



# ARTS BASED RESEARCH AND THE SEARCH FOR DIDACTICAL POTENTIALS IN HAIKU POEMS



# ABSTRACT

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- Introduce to arts-based research and a/r/tography in educational research (Leavy 2009), Irwin & Springgay 2008)
- Present a small scale qualitative intervention with 20 students and two colleagues writing haiku poems about their childhood homes at the master's degree program 'didactics of material culture' at Aarhus University Denmark
- Discuss:
  - What are the scopes for arts-based research?
  - And the development of didactics by writing poems?

# ARTS-BASED RESEARCH

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- An approach to all aspects of the research process by the use of art, artistic methods, artistic knowledge forms: Often literary writings, music, performance dance, visual art, film.
- An emphasis of continuing and creative processes in and between the researcher, the informants and the audience.
- A genre of qualitative research that moves the paradigm forward.
- Some researchers have come to these methods as a way of better addressing research questions while some quite openly long to merge their scholar-self with their artist-self.
- In all cases, whether in the particular arts-based project or in the researcher who routinely engages with these practices, a *holistic, integrated perspective* is followed.

Patricia Leavy (2009, p.1-2)

# A/R/TOGRAPHY

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- A specific category of arts-based research
- Artist – Researcher – Teacher: Three roles in interplay
- Creating a third space ‘in-between’ knowing, doing and making
- Research ‘practices’ rather than ‘methods’: Rejection of neutral tools in research

”Knowing (teoria), doing (praxis), and making (poesis) are three forms of thought important to a/r/tography. Relationships between and among these ways of knowing of understanding experience are integral to an intertextuality and intratextuality of ideas and form a foundation for a/r/tography. All three ways of understanding experience – teoria, praxis, and poesis – are folded together and form rhizomatic ways of experiencing the world. This is important as we come to appreciate how a/r/tography is conceived as research.”

Irwin and Springgay “Being with a/r/tography” (p. xxiii-xxiv)

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# INTERVENTION

# TEACHING RELATIONS OF PLACE AND DIDACTICS

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Intervention conducted in a lesson at Master's degree program 'didactics of material culture'

Learning objectives:

- To gain knowledge of a variety of perspectives on how places can express didactics
- To be able to analyze artifacts and identify their relations to places and forms of practice.
- To be able to participate in a discussion on theory development via empirical analyses.

# PREFACE: JUHANI PALLASMA ON OCULARCENTRISM

Research on

- Modern architecture dwells in the greatness of buildings and individuals at high speed
- Transparency with the extensive use of glass and steel gives primacy to the sense of sight: rationality
- The hand, ear, tongue, and nose are less trustworthy, uneasy to fixate etc.

Didactics of

- Analysis of architects drawings, applying theoretical notions, discussions etc.

