Cover

Cover plays on the dubious meaning of the word. Firstly to conceal, protect, shelter or hide oneself (to take cover). Secondly as the front page or headline story of printed matters such as a book or magazine. Finally it is a tool to uncover a cover by looking carefully at its make-up, i.e. how things are constructed, but also consequently covered/hidden by different means. Cover is a continuous revealing and hiding (as make-up also is) by using aesthetic hegemonies in order to cover the sensitive perception of matter.
GLOSSARY CONTENTS:

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E.W: I agree, if one wants to look at the fundamentals of production one have to look at the economy of production. Institutional overheads has to be turned around and faced towards us when we are listening. We can no long stand behind and see as it happens, instead we have to refuse see the objectives and begin to organize. As you have earlier been talking about refusal, or the idea of what happens to people that are refused entrance, is that what happened in the movement? you basically bracket it and study it? This study began by looking at the foundation of the building and thus began to see the cracks. I mean what is the educational turn? and what are the reforms that we don’t want and want to be part of? With other words, one begins to notice the object of the the book, or begin to see the telephone as more than a communication device. The telephone as something more than a thing. I can clearly hear you and you can clearly hear me, but we can not know if a third party can hear this conversation. This is not the same as to see the end but to problematize the situation. To see beginnings rather than ends, or to see possibilities rather than impossibilities [excerpt from an interview].

This is an excerpt of the ongoing glossary of the research *Overhead and Behind*. It is not the end of the work and does not contain a conclusion, rather it is an attempt to draw out some of the key aspects connected with the research. The reason for structuring it as a glossary is because this format allows space for new entries, making it expansible as the research evolves, after I have left the Konstfack. *Overhead and Behind* relies much on examining what one can learn from different words. The function of the glossary is to assist the development of my practice as an artist. The glossary will allow itself this liberty, as the main motivations for writing are me learning about my practice and unlearning what one is expected to learn as artist. *Overhead and Behind* proposes irrationality, not in the sense of unquestionably following ones desire, but rather to insist on a leveling
of reason and knowledge. It will appear rational, as the context for making the research (the institution) is rationality (perhaps it only listens to rationality!). This is an attempt to mediate irrationality and insist on non-objective knowledge that can re-vitalize the valorization system it is part of. *Overhead and Behind* is best described as an ongoing learning exercise in three parts: *Working Conditions, The Refusal of Objects* and *Disturbing Distribution* (forthcoming). Through learning by doing, it unfolds new “episodes”¹ as an attempt to look at the act of orientating different standpoints. What combines the episodes is the act of working in collaboration with other theorist/artist/designers/choreographers etc. The episodes are often presented as performances or discussions.

The basic premise is that overhead and behind are both physical standpoints. Consequently the research examines these positions from a phenomenological perspective, as a lived process. The key aim is to connect the theoretical and practical parts by embodying the research. It thus aims to situate the orientation and location of the ground one views from. The task therefore becomes that in order to understand what is over-ones-head, one is required to examine the ground under the feet, which is the ground that enables me to formulate and reformulate viewpoints. The ambiguity of understanding is consciously played with within this text, as the research began as a response to study at art academy, Konstfack. Any academy is of course a site for learning, understanding and to prepare for work. In this instance understanding has double meaning, firstly to understand the ground that one stands on, secondly what it is that one stands under when standing there, to under-stand.² This phenomenological perspective is therefore a way to designate the ground where knowledge is being generated and requires one to “understand” the body as the generator for this knowledge, as the site for work.

¹ See the entry for episodes

² I like to thank the artworker Kevin Dooley who highlighted the complexity of the word “understanding”. Excerpt below from the episode *Cover story act II: A Footnote of an Object (revisited in the form of a play)* performed in Stockholm 2012, continues to discuss and play with this. In the roles me (editor), Sam Kennedy (Student body), Bernd Krauß (Fatherland) and Zoè Poluch (Mother Tongue).

Student Body: who is everyone? we do not understand?
Fatherland: It is good to make everyone think they understand
Mother Tongue: It is everyones choice to understand
Fatherland: Let’s outsource understanding so we know who is behind it.
Mother Tongue: Everyone understanding is behind!
Student Body: why is everyone behind it?
Fatherland: that way everyone understands that it is best to be behind
Student Body: but we do not understand.
Fatherland: What do you not understand?
Student Body: We mean we don’t understand, we don’t under- stand you.
Mother Tongue: What do you mean, you do not understand us?
Student Body: We mean we don’t stand under you
Fatherland: but without understanding, there is no progress
Student Body: We object!
Mother Tongue: What object?
Fatherland: An object?
Student Body: No, we object!

See: [http://www.1200m.org/jens/episodes/cover-story](http://www.1200m.org/jens/episodes/cover-story) for video and full script.
By choosing this orientation of this text, does not mean to enable a more “solid soil” (objectivity), rather it is, as all orientations are, a way to “put some things and not others in our reach” [Ahmed, 2007:152]. It is an attempt, following a feminist tradition, to see where one is looking, what lies behind my orientation, the spectral structures behind my back and over my head, in order to enable other points of views.

This glossary is an attempt to make more firm the writing practice related to Overhead and Behind and below is an overall structure for the research. Some glossary entries are more directly linked with the parts while other are more loosely connected, but all will draw on the learnings from the related “tools” and “episodes”. For a detail description of the separate “episodes” and “tools” please see: www.1200m.org/jens/overhead-and-behind.

Overhead and Behind

TOOLS:

www.1200m.org, The Hills, Enlightenment Hearts

PARTS:

Working Conditions, The Refusal of Object, (Disturbing Distribution, forthcoming)

EPISODES:

A.S.A.P, Letter Refused, The Hills an example, Cover Story, A Form of an Object, The anecdote of Success, WE in Transmission, Department Meeting, New Approach, Wild Horses


4 A more direct inquiry of the architectural working structure of Konstfack can be found in my friend and colleague Sam Kennedy’s master theses Why are all the chairs at Konstfack red? [Kennedy, 2012]. This “project” makes an excellent inquiry into what it means to take up a chair as a student at Konstfack. It aims to drive the theses that one have to sit uncomfortably in order to learn something new. I do not fully agree with this idea, but rather follow Jacques Rancière argument of “dissensus… a conflict between a sensory presentation and a way of making sense of it” [Rancière, 2010:139]. This does not mean that it has to uncomfortable, rather it means that it has to be a disconnection between senses, which could potentially be a euphoric (sit)uation.
Behind

The familiar world begins with the writing table, which is in ‘the room’. We can name this room as Husserl’s study, as the room in which he writes. It is from here that the world unfolds. He begins with the writing table, and then turns to other parts of this room, those which are, as it were, behind him. We are reminded that what he can see in the first place depends on which way he is facing [Ahmed, 2007:151].

This short entry will try to sketch up some of the concepts that are connected with the position of behind.

The first impression when thinking of behind is that it refers to physically stand on at the rear side of someone, or to physically place an object further back from another. Within Overhead and Behind, refers the notion of “behind” to the theory of vulnerability and the act of “slowing down”, i.e. not understanding, as well as to support, e.g. we are behind your ideas.

The act of being behind does not mean an individuals ability to not comprehend a thing or idea that is communicated, but rather it is an act of complicating (or over-standing) the communicated message, something which is often dismissed as negative within schools and professional surroundings. With this I mean; being behind insists on being an empowering position, as this inserts vulnerability aims to avoid authority.

In her essay A Cosmopolitical Proposal argues Isabelle Stengers for the idea of “slowing down the construction of this common world, to create a space for hesitation regarding what it means to say ‘good’” [Stengers, 2005: 995]. Stengers points to the danger of reproducing practices to become universal neutral keys and applicable for all situations [2005: 995]. Instead she argues for a practices that only has meaning in particular situations and because of this avoids authority. This is an act of adding perplexity to a situation, to slow down and look a skew and to insist on that “there is something more important”[Stengers 2005: 994] which is an ability is possessed by the idiot. The idiot “resists the consensual way in which the situation is presented and in which emergencies mobilize thought or action” [2005: 994]. This does not mean that the idiot knows what is more important, instead this figure only knows that there is something that requires hesitation. Being behind is to be comprehended through the means of translation, it is an interruption device that can be put into practice. It is a way to reorientate, to not look at what is in front of us within out reach, but rather what lies behind us. It is an ignorant supportive element where one stands “behind”in order to strengthen each other.
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Collaboration, Coming Together, Working Together and Cooperation

This entry will expand some notes related to collaboration, coming together, working together and cooperation. It is a response to the time I spent working at the artist run gallery Transmission in Glasgow and is based on a text originally written for Jakob Anckarsvärd’s anniversary catalogue for Transmission Gallery’s membership exhibition 2011, revisited here in the Grizzlyhoppers form.

I want to begin this entry with an anecdote, as I felt it related to my experience of coming together similar to the coming together of Transmission Gallery exhibitions. Grizzlyhoppers is a double dutch/basketball team in Stockholm. My friends and I began it in 2010 when we were new in town and did not have many friends. The setup is very simple: I will send a text message inviting people to join a game, battle or truce, every Sunday. People come join and run around. None of us really know the rules of the game, we are all at different levels (some are quite good basketball players, while others do not know the game) but together we find a way to play. Each game is followed by coffee and chat, where we can update and hear what people are up to in their lives. We were not many when we began playing and for a long time we remained around 4-6 people. Over the years the number has increased and nowadays I am texting approximately 30 people each week and around 15 join in. Grizzlyhoppers is a team whose members come and go, there is a constant flux of members. More importantly it is a great way to get to know know people. The longer we live in Stockholm the more people we get to know. Grizzlyhoppers is a great space for this, when meeting new people it is easier to sweat and have a game of basketball or double-dutch, rather than to go for a drink, which so often can be filled with pressure.

Transmission is an artist run gallery in Glasgow which I dedicated my full attention to between 2008 and 2010. It has existed since 1983 and has a committee that programmes and runs the gallery. I stumble with almost impossibility to write about Transmission without also writing about collaboration and fluctuating organizational structures, which is tightly interwoven with my own experience of running the gallery. Each

5 http://grizzlyhoppers.blogspot.se/
committee member devotes two years of their free time to organize the gallery activities, most of the time additional to their money-making job and/or studio practice. Once their two years are up, they are kindly asked to leave to make space for a new committee member, creating a continuous rotation of people and ideas. The purpose and consequence of having a rolling committee structure is that the gallery shifts in character and interest.

The main task of the committee is to serve the interest of the gallery’s members, which approximately, when writing this text, is 300 people. This, one should say, has been interpreted differently through Transmission’s brief history. However, the important idea connected to this is that the members can, at the gallery’s Annual General Meeting (AGM), disapprove the nomination of the sitting committee. Making the gallery run, at least theoretically, by its members. The significant concept underlying this model is that it shifts the focus away from the artists that show in the gallery and maybe also away from the committee who run the everyday business of the gallery towards the members who can with a majority vote over rule any decision. In the same way this text attempts to shift the attention away from the consumption of art to the context for art.

Let’s begin with one of the few things that has remained the same throughout the history of Transmission, the name. The verb of “transmission” is “transmit”, which is to cause something to pass from one place or person to another, or the act of sharing or communicating something. In an exhibition context the act of ‘transmitting’ is crucial, an artwork does not exist unless it is shared. When introducing Transmission gallery this is often the starting point for the discussion, but I hope to present a slightly different angle. I will discuss Transmission not only as a place for presenting art but also a place for creating social networks. Irit Rogoff quotes Jean-Luc Nancy in the essay *WE-Collectivities, Mutualities, Participations:* “‘There is no meaning if meaning is not shared,’... I would want to say that we are staging the possibility of a politics without a plan”. Elysa Lozano expands this in her text *Project Space Survival Strategies and the Future of the Art Economy* in which she states: “Work presented publicly creates a sphere where the audience collectively produces their meaning and thus participates in a political activity”. This arguably moves our concern away from the art presented to the creation of social communities. I will try to return to this later in the text, but please allow it to echo when reading the following passages.

One should also say that the image of how Transmission runs is more complex than what I will draw out here, as it includes the funding of the gallery, the gallery’s relationship to the city and the marketing of the city etc. However I am more keen to focus on Transmission’s role in creating a community. I am also not distinguishing between terms applied when talking about community and collaboration. There is a jungle of terminologies connected to these notions, which other people have successfully problematized and straightened out. I will just briefly say that in this text I will mainly make use of the term “collaboration” which refers to the process

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6 Transmission has some members outside of UK, however the majority of the members are based in or around Glasgow.

7 This text was published by ak28, a self-organized and self-funded artist run gallery in Stockholm, between 2003-2009.
wherein people “work together”- applying both the work of individuals and of larger collectives.

“Collaboration” suggests an open-ended method and concept, compared to “cooperation”, which underlines working together and benefiting from it. I will also talk about “working together”, as this focuses on “work” and being in a group and lastly “coming together”, which shifts the focus away from work to more social forms.

The Transmission gallery committee is a jumbled combination of 4-6 artists who most of the time have no experience or idea of how to run a gallery, curate exhibitions, organize accounts or of writing funding applications, in addition to this they usually don’t know each other prior to getting involved with the gallery. The committee is a group of amateurs that learn through doing and do things “wrong”. One should of course question what is considered right and wrong, in many ways I would say that what makes the gallery interesting is this unintentional questioning of pre-established notions. In my experience of working at Transmission, this disorder is important for contestsing the ruling order of presenting art.

The sitting committee nominates the new committee and, when I was there, we always tried to think of people outside of our realm of friends in order to expand the diversity of the interests on the committee. This way of coming together and later working together is what makes the gallery interesting.

Compared to commercial companies there is no pressure that Transmission should financially profit from the exhibitions and the committee has almost free reign to run the gallery in whatever way they want. This makes the gallery a flat, or at least a flatter, structure for working together. Ideas are presented by the committee as a cohesive decision. This does not mean that the committee always agrees but it was never a point, in my experience, where we materialized a decision without understanding its implications and reaching what Chantal Mouffe calls a “conflictual consensus” [Mouffe, 2002]. Mouffe’s concept of agonism is “to struggle with an adversary rather than an enemy, as in antagonism”. In Articulated Power Relations - a conversation between Markus Miessen and Chantal Mouffe, Mouffe distinguishes the understanding of “enemies” and “adversaries” in the following way:

The major difference between enemies and adversaries is that adversaries are, so to speak, “friendly enemies” in the sense that they have got something in common: they share a symbolic space. Therefore there can exist between them what I call a conflictual consensus. They agree on the ethico-political principles that inform the political association but they disagree about the interpretation of those principles [Mouffe, 2002].

Following the model suggested by Mouffe, one should aim for embracing difference and disagreements. This allows one to move away from the risk of “consensus of the centre”, which European-politics have so optimistically welcomed in recent years. The “consensus of the centre” is in many ways one of the biggest

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8 Mouffe, Chantal [2002] Politics and Passions, the stakes of democracy, Centre for the Study of Democracy, “what is important is that conflict does not take the form of antagonism (struggle between enemies) but of agonism (struggle between adversaries).”
threats to democracy as it arguably enables right-wing extremists to act as the only alternative on the political arena.⁹ Working together, with no assigned leader, allows for the possibility to re-shape and re-imagine the roles in a group at any given point, as positions can and should fluctuate between people. However one shouldn’t neglect the invisible working structures that often underline these constellations and it is important to actively try and speak about and refuse these structures.

There is no secret, collaboration requires communication, preferably good communication. To transmit and share a language, to understand and even translate, sometimes in consensus and sometimes in conflictual consensus, as outlined earlier. Collaboration is, in this sense, a way to transmit ideas (presenting artists and artworks in the gallery) but more importantly it is a way to entice discussions and communication among the audiences of the work.

There is a possibility to re-read transmission, not as a place of viewing art but as a space for discussion, both within the committee and outside of the committee. To define Transmission in this way attempts to say that a small group (the committee) wants through conflictual consensus to mobilize larger groups (the members), in order to create community.

At the moment social networks are more established than ever. On the Internet one can find numerous examples of self-organized social networks. Compared to Transmission these communities are also often self-supported and can exist globally. They are sometimes so globally expanded and large in their size that we don’t even consider them to be self-organized anymore. In these networks the working together is more complex than ever, it is often generated by the users without them even reflecting on it. The online collaborative encyclopedia Wikipedia is one example of this. Wikipedia is a free non-profit web based encyclopedia that can be edited and altered by anyone who can afford a computer. In many ways Wikipedia is questioning the very notion of knowledge and our definition of defining, as it keeps itself editable. This framing of knowledge allows terminologies, notions and concepts to change, as an undefined net-community re-edits and re-thinks concepts. This is information in its purest sense, as similar to all communities, it is constantly in-formation. Wikipedia defines a community as “a group of interacting people living in a common location”. It later continues “...the word is often used to refer to a group that is organized around common values and is attributed with social cohesion within a shared geographical location...”. Compared to the Internet networks such as? this is a definition of a community comprised of a group who share a geographical location.

While Transmission changes, both within the committee and also its members, it remains located in Glasgow and a members based organization. This is also why the Transmission Annual Members Show is the main reoccurring point of consitiency, in what would otherwise seem like a constant flux. No matter who runs the gallery, the members show reoccurs, as the last show before the summer break, as one of the most important

⁹ Mouffe, Chantal [2002] Politics and Passions, the stakes of democracy, Centre for the Study of Democracy
exhibitions in Glasgow. It is the exhibition where the gallery members come together to collectively exhibit in the gallery. It is also the departure and destination of this catalogue.

This exhibition invites all members to submit one piece of artwork for a group show that normally comprises more than 100 artists and artworks. Although it looks hectic in its formal presentation and does not do justice to many of the displayed works, the exhibition is one of the most important for the gallery. From experience I know it can be hard to get around to the different studios and see artists’ work. It can also prove difficult to see exhibitions, when one spends so much time planning for Transmission (in fact, seeing art can be the last thing one wants to do). Therefore the members show is an important exhibition to meet and see what people have been working on throughout the year. In many cases, when I was on the committee, an artist’s contribution to the members show was the initial point for later getting in touch with them and beginning discussions about a potential exhibition. It is also an exhibition where the committee, newly graduated artists and internationally celebrated artists exhibit alongside each other, in no hierarchical order. In this way relations between artists, that perhaps would have never met, are established.

While the role of the committee is to work together, the role of Transmission, and especially the members show, is the gathering of “coming together”. Coming together is, I think, even more valuable than working together, as it is a primitive collaboration. It is the potential for anything, which is what makes it exciting. So while the members show is one of the busiest exhibitions in the sheer quantity of work shown, it is also one of the busiest gatherings for the Glasgow art community. It is the time to socialize and enjoy a beer together. It is also the time when one gets introduced to new people, extending and strengthening their networks. I say it again, the members show is important for the gallery, but also for the members. Hence I am never surprised when to find the member show listed on artists’ CVs. Although coming together is not collaboration per se, I would argue that this social activity forms the basis for artists to begin collaborating. It is a coming together for potentially later working together. It is a place where a circle of friends are re-shaped and re-imagined and new social communities are created.

Allow me to revisit Grizzlyhoppers here, as this is a micro-example of getting together similar to the one of the Transmission members show preview night. We get together and play, then afterwards enjoy a beverage (the beer at the opening) and talk about our life/work. The meeting is made possible through an extended realm of friends, who imagined we would all share common interests. Most of the time these common interests are related to art, performance and how this is distributed and shared. Interests that often exist outside traditional commercial structures for presenting and selling art, preferring instead a model of exhibition practice that is often communally imagined, communicated and translated. It’s a creation of social networks that does not necessary follow the pre-existing paths when presenting art, but instead remains plural and full of potential directions. It is not a cooperation which works towards a goal, instead I would argue, it is a collaboration where a group of people work together without an end, as an aspiration of learning together and producing meaning that can be shared and contested in groups and new social constellations.
Problems remain; does it make any difference to collaborate? Does it produce a better result? Or how does one sustain these collaborations? I will not be able to conclude this here, but collaboration does not need to exist forever. Collaborations can be temporal, fluctuating and it is often even good if they are. So are collaborations important? Of course, as collaborations are communal, plural, political and contains all the potential ingredients to shape an alternative to existing structures. Collaboration has the potential to create communities, macro and micro, and these communities can create new constellations making what seems impossible, possible.
Episodes

This entry gives a quick contextualization of the choice of the word “episodes”, which is a term that returns throughout the Overhead and Behind. It is easiest to describe episodes through introducing www.1200m.org which is one of the main tools for making the research.

Expanding and redoing my website became key to publicly making sense of my doings. This place was initially set-up in 2005, as I wanted to create a site which was not be tied to an individuals name but rather would function as an umbrella structure for practices that I found particularly interesting. Each practice is allocated a space, which can be used in whatever way preferred.10

Beginning at Konstfack I invited the artist and designer Pål Bylund to help me redesign my part of the website.11 I wanted it to become a space where my research sequentially could be collected, archived and made public. My part is structured in five sub-parts: about, episodes, links, relevance, publications and upcoming. Most of the parts are self-explanatory, but I will quickly contextualize “episodes” and “relevance”, which are the two main parts I am making use of.

Relevance enables me to upload a registry of material that relates to my doings: e.g. films I see, texts I read, sketches, sounds I hear etc. Episodes are basically art works, but by renaming it in this terminology is an attempt to ascribe a new order of value. An episode hints that the works are connected and in flux, one episode comes from and will be followed by another. This way episodes are a series of events (or a series of episodes) and indicates, continuation and a trajectory. This does however not imply an end or a direct aim of the work, as it is made, in time, duration, speed “as the world turns”12.

An episode is continuously made public, meaning that it unfolds the material in the making, allowing the process to be transparent. Making the making of an episode public inserts a revaluation of the end, as it allows “(non)significant moments in a research, generating a myriad of traces, evidences suggestions etc. and consequently overcoming the weight of the final presentation” [Kunst, 2011: 17]. This act implants a greyscale into the understanding of concepts such as “public”, as it creates, what I will call, a “hyper-public”, which the moment an episode meets an increased public situation, e.g. an exhibition, performance event etc. In these

10 At the moment there are seven artistic practices and projects represented: Giles Bailey, Kevin Dooley, myself, A.S.A.P, Nuts and Seeds, Draw or Die and Grizzlyhoppers. There are also other non-public initiatives connected to the site, e.g. Schoolworks, which is a research platform that examine the relationship between work and school and school and work, or the research Troubling Research - Performing Knowledge in the Arts.

11 www.1200m.org/jens

12 As The World Turns is the longest serving tv soap-opera. It was canceled in 2010 after broadcasting for 54 years with an amazing number of episodes 13,858.
situations, one should insist on letting the *episode* unfold in its own pace and reject the instinct to work towards the completion. This means that the *episode* should be possible to show in hyper-public setting at any given point, sometimes as completed and sometimes in a more drafted state.

Temporality is a crucial component when insisting on this renaming of art work to *episodes*, as temporarily is not to follow a trajectory that works towards a goal and is instead an ongoing insertion of public nows.
Magic

Life is but a motion of limbs... For what is the heart, but a spring; and the nerves, but so many strings; and the joints but so many wheels, giving motion to the whole body... [Hobbes, Leviathan]

The body, then, enters the center of social policies... as container of labor power, a means of production, the primary work-machine [Federici, 2005:??]

This entry will connect the body, work and ideas of unproductive and reproductive labor, as an attempt to look at process as production. I will ground my argument on the idea that work more commonly happens outside the time officially designed worktime.\textsuperscript{13} Students are workers, as students often have to work besides our studies. Conversely workers are students, pushed back into education in order to re-skill.\textsuperscript{14} In this entry I will make claim that rationality has superseded magical powers (imaginary powers) and that the body is a container of these magical possibilities.

\textbf{Workers Entering the Factory.} This image of students entering Konstfack was made during my first year and was juxtaposed with a still from Louis Lumière classic film: \textit{Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory}. Konstfack is a former Ericsson factory and was turned into a school in 2004.

\textsuperscript{13} See: \textit{Student Workers Inquiry Part I: Soil} [Dooley, 2011]

\textsuperscript{14} It is here interesting to consider that Konstfack is the former factory of the telecom company Ericsson. The interior has been redesigned when it was made into a school, curiously keeping the layout where the boss (the professors) can overview the workers (the students), as their offices are located above the design students studios. See \textit{Letter Refused} forthcoming in \textit{Konstfack School Paper #1} for a longer footnote on this, or Sam Kennedy \textit{Why Are All the Chairs at Konstfack Red?}
I will begin this inquiry by drawing on Silvia Federici’s analysis of the transformation of the human body by capitalism made in her book *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. This book offers a detailed account of the relationship between the witch trials of the 16th and 17th centuries and the rise of capitalism, I will summarize the parts that relate to my research.

Federici’s analysis puts forward the argument, that in order for capitalism to rise “the body had to die so that labor power could live” [2005:??]. While it is not the materiality of the body that had to die, rather the idea of the body as being a container of mystical powers, of magic. This idea had to be destroyed, and was so, through classifying “irrationality as a true form of crime” [2005:??]. This was done through inventing the model of the state, Federici’s account continues, which “destroyed a vast range of precapitalist beliefs, practices, and social subjects whose existence contradicted the regularization of corporeal behavior promised by mechanical philosophy” [2005:??]. Unproductive” activities, such as play etc. had to be forbidden in order to create an hierarchization between productive and unproductive activities.¹⁵ According to Federici, the body had to undergo a “scientific” shift and become mechanicalized. Limbs, muscles, bones etc. had to be dissected, pulled apart, rationalized and studied. This shift corresponds with the passing from astronomy to social sciences (another rationalization) and produces the human body, as the receptacle of labor-power (however this had to be hidden in order to develop a hierarchization of work).

We see, in other words, that the human body and not the steam engine, and not even the clock, was the first machine developed by capitalism [Federici, 2005:??].

The workers body had first to be disempowered in order to ascribe additional value (surplus value) to the result of what the body produced (the commodity). The body is thus rationalized and controlled by social science (state), which means that it becomes a task of organizing social-bodies.¹⁶ In his diploma work, *SOIL: Student Worker Inquiry*, spent Kevin Dooleymuch of his time analyzing and translating texts by Mario Tronti from German to English, in order to see to what extent the social-factory hypotheses is valid today [Dooley, 2011:2]. I will not enter into detail of this theory as this is thoroughly explained in Dooley’s essay, instead I will highlight some themes that relate to *Overhead and Behind* and this glossary entry, *Magic*.

In viewing the body as a container of labor-power (consequently the provider of capital), the worker becomes the seller of labor-power, and consequently a capitalist.¹⁷

- the idea that it is "working people" who are the true "givers of labour"... [is] Untrue...The truth of the matter is that the person who provides labour is the capitalist. The worker is the provider of capital. In the

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¹⁵ Perhaps this is especially shown in the forbidding of “unproductive” forms of sexuality, e.g. homosexuality

¹⁶ Through, self-discipline, self-control, self-development etc.

¹⁷ One should clarify that there is a key difference within Tronti’s work between labor and labor-power. Labor is understood as the activity of producing while Labor-power as a person ability to work. Labor= work act, and labor-power= work capacity (emphasizes are mine). [Dooley, 2011:21]
reality he is the possessor of that unique, particular commodity which is the condition of all the other conditions of production [Tronti, 1976].

So when an employer hires a worker, the agreed upon wage is for the work-capacity, for the labour-power, which is itself the property of the worker, but the wage is paid only upon the consumption of that labour-power, and its subsequent transformation into capital [Dooley, 2011:21].

The worker being the capitalist, selling his/her labour-power and time means that in capitalism the value of the labour-process has to be less than the value of the product. This means that into the product (the commodity) must be inserted a mystified value that is higher than the labour value. The commodity labor power is sold andvalorized in the form of a wage. The devaluing-process of labour power, through the wage, is perhaps most strongly manifested in the separation of productive, unproductive and reproductive work. The difference between these types of work is that productive work is waged work while reproductive work is “the necessary labour, the work done in order to reproduce the conditions of work and the workers themselves” [Dooley 2011:27]. Perhaps this develops the marxist understanding of reproductive work, to not only including how humans reproduce biologically, but also expands to “how we care for one and other, how culture and ideology are reproduced, how communities are built and rebuilt and how resistance and struggle can be sustained and expanded” [Haiven, Federici, 2011]. Reproductive work has been key in Federici’s research and her involvement with the Wages for Housework movement. Wages for Housework sets out, as the name suggests, to argue for wages for doing housework. It was always contradicative, Federici herself once wrote Wages Against Housework [Federici, 1975]. Wages for Housework could only be “realized in a revolutionary situation where capital and the state have been eliminated from the situation” [Vishmidt, 2012]. Wages for Housework is first and foremost a wage which recognizes housework as work and that this exploitation of unpaid labour goes unchallenged and unseen in society [Federici, 1984:340]. Secondly it recognizes that housework is a common form of work and raises the possibility to uniting women struggle, who are the main doers of this type of work. It was a negation of labour of redefining reproductive as productive labour. The strategy is simple; rather than alienating women, who wanted to work at home taking care of their families, by telling them to get a job, Wages for Housework sets out to find common struggles that can unite women. Housework is reproductive labor that all share.

We believed that the women’s movement should not set models to which women would have to conform, but rather devise strategies to expand our possibilities [1984:340].

The school is another site of reproductive work, as it reproduces the workforce. That is to say, it produces graduates, the future workers, a primary capitalist commodity. Work done within the academy is more and more

It is interesting to think about this in relation to Dominique Laporte book History of Shit, which follows the byproduct of human (shit) transformation and mystification into a commodity, through religious mystification. Is the act of shitting a labor process?

Wages for Housework was a feminist marxist movement in 1970’s that was initiated by Selma James, Mariarosa Dalla Costa and other key feminist activists and writers.

Vishmidt, Marina, 2012, Counter (Re-) productive Labour http://autoitaliasoutheast.org/blog/news/2012/04/04/counter-re-productive-labour/ (06/04/2012)
becoming essential in order to get a job. Lately one has witnessed educational cuts around Europe, even Sweden has been subject to cuts. Upon my arrival to Stockholm in 2010 I was confronted with the reform Govt. Bill 2009/10:65 worst known as Competing on the basis of quality - tuition fees for foreign students.21 As the name entails, this reform inserts tuition fees for “third country students”22 meaning students from outside EU/EEA state or Switzerland. In my first year at Konstfack, I unfolded the episode A.S.A.P together with Maryam Fanni and Behzad Noori that aimed to discuss this governmental reform.23 Practically this reform means that it will cost 265.000 Swedish crowns per year to study at Konstfack.24 Using artistic means we aimed to generate a dialogue among students and staff at Konstfack, as we felt this reform had not been discussed within the academy. We learned a lot, even if we never generated an open discussion around the subject. We learned that this episode was more interesting for galleries than to the students and staff at Konstfack. More people outside of Konstfack knew about A.S.A.P than people within the school. We also learned that everyone was against the tuition fees. One can put it like this: The students blamed the teachers/professors for not doing enough, the teachers/professors blamed the administration for not doing enough, the administration blamed the rector for not doing enough, the rector blamed the educational department for not doing enough, the educational department blamed the government and although we never managed to arrange a meeting with the people in government responsible, I am certain that they also would have blamed higher instances.25 Although students and teachers cared about the issue and supported us, no one did anything.26 Teachers did not join our meetings, nor did we generate a debate over our heads concerning the subject in closed off meeting rooms (at least not one noted in minutes from meetings).

21 The Swedish name for this reform is Konkurrera med kvalitet - studieavgifter för utländska studenter http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/12798 6 april 2012
22 This is the phrase used by the government.
23 According to our manifest, A.S.A.P may stand for Academy of Students Against Privatization or Artists in Solidarity And Protest or Articulate See Align Postpone or Ask Schools About Privatization or Artist Showing the Academic Poverty or Act as Soon As Possible. See: http://www.1200m.org/jens/episodes/a-s-a-p for more info.
24 This roughly translates as 30,000 Euros
25 One can also look at this in this way: students felt they had done everything they could to stop the reform but that the teachers/professors did listen, the teachers/professors felt they had done everything they could to stop the reform but that the administrative did not listen, the administrative felt they had done everything they could to stop the reform but that the rector did not listen, the rector felt he had done everything he could to stop the reform but that the educational department did not listen, the educational department felt they had done everything they could to stop the reform but that the government did not listen, etc...
26 Although this is looked at in a microcosmos, it is interesting to think how this function outside of the white walls of Konstfack. To see how decisions are distributed and pushed from one table to another, where no one has the overview to see all parts of what they are deciding. More commonly to distribute tasks so that the state can take a backseat, or withdraw their responsibility completely from the decision. The curator and critic Simon Sheikh highlighted this in a lecture at PAF (Performing Art Forum) summer school 2011, where he suggested that privatization of the state that has been happening around Europe the last decades, and which normally is seen as conservative politics to decrease taxes etc. could also be viewed as a withdrawal of responsibility, as the government is not responsible if the rail system does not work, or if the hospital is doing a bad job. One can perhaps say that this makes it harder to criticize conservative, market orientated politics, because there is nothing to criticize, everything has been outsourced....On the other hand one can criticize that, i.e. the privatization and the withdrawal of taking responsibility.
Our strategies to raise discussions were diverse including open breakfast with the rector, making reading compendiums, holding talks, arranging detention seminars in the rector of Konstfack’s office, making the slideshow *The Last International Students at Konstfack* etc. One of the more interesting strategies we used was to apply for money from Konstfack yearly internal scholarship meetings, which gives out small grants to students. We applied with the proposal *The Structure of a Frame*, which was a “project-proposal” (see entry for
This proposal was an attempt to find strategies that would sneak into the administrative areas of Konstfack. It aimed to unlock the application process and all complications related to that, by collectivizing and consequently politicalizing that medium. The overall purpose of A.S.A.P was to question the government’s way of increasing quality within education. According to governmental statement "the change [the reform] intended to ensure that Swedish higher education institutions compete internationally on the basis of quality, not on the basis of free tuition." Instead, we argued that this reform decreased the quality as it disables diversity, through inserting economic hinderances to access (See entry for “objects”). Looking back, my intuition is that we did wrong when trying to meet their argument with their methods. We put statistic against statistic, language against language, money against money, etc. What we did not do; was to insist on a completely other valorization system and “refuse work” [Tronti, 1965] or following Wages for Housework logic, A.S.A.P should not have demanded that “education must be free”, instead argued that education should be waged. That one should be paid to study. This would have been a radical move towards questioning the overall hierarchy of labour. The ironic part is that the reform creates an economic catastrophe towards the future work force, as some people can’t afford it. It is in other words, a major cut in the 

27 The Structure of a Frame

I would like my proposal The structure of a frame to be considered at Konstfack’s next scholarship committee meeting. The funding of 265 900 Swedish crowns will go towards the costs of studying for one year on the masters programme at Konstfack and towards the application fee of 900 Swedish crowns.

During this project I will continue to develop my research, which explores notions of what transpositional possibilities can be.

The structure of a frame is part of an ongoing research project entitled: Intersectional Structures; The Politics of Space. This research consists of a series of events, through which I aim to question the crucial role that “location” and “positioning” play in the production of art and culture. In an artwork later this year I decided to elaborate on the discussion of what location is and how it can be publicly discussed. Although un-concluded it aimed to discuss how collective working strategies within artistic production can create “Public”. One of the focus points for this project is to look at the new reform agenda regarding tuition fees for non European students. I consider this to be part of a larger context which leads to a privatization of thinking.

This economical change will have a huge impact on the working conditions within the academy and also within society at large. The new circumstances risk establishing an economic border and consequently may bring into question the fundamentals of a democratic society.

In the forthcoming production, as part of the masters programme at Konstfack, I will aim to focus more on concepts related to “positions” and “position-taking” as a mode of intersectional thinking. I am especially keen to develop a thesis that explores the crucial role played by economic constraints, in allowing transpositional possibilities to exist, within the field of knowledge production.

The project will perform an occupation of space, as a political act. It will begin by inviting thinkers from various backgrounds to a series of talks, on the cultural economy and the importance of taking a position. This think tank will provide the platform for the ongoing research. A forthcoming publication will later be produced which will aim to “demonstrate” the various transpositional perspectives that will arise from “The structure of a frame”.

On this endeavor I would appreciate your support.

The emphasize are mine. (A.S.A.P was not granted any money)

student body.29 George Caffentzis has said that rises in tuition fees effectively function as wage cuts. I quote Dooley quoting Caffentzis’ essay *University Struggles at the End of the Edu-Deal*.30

He [Caffentzis] states that “with the elimination of stipends, allowances, and free tuition, the cost of ‘education’, i.e. the cost of preparing oneself for work, has been imposed squarely on the work-force, in what amounts to a massive wage cut”. [Caffentzis, 2010] Thus what’s left is a system whereby one has to pay (and pay a lot) in order to have the chance to access waged work [Dooley, 2011:9].

This is the goal for a capitalist, to devalue work, to unwage work, as this increases the profit. Federici argues that this begins in the 16th century, with the alienation of the body (creating the work machine), concurrently with the enclosure of the commons (forcing workers to earn free time) as well as the outspread witch-hunt around Europe (oppression of women’s right and rationalization of science and knowledge).

By creating unpaid labour or paying for some labour and not other through the means of wage, capital transforms and rationalizes labor-process so that it becomes productive, i.e. it creating hierarchical difference between productive, reproductive and unproductive labor, while all depend on the other. A lower wage inscribes higher profit for the capitalist, whose primary aim is to make as much capital as possible from the “valorization-process”31. The capitalist goal is to devalue waged work turning it into unwaged work, making productive and

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29 An excerpt from the play, *Cover story act II: A Footnote of an Object (revisited in the form of a play)* cuts the cake in order to serve it.

Mother Tongue: We will just cut the objects
Mother Tongue: just the objects
Fatherland: the targets
Student Body: the body
Mother Tongue: The goal
Student Body: Sculpturing
Fatherland: The form
Mother Tongue: this is the reform
Student Body: Please do not cut us!
Mother Tongue: This is the body
Student Body: We are the body, but scaled down into one person due to budget cuts and practicalities for being here tonight.
Fatherland: Always blaming me for everything
Student Body: No...
Mother Tongue: Let’s make the cut
Student Body: No.
Fatherland: Its just a small cut
Student Body: No...
Fatherland: No-one will notice.
Mother Tongue: One can say that things gets sharper and quality increases when one cut things off.
Student Body: Do you not hear us? we don’t want to be cut...
Fatherland: Yes good formulated! We increase quality... and if we cut off the infected parts, the rest of the body will survive. In fact I don’t think anyone will notice, as infected parts are unwanted. Later we can re-define the infected parts and cut another small part.
Mother Tongue: Great idea, lets cut everyone except the ones with the “right” mother tongue.
Fatherland: Very cute, lets execute this.

See: [http://www.1200m.org/jens/episodes/cover-story](http://www.1200m.org/jens/episodes/cover-story) for video and full script.

30 To read Caffentzis article see: [http://www.metamute.org/content/university_struggles_at_the_end_of_the_edu_deal](http://www.metamute.org/content/university_struggles_at_the_end_of_the_edu_deal)

31 The creation of commodities.
unproductive labor the same by having us work for free, perhaps best summed up in the term “playbour”\textsuperscript{32}. This is a transformation of labor where workers should not only work for free, but even in some cases (as with eduction), pay for working (in the form of tuition fees).

Paying to work is a form of “primitive accumulation”\textsuperscript{33} something Federici sees as essential character of capitalism, compared to Karl Marx who claims it as a precursor for capitalism. Primitive accumulation is when “capital pays the worker non-reproductive wages, (wages to low to produce a new generation of workers)” [Dooley, 2011: 29]. Looking locally one can see students in academies who are working in competitions to develop products for companies, furniture, graphic profiles etc. in exchange for “cultural capital”.\textsuperscript{34} Additionally graduating students are more and more required to take up unpaid internships that are exploitative and promise “a foot into the business”. When educational reforms force students to pay for studying, it is primitive accumulation, it is a hyper-exploitation, one pays (sometimes with capital sometimes with time) in order to work, to maybe get a paid job afterwards.\textsuperscript{35}

When students are employed by the academy (which happens quite often) their work tasks are often reduced to service work. I myself was recruited by my professor to be her “right hand” and organize a series of lectures at the academy ironically these lectures were named \textit{Activating Public Attention}.

\textit{Activating Public Attention} is series of presentations where invited speakers discussed from within their own practice of art, writing and curating a set of concerns foregrounding art as a social practice. Beginning with the proposal for an active role art plays in the making of an engaged public... ...In what kind of platforms for exchange and dialogue would we like to participate? As the commercial concerns aggressively threaten the collective ownership of knowledge and creativity, there is no better place than the university and the art school to fully explore and perhaps defend our rights to disagreement as well as being in common” [Lewandowska, 2012].

I had hoped that this outstretched hand from my professor would enable the possibility to develop the series together, level our knowledge, listen to each other while creating “public realms”, i.e. a shared space in which my own voice my professor’s voice would count for the same. I had hoped that this joint endeavor would enable me to suggest lectors, even though this would run the risk of jeopardizing the “quality” of the lecture series (as I would perhaps suggest the “wrong” people). Instead my role was deskilled to printing posters, which were preprogrammed and predesigned, and put these up around the school premises. None of my suggestion were met, instead I was given the schedule for the lecture series in an email, when it was all set. I

\textsuperscript{32} “Playbour”, a term invented to merge the relation between play and labour.

\textsuperscript{33} Primitive accumulation can generally be described as theft and stealing.

\textsuperscript{34} There are many other examples of primitive accumulation, most obviously in how large companies exploitation of labor and poor people. Additionally a more advanced plan is the UK conservative party campaign \textit{The Big Society} which aim is “to create a climate that empowers local people and communities, building a big society that will take power away from politicians and give it to people”. This is done through encouraging communities to do more voluntary work, basically an attempt to replace work with unwaged work.

\textsuperscript{35} See: Marc Bousquet and Tiziana Terranova’s discussion in the article \textit{Recomposing the University}, London: Mute Magazine. \url{http://www.metamute.org/en/recomposing-the-university} or \textit{A.S.A.P} reader compendium.
was paid a wage for my labour, which is important to note in this context and in my opinion the intention of my professor were good. She tried through including me in the process to change procedures, blur the distinction between our roles. However this process was mistakenly un-emancipated\(^{36}\) and did not bring about any actual hierarchical change. She wants me to do well, she wants me to become an artist, through connecting me with these political thinkers. My intuition says that she wanted to produce a “political subject” out of me. However, the problem lies in just this; trying to produce political subjects/artists etc.

This does not work because the labour process was stultifying the theory was not embodied. Instead of activating a public situation, through assigning a student with responsibility (more radically it could have opened up the labour process to the whole class), the product was given higher value than the labour process. This made it impossible to practice being ignorant and behind and impossible to together learn how to create an “interesting” lectures series.\(^{37}\) My critique is therefore that professors are waged (and quite well) to equip (unwaged) students with the necessary tools to become leading within their field. Practically, this seems to mean that students need to be deskillled in order to be skilled, or under-stand in order to understand (see introduction). My professor forgot to pay close “attention” to her own soil, she forgot to activate public attention in the making.

Whether or not an academy provides a good education is often judged by its capacity to produce products, in the form of graduates. In art academies it also seems to invoke a process of mystifying the product (the student), by making the entrance exam and conditions almost impossible to meet, this creates a higher desire for the education. Therefore it has to produce “successful” students/artists, as this increases the schools value. Thus any academies are forced to reproduce the idea of the artist (or the political artists) rather than to generate reproductive situations that can re-valorize the valorization system, as a whole.\(^{38}\) When students are put into a system of under-standing professors, the possibility to pragmatically activate public attention in the construction of a situation is undermined and emancipated learning situations for both students and professors, in order to practice other valorization system, is made impossible.\(^{39}\)

Any academy continues an elimination process that it embraces from the very beginning. When some people are refused entrance the act of given acceptance by the institution is mystified and inserted with surplus value.

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\(^{36}\) I am making use of the word “emancipated” as a reference to Jacques Rancière’s theory put forward firstly in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* here quoted in *The Emancipated Spectator*: “The opposite of stultification is emancipation. Emancipation is the process of verification of the equality of intelligence. The equality of intelligence is not the equality of all manifestations of intelligence. It is the equality of intelligence in all its manifestations” [Rancière, 2005]

\(^{37}\) One should of course add that this does not mean that my suggestions were bad or would not have created an interesting lecture series. This might have been the case, but we will never know.

\(^{38}\) This is visible in Konstfack’s vision put through 15.02.2011 “Konstfack shall create new knowledge and play a leading role, nationally and internationally, in artistic education and research as well as in the professional development of artistic subjects and practitioners.” See: https://www.konstfack.se/en/About-Konstfack/This-is-Konstfack/Konstfacks-vision/

\(^{39}\) The academy gets a better reputation the more “successful” artists it manages to produce. It will most likely also get more support from the government if it can show that students progress in the work market after completing education.
Some must fail in order that those who make it are valorized, speaking more broadly; some have to be unemployed in order to create the desire for employment. With this model it becomes more effective to make result orientated projects as this allows one to project the outcome, to more easily reach the goal (see entry for project).

*Overhead and Behind* is a proposal to slow down not just myself but also to be the idiot who slows down the others “…the idiot that does not deny articulated knowledge, does not denounce it as lies...” [Stengers, 2005:997] but that inserts vulnerability and doubt into a situation. The aim is to allow situations to be imaginary and present, not projected.

Let me here return quickly to primitive accumulation, as this is where my anecdote began. Silvia Federici argues that primitive accumulation is an essential part of capitalism, that must be expropriated. This means that capital needs to exploit in order to function and it also needs to reinvent this exploitation in order to continue to function

One could accuse the academies or the professor’s of stultifying through their objectives, but this would only serve to disempower the student further, as well as projecting responsibility. I too could have organized and practiced anti-capital strategies that would not conform thinking or work towards a product, but that instead might have emancipated the situation, as “only an equal understands an equal” [Rancière, 1991:73]. In other words, it was no ones fault but the possibility to use the situation differently was everyone’s.

One of the questions for *Overhead and Behind* is simply to examine what is over ones head and what it means to be behind. This entry is an attempt to locate power in the multitude of individuals rather than in the institution. Power is in the individuals that make up the institution and not in the institution itself, as this would be projected power. Instead we would need to recognize the power that already resides in everyone and how we can make use of this by self organizing and though common strategies. School work has the potential to find the commons and unlock these realms. It is through recognizing and refusing conditions that one can emancipate the role of the self in relation to the institution.

Institutional objectives may emerge as dictating superstructures, which through a constant rational projection to form products (graduates) hinders actual research, in favor of finishing the projected ends. These directories streamline work and making it impossible to move outside of their superstructures. These structures are so engrained in the institution that they could be said to form a “wall”. But by locating the power (magic) within the multitude of bodies and discharge the institution, one can cause a rupture of the situation that could bring about another system. With that in mind one should not undermine the power of the institution. But in practicing a non projective power relation and building up communities that do not set models to which students (workers) have to conform, but rather device strategies to expand possibilities [Federici, 1984:340], the magic of the multitude will be released.
Thus we return to what began this entry; that of the body as the container for imaginary possibilities, of magic. It is through Federici’s analysis of pre-capitalist development that the deprivation of the potentials of the body is illuminated. In upholding the belief that power resides outside the body, outside one’s boundaries, and is located in the wall, the possibilities of imaginary situations disappear. This is a fundamental prerequisite for capitalism but by activating the power we as a multitude of individuals already possess, we recharge the body with the potential for change, making it possible to imagine long-term reproductive support structures.

This brings about one of the foundations for *Overhead and Behind*, that of working together (see entry for collaboration). All episodes include collaboration, a relational way of finding a commons that can unite people. It is a way of creating public spheres, not just one, but many and all the time. This enables one to collectively reclaim power over the situation, to pay close attention to all aspects of the production and to refuse the institution.
Behind

The familiar world begins with the writing table, which is in ‘the room’. We can name this room as Husserl’s study, as the room in which he writes. It is from here that the world unfolds. He begins with the writing table, and then turns to other parts of this room, those which are, as it were, behind him. We are reminded that what he can see in the first place depends on which way he is facing [Ahmed, 2007:151].

This short entry will try to sketch up some of the concepts that are connected with the position of behind.

The first impression when thinking of behind is that it refers to physically standing at the rear side of someone, or to physically place an object further back from another. Within *Overhead and Behind*, the notion of “behind” refers to the theory of vulnerability and the act of “slowing down”, i.e. not understanding, as well as to support, e.g. we are behind your ideas.

The act of being behind does not mean an individuals inability to comprehend a thing, or idea, being communicated, but rather it is an act of complicating (or over-standing) the communicated message, something which is often dismissed as negative within schools and professional surroundings. With this I mean; being behind insists on being an empowering position, as this inserts vulnerability, while aiming to avoid authority.

In her essay *A Cosmopolitical Proposal* Isabelle Stengers argues for the idea of “slowing down the construction of this common world, to create a space for hesitation regarding what it means to say ‘good’” [Stengers, 2005: 995]. Stengers points to the danger of reproducing practices to become universal neutral keys applicable to all situations [2005: 995]. Instead she argues for practices that only have meaning in particular situations and because of this avoid authority. This is to add perplexity to a situation, to slow down and look askew and to insist that “there is something more important”[Stengers 2005: 994] an ability possessed by the idiot. The idiot “resists the consensual way in which the situation is presented and in which emergencies mobilize thought or action” [2005: 994]. This does not mean that the idiot knows what is more important, instead this figure only knows that there is something that requiring hesitation. Being behind is to comprehend through the means of translation, it is an interruption device that can be put into practice. It is a way to reorientate, to not look at what is in front of us within out reach, but rather what lies behind us. It is an ignorant supportive element where one stands “behind”in order to strengthen each other.
Object

This entry was written as a conversation between me and Sam Kennedy, as part of making the episode “A Form of an Object”. The notion of objects proceeding from two aspects of the definition of the word, discussed here as both noun and verb. It sets out a challenge for the two writers to see how these different concepts relate to their own practice as artists. The goal with this essay has been to build a platform of support from which the writers will produce an art work at Leeds College of Art.

Introduction

In 2011 we were invited to make a work for a group exhibition that will take place in Leeds in mid November. The invitation was made to us by two friends who had been working collaboratively for a period of time, but at a distance, corresponding through letters. The act of correspondence, for them, had become a crucial part in developing ideas for the exhibition as well as setting its parameters and structure. We had both played some role in their letters leading them to invite us to produce a work specifically through collaboration. We had never before collaborated, in fact our work seemed to completely lack any obvious relationship. As we see it an
invitation is always a challenge, it sets forward a trajectory and forces one to formulate and define ideas that otherwise would remain undefined.

At the same time as struggling to find a direct connection between our practices we were also struggling to form a relationship to the site of the exhibition, Leeds College of Art. Both of us felt a similar lack of enthusiasm for making a work which did not in some way deal with the context of the college. How could one relate to the college without ever having attended it, or without having been there? One thing we could relate to was what it was like to go to an art school. We had both been trained in colleges like Leeds College of Art, before “progressing” on to Batchelor of Art (BA) and now Master of Art (MA) level. To a certain extent we are both products of the art education system, something which became clear to us through this invitation. Simply put, the objectives of Leeds College of Art are to prepare people from across the UK to enter into a BA program in art or design like the ones here at Konstfack.

If, then, preparation was the context, how could we prepare ourselves to work together? As we said earlier our fields of interest were seemingly fairly separate. Sam studies in the interior architecture department and has a practice centered on the physical object. Jens meanwhile had seemingly stopped making work of physical material, instead choosing to make work based around organization and discussions. He is now studying in art department on the course *Art in the Public Realm*. It was in this limbo of different forces that we began to define a common ground where we thought we could meet. In other words we began discussing not only what could combine our work and the site of exhibition but also how we could use this invitation to develop a side of our working process that was latent. Our discussion came to rest on our different ideas of what we meant by “object” and what this could mean in the context of an exhibition at Leeds School of Art.

This word, which is both a verb and a noun, which has both a physical and notional character, which is both objective and subjective, seemed to take in much of what we are both concerned with. This text is structured as a “conversation” between the two of us and how we relate to this word. This conversation is completely influenced by the time we have spent together, the reading we have done together and the discussions we have had. It is our attempt to map out a ground on which we will stand, a “support structure” which we hope will allow us to make a response to the invitation we received to produce work for Leeds College of Art.

Before beginning we would like to make our process a little bit more transparent. Working together is always difficult, especially when the constellation is imposed. Through our method we hoped to find a common language. One of our initial attempts at this was to establish a reading group, in which we began by reading Bruno Latour’s *We Have Never Been Modern*. Each section of this book was read prior to our meetings, during which we would take it in turns to read aloud for the other. This book, which might seem to have been plucked out of thin air, became a crucial reference point for our discussions, which have developed alongside its slow
reading and re-reading. It has consequently lead us to other essays that have helped us expand our relationship to the subject. In this way one can say that the reading group has become a mediator between us, a tool for discussing a complex topic. Other texts have also influenced us and been important in creating a shared language, e.g. Jacques Ranciére, Chus Martinez, Martin Heidegger, Chantal Mouffe, Michel de Certeau, Merleau Ponty, Doreen Massey, Raymond Williams, Maija Timonen, George Caffentzis, Nina Power, Simon Sheikh and Celine Condorelli. It is from this agonistic ground that we set out to challenge ourselves and our working method. It is also from here that the following conversation originates.

1. object

Noun

It is hard to describe ones immediate environment without using the words object or thing. An example. Most people are so familiar with the computer’s keyboard that they can type without thinking about the position of the keys. If we stick to the letters we know well, the end of the text might arrive without us even having noticed the keyboard at all. If, on the other hand, one of the keys gets stuck down, or if say, we want to introduce a semi-colon; all of a sudden the keyboard transforms. Something that was felt only through fingers and which went largely unnoticed by the rest of the consciousness, comes precisely into view. The keyboard becomes defamiliarized. All of a sudden we don’t know it in the same way. This defamiliarization and representation for a subject is how a thing is transformed into an object.40

But keys rarely get stuck down. More commonly things work quite well whether we notice them or not. Our world is composed of these things that do not need to be noticed, in order to exist. A wall is a wall, whether or not one is there to see it being a wall. Similarly a floor is a floor whether or not we walk over it. The world of things is everyday, it exists despite us but it is also, at all times around us. It shapes every action we make, affecting every part of our lives. If we were to trace the writing of this text back to the beginning we would encounter a huge heap of these things which were necessarily taken for granted, so that we could think only about writing. Similarly if we were to thoroughly investigate the story of the paper on which this essay should be printed, we would come into contact with an every expanding network of things; trees, water, machines, chemicals etc.

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40 For Heidegger’s tool analogy, see: Martin Heidegger, “The Thing”, ed. Fiona Candin, The Object Reader (In Sight: Visual Culture) 2009
In philosophy, one usually refers to a subject as “a being that has subjective experiences”.\textsuperscript{41} According to the etymological definition of the noun object it is a thing which is thrown in the way\textsuperscript{42} of the subject. The separation of the object from the subject arrives at the beginning of the history of Modernity.\textsuperscript{43} Modernity was built one separation after another. The first was modern from pre-modern, or now from then. The moderns aimed to define what came from us and what came from the world. Hence modernity was a splitting up, categorization and purification of everything in the natural and social world.\textsuperscript{44} This was followed by further separations within these two categories. To cut a long story short, one can say that the story of the object and the subject in modernity is also a story of private property and in the long run of consumption. It is the story of what is mine and what is yours.

If the object is defined through separations then things are defined through their combinations.\textsuperscript{45} The etymological root of the word thing means “a gathering together of matters of concern”.\textsuperscript{46} Things are defined by their nearness and fuzzy borders. To call something a thing is to not have the complete image of it in one’s mind. The thing exists in a state of support, it stands beside, on top of, under, to the left or right of, it exists in relationship with other things. As humans, when we come into contact with things it is with all our senses. What would it take to re-imagine the “Modern world”\textsuperscript{47} of detached objects as a world made up of connected things?

The problem with thinking about things is that as soon as we give them our attention we, in some way, perform an extraction. We separate the thing from its environment, turning it into an object in front of a subject. Instead of looking at things and turning them into objects one can look between them. What are the nature of the connections that tie things together? In asking this question we may be able to get to a better understanding of things. A brief return to the computer. It now stands on top of the table a certain height above the ground, a height proven comfortable to work at provided there is a chair. The chair, the table, the computer, all these things support each other and are needed.\textsuperscript{48} Going unnoticed through all of this is the floor, without which

\textsuperscript{41} To play with this concept we took this definition from the online encyclopedia Wikipedia, a resource that allows any individual to edit a subject from their own point of view. \url{http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subject_(philosophy)} 23/09/2011


\textsuperscript{43} Bruno Latour, \textit{2.4 The Mediation of the Laboratory} “We have never been Modern” ”, Harvard university press [1993]P.20

\textsuperscript{44} Bruno Latour “We have never been Modern” ”, Harvard university press [1993]P.11

\textsuperscript{45} Bruno Latour “A cautious Prometheus? A few steps toward a philosophy of design (with special attention to Peter Sloterdijk)”, Keynote lecture for the Networks of Design meeting of Design History Society 03/09/2008 \url{www.bruno-latour.fr/articles/article/112-DESIGN-CORNWALL.pdf}

\textsuperscript{46} Martin Heidegger, “The Thing”, ed. Fiona Candin, \textit{The Object Reader (In Sight: Visual Culture)} 2009

\textsuperscript{47} See discussion on Modern world in Bruno Latour “We have never been Modern” ”, Harvard university press [1993] e.g p.32.

\textsuperscript{48} According to Beatrice Gibson in Celine Condorelli “Support Structures” p.77 "Support is the tragic double of the pre-fix. Support can't spend time alone with itself but is condemned to existence only in relation to something else.”
everything would be falling down to who knows where? Or gravity which keeps everything from floating away.49

In order for the dependency of a thing to be satisfied, support must be consistently and unremittingly provided. The need of one relies on the generosity of the other, as soon as one side is removed the fragile relationship that makes up the thing collapses. In this analogy things are continuously being made and remade, never static always changing.50 This is where it could be interesting to think about things in relationship to time, not as in the Modernist idea of time as an irreversible trajectory51. Instead as a relational time, a thing as a collection of moments when need is felt and support is offered.

Still from the video, “Composition as Explanation”, Kennedy/Strandberg, 2011

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50 Celine Condorelli “Support Structures” p.21 "Support continuously reveals the occurrence of a point of jeopardy and how it causes a rupture in the autonomy of the object"

51 Raymond Williams “When Was Modernism?”, [1987 http://work.colum.edu/~zfurness/theories/williams-when-was-modernism.pdf 23/09/2011 “] ‘Modern’ began to appear as a term more or less synonymous with ‘now’ in the late sixteenth century, and in any case used to mark the period off from medieval and ancient times. In the nineteenth century it began to take on a more favourable and progressive ring”
This section of our conversation will focus on the verb to object. A quick look in the etymological dictionary shows that both the noun and the verb come into use in the 14th century. Although they appear distinct from each other, one defined as something thrown in one’s way, the other as a declaration of a disapproval, they do etymologically connect. Both the verb and the noun stem from Latin word objectus, which means “to put or throw before or against”. This interpretation implies a person making an act in opposition to something or someone.

Before continuing our conversation around the verb to object, we would like to return to the context for making this work, the common conditions which allow connections between two distinct colleges, Leeds college of art and Konstfack. This educational system, which both academies are part of is the working condition within which this text exists, as well as premise for the art work we will make. Instead of thinking about the keys that are stuck down on the keyboard we want to refocus on the larger context.

Both Leeds college of art and Konstfack are signatures to a reform that is called the Bologna process. This can quickly be summed up as a European attempt to make it easier for students to move between universities, by standardizing the educational system and insisting on an efficient way of evaluating degrees e.g. BA and MA degrees. Although this is not particularly the place to dwell on this reform, one can say, based on the evidence so far, that the Bologna process has had a largely negative effect on education, particularly on art education. Our own experience is that universities have not become more efficient, instead administrative work seems to have increased, leading to additional costs. At Konstfack it now takes at least three board meetings to change or develop a course potentially leading to the stagnation of programs. The initiation of the Bologna process was soon followed by the introduction of tuition fees for students in most European universities. In the last few years one could witness students demonstrating against, both the Bologna process and the tuition fees. These are some of the conditions that we, as students at Konstfack, share with those at Leeds college of art.

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54 Since he began at Konstfack, Jens has been a student representative on the KU board (Konstnärlig Utveckling). The KU board is a deciding committee for Konstfack, consisting of professors from the different departments. It can incredibly heartbreaking to see the progress of errand, as it is slowly passed through and watered down by the administrative system. The brief for this course, that this text is part of, was passed by the KU board after a long meeting earlier this year. As I remember it there was a disagreement around the word essay and its suitability.
Another thought: Our intuition is that material objects are swallowed up by an art market, no matter how hard an artist tries to radically break with the current conditions. Works are formed only as reforms of the current trend. Even the most radical art works or the most avant-garde artists have been absorbed by private collectors and companies, or made into museums artifacts. The role of the art institution is only to organize them and insert them on a chronological axis and into a narrative trajectory. The art institution becomes a place for legitimating objects. The curators and historians are the police, the police that polices the organizational system, that defines the law, which “divides the community into groups, social positions and functions”. This law decides partitions and distributes those with rights to take part and those that are excluded.

One could imagine us together with our friends in Konstfack having wild discussions about how we will change the world we live in. Explaining to our professors, we would tell them how our designs or art works will make the world less capital driven or more gender equal, or simply more fair for everyone. This is what many artists, including ourselves, strive for with their art work. How far away are we from change when all our objects do, is to confirm the tradition of the trajectory. The choice seem to be limited, one either confirms the tradition or stops making work. What if, instead of explaining to our professors how, we exchange it with when.

When do we change the world? When do we make it less capital driven? When does it become more gender equal? To try to relate these questions to art, we paraphrase the title of Raymond Williams short essay “When was Modernism?” and ask when is art? In this line of thought it seems to us that when objects reach the public institution the art has already happened. The exhibition is only a public declaration of a completed thought, an object, the evidence of a private experience had by an artist. What if we replace objects with unfinished thoughts? What if we replace completion with fragments? What if we look for temporariness instead of the permanency? Never becoming standardized by a reform but always contesting and aiming to re-form.

The question of public and private is thus a crucial one. Most exhibitions and art schools including Konstfack want to deal with the notion of public. It is a buzzword within art, it sounds great! it implies transparency and democracy. A brief look at the writings about public shows that it is seen not just as property accessible to common people, generally owned by the state or aristocracy, but also as a relational notion, i.e. as an arena

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56 Ibid p.3
57 It also divides “the visible from the invisible, the audible from the inaudible, the sayable from the unsayable” Ibid p.3
59 Chus Martinez in a lecture at Tensta Konsthall 13/09/2011
60 Jens’ program is called “Art in the Public Realm”
where one meets, engages and discusses. This is a place that is always becoming a place, “a public sphere” where one practices democracy and can agree or disagree on a subject in “conflictual consensus”. An art exhibition implies a public display, but what is public about that display when the art work is speaking and not listening? How can one discuss, engage and contest what is being said in public when the declaration is made from the private space, e.g. the artist studio or the artist bedroom? If art is ways of “doing and making” in the world, should it not also include ways of listening?

This is where we can return to our conversation around the verb to object. One can break with the police order by objecting, extracting oneself from the dominant trajectory. In order for this objection to also be emancipatory, one must also listen. “Emancipation is the process of verification of the equality of intelligence... It is the equality of intelligence in all manifestations”. Because an objection requires, as we earlier said a disagreement with something or someone and that disagreement should be public.

How and when should one object? The answer is easy, one should continuously object! Not by extracting oneself from the dominant order in an antagonistic way but instead by continually contesting the established frame in an agonistic way. The agonistic object should be a disagreement made public with agreed upon principals. It should share a symbolic space of listening and talking to each other. An object should not be made in the private and transferred to the public, nor should the object be made in public while moving to the private. It should be formed and re-formed continuously through conversation. In this way the educational system can be shaped by all levels of knowledge and power. Thinking is always unfinished, objects should be always re-formed, scribbles are just another way of writing, people never stop learning. One should not assume

61 There are tons of writings on the notion of public including texts by Jürgen Habermas, Alexander Kluge, Ernesto Laclau or Chantal Mouffe. Instead we suggest Simon Sheikh’s essay “In the Place of the Public Sphere? Or, the World in Fragments” [2004] http://republicart.net/disc/publicum/sheikh03_en.pdf 23/09/2011

62 Ibid.

63 Chantal Mouffe “Articulated Power Relations - Markus Miessen in conversation with Chantal Mouffe” 2002 http://roundtable.kein.org/node/545 23/09/2011. “This is how I envisage the agonistic struggle, a struggle between different interpretations of shared principles, a conflictual consensus: consensus on the principles, disagreement about their interpretation”.

64 Jacques Rancière “The Politics of Aesthetics” 2006 Continuum books London, New York. “Artistic practices are ‘ways of doing and making’ that intervene in the general distribution of ways of doing and making as well as in the relationships they maintain to modes of beings and forms of visibility.” p.13


66 Ibid.

67 Chantal Mouffe “Politics and Passions, the stakes of democracy”, Centre for the Study of Democracy, [2002] “what is important is that conflict does not take the form of antagonism (struggle between enemies) but of agonism (struggle between adversaries).” p.9

68 Chantal Mouffe “Articulated Power Relations - Markus Miessen in conversation with Chantal Mouffe”, [2002] http://roundtable.kein.org/node/545 “The major difference between enemies and adversaries is that adversaries are, so to speak, friendly enemies in the sense that they have got something in common: they share a symbolic space. Therefore there can exist between them what I call a conflictual consensus. They agree on the ethico-political principles that inform the political association but they disagree about the interpretation of those principles” 23/09/2011
that we, the students, should just listen to the monologue of our Professor, or sit waiting for a verdict. Instead we should continually contest these structures and not allow our working conditions to remain a standardized stagnant reform. By allowing space for agonistic objection and equal transmission of knowledge, separation can remain within and transform the system.

“The Objects is Complication” is an artwork conceived for the exhibition “August 2002 – ongoing, and back” (Leeds College of Art, 16th Nov – 16th Dec, 2011). Simone Wonnacott, principal of Leeds College of Art, agreed to carry a sculpture with her for the duration of the exhibition. Under the terms of the contract signed by all participants, Simone Wonnacott were obliged to make this artwork available to students of the school and the wider public by appointment. It was possible to book an appointment or stop by her office at Blenheim Walk to view this artwork. “The Objects is Complication” is a copy of the sculpture “Reclining Woman: Elbow” from 1981 by Henry Moore, which is on display outside the Leeds art gallery and was covered over during a demonstration. “The Objects is Complication” was an attempt see if an “object” could encourage a conversation between administrative staff and students, something which is often lacking in universities and art schools. Me and Kennedy have, throughout this project, been worked with the idea of “objects” as verbs. That is the physical aspect of objecting as part of breaking a trajectory (especially within educational frames, which we see is becoming more and more standardized), and to see if “objects” can function as hinders, hinders as a potential for something new. The “object” made for this exhibition is heavy as it is a cast in copper, and would affect the daily doings of principal Simone Wonnacott.
**Overhead**

Overhead is when something located, functioning or originating above. It may also be extended to the field of economics; referring to the ongoing expenses for a corporation or organization, finally it is a presentation device an “Overhead Projector”.

The main period for using overhead projectors were prior to developments of data projectors. Overhead projectors differs from data projectors in many ways, especially in terms of the physical present as well as quality of graphics. The key difference that is used as an allegory for the making of *Overhead and Behind* is that an overhead projector allows a speaker to restructure a presentation live when presenting.

PowerPoint slideshows are typically projected in a fixed order, making it more difficult for the speaker to easily rearrange the slides during the presentation. This fact marks an important distinction between the PowerPoint presentation and the presentation made using overhead transparencies [Orlikowski, Yates, forthcoming: 16].

This implies that Overhead and Behind follows the nature of an overhead projector presentation by allowing its structure to fluctuates. This differentiates completely from presentations done with software such as *Keynote* or *PowerPoint*, which dictates the presentation [Strandberg 2008]. Digital presentation are slides preprogramed prior to the presentation, hence making it difficult to change the narrative. Or in shorter terms, as design critic Edward Tufte puts it “relentless sequentially, one damn slide after another”[Tufte, 2003]
Project

This entry is a response to the never ending requests for a project. “Project” is a buzzword among artists, producers and culture workers, and, when applying one is often required to submit a “project proposal” or a “project plan”. _Overhead and Behind_ is a response towards this demand and hopes to constantly disentangle the notion of projects from the research. It began looking into the word project, as a reaction to _Art in the Public Realm_ a University course at _Konstfack_, which it found itself part of when initiating the work. _Overhead and Behind_ refused the framework of the project from the beginning (I did not apply with a project proposal), not as an adolescence response, but because it is a conforming word with hidden frameworks. This entry will try to dismantle the word project, in order to look at what frameworks that lies behind it. The entry will begin with a quick detour look at the notion of public realm, as this is the focus of the course. This will be followed with a response to the third point on the application assignment, that of the project proposal, which one is required to complete upon applying to _Art in the Public Realm_. Finally I will aim to connect the notion of a project, art in the public realm and the notion of an emerging figure.

Art in the public realm is in this entry understood as something separate from public art. Instead, it underlines that the public realm is a place which engages and expands a community's sense of “place”. That is a place which is forming or reforming the expressions of public opinions. It is a discursive public place, a place that is always becoming a place, “a public realm” where one practices democracy and agree or disagree on a subject in consensus or “conflictual consensus” [Mouffe, 2002]. The course described public realm, as “an important concept for the construction of the democratic welfare state, which in Sweden has been called Folkhemmet (roughly the People's Home)”. The objective of _Art in the Public Realm_ is to “examines various aspects of the public realm set in both physical and virtual arenas. The public realm of course includes the art institutions, their structures and importance – but also notions of "public opinion", "ownership" and "public property".” From this one can subtract that Konstfack’s version of art in the public realm is that public realm is the practice of making public, i.e. expanding a public community, by creating the sense of belonging.

When applying to Konstfack applicants are required to submit 1) an overview of submitted work samples, 2) five to ten works, in a digital portfolio and 3) Project Proposal and explanatory statement:

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69 See entry for Object (verb) for an expanded description of the “public realm”. “Confictual consensus” is a phrase used by Chantal Mouffe: “This is how I envisage the agonistic struggle, a struggle between different interpretations of shared principles, a conflictual consensus: consensus on the principles, disagreement about their interpretation”.


71 _Making Public_ is also the title of the introduction course to the programme. If anything, this course certainly sets the theoretical premiss for discussing the notion of public, unfortunately, I would argue, it missed out on the fundamental point of practicing these concept within the art institution it is part of and particularly the emancipation of a democratic learning situation. A democratic learning situation is a public realm, it is a becoming of a place where inferior and superior intelligence can be leveled. Finally rather than to having knowledge transmitted from one body to another, a public realm in an educational situation will emancipate different intelligence to coexist, by creating belongings and a community [Rancière, 1991 and 2005].
A brief project proposal on one (1) A4 page... The project proposal shall give an account of a planned project within the objective of "Art in the Public Realm", and also contain an explanatory statement why Konstfack is the place where the project can be realized.\textsuperscript{72}

The project is a crucial element for the course, not just in the application process but also later, in the end of the first year one is required to rewrite this “project proposal” to a “project plan”. The project plan is finally updated in the end of second year in the essay, which is “the writing part of the individual project”. This essay must include for example “a statement of... project goals and question addressed, a description of the critical and historical contextualization of the project” etc. This is the frame that this entry is finding itself part of and which in my opinion requires hesitations. Lets take the opportunity to slow down this project.

A quick look in the dictionary shows that a project is described as (1) to plan, draft and scheme, i.e. to project, and, (2) as a major undertaking or a specific task of investigation. Both definitions underlines that the project is not the time of the event, but rather the time described of planning/projecting the future event.\textsuperscript{73} Bojana Kunst describes a project, as a “retrospective future”, which according to her “enables a lot of possibilities even though everything has to be planned in advance to reach the already-projected future” [2011: 17]. A project allows for possibilities, “but no actual change... the public dimension of his/her work is most of the time conceived as a finalization of its ends” [2011: 17]. A project is thus work focused on staging a future event, it is never the present of the work, the mortal deadline is approaching.

The problem therefore lies in the fact that, regardless of the openings and transformations inside of the projective temporality, the future is still projected as chronological continuity with the past, and the meaning rises from progressive continuation [2011: 15].

A project has to consume it own process, as it has to expect and evaluate its finalization from the beginning by anticipating and cover up the gaps in the work so it can reach a closure. It must keep focus on completion rather than the temporality and conceal the making for the projection of the consumption. It is within the closure of projected goals, it is key to pull back the discussion of public realm and simply pose the question: what is a public project? Put simply; as described above, a project is to work towards a projected closure. It has to enclose, anticipate and evaluate this end, while the notion of public works towards becoming a place. Meaning it has to continuously be made, remade and remain in fluctuating mode.

A public project is to consume the possibilities of a public, consequently enclosing the potential of the public.

Applying this to the process of a work, one is tempted to think of the relation between art practice and art project. Dispersing the aim of the making, by allowing it to be potential and non-directed is henceforth a way of

\textsuperscript{72} \url{http://www.konstfack.se/en/Education/Masters-Degree-Program/Art-in-the-Public-Realm-120-credits/} [26.03.2012]

\textsuperscript{73} Which in the field of arts, demands multiple managerial skills as artists are more and more asked to work on several projects at the same time. [Kunst 2011]
practicing doings rather than projecting the future. Even though the objectives of the Konstfack course is open
minded towards the subject of a project, it is consuming itself through the course objectives, hence situating the
artwork at the centre of a valorization-system (as well as a conservative educational reform, known as the
bologna process)\(^\text{74}\) where a “pubic realm” is projected rather than practiced.

The course description ends with the (cl)aim that “Art in the Public Realm provides artists with the opportunity
to operate on an internationalised art scene where artists are increasingly assuming responsibility for and articulating their artistic practice, putting it into context, cooperating and viewing the historical and societal role played by art” [my emphasis].\(^\text{75}\)

Being confronted with the course objectives, the obligation of a “public project”, I initiated the cooking/reading
study-circle Enlightenment Hearts together with Sam Kennedy. Enlightenment Hearts is group consisting of ten
loosely connected individuals, from various fields of interests (dance, gender studies, art, performance, media
etc...). The group meets once a week to read a text together, each text is chosen by a member of the group and
changes from time to time, allowing the reading list to alter as it develops. The idea is to meet, socialize, eat,
“slow down” and read together. Reading together is a tool that enables people to analyze a text, as it is picked
apart and discussed in the group. People participating are asked to read the text prior to the meeting, which is
followed by a detailed reading of the text out loud accommodating anyone the possibility to interrupt the
reading to comment or ask questions. A new Enlightenment Hearts season begins when each participating
member has picked one meal and text of their interests. Each season has a theme, the first was called the “soup
season”, where people were asked to pick a text that they always wanted to read, but never had the time.
Following with the “Pina Colada Season”, where members were encouraged to team up in small constellations
in order to enable longer texts over a period of meetings. This was an attempt to create smaller groups within
Enlightenment Hearts that would support people and increase understanding around a subject and potentially
establish collaborations outside the group. The difficulty with this was that it required more administration and
ultimately only half succeed. In the current “rainbow reading” season we aim to pick texts that will assist the
progressing of each persons makings and doings.

\(^\text{74}\) A more detailed examination of the bologna reform will follow in relation to the episode A.S.A.P
Enlightenment Hearts is the tool that is practiced within this entry, as the literature-list is taken from Enlightenment Hearts readings. Consequently it might appear dispersed, as it is based on choices from a scattered combination of individuals. However this proves an important point that underlies Overhead and Behind, i.e. the end of a “project”. This end does not mean to give up making and doing but rather to give up the notion of working towards an end. Instead it hopes to allow a space where one can recognize that there are struggles going on at all time in many individuals, in many different places and the point is to build up a common space where support and discussions can be amplified [Stengers, 2005].

This place is a “public realm” - an anti-hierarchical learning structure, with no assigned leaders. A structure that does not accept the ranking system that universities promotes, between students and professors. But in all constellations, power relations remains. The name Enlightenment Hearts clarifies: to enlighten is to shed light upon. Enlightenment Hearts plays on this illumination in the following way, when light is shed upon an object it will cast a shadow, and concretely obscure something else, a dichotomy similar to that of power. Power implies hierarchies, when empowered we disempower, i.e. we form a shadow and the more power the larger shadow. The point with Enlightenment Hearts is to temporarily shadow, allowing light, power and authority to wander within the group, spotlighting “hearts” as it goes along. Enlightenment Hearts is thus a self empowering group, with a self-organized curriculum where people learn and unlearns together. It is not a project, as it does

76 See entry for “Object” it will clarify that Overhead and Behind makes use of this in the widest meaning, as a noun, verb and goal or aim.
not read for a purpose or towards a goal. Rather it is a reading practice that reads towards supporting and expanding possibilities for other practices. Working open ended forming and deforming itself through out its making.

This is the point of illuminating the notion of the emerging figure within an art practice, is foremost to see who or what that is shadow, as this obscures all those that did not emerge. With other words those that were refused entrance to the art academy, or who constantly were rejected grants and showing opportunities. These concealed figures makes the emerging figure possible. The emerging artist, the never solidified character. This is a projected figure, which allows external speculations in the doings. Will (s)he make an interesting project? A capitalist will insert value into this speculation. Artists are on the other hand continuously asked by institutions, to remain a retrospective future, never value the temporality of the work, instead always administrating the future event. The deadline, the mortal end, is thus projected and planned and most public possibilities dies with it. It is within this state of always administrating and planning that the project conforms the outcome, even students are projected as potential graduates that can be consumed and made employable.

Without making the attempt to enclose this entry one can argue that working open ended and without a projected aim is fundamentally different from the objectives of the Konstfack’s course. This course clearly suggests an examination of the notion of the public-realm, which is a democratic space where discussions and hierarchies can be leveled. But through a set of definitions and the insertion of a valorization-system it encloses this public place. It does so as it promotes work processes that are working towards a finalization of its ends, towards a product (commodity). This is the crucial difference between projects and practices, projects inscribes frameworks of an end, while a practice emancipates other practices by working open ended, creating public, most importantly practicing the making.
Self Education

The problem of writing about self education in general terms is that the focus firstly lies on the “self”, then on “education”. Each person of the “self” in self education, will differ in their definition of the concept.

Common categorizations of the term (e.g. some might say that self education is “learning on your own”, or “education outside of schools”) are good but can jeopardize the possibilities offered by the term in that they generalize. The definition of self education is a pluralistic gathering of the self’s claiming of unreliable statements, including this. Non of these statements are wrong or right as they reveal (when stated) that self education is a local practice, i.e. referring back to it “self”. Hence, self education is a doing of educating the self.

When educating the self, I am often struck by how little I know about it. This is when education is good, as it highlights that the “self” is in-formation. The action of forming or in’forming the education of the self is the exciting part of self education. It is the curriculum of the education one did not know existed. I my-self would claim that self education is full of potentiality, where learning can be sought rather than given to the self.

It is a place where the self can form and reform.