DISSENS AND SENSIBILITY

WHY ART MATTERS

LISBET SKREGELID

Dissens and Sensibility

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Acknowledgements

Borders? I have never seen one. But I have heard they exist in the minds of some people.

I saw these words by the Norwegian adventurer and ethnographer Thor Heyerdal on a T-shirt when I was visiting the Kon Tiki Museum in Oslo with my children some years ago. I bought the T-shirt and every time I wear it, I offer gratitude to Heyerdal and all the people I know who have had and who have the imagination and the courage to put their dreams into reality. I am thankful to and inspired by all those who find their own paths and who set out on risky voyages to places with unknown destinations. In all areas of society, the experimental minds and explorative actions of adventurers and artists who cross borders and boundaries are needed, not least within the field of education.

This book is an introduction to what I call a pedagogy of dissensus, a pedagogy informed by the dissensual characteristics of art. In this pedagogy, borders, norms and regular ways of teaching are challenged. I call for risks and interruptions and for providing what is not asked for – but needed – from a teaching position filled with love, sensibility and care.

This book includes both theoretical foundations and examples of how the theory is unfolded in different contexts ranging from educational practice to my own arts-based research. It is partly based on existing publications, as well as ongoing projects. Some of the work is introduced here internationally for the first time. Being included in the book series *Artwork Scholarship: International Perspectives in Education* gives me a unique opportunity to provide an overview of my research in an international context. It also gives me, and hopefully others, insight into the connections between my different projects as they have developed from when I entered this field of art education at the turn of the millennium. The aim of the series is to invite debate and to provide an essential resource for transnational scholars. I hope the book can fulfil these intentions.

I am so grateful to the publisher, Intellect Books, and the series editors Rita Irwin and Anita Sinner for being so enthusiastic about my proposal, and who approved the inclusion of my book in the series. I am honored to be in the company of great people who, through their publications in this series, argue for why art matters in education across international borders.

Although it is only my name on the cover of this book, the ideas put forward are the result of much collaboration with and input by others. The book could not have been realized

without the inspiration, support and knowledge I have been so lucky to receive from a wide range of people.

I would like to warmly thank my dear colleague Helene Illeris, who forwarded the mail with the call for contributions to this book series. For over two decades, I have been inspired by her groundbreaking research in the art educational field. I have also had the privilege of having her as my mentor when doing my Ph.D., which is this book´s point of departure. Over the last 14 years, I have had the pleasure of working together with Helene on a range of projects, including projects discussed in this book. Our collaboration has taken me in directions I would never have imagined and for which I am so thankful. I would also like to pay gratitude to Venke Aure, who was my main supervisor during my master´s thesis and Ph.D. My work is heavily grounded in her deep knowledge within the field of art education. I am thankful for the forever support. My other supervisor, Ole Stafseng, inspired me to see the relevance in old, rare books in general, and in Helga Eng´s radical treasure *Kunstædagogik*, from 1918, in particular. I hope he would have appreciated how Eng's ideas are promoted in this publication.

My ideas concerning a pedagogy of dissensus were initiated when researching my Ph.D. within an art museum context. In Chapter 2, I refer to secondary school pupils' encounters with contemporary art over the course of three years. I am still so grateful for their participation in the project, for the inspiring collaboration with teachers in local schools and with the staff at Sørlandet Artmuseum. I am looking forward to continuing the collaboration with the new museum Kunstsilo. I am also immensely grateful for all the students who have taken part in the exploration of how dissensus can be acted out both in and outside the museum space throughout the years.

I am very thankful for all the artists who have created the unforgettable and disturbing art that is referred to in this book. I keep returning to these pieces in my teaching and presentations. Many thanks as well to the artists who let me use images of their art in this book and to the artists who have collaborated with me on different projects that inform my thinking and practice.

Chapter 3, concerning bringing dissensus into the context of teacher education, is based on parts of the project pARTiciPED. I am very grateful for all collaborating participants in this project and especially Sandra Norrbin, Veslemøy Olsen, Johna Buttedal, Katrine Sirnes Nesheim and the students who contributed to this chapter.

In Chapter 4, I reflect on the course involving artists on Lesvos – a course that could not have been done without André Tribbensee. I am so thankful for our collaboration and for all the participating students in what has been far more than a regular university course.

One of the most cited references throughout this book is Gert Biesta. It has been a privilege to work together for the last few years while he has been a visiting professor at our university. I really appreciate our conversations about how art keeps us in and with the world. While I have been writing this book, we have also co-edited the book Being Human Today together with Tore Dag Bøe. I am so thankful for the fruitful interdisciplinary

collaboration, involving colleagues and artists across academic and artistic fields that have led to slow conversations, events, publications, courses and more where I get the chance to explore my thinking about the pedagogy of dissensus in such a playful collective.

I feel privileged to work at a university, to teach and to spend time researching and writing about what is close to my heart. I am grateful for my closest leaders Marit Wergeland and Merete Elnan who approved my research leave, and for the financial support from the Faculty of Fine Arts to realize this book. University of Agder has provided funding which makes this book openly accessible to all, for which I am very thankful. I am also grateful for fantastic colleagues, Ph.D. candidates, my research group and students who inspire me and who join me in exploring arts-based approaches. Recently, I have worked closely with Kristian Nødtvedt Knudsen, Monica Klungland, Jørund Føreland Pedersen, Heidi Kukkonen, Sigurd Tenningen, Kristine Kolloen Nilsen and Helene Illeris on various publications. I am very thankful to be able to expand my ideas as proposed in this book in related projects.

Many thanks to Jelena Stanovnik, Sophia Munyengeterwa and Georgia Glasspole from Intellect Books for the wonderful work with getting this book together. And thanks a lot to Jørund who contributed to the cover design! Thanks also to Annette Götlund, who has offered fantastic and encouraging feedback and who has written the introductory words.

I am grateful for all my inspiring teachers and, especially, I am thankful for my parents who introduced and supported my interest in art and art education. I am so grateful to Levin and Sara for their unstoppable unconditional support and love and who, even though there have been times where art has been 'so boring', also see that art practice is a vital dimension in school. Finally, I am so thankful to Kåre André for giving me the title of this book for my birthday some years ago, and who inspires me by practicing the pedagogy I call for every day in the classroom as a secondary school teacher. While his school leaders buy laptops for the pupils, he buys them ink pens so they can explore the magic of writing and drawing, the connections between hand, body, mind and matter and the adventures of the uncontrollable. I hope more educators will join us in letting art teach and to realize art as an overarching principle in school.

Foreword

Anette Göthlund[1]

In a time where we continuously have to speak for the relevance of aesthetic subjects in school, such as art, crafts and drama, regardless of whether we live in the Nordic countries or elsewhere in the world, a book like *Dissens and Sensibility: Why Art Matters* offers well-grounded arguments.

Here, Lisbet Skregelid introduces what she calls 'a pedagogy of dissensus'. Taking as a starting point Jacques Rancière's philosophy, she invites the reader to encounter dissensus as an educational strategy through examples from her own research and teaching. Via philosophers and theorists such as Jacques Rancière, Gert Biesta and Dennis Atkinson, she discusses, and proves, art's ability to create necessary disturbance and resistance in art education. Thus, putting art at the centre of education and democracy.

Although the examples cover art education in Norwegian schools, museum education and teacher education, they are easily transferable to most readers' own contexts and situations. Skregelid trusts in the pedagogical strategy to rely on and use personal experience as a starting point for a more general discussion, which helps the reader to get close to examples and discussions.

In the final chapter, Skregelid turns to the over 100-year-old thoughts by the Norwegian art educator Helga Eng, the first female professor in pedagogy in Norway, to draw attention to the belief that Eng's pedagogical ideas and Skregelid's ideas about dissensus and the dissensual characteristics of art, actually correspond. Eng's book *Kunstpædagogik: Nutidspædagogik* ('Art education: Contemporary education') from 1918 creates a fascinating arch between today's and yesterday's thinking on the subject, where Eng's thoughts are put in a contemporary perspective.

An important contribution is the way in which this book shows possibilities of how to push boundaries for what is possible across art and education, but still within the frame given by the university structure – where many of its readers probably are to be found. Still, this well-written book will hopefully also find readers outside art education: educators,

researchers and students interested in critical pedagogy will not the least find an easily accessible introduction to Jacques Rancière's philosophy and why it matters for education.

Note

1. Professor of visual arts education, Konstfack University of Arts, Crafts and Design, Sweden.

Introduction

The Role of Art in School and Society

This is a book about voyages. Not so much far off-isles or exotic vistas as to those much closer lands that offer the visitor the image of another world.

(Rancière 2003a: 1)

I let these words by the French Algerian philosopher Jacques Rancière, a major inspirational source for me, introduce this book. The book you are now reading is also one about voyages. I will let you into my own voyage as a Norwegian pupil, teacher and researcher within the field of art education. For some of you, the trip to the Norwegian art educational context might be considered far off, a journey to some extent exotic; though, I think the situation for the arts in education is recognizable across international borders.

The title for this book *Dissens and Sensibility: Why Art Matters* is party inspired by Jane Austen's classic novel *Sense and Sensibility* from 1811, portraying two sisters, Elinor and Marianne, one representing sense and rationality and the other representing sensibility, emotions and passions. The title also refers to the term 'dissensus' (*dissens* in Norwegian) by Rancière (2010) and my use of it in educational contexts. Dissensus is a synthesis of sense and no sense, uniting logic and irrationality and including both reason as well as affects and desires. The title suggests that education should be sensible to these contrasting facets of being human.

Rancière makes use of the term dissensus to describe what he believes art is and what art can do: 'What "dissensus" means is an organization of the sensible where there is neither a reality concealed behind appearances nor a single regime of presentation and interpretation of the given imposing its obviousness on all' (2009: 48). The way art can interrupt our everyday lives, question the sensible, cause sensibility, doubt and uncertainty and possibly enable us to disagree, is very relevant for education.

This book is a call for the need for arts-based approaches to education in general and pedagogy of dissensus in particular. In my Ph.D. dissertation (Skregelid 2016), I analysed secondary school pupils' encounters with contemporary art in a school- and art museum context to discuss the relations between dissensus and what I term 'events of subjectification', which means new ways of seeing, hearing, sensing and acting in the world. From this material, I developed a pedagogy informed by the dissensual characteristics of art. When dissensus is inspiring education the norms and regular ways of teaching are challenged, possible disruptions of the expected are offered. Risk and uncertainty are welcomed. Equality and the unforeseen knowledge are emphasized. Pedagogy of dissensus might lead to resistance, and changes in perceptions and attitudes, along with changes and transformations in the subject.

After finishing my Ph.D., I have explored this pedagogy in different contexts, like a course in site-related art in a contested space in Lesvos, Greece, for both experienced and not so experienced artists. Pedagogy of dissensus has also inspired the theory and the methodology I employ with my students doing educational practice in the local art museum (former Sørlandet Artmuseum, now Kunstsilo) in Kristiansand, Norway, as well as in the art collection at my university. This perspective is also included in the national research project pARTiciPED and the work package I lead Lab for Initiating Dissensus and Exploring the Edges between Art and Education. Lately, my own arts-based research has taken my elaboration on dissensus in education into new directions. Throughout this book, I hope to demonstrate the relevance for placing art at the centre of education by referring to how the pedagogy of dissensus takes place in the different contexts mentioned above.

Hopefully, the book will inspire you to travel yourself, cross borders, expand your horizon and imagine the unimaginable in the field of art education and in education in general. I hope the book will also disturb, deterritorialize and transform and contribute to new ways of thinking, seeing and *doing*. At the end, it is maybe not so much the reading, but the *action* that generates other possible worlds.

My motivation for arts in education

My motivation for writing this book is a long-term engagement with arts in education. I will begin by being a bit personal so that you get a sense of who I am. By exposing my art educational journey, I also say something about dominating discourses within this field in Norway from the 1970s until now.

Both my mum and dad were teaching arts and crafts, in addition to a range of subjects in primary school when I was growing up. The book *Creative and Mental Growth* (1947) by the Austrian professor in art education Victor Lowenfeld was considered *the* book for art educators. The Danish translation from 1976 (Lowenfeld and Brittain 1979 [1947]), was compulsory reading in Norway when studying art and crafts, or forming as the subject was called from 1960 to 1997. Lowenfeld's statement about understanding the stages of artistic development can help children fulfil their full potential regarding creativity led to my mother storing all my drawings and paintings from when I could hold a crayon in my tiny hands. This collection is very valuable to me. She also brought clay to the kitchen table so that my brothers and I could explore the plasticity in that material. In line with Lowenfeld's call for enabling a free space with little restrictions, we were not told what to draw or make. This was also reflected in school, where the dominating activity in the drawing sessions was to draw from our own memory or imagination. I still have the cards where the drawing assignments are listed: 'Summer holiday', 'A dream' and so on. My peers and I were drawing with our Caran d'Ache wax pastels, while our teacher was sitting by his desk in the classroom, giving no instructions other than, 'All of paper needs to be covered in colour'. When the drawings

were accepted by him, we could move on to the next assignment on the list. The woodwork and textile classes were totally different. Here, there were clear directions for what to make. The idea that objects should be useful and well-made is deeply rooted in the history of art and crafts and in the discourse that I call 'Oppdragelsens kunstdidaktikk' (Skregelid 2016: 31), which is similar to what my colleague and Danish professor in art education Helene Illeris calls 'the education of the disciplined eye' (Illeris 2009: 19), emphasizing skills that can easily be measured. Both Illeris and the Norwegian professor in art education Venke Aure have contributed to discourse analyses in the field of art education, which have inspired many Scandinavian scholars (Brænne 2009; Dagsland 2013; Lutnæs 2011; Rimstad 2014), including myself.

Entering drawing classes at secondary school in 1986 was quite a shock for both me and the rest of the pupils in my class. Here, we met a teacher who put a reproduction by the iconic Dutch artist Vincent van Gogh upside down and told us to draw what we saw. Clearly inspired by the book *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain* by the American art educator Betty Edwards ([1979] 2012), the teacher represented a major contrast to that teacher in primary school. By letting us explore the different gradations in the drawing pencil and making us to look at the object a lot more than the paper, some amazing and some not so good copies of van Gogh's *Digger in a Potato Field* emerged in the classroom. Some of my fellow pupils, me included, liked this new approach to drawing, while others lost all of interest as they found it difficult and not very liberating. In textile, however, the freedom from primary school was materialized in the final project. Here, we could make whatever we wanted. I ended up making a jacket of some old jeans and leather, and my star at the time (and now), Bruce Springsteen, written with beads on the back.

Even if I was advised not to, I took the same educational route as my parents. I wanted to become a teacher. I especially enjoyed the last of my four years of studying arts and crafts to become a teacher like my mum. Being an Erasmus student in Northampton, during that year also gave me insights into how art was taught in schools in Britain.

In my first teaching job, which I got in 1998, I was lucky to teach art to a range of pupils between 6 and 16 years old. A new curriculum, *Læreplanverket for den ti-årige grunnskole* ('The curriculum for ten-year compulsory school') had just been introduced. Maybe hoping to achieve a higher status, the name of the subject had been changed from 'forming' ('making') to *Kunst og håndverk* ('art and crafts'). Long lists of learning objectives were found in all subjects, and in arts and crafts, the curriculum revealed a move from free expression to areas of knowledge that could more easily be assessed. An art canon was introduced for the first time. The pupils were to be taught about well-known artists like Pablo Picasso and our own Edvard Munch. Learning goals thematizing design and architecture were also included in the curriculum. In addition to this, visits to art museums and galleries were mentioned explicitly for the first time. It was on this matter that I really felt uncomfortable. Especially when bringing my own pupils to see contemporary art, I was uncertain about what to say when confronted with questions and comments like: 'Why is this art?' 'I could

have made this!' 'Where is the handcraft?' Particularly it was conceptual art that caused the most problems for me.

Because contemporary art, including conceptual and issued-based art had not been included in my own education, neither in primary, secondary, upper secondary, nor in teacher education or in the newly introduced curriculum, this was an unfamiliar field for me but still something that I wanted to explore further. Thus, youngsters' encounters with contemporary art became the point of departure for my own master's degree. I took a break from teaching to explore how museums, in particular the newly opened local art museum in my hometown Kristiansand, Sørlandet Artmuseum, engaged their young audiences, along with how schools and museums collaborated on this (Skregelid 2005). I also spent a lot of time attending art exhibitions myself. Encountering art by artists like Doris Salcedo, Yoko Ono, Douglas Gordon and Marianne Heske, to mention some, were ground-breaking eyeopeners to me. I realized that questions could be more important than answers, that there is no right way to encounter the art and that art can engage in amazing ways. I was also fascinated about the responses to the exhibitions from the youngsters involved in my research. They were a lot more positive to conceptual art than I could have imagined.

After finishing my master's degree, I was lucky to work in a new secondary school for two years, where I established the art department and was head of art education. I tried to adopt my experiences and results from my research and included contemporary art in the arts and crafts sessions by exposing the pupils to contemporary art and letting the students do issued-based practice themselves, despite the obstacles in the curriculum.

In 2004, I started a part-time job teaching teacher-students in arts and crafts at the University of Agder. The year after I started full-time teaching there, and soon after, I was given a grant to do my Ph.D., where I continued to explore youngsters' encounters with contemporary art (Skregelid 2016). I will refer to this work in upcoming chapters, especially in Chapter 3.

What I will say here is that, throughout the years as a kid, a pupil, a teacher and now a professor at the university, I have taken onboard a range of experiences with an art education that I bring with me into this book. In the fifteen previous years, I have also been a mother to two lovely kids, Levin and Sara. In my Ph.D., I say in the foreword that my children are my most important inspirational sources to aesthetic practice and art education. This statement is still valid.

As a parent, I have witnessed a kindergarten that brings the kids outdoors in nature, that fills the days with playing and making activities and that is concerned with the aesthetic appearance of the indoor and outdoor environment. As a parent, I have also witnessed a school that has adopted the idea – one very popular among policy makers and politicians – that reading, writing and mathematics are the most important activities. I have witnessed teachers and administrators that seem subjected to the current policy directives with little opportunity to oppose to these.

My engagement with art from my childhood and my own research has been confronted with the current status quo for the arts in school. The reasons for writing this book are similar to what motivates others to write about related issues. The British professor emeritus in art education Dennis Atkinson and the Dutch professor in educational theory Gert Biesta both share my concern for the minor role of arts in education. Atkinson, for example, introduces his book *Art, Disobedience and Ethics: The Adventure of Pedagogy* (2018) as follows: 'The main reason for writing this book stems from what I see as a persistent under-valuing of the educational force of art in education by governments around the world' (1). He continues to say that, during the past few decades, 'the time allocated for art in schools has been cut significantly to allow greater emphasis upon what are often called the STEM subjects, including science, technology and mathematics – that are viewed as central for economic ambition and competition' (Atkinson 2018: 1). Biesta introduces his book *Letting Art Teach* (2017) in a similar way. Here, he refers to schools as exam factories part of the global education measurement industry. In his calls for a more world-centred education, he says, 'Rather than asking what education *produces*, we should be asking what education *means*. And rather than asking what education *makes*, we should be asking what education *makes possible*' (Biesta 2017: 54, original emphasis). I have picked up on both Atkinson's and Biesta's ideas in this book and will return to these.

In the following, I draw attention to the situation for arts in Norway that complements my own personal story. The status quo is similar to what is referred to by the scholars above, but also, it is a bit different because art is paradoxically both prioritized and not prioritized in Norwegian schools.

The situation for arts in education in Norway

Many researchers have reported on the marginal position of art in Norwegian schools (Dale 2006; Haabesland and Vavik 2000; Halvorsen 1996; Kjosavik 1998; Samuelsen 2003; Solhjell 1995). Up until the 1990s, art was not much visible in the school's curricula (Det kongelige kirke- undervisnings- og forskningsdepartement 1996). The report *Kunst og håndverk i L97: nytt fag – ny praksis* ('Arts and crafts in L97: New subject – new practice') (Kjosavik et al. 2003) explored the impact of the newly launched curriculum in 1997. This was the curriculum that guided me as a newly educated teacher, where art was one of the main areas and visits to art museums were central. The report showed that the new emphasis on the arts in the official document were still not much present in actual teaching. The teachers taught as before. Visits to museums and galleries occurred to a small extent, and the aesthetic dimension was generally neglected. Regarding the aesthetic dimension in the subject, it is said that it is 'unclear and seems to have little space' (Kjosavik et al. 2003: 169, translation added).

Over the past few decades, Norwegian schools and teacher education in Norway have moved towards a view of knowledge and teaching that favours what can be assessed and

quantified (Klungland 2021; Skregelid 2016; Svingen-Austestad 2017). An economically motivated education policy, with a strong emphasis on teaching activities that are oriented towards international tests such as PISA, is partly to blame for the current situation in the schools in Norway, which is something we have seen abroad (Atkinson 2018; Biesta 2018; Madsen 2018). The Norwegian professor of education Lars Løvlie has been one of the leading critics of this measurable knowledge and skills orientation that he refers to as pedagogical formalism and which he did not think would benefit children and young people (Løvlie 2007). This is also referred to as a 'performance-oriented school' (Skaalvik and Federici 2015) with an increased number of hours in subjects such as Norwegian, English, science and mathematics, which has created poor conditions for the arts in school (Ministry of Education 2019).

One consequence of such a view on knowledge and a focus on learning outcomes is that it primarily emphasizes goals and results, not processes. Arts and culture and art subjects in general are not so easily placed within the logic of measurable learning outcomes. This has led to these subjects gradually being disqualified in the battle for what is important in school.

In Norway, the relative percentage of hours devoted to art subjects in primary and lower secondary school has dropped from 20 per cent in the National Curriculum of 1974 to 12.3 per cent in 2006 (Espeland et al. 2011). Many teachers have no formal skills in these subjects, especially in primary and lower secondary school (Lagerstrøm 2007). There has been no compulsory aesthetic module in the framework for teacher education since 2003, and several reports have pointed out that many student teachers graduate without essential knowledge of arts or how to implement aesthetic approaches to learning (Bamford 2012; Lagerstrøm 2007).

The changes mentioned above have led to reports being made and expert groups exploring the status for the arts in education. The report *Praktiske og estetiske fag og lærerutdanning* ('Practical and aesthetic subjects and teacher education') from 2011 states a scepticism towards more tests and trials and less time for the aesthetic subjects. In the report, we read 'there is a real danger that the school may be perceived as smaller and less relevant to young people's lives and future' (Espeland et al. 2011: 11, translation added).

In 2013, an expert group was established to give advice to the Minister of Culture and the Minister of Education, about how to ensure a better coordination of all the art and culture initiatives for school. The background for the request to the expert group was the concerns written about here, about reduced quality and a lack of prioritization of the arts in education (Birkeland and Kunnskapsdepartementet 2014). In the report, the researchers mention the paradoxical situation in Norway, with no emphasis and an emphasis on art in school at the same time. I will return to this.

In the run-up to the work of renewing the curriculum in primary and secondary school, there was a growing awareness that the aesthetic subjects had to be strengthened (NOU 2015: 8, 2016: 28). In 2019, the strategy *Skaperglede, engasjement og utforskertrang: Praktisk og estetisk innhold i barnehage, skole og lærerutdanning* ('Creativity, engagement and curiosity: Aesthetics in kindergarten, school and teacher education') was launched by Ministry of Education (Kunnskapsdepartementet 2019).

In the current curriculum from 2020, art has held a different status than in the two previous ones. Art history and theoretical approaches are practically not present in the subject of arts and crafts. The practical creative work is at the centre of students' learning, and emphasis is put on linking theoretical knowledge to the making activities (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2019).

Simultaneously with art being marginalized in school, throughout the last twenty years, we have seen a range of initiatives aiming to democratize and to make art and culture accessible to a wider section of the population. Children and young people have been given special priority. Within a short period of time, Norway has become one of the world's leading countries in public investment in art and culture for children and young people. Cultural institutions like museums and galleries must include children and young people as an explicit part of their programming and get public funding to create activities involving them. This has been followed by experimentation in these spaces, as well as research that I have also myself contributed to (Skregelid 2016, 2019a, 2019b, 2020a).

In 2001, the national initiative The Cultural Schoolbag (TCS) was launched by the Norwegian Ministry of Culture. Since then, the programme, which is organized by Arts for Young Audiences (Kulturtanken) together with county councils and municipalities, schools and cultural institutions, has ensured all Norwegian pupils aged 6–19 access to professional art and culture in school for free. The arts span from literature, music, visual arts, performing arts and film to cultural heritage. Gaming has newly been included in the portfolio. TCS is an ambitious programme with an annual budget of NOK 285 million that aims to provide a shared frame of reference and joint experiences, irrespective of the pupil's nationality, address, wealth and social background (Kulturtanken 2020). Three times a year on average, 3300 schools, including about 820,000 Norwegian school children, are the visiting venues for arts and culture or are visited by professional musicians, writers, theatre companies, dancers, artists and other cultural producers in their schools. British professor in creativity Anne Bamford asserts that TCS 'is one of the largest programmes in the world that aims to bring professional arts and culture to children' (2012: 33). TCS is also claimed to be 'the only one of its kind in the world' (Den kulturelle skolesekken 2021).