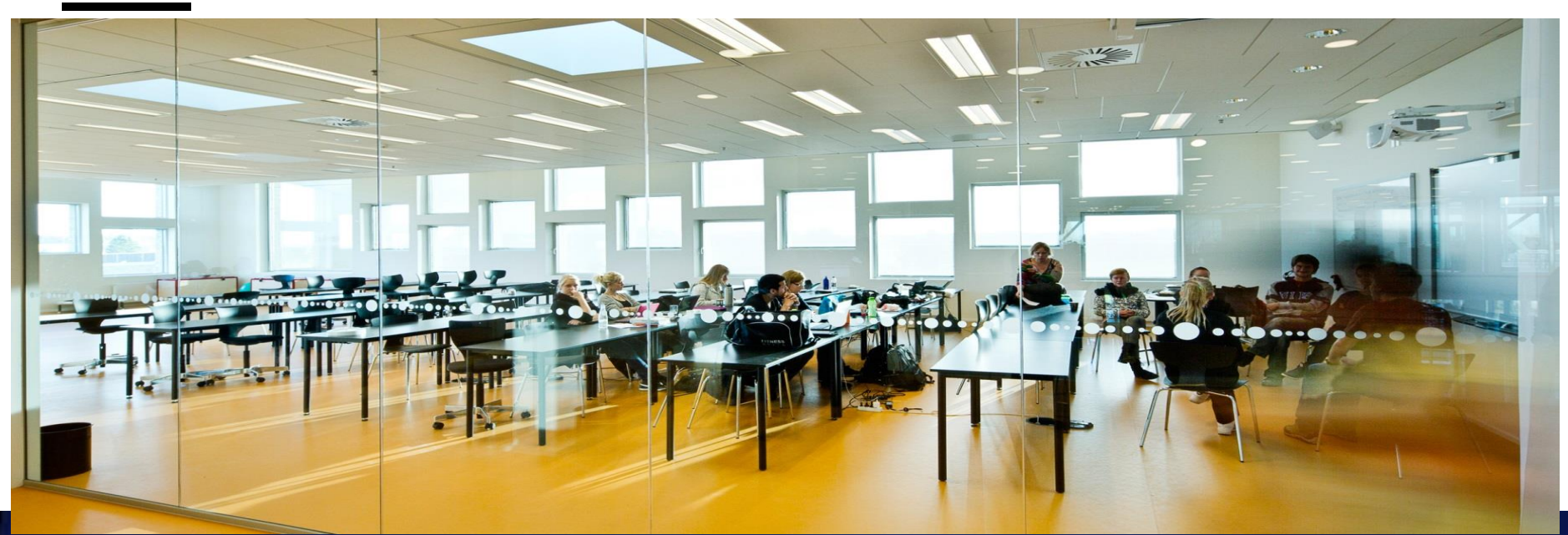


# UNIVERSITY COLLEGE SEALAND: THE HALL





# UNIVERSITY COLLEGE SEALAND: A CLASSROOM



# UCC IN VALBY, UCSJ IN ROSKILDE, UCL IN ODENSE AND UC-VIA IN AARHUS



# CHANGING PERSPECTIVES – TOWARDS NEW DIDACTICAL WAYS

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- Exploring new didactical ways for the masters degree of Material Culture by the use of a/r/tography
  - How can touch, smell, sound, sight and taste be a significant part of educational research especially the master of material culture?
  - Writing haiku poems on childhood homes

# GASTON BACHELARD

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- Dreams and daydreams feed the poetry of space that reveals and augments the perceptions of the childhood home in its embodiment of memories.
- Poetry awakens memories and that memories are topological
- Places compress time and fossilize memories: toposanalysis
- Poetry of space unfolds how the cellars, garrets, nooks and corners of the childhood home are filled with fears & hopes, rationality & unconsciousness, intentionality, structures, cultural motives for promoting distinct actions etc..

(Bachelard 1994/1958).



*“And when it is the poet speaking, the reader’s soul reverberates; it experiences the kind of reverberation that, as Minkowski has shown, gives the energy of an origin to being. It therefore makes sense from our standpoint of a philosopher of literature and poetry to say that we “write the room,” “read the room,” or “read the house.” Thus, very quickly, at the very first word, at the first poetic overture, the reader who is “reading a room” leaves off reading and starts to think of some place in his own past. You would like to tell everything about your room. You would like to interest the reader in yourself, whereas you have unlocked a door to daydreaming. The values of intimacy are so absorbing that the reader has ceased to read your room: he sees his own again” (Bachelard 1994/1958: p. 14).*

# INTERVENTIONAL PROGRAMME

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- The students interviewed each other about their childhood homes in 20 minutes
- I introduced the haiku form
- The students wrote haiku poems in 20 minutes
- The students read out loud the poems
- Plenum discussion: Reflections about place and poems in didactics

# FIRST TWO POEMS: THE PAST IS UNEASILY ACCESSED

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Et støvet lys / A dusty light

Hengemte erindringer / Staled memories

Et strejf af himmel / A touch of the sky

En træls øvelse / A tiresome exercise

Barndom men ikke for børn / A childhood but not for children

Kaos er i ro / Chaos is in rest

- 
- Intertwined qualities of both real events and imagined or interpreted experiences.
  - The reader is not simply brought back to any childhood home though all the senses are activated:
  - The poems confront how the past is distant, not easily accessed and hardship to even think off by the adult writer who seems (luckily) left with only glimpses of what once was.
  - Memories are un-doubtedly under great persuasion of poetic interpretation as the writer is looking back.



# SECOND TWO POEMS: DWELLING IT ITS OWN EASE

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Te, lys, snak og hygge / Tea, light, talk and cosiness

10 øre pr 100 gram plukkede bær / 10 pennies for 100 gram of picked bearies

Loftet mørkt med mange ting / The dark attic with plenty of things

Fyrretræsnåle / Pinewood leaves

Hønsefjer og saftvand / Hen feathers and limonade

Min brors morgentur / My brother's morningwalk

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- Bringing the reader back to what 'really' once was by giving the readers senses of the smells, touch, sound, sight and taste in the childhood homes:
  - Unblemished poetic memories dwell in their own ease and a first person perspectives on a child's happy moments in the childhood homes.
  - Visual images cast the reader into the milieus, social environment and routines around the childhood homes: Distinct parts of the childhood upbringing and identity formation.
  - The reader is soon lost because he or she gets inspired and starts to imagine his or her own childhood home and potentially what things and events meant for their upbringing.

# THIRD TWO POEMS: SENSING AND THINKING

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Risengrød på loft / Rice pudding in the attic  
Uhygge i kælderen / ghastliness in the basement  
Køkken varmt og trygt / Kitchen warmth and safety

Børn på én etage / Children at one floor  
Voksne ovenpå alene / Adults alone upstairs  
Et hus for alle / A house for everyone

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- Childhood home organized the family roles. The different floors manifest division between children and adults: Functions of the house along with emotions of respect, awe, fear.
  - Children on their own or accompanied by the parents visit all the nooks and corners of the house and literally walk through the challenging atmospheres and emotions clinging to the walls of the rooms.
  - Echoing psychoanalysis of the human body and the house when speaking of: The rationality of the attic (the mind), comfort of the first floor (the heart) and the unconsciousness of the basement (the sexual organs).

# FOURTH GROUP: POEMS ON COMING OF AGE

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Barn-dom, kær-lig-hed / Childhood, love  
Gad-en nær-me-re midt-en / One street close to city-centre  
Blev jeg mig, Vi-be / I became me, Vibe

Mandshøje gæs i græs / Man tall geeses in grass  
Flugt i panik over hegn / Flight in panic over fences  
-køkkenvarm tryghed / Kitchen-warmth safety

Altid samme tur / Always the same walk  
Hav. Vand. Evig forandring. / Ocean. Water. Eternal change  
Aldrig samme tur / Never the same walk

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- Distancing the sensations of materiality of the childhood homes by taking an analytical approach to the memories where the child's coming of age is thematized:
  - Childhood memories cling to neighborhood, the streets and walks by the ocean away from the family's house (and back again) where significant parts of the writer's identity were formed.
  - The protagonist leaves the house and hereby underlines the natural, cultural and historical setting of the house and the upbringing taking place inside.

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# PERSPECTIVES ON EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND DIDACTICS

# TENETS IN ARTS-BASED RESEARCH (LEAVY 2009, P. 256)

## Quantitative

Numbers

Measurement

Tabulating

Value-neutral

Reliability

Validity

Prove/convince

Disciplinary

## Traditional qualitative

Words

Meaning

Writing

Value-laden

Process

Interpretation

Persuade

Interdisciplinary

## Arts-Based Research

Stories, images, sounds

Evocation

Re(presenting)

Emancipation

Authenticity

Truthfulness

Compel

Transdisciplinary



# 1) CONCLUSION: CONTRIBUTIONS TO RESEARCH PRACTICES

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The haiku poems gave data from a first person perspectives on:

- **Evocation** of both the writers and the readers own memories
- **Re(presenting)** the past in the present
- **Emancipation** from family bonds, house, neighbourhood.
- **Authenticity** by poetic framework: Reduction and creation
- **Truthfulness** first person-perspectives were supported by the poetical format
- **Compelling** by the poetic imagery
- **Transdisciplinary** in the combination of arts, didactics and research

## 2) CONCLUSION: CONTRIBUTIONS TO MATERIAL CULTURE DIDACTICS

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Haiku poems gave didactical insights by practicing:

- **Stories** or poems of living upbringing, formation and family roles in places.
- **Compelling**
  - by raising touch, smell, sound, sight and taste as significant parts of didactical discussion: How, what, why, where to teach and learn?
  - by getting substantial new knowledge about fellow students.
- **Transdisciplinary** Acquired the learning objectives but adding personal engagement through art.

# Arts-based research

- Arts based research enjoys relatively more attention in North America (i.e. UBC, Vancouver) and Southern Europe
- Helsinki conference at Aalto University:  
<http://taide.aalto.fi/en/research/arts-based-research/>





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