing is a testimony
- Juhani Pallasmaa

1.1 Intention

I believe that there are certain things when it comes to making that we can not describe. Not only really talking about crafts it is everywhere in our everyday lives; skills that our body does that we hardly reflect on. This project is about describing tacit knowledge through my craft making, in theory and in the material glass.

My intention has been to find a new method to trace this other dimension of knowing and to illustrate the subjective and its importance in knowledge production, where the positivistic science have the leading position. By using an auto ethnographic method I have searched in my own craft; glass making. This has come to result in a self portrait in glass and transcriptions from sound recordings of me dictating while blowing glass.

1.2 Research question

How can I describe tacit knowledge through my craft?
To explore this —> is it possible for a glass object to store my knowledge?

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1.4 Overview

In the background I will introduce you to some previous work which can be in relation to this project. I also present theory and other artists that have been important for the development of the idea such as Jonna Bornemark’s *Det omätbaras renässans*, thoughts of objects as keepers of knowledge and Alice Andersson’s *Memory movement memory objects*.

In the theory chapter I give you a short intro to the philosophic history regarding tacit knowledge, also discussions regarding positivistic science and comparisons between the writing and glass-blowing processes.

Methods is were I present the sampling method inspired by the composer Nils Frahm. Descriptions of me trying to find the right methods for reveling tacit knowledge working with blown glass, transcribed sound recordings, collage and more.
It started with me reading Edmund De Waal’s *Hare with amber eyes* in 2012. I had been working with glass and more precisely studio glass for a long time already, apprentice from 2003-2006, and then continuing work as a production glassblower and assistant for studio glass artists & makers in Sweden and abroad. David Kaplan a Scottish studio glass artist who I worked for at the time gave me the book. De Waal put in to words what I felt while making, the repetition that’s not at all static. I saw a way of combining theory with practice and this made me come to Konstfack in 2013.

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2. Background

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Image 1. Me working at Lindean mill Glass, 2012

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2 Studio glass is a glass studio/hot shop for a smaller more studio based production of blown glass in comparison to glass factories.
2.1 Previous work on the theme

For my bachelor degree I did the installation *Verktyglighet* (image 2 and 3). An artistic research in muscular memory and bodily learning. By making the same glass shape repetitively for 120 hours I made a conceptual work where the viewer could study my bodily knowledge though a production series of glass. During the making I saved every bit even the broken ones in correct order and presented this with maker pen lines which highlight the mistakes and successes. This method of repetitive glass making I have continued to work with and developed in other projects for example in the piece *Ruben 10* (see image 3) which I made during a recidence at The Glass Factory in Boda Glasbruk in the autumn 2016. Here I studied the glass object as a keeper of knowledge. I chose an item from the museum grounds and collections. An ink holder made by Ruben Hjelm⁴ found in his cottage and made probably because he simply needed one.³ By remaking this ink holder I transferred knowledge from the object to my body from the previous maker. In my final installation you find a production series where you can study how the ink holder is repetitively made and how the shape is transferred to my body. In the installation the ink holder has shifted agency and has now turn into talk about the meeting between two different makers in two different times from industrialism to post industrialism; Ruben a glass maker working at the Boda glass factory 1910 and me remaking it over a 100 years later, a time when a maker can be seen as an artist, and Rubens old work space has been turned in to a museum.

³*Verktyglighet* is a Swedish title and a made up word by me, consisting of the words: verktyg(tool) and verklighet(reality).
⁴Ruben Hjelm(1887-1969) was a master glassblower working in the glass factory in Boda glasbruk. He lived his entire life in an smal cottege close to the factory. This cottege is preserved and still today kept as Ruben and his sister Cecilia Hjelm left it (1978). Jonsson, Magdalena, Boda Glasbruk Kulturhistorisk guide i glasbruksmiljö, länsstyrelserna i Kalmar och Kronobergs län, 2015, p. 20-21.
⁵This is something I think a lot of makers do. You need something and if it’s possible you make it yourself, especially if you have access to a workshop daily as Ruben did. For others this item can be classified as unique and exclusive but for a maker like Ruben this can be the easiest way and cheapest since you are at work anyway and employers often give you lunch break access to the glass studio.
In jan 2017 I showed the work *Test session 1; Microscope slides prepared with wineglass feet* (image 4 and 5) at the exhibition *Flux - moving through crafted spaces*. I placed a production series of wine glass feet on an enlarged microscope slide to study them. A mutation of the Verktyglighet-method where I used repetition and chronologically saved all pieces while making. This time I tried to combined it with text, small simplified notes, a description of each foot to talk about the difficulty in describing practical experiences in this case craft with words. This looking like fungus organisms on a microscope slide was an attempt of using a scientific aesthetic to question how we view craft and where craft can be found. The handmade is often viewed as something imprecise non objective ---> non scientific. But I find craft in the preparation of a microscope slide by a lab technician as well as in the blacksmiths forge or a glass studio.

Image 5. Evelina Dovsten, Test session 1; Microscopic slides prepared with wine glass feet, 2017

Image 6. Evelina Dovsten, Test session 1; Microscopic slides prepared with wine glass feet, 2017
2.2 Intellectus ←→ Ratio

I think the basic drive behind museums is curiosity. Curiosity about the world around us. Then we have this problem of finding order, because we have as human beings difficulties in accepting chaos. We need order. It gives us a sense of security and certainty. Everything should have its place in a system. It’s maybe a God given system or a more rational scientific system, but we love to make systems.\textsuperscript{6}

This quote is by Peter van Mensch\textsuperscript{7} and is taken from the introduction to the documentary \textit{Curiosity and Control}. Here I recognize something, and maybe most of all something that I see in myself. Trying to keep control, organize, sorting out impressions to understand, to learn. According to van Mensch I seem to be very much a human, but if I would like to make new discoveries in my work Jonna Bornemark\textsuperscript{8} says I need to let this go, and keep close to what Nicolaus Cusanus\textsuperscript{9} calls intellectus: the border to the unknown. Ratio is the opposite. Ratio is the structure made from positivistic facts. She exemplifies with elderly care and how a ratio is set up to structure the needs of the elderly which can be useful but if this is in too much control of the staff impairs them from making their professional assessment: using intellectus ←→ think in a subjective way which ratio never can do alone.\textsuperscript{10} Only using ratio you become a robot. Maybe effective according to what can be put in to figures, but still a robot. To not become that, I need to push myself out to that border of the unknown. Juhani Pallasmaa\textsuperscript{11} says that this is what art is for, to lead us to this threshold.\textsuperscript{12} If my art has an aim of leading someone else there I first have to go there myself.

\textsuperscript{6}Curiosity and control(2018), Biblom, Albin, Sweden, Alphaville AB, Sveriges Television
\textsuperscript{7}Peter van Mensch(1947 --), a museologist and professor of Cultural Heritage at Amsterdam School of Arts.
\textsuperscript{8}Jonna Bornemark(1973 --), phd in philosophy, researcher and tutor based at Södertörns Högskola.
\textsuperscript{9}Nicolaus Cusanus(1401-1464), cardinal, philosopher and mathematician.
\textsuperscript{10}Bornemark, Jonna, "Konsten under pedanternas världsherravälde", Konsthantverkarna, Södermalmstorg 4, Stockholm, 2018-11-12.
\textsuperscript{11}Juhani Pallasmaa(1936 --), architect, professor and writer.
2.3 The Keeper

As a maker I often study glass objects in my surroundings. I read them without being aware of it. How they are made, who’s made them, where they are made. By seeing for example a wine glass foot I can feel how it feels to make it. An anatomic explanation can be found in our brain according to Göran Lundborg\(^{14}\) --> In our brains the same area is activated when we read the craft of an object as if we would be making it ourselves. Another example could be if you see a picture of somebody running you can feel the moment in your own body by just observing. This mirror neurons have an important function when we learn new gestures not only in crafts, it adapts to all sorts of movement.\(^{15}\)

The object stores knowledge. Knowledge from its maker, is kept, preserved. Someone with similar knowledge or insight in the craft or making can read this out of a item by its visual appearance. Pallasmaa writes that by viewing made things/objects/architecture we get an insight in to the maker’s mind and fantasies. He means that our ideas first are pictured in our inner thoughts and even if it turns out a bit different in reality it bears fragments from its maker’s mental world.\(^{16}\)

If \textit{Verktyglighet} was one method of seeing and proposing tacit knowledge through glass, I have now researched how I can make a new method based on the idea of storing my bodily knowledge in an object. The idea came when I visited National Museum of Scotland in the summer 2018 and found: \textit{Demonstration center piece and stand} by F and C Osler (image 7). With the label text: “Glass manufacturers often made spectacular demonstration pieces to show off their manufacturing skills and techniques.” This made me think about the object as a keeper of knowledge. The piece was placed in their workshop made to illustrate their skills and what they were able to make. But I don’t think it is that simple. Glass is a material that is like water non crystalline, it is frozen in a state which the maker leaves it to be. The shape tells us about the making --> the body who made it, how it was made and the time it was made in.

I have been inspired by the artist Alice Anderson and her project \textit{Memory movement memory objects}(image 8 and 9) which talks about our relation with objects in our surroundings. In her performativework she is loading objects with value by covering them with copper wire. Like my intention of loading glass elements with my bodily knowledge she is loading her objects with memories and movement.\(^{17}\)

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\(^{14}\) Göran Lundborg(1943-->, professor at Lunds universitet and hand surgeon at Skånes universitetssjukhus.
\(^{15}\) Lundborg, Göran, Handen och hjärnan, Bokförlaget Atlantis AB, Stockholm, 2011, p. 63.
\(^{17}\) Andersson, Alice, Memory movement memory objects, Wellcome Collection, 2015.
Image 7. F and C Osler, *Demonstration center piece and stand*, 1865

3. Theory

3.1 Tacit knowledge… know-how… practical knowledge… a brief history

We can know more than we can tell.
- Michael Polanyi

Michael Polanyi\(^{18}\) is the founder of the term tacit knowledge. One example of this is the ability to recognize someone’s face, this is done without us being able to describe or distinguish exact features. He propose that this is found everywhere and central in all knowledge regarding our world.\(^{19}\)

But long before Polanyi’s wrote of tacit knowledge Aristotle\(^{20}\) divided knowledge into different fields: episteme, techne and fronesis. A quick explanation to this can be that episteme is what we call theoretical facts and secure knowledge often today found by positivistic science methods. Techne is the handicraft knowledge and skill of manufacturing. Fronesis is what we might call wisdom, an in-depth knowledge and practical wisdom often used in meetings between people.\(^{21}\) This terminology is still currently used in contemporary philosophy.

I would like to describe tacit knowledge as something that you rather demonstrate than tell. Often when people hear that I am a glass maker I get the question if I can describe how to make a wine glass. An impossible question to answer, this has to be seen, or to be fully understood it’s my view that it actually needs to be learned and made.

The phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty was in 1945 rebellious when he was describing the body and mind as one, none separable. And by that questioning the thought that knowledge is placed in our brain exclusively. But this old dichotomy was difficult for Merleau-Ponty to delete, and still today we often talk about the body and mind as separated.\(^{22}\)

Another important philosopher was Gilbert Ryle\(^{23}\) who put our knowledge into two categories: knowing that and knowing how. In this way he justified the existence of practical knowledge. Like Mearleau- Ponty he also talked about the knowledge as something that exists throughout the human being and also in its bodily actions.\(^{24}\)

\(^{18}\) Michael Polanyi(1892-1976), a scientist in chemistry and physics who later in life devoted himself to philosophy.


\(^{20}\) Aristotle(384 BC- 322 BC), acent philosopher.

\(^{21}\) Gustavsson, Bernt, Vad är kunskap, Lenanders grafiska AB, Kalmar, 2002, p. 54.

\(^{22}\) Ibid., p. 69.

\(^{23}\) Gilbert Ryle(1900-1976), philosopher.

Tacit knowledge is also referred to as practical knowledge. I have chosen the term tacit knowledge because I think it talks about something hidden, another dimension of knowledge while practical knowledge I think sounds so physical. I think this knowledge like Polanyi says goes in to more than just the physical experiences; it’s also psychical. Jonna Bornemark and Södertörns högskola often use practical knowledge, because the Swedish translation of tacit; tyst meaning silent, and Bornemark believes tacit knowledge not only has to be silent. She also says that to say it is silent might make the researchers stop believing that research is possible. But for me that paradox is intriguing.

So how did I learn the craft? How did I receive the tacit? In the beginning of learning something new I really had to let go of the control and above all trust someone else. Fortunately I was young which in my case made me trust adults more and the hierarchy in that way seemed constitutional.

It was a combination of demonstrating and complementary describing what to do. I was constantly looking at the masters moves and timing. I believe it is close to how a dancer learns new movements. Polanyi says that the apprentice has to engage in what can seem to be pointless in the beginning to reach further and be able to deepen the knowledge. This requires that the apprentice trusts his/her master. Mårten Medbo agrees with Polanyi and says that what might sound boring with repetition can actually be a satisfactory way to learn, and that this learning continues throughout the makers practice and that every moment of making is refining ones craft. During the years I have of course lost this trust on and off. but breakthroughs in my craft often came when I out of exhaustion gave up and made what I was told. Too tired to think. Just did. Then I did it again and tried to record it in my bodily memory. The repetition is key here. Richard Sennett is talking of the makers engagement in the process and the joy of doing something good for its own sake. Maybe this is an answer to why I have kept going so far, I have found a great pride in knowing a craft and refining it.

In my research of the inner and the bodily knowledge I have been inspired of Lovisa Ringborg and her work Imprints (image 10) which is talking about the mapping of the inner. Also Carsten Höller’s work Two Roaming Beds (Grey) (image 11) where you find two beds in which the observer was invited to sleep while the beds mechanically moved around in the space leaving a trace of your sleep or insomnia --> a trace of the subjects inner. Both Ringborg an Höller has chosen a strikt aesthetic in there work, which I think borrows the power of scientific aesthetics --> the controlled, sorted and above all convincing. But here used to illustrate the subjective.

25 Important masters for me has been John Vesanen, Linda Isaksson, Ebba von Wachenfeldt, Leni Bille, Fresco crew in the lead of Takeshi Tsujino and David Kaplan.
26 Mårten Medbo (1964 -->), artist and maker with a phd in crafts.
29 Richard Sennett (1943 -->), writer and professor in sociology.
30 Lovisa Ringborg (1979 -->), writer and professor in sociology.
31 Drömmar och fotograf: Lovisa Ringborg (2016), Bok, Bengt, Sweden, Sveriges Television AB.
32 Carten Höller (1961 -->), artist.

Image 11. Cartsen Höller, *Two roaming beds (Grey)*, 2015
3.2 Positivistic Science

Positivism or the positivistic science method\textsuperscript{34} was thought to solve all our human problems when it was born during the 1800s. It was mainly used in nature science and physics. Positivistic science stands for the certain and based of what can be experienced by our senses (what we can see for example) and this empirical method is important in the way it is as close we can get to reach absolute facts about our world. A good scientist has to be as objective as possible, preferably use a huge group subjects for study or a large survey material. In this big material a compilation is made and the subjective gets lost. Everything unable to be verified needs to be erased.\textsuperscript{35} But it is rational and very useful, IF used correct.\textsuperscript{36} An extreme version is scientism whose followers believe natural science alone to be the only way of understanding our world. This fellowship is beyond science and leans more towards religion.\textsuperscript{37}

I’m not against positivistic science, but I think we need more of the subjective voices in our studies to not forget how complex we are as humans. When the positivistic method is telling us to be as objective as possible we classify all of the subjective as a weakness. But what if it is like Polanyi exemplifies with; that all knowledge is tacit, then all of that would gets lost, and in a way all knowledge deleted from the study.\textsuperscript{38} I agree with Jonna Bornemark when she writes that positivistic science would gain from looking in to more intellectus-based research. I think art and making is important for our society and can contribute in the way that it can question the ratio norm by not aiming for the measurable result.\textsuperscript{39}

The beauty of the simplicity in the positivistic method is convincing and can be seen in Library of the human genome\textsuperscript{40}(image 12 and 13) a project were science and art meet. When I visited Wellcome collection in London this anonymous book shelf caught my attention. All of the books together represent a human body or more precisely the human genome mapped out and represented in written code. The human genome project is a collage of many individuals put together --> representing everyone and at the same time no one.\textsuperscript{41}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{34}The scientific method has two main directions one is the positivistic and the other one is called hermeneutic, and in the hermeneutic method the researchers refers to thier logical intelligen. This is often questioned by positivists who says this is non objective. Thurén, Torsten,Vetenskapsteori för nybörjare, Liber AB, Stockholm, 1991, p. 14-15, 45-46.\textsuperscript{35}Thurén, Torsten,Vetenskapsteori för nybörjare, Liber AB, Stockholm, 1991, p. 14-15.\textsuperscript{36}Paulo Maccarini, thoracic surgeon and a former researcher is a famous example of someone who didn’t followed the template correctly. In the name of science he pushed through methods which was un ethnical to say the least, and lied about research results. Dokument inifrån: Experimenten(2016), Lindquist, Bosse, Sweden, Sveriges Televison AB \textsuperscript{37}Bornemark, Jonna, Det omätbaras renässans, Volante, Stockholm, 2018, p. 156. \textsuperscript{38}Polanyi, Michael, The tacit dimension, Daidalos AB, Göteborg,1966(2013), p. 50-51. \textsuperscript{39}Bornemark, Jonna, Det omätbaras renässans, Volante, Stockholm, 2018, p. 258.\textsuperscript{40}The human genom project is a science project of mapping out the human genom, and the full sequence was completed and published in 2003. This is illustrated with the Library of the human genom at Wellcome collection in London. \url{https://www.genome.gov/12011238/an-overview-of-the-human-genome-project/(2019-03-14)}. \textsuperscript{41}Wellcome collection, \url{https://wellcomecollection.org/articles/WcvK4CsAANQR59Up(2019-03-14)}.}
3.4 Write making

To be honest my glass making skills are far more advanced than my writing skills. But when writing I often find myself in a similar state of concentration as I do when I’m blowing glass. My fingers meet the keyboard, if I would ask myself where a certain letter is placed on the keyboard I would hesitate, but if I let go, trust this know-how it’s there in my body and my fingers are hitting the right keys in dialogue with my thoughts.

When writing something new the thought can come that I don’t know what to write about, but I often experience that if I just start I know more than I think. Maria Hammarén\textsuperscript{42} views writing as a form of reflection and says that we are in a conversation with our text during writing. This is something that I recognize from my glass making process.\textsuperscript{43}

Helena Granström\textsuperscript{44} said that when she started to write she realized she was a goldmine! She experienced that she had knowledge she wasn’t aware of. Knowledge that is awakened in the act of making in this case -- writing.\textsuperscript{45} Pallasmaa agrees and he says that the act of writing is opening up for new thoughts and ideas and it can make you experience a sort of mental flow.\textsuperscript{46}

When I write of the importance of tacit knowledge it is important to mention that I don’t say that there is a better way than writing to communicate knowledge, I mean that there can be other ways as good or that methods can differ according to the specific situation. What I turn against is the high status the written has in our society, leading to placing tacit knowledge in an underdog position when it is not always suitable to be transferred into written text.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[42]\textsuperscript{42} Maria Hammarén(1953 --), researcher in work environment and technology.
\item[43]\textsuperscript{43} Alsterdal, Lotte, ”Dilemma i äldreomsorgen”, Vad är praktisk kunskap?, Jonna Bornemark, Fredrik Svenaeus, Söder-törns högskola, Huddinge, 2009, p. 171.
\item[44]\textsuperscript{44} Helena Granström(1983 --), writer and poet.
\item[45]\textsuperscript{45} Granström, Helena, Friday lecture, Kropp, kontroll & magi, Konstfack, Hägersten, 2018-11-30.
\item[46]\textsuperscript{46} Pallasmaa, Juhani, The thinking hand, John Wiley & sons Ltd, 2009, p.92.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
4. Methods

4.1 Samplings

It starts with a thought, something that happened when I blew glass or something I read and that turns in to be an obsession, and a continuous search begins. That it turns into being something useful in my artistic practice is not always clear in the beginning. Often it starts as a sidetrack, an interest. I deepen my search by trying to find more information, reading, studying. Connect ideas with each other, and link the theory findings with the craft findings, and process of refining the concept goes alongside with a continuous making period.

In this case I view the Nils Frahm concert at Berwaldhallen in Stockholm as a starting point. It was his method of playing and making music that struck me, and I recognized a will of being in control, alone. Nils Frahm is a composer and musician that makes everything himself in his compositions. He plays all the instruments and records sequences and combine this with other recordings also made of him. He is sampling himself. This way he can make everything, and control everything. No one has been interfering, so what we hear is a recording of his body alone --> and in that way his bodily knowledge alone.

Music is often played by several musicians in concerts and glass is also traditionally made in teams. By using a sampling method Frahm inspired me to do the same in my making. I wanted to convert this to my practice and make glass samplings, samplings/recordings all made by me and then assembled into collages, collages as keepers of my bodily knowledge.

I felt the need of a structure to begin making. A structure of making 10 samplings each day, and one of these samplings would lead me to the next shape, which would correspond with the next days sampling production of another 10, and 1 of those …and so on(image 15). But from the beginning I was aware that this structure would have to change according to how the work developed. Maybe this structure made me feel secure enough to start, it’s about control again. This structure was some sort of ratio I realized so I had to leave it. Inspired by Jonna Bornemark I knew I had to put myself into this intellectus mode, and try to avoid panic when feeling out of control.

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47Nils Frahm(1982 -->), composer and musician.

48To use samplings or cuts of music is not at all something that is unique or invented by Frahm, it is an established method making music.


Image 15. The first glassblowing method structure. This ratio had to be left for a more intellectus-inspired method. 2018

Image 16. Nils Frahm in concert, Berwaldhallen, Stockholm, 2018
From now on I would work more intuitive in the glass studio. One form leading to another form. This is also talking about a maker’s many choices and how form mutate all the time in a dialog with its maker. Like a writer is in dialog with the text, I’m in dialog with my material while making. Different states of mind or sometimes choice of equipment directed some choices but they are still mine in relation to them. I see my craft, my choices, my shapes as mutations of my masters craft and this I believe is to be shown in the final pieces. Another important thing according to the choice of what to do, was that it had to be challenging craft wise, because I wanted the concentration that this gives. David Pye would tell me to take a risk. In his theories regarding handicraft he says that the risk taking is the extension of the self and the individual. The opposite would result in a absence of the individual maker in the(in this case) sampling.

I use an auto ethnographic method in my work which means that I use myself as a study object. Not so far from what you can call a self portrait. Together with the theory of keepers of knowledge this results in a portrait of me and my bodily knowledge kept in the glass that was created of me/my body. In a way the information is all there in the glass made by me but I wanted to try to reach out for more and make it comprehensible. Amplify the personal experience. Try to theorize. I kept all my samplings made, even broken ones. I wanted to use not only the samplings representing the best in my craft. I was going to show when my making is failing, skill gaps, bad days, and stupid mistakes. This requires me to watch myself all the time to not be posing, I wanted to find a directness or rather honesty. Maybe there is a contradiction here? If I watch myself am I really myself then?

In Carin Ellbergs exhibition Selfportraits at Andréhn-Schiptjenko in Stockholm 2017 she showed 600 self portraits and reflects around the ability to capture an emotional state. Systematic painted since 1985. This structural way of searching the own body I recognize in this project as well in the way I make a lot of material in the beginning which I later during the assembling phase analyze.

I scheduled days in the glassblowing studio, days to make samplings. I try different ways of theoretically document the samplings. The first documenting method I called post blowing and involves me after I made each sampling to keep track of them in a notebook. I wrote about my experience while making it. But there was a big problem with this method because when I reached out for the notebook I had all ready forgotten most of it. I was in need of a more direct method.

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50David Pye(1914-1993), designer, professor of furniture design and wood turner.
51I also want to mension that this is from David Pyes theories regarding Workmanship of risk and Workmanship of certainty. Pye, David, The nature and art of workmanship, 1968.
52The auto ethnographic method was introduced to me by Cecilia Andersson a lecturer at Konstfack with a phd in bildpedagogik. This is method that has come to suit artistic research well. Frida Hållanders doctoral thesis Vems hand är det som gör?, and Anders Teglunds master thesis Att dras mot stadens ljusa lyktor are two examples.
53Carin Ellerberg(1959 -->, artist.
Image 17. My notebook. The postblow-method.
Notes from experimentation with samplings and dokumentation, 2018
4.2 Testimony & transcription

I continued my search after a way to document my making. While blowing glass you can’t hold up, you have to finish what you have started due to the sensibility of temperature change. Every gesture needs to be done in the right order and within a certain time-frame to reach the result in mind. The production process is fast if you compare with for example a ceramic process. I also should mention that I blow everything without moulds; more of Pyes risk.

The documenting method that I found most suitable was talking in to a microphone while making. I forced myself to try to speak out the thoughts that came, observations and bodily experiences. During making and recording I didn’t notice the full potential in this method, it was not until I transcribed the text that I realized I was on to something. By reading the transcription I understood that I had drained my body of knowledge that I didn’t know of, or previously never tried to pronounce. This made me see the work to not only consist of glass, the transcription was a result as well. The transcriptions created a distance which made it possible for me to view my making from another perspective. Another observation is that not only me as a maker is shown, me as a person is also shown in this dialogue with myself and with the glass.

\[ \text{transkriptionerna} \]
\[ \text{de} \]
\[ \text{När jag ser dagstagningsarna ser jag att kameran har sett mycket mer än vad jag har sett, alltså det är ett otroligt instrument att registera människosjälen.}^{55} \]

I continued to refine this method by starting to make recordings to all my samplings. I wanted to have lots of material to work with and chose from.

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55 My own translation into english: “When i see the camera shots from a days work I see that the camera have seen more than what I have seen, thus the camera is an incredible tool to register the human soul.” quote by Ingmar Bergman. Bergman i 4 akter(2018), Magnusson, Jane, Sweden, B-Reel Films, Sveriges Television.
"... forgot to lay out the blow hose. There... drink some water. And the time is, let's see. 10:39. Then I gather glass. Some pain in my right wrist. A bubble on the iron. Try to move it down the with tweezers. Goes quite well. A first bubble. I blow. I don't feel the wrist right know but it comes and goes. The right one. On the back of the hand. Put the jacks against the bubble. To even the bubble out a bit. And cools it. Compressed air. Place out the same block as I used last time and gather more glass. Thinking of putting another layer of glass before I take... pour som glass off in a bucket of water. Blocking. It is pretty pointy. Shape it with paper. Don’t know why I kept this pointy shape, that was stupid. That pointyness I will struggle with later. It was like I thought it was the final layer though I said it was just a first gather. Cools it. Quite bad shape for being a first gather but I go on any way. See what happens. Gather more glass. Sit down in the bench. Thinking of Ebba who always says that you should make a gate for yourself of the pipe when you go in to the bench. It's like they are flashing by all the time: all of them I have worked for, while I make. Strange I haven’t notice I do that before. Water on the paper. Again Ebba tells me to not make the paper soaking underneath. Stretch the shape and cut it down. Trying to avoid getting the gathering bubble I created last time. I cool the bottom and blow more. And heat. Sigh. I wonder if I can measure who I have got the most from just by saying how often I am reminded of them while I work? Cool bottom end. Talking about Ebba before I would have used a block to blow against. But I don’t that any more, now I use blow hose instead. A result of the Pilchuck stay 3 years ago. Blow one more time before I use blow hose. It is a bit crocked, but ok. See the dot after that point I did on the first gather, it’s still there. Mmm.. it starts to become so big so I have to make an effort. Im not comfortable with this amount of glass. It starts to collapse. Notice how I start concentrating because of the collapse on a certain point, so I don’t talk as much. What I now am trying to do is to heat as little as possible but still enough to be able to shape it, because then it might shrink and become a bit thicker. It is hard to remain the sharpness when I make bigger things. I will shape the sides one more time. I notis that I unconsciously adjust the size of the object being made to the size of the reheating unit I use. Right now it is in perfect size to this opening, I do it consciously some how. It’s like I’m comfortable. It is like the cells in my body just making what is comfortable, what just goes on. Laziness build in to the body, in me. Sometimes its like I blow to hard, when I use my hands more forcefully it is passing on to the blowing. The though about giving up is coming now. But I don’t do it. It is very thin in the bottom. The edge of the bottom. See how it goes with the punty. Gather glass on a punty. Marvel it. The glass is laying in the bench, running over there. Take the jacks. Tapp the punty and stick it on to the glass bottom. Doing this I feel that the glass is cold. Detaches fine. I put the pipe inte bucket so I can get in to the bench again. The punty is well attached actually. I see something looking like a wave where it is thin in the bottom which is not shaped correct…correct according to me. Focus on the opening of the glass to see how it is heating up, to understand when it is time to go back to the bench again and use tools. To see when it is hot enough to start working with again. Shape the opening to even out the cracks. Feels it. Cools the sides of it to keep its shapes. And blow in the opening. Center and heat. Have to do it again because it was not hot enough. I worry about the bottom which is too thin. Shape the sides. Drop the microphone.

Lose a bit of focus during heating. I feel a bit lost in how hot it is. I think it is hot in the bottom at least. Have to check. It is very crocked right now. Feels dangerous. The punty starts to crack. It starts to crack very much. See how long it will survive. Starts to turn faster and hope that the shape won’t drift away. But that is the risk now when it is this much unevenly thick. Use the paper next time I think. The though of giving up is returning. (Drop the microphone and it cracks when I take it off the punty)."
After a period of making samplings I entered the assembling phase, a time for reflection and another form of making. In contrast to the fast process of glassblowing this is a slow one and a lot of decisions had to be made. Like Frahm wanted to put my sampling together resulting in collages and self portraits. With a big collection of samplings an intuitive process had started and different combinations were being tested. A similar process was going on to the transcription material which I wanted to work with in a similar way by highlighting parts of text. A selection of samplings and transcription-samplings was going to be chosen for the final installation. I want to show them together and create links between them, one experiment to do this is to laser engrave one transcription sampling on to the glass in a frame which I then combine with a glass sampling (image 24). I use black frames with black plexi glass covered with a glass sheet to create a vague link to the self portrait. the same frame is used for the printed transcription-samplings.

Bia Mankell\textsuperscript{56} describes the self portrait to be a way for the artist to observe the self, the gaze and the mirror are two frequently used elements in self portraits. Mankell also describes how the mirror has affected our view of knowledge; to see is to know, and that the mirror often is seen as a reproduction of reality.\textsuperscript{57} Glass often works as a mirror, in my work the viewers can get a glimpse of their own portrait, their own view of themselves and reflect on their own subjective knowledge. In the black pieces the mirror effect is stronger. The black glass is also giving the clear glass a more distinct shape by its reflections. I decided to add another mirror in to the installation placed next to the transcriptions on the wall, a pause to give the observer an invite for self reflection.

The graphic aesthetic of mainly black and white is a flirt with science aesthetics again. This can also be viewed as a sort of Trojan horse, with the aim to charm the ratio-loving observer to get closer and tricked into looking at the subjective, and step in to intellectus for a while.

As I mention before this phase is a time for reflection and seeing how the project has turn out so far. The transcription samplings I didn’t see coming in the beginning. I think that method and result has been successful but I have also over time found problems, like how it has disturbed my work flow. Both in the way the microphone cord has been in the way and also dictating while making has made me unfocused. But since this is not an objective study of glassmaking, rather a subjective self portrait this might even make the work stronger.

\textsuperscript{56}Bia Mankell(1952 --), associate professor in art history.
Image 22. Test of assambling samplings, 2019

Image 23. Test of assambling samplings, 2019
Image 24, Collage; glass-sampling and laser ingraved transcription-sampling in black frame. 2019
5. Conclusion

I see myself as a maker and artist, and more precise a conceptual glass maker. Like many other
glass artists of my time\textsuperscript{58} I am hands on with my material in contrast with the Swedish factory tradi-
tions where artist and glassblowers practices was(is) very much divided. All the small decisions are
so important in the making process, all those decisions that are happening in dialogue with the ma-
terial, which is shown in my transcription-samplings. I can see my work fit in to the craft scene but
also in other art contexts. This work is somehow in between and would stand out as very conceptual
in most of the craft scene and in a more fine art context very crafty. My hope is to be right there in
both or something else; that I don’t know of yet.

Do I think it’s possible to describe tacit knowledge?
To describe and discuss tacit knowledge with a fellow glass maker I think is easier because there
is a chance that we have similar experiences. I think it is so much about the experience, and this
becomes clear in Bea Uusmas\textsuperscript{59} book Expe\textoectionen Min kärlekshistoria where Uusma researches
a disappearance and death of a research team from 1897 heading for the north pole. The Andrée
expedition is a mystery and Uusmas conclusion was found when she went to the exact spot were the
bodies was found and was able to empirically experience what Salomon August Andrée\textsuperscript{60} must have
seen before his death.\textsuperscript{61} Another example is to be found in physics where the researcher might end
up with a formula --> this can only be a representation and a sort of explanation. To fully under-
stand you need to do it on your own.\textsuperscript{62}

So it’s time to go back to my research question:
Did I find a way to describe tacit knowledge through my craft?
Yes, I believe all glass elements/samplings/objects bears my knowledge and can be read out of
them. All the choices that is there and is made during every moment of making is an evidence.
They are themselves the proof of my knowledge. But a fair picture of my knowledge they can only
give when they are assembled in the collages, where not only the more ”successful” results are
shown, but also the failures and mistakes. But this is my self portrait, some else may have portrayed
me in another way. I think the greatest finding I made during this work has been the dialogues dis-
covered in the transcription samplings. Dialogues between: me <-- me, me <-- material, me <--
philosopher/reference/other artist, me <-- what I have written in this paper.

\textsuperscript{58}E.g. Sara Lundkvist, Yoko Yamano, David King, Kristin Larsson and Riikka Haapasaari.
\textsuperscript{59}Bea Uusam(1966 -->), medic and writer.
\textsuperscript{60}Salomon August Andrée(1854–1897), engineer and explorer.
\textsuperscript{61}Uusma, Bea, Expeditionen min kärlekshistoria, Norstedts Förlagsgrupp AB, Stockholm, 2013, p. 270.
\textsuperscript{62}Granstöm, Helena, Standardmodellen, Svante Weyler förlag AB, Stockholm, 2018, p. 53.
When handing in this paper, I’m still in the assembling phase, trying out suggestions for the exam installation. Choices are being made regarding the collages, transcriptions and the formation. Again it’s important that all of those choices are mine from making the first sampling to what kind of mirror to use --> right now I’m considering the bronze shade...

- Evelina Dovsten
6. List of sources

6.1 Bibliography

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6.3 Image list

Inside cover image. Evelina Dovsten, glass samplings, 2019, blown glass, Stockholm, Sweden, image: Evelina Dovsten


Image 2. Evelina Dovsten, Verktyglighet, 2016, blown opaline coloured glass, whiteboard, marker pen, 80 x 120 x 350 cm, image: Evelina Dovsten

Image 3. Evelina Dovsten, Verktyglighet, 2016, blown opaline coloured glass, whiteboard, marker pen, 80 x 120 x 350 cm, image: Evelina Dovsten

Image 4. Evelina Dovsten, Ruben 10, 2016, blown opal black glass, table, photo, mirrors, marker pen, 200 x 200 x 300 cm, image: Evelina Dovsten

Image 5. Evelina Dovsten, Test session 1; Microscopic slides prepared with wine glass feet, 2017, blown glass, microscope slides, box for microscope slides, cut glass, marker pen, 90 x 90 x 120 cm, image: Evelina Dovsten

Image 6. Evelina Dovsten, Test session 1; Microscopic slides prepared with wine glass feet, 2017, blown glass, microscope slides, box for microscope slides, cut glass, marker pen, 90 x 90 x 120 cm, image: Evelina Dovsten


Image 22. Evelina Dovsten, Test of asambling samplings, blown glass, frame, marker pen, 2019, 20 x 30 x 40 cm, Stockholm, Sweden, image: Evelina Dovsten

Image 23. Evelina Dovsten, Test of asambling samplings, blown glass, frame, marker pen, 2019, 40 x 30 x 40 cm, Stockholm, Sweden, image: Evelina Dovsten

Image 24. Evelina Dovsten, Test of asambling samplings, blown glass, frame, marker pen, laser engraved glass, 2019, 15 x 30 x 40 cm, Stockholm, Sweden, image: Evelina Dovsten