Many have reported on the success of the programme, and the initiative is still expanding. In 2021, kindergarten children were also included in the programme. Still, there are some challenges. Some of the critique that has been raised touch upon the extraordinary and speed-dating character of the initiative (Borgen and Brandt 2006; Bamford 2012; Østrem 2012). Research undertaken across the school sector and art sector demonstrates the difficulty with collaboration between the two contrasting fields. The research has reported on conflicts and polarization of interests, perspectives and ideology (Aslaksen et al. 2003; Aure et al. 2012; Borgen and Brandt 2006; Breivik and Christophersen 2013; Christophersen et al. 2015; Digranes 2009; Heian et al. 2016; Liden 2002). In the research reports, we can read about the need for integrating the programme better within school. This causes a lot of tension because the school sector and the cultural sector seem to understand the goals of TCS differently. The difficult relation between

the school and cultural sector was observed by the Swedish literary critic Jan Thavenius in the similar, but smaller Swedish initiative *Kunst i skolan* ('Art in school'). Thavenius refers to isolated fields and the challenges with integrating the programme in school (Thavenius 2005).

All teachers in Norwegian schools are in contact with TCS activities several times a year, yet the TCS initiative has not been included as part of the education of teachers. In Chapter 3, I write about a research project that was initiated because of this tense relation and the fact that teachers lack ownership of TCS. Student teachers have no compulsory art during teacher education. The research project and initiatives in different teacher education institutions across Norway have emerged to explore how to make student teachers more confident with TCS particularly and in the arts in general. As I have written about the pilot studies leading up to this project in publications before (Skregelid 2020b, 2021c) and because there are publications upcoming, this chapter focuses on how TCS can function as a productive disruption and dissensus in teacher education can contribute to moving beyond the established gaps between the arts, culture and education within schools. Hopefully, the research will demonstrate that this minimum of art is not enough.

In the current situation where art is marginalized in school, there has been a worry about the TCS initiative. Will it become a *substitute* to art and culture within the school? Will teachers think that the art the children experience and do through TCS is enough? Will school leaders refrain from hiring educated art teachers because the pupils will encounter professional art and take part in projects initiated by professional artists anyway? Is it easier to legitimize emphasis on other subjects when a TCS programme exists? TCS is not a substitute initiative but is additional to the art that is already in school. The worries about the extraordinary and substitute are related to the current and past situations of the arts in Norway.

In the spring of 2021, the Norwegian government issued its first white paper on culture for children and young people: *Oppleve, skape, dele – Kunst og kultur for, med og av barn og unge* ('Experience, create, share – Art and culture for, with and by children and young people') (Kulturdepartementet 2021). Through the report, which is a collaborative project between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture, the government aimed to prioritize children and young people and contribute to a higher status and a higher quality of art and culture for this group. The white paper is based on Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that all children have the right to experience art and culture, but also the right to participate actively through creative practice (United Nations 1989). This white paper is a follow up to *The Power of Culture*, published in 2018. This document states the importance of artistic freedom and the role of art for democracy:

> Art and culture are expressions that build society, and cultural policy must be based on freedom of speech and tolerance. The cultural sector and civil society are prerequisites for an educated and enlightened public, and thus an investment in democracy.
>
> (Kulturdepartementet 2018: 7)

The underlying questions in all the strategies, white papers, reports and research projects referred to above are as follows: Why does art matter? Why does art matter in education? Why does art matter for kids and young people? Why does art matter in society? What agendas are the arts and aesthetic subjects asked to address? In the last section of this introduction, I draw attention to some of the justifications that have emerged in the discussions about the role of art.

Why does art matter? A contested question

Former Norwegian Minister of Culture Trine Skei-Grande has touched upon the question 'Why art matters', emphasizing the value of art when launching the strategy for giving more attention to art and culture in education (Kunnskapsdepartementet 2019b). She stresses that experiencing and participating in art and cultural activities can lead to different ways of expressing oneself, and to reflect on the society one lives in (Kunnskapsdepartementet 2019b). She states that the methods from these subjects can be used as 'pedagogical tools' in all subjects, which make the teaching more varied and engaging. She also says that engaging with art can contribute to 'creative and innovative skills'. In the strategy itself, we see how the value of art is linked to innovation and economically motivated agendas: 'Creative and creative abilities and skills are an enrichment for the individual and for society. They are the basic elements of all innovation and development' (Kunnskapsdepartementet 2019a: 4, translation added). Furthermore, the strategy states that art and culture and creative activity expand 'our understanding of ourselves and the society we live in' (4, translation added). Art creates 'identity', provides 'insights into our own and others' culture and traditions' and contributes 'to develop wonder, curiosity and critical thinking' (4, translation added). Social competence and good mental health are also outcomes of engaging with art.

Over the past twenty years, we have seen a neoliberal turn in the economy and increased competition between different countries (Pedersen 2011). This tendency has led to what Norwegian professor emeritus in economics Rune Slagstad describes as a new school policy knowledge regime governed by the OECD (Slagstad 2018). In the prelude to the present curriculum, we have seen a somewhat one-sided emphasis on business-oriented needs and society's competence requirements as guidelines for what should be the educational content in school. Business-oriented rhetoric is explicitly formulated when it is made clear that 'creativity and innovation is considered central to economic development and to the competitiveness of Norwegian business and industry' (NOU 2015: 8, 31, translation added). In the final curriculum, we see this idea realized when, for example, the relevance of the arts and crafts subject is discussed: 'The subject must prepare students for an everyday and working life that requires innovation, practical skills, and the ability to make aesthetic and ethical choices' (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2019a: n.pag., translation added).

The importance of the arts and aesthetic subjects has been documented in several international research reports (Bamford 2012; Cziboly 2010; Tanggaard et al. 2012; Winner et al. 2013). These reports emphasize particularly the importance for the development of creativity and the significance of these subjects for how to do well in other subjects.

In Norway, we have had headlines in media such as 'Art makes students better' (Hoas 2008: n.pag., translation added), 'Art makes it easy to learn grammar' (Ebdrup 2012: n.pag., translation added) and 'Art leads to better grades' (Tessem 2011: n.pag., translation added). Some of these newspaper articles refer to Bamford's research and much quoted book *Wow Factor* (2006). In this book, Bamford writes about how different countries' investment in art and culture corresponds with good scores on PISA tests. Not long after writing his book, Bamford was commissioned by the National Centre for Art and Culture in Education to explore the situation for the aesthetic subjects in Norway, which showed a worrying status quo that I commented on above (Bamford 2012).

Over the past two decades, there has been a major increase in the research into the effects of the arts on health and well-being, alongside developments in practice and policy activities in different countries across the World Health Organization (WHO) European Region. The WHO report *What Is the Evidence on the Role of the Arts in Improving Health and Well-Being? A Scoping Review*, which was published in 2019 (Fancourt and Finn 2019), finds evidence of the culture's ability to promote good health and prevent several mental and physical health conditions, as well as the treatment or management of acute and chronic conditions that occur throughout life. According to the report, art is effective against diabetes, obesity, anxiety and depression, to mention a few.

I acknowledge the need for exploring and communicating the reason for why art matters. This is also what motivates me and is why I wrote this book. However, in contrast to the arguments referred to above, in this book, I will seek other lines of reasoning, being aware of that some kind of instrumentalist justification is unavoidable. Are there some agendas for the arts to address that are more acceptable than others?

One of those who has criticized both the neoliberal turn in education and the constructed connections between innovation and creativity is Biesta. In the text 'What if? Art education beyond expression and creativity' (Biesta 2018), he outlines an imaginary future where we look back to where we are now with measurable learning outcomes, comparison and competition, with few winners and many losers and where we ask ourselves: 'What was that all about?' (Biesta 2018: 11). He continues with the following:

> And maybe some educational historians may also wonder how the arts became caught up in all this – how art became redefined as creativity, how creativity became redefined as a skill and, for some, a '21st century skill,' and how such skills were deemed to be important for survival in the uncertain world created by global capitalism.
>
> (Biesta 2018: 11)

His text presents two challenges for the arts in education. One is on the instrumental justifications for the arts in education, such as the ones I have referred to above. Biesta believes this leads to art disappearing from art education. Another concern is rooted in the well-known notion 'free expression' in the arts, or 'artistic freedom', which is also promoted in the white paper *The Power of Culture* (2018). Biesta is worried about the educational dimension disappearing and that the role of the teacher in the arts will be minimized. He is also concerned about the attention given to the desires of the individual. Is what is desirable for us desirable for the world? Do we risk becoming more egocentric than eco-oriented? Atkinson raises a similar worry towards the marked capitalism infusing education:

> Thus the arts, which are currently being marginalised in the school curriculum in many countries, should be recognised as playing an important part of learning experiences along with other modes of learning such as science, language, technology and mathematics. A challenge within art education itself concerns trying to respond effectively to the different ways in which learning encounters are manifested in their outcomes and to the evolving sensibilities of learners in their changing social milieus.
>
> (2018: 6)

He continues to question whether his way of seeing the force of art is an instrumental justification. He refers in a similar manner as I do in this book, to how art can disrupt and destabilize, what French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari call deterritorialization 'that opens up a potential for new ways of seeing, thinking feeling and making' (2018: 7). Such justifications for the arts are adopted in this book. Thus, I challenge the autonomous idea of *l'art pour l'art*, or art for art's sake. In this final section, I refer to how this might be understood, still taking onboard the critique of instrumental justifications of art mentioned above.

Art to see ourselves and the world in new ways

My starting point for writing this book is the belief that art and culture are important for both young people and adults, both inside and outside of school. Erlend Høyersten who is director of Høyersten Contemporary in Bergen and former director of Sørlandets Artmuseum in Kristiansand, Kode in Bergen and lately Aros in Århus, Denmark, has, in many contexts, proclaimed the relevance of art. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit the field of art and culture in March 2020, he turned to the Danish Minister of Culture, Joy Mogensen, and said the following:

> Art and culture require critical thinking, openness and curiosity. Art can strengthen our imagination. That is why we need art and artists. Artists; because they can challenge

> habits and patterns by imagining what has not been created yet. Art; so we can contribute to this imaginary world and see what does not yet exist. Because if we cannot imagine a better world, we will not get a better world.
>
> (Høyersten 2020: n.pag., translation added)

Relevant to this quote, the Russian author and critic Victor Sjklovskij wrote over one hundred years ago about the ability of art to make us more sensitive to our surroundings. In the article 'Art as techniques', he writes about of art's ability to deautomate our access to the world (Sjklovskij [1917] 1991). This leads my thoughts to Rancière (2004) and what he writes about regarding the possible effect of art. From an art philosophical point of view, Rancière emphasizes the disturbing character of art. As mentioned in the beginning of this introduction, he sees art as dissensus and art as a distribution of the sensible, which contributes to looking at ourselves and the world around us in new ways. Experiencing art and doing art practice can make children and adults see themselves, each other, and the world around them with new eyes. Art complicates and questions established truths. Particularly this perspective by Rancière is adopted in my conceptualization of pedagogy of dissensus.

The British artist and visual cultural theorist Simon O'Sullivan (2001) also says that art has the potential to transform us 'our sense of our' selves 'and our notion of our world' (128). He goes on to say, 'This is art's function: to switch our intensive register, to reconnect us with the world' (O'Sullivan 2001: 128). According to the German sociologist Theodor Adorno (1984), art is utopian and can give ideas about a world that is not yet. Biesta (2018) also talks about the possibility of art to let us get in touch with the world, but more so the physical, sensory world. Because art often represents a resistance, according to Biesta, it represents an ongoing dialogue without a known outcome:

> just as art *is* the dialogue of human beings with the world, art *is* the exploration and transformations of our desires so that they can become a positive force for the ways in which we seek to exist in the world in grown-up ways. And that is where we may find the educative power of the arts.
>
> (Biesta 2018: 18, original emphasis)

Here, we see Biesta addressing the potential of art for education. The references above also show the more existential possibilities of art. For example, that art can connect us and make us more aware and related to our surroundings. Are these unrealistic expectations? Should not art be autonomous? Should not art be allowed to operate without any thought for what it may mean? As mentioned, there are many agendas that art is asked to address. The pamphlet and handbook *Derfor trenger vi kunst og kultur* ('Why we need art and culture') (Choi 2021) lists many reasons why art is important. Some of these correspond to those mentioned above and can, from an artistic point of view, be considered problematic, for example, when one sees connections between art and health, between art, PISA results and economic innovation.

The mentioned handbook and the book you now hold in your hands also comment on other agendas that may be considered less problematic, for example, that art can improve the quality of life and can contribute to more ecological and democratic consciousness. Nevertheless, these are agendas that art must adhere to, for I do not think art can escape any agendas.

This book is oriented towards how art has a generative potential for enabling the subject to come into presence and exist. I state that dissensus and encountering art and doing art can make the events of subjectification (Skregelid 2020a: 163), or what I here call events of subjectification, possible, which means new ways of seeing, hearing, sensing and acting in the world. This term is inspired by Rancière (2009), who sees dissensus as part of the process of political subjectification. By raising the voices that disturb the normal order, the obviousness of the visible might 'sketch a new topography of the possible' (Rancière 2009: 49). I relate Rancière's way of understanding the political subject to Atkinson's (2011, 2018) and Biesta's (2006, 2010, 2014, 2017a, 2017b, 2021) conceptions of the subject; both argue for education that risks and offers resistance for the subject to exist and come into being. They talk about the knowledge that emerges, that was not there and that could not be anticipated. Atkinson's and Biesta's theories on the subject and interruptive teaching have inspired my way of seeing dissensus as a premise for events of subjectification and an educational approach. They both also make use of the concept dissensus themselves. In the book *The Rediscovery of Teaching*, Biesta uses the term dissensus as a quality of subject-oriented teaching (2017b: 83). He refers to Rancière and argues for teaching as dissensus as an orientation towards the unforeseen, a teaching that interrupts the logic of ideas of child development and students' growth. Atkinson writes in *Pedagogy Against the State* about 'dissensual art practices' (2011: 75) as marginalized aesthetic practices that challenge the norms. Without mentioning dissensus explicitly in this context, he refers to how Rancière says that contemporary art can disrupt and redistribute the sensible. In *Art, Disobedience and Ethics*, Atkinson acknowledges that his call for art as disobedient and a pedagogy that is 'disobedient to established parameters of practice, practices of thinking, seeing, making and feeling' (2018: 1) could be called a 'dissensual pedagogy' (6).

My application of dissensus in a range of art educational contexts throughout this book will hopefully join the somewhat loose connections between Rancière's own understanding of politics, education and aesthetics while providing some examples of the ways dissensus in relation to education can be realized. My hope is that readers will see the relevance of placing art and the characteristics of art at the centre of education.

Outline of the book

In my research, I argue that art has something to offer education because of the unpredictable and unforeseen nature of art that challenges existing norms, that has no definitive answer and

that contributes to new ways of seeing both oneself and one's surroundings. The argument for this has emerged as a reaction to an economically motivated policy on education, one with an emphasis on goal-driven activities that are oriented towards international tests such as PISA. As a response to this, I have introduced the pedagogy of dissensus as a resource and approach relevant to teaching and pedagogical activity in various contexts. This introduction that is partly based on the introduction to the book *Kunstens betydning? Utvidede perspektiver på kunst og barn & unge* ('The relevance of art? Extended perspectives on art and young people') (Skregelid and Knudsen 2022) has provided a status quo of the position of arts in education in Norway, here with reference to the international situation as well. This forms the basis for arguing for the need for dissensus in education.

The first chapter is an introduction to dissensus as an educational approach. Pedagogy of dissensus is developed out of Rancière's (2009, 2010) general philosophy and his concept of dissensus particularly, along with the research conducted in a range of art educational contexts (Skregelid 2016, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c, 2021). When dissensus is used as an educational approach, unforeseen and uncertainty is welcomed, and regular ways of teaching are challenged. Questions and actions that complicate are preferred over a practice that comforts and eases. The challenges and uncertainties may lead to resistance, but I see this as a resource that leads to a change in perceptions and attitudes. From this, I argue that a pedagogy of dissensus enables the subject to come into existence, or what I frame as events of subjectification. The chapter is based on the chapters in my Ph.D. (Skregelid 2016), where I introduce Rancière's theories and develop them in an art educational context. In this chapter, I briefly introduce how the pedagogy of dissensus relates to theories on subjectification, third space, democracy, affect, a/r/tography, world-centredness and agonism. In the next chapters, I elaborate more on these concepts in relation to the different educational practices informed by dissensus.

One way to initiate dissensus can be to introduce what can be seen as disruptive art, initiating situations that offer resistance and that welcome disagreement and the unforeseen. In the second chapter, I write about how dissensus can inform educational practice in an art museum context. I use examples from my own research that involve art and that have been regarded as provocative and confronting, such as the art of the Norwegian artist Morten Viskum, who is known for his use of animals and parts of dead human bodies in his artmaking. I also refer to research in an art museum context, which includes the Finnish photographer Iiu Susiraja, who uses her own body as the subject for her art. This chapter addresses the relations between dissensus, agonism and democracy by asking the following: What are the democratic potentialities in art educational practice when dissensus and agonism are used as central approaches? I refer to agonism as it is understood by the Belgian political theorist Chantal Mouffe (2000, 2005, 2013), who argues for the potentialities of disagreement and conflicts, particularly in political contexts to promote democracy. Biesta contributes with a productive way of seeing democracy in educational contexts (2014).

Chapter 3 thematizes dissensus in a teacher education context. Here, I refer to the national research project pARTiciPED: Empowering Student Teachers for Cross-Sectorial Collaborations with TCS in Norwegian Schools (2021–24), funded by the Research Council of Norway. I have been leading the work package Lab for Initiating Dissensus and Exploring the Edges in between Art and Education. As the title of the work package hints at, an exploration of the initiation of dissensus is also significant here. In this project, the concept of third space is central (Rutherford 1990; Soja 1996). The chapter discusses the relevance of the third space to characterize the intersections and relations between art and education, the artist, and the educator, in addition to referring to the initial stages of the research project. The concept of word centredness by Biesta (2017) is also included here. I claim that dissensus as an educational approach and third space can be a contribution to what Biesta refers to as 'a worldy space [...] an educational space' (2017: 65).

A third context where I have initiated dissensus is a BA study programme on site-related art, based on the Greek island of Lesvos in 2018 and 2019. This course was mainly attracting artists, both experienced and not. I also collaborated with an artist in making the course. In Chapter 4, I write about how dissensus informed the form and content of the course, about the experiences and especially about the doubts and ethical issues that emerged when arranging a site-related art courses in an area facing a migration crisis. Here, theory about socially engaged art and socially engaged art education is addressed in relation to pedagogy of dissensus. The educational turn in art (Wilson and O'Neill 2010) and the merging of art and education is discussed as a contested but productive third space.

In Chapter 5, I describe how the COVID-19 situation as a major interruption in March 2020 has contributed to discussing – and even questioning – dissensus and subjectification in a much more personal way than I have done in previous research. The chapter has my own arts-based educational research project as point of departure, which is centred around my ongoing artwork *My Stunning Stream: Made with a Little Mischief* (2020–ongoing). In this project, I embody pedagogy of dissensus. Since the first lockdown, I have been running two to three times a week, stopped about half-way and, from about the same spot, filming the sea view for 30 seconds. Despite the speed of running, this project has made me slow down and pay attention to my senses and how I have been affected by the running itself, the ongoing situation and nature. This chapter discusses the relevance of pedagogy of dissensus in relation to a/r/tography as a practice-based methodological approach (Irwin 2012; LeBlanch and Irwin 2019), an approach that unites art, education and research and embraces the arts and education as forms of performative, explorative and lived inquiry. Central in this chapter is also the notion of affect (Massumi 2015) and how ecological awareness (Morton 2018) is created.

The last chapter sums up the theoretical foundation that is expanding throughout the book. The question of why art matters and why art matters in education is, in this final

chapter, related to the radical but rather ignored book *Kunstpædagogik* ('Art education') from 1918 by the Norwegian psychologist and educator Helga Eng. Her arguing for art as an overall principle in school cultivates my claim for a pedagogy of dissensus and the use of the dissensual characteristics of art to inform teaching and see education as a place for artistic and explorative practice. This Norwegian and Nordic perspective will hopefully contribute to the international art educational field in the future.

Chapter 1

Towards a Pedagogy of Dissensus

Although Rancière's work has concentrated on the aesthetics of politics and the politics of the arts of the aesthetic regime, he has paid significantly less attention to the aesthetics of education and in turn the politics of this relationship. Indeed, it is the exact nature of politics, education, and the arts that Rancière fails to completely conceptualize, thus creating a gap that mysteriously separates and yet conjoins these three autonomous fields.

(Lewis 2012: 5)

I have set out the ambition for this book to be an introduction to a pedagogy of dissensus, what I see as an educational approach using the dissensual characteristics of art as an experimental and affective force. As stated in the introduction, pedagogy of dissensus might lead to changes in perceptions and attitudes, changes and transformations, deterritorializations or maybe reterritorializations in the subject.

Pedagogy of dissensus is based on Rancière's (2009, 2010) general philosophy, and his concept of dissensus particularly. This pedagogy is also based on research conducted in a range of art educational contexts (Skregelid 2016, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c). Rancière is a central figure in both aesthetic, political and pedagogical philosophy. I find his works interesting but also challenging to read sometimes. Rancière's works have been described by others as complicated because of their cross-disciplinary nature, in terms of both content and form. British educational researcher Caroline Pelletier, for example, refers to one of my main inspirational sources *The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation* (1991) as 'at once a kind of a novel, a militant treatise, and an archival study, it recounts the life of a 19th century teacher and his experiments in emancipatory education' (Pelletier 2009: 138).

Rancière's theories form a comprehensive epistemology involving politics, art and education. The complexity invites us to make use of the theories in a variety of ways. As the quote above indicates, the interrelations between art and education and what American researcher Tyson Lewis calls 'the aesthetics of education' (2012: 5) seems less elaborated on. I use a broad register of Rancière's mindset and conceptual apparatus. My application of the concepts by Rancière in an art educational context might contribute to joining the somewhat loose connections among his understanding of politics, education and aesthetics. In this chapter, I introduce some of the key concepts and ideas that have contributed to my understanding of the pedagogy of dissensus. This involves Rancière's radical concept of equality, his perception of emancipation, his understanding of aesthetics and aesthetic efficiency and his view of art as politics. Furthermore, his understanding of

dissensus and political subjectification and connections between these are central in the current book.

In this chapter, I introduce the thoughts and concepts from Rancière, as well as other theorists and researchers who have inspired my use of dissensus in art educational contexts. As I have referred to in the introduction, the theories about the subject, interruptive teaching and the elaborations about the force of art by amongst Atkinson and Biesta have all inspired my way of seeing dissensus as a premise for the events of subjectification and an approach to education. In this chapter, I also briefly introduce how the pedagogy of dissensus relates to the theories on third space, agonism, affect, a/r/tography and world centredness.

Equality

Rancière's understanding of equality as an ahistorical and universal presupposition, infiltrates most of his thinking: 'Equality is a presupposition, an initial axiom – or it is nothing' (2003b: 223). As the American art critic Hal Foster also admits, there are good reasons why Rancière gets so much attention, despite some weaknesses in some of his theories: 'his ability to connect philosophy, politics and art might be unparalleled, and the same is true of his commitment to egalitarianism as both a topic of research and a goal of struggle' (2013: 15).

The starting point for Rancière's concept of equality was his rereading of the German philosopher Karl Marx and the break with his teacher and mentor, the French philosopher Louis Althusser, in the 1970s. The discovery, that French workers spent their free time on completely different things than their class affiliation led to a critique of the Marxist heritage (Rancière 1989). The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu is among those criticized by Rancière. Rancière criticizes a policy based on the division of the world into groups, social positions and functions. Pelletier refers to Rancière's critique of Bourdieu as a 'demolition of Bourdieu's whole enterprise' (2009: 138). Rancière's emancipatory ideas, that democracy must be based on equality between the individuals of society, are in contrast to Bourdieu's theories and research, which Pelletier believes 'places the poor in one position in society, and the sociologist in another; in which the poor are objects of study rather than intellectual subjects' (2009: 138). Rancière criticizes Bourdieu for claiming that inequality exists, for example, as a class divider, and that our habitus determines how we encounter the world (Rancière 2003b). Rancière believes that, by focusing on a division of those who are researched and those who do the research, a balance of power between these is maintained and strengthened.

In my research, which is described in this book and very much relies on participation and making use of action-based research methods, equality is something I strive to ensure. Still, I acknowledge the challenges with a total balance between the researcher and participants because of our different positions and agendas. I also try to include Rancière's understanding

of equality in my teaching. Rancière brings his own ideas on equality into the field of education in *Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation* (1991). In several of his later books, Rancière refers to this text. The book begins with the story of the teacher Joseph Jacotot (1770–1840) and his teaching methods. During the restoration period in France at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Jacotot was forced into exile and fled to Leuven, Belgium. Without being able to speak Flemish, he began teaching his students French by having the students read a bilingual version of the classic *The Adventures of Telemachus* from 1699. The Flemish version was read to understand, and then, the students had to memorize the French version and retell it. The students learned to read and write French without the teacher's explanations and transfer of knowledge. One of Jacotot's main theses was that the teacher's task is to make the students find answers to questions themselves, even answers the teacher is not aware of. Through various experiments, he demonstrated that it is possible to teach what one does not know. These principles contrast a more normalized pedagogical logic that is about teaching someone what they do not know, to abolish the distance between those who know and those who do not know, a pedagogy where the explanation and transfer of knowledge are central. It is this pedagogical mindset that Rancière distances himself from when he proclaims his radical notion of equality. From Rancière's position, the relationship between the teacher and learner becomes somewhat unclear. Both the teacher and pupil teach and learn at the same time. Rancière says the following:

> He does not teach his pupils *his* knowledge but orders them to venture into the forest of things and signs, to say what they have seen and what they think of what they have seen, to verify it and have it verified.
>
> (2009: 11, original emphasis)

I find Rancière's way of understanding the 'ignoramus' (2009: 9) relevant for both myself as a teacher and researcher, and in the way we look at the teacher–pupil relation, especially in contexts involving art when we do not believe that art contains a hidden truth. Rancière says: 'The ignoramus advances by comparing what she discovers with what she already knows, in line with random encounters but also according to the arithmetical rule, the democratic rule, that makes ignorance a lesser form of knowledge' (2009: 9). I will return to how the idea of equality is relevant and how it is adopted in the different contexts in the upcoming chapters.

Emancipation

Rancière's ideas on equality are related to his understanding of emancipation: 'Intellectual emancipation is the verification of equality of intelligence' (2009: 10). Rancière refers to Jacotot's pedagogical idea as a path to emancipation and liberation in opposition to what Rancière calls 'stultifying pedagogues' (2009: 12).

Rancière's premise of equality, his view of emancipation and his understanding of teaching is related to the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire's ideas expressed in *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, first published in 1968 ([1968] 2003). At the same time, we see that the emancipation that Rancière talks about differs from Freire's view of emancipation, which is an analysis of oppressive structures and of overcoming the differences between teachers and students. Rancière's understanding of emancipation, which is also picked up by Biesta (2014), involves a critique of a logic where it is assumed that emancipation is about an intervention from outside, where one or more people set others free to create equality. Rancière states that emancipation means a 'blurring of the boundary between those who act and those who look; between individuals and members of collective body' (2009: 19).

Can Jacotot's ideas about teaching be applied to all situations and all educational contexts? Rancière states in an interview that we *cannot* transfer Jacotot's ideas directly to other fields: 'the question is not about pedagogical methods or pedagogical results, but rather about the philosophy itself as a whole' (Jul-Larsen 2012: 229, translation added). For Rancière, Jacotot's ideas are interesting because of the principle of equality on which the pedagogical idea is based and on what this assumption makes possible. Many reject Jacotot's ideas as a method or recipe for educational success (Atkinson 2011; Bingham and Biesta 2010; Pelletier 2009). Bingham and Biesta write about this: 'It is a story. It is not a method. It waits not for implementation. It waits instead for another story to be told in return' (2010: 152). Sometimes, it might even be tempting to justify one's own lack of knowledge or time for preparation by referring to Jacotot. I do not think this is a right use of this theory. What I find interesting is to use Jacotot's ideas on equality and emancipation as a *starting point* for educational thinking and praxis.

Although Jacotot's thoughts on education cannot be automatically transferred to other fields, these ideas of teaching still become very relevant in art educational contexts where art is considered open to different readings and a range of possible meanings. Ideas of equality become relevant when all voices are seen as significant. In the book *The Emancipated Spectator*, Rancière transfers his idea of intellectual emancipation and equality to encountering art, including visual art (Rancière 2009).

Before I present Rancière's thoughts on the one who sees and experiences art, that is, the spectator, parts of Rancière's aesthetics are introduced, which, to a large extent, form the basis for my understanding of art and art educational epistemology. The considerations of the phenomenon of art and what art can do are probably also the starting point for the connections Rancière himself makes between art and education.

Aesthetics between autonomy and instrumentality

When exploring the relevance of art and claiming that art matters in education, Rancière's arguing for a possible autonomous experience of art is interesting. He says 'the autonomy staged by the aesthetic regime of art is not that of the work of art but of a mode of experience'

(2010: 116–17). In *The Politics of Aesthetics*, first published in 2000 and considered one of his most important books, Rancière writes that aesthetics refers to:

> a specific regime for identifying and reflecting on the arts: a mode of articulation between ways of doing and making, their corresponding forms of visibility, and possible ways of thinking about their relationships (which presupposes a certain idea of thought's effectivity).
>
> (2006: 10, original emphasis)

Rancière explains the use of the concept of aesthetics as follows:

> I call this regime *aesthetic* because the identification of art no longer occurs via a division within ways of doing and making, but it is based on distinguishing a sensible mode of being specific to artistic products. The word aesthetics does not refer to a theory of sensibility, taste and pleasure for art amateurs. It strictly refers to the specific mode of being of whatever falls within the domain of art, to the mode of being of the objects of art.
>
> (2006: 22, original emphasis)

Rancière's concept of aesthetics is based on the Greek *aisthesis*, meaning sensory knowledge. Artistic practices are seen as '"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 being and forms of visibility' (Rancière 2006: 13). Atkinson writes about this as follows: 'A distribution of the sensible is concerned with the organization and legitimizing of ways of doing, saying and seeing in particular social contexts' (2011: 42). Atkinson goes on to stress the importance of disturbance in Rancière's philosophy, which is prominent in Rancière's aesthetic regime of art and contributes to my construction of pedagogy of dissensus.

Rancière himself says that his thinking is 'quite close to' the French philosopher Michel Foucault (Hallward 2003: 209). Inspired by Foucault's epistemes and orders of knowledge in the book *The Order of Things* (Foucault [1966] 2006), Rancière identifies three different regimes for art that all represent different periods, historical connections and different relations to the outside world: the ethical, the representative and the aesthetic art regime (Rancière 2003b). The concept of regime is defined as follows: 'a specific type of connection between ways of producing works of art or developing practices, forms of visibility that disclose them, and ways of conceptualizing the former and the latter' (Rancière 2006: 20).

The aesthetic regime of art is referred to by Rancière as a 'regime of democracy' (2006: 14). In his account of this regime, Rancière draws on German poet Friedrich Schiller's *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* from 1795 ([1795] 1991), where Schiller expresses his disappointment about the outcome of the French Revolution in 1789. The revolution was perhaps more on an ideological than practical level, and the distinction in society between

an elite and common people who were not listened to was maintained. Schiller's solution was aesthetic education, an aesthetic revolution that could help connect emotions and reason, the unconscious and conscious because man instinctively seeks harmony in this field of tension. It is in this context that play becomes central. According to Schiller, one becomes a complete human being by being playful.

Rancière claims that the aesthetic revolution turns reality and fiction upside down: 'The real must be fictionalized to be thought' (2006: 38); he believes that fiction has a certain degree of realism and that it may appear more real in a poetic form. In this way, in its fictional form and with its inherent ambiguity, art can contribute to seeing the surroundings and 'the real' in new ways. In the aesthetic regime, rules for how art is produced and what art is has been dissolved: 'The aesthetic regime of the arts dismantled this correlation between subject matter and mode of representation' (Rancière 2006: 32). The aesthetic regime is characterized by the absence of norms. An example of this, one over 100 years old, is French artist Marcel Duchamp's readymade *Fountain* from 1917. American philosopher Joseph J. Tanke, who has written a lot about Rancière, including the book *Jacques Rancière: An Introduction* (2011a), says in the article 'What is the aesthetic regime?' that common for many of the art movements that arose towards the end of the nineteenth century is that they ask the question 'how art is related to and, more importantly, different from life' (2011b: 72). Rancière himself says, 'In the aesthetic regime of art, the future of art, its separation from the present of nonart, incessantly restages the past' (2006: 24) and further that the aesthetic art regime is 'is first of all a new regime for relation to the past' (2006: 25). By doing this, Rancière also criticizes the established modernism-postmodernism dichotomy and contradictions between the old and modern.

Poetic translation and aesthetic participation

I am inspired by what Rancière writes about regarding poetic translation and aesthetic efficiency. In *The Emancipated Spectator*, we read, 'The poetic labour of translation is at the heart of all learning' (Rancière 2009: 10). It is not about taking the scholar's position 'but so as better to practice the art of translating, of putting her experience into words and her words to the test' (Rancière 2009: 11). He is concerned with how to make use of the students' existing knowledge to expand their understandings and how encountering art is always a question about translation: 'The meaning of things is not given in any simple way, and meaning is always a work of translation' (Jul-Larsen 2012: 235, translation added).

Rancière (2009) finds it problematic to think of a connection between art production, perception of art and the spectators' thoughts, feelings and actions. By holding onto his principle of equality of intelligence, he believes that what art does or can do is not a matter of conveying messages, making models of how to behave, or teaching how to understand art.

In contrast, Rancière describes a 'aesthetic efficiency' (2009: 63) that means 'a paradoxical kind of efficacy that is produced by the very rupturing of any determinate link between cause and effect' (63). He also says, 'The aesthetic effect is in fact a relationship between two "separations"' (Rancière 2009: 69). According to Rancière, art must be seen as a third thing that is unfamiliar to both the artist and spectator, an element that no one owns: 'whose meaning is owned by no one, but which subsists between them, excluding any uniform transmission, any identity of cause and effect' (2009: 15). Seeing art as a third thing in between the artist and the spectator corresponds to seeing art as a third space. I will return to this below.

Rancière makes connections between the student, teacher and spectator because they are all active when they reflect and think about what they see and experience:

> The spectator also acts, like the student, just like the pupil or scholar. She observes, selects, compares, interprets. She links what she sees to a host of other things that she has seen on other stages, in other kinds of place. She composes her own poem with elements of the poem before her. She participates in the performance by refashioning it her own way – by drawing back, for example, from the vital energy that it is supposed to transmit to make it a pure image and associate this image with a story which she has read or dreamt, experienced or invented. They are thus both distant spectators and active interpreters of the spectacle offered to them.
>
> (2009: 13)

In addition to demonstrating how equality infuses encounters with art, Rancière writes about how meaning is formed through participation and what this participation is. The spectator relates what they see to other things they have seen elsewhere. The spectator creates their own work, their own translation that is not necessarily and probably most often, not identical with the artist's intention. For Rancière, seeing and experiencing art is not about a passive state that must be made active. Rancière speaks of the active spectator state as our 'our normal situation' (2009: 17). By looking at art, one participates and becomes active, even if one does not say or do anything in relation to others. What we hear and see, we constantly associate with what we have heard or seen before. Here, Rancière compares the spectator and ignorant student again: 'It requires spectators who play the role of active interpreters who develop their own translation to appropriate the "story" and make it their own story' (2009: 22). This is what I refer to as 'aesthetic participation' (Skregelid 2016: 84, translation added). Aesthetic participation challenges the established understanding of concepts such as 'activity' and 'participation', contributing to the understanding of how to experience and how meaning is formed.

I now move on to the concept of dissensus, which is central to Rancière's aesthetic regime, along with his understanding of aesthetic efficiency, which I find to be a very productive concept for education.

Dissensus

I see dissensus as a key concept in Rancière's philosophy. The ambiguity of the concept, which is referred to in the introduction opens the possibilities of dissensus in art educational contexts in particular and in educational contexts in general.

In his discussion about the aesthetic regime of art, Rancière (2009) is concerned about what art is and what art does. The dissensual character of art breaks with familiar forms of representation, contributing to new ways of seeing, hearing and sensing. In *The Emancipated Spectator*, he talks about the ontology 'the ontology of the dissensual is actually a fictional ontology, a play of 'aesthetic ideas' (Rancière 2009: 67). He also states the following about dissensus:

> What 'dissensus' means is an organization of the sensible where there is neither a reality concealed behind appearances nor single regime of presentation and interpretation of the given imposing its obviousness on all. It means that every situation can be cracked open from the inside, reconfigured in a different regime of perception and signification. To reconfigure the landscape to what can be seen and what can be thought is to alter the field of the possible and distribution of capacities and incapacities. Dissensus brings back into play both the obvious of what can be perceived, thought and done, and the distribution of those who are capable of perceiving, thinking and altering the coordinated of the shared world.
>
> (Rancière 2009: 48–49)

He continues to say that a dissensual community is 'an aesthetic community is a community structured by disconnection' (Rancière 2009: 59). In the book *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*, dissensus is described in a similar way, that is, as ruptures in the sensible: 'It is the demonstration (manifestation) of a gap in the sensible itself' (Rancière 2010: 38). As I have previously explained, according to Rancière, art has no hidden meaning that can be revealed. Because art is open to different readings, opportunities for disagreement emerge. Tanke writes about the connections between Rancière's aesthetic art, dissensus and meaning:

> These aesthetic practices are, for Rancière, one of the primary means of creating dissensus. One way of describing dissensus is to say that it is a 'separation [écart]of the sensible from itself.' Instances of dissensus are moments in which the supposed obviousness of the distribution of bodies, voices, and capacities, breaks down. Aesthetic art troubles traditional patterns of assigning meaning to that which appears to our senses, and, more generally, cultivates the separation of sense or meaning [sens] from sense [sens]. Aesthetic art is a rejection of the idea that things have a single and definitive meaning. It is therefore one of the means by which the meanings of an object, a body, a policy or

> a group of people can be contested. The ability of art to impact the distribution of the sensible stems from the ambiguous and complicated relationship between art and life at the heart of the aesthetic regime.
>
> (2011b: 73)

Tanke emphasizes here that art and art exhibitions can be dissensus and that dissensus can also be what art should strive for. In the same way that general teaching situations are open to multiple translations, Rancière is concerned that encounters with art are about translations, which often take place in a 'community of narrators and translators' (Rancière 2009: 22). This is a community that, according to Rancière, is characterized by dissensus.

Hence, even though Rancière (2009) states that dissensus is not a conflict of interests, I find the notion of dissensus relevant to apply when readings and opinions of art differ. This is the space where art encounters politics, according to Rancière (2011). He refers to dissensus as 'the essence of politics' (Rancière 2010: 38) and describes political dissensus as 'a conflict about who speaks and who does not speak, about what has to be heard as the voice of pain and what has to be heard as an argument on justice' (2011: 2).

Rancière's concept of politics differs from a normalized understanding of politics as an exercise of power and party politics and systems for the distribution of goods (and burdens). For Rancière, the agenda of politics is to break with the established order, what he refers to as the 'police order' (1999: 29) so that it is shifted or changed. In this context, 'police' refers to the prevailing system or prevailing order, what the majority agrees with or an attitude to what is considered right to say and do. When politics breaks into the police order, that is, the consensus, it makes us see that things could have been different, making other possibilities visible. In this way, one can see, hear and participate in the world in new ways, and new voices can be expressed. This leads to my understanding of the events of subjectification and the relation between dissensus and subjectification.

Events of subjectification

When commenting on dissensus as a part of the process of political subjectification, Rancière (2009) introduces his ideas about a political subject. By raising voices that disturb the normal and heterogenous order, the obviousness of the visible might 'sketch a new topography of the possible' (Rancière 2009: 49). The acts of subjectification undo and transform the aesthetic coordinates and supposedly natural order of the sensible. The relation between subjectification and politics is stated in the following:

> Politics is a matter of subjects or, rather, modes of subjectification. By *subjectification* I mean the production through a series of actions of a body and a capacity for enunciation

> not previously identifiable within a given field of experience, whose identification is thus part of the reconfiguration of the field of experience.
>
> (Rancière 1999: 35, original emphasis)

In contrast to the rhetoric of learning and to an understanding of teaching as a process where one can measure learning outcomes, I find the term *events of subjectification* useful as an analytical concept to reflect on the potential of aesthetics and encounters with art. Events of subjectification are characterized as ruptures in the habitual ways of seeing, hearing and sensing that allow new voices to speak, in turn potentially causing new actions (Skregelid 2016). The acts or events of subjectification free subjects from the dominant views of what a subject should be and how it will act in the world. According to Rancière (2009), political subjectification makes new topographies possible. Indeed, Rancière is concerned with how disagreement plays a role in how people appear as subjects – 'the place where the people appear is the place where a dispute is conducted?' (1999: 100).

Rancière's way of understanding the political subject is relevant to discuss together with Atkinson's and Biesta's conceptions of the political subject. Both Atkinson and Biesta argue for education that offers resistance for the subject to exist and come into presence – to emerge. In my research, their theories on the subject and interruptive teaching (Atkinson 2011; Biesta 2006, 2014) have inspired my way of seeing dissensus as a premise for subjectification and as something that can be attempted in teaching. In the following, I relate my way of seeing dissensus to Atkinson's and Biesta's understanding of how the subject appears.

Dissensus and subjectification

Both Biesta and Atkinson offer valuable contributions to the pedagogy of dissensus, which is oriented towards the freedom of the subjects and what is put in the way of the subject, that is, resistance. Biesta has introduced qualification, socialization and subjectification as three aspects, or dimensions, in education (2009); he highlights what education might do in relation to knowledge and skills (qualification), in relation to values, cultures and traditions (socialization) and, eventually, in relation to the formation of the student as a person (subjectification). The latter is the dimension that Biesta finds to be neglected most often in school. This 'existential orientation of education' (Biesta 2021: 40) is also the dimension that he thinks is the most important.

Biesta and Atkinson are occupied with what an education that breaks with the norms can offer the subject. They argue for teaching which interrupts, that challenges and involves a risk. They do not discuss the *essence* in the subject. In their reflections, they move the focus away from what the subject is or can be to how the subject can exist and come '*into presence*' (Biesta 2006: 53, original emphasis). Atkinson says that there are some aspects of the subject that is not yet 'available' (Atkinson 2011: 33).

Biesta is inspired by how the philosophers Hannah Arendt and Emmanuel Levinas understand the subject. With Arendt's theory on action (Arendt [1958] 1985) as a point of departure, he is not only concerned about how the singular subject appears or begins; it is also about beginnings by others: 'It is about beginning in a world full of other beginners in such a way that the opportunities for others to begin are not obstructed' (Biesta 2006: 49). Biesta makes use of Levinas to emphasize the ethical responsibility subjects have to each other. From these elaborations, Biesta's ideas about a pedagogy of interruption emerge (2006, 2010). Biesta is critical to how learning, what he calls 'learnification' (2021: 59), has taken over the rhetoric about education. Atkinson, on the other hand, makes use of the term 'real learning' (2011: 14). Still, both authors share an understanding about the value of education that is oriented towards the existence and emergence of the subject. They are also critical to evidence-based education. Biesta proposes risk as a central feature in all educational acts (Biesta 2014) and believes that education should disrupt and challenge by offering resistance. Even though it is difficult to plan for the unknown, he states about the responsibility of the teacher, 'The responsibility for the educator is a responsibility for what is to come, without knowledge of what is to come' (Biesta 2006: 148).

In the book *Art, Equality and Learning: Pedagogies Against the State* (2011) Atkinson writes about how the subject might emerge when we are confronted with the unexpected and when practice is disturbed: 'It is in those disturbances of practice, when we are confronted with the unexpected, when we encounter something which diverges from normalising structures […] that we may be precipitated into questioning how the learner as a subject emerges' (4). Here, Atkinson finds support in the way the French philosopher Alain Badiou connects 'being' and 'event' (Badiou 2005). 'Being' is seen as the state of the subject, and 'event' is the disruption of this state: 'The event involves an encounter; something has to happen which fractures our current ontological state […] The event disrupts our modes of representation' (Atkinson 2011: 31). Thereby 'new modes of becoming come into appearance' (xi). According to Atkinson, subjectification happens 'from the consequences of an event' (36). Disruptive events can make us realize that existing ways of thinking are not sufficient, so we might start experimenting so that the horizon of the subject is transferred to something that could not be foreseen.

> We can think of 'that-which-is-not-yet' as referring to forms of being that have no existence, that is to say, to being that does not count or is not yet valued. This might refer to emerging states of becoming but also to those forms of being that are often present but absent, that is to say where they have no existence, no recognition in the sense that they lie outside of dominant modes of understanding.
>
> (Atkinson 2011: 13)

For Atkinson, an event represents a break that can lead to a 'new order of becoming' and 'a leap into a new space' (2011: 9). Here, Atkinson makes use of the terms 'emerge into

existence' and 'unknown of becoming' (13), instead of seeing the subject as static and predetermined. Atkinson is especially concerned about what cannot be foreseen because this allows us to move into a 'new ontological space' (14). This space is also seen as *a space of potential* that makes it possible to see in new ways and 'new ways of making sense of what is presented to us in our different modes of existence' (14). Atkinson makes use of the phrase 'pedagogies against the state' regarding the pedagogy he calls for: 'They are pedagogies that attempt to accommodate the unpredictable, from being to becoming, a process that challenges the learner out of a complacency, a comfort zone' (15). Lately, he has also called this pedagogy 'disobedient' (Atkinson 2018).

The writings referred to above contribute to what I term pedagogy of dissensus. The interruptive character of art and the way art makes us see and might do things in new ways is relevant to bring into the domain of education. When dissensus is inspiring education, the regular ways of being a teacher and doing education are challenged. A break with what is expected is strived for. Pedagogy of dissensus might lead to resistance, but also changes and transformations in the subject.

More concepts and approaches of relevance

The term 'dissensuality' is related to dissensus, the rupture art can be and can cause. This term is especially present in Chapter 5. I argue for dissensuality as being important for art education because 'it unites the sensory, the resistance, the disagreement and also the passion' (Skregelid 2016: 298–99, translation added). For me, dissensuality involves the body and senses. As far as I know, Rancière does not use this notion; however, in a Norwegian translation, we see the use of the term *dissensuell* in relation to dissensus (Rancière 2012: 105). As I have mentioned before, Atkinson writes about 'dissensual art practices' (2011: 75) as marginalized aesthetic practices that challenge the norms. He also talks about 'dissensual pedagogy' as a disobedient praxis (2018: 6). I want to stress the sensory and sometimes sensual and passionate dimensions of pedagogy that are not so much developed by Atkinson. This brings me to another concept I find relevant for the pedagogy of dissensus: 'affect'.

I see affect as being closely related to dissensus and dissensuality. According to the Canadian philosopher and social theorist Brian Massumi (2015), affect is about embodied experience and how the body responds to someone or something that cannot be controlled. He writes, 'With intensified affect comes a stronger sense of embeddedness in a larger field of life – a heightened sense of belonging, with other people and other places' (Massumi 2015: 110). O'Sullivan refers to Massumi when stating, 'Affects are moments of *intensity*, a reaction in/on the body at the level of matter' (2001: 126, original emphasis). Both the terms 'dissensuality' and 'affect' are relevant concepts to bring into the educational context because they represent possible transitions and changes. The term 'affect' is weaved in Chapter 5 particularly.

Applications of the term 'third space' can be found in the writings by Indian theorist Homi Bhabha, who believes that all culture is in a continuous process of hybridity. In an interview, Bhabha says, 'the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the "third space" which enables other positions to emerge' (Rutherford 1990: 211). The term is further picked up by the American geographer Edward Soya (1996), who perceives the third space as a radical way of understanding and practising the spatiality of life. In the book *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*, he writes about the third space as a meeting place between subjectivity and objectivity, between the real and imaginary, between those one knows and those one cannot know, between the routine and break and between the conscious and unconscious. It is interesting to see how the third space is used in educational research when, for example, the gap between the knowledge that is disseminated at school and the knowledge that students bring with them themselves is thematized (Maniotes 2005). The third space can and does include the aesthetic practice that takes place outside of institutional art, for example, in children's play (Yahya and Wood 2016). With this, the significance of the exploratory, procedural and no measurable both in play and art can be elucidated. I find the term useful because it breaks with the recurring dichotomy thinking between art and pedagogy and artists and teachers. The third space opens opportunities for new knowledge in this space between art and pedagogy (Gutiérrez 2008; Klein et al. 2016; Zeichner 2010). I also consider what Biesta refers to as 'a worldy space […] an educational space' (2017a: 65) as a contribution to the understanding of third space. In Chapters 3 and 4, I discuss this notion particularly.

In my exploration of pedagogy of dissensus, Biesta's understanding of a subject-oriented approach to education and how this has developed in his books continues to catch my attention. As I refer to in the chapters to come, Biesta questions the expressive and child-centred tradition in art making (2017) and is sceptical about the self-oriented activities that have been – and are still a part of – the art education discourse, which I term the 'charismatic regime of art education' (Skregelid 2016, 2019). Biesta (2017a) asks a lot of 'What if?' questions: 'What if the voice that expresses itself is racist? What if the creativity that emerges is destructive? What if the identity that poses itself is egocentric?' (56). Instead of a person-centred – and what he refers to as an 'egological' – approach to education, Biesta (2017a) calls for art educational practices that move the focus from oneself to greater openness towards the world. Instead of an educational practice aiming to please the student, that listens to the students' desires and that strives to give the student what they ask for, Biesta calls for a 'world-centred education' (2021: 90) that disrupts and deals with existential matters. He calls for education that is 'bringing children and young people into dialogue with the world' (Biesta 2017a: 37). A key aspect in encountering the world is to encounter resistance. In this book and in previous writings (see, e.g. Skregelid 2016, 2019a, 2019b, 2020a, 2022), I argue that art and encountering art may represent such resistance and has the dissensual potential to disturb. Thus, initiating dissensus by introducing students to both art and educational practice that contrast with the norms and disrupt the

expected has the capacity to turn education into a place for subjectification – for being in the world, without occupying the centre of the world. This relates to how Biesta envisions how world-centredness is revealed: 'The encounter with the world – material or social – manifests itself in the experience of resistance' (2017a: 64). When our intentions, actions and initiatives encounter resistance and are interrupted, we can push our ambitions, or we can withdraw if we feel frustrated. Instead of withdrawing or protesting heavily, we can also stay in 'the middle ground' and have ongoing dialogues with the challenges (65). Biesta connects this to a world-centred approach, calling it a 'never ending exploration of what it might mean to exist in and with the world' (66). Introducing resistance is to put something 'in the way' (87).

To put something in the way might sound troubling. In all the chapters students and teachers, including myself, are disturbed. Our intentions and initiatives might be rearranged. I see such disturbance, what I call dissensus, as productive. I believe this is when new insights can be achieved. Atkinson says, 'A disruption or intervention of the school art curriculum which precipitated new forms of practice would constitute a new distribution and new subjectivities' (2011: 85). This is what he would call 'new states of existence' (2011: 39).

The British professor of visual culture Irit Rogoff is engaged in similar questions, writing about how art educational theory and praxis, what she refers to as 'education in and of and for, the arts with its flimsy, unstable and nonteleological epistemologies' (2006: 2) can challenge what education is and how this can contribute to 'coming into being' (2006: 3). She approves the 'not-yet-known-knowledge' (3). In addition, she says we should be guided by the principles 'curiosity, discovery and possibility' (1–2). In the article 'Free', she argues for how encountering contemporary art can contribute to 'some of the most important redefinitions of knowledge that circulate' (Rogoff 2010: 8). Rogoff believes, just as Biesta and Atkinson, that education should challenge. Teachers must use their imagination to challenge established ways of teaching. She says, 'I would like to think of education as the arena in which **challenge** is written into our daily activity […] In education, when we challenge an idea, we suggest that there is room for imagining another way of thinking' (Rogoff 2008: 8, original emphasis).

In the article 'Dissensuality and affect in education', I write:

> Educators and art educators, like myself, spend a lot of time ensuring the best possible education of others. However, where are we educated ourselves? Where are our ideas and practice challenged? Where do we encounter resistance, so we doubt our habits and norms?
>
> (Skregelid 2021: 697–98)

Towards the end of the book, I bring the discussions about dissensus in education into the first project, where I make use of arts-based methodologies, which I frame within a/r/tography. A/r/tography is an arts-based, practice-based research methodology that is characterized by a bodily, sensory, relational and exploratory approach and the merging of the roles of

the (a) artist, (r) researcher and (t) teacher. The spaces between these roles indicate how these are interrelated and how they overlap, still acknowledging the uniqueness of them (Irwin 2012; Leblanc and Irwin 2019). I find this methodology especially relevant because it enables art practice as a lived enquiry to elaborate critically about dissensus in education. This methodology also presupposes that researchers put themselves *into* the situation, rather than placing themself outside it. In Chapter 5, I bring myself into the research, letting my own lived art practice be the point of departure for discussing the pedagogy of dissensus.

In museum and gallery education, dialogue is often emphasized as a preferred approach as a way of promoting democracy (Dysthe et al. 2012). In some of the chapters, particularly in parts of the second chapter, I refer to agonism as it is understood by Mouffe (2000, 2005, 2013). Mouffe argues for the potentialities of disagreement and conflicts – particularly in the political contexts – to promote democracy. She sees conflicts as the necessary and inescapable dimensions of political process and discourse, connecting agonism to pluralism; in this way, she sees society as more open and porous to the rise of multiple social identities. I see agonism as an associated concept to dissensus. Mouffe also states, 'While consensus is no doubt necessary, it must be accompanied by dissent' (2013: 8). In my research, I have enabled agonism and dissensus, for example, by inviting pupils and students to make arguments both for and against seeing the exhibition, thereby constructing a space for disagreement and conflicting positions to emerge. By enabling opposite views to encounter, to let your own beliefs be challenged, the pedagogy of dissensus is also realized. I believe agonism is crucial for the democratic ambition in education to succeed.

In the following chapters, the ideas of dissensus as an educational resource, which also include the concepts and theories introduced above, are folded out in different kinds of contexts, here with the aim of putting the pedagogy of dissensus into action.

Chapter 2

Dissensus in Museum Education

I have mixed feelings about the exhibition. I feel in a way that it is fascinating and provocative at the same time. I cannot really say if I like the exhibition or not, but one thing I know for sure: I'm glad it was exhibited and that I got to see it.

(Student, 15 years old)

The pedagogy I call for in this book is a synergy between my own experiences as a pupil, student and teacher, readings that I have referred to in the previous chapter and research in a range of contexts. In this chapter, I bring in the context where my interest in research started: in the art museum. I write about how dissensus is – and has been – initiated here. I refer to secondary school students' responses to contemporary art, along with how the educational framework for these visits was based on ideas of disruption, both sinister ruptures and more confrontational ones. Inspired by Rancière's *Aisthesis: Scenes from the Aesthetic Regime of Art* (2013), I entitle these visits *Scenes of Dissensus*.

In my Ph.D. (Skregelid 2016), I investigated pupils' encounters with three different art exhibitions. I unfolded what happened in the encounters, detailing how those present and involved responded. In the following, I first present the project Visual Dialogues, as Scene One of the Scene of Dissensus series. In this project, 13-year-old students were engaged in encounters with the exhibition *Obscura*, which was the starting point for my three years of collaboration with Sørlandet Artmuseum and with two schools that chose to visit two more exhibitions in the following years. When the collaborating teachers and museum educators and I saw how the pupils responded to photos and videos in *Obscura*, our strategy was to expose the pupils more to what they found challenging – or maybe not considering art – and take their own comments and former research on museum education into account when planning the next visits. *Flegma,* which is described here as Scene Two, was a solo exhibition by the Norwegian photographer Torbjørn Rødland, and Scene Three was the exhibition called *Morten Viskum* by a Norwegian artist with the same name as the show. The quote that opens this chapter is a response to the inherent contradiction and ambivalence that the audience often experienced after viewing the art of *Viskum*. It also indicates what can happen when teaching and moving students out of the comfort zone with the deliberate strategy to challenge.

In this chapter, I also refer to how I have used dissensus as an approach in my teaching of students in the museum. In what I call Scene Four, I present how the pedagogy of dissensus was implemented when my students within teacher education encountered the art from the exhibition *Dry Joy* by Ilu Susiraja. At the end of the chapter, I refer to how dissensus

has formed the framework for my teaching of bachelor students in visual arts education in Sørlandet Artmuseum since 2004. Although the dominant educational approach has been discursive and very much based on language, reading and writing, I draw attention to how I have encouraged the students to make use of more sensory, performative and arts-based educational approaches.

In addition to exploring how dissensus can inform teaching within the museum context, this chapter addresses the relations between dissensus, agonism and democracy by asking the following: what are the democratic potentialities in art educational practice when dissensus and agonism are used as central approaches? I refer to agonism as it is understood by Mouffe (2000, 2005, 2013). Biesta (2014) also contributes through his productive way of seeing democracy in educational contexts, such as those presented below.

Scene One: *Obscura*

In 2008, Sørlandet Artmuseum announced the project Visual Dialogues as part of The Cultural Schoolbag (TCS) programme mentioned in the introduction. I found interest in the outline of the project because it stressed the participation of pupils when encountering art (Sørlandets kunstmuseum 2008). The focus was on the pupil's own questions and reflections. This corresponded to my pedagogical ideas, where I argue for the inclusion of the voice of the spectator, and to base the visit to the art museum on dialogues between the participants (Skregelid 2005). It also relates to Rancière's understanding of equality and making use of existing knowledge. I was concerned about how the pupils would respond to such educational approaches. Because my curiosity was on contemporary art particularly, I was very interested in how this project would be realized in relation to the exhibition *Obscura*, which showed videoart in dialogue with photos, paintings and installations by Norwegian and international artists. Previous experiences from my research in this domain made me expect positive responses from the students to both the art and educational strategies used. I contacted three secondary schools and proposed their participation as this was the age I was interested in exploring. Two schools accepted my invitation to take part in the research and proceeded to collaborate on more action-based research approaches that would be conducted in the project in the following two years.

The visits lasted for about two hours. The first part for all four groups took place within the physical context of the exhibition. The pupils were given a short introduction in which they were told that the roles were to be turned upside down and exchanged. The pupils were to be the art educators and museum guides, and to some extent, the museum guide was going into the role of the students. Then, the pupils were told to explore the artworks in the different rooms in pairs. Each pair was given a little piece of paper with an image that

showed a small part of one of the artworks. They had about twenty minutes both to explore the exhibition on their own and then to find the artwork that they were to present to the rest of the group. Before going to these artworks and the presentations by the students, the museum educator presented some overarching ideas of the exhibition. In this part, the museum educator was placing herself in her own role as a traditional guide, and the pupils were positioned as themselves. In the following section, this changed. From this point on, the guided tour was based on the pupils' presentations of the artworks found on the small pieces of paper.

The educational approaches used in the project were related to the relational art educational concepts proposed by the Scandinavian researchers Helene Illeris (2002) and Venke Aure (2011). Illeris and Aure have been significant influences and mentors throughout my research career. They both argue for playing with roles, emphasizing the importance of participation and the idea that art has no inherent meaning, which is a proposal that is also relevant to Rancière (2009). In this respect, the project corresponded to my expectations and to what I found important when pursuing art educational practices in the museum. However, the way the pupils encountered the art in the exhibition surprised me.

In every group, the pupils picked a fragment from one of the seven photos from The Subway Series (2000) by the German photographer Wolfgang Tillman. The artwork was showing people on the underground in London. The snapshot, random-like character encouraged some pupils to state that they could have done this themselves. They found the artwork to be too simple or too easy to make. In their opinion, there was no handcraft, nor any technical skills. It was just 'a click'. Many of the 13-year-old students did not include photography in their notion of what art is. The comments by the museum educator about this artist being well known in the art field seemed to provoke the pupils even more.

Some students responded with mistrust and made negative comments suggesting that the prestige of this work was not about the quality of the work but more about the artist's reputation. Similar comments occurred when encountering the artwork *Full Time, Decision (Unanimous)* by Norwegian photographer Kjetil Kausland (Figure 2.1). Two boys who had got a fragment of this photo started to present their idea for a new title: *Erotic Wrestling*. The museum educator commented that the boys' new title in some way captured the intimacy and vulnerability that she also saw in this image. This kind of image is not what one would expect to see from a fight club context. There were some interesting comments in relation to gender issues and homoeroticism, but I also heard similar statements to those made in response to the Tillman pictures, that pointed to the missing handcraft and snapshot character.

This resistance from the pupils took me by surprise, and it also became very prominent in the second part of the project, where the students were reflecting about what they had seen. This section of the project offered them the opportunity to speak freely about their notions of art. In the project outline, the museum called this second phase *Tenketanken* which can be translated into 'think tank'. This brought to my mind the work of Rogoff (2008). Rogoff references the artwork of the same name 'think tank', by John Palmesino og Anselm Franke

Figure 2.1: Kjetil Kausland, *Full Time, Decision (Unanimous)*, 2006. © Kjetil Kausland / BONO 2024.

(2006), which was a part of the ACADEMY project in Van Abbemuseum in Holland. Rogoff calls this artwork a 'site for production of questions' (2008: 4). This think tank at Sørlandet Artmuseum was indeed a site for questioning both from the museum educator and from the pupils, and as such Rogoff draws attention to a point that is extremely important to my research regarding how art can enable such sites to exist while triggering these challenging dialogues.

The students continued to express their scepticism about the photo being art and expanded notions of what art can be. They repeated well-known comments such as 'I could have made this' and 'I wonder how anyone can make money out of just splashing paint, looking like something a 4-year-old could have made, even though the artist is supposed to be educated'. One boy also made a clear statement about what good art is: 'Beautiful images of a rising sun.' After further elaboration, it became clear that he was referring to taking pictures of such scenes, hence finding good art to be related to nature or representations of our natural world.

When analysing the dialogue, it seemed to me that the comments and questions by the museum educator provoked the pupils and added to the resistance to these contemporary works.

Those who spoke out did not accept photography as art. The dialogue failed to reach the level of criticality needed to move the pupils to a new place of knowledge and understanding; hence, the think tank seemed to result in an affirmation of the pupils' (narrow) conceptions of art.

After the visit, we asked the students to reflect on the trip to the museum. To some extent, this underlined the resistance taking place in the think tank. In this conversation, quite a lot of pupils who did not raise their voices in the museum said they liked the variety of art. Still, many commented that a lot of the artworks in *Obscura* were challenging and found it difficult to access or fully understand the works. The reflection also demonstrated that the educational strategies used in the think tank were appreciated. The pupils stated that they liked exploring the exhibition in small groups. They also liked being able to speak and listen to their peers, not only grown-ups, as that many said they found to be boring. Many commented that they would have liked to have chosen the artwork themselves and to be given the possibility to talk even more.

Despite the more balanced impression the written reflection notes provided, the resistance was more dominant that I was expecting. The art in *Obscura* challenged the pupil's notions of what art is and what good art is. In my masters' degree (Skregelid 2005), I claimed that previous experiences with art do not have to affect how one encounters contemporary art because it is accessible to all, no matter what background one comes from because of the openness to multiple associations and readings. This was somehow supported by Scandinavian research on youngsters' encounters with contemporary art (Aure 2011; Aure et al. 2009; Illeris 2005). This project, however, challenged the claim that young people are open to new media and contemporary art in general.

At this point, I had started to read Rancière. I was fascinated by his statement about radical equality, as discussed in Chapter 2. I saw the project in the museum proposing a platform for all to express their opinions and possibly realizing what Rancière would call emancipation (2009) and political subjects (1999) to emerge through such encounters. His ideas about art having no fixed meaning but being open to a range of readings was also recognizable (Rancière 2009). In relation to this, I found the concept of dissensus of particular interest. The openness inherent in the artworks, along with how the project emphasized this dimension, also made the art open for dispute and disagreement. As mentioned, the museum educator seemed to contribute to the tensed atmosphere by confronting the pupils with challenging questions and statements about art. This made me curious. Could Rancière's theories on dissensus be brought into an art educational context and become a pedagogy in its own right? From here on, a pedagogy of dissensus was emerging.

Scene Two: *Flegma*

I now move to the second scene, where the same students as mentioned in Scene One were taken to another exhibition at Sørlandet Artmuseum and where we made the students embody the art practice that many of them did not include in their notion of art.

The resistance that appeared in the *Obscura* exhibition, motivated the teachers, the museum educator and I to expose the pupils to more of the art that many of them found challenging and that they did not think to be art. So when we realized there was an upcoming solo exhibition by the Norwegian photographer Torbjørn Rødland (b. 1970), who is known for his placing of people and objects into settings that seem slightly misplaced, like one of his first exhibited images in 1993, *I et norsk landskap 2* (*In a Norwegian landscape 2*) (Figure 2.2), we took the opportunity to include this exhibition in a longer lasting project on photography in the arts and crafts subject. The two schools involved in the research the year before had already accepted to continue taking part in the project. The project had now moved into another phase, relying on a collaboration between the school and culture sector, trying to overcome the tense relationship described in the introduction and trying to realize a collaboration that TCS was supposed to be but that seemed so difficult because of the opposing positions.

Based on our experiences with the visit to *Obscura* and the already planned activities at school, we organized a project on photography lasting for about seven weeks, including their own practice, a visit to the museum and an exhibition of their own photography.

Both schools realized projects in photography that were related to the art of Rødland but in different ways. One of the schools focused on self-portraits and the other on creating a kind of ambivalence, what we, with help from Rancière, can call dissensus, in the image itself by putting people or objects into contexts that were slightly unexpected. As part of the preparation for the pupil's own photographic work, they were shown photos from both the *Obscura* exhibition and artworks by Rødland. These were discussed, creating connections to the exhibitions they had seen, the exhibition they were about to see and their own photos. I took part in all five workshops at both schools, lasting for about one and a half hours each, all in all twenty workshops because there were three groups of pupils in one of the schools.

The visit to the exhibition started with the museum educator asking questions about what they remembered from the last time they were there, and the pupils responded to this. We then saw one artwork together, and the museum educator asked the pupils to describe what they saw. Then, they were asked to write on a Post-it note what this artwork made them think about. The Post-it notes were collected and put up on the wall beside the artwork, with different responses placed horizontally and similar responses vertically. This demonstrated the openness inherent in Rødland's art. The museum educator also said that the artist does not talk a lot about his art, so we had to rely on our own thinking when encountering his photos and films. After this introduction, the pupils were told to explore the exhibition on their own and find an artwork that, in one way or another, affected them. When they had chosen the artwork, they were asked to write down their immediate response in words and then start to write a story with the artwork as a point of departure. By the end of the visit, the whole group went from artwork to artwork to hear an introduction to the stories the pupils had made. They used a similar strategy when encountering their own photos back at school.

Figure 2.2: Torbjørn Rødland, *I et norsk landskap 2*, 1993. © Torbjørn Rødland 2024.

The idea about initiating dissensus, that is, introducing a kind of resistance, was guiding the project and educational design. The art was open to a range of associations, and the way the pupils responded to this openness demonstrated the dissensual character of Rødland's photos and films. Interestingly, Rancière (2009) has commented on photography as the perfect example of the ambivalent character of art, saying that photos challenge the viewer. The resistance we saw among some of the pupils in the previous exhibition was not taking

place here at all. There were no questions about this being art or not or comments like 'I could have done exactly the same'.

The approaches used in museum and in school were based on the openness the art was characterized by. The pupils had experienced that art did not have an inherent meaning the year before as well, but this time, they tried to achieve this kind of ambivalence in their own art making. The focus on concepts and issue-based art, rather than form, colours and composition, was a contrast to the practice they had experienced in the art and craft subject. Working conceptually with art themselves contributed to a greater sense of acceptance to contemporary art. One student stated that this made him realize the variety of art. He also said that what seems quite simple, can be rather advanced and might have taken a long time to make. One student was also saying that he admired Rødland for taking such good-quality pictures. Many also realized that to create this openness is not easy.

Figure 2.3: Photo by pupil, *Kongeplass?*, 2010. Image of a statue of King Olav V in Kristiansand (King in Norway 1957–91).

In the previous chapter, I have written about the close relations between dissensus and events of subjectification. The first time I used dissensus for analysing how encounters with art might contribute to changes in students' ways of relating to artworks and the environment that surrounds them was in the pupils' encounters with the art of Rødland. As mentioned, their understanding of art, as well as how to visit an exhibition and what activities can be included in the arts and crafts subject, was disturbed. The next and third exhibition the pupils visited more than a year after disturbed them more dramatically and contributed to changes in the way they were relating to themselves and others.

Scene Three: *Morten Viskum*

In the third and last year of secondary school, the pupils who had visited *Obscura* and *Flegma* were taken to the exhibition *Morten Viskum*, a solo exhibition named after the artist. Morten Viskum (b. 1965) is considered one of Norway's most controversial artists. His use of dead animals, parts of the human body and the thematization of the taboo has caused strong reactions. The exhibition featured a wide selection of Viskum's art, including the debated work *Rats and Olives* (1995) from Viskum's early career when he was still a student at the Art Academy in Oslo (Figure 2.4). The emphasis in the exhibition was on installations and videos. One video showed a performance in which Viskum paints with a cut-off human hand. On display were also the paintings painted by these hands. Furthermore, the installation *The Black Hand* (2009) contained a hand from a dead person in a metal box and formaldehyde, which could be opened if desired. The exhibition was chosen because it had a dissensual character. It had the potential to disturb in a different and more confrontational manner than the other two exhibitions. I also expected it to cause a lot of strong reactions and debate among the pupils. Hence, by exposing the pupils to this exhibition, we were deliberately initiating dissensus.

Here, their notions of what art can be and what makes art interesting could possibly be challenged – again.

After the involved teachers had gained insights into Viskum's art in general and the works at this exhibition in particular (via a book that was made for the exhibition), it was both a wish and requirement that the visit became part of a broader context and that it was included in the activities at school.

Furthermore, it was a requirement that the students were prepared before the visit and that I, as a participating researcher, contributed to the follow-up activities at the schools. Our good experiences with integrating the exhibition *Flegma* in the school activities the previous year contributed to this premise being made. However, because there were a few arguments for visiting the art exhibition in the art and crafts curriculum, the exhibition and work related to it became part of the teaching in Norwegian instead.

Figure 2.4: Morten Viskum, *Rats and Olives*, 1995. © Morten Viskum / BONO 2024.

Prior to the visit, the students were told about Viskum's background as a veterinary student and his use of unorthodox artistic materials. Some of his works were referred to and shown. The exhibition caused a lot of questioning before the actual visit.

The visit to the exhibition lasted about one and a half hours. Like the educational approach to the *Flegma* exhibition and the activities at school before and after the visit, this was also informed by what I now call the pedagogy of dissensus described in Chapter 2. In the introduction, the focus was on what the students already knew about what they were going to see and on all the questions they had to this. To begin with, the group discussed a couple of artworks together. Then, the students explored the exhibition in pairs. They were to find a piece of art that they wanted to ask questions about and discuss with the rest of the group. Finally, the students were responsible for asking their questions and organizing the discussions in relation to the selected artworks.

In my Ph.D. (Skregelid 2016) and the book based on it (Skregelid 2019a), I refer to many of the dialogues the pupils had both in the exhibition and back at school. In the article 'A call for dissensus in art education' (Skregelid 2020a), I focus on the discussions by one of the artworks, *I Hope You Did Not Die in Wain* (1999), which shows a steel shelf with 2160 small glass containers with mice on formaldehyde in various sizes, one of the many artworks involving rats or mice. The conversations and debates reveal a lot of strong reactions, disgust, wondering and disagreement. However, they also show fascination, curiosity and interest. The dialogues among the pupils were kicked off by the questions the pupils had made themselves. Some kept holding on to their scepticism, while others welcomed new perspectives offered by their peers and the grown-ups involved. The work represented something else than the students already had in their art vocabulary. It broke and disrupted with *their* normal order and caused long-lasting discussions. The art also allowed for a variety of interpretations, demonstrating how art can be dissensus itself and cause disagreement and differences in opinions. Disagreement dominated the social interaction (Skregelid 2020a).

The analysing of the dialogues shows interesting transformations in the students' ways of relating to artworks and the environment that surrounded them, as well as changes in the ways of relating to themselves and others. This is what I have termed 'events of subjectification' in the previous chapter. Issues on ethics were present in most dialogues. The students' ethical attitudes were challenged and disturbed. Like in the other exhibitions, there were no definite answers. What is right, and what is wrong in a research context? What is right, and what is wrong in an art context? Ethical issues and the questions on responsibility did not only cause disagreement *between* the students but also *within* the students themselves. There were students who questioned the *artist*'s ethical concerns and whether it was okay or not to be exposed to this kind of art. One of the students made it clear that she had no interest in seeing works like this and questioned the forced confrontation in the school context. All this activates the relevance of Rancière's chapter 'The intolerable image' in *The Emancipated Spectator*. Here, he asks if we can tolerate that artists make intolerable images:

'is it acceptable?' (Rancière 2009: 83). He also asks if an image that has the intention to mirror reality can be too real and too difficult to look at? Rancière is principally defending intolerable images, but he is also concerned about the uncertainty of the effects. He says, 'Images change our gaze and the landscape of the possible if they are not anticipated by their meaning and do not anticipate their effects' (105). The artists' intentions are not necessarily consistent with the public's translations.

This is a kind of exhibition that no one leaves indifferent. I think the discussions that took place indicate how dissensus and subjectification are connected. Existing perceptions students have of art and about research are challenged, and we can see changes in their ways of thinking. The exhibiting contexts, ethical issues and questions about responsibility and morality are themes that challenged both the students and others involved. I find it interesting that many of the students, even if they found the exhibition provocative, were glad to have visited it. The quote introducing this chapter tells us something about this. The following statement also reveals the ambivalent feelings about seeing the art of Viskum: 'This art exhibition is so provocative that I recommend seeing it. The more counter-arguments I have, the more I think it's worth seeing'. Some wrote rather explicitly about how difficult issues in art might influence our beings and actions in the world, saying that encountering art can make them aware about how to act and what kind of human being they want to be:

> Art should engage with difficult issues and make us reflect. I think this in a long term will clear our minds and help us to define what kind of humans we want to be, because it will question our own existence. What kind of human do I want to be?

Looking back, I think many of the educational approaches used in Scene Three contributed to the nuanced attitudes witnessed here. One thing I want to mention in particular – and that is also relevant for the next scene in this chapter – is what we did in one of the schools after the visit. Inspired by the discussions in the museum, we staged a debate letting the contrasting views of Viskum's art play out, thus initiating dissensus. Returning from the exhibition, the students continued discussing the art they had encountered. Therefore, we asked the pupils to respond to the following question: 'Is this exhibition worth seeing?' In pairs, they were to make four arguments *both* for and against. After this, a roleplay was arranged, where it was random what kind of roles the pupils got. Here, pupils who were critical to the art of Viskum had to act out support and arguments about how relevant and interesting they found the exhibition. There were also pupils who liked it who had to express their critical views. When writing debate articles based on their true views, the pupils could pick arguments from a list as long as five pages with reasons to see the exhibition or not. When seeing the very nuanced texts and possible transformation of pupils, I claim that such confrontational approaches used in this museum and school context can be transferred to other areas.

In my research, I have continued to make calls for dissensus as an educational strategy relevant for teaching art and, indeed, for education in general. I have argued for encounters with art as arenas for the exchange of opinions and debate. I will now refer to a similar example from the museum context but with a group of teacher students.

Scene Four: *Dry Joy*

In 2020, the exhibition *Dry Joy*, featuring Finnish photographer Ilu Susiraja (b. 1975), was exhibited at Sørlandet Artmuseum, the same museum as in the other scenes. Susiraja primarily uses the media of photography and video, drawing on self-portraitures that she relates to feminine performance, psychoanalysis and physical comedy. Her approach can be seen as brutally honest, sometimes surreal, funny and ironic, using her own body and everyday objects as the subject of her work. Susiraja does not include other people in her photos. She chooses to focus the attention of the viewer on herself, in what could be seen as a form of self-humiliation. She is clear in that she sees photo sessions as very intimate and private. Therefore, images are made in private settings, such as that of her own home or her parents' home. She prefers not to elaborate on or talk about her own images: 'That's why I don't tell stories' (Nielsen 2016: n.pag.).

I had planned to visit this exhibition with my group of student teachers as part of their module in art and crafts at the University of Agder in Kristiansand, Norway, in spring 2020. The intense debates in the news and social media caused by the exhibition motivated me to include Susiraja's art in the teaching for this group of students. I especially found interesting the strong reactions by parents whose children had visited the exhibition as part of a school trip (Gelius and Ra 2020). The school also regretted taking the kids to the exhibition. My idea about introducing this exhibition to the student teachers was to make them reflect about their role when their upcoming pupils are exposed to art like this. How will they respond themselves? I also wanted to make use of the strategy described in the previous scene, letting the students see the art of Susiraja, letting them consider their own reactions and bringing these into a discussion based on arguments both for and against the exposure of these images to school children.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, my plans had to be changed. Due to lockdowns, the visit to the museum was transformed into a workshop on the online platform Zoom. The debates that took place in the media were important premises for how I developed the workshop. However, I felt it was essential *not* to introduce the students to these debates before they had encountered the artworks themselves and discussed it with their fellow students. This would allow them to make up their own minds about the art.

Before the workshop, I sent the students information about the alternative teaching session. I wanted them to be prepared before we met online, so I sent them two images by Susiraja. One of them was *You Did Not Call* (2018) (Figure 2.5). I encouraged them to reflect

Figure 2.5: Iiu Susiraja, *You did not call*, 2018. © Iiu Susiraja 2024.

on the following questions: 1) What do you see in the two artworks? 2) What questions and thoughts do the images bring up for you? 3) Do you think some societal issues are thematized in the images? If so, which ones? In reference to their role as upcoming teachers, I also asked them to make arguments for and against why children at the age of 10 should be exposed to this art exhibition based on the information given. In addition, I asked them to read an article that I found to be relevant for the workshop.

Dialogues are very much made use of to describe democratic approaches in museums and galleries (Dysthe et al. 2012). The possibilities for the directions in conversation seem endless, with no prior knowledge needed and all readings and interpretations being welcome. Such approaches seem to be inclusive because they are often based on reaching agreed readings. However, I often find dialogic approaches to be too much oriented towards harmony and agreement. I think challenging consensual approaches are relevant for art educational contexts. With support from Mouffe (2000, 2005), who sees conflicts as the necessary and inescapable dimensions of political process and discourse, I argue for the potentialities of disagreement and conflicts also in educational contexts. Keeping hold of the idea of dissensus, I also let Mouffe's understanding of 'agonism' (2013) inspire the workshop, hence constructing a space for disagreement and conflicting positions to emerge. In this specific study, educational dissensus can be seen as a strategy aiming to realize the agonistic potential that may lie unprovoked in an art educational setting.

Despite my years of art educational experience and knowledge, I always hold back what I know and let the students speak first and share their concerns and questions. This is my way of practising Rancière's (1991) ideas of equality, and my way of putting forward his ideas about the ignorant schoolmaster. Still, I acknowledge my role as a teacher as someone who introduces the students to something new. So, after we had discussed whether the exhibition should be exposed to 10-year-old pupils or not, I provided the students with links to the news about the angry parents, as well as other reactions to the exhibition. We ended the session with a discussion on whether they agreed with the parents or not. We also discussed whether the educational dissensus strategy was beneficial.

The students gave both positive and negative responses to the art of Susiraja. I write about this in detail in the publication 'Zoom in on *Dry Joy:* Dissensus, agonism and democracy in art education' (Skregelid 2021a). One thing I found interesting was how the transformations and events of subjectification possibly took place. The following comment by one of the students starts off as rather critical:

> I thought Susiraja's art is very special. It's not art I would pay to see in a museum. I thought it was a stupid way to portray her being overweight. We often hear that you look good in the body you have, but here, I just thought she was trying to make herself as ugly as possible. To create as much fuss as possible around the photos. She wants attention. She wants to be seen as an artist. And that's something I can understand. One has to dare to stand out. So that one can get a name out in the big art world. By hearing fellow students' opinions and views on art, I began to study the images in a different way.

The final sentence signals a transformation in her own view, or what I call an event of subjectification. What her fellow students said about the images affected her. This can relate to what Rancière calls political subjectification, which might 'sketch a new topography of the possible' (2009: 49). Both her own and her fellow students' different opinions disturb

the initial approach to Susiraja's art, thereby demonstrating that disagreement is vital for changes to emerge and for subjects to appear as stated by Rancière (1999).

Making sure that multiple voices have been raised seems to affect the possibilities for transformations to take place. One student stated, 'My fellow students had other thoughts about the images that dealt with beauty ideals and health. In retrospect, these ideas have also struck me when I look back at the *Dry Joy* exhibition'. Also, providing time and space to reflect might have affected movements and changes in their own and other's perceptions of the art: 'I have now changed my mind somewhat from considering Susiraja's art as not only provocative but as art that can affect our emotions and encourage self-examination.'

Regarding the question about if 10-year-old school children should be able to see the art by Susiraja, many students raised the argument that the artworks open questions about how the body is portrayed in society today, and that such an exhibition gives the opportunity to have interesting discussions about it in a relatively controlled form. When it comes to the counterarguments, some found the art to be too sexualized. Still, some kind of consensus appeared, as commented by one of the students: 'Finally, we agreed that if a school wants to bring a class to such an exhibition, it is important to carefully prepare and plan, as well as engage and create good reflections, preferably before, but also after the exhibition.'

The workshop described here, as well as the one described in Scene Three, demonstrates the democratic potential of bringing dissensus and agonism into education, along with what role art can play for creating productive arenas of disagreement. Because art can be ambiguous, open, thoughtful, unpredictable and incomprehensible, it seems like a perfect arena for real democratic practice in the way Mouffe (2005, 2013) understands democracy, with agonism as an essential dimension. Art becomes an important space where consensus is challenged and where societal and ethical issues can be raised. Rather than striving for equal views on art and consensus, this process provides opportunities for different opinions to emerge and contest, something I see as the essential elements of education. Being confronted with other people's attitudes in the art space can also contribute to us becoming more nuanced and more tolerant of others and the views of others. This can be brought out beyond the art educational context and into society in general. This staging of debate and conscious application of agonism expand educational dissensus, offering the potential to adopt complex concepts within the framework of engaging with challenging art.

Scene Five: Encountering art with art

In this last scene, I refer to how the pedagogy of dissensus is also realized in other ways within the museum context. Whilst the former scenes have been dominated by discursive approaches and dialogues and debates in the museum and gallery, I demonstrate here how the pedagogy of dissensus is realized using art practice and more performative approaches in the museum space.

Even though educational practice with guided tours and talking is deeply rooted and seems to dominate the way galleries and museums try to engage their visitors, there is an emergence of experimental, sensory and arts-based educational approaches in the art museum spaces, as well as outreach approaches to a range of social communities (Christensen-Scheel 2019). Arts-based educational approaches in the gallery and museum space are understood in many different manners and unfold in a variety of ways. For example, I have many times witnessed projects where the artist is asked to respond with a workshop to an exhibition that has no connection to their practice. I have also seen artists be engaged in the gallery and museum space to initiate some kind of practice that is disconnected from any exhibitions. There are some examples where the artists themselves are invited to engage with the audience in workshops. We see artist-in-residencies in museums and artists doing artist talks. Sometimes, also, artists are invited as art educators to give a workshop that is very much related to the art exhibited and still closely connected to the artist's own artmaking.

The way I use arts-based approaches is by letting the art itself, the characteristics of art and art theory inform teaching in the sites of art museums and galleries. In the chapter 'The art of teaching: A proposition for pedagogy of dissensus' (Skregelid 2024a) in the book *Propositions for Museum Education: International Art Educators in Conversation*, I describe how my teaching of students in the museum and the workshops by the students themselves have become a laboratory for exploring and playing with and experimenting, thereby contributing to an extended understanding of what pedagogy of dissensus can mean in the museum space.

For eighteen years, as part of my position at the University of Agder, Norway, I have been responsible for the teaching of groups of bachelor students having work practice in Sørlandet Artmuseum, the same museum that has been the scene for my research contributing to the pedagogy I call for. In the art museum space, the students plan, realize and reflect on workshops for their fellow students and students from both primary, middle and secondary school. I now realize that my teaching here has contributed to how I see pedagogy of dissensus.

One thing I have always done, even before reading Rancière, is practicing what Rancière (1991) calls the ignorant schoolmaster. I start with the knowledge the students have about being a visitor in a museum or gallery setting. By doing this, I realize the premise of equality that is deeply rooted in Rancière's philosophy. Throughout the years, I have practiced or actually *been* the ignorant schoolmaster in the museum. Instead of teaching the students about the strategies for encountering the art, they have explored this themselves; I encourage them to make use of expertise they already have and to include their abilities to, for example, play music and perform theatre in their forming of workshops.

Another important element is stressing that art is open to all responses and associations, as I also have referred to in the other scenes. Although I hold back my own knowledge and

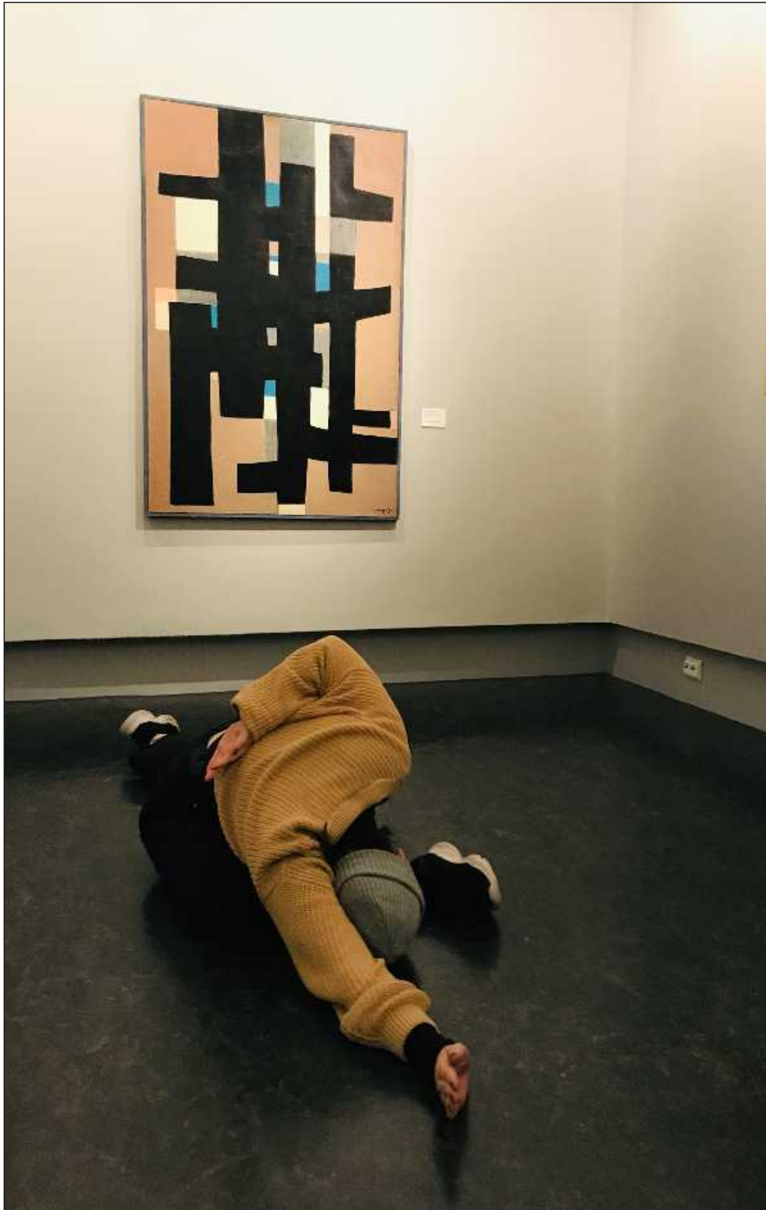

Figure 2.6: Student work, 'New Approaches to Abstract Art' from the exhibition *Gunnar S. Gundersen: A Groundbreaking Modernist at Sørlandet Artmuseum*, 2020. Photo by Lisbet Skregelid. © Lisbet Skregelid. [Artwork: Gunnar S. Gundersen, *Komposisjon* (*Composition*), 1957. © Gunnar S. Gundersen / BONO 2024.]

I always try to establish a free and democratic space for different associations and responses to appear, we often begin by encountering one artwork together as a group. Inspired by Illeris (2002) and Aure (2011) and their arguing for relational and performative approaches when encountering art, I have motivated the students to make use of sensory and bodily responses when encountering art. Their theories on relational and performative approaches to art education correspond to Rancière's principle of equality of intelligence (2009) and the ways he sees the aesthetic regime of art (2004). Illeris's concept of 'the hook' and fascination as a driving force (2005: 237) is also used and included in my understanding of the pedagogy of dissensus here.

I asked the students to make a memorable trip to the museum for those who would be involved, be that fellow students or invited pupils from various local schools. The openness and the high level of freedom presented in the assignment were meant to encourage them to experiment, but it might also have been challenging. Some students found it very difficult to get started. They might also have been anxious about doing it well enough. By confronting the students with the unknown and contributing to a movement into a space of uncertainty, I believe that the students' conceptions of art and art education can be rearranged.

Over the years, there have been so much experimentation and high-quality art educational practice by the students. Every year, I am surprised by their playfulness. The students make projects we could not have imagined beforehand and that have expanded our understanding of how a pedagogical framing can affect how we encounter art. My own notions of education in the museum are continuously widened and expanded, more recently within the digital domain of art museum education (Skregelid 2021d).

Now, at the end of this chapter, I just briefly mention one of the workshops a group of students invited their peers into that had an exhibition by the Norwegian modernist Gunnar S. Gundersen (1921–83) as a point of departure. Gundersen's art is nonfigurative, hard edged and colourful. After a short, guided tour, the students responsible for the workshop let their fellow students explore the exhibition on their own. Then, they asked the students to choose one artwork to respond to either by drawing, making a story or by making a bodily response. I am not sure whether the student in the image seen above (Figure 2.6) was aware of the corresponding colours in the artwork and in her clothes, but the interactivity between her appearance, Gundersen's abstract art and the museum space is amazingly related.

The museum as a democratic space

In this chapter, I have referred to five different scenes of art educational practice in the museum space. The first four are dominated by discursive approaches, while the latter is moving towards more sensory and performative approaches. Common among all is that they are all informed by pedagogy of dissensus, and the thinking presented in this book. One

way to initiate dissensus can be to introduce what can be seen as disruptive art, initiating situations that offer resistance and that welcome disagreement and the unforeseen. In all the scenes, the pupils or students are moved out of their comfort zone, either by encountering art that challenges their notion of art or by experiencing other ways of encountering art than they have done before by having roles as active participants, here given the opportunity to respond to art with, for example, stories, questions, their own art or bodily actions. This way of letting the voices of the pupils and students be heard and seen can be one way of seeing the museum as a democratic space.

As mentioned, Mouffe (2000, 2005) argues for the potentialities of disagreement and conflicts to promote democracy. It is important that this conflict does not take the form of antagonism, a term she explains is a struggle between opposing sides that often leads to the formation of enemies. It must take the form 'as an agonism, a struggle between adversaries' (Mouffe 2013: 7). In Scenes Three and Four, we see opposing and maybe conflicting views on the art of Viskum and Susiraja are acted out. The outcome of this was not that all ended up liking the artworks, but as the young man at the start of the chapter said, 'I'm glad it was exhibited and that I got to see it.'

In Norway, 'democracy and citizenship' are one of three newly launched interdisciplinary areas that run through all subjects in primary and secondary school (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2019). Bringing Rancière's criticism of social inclusion with me, I have previously raised some concerns about bringing democracy into the curriculum, and into the rhetoric in museum education (Skregelid 2016). By doing this, one can anticipate that the school is *not* a democratic place, and one might risk that the asymmetry between those who invite and those who are invited into the museum is growing, which can cause an unbalanced relation. As a response to these paradoxes, the Danish researcher Lise Sattrup introduces 'performing democracy' (Sattrup 2015: n.pag., translation added) and the 'democratic event'. Instead of introducing democracy and the concepts that can be associated with democracy, like social inclusion and outreach, she proposes *doing* democracy, and democracy *in action*. This goes well together with Biesta's (2014) understanding of democracy. He sees the school as a perfect place to act democracy because this is a site where all parts of the population are represented. The plurality is considered a resource. In the epilogue to the chapter 'A pedagogy of interruption' in the book *Beyond Learning: Democratic Education for a Human Future*, he writes about this: 'Democracy itself is, after all, a commitment to a world of plurality and difference, a commitment to a world where freedom can appear' (Biesta 2006: 151). He also makes use of the notion 'democratic moment' about the disruption of existing orders and says this is needed for democratic subjects to be born (Biesta 2014). The scenes described in this chapter involve pupils and students who visited the art museum in a school or university context as part of their curriculum. Unless there were strong reactions against the art exhibited or other reasons for not coming, we expected them to visit the exhibitions. In this way, the plurality of the population was represented, also in the responses, because most of the pupils and students gave consent to take part in the research.

Even though the term democracy can be questioned, I find encounters with art to possibly function as democratic encounters if all voices are considered equal. In this way, encounters with art in museums and elsewhere can serve as sites where democracy can be acted out and practiced. Opposing and conflicting views can appear, but as long as the multiple attitudes are respected, democracy is realized.

Chapter 3

Dissensus in Teacher Education

In order to reach the national ambition about increasing the awareness and recognition of art and culture, it is time to focus on schools, teachers and teacher education.

(Skregelid 2020d: n.pag., translation added)

As mentioned in the introduction, the situation for the arts in Norway is rather unique because of the amount of funding to art and culture, which is also true for art and culture in schools. The ambitious initiative The Cultural Schoolbag (TCS) that has existed since 2001 was established as a collaboration between the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Education to ensure Norwegian pupils have access to professional art and culture in school. However, as I commented on, there are a lot of tensions because of conflicting agendas from the culture and school sector, along with disagreement about ownership. A paradox also appears when this initiative runs simultaneously with the downscaling of aesthetic subjects in school. This has led to worries about replacing the aesthetic subjects, with the TCS initiative even though TCS is not meant to be a substitute but an additional resource in school.

By some, the initiative has been reckoned as a disruption and an extraordinary element in school (Borgen and Brandt 2006). Bamford, who has studied TCS along with other initiatives aiming for enhancing art in school in Norway (2012), has called TCS 'a speed date'. She has criticized the way artists come into school and the way they are sometimes doing their project for or with the pupils with little dialogue with the teachers.

This motivated me to establish a longer-lasting collaboration between teachers and representatives from cultural institutions to overcome and better integrate art in school when doing my Ph.D. (Skregelid 2016). As I have referred to in Chapter 2 and in Scenes One to Three, I together with teachers and educators from the art museum formed a unique and long-term collaboration, lasting for three years and integrated the visits to the art museum in the activities at school. Over the years, I have been thinking a lot about my early quest for establishing this collaborative unit of teachers and representatives from the arts field and to integrate encounters with art and artists in education. How does this go together with my calls for disruptive elements and the need for the extraordinary in education? What kind of disruption is OK? When does the disruption need a context and to be followed up?

In this chapter, I address such questions by referring to the national research project pARTiciPED: Empowering Student Teachers for Cross-Sectorial Collaborations with TCS in Norwegian Schools funded by the Research Council of Norway (2021–24). The project explores how the collaboration between the culture and school sector can be improved. The part of the

project I lead, Lab for Initiating Dissensus and Exploring the Edges between Art and Education, is based at the University of Agder (UiA), in Kristiansand, Norway. The work package includes a range of partners, with representatives from teacher education at UiA, the Municipality of Agder, Sørlandet Artmuseum, teacher students, a teacher, an artist and researchers who collaborate on and discuss how the inclusion of TCS in teacher education can lead to a better integration of art in general and TCS in particular in school.

On the initiation of the teacher education department at UiA, all teacher students in their third year (of five years in all) take part in and reflect upon TCS projects originally designed and made for schoolchildren, regardless of subject specialization. This is part of the interdisciplinary compulsory topic aesthetic learning processes, launched at UiA in 2020, partly as result of our collaboration, initiated with a pilot study in 2019 that I was responsible for (Skregelid 2020, 2021).

One TCS project the students have been exposed to is the workshop Teiporama by the Swedish artist Sandra Norrbin, which was designed for the school and classroom context. In this chapter, I refer to how I see the introduction of this workshop as a way of initiating dissensus. In the chapter, the responses by the participating students are referred to. These are used to discuss the relevance of the concept 'third space' (Rutherford 1990; Soja 1996) to characterize the intersections and relations between art and education. The concept of 'word centredness' by Biesta (2017, 2021) is included here. I claim that, as an educational approach and third space, dissensus can be a contribution to what Biesta refers to as 'a worldy space […] an educational space' (2017: 65).

Disturbances in teacher education

The opening words in this chapter refer to the need for giving attention to teacher education to fulfil ambitions about increasing awareness of the relevance of art in general and in school in particular.

In the current political context with competition and measurement in all areas of society (Pedersen 2011), there seems to be little space for art that is not that easy to evaluate and access. Art is also not a compulsory subject in teacher education. So how is art and the potential disturbance it might represent welcomed in this context?

In the previous chapter, I refer to the possible value of bringing disturbing art into the lives of pupils in a school and museum context. In addition to discussing the *content* in the teaching, I touched upon how the *form* of the teaching can be disruptive. During the years of teaching teacher students, I have found interest in bringing disturbances into this context. I now briefly refer to three different projects or incidents that motivated the research project described in this chapter.

In 2015, I organized a workshop for two groups of teacher students within the arts and crafts course at UiA. The students were invited to take part in a TCS workshop run

by the artists Mette Stausland (NO) and Robert Wood (UK) in Kristiansand Kunsthall; the workshop was related to the ongoing exhibition *Correspondences*, which involved Stausland's drawings and Wood's sculptures. In addition to this, the students were to make a temporal installation together with the artists. There were three exhibition spaces in the gallery. The artists exhibited their artworks in the two main rooms, and the students worked on their installation with the artists in the middle room. The teacher students observed TCS activities and worked concurrently on their installation. They used materials such as cardboard to construct their piece, and over the duration of the week-long workshop, I observed the characteristics of a processual work that relied heavily on collaboration. There were no sketches to inform the work as the artist encouraged an open-ended approach. This open-endedness caused a lot of resistance among the students. With no plans to follow, they seemed uncomfortable and struggled to come to terms with the freedom offered to them. The students asked a lot of questions: 'Where is the handcraft?' 'What are the criteria needed to succeed?' 'Why are we not being assessed?' Some asked for the meaning and purpose of the workshop and made it clear that they would rather study for their upcoming exam. This made me curious because I could see that something was happening in their attitudes to the activity that had deeper implications for their understanding of art and educational work.

In 2017, my former colleague Anne Svingen-Austestad and I received funding from teacher education at our university to do a project on contemporary art and play within teacher education. We called it #Aksjon 2: Ommøbleringer ('#Action 2: Rearrangements'). This was a follow-up on what we referred to as '#Action 1: Poetic strategies as event: On actions in the art, craft and design classroom' (Johnsrud et al. 2015). Here, we wanted to pursue our shared interests in challenging the quest for usefulness and instrumentalization of the arts within school and to implement this in a project involving teacher students in arts and crafts. We introduced the students to contemporary artists implicitly or explicitly related to the importance of play and to films and texts that opened for questions and reflections about the current status quo for playing and arts in school. We made the students observe toddlers playing in a kindergarten and how they imagined objects from nature to be all sorts of objects. We encouraged them to see the connections and disconnections between the poetic practice of artists and play, and we made the students play and do poetic practices themselves. We found it important not to explain how our actions of teaching were inspired by the random, processual characteristics of art and play because we wanted the students to try to find the connections themselves. The project resulted in an exhibition where the students exhibited their photographic work of their poetic playing with everyday objects. Despite the wonderful work produced by the students, this project also caused a lot of resistance. Many students did not see the point of playing within the context of teacher education, nor playing as an element in school. Some did not come to the teaching sessions after the first day. The teaching was considered too challenging.

A year later, I visited Sørlandet Artmuseum in Kristiansand with my then 7-year-old daughter. She and I participated in the workshop Teiporama, designed, and delivered

by Norrbin, whose art practice is conceptual, site specific and temporal. Without any instruction, we were given different coloured tape and played around with it in the biggest room on ground floor in the art museum, in a space especially designed for children. Installations of tape were expanding in the room. There was a lot of joy. The activity had similar qualities to the workshops the teacher students took part in above. The activity was processual and temporal. I could not observe any resistance among the kids and the participating parents.

At this point, I knew that the national administrator of TCS was interested in projects that could include teacher students. When I learned that the Teiporama workshop was part of local TCS programming in Agder, I explored the possibilities for arranging the Teiporama workshop for the teacher students as part of the new module in art and crafts: *introduction to experimental making processes*. I saw this both as a possibility for practicing educational dissensus in another context than I already had done in previous research, to see how the TCS workshop could challenge the existing practice for our teacher students and, at the same time, introduce this national initiative for them.

First, Teiporama became part of the pilot study 'TCS as dissensus in teacher education' funded by the teacher education unit at UiA and Arts for Young Audiences Norway. In 2019, arts and crafts students took part in it, and in 2020, general teacher students from a range of subjects were exposed to this TCS project. In the publications 'Tensed possibilities: The cultural schoolbag as dissensus in teacher education' (2020) and 'Encounters with the world through cultural schoolbag workshops for teacher students' (2021), I refer to these. In the following, I refer to what I see as the dissensual character of TCS workshop, which led me to include it in my research and in this book.

Teiporama: A dissensual third space?

Agder County Municipality accepted Norrbin's application to be part of the programming of TCS in 2018 and has since then continued to engage with her to realize it. Teiporama is the type of TCS project where the artist is coming to schools and where the artist is inviting the pupils to take part in her art practice. The pupils also get to know the artist's artistic work. A typical amount of time is 90 minutes. This project also had a duration of 90 minutes. The Teiporama workshop has been realized over 250 times in different schools across Norway. The county municipalities and municipalities decide which schools will be offered the different projects. The following is how Teiporama is announced and the information the schools get prior to the visit:

> The idea of the Teiporama project is to get familiar with the concept of installation, something we often encounter in contemporary art. What does it mean, and how can you make an installation? […] To get a sense of what an installation can be, we will use tape of

> different colours and sizes. Tape is an easy material to work with; it is a material everyone knows and that can quickly be turned into big formats. We perform a performative action where we use the whole body; we move around the room and pull out metre after metre of tape. By making lines and shapes with the tape, we want to change the experience of the room […] Working outside the usual framework is a good way to feel free when creating. There is nothing right or wrong. What we are going to create is a common installation, each with its own roll of tape, an installation that you can walk around in and even be allowed to walk on.
>
> (Den kulturelle skolesekken Agder 2022: n.pag., translation added)

It was the experience with my daughter taping in the museum, but also this text about Teiporama, that caught my interest. I was thinking about the students in the former projects feeling uncomfortable, searching and asking for meaning and usefulness. I found this workshop to include many of the elements that had proved to be challenging in similar previous experiences: installation, focus on process, little restrictions, and a great deal of freedom to do whatever is wanted. In that way, I found Teiporama to fit the idea of practicing pedagogy of dissensus as the workshop was such a contrast to the educational activities offered as part of the courses on both the general and art-specific programmes within teacher education. I saw the rupture that the workshop could possibly contribute to similar resistance I had witnessed before.

I suspected that this workshop would challenge the students, both the arts and crafts students and general teacher students. A central element in the workshop is to get familiar with art as installation, a term for art that makes use of and relates to space either indoors or outdoors. Installation art is most often not permanent and is only meant to last for a limited amount of time. In this workshop particularly, different coloured tape is used as the main material. This is a known material, but it is very unlikely that the students have used this material in an artistic process before. In that way, they all have the same point of departure. The tape workshop has an explorative character and can be oriented towards the process more than focusing on developing skills and the artistic object. The workshop is playful and free of pre-described learning outcomes. When implemented, the students were not assessed but instead asked to reflect on the relevance of the project for schools; most importantly, they reflected on the value for them as teachers. The freedom that is emphasized in the advertising of the project was expected to represent a huge contrast to the everyday practice both in school and teacher education.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, I have paid attention to both Biesta's understanding of a subject-oriented approach to education and his criticism towards expressivism in art education (2017a, 2018). Biesta is sceptical of unlimited freedom of expression and self-oriented activities that has been – and is still – a part of the art educational discourse. Biesta

is concerned about the possible dangers of letting everybody express whatever they want as what might be expressed can be too ego centric and maybe harmful.

When Teiporama was chosen to be part of TCS in compulsory teacher education, I was of the opinion the workshop had something to offer because of the contrast to regular teacher education. From my earlier experiences, I expected that the workshop would initiate some possible resistance for some. I was excited to see how this encounter with an artist and art would be welcomed by the teacher students. What I did not imagine was that the workshop would also be an interesting point of departure to discuss Biesta's ideas on world centredness and his critique of expressivism and freedom in art practice.

According to Biesta, one premise for a world-centred education is to encounter resistance. There are different ways of responding when our intentions, actions and initiatives encounter resistance and are interrupted, as mentioned in Chapter 1. Encountering and doing art, according to Biesta (2017a), is to be in a middle ground. In my research, I use the concept of dissensus from Rancière (2009) in a similar way (Skregelid 2016, 2019a, 2019b, 2020a). Because I see dissensus as a premise for subjectification, I argue for *initiating* dissensus by introducing students to both art and educational practice that contrasts the norm and disrupts the expected. I thought that the characteristics of the workshop mentioned above could represent dissensus in the normal order of teaching within teacher education. I have also been curious about how the concept of the 'third space' by Bhabha (Rutherford 1990) and Soya (1996) could be activated in this project. In pARTiciPED, we wanted to break with the recurring dichotomy between art and pedagogy and artists and teachers, a rhetoric that is also largely enshrined in the literature and research on TCS. The third space, on the other hand, opens opportunities for new knowledge in this space between art and pedagogy (Gutiérrez 2008; Klein et al. 2016; Zeichner 2010). I discuss the relevance of the third space in this context in the final part of this chapter. I now put the students' experiences of Teiporama in focus.

How was the workshop experienced by the teacher students themselves? Before referring to the responses by the students, which can be read in reflection notes written by the students within the workshops (and in the experiences that appeared in group interviews), I briefly refer to the design of the workshop and some observations made by myself and the students participating as co-researchers.

Workshop for teacher students

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was challenging to plan for Teiporama in 2021. The students had mostly online teaching since March 2020. Would the students attend this workshop that was off the official schedule and detached from their main subjects? Just before our realization of the workshop, the number of infected inhabitants in the region were rising. We needed special permission from the management of the university to go through with it, something we received just days before.

Information about the workshop, why it was included in the teacher education programme and an invitation to participate in the research project, was given online beforehand. We expected about two hundred teacher students in eight workshops in March and April 2021. Four of them were realized in the spring, with only a low number of students present. Many refrained from coming because of the tense situation. Those who participated were well prepared regarding all the restrictions. They had to keep their distance, they could not collaborate, and they had to wear facemasks. We also needed to use two rooms. The university closed the day after our second day of workshops, so thereby the two remaining workshop days had to be moved to autumn.

The research material related to Teiporama, four workshops in the spring and four workshops in the autumn of 2021, involved the visual material and observation notes by me and the participating coresearchers, as well as reflection notes from students, taking part in the workshops. All students were asked to reflect upon their participation, and most accepted that this could be shared with the research project. In addition to this, my colleague and participant in WP4, professor in education, Ilmi Willbergh, with help from the two students as coresearchers, conducted six focus group interviews lasting about thirty to forty minutes each, with four to six students in every group.

All eight workshops lasted about three hours each and took place in a variety of places: in the Faculty of Fine Art building, in regular seminar rooms in the teacher education department building, and in the museum where I had first taken part in Teiporama with my daughter.

Despite the differences in the number of students attending and restrictions that had to be followed, the structure of the eight workshops was about the same: first, Veslemøy Olsen from the teacher education department had an introduction, telling the students why this workshop was included in their teacher education programme. After this, I talked about the research project and invited the students to take part by sharing their reflections or taking part in the interviews. From this point, Norrbin took over, and Teiporama progressed in the same way as with pupils in school. First, she asked some general questions about art and what experiences the teacher students had with art. Then, she showed them a couple of her own artworks, followed by an introduction to the tape and the installation work. The students worked with the installations for about forty minutes. Before reflecting about their participation in writing or in focus group interview, some of the installations were discussed.

It was interesting to observe the students entering the workshop. Because the students came from different specialist subjects, many of them did not know each other from before. From my observation notes, I read that there was little noise in the groups participating in Teiporama in the spring. The students worked without much talking. We only heard the sounds of the scissors hitting the floor. In the spring, the students worked in a very limited space because of the restrictions. There were a lot of two-dimensional images on the floor (Figures 3.1 and 3.2) or wall (Figures 3.3 and 3.4). There were both abstract (Figure 3.5) and more naturalistic

Figure 3.1: Student work, from TCS project Teiporama Sandra Norrbin, UiA, spring 2021. Photo by Lisbet Skregelid. © Lisbet Skregelid 2024.

Figure 3.2: Student work, from TCS project Teiporama Sandra Norrbin, UiA, spring 2021. Photo by Lisbet Skregelid. © Lisbet Skregelid 2024.

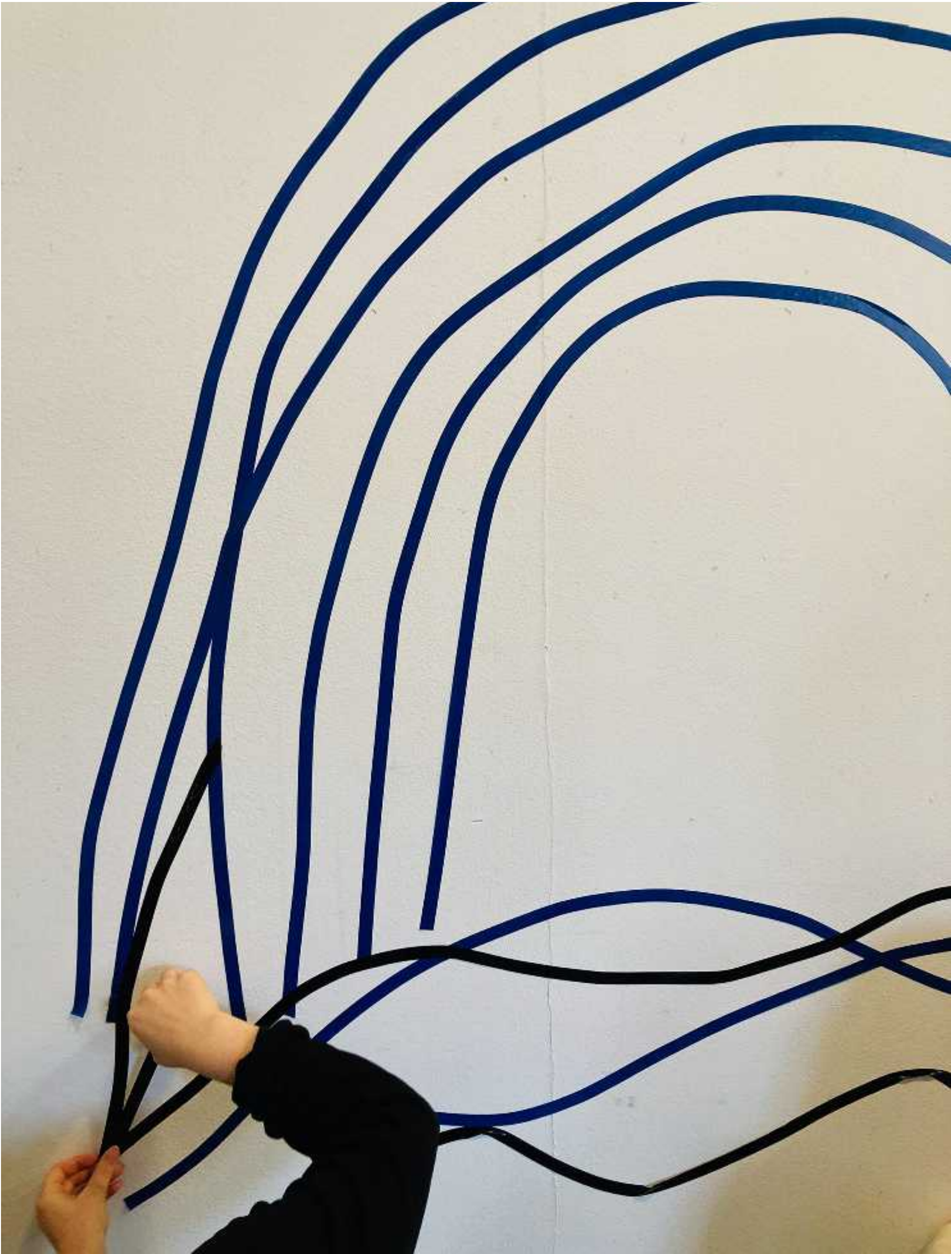

Figure 3.3: Student work, from TCS project Teiporama Sandra Norrbin, UiA, autumn 2021. Photo by Lisbet Skregelid.
© Lisbet Skregelid 2024.

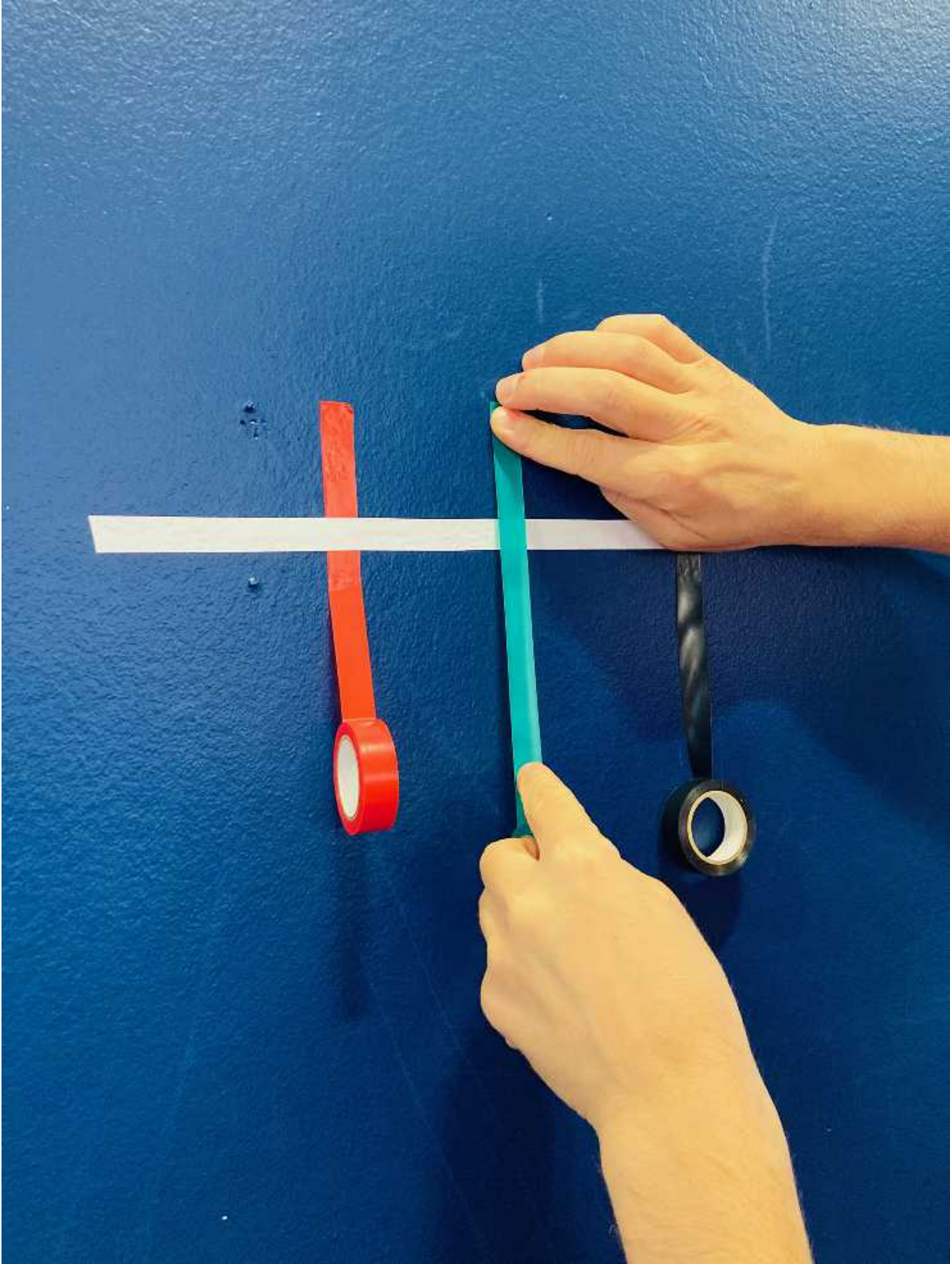

Figure 3.4: Student work, from TCS project Teiporama Sandra Norrbin, UiA, autumn 2021. Photo by Lisbet Skregelid.
© Lisbet Skregelid 2024.

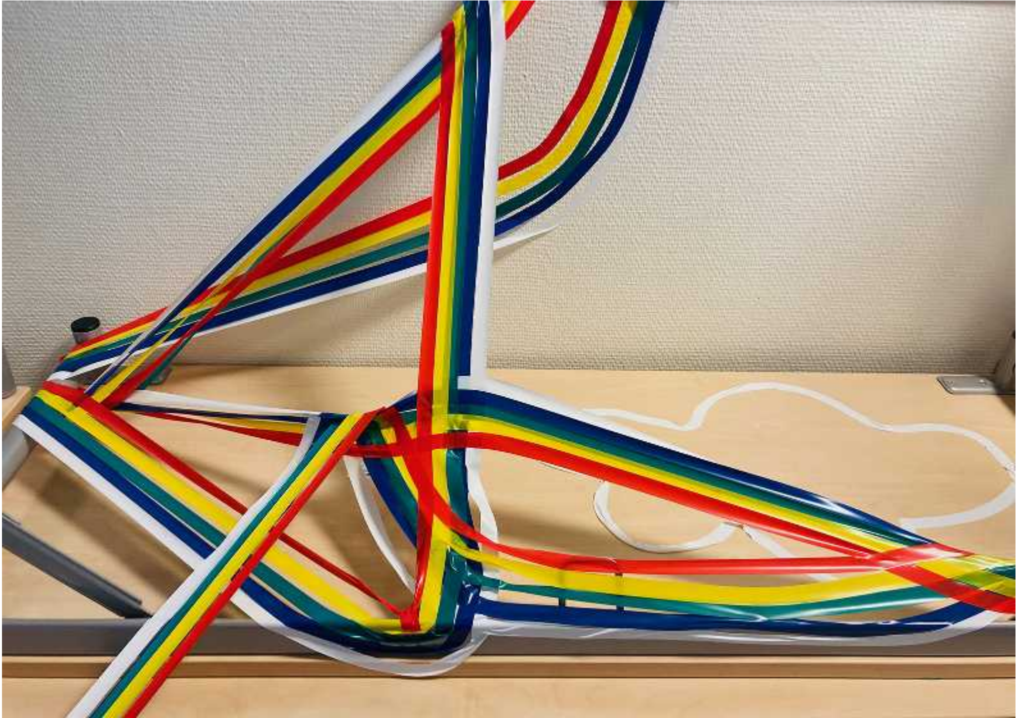

Figure 3.5: Student work, from TCS project Teiporama Sandra Norrbin, UiA, autumn 2021. Photo by Lisbet Skregelid. © Lisbet Skregelid 2024.

and recognizable forms. In the autumn, there was a lot more talking, both in the introductory conversation about art and during the actual taping. The students had the opportunity to collaborate at this point. Many people chose this and made larger installations.

Students' experiences with Teiporama

Reflecting on the participation in Teiporama was a mandatory part of the workshop. The reflection notes show us what the students found positive and what they experienced as challenging when taking part in Teiporama. The students were also asked to write about the relevance of art in school and what experiences they would bring with them into their teaching profession. In the following, I refer to some of the responses by the students. The reflections demonstrate the relevance of bringing in the concept of the third space to discuss the intersections between art and education, the artist and the educator.

‘I did not have a clear idea of where I wanted to go.’

How the students have described their participation in the workshop can tell us something about how they responded to the open assignment and not having any guidelines. What initiated their practice differed from starting with colours and motifs they liked to something they looked forward to. The specific space and material were directing their work. Some students said that it took time to get started: ‘I spent a long time getting started. I did not have a clear idea of where I wanted to go, so the first minutes were spent brainstorming and testing.’

Many students described how they let themselves be driven by the process and that one thing led to another.

Because it was possible to collaborate in the autumn, some spent time discussing what they should make before getting started with the installation work: ‘It started with the good conversation. However, my partner and I let the talk and the tape rolls go simultaneously. The installation was created while our minds were wandering.’ Another one stated, ‘My imagination controlled the work. I had no plan, the tape just moved unintentionally.’

‘I relaxed and got engaged.’

The students’ descriptions of the atmosphere in the workshop can shed light on their experiences as well. Therefore, a question about that was included. Words such as ‘fun’, ‘good’, ‘calm’, ‘harmonious’, ‘relaxing’, ‘liberating’ and ‘pleasant’ were used to describe the students’ experience of the atmosphere. For some, the participation in Teiporama reminded them of what it was like to be a child: ‘It was comfortable and relaxing. Felt free to relax, like drawing as a child. It is not often you do that today, where everyday school life is filled with a lot of stress.’ Some also said they wanted to make use of the experiences when becoming a teacher.

Being together and the relational aspect of the activity were commented on, despite the fact, that the students were working independently and on their own in the spring. They still worked side by side: ‘It was comfortable to play with the material and colours. I relaxed and got engaged. At the same time, it was like being part of a community.’

Also, in the autumn, when most people worked in groups, someone who worked alone said, ‘The atmosphere was good. I do not know many in this class, so I was working alone. But I like creative activities, so I felt kind of safe being surrounded by everybody doing their own things.’

Many of the students said that the encouragement from artists and fellow students while working contributed positively and motivated them to continue their art projects. One said she was surprised about how one manages to relate to the openness in the activity: ‘It was a surprise to see how committed you become when you get such an open assignment.’ One commented on a more ambivalent experience and talked about scepticism and curiosity at the same time:

> I was sceptical about what I created, at the same time as I was curious about where it would end. The more abstract the work turned out to be, I was wondering if this was the wrong way of doing it. Still, it is nice to make something, without an idea about the outcome.

The atmosphere turned out to be different than expected for many of the students. The following statement gives a hint about this: 'The atmosphere was good. Seemed like most people thought it was fun. I was surprised. I did not have high expectations.'

'A bodily experience making something without a plan.'

When asked about their experiences with Teiporama, the positive feedback dominated. The students said it was 'fun', 'exciting' and 'educational'. They stated that they encountered something they did not expect: 'Time went a lot faster than I expected, so it was more interesting than I had thought.'

The openness and the fact that there was no expected outcome were mentioned as particularly positive. Being able to work in other ways than they usually did was commented on: 'It was great fun to work with tape. It was a different way of being creative. Good fun to see all the different ways we solved the task.' Gaining a better understanding of how art can be created was also emphasized. The following comment highlights the importance of a bodily experience: 'I gained a greater understanding of how art can be made. It was an embodied experience making something without a plan.'

How the workshop stimulated creativity was mentioned by many of the students, and on one occasion, there was one student who said there is not much room for being creative in teacher education: 'On my way through teacher education, there has not been much space for creativity.' Some said they were surprised about the fact that the openness in the workshop did not paralyse them: 'I was surprised that such an open task made us act so quickly. I normally struggle to take part in such activities, but here, I felt safe and secure enough to just go on'. A girl said that she liked 'to be forced to have to think differently.' Another one commented on the challenges with this: 'I was critical to the workshop to begin with, but when I started working, I liked a lot to work in such a creative way. The challenge was to get started. But it went well in the end.'

'Teiporama has been a confusing activity.'

Although most of the students did not comment on any challenges, challenges were explicitly mentioned by some. Among other things, it was difficult to get started and know what to make. Someone also found it hard to finish their installation: 'It was a bit difficult to start.

It was hard to know where the first piece of tape should be placed. It was also challenging to know how to finish.' Resistance from the tape was mentioned as a challenge: 'Getting the tape to behave the way you wanted. It is easier to control a pencil than to "draw" with tape.'

Some of the students stated they did not consider themselves creative enough, and it was difficult to understand art in general. There were students who emphasized openness and freedom and the use of imagination as challenging: 'The greatest challenge was to create what I envisioned in my head'. On this question, there were a handful of students who said that they did not quite see the point of participating in Teiporama. One said, 'It is fun to make art, but I cannot really see the relevance for my professional work as an upcoming teacher.' I include two similar quotes: 'Teiporama has been a confusing activity because the purpose and learning outcomes are unclear.' 'It was perfectly fine to participate, quite fun to make something in tape. Did not gain so much from it though. I do not quite see the point of what we have done.'

'I bring with me that it is important to expose children to open activities.'

We asked what experiences the students thought they could bring with them from participating in Teiporama into their teaching profession, especially in the light of the following ambition in the new curriculum: 'The school will make students creative, joyful and explorative' (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2019b: n.pag.).

Some of the students said that the specific activity of using tape to make an installation was something they wanted to adopt, and that art can be made in other ways than just by painting. Some stated that tape is a manageable material and easy to clean up. It provides few restrictions and invites to make use of the room. Several talked about how the elements from Teiporama can be transferred to other subjects. The potential for collaboration was also mentioned by several students. The use of abilities other than the cognitive ones was emphasized as positive: 'Working creatively is a new way of working, providing a break for the head.' Another one said, 'We should make more use of the body to do projects in all subjects.'

Some commented on how they were inspired by the few restrictions and freedom in the activity: 'I will definitely make use of this in my own teaching. I think the pupils will love this. There is a lot you can do and there is no planned outcome. The pupils get the opportunity to play with tape.' Another student said, 'Working with something new, and to be given total freedom was good. I will think about that when I go to work in school later.' One student stated that she saw the potential in open activities as the following: 'I bring with me that it is important to expose children to open activities.' In relation to this, the challenges of freedom were also mentioned: 'The experience I take bring with me is that freedom of expression is fun, but also difficult.'

Others mentioned the need for breaks in everyday school life: 'It can be nice to have a break from "regular" sessions and then this kind of activity is nice.' Another one said, 'Such activities

stimulate imagination, creativity, and good ideas – and it will probably be experienced as good fun for pupils. It is a different way of working, and a break with everyday life.'

'Art has great value in school.'

All the students were asked about what value and relevance they thought art had in school. Here, most students of responded that they believed art is important and has great value. When they had to justify why, they said that children are different and have different interests, they have an imagination that should be nourished, they have interests that can be explored through art, and art can help to express themselves in different ways. One said, 'You disappear into the art and are disconnected from everything else. Therefore, art is valuable.' Another said about art in school, 'It is more important than you think. It's a great way of expressing yourself. It is important to be able to work in different ways.' One student stated,

> I believe art is of great value in school because the pupils are allowed to express themselves in other ways than they normally do. You try something you have not tried before. You have the opportunity, to express yourself in other ways, than orally and in writing.

They mentioned that they could make use of their bodies and express their creativity. Some also made use of instrumental justifications mentioned in chapter one, that art can make school easier and that they may manage other subjects better.

Some students commented on the status quo for art in school: 'I do not think it is enough focus on it, apart from in the arts and crafts subject. It is really something you can include in several subjects.' Another one said, 'Creativity is not included well enough in school.' Another said, 'I think art is not prioritized enough in school. Pupils are not being able to be creative.'

Some of the statements in the reflection note moderate what has been said above about the value of art. It was pointed out, for example, that it can be challenging to comment on this question when one does not have much knowledge about art: 'A lack of knowledge makes it difficult to comment on this.'

'Better impression of TCS than I had before I came.'

Finally, the students had the opportunity to make some further comments about their participation in Teiporama. There were some who did not say anything, but several used the opportunity to write that it was 'fun', 'social', 'exciting', 'educational', 'engaging' and 'good'. They also liked the activity because it required little equipment and planning. The fact that everyone can get something done was mentioned as positive: 'Great workshop, especially for students who may struggle a little otherwise. It is both individual work and cooperation.'

The comments by the students give some insight into the expectations of the students. One said, 'I entered the workshop a little sceptical. But it turned out to be fun.' Another one stated, 'I think it was challenging and exciting. Nice to have been a part of. I now have a better impression of TCS than I had before I came.'

Third space in teacher education

The responses by the students demonstrate the importance of exposing teacher students to art and letting them participate in the making of art. In what way can I say that Teiporama appears as a productive dissensus and a relevant disturbance within teacher education? And how does a third space between art and education emerge?

When discussing dissensus in the previous chapters, I have written that this can be initiated, among other things, by introducing pupils and students to teaching practice that challenges the norm. I exemplify this by emphasizing open and processual working methods that are not aimed at any particular outcome. As mentioned before in this chapter, the workshop Teiporama was included in teacher education and in the research project because it precisely addresses these aspects.

The students' descriptions of how they worked in the session and how their work progressed demonstrate how many worked without any idea of an outcome. Because they had not worked with the material tape before in this manner, they had to explore the opportunities inherent in the material. Some described a plan that had to be either rejected or adjusted because the tape did not move the way they wanted. In the description of dissensus, I have emphasized the importance of encountering resistance. The resistance experienced here was, as in the pilot project leading up to this main project (Skregelid 2020b, 2021b), related to the specific material, but the resistance appeared also because the workshop represented such a contrast to the dominating activities within teacher education.

Most students experienced Teiporama as both relaxing and comfortable. They stated that it was socially engaging and enjoyable. The freedom to do what they wanted, to create something without a plan and the opportunity to be creative were regarded as positive. These arguments were used to stress the value of art. So were comments on how art and TCS can represent interruptions and breaks in everyday school life and in teacher education.

As always, when introducing new forms of teaching, there are pupils and students who do not see the point of taking part in it. The reflection notes have shown that the contrast the workshop represented caused hesitation from some of the students. What was interesting here was that the students stayed in the workshop, despite the objections they might have had. As mentioned earlier, Biesta (2017a) outlines three options when encountering resistance. One can resign from it or one can fight hard against it. A third possibility is to relate to that which is different, that which resists, becoming what he refers to as 'the middle ground' (Biesta 2017a: 65). He says we can never anticipate how challenges will be welcomed.

He believes that, as teachers, we can hope that being exposed to disturbances can contribute to what he describes as a world-centred education 'that which "arrived" as interference, as an intervention they did not ask for, turned out to be helpful, beneficial, perhaps even essential for their attempts at trying to be home in the world' (Biesta 2017a: 88). Based on Biesta's understanding of a world-centred education as an 'ongoing, lifelong challenge' (2018: 16), Teiporama's processual character can precisely represent this.

In this workshop, the students' quest for planning and to be in control of the situation encountered what cannot be controlled. Their own desires had to be put aside. They may have had to give in and let the tape guide them. Biesta is concerned with the possibilities in the art for realizing world-centred teaching and not to over-dimension either what the students want nor what society wants. One must instead ask the question of what the world needs. In an interview, he writes about this:

> This is, as I have tried to make clear, not a matter of just doing what you want to do, but it is about encountering reality – reality that in all its forms makes our existence possible but also puts limits and limitations on what we might want from life.
>
> (Biesta cited in Skregelid and Biesta 2022: 42)

He says that to work through these challenges is to be in this middle ground and that this is a central task for all teaching:

> it is in this task that the roads of education and the arts cross. And it is at this crossing point that the arts and education can work together, can enhance each in their coming interest in and concern for our 'worldly' existence as human beings.
>
> (Biesta 2018: 42)

What Biesta writes about here addresses the question of how a third space can be established when art encounters education. The concept of the third space can help us to see the possibilities this notion is providing for what happens in Teiporama. What knowledge is produced? It is interesting to look at Soja's (1996) description of the third space as a way of understanding the spaciousness and diversity of life:

> *Everything* comes together in Thirdspace: subjectivity and objectivity, the abstract and the concrete, the real and the imagined, the knowable and the unimaginable, the repetitive and the differential, structure and agency, mind and body, consciousness and the unconscious, the disciplined and the transdisciplinary, everyday life and unending history.
>
> (56–57, original emphasis)

This quote relates very well to the confrontations in Teiporama. Soya sees the third space as a place, where among other things, the abstract encounters the concrete. The

students have been given the possibilities to make use of their imagination, but they also encounter limitations with not having any guidelines or learning objectives to follow. Their understanding and idea of what to make encounter the challenging tape, which does not behave in the way they might want. One can think of Teiporama as a rupture, representing a break, or dissensus, in the constant stream of what the teacher training students normally experience. This is also something they explicitly stated themselves.

The starting point for the research project pARTiciPED and the part of the project conducted at UiA is the recurring refrain about the insufficient collaboration between culture and school. 'This affects children and young people and their experience of art', the former minister of culture Abid Raja and the minister of education Guri Melbye state in an article (2021: n.pag., translation added). The preliminary results from this project show not only that exposing teacher students to art can make students better prepared for their responsibilities when their future students encounter TCS in school, but that art in general and TCS in particular realize relevant dissensus and positive disturbances in school and teacher education, thus contributing to necessary third spaces.

Chapter 4

Dissensus in Education Involving Artists

But who is the work for?

(Blackmore 2017: 359)

In 2017, I went to the island of Lesvos in the Aegean Sea, where my university has a study centre in an old monastery annex. Metochi was founded in the sixteenth century and is part of the nearby Limonos Monastery. Since 1993, the annex has continuously been renovated and has been used for seminars and study purposes organized by the University of Agder and other universities and organizations. It had been ten years since I first attended a course in this beautiful place surrounded by olive trees, with fantastic local food that contributed to a very special atmosphere for academic work.

The flight from Norway via Athens indicated that this time would be different. A paper cup I was given on Aegean Airlines from Athens to Lesvos said, 'Aegean takes you to Athens and Kassel! Documenta 14'. A few weeks before, I had been to Kassel and visited Documenta 14, an international contemporary art event that has taken place every fifth year since 1955. This time, a lot of the art was responding to issues like the current political situation, with refugees escaping from their unsafe places in the hope of a better future. Even though I many times find art to reflect reality better than reality itself, I felt very much distanced from what was referred to as the refugee crisis affecting the Middle Sea countries like, for instance, Greece and this venue for contemporary art in Athens. This changed when I arrived Lesvos early in the morning in July 2017. On the way from the airport to the capital of Lesvos, Mytilene, the bus passed a beach. There were no tourists but the remains of shelters for sleeping. I could sense the despair from the few people I saw on the beach and on the streets of Mytilene through the doors of the bus.

Arriving at Metochi, which is at the very centre of the island, I realized the framing was about the same as ten years ago, just even more beautiful with new buildings and better standards (Figure 4.1). This time, I even got a separate room with my own bathroom, toilet and shower. Such a contrast to all the run-down buildings on the way from airport and tense atmosphere I sensed.

So, what was my business in Lesvos and Metochi? I was invited to join my colleagues at the Faculty of Fine Arts who run FLUKS: Art Centre for Young People to take part in and observe a summer course they had initiated. The artist André Tribbensee, whom I had collaborated with myself before, was engaged as the artistic leader to make a course that invited young people to relate artistically to the current situation of migration in Lesvos.

Figure 4.1: Lisbet Skregelid, Metochi, 2017. © Lisbet Skregelid 2024.

The course conflict/ecology/migration included fourteen youngsters from all over Norway. Many of them were already within a formal art educational programme. They were accepted to take part in the course based on a motivation letter and their plans for site-related art projects on Lesvos.

My role during the stay was to seek inspiration for the upcoming similar course I was to realize myself the year after in the same place. In contrast to this summer course, the upcoming course was to be included as a module of 15 ECT in our bachelor's degree in arts and crafts (now visual arts and education). The idea was to make an alternative and supplement to the existing module on site-related art. Because I was to be the course leader, I was sent by my department to do some research.

Many things about the summer course caught my interest. I found the topic to be relevant but also very difficult and complicated to relate to. First, I observed very engaged youngsters. In the announcement for the course, 'motivation, engagement and commitment' was explicitly expressed as qualities that were wanted: 'Highly motivated participants, people

with intensity in what they do and with a serious interest in what is happening in and with the world.'

It is rare to experience such a hard-working and dedicated group of people. In the talk I gave on the last night to the participants, I started as follows:

> When I return to my university, people will ask me how it was on Lesvos. I was sent as an observer to draw experiences for similar projects. It has been an incredibly nice stay. I will tell people that I have met exceptionally committed young people. Dedicated and hard-working young people who have shared experiences about their encounters with people, nature, animals, and themselves.
>
> (Skregelid 2017: n.pag., translation added)

In the talk, I reflected on how to report about what happened in the course. What impact had it had? The few days in Lesvos in 2017 really affected *me*. When giving the speech to the youngsters, I told them that the sharing and stories they contributed with during the week affected me a lot. It affected how I looked at myself and how I saw others and the world. In the talk, I continued to refer to my research and how encounters with art and aesthetic practice can lead to events of subjectification, events that change and move us as human beings. I told the youngsters, 'This week has been such an event for me' (Skregelid 2017: n.pag., translation added). The days in Lesvos in 2017 were disturbing, which led to new ways of teaching and that made me experience and embody the ambivalence, doubting and that made me bring this into the courses realized in the same place in 2018 and 2019. The question 'But who is the work for?' raised by the socially engaged artist Kate Blackmore (2017) as cited in the introduction to this chapter haunted me.

In this chapter, I give an account for dissensus as form and dissensus as content by exemplifying how this is understood in this context, emphasizing how the ethical dilemmas faced led to what I see as important questioning and doubting. I draw connections from my observations in 2017 to the following courses. I write mainly from a first-person perspective as an art educator, thereby focusing on how making these courses has affected me and my teaching. However, I also refer to some of the reflections and artworks by the participating artists that took part in the course, including them in the discussion about bringing art into contested areas like this and about letting art and education possibly become third spaces.

Art into academic structures – Dissensus affecting the form

I got funding from the university to make the course 'site-related art Lesvos', but there were some requirements. First, the course had to be close to the course description of the already existing module. This meant a course with similar learning outcomes and similar content. It also meant a reading list, an exam and so forth. Entry formalities were also required.

These requirements did not exist for the summer course. The course for the youngsters in 2017 relied very much on the independent work by the youngsters themselves, with feedback and response from Tribbensee, their peers and the course leaders. The youngsters had to plan their own time and arrange their own contacts. This also involved getting to the places around the island. There were no lectures or formal teaching, so the course conflict/ ecology/migration was a contrast to regular university courses. There were no reading lists nor any final exams. The youngsters were not asked to exhibit or make any documentation from the stay.

My question was how to bring this artist and his way of teaching into an academic frame. Would he be interested? And if so, how should artistic freedom be woven into the formal demands from the university?

I knew Tribbensee was interested in exploring the limits and possibilities in between art and educational institutions by merging the fields of art and academy. I got to know him when, in 2014, he arranged the artwork *Temporary Academy* in my hometown Kristiansand, which included a week of workshops and talks and contributed to interesting encounters between artists and academics. The following year, Tribbensee and I, along with a colleague Tormod Wallem Anundsen, curated the EU-funded international seminar 'Rethinking art education', where we asked: 'How does art education work, and how would we like to imagine it working? How can existing educational practice be challenged?' In 2017, Tribbensee's *Parallel University* was included in the annual exhibition in the region in Kristiansand Kunsthall. This relational artwork included discussions and seminars also involving some of my students and colleagues. Our common interest in pushing boundaries for what is possible across art and education and within the frame given by the university structure led us to come up with some ideas for continuing our collaboration in Lesvos.

After taking part in the summer course in 2017, I asked Tribbensee to be the artistic leader of the site-related art courses in 2018 and 2019. Even though there were some hesitations from Tribbensee about putting too much content into the course, he accepted the demands of the university of, for example, having a reading list, some lectures and a final exam.

When announcing the site-related art course to potential participants, we stressed that a central part of the programme was a week-long intensive workshop. The following text is taken from the outline of the module:

> In the course, the students will work with artistic projects related to the Greek island of Lesvos in general and contemporary issues here in particular. Before the stay on Lesvos, the students will develop projects and make contacts relevant for their plans. An important part of the course is to know about different artistic approaches to site and site-specific art. The students will be made aware about ethical concerns that can be raised in site-related art and will be asked to discuss ethical issues in their own projects.

We introduced critical perspectives by the art historian Miwon Kwon (2004) to discuss different approaches to art in relation to sites, places and spaces that challenge art in institutions. Kwon examines the relations between location and identity, and identifies the artist and community as being in often conflicting positions of authorship, representation and/or legitimacy based on power. In this course, the students needed to plan their projects before even being on site. In that sense they were *not* site specific in a phenomenological way because they started without the physical presence of artist in place. Some of the projects were also not realized in Lesvos. However, most of the projects had a discursive approach to site specificity because they engaged in the public and had sociopolitical concerns as the points of departure (Kwon 2004).

The perspectives from relational art (Bourriaud 2007) and art historian Claire Bishop's ways of seeing the artist as collaborators and producers of *situations* rather than an individual producer of objects (Bishop 2012) were an inspiration for many of the participants. Therefore, theories on socially engaged art practice were included in the readings and used as motivation. Among these was Pablo Helguera's *Education for Socially Engaged Art* (2011). Combinations of site-specific art and socially engaged art as seen in recent research (Hutcheson 2014) were also touched upon in the course.

Ethical dilemmas concerning artistic ambition and the role of art in crisis, along with art as a social and political practice, led to much debate during the course and caused a lot of tension within the participating artists and tutors. We also saw the need for including lectures and readings on this matter. I will return to this later.

Inspired by the announcement of the summer course in 2017, we called for highly motivated and self-driven students. We required all applicants to include a letter of motivation commenting on why they applied, with a preliminary sketch of the project they would like to carry out in Lesvos.

In 2018, eleven experienced and not-so-experienced artists took part in the course. In 2019, five artists took part. In addition to this, there were youngsters attending the summer course without the formal university requirements. Tribbensee was the artistic leader of both courses for both years. Soon after the students had registered and accepted, we organized a one-day kick-off session in Norway. This event was a collaboration with another similar course on masters-level, arts-based ethnography, with lectures and input on site-related art, the situation on Lesvos and ethical perspectives regarding doing art in areas of crisis. The lectures were carried out by invited professors, artists and us. We established a webpage where all readings and lecture material were available. This online platform was also used for handing in sketches, texts and the final exam projects.

On Lesvos, we kept the week rather open for the students to organize and work on their own art projects. In 2018, we adopted the somewhat loose frame from the summer course by not putting any lectures into the week. Three lovely meals for breakfast, lunch and dinner structured the plan of the day. The only set requirements were a compulsory meeting just

after breakfast every day and a meeting on the balcony after dinner where the participating artists were sharing their experiences and ideas.

Some of the artists who took part in the course the first year said they would like to have more theoretical input on some issues. This led to me making ad hoc lectures, planned during the night, and given the next morning. In 2019, we put up some lectures that the artists could choose to attend or not. The flexible plan also allowed us to invite people to talk and inspire our participants. I have elsewhere (Skregelid 2020c) mentioned the invitation by a woman taking part in another course in Metochi, who appeared to be very critical of the art projects and the site-related art course in general. She was very disapproving and critical of us being in Lesvos for a week and of us believing we could make a difference within that short time. By letting her share her worries and concerns with the students and us, we opened for the difficult questioning and critique. We had to encounter critical remarks with counterarguments. Some of the criticism was also kept unanswered. I see this incident as a clear example of how this space of uncertainty was opened and how dissensus was initiated. The ethical questioning was an inevitable part of the course. However, this questioning was also something we brought into the course deliberately. This, too, can be seen as an initiation of dissensus. I will return to this below.

To sum up this part, I find the flexible way the course was organized as a demonstration of how dissensus was informing the form. Tribbensee's somewhat loose strategies for teaching and organizing education were challenging the academic structures that were needed because this was a course offered by the university. The fusing of these artistic approaches with credits, formal entry requirements, learning outcomes and exams made interesting synergies and third spaces that I will comment on at the end of the chapter.

There were no demands for presenting a finished artwork by the end of the course. Tribbensee saw the course as a starting point. The importance of the process was stressed. In all the courses, however, the projects in progress were shared on the last night. Local people working at Metochi and other guests were invited to this. The artists then presented finished artworks or plans for upcoming projects some months after, along with a reflection note for their exam.

Moments of doubts

What I took part in and witnessed in Lesvos in 2017 made a great impact on how the course I was responsible for in 2018 and 2019 was designed and organized. In the introduction of this chapter, I mentioned the trip from the airport to Metochi and the tense atmosphere that I felt. I will here mention three incidents from my experiences from Lesvos represented by three images and reflections of these. These moments made me doubt the existence of the course. All the events touched upon the ethical dilemmas that both many of the participating

artists and I faced. The events also represent how dissensus was embodied and the way I see dissensus informed the content in the course.

Moment one

During the stay in 2017, the youngsters were taken by bus to the picturesque village of Molivos. This was part of the weekly routine for groups staying in Metochi. This was done so the visitors could see some more of what Lesvos could offer and to have some time to socialize elsewhere than within the monastery annex walls. On the way there, the bus would normally stop in Petra, which is usually a busy village with a lot of tourists on the beach, in the restaurants and in the hotels.

When we stopped in Petra this time, there was hardly anybody there. As seen in Figure 4.2 only a few people were swimming. In the picture, you also see the Greek coastguard looking

Figure 4.2: Lisbet Skregelid, Beach of Petra, 2017. © Lisbet Skregelid 2024.

for incoming refugee vessels. I can remember the hesitation when going into the sea with the knowledge of all the refugees who had lost their lives in the same sea. This made me ask myself about what we were doing there.

I felt bad and uncomfortable, even though I knew very well that the Greek locals needed us as tourists. This led to more difficult questions: Was it okay to bring the students here? Was it okay to plan to go here again with students working on site-related art projects? How can art matter here?

Lesvos is in the northeast of the Aegean Sea. Starting in the summer of 2015, a high number of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers passed through the Greek border via Turkey to eventually arrive on Lesvos. Because of an agreement between European Union and Turkey in 2016 that, in essence, opened the route to Europe from Turkey through the Greek islands, an enormous number of people travelled to Lesvos and have become stranded on the Greek islands close to Turkey, such as Lesvos. Throughout the years, there have been many reports about the disturbing situation in the old military camp and prison Moria, which was estimated to hold about three thousand people. At the most, about eighteen thousand people were reported in the camp (Bjåen 2019), which was apparently Europe's largest migrant camps. The appalling status quo for the refugees staying in the camp led to journalists referring to situation in Moria as a 'human crisis' and a 'Greek tragedy' (Bjåen 2019; Young 2019). In September 2020, in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, a fire started in the camp, leaving 13,000 refugees without shelter.

Going back to the nearly empty beach in the image from 2017, swimming in the contested Middle Sea and witnessing the ship looking for refugees made us realize that the refugee crisis that had first emerged in 2015 was still very much present. We were aware of the dilemmas emerging when suggesting the refugee situation as a point of departure for art projects, but we found it immoral to close our eyes and neglect this international tragedy; therefore, in the announcement to the course we said, 'The international refugee situation may be relevant and will be thematized.'

Moment two

The difficulties and the ethical questions raised in the evenings when discussing the art projects were brought into our planning and realizing of the site-related art course. Already in the announcement, we included some questions so that the applying artist could reflect critically about their possible participation and art projects. During the course, Tribbensee also repeated these questions:

> Would it be possible to relate artistically to the tragedies happening on the sea between Turkey and Lesvos, on the shore and around the refugee camps at all? Would it be better to stay away instead?

These questions were addressed in the kick-off, during the stay on Lesvos, and in the written papers accompanying the artworks. In that way, we deliberately infused doubt in the artists from the start.

I also asked myself the same questions in 2018, when I had just arrived on the island and was walking around the outskirts of Moria Camp, in an area called Afghan Hill, which had emerged as a camp outside the fences of the main camp (Figure 4.3). The confrontation with this humanitarian crisis was affecting me a lot. In one sense, I felt like a tourist looking for misery to confirm my ideas of what it was like to be a migrant. I felt bad about my presence and about taking pictures, something that was not allowed. Looking at the words FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT – MOVEMENT OF FREEDOM on a shed inside the fence also made me feel bad about my own freedom which allowed me to leave here whenever I wanted.

I felt the relevance of Tribbensee's question to the students and started to question my own motivation for initiating this course in this contested space. Should I have joined an

Figure 4.3: Lisbet Skregelid, *Freedom of movement – Movement of freedom*, Moria, 2018. © Lisbet Skregelid 2024.

NGO instead? What can an art project do in this situation? What can a course about site-related art contribute to?

Moment three

During the three years, some of the participating artists travelled to the so-called 'Life west graveyard' close to the picturesque Molivos. It was a place close to the sea but still a hidden space full of safety vests and boats that were abandoned after reaching the beaches of Lesvos since 2015. It was a place that I connected to both courage and fragility.

In the evening conversations with the artists at Metochi, we discussed whether it was ok to go there. Was it okay to take any of the vests back home for art material? There was a lot of disagreement on this among the artists. Some talked about the discomfort when being there and said that they felt they were stealing if they had taken anything. Others saw the life vests as possible art material that could be turned into art, thereby also doing good for the environment, given that life vests are not easily recycled. When discussing this, we referred to the artwork *#Safe Passage* (2016) by the Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who made a site-specific artwork of 14,000 lifejackets at the entrance of Konzerthaus in Berlin.

I had decided not to go to these mountains of vests. I had seen so many images and heard stories from this place. However, in 2018, three of the artists wanted to go, and I was the only one who could drive a car. The road there was very bumpy, not optimal for regular cars to drive on. Neither of us knew what to expect. On the way, we met a couple walking. I think they were German. They told us to change direction and go back. There was nothing to see there, they said. However, because we were so close, we wanted to keep on.

What we encountered was striking, and something I will never forget. The piles of orange life vests were catching our eyes immediately. As we walked closer towards the orange hills, we could see sinkable material popping out of the vests, rubber items and clothes in between. The sounds of the crows and seagulls created a frightening atmosphere, even though it was in the middle of the day and the sun was hot and shining. An excavator contributed to a sense of normality, trying to make some order in the piles of vests.

The artists went closer to the piles, and some even tried to walk on the life vest hills. It was a calm but tense atmosphere. I felt ambivalent about being there. Suddenly, I heard a voice saying. 'Go home! This is not England. This is Greece!' I looked for where the voice came from and saw a man coming from the graver towards our car. He was carrying a long, shining tool in his hand. It looked like a knife. I looked for the three girls, and they were all coming towards the car as well. With very quick footsteps, they left the piles of life vests and went into the car. When all of us were inside, I locked all four doors. I pressed the accelerator, and as quickly as I could, I drove onto the bumpy road. The very clear message made us realize that we were not welcome here. This was not a place where we were wanted.

Figure 4.4: Lisbet Skregelid, Molivos view, 2018. © Lisbet Skregelid 2024.

Almost instantly, I headed towards the nearby village Molivos and took the girls to the castle on top of the village. There, I told them to take some images. I said, 'I think this is what they want us to post on social media' and took some images myself, too, like the one in Figure 4.4 on the next page.

Ethical questioning and arrivals of the I

I have now described three incidents from the course that provide insights into how dissensus was informing the content of the course, the idea of having the refugee situation as a possible departure for the course itself and the art projects by the participating artists. This affected me so much that I started doubting the existence of the course. It also initiated difficult questioning about art making and about art education.

In all the courses from 2017 to 2019, we were constantly reflecting about the *ethical* concerns regarding our use of the refugee crisis as a point of departure for artmaking. We were asking ourselves the following:

> Is all right to push ethical boundaries for the sake of a good artwork? If not, how to avoid mis representation or even exploitation? If you include people in your art, how do you bring them to trust you? What is the responsibility for the people you involve in your art projects? Who is your artwork for? For yourself? For the people you involve? For a bigger cause?

The question about who the work is for is raised by the artist Blackmore in her article '(Mis) Representing others: Ethical dilemmas of socially engaged art practice' (2017). We found her text interesting for the course but also troublesome and challenging because of the difficulties her questioning is causing. For example, she questions artists involving people in their artmaking or artworks without any concern about or credits to the people involved. She refers to a remark by one of the participants in one of her own art projects who was talking about former experiences on involvement: 'People come here, take our stories and show them in the West' (Blackmore 2017: 352).

In our evening sessions, we discussed how ethical concerns entered the different projects. Many shared their feeling of being in the wrong place. They questioned their presence and elaborated repeatedly on Blackmore's questions: Who is my artwork for?

When doing a workshop for minors in Moria, is it to provide for some positive experiences in a rather depressing everyday life in the camp? Or will it just become a short reminder of what the refugees are lacking? Is it to ease our own bad consciousness that we do it? Is it to feel that we have helped a little? Is getting access to Moria and to realize a workshop inside the camp through an NGO a sign of accepting the existence of this place? Would it be better to do a project outside the camp? Would it be better to do a project that engaged with the more overall political structures?

In these discussions, we brought in artworks by other artists as examples. Weiwei made a very much debated artwork in 2016, where he placed himself on the beach of Lesvos in the same pose as the image by the little boy Alan Kurdi, the image that became a symbol of the refugee crisis worldwide. Weiwei is accused of being ego centric (Teeman 2017) and to be more concerned about his own status as an artist rather than that of the refugees, so his self-portrait was a relevant example to discuss in this context.

Hanne Kolsnes was one of the young artists who took part in the summer course in 2017. A sore throat prevented her from doing what she had planned. In an art journal including art projects from Lesvos during the years 2017–19, she cited from her own notebook:

> I could have collected a lot more plants, but the truth is that I have seriously begun to doubt the project […] I had no ambitions to contribute to anything with my presence,

> but I at least wanted to feel that my understanding was expanded. I do not know what to do the rest of the week.
>
> (Kolsnes 2019: 32, translation added)

Similar doubts were put forward by many of the artists. They said they were unsure whether they have had any impact on the situation on Lesvos. However, many of them mentioned the existential impact the course had on themselves as human beings.

It is interesting to see how the questioning to one's own practice led to transformations in the artistic expression by the individual artists. One of the artists that took part in the course in 2018, is the photographer Hilde Honerud. Her images from her time in the course depict the refugee camp in Moria in a very abstract manner. In her later works, the distance and absence of people in these images are replaced by a very much physical presence of the refugees. In 2019, Honerud returned to Lesvos on several occasions to engage with a local NGO called Yoga and Sports with Refugees. This has led to part two of the project 'It is a light which objectifies everything and confirms nothing.' Honerud has also done fund raising for the NGO. In this way, her art practice has led to the formation of a potential new practice that includes a social concern with artistic output.

Linn Camilla Tofteland is an artist who took part in a course in 2019. Her project was initiated by her own fascination for water and diving. Before going to Lesvos, she had contacted a diving company in Petra and booked a week of diving in advance. She suspected some traces from the refugee crisis could be seen under the water; however, the sea was beginning to heal, and there were not many traces left. She took some fascinating photos underwater and says that her project is beyond the materiality of the images and a lot more about the relations in between her and other divers and instructors (Figure 4.5). She talked about the community that she got to be part of, how she was touched by their stories and about how much she respected the work of the divers.

Even though she contributed with about 1000 pounds to the local diving company during the week, she still questions her presence and her project, maybe resulting in an existential transformation in her more than anything else.

My experiences from Lesvos make me claim that such questioning and doubting and the use of educational approaches inspired by art and art practice, what I call the pedagogy of dissensus, makes it possible for subjects to emerge, for the arrivals of 'I' to happen and for people to open to the world. The arrival of the 'I' is not about who one is, it is not about your competencies, but it is about who one is trying to be, how one is. It is about your actions and how others respond to one's actions. As Biesta would say, it is about being in dialogue with the world (Biesta 2017).

One of our motivations for going to Lesvos and for arranging the course was to pull artists out of their studios and make them relate to the world around them, to encourage them to respond to the urgencies taking place in the world, to get them to be concerned and occupied with those urgencies as opposed to focusing merely on their own artistic agendas.

Figure 4.5: Linn Camilla Tofteland, *Ascension*, 2019. © Linn Camilla Tofteland 2024.

In the previous chapter, I have been discussing world centredness in relation to teacher students working with tape installations. Talking about word-centred education might seem more relevant in this context because the artists were literally faced with the urgencies of the world when participating in this course. However, I think that both making tape installations in a seminar room in a university in Norway and doing socially engaged art practice in a contested space like Lesvos make students and artists encounter the world. In both workshops, disturbances and interruptions have occurred in different ways.

In his latest book, Biesta states that 'the existential work of education is first and foremost interruptive. It interrupts the being-with-oneself, it interrupts identity, it interrupts flourishing, it interrupts growth, it even interrupts learning' (2021: 36). In Lesvos, the students encountered a lot of questioning. Even though we initiated a lot of discussions about ethics, there were no set of guidelines that could help the artist navigate in this landscape to know what was right and wrong. They were responsible for their actions. Biesta (2021) touches upon how

world-centred education differs from moral education when discussing the Parks–Eichmann paradox: 'Existential education is therefore not a form of moral education and definitely not a form of moralising education, but education that seeks to bring the "I" of the student into play' (38). Here, he acknowledges Rancière's (2010) way of seeing the teacher as one who forbids the student the satisfaction of being an object rather than a subject.

Because this was a course arranged by the university, the university was responsible for the art projects that were carried out in Lesvos. This means that the students were not alone with their responsibility. Still, we could not guarantee 'wrong' decisions being made. Both the participating artists and us responsible for the course were taking risks. One could ask whether this risk increases when doing socially engaged art simply because a major part of the materiality of the artwork is the engagement the artist has with people. Blackmore elaborates on how risk taking must be balanced with the responsibility for the people involved in socially engaged art: 'Artists have a social mandate to take risks. Yet unequal power makes unequal risks, and aesthetic daring must be balanced with the responsibility to the communities with whom the creators are creating' (Lippard cited in Blackmore 2017: 353). In contrast to research, in art, there is no code of ethics regarding how to attend the involved people (Blackmore 2017). Hence, one is left with the judgements one makes, thus also running the risk of being judged by others.

The middle ground as third space

In this chapter, I have made accounts for how the pedagogy of dissensus has infused both the form and content in the course site-related art. I have mentioned the relations to the workshop Teiporama described in the previous chapter. In both places, the students and artists encountered resistance. When discussing Teiporama, I referred to what Biesta calls 'the middle ground' (2017: 65), like what Haraway calls 'staying with the trouble', in the book with this title (2016). This is a place where the 'I' of the student is brought into play. I would also say that the middle ground is a place where the teacher is encountering resistance, where the 'I' of the teacher is brought into play and where the 'I' is in this constant battle somewhere in between resigning or accepting.

I have here written about three events that have made a particular impact on me. These moments have put *me* into the middle ground. They have brought my own 'I' into play. The ethical questioning promoted a doubt that continued to haunt me throughout the course and now in the aftermath. Will I realize this course again?

The constant doubt, the place where both the 'I' and the artists encounter resistance form this vital third space that I think should be present in all teaching. As I have demonstrated in this chapter, resistance is something that can be initiated. Sometimes, disruptions only happen; they push us out of the normal order. It is not necessarily a comfortable place to be in this middle space.

In this chapter, I have written about the making of a course focused on site-related art as a contest between artistic principles and academic demands. Tribbensee's suggestions for a very open schedule for the course challenged my own quest for structure and predictability. His scepticism to learning objectives and exam papers was in opposition to the academic requirements. This scepticism towards institutions is often portrayed in artworks associated with the educational turn, a term used to describe art practices that go beyond the focus on aesthetic specificities and visual appearance, instead offering platforms for interdisciplinary dialogues (Wilson and O'Neill 2010). The educational turn is often related to the endeavours of institutional critique, for example, criticism of the regulation, appropriation and commodification of knowledge-based production. The educational turn is also associated to biennales and art spaces that resembles schools and universities.

Tribbensee himself has been very much inspired by the German artist Joseph Beuys, who, in 1973, established the organization Free International University in his studio in Dusseldorf, there creating a lot of artworks, now often mentioned when the educational turn is thematized. Despite, the somehow heated discussions between two worlds encountering each other, I found the compromises that were made from both sides productive. I think the site-related course realized third spaces in many ways; a space for dissensus, doubt and disruption and arrivals of the 'I' and new space made possible by the encounters between art and education.

In this and in the previous chapters, I write about how the pedagogy of dissensus and characteristics of art inform my teaching and how this may contribute to subjectification and educational spaces. In the next chapter, I show how the pedagogy of dissensus is embodied in my own project, where I unite art, education and research, creating an educational space where my own ideas and claims are put to the test.

Chapter 5

Dissensus in Arts-Based Research Practice

> *For Rancière aesthetics concerns what it means to experience the world not what it means to experience art.*
>
> (Atkinson 2013: 10)

In the other chapters, I have written about the research I have done in the museum, in the classroom and in the education of artists, along with how dissensus has come into play and has informed the teaching in such contexts. Here, I draw attention to how dissensus has also become relevant to relate to my daily life and lived practice in creating new pathways for pedagogy of dissensus and for my research.

In this chapter, I describe how the situation caused by COVID-19 has been a major interruption and has contributed to discussing – even questioning – dissensus and subjectification in a much more personal way than I have done in previous research. The chapter has my own arts-based educational research project as the point of departure, one centred around my ongoing artwork *My Stunning Stream: Made with a Little Mischief* (2020–).

Since the first lockdown, I have been running two to three times a week, stopping about halfway, and from the same spot, filming the sea view. Despite the speed of running, this project has made me slow down and pay attention to my senses and how I have been affected by the running itself, the ongoing situation, nature and the disruptions I encounter on my route. In the chapter, I argue for my praxis as a contribution to creating ecological awareness (Morton 2018) and the relevance of the notion of affect (Massumi 2015) for the pedagogy of dissensus. This chapter also discusses the relevance of a/r/tography as a practice-based methodological approach (Irwin 2012, 2013), an approach that unites art, education and research, embracing the arts and education as forms of performative, explorative and lived inquiry. I introduce the chapter with what initiated the project, what the project is and how it relates to dissensus.

Lockdown

On 12 March 2020, I was hit hard by the breaking news about the lockdown and closed borders because of the COVID-19 pandemic. My immediate response was to cycle to the local beach, Bertes in Kristiansand, Norway, and look at the sea view. The image on the next page (Figure 5.1) shows a sunny, crisp day. The sea and shapes of the waves reveal a breeze

Figure 5.1: Lisbet Skregelid, 12 March 2020. © Lisbet Skregelid 2024.

in the air. Everything seems normal. Still, the darker clouds by the horizon may indicate that something is not as it should be. Inside me, everything was chaotic. I had just witnessed our current Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg talking about the very serious and difficult time we suddenly were in. Solberg had been talking about the dramatic lockdown, the limitations and lack of social interaction that was ahead of us, including the closure of schools, universities and borders. No visitors and no contacts outside of our immediate circle were allowed.

When I arrived back home that afternoon, the recent news restricted my movements further. As I had just arrived from a work-related trip to the United Kingdom, I was put in quarantine for ten days. I could not see others than my close family. I could not even see

my mother, who has the same street address as I. Like for all others, these severe limitations were surreal.

By 19 March, I was officially out of quarantine. At last, I could go outdoors again, keeping distance from all the people I met on my way. I felt an urge to see the sea again, so I brought my daughter, Sara, with me to Bertes.

Very soon, I spotted the text *ALT BLIR BRA* ('EVERYTHING WILL BE ALL RIGHT') made up of stones and framed with dried seaweed. My immediate response was to grab a stick and write the same text in the sand. I saw that Sara also took a stick and did the same, but she wrote *JORDA BLIR BRA* ('THE EARTH WILL BE ALL RIGHT'). Before we left the beach, I filmed the sea hitting the beach and this writing of Sara's (Figure 5.2).

This was the beginning of what was to be my way of creating a rhythm, a repetition, a discipline in an otherwise loose everyday life. I repeated the trips to Bertes, preferably early in the morning, but I started *running* to get to the sea.

Since March 2020, I have been running the same route from my home past a local beach and back home again, a journey of almost thirty minutes, about two to three times per week. Midway, I stop by the beach and make a short 30-second video on my mobile phone. I make sure that I stand in the same spot each time. The films are then uploaded on Padlet, a digital platform for creating projects that can be stored and shared with the public.

Figure 5.2: Lisbet Skregelid, *JORDA BLIR BRA* ('THE EARTH WILL BE ALL RIGHT'). Film still from 19 March 2020. © Lisbet Skregelid 2024.

The uploading on Padlet was initially a side project to another ongoing project at the time (Illeris et al. 2022). I also had to practise using this platform because my students were expected to use this for their different projects during lockdown. When uploading the first film from my trip to the beach with my daughter, Padlet suggested the title. It said *My Stunning Stream: Made with a Little Mischief.* I was surprised about how suitable it was to how I felt. It also seemed to connect to the ambiguity of the term dissensus that I was so occupied with and with the ambivalence in this project.

The running and the filming

I ran from my home towards the sea. I love the forest, too, but my heart belongs to the salty water and never-ending horizon. To get there, I need to run from my neighbourhood through an urban area. I pass different kinds of homes and buildings on my way. Townhouses, apartments, a kindergarten, a petrol station and the old football stadium. Before reaching Bertes, which is a wonderful recreation area with sandy beaches that are flanked by rocks, I run through a harbour with different boats, like day cruisers and sailing boats. Sometimes, I meet a lot of people by the beach. Most often I hardly meet any.

When getting closer to my spot, I slow down. I take out my mobile phone from the small bag I carry around my waist, direct it at the horizon and press the video button. I try to hold my phone as still as I can for 30 seconds.

What is seen on the screen of my phone and in the films that are stored on Padlet has, for most of my period of filming, been very much the same. Up until mid-December 2021 (I will return to what changed then), the sea is covering about half of the image, and the sky is covering the next half. In the text 'The art of running and being (or just running and being?)' (Skregelid 2024b), I make this description of the view:

> There are some rocks on both sides. On the left, you see a diving board and parts of a slide. In the horizon, you see some lights in the water. The blinking green and red lights are more visible in the dark, and when jet black, those are the only things to be seen in the view. On the left side, on the horizon, you see some buildings. On the right side, there are trees and vegetation. During the summer, there is a bathing raft floating in the water. Now and then, there is a boat, a plane or somebody swimming in the sea that can be seen or heard. More often, there are birds in the sky. What also changes, of course, are the colours. Similar to the impressionistic paintings of a number of haystacks, the Rouen Cathedral and the Houses of Parliament by the French painter Claude Monet (1840–1926), the films show the same view in different colours brought about by the changing light and seasonal transformations of nature. Therefore, the films, like the paintings, are accentuating the effects of the passage of time. You see the water covered with ice during winter, and at other times, it is very calm and tranquil. Sometimes, the sea is immensely rough because of heavy wind.

> The colours of the different elements within the frame affect other elements. If the sky is orange, the sea becomes orange, too, but not if its windy. The wind prevents reflection and turns the sea and sky to conflicting and contrasting elements. The lighter the breeze is, the more the sky and sea merge and become one.
>
> (Skregelid 2024b: 40)

Different from the artworks by Claude Monet and the other impressionist painters, the *sound* is important in my project and in the films from the beach. Unlike many runners, I do not use headphones and listen to music while I run. I try to be aware of the sounds I am surrounded by and the ones I make myself. This is especially notable in the films. I try to stand as steady and quiet as I can, but often, the soundtrack of my breathing is very noticeable. The breathing also affects my body and hands. I am trying to keep my mobile phone still, but all the films reveal slight movements.

The films are visual fragments from the running, small parts of the project, because they only reveal one place I pass on my route. Still, they stand out as strong evidence and context for my running.

On the way back, I must pass the beach area, which is also a campsite. During the summer, there are lots of caravans and tents. They have also some kind of igloo- and cone-shaped semipermanent cottages for rent. There is only one part of the route where I must stop running and walk instead. I hardly ever push this. I know that, if I run uphill, I will be exhausted and struggle with my breathing. On the way home, I also pass a school and an area that has been transforming from industry to expensive apartment buildings. The last distance on my route is the racetrack at the nearby secondary school where I was a pupil myself. I always run the fastest I can here.

When all the restrictions were removed in September 2021 and things were more back to normal, I wondered if I should stop filming at the beach. I knew I could not stop running because that was something I needed. Making the films were motivating me to run, so I continued to do that as well. I felt committed to continue my own project.

The news about the Omicron virus emerging around the end of November 2021, also in Norway, caused a lot of worrying. On 7 December, the new Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre launched restrictions about how many people could be gathered and recommendations about wearing masks in public spaces. Then, just after one week, on 13 December, he announced a new press conference and even stricter limitations were introduced, for example, not allowing any serving of alcohol in pubs or restaurants for four weeks. At that time, the number of Omicron infections was rising at a terrible speed, especially from the beginning of January 2022.

The film from the same day as the message about the new restrictions shows a big change. A boat and graver are covering all the horizon. The long-planned replacement of the former diving board with a 10-m-tall diving platform had started. (The diving platform was finished in June 2022.) What is not seen are the metal fences surrounding a large area

Figure 5.3: Lisbet Skregelid, *My Stunning Stream: Made with a Little Mischief*, 2020–ongoing. Film still from 16 December 2021. © Lisbet Skregelid 2024.

not far from my spot. In addition to the boat and graver, the sound of the replacement work is dominating the film from three days after (see Figure 5.3). Most of all the changes in my view caused severe responses within me. In the following. I relate my running and filming to dissensus, discussing the relevance of doing so.

Dissensus and running as an educational space

From the start of the pandemic, I thought about the COVID-19 virus as a major disruption and found Rancière's concept of dissensus as very relevant in that sense. This virus made a division of the sensible. It reshaped human existence, but also, it sketched a new topography of the possible in the way we had to relate to ourselves, each other and our surroundings. For me, the disturbance caused by COVID-19 started my running and led to the continuous filming. It also led to proposals for art exhibitions, academic papers and several texts, including this chapter in the book now being read.

Most importantly – and quite paradoxically – my calls for dissensus and my own arguing for pedagogy of dissensus were disturbed. In this context, I felt a need for the opposite. I wanted calmness, continuity and routine, and the running seemed to provide this. In this sense, the situation caused by the virus disturbed my own beliefs and theoretical claims.

The running and sea view, either stormy or still, provided a needed balance, but at the same time, it caused a disruption. The project has made me doubt my own calls for pedagogy of dissensus; thus, it is very much affecting me as an educator. Dissensus takes place in the running itself because it is both pleasant and painful, but most of all, the repetitive action is doing me well, I think. I realize the importance of acknowledging this not only in a cognitive way. The *embodied* realization of balance and dissensus has made me aware of my own site for education. The running has become my educational place, where I encounter resistance, where I am put in the middle ground.

In the text 'Dissensuality and affect in education', I write about my running as an educational space for me: 'The habit of running and capturing glimpses of what I see and experience while running, has turned out to be my own space for being educated' (Skregelid 2021: 694). I now see this space as a *contested* educational space. In this book so far, I have written about dissensus and encountering resistance as a premise for subjectification. This claim is made from studies ranging from secondary schoolchildren talking about seeing art that is challenging, teacher students who find the art practice of using tape to be out of their comfort zone and art students who work with issues causing ethical concerns. In the previous chapter, I have also discussed how my role as an educator has been disturbed, thus making me reconsider my teaching. In *My Stunning Stream*, I encounter this continuing doubting in my own living practice and arts-based research project.

Throughout this book, I have referred to Biesta's *World-Centred Education* (2021). In it, he has a section called 'Anamorphosis: Finding the Place Where One Can Be Found' (96), in which he creates the difference between a place where one is *in centre* of world and a place where one is *exposed to* the world, without controlling it. When running, my body is vulnerable regarding what it encounters. My own staging two to three times a week of a place where I can 'be found' makes me aware of my responsibility for providing spaces like this for my own students. Running has made me think about my teaching differently. Repetition and rhythm are needed to balance dissensus. I think this demonstrates the relevance of having your own educational ideas being put to test and being disturbed. This project has made me realize this. The project also demonstrates that the calmness that I am seeking in the running and sea view is disrupted in ways that I could not have expected when I started the project. The building of the new diving platform, for example, has affected my own relation to nature, in particular. In the following, I argue for the relevance of relating this project to sustainability issues as my own ecological awareness has been awoken through my running project.

My Stunning Stream and ecological awareness

In the Norwegian curriculum, three interdisciplinary themes were newly introduced in primary and secondary education (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2019a). Sustainable development and two other themes run across all the subjects in school. Sustainability issues related

to education in general are very much dominated by how to improve our actions to live sustainable lives by recycling and practising climate-friendly behaviours (Illeris 2020; Illeris et al. 2022). In arts and crafts, there is a lot of focus on using sustainable materials or thematizing sustainability in artistic processes and how the arts can technically contribute to solving the societal challenges we face in relation to the climate crisis and the loss of biodiversity. However, there is a lack of suggestions for how sustainability can be related to the open and sensory forms of knowledge and learning that are otherwise considered central in art education (Näumann et al. 2020; Østern and Knudsen 2019).

Running outdoors is an everyday habit and routine that a lot of people can relate to. It is no doubt good for one's well-being and people's health. However, how can running in general and the project *My Stunning Stream: Made with a Little Mischief* be representative of sensory-oriented ecological awareness?

According to the British literary theorist Timothy Morton (2018), ecological awareness is not just about connecting to something bigger. On the contrary, he believes that it is more a matter of connecting closely to, for example, the objects that surround us and the materials we are in touch with. There are things we are constantly in close contact with but that we forget to sense.

Helene Illeris makes us of Morton's definition of ecological awareness as 'acknowledging in a deep way the existence of beings that aren't you with whom you coexist' (Morton 2018: 128) to challenge what she finds to be a more neo-liberal and anthropocentric approach to sustainability. She promotes intimacy, solidarity, fragility in arts and crafts education to contribute to ecological awareness and to 'teaching us different ways of relating to nonhuman forms of being, and through that to different ways of relation to ourselves' (Illeris 2020: 166). She refers to responses we made to the proposals to the current curriculum *Læreplanverket for Kunnskapsløftet 2020* as follows:

> In our view, arts and craft education can be used to explore forms of life and processes of becoming that are more insecure and fragile than we have been used to. By enacting aesthetic, sensuous relationships with nonhumans we can connect to our surroundings in new ways and start to perceive the world differently.
>
> (Illeris 2020: 154–55)

In the article 'A/r/tografi som tilgang til udvikling af en sanselig bæredygtighedsdidaktik i kunstfagene' ('A/r/tography as an approach to sensory sustainability education within arts education') (Illeris et al. 2022), Helene Illeris, Kristian Nødtvedt Knudsen and I make use of Morton's understanding of ecological awareness and propose 'intimacy' as a central dimension in what we call a sensuous approach to sustainability.

At the beginning of this chapter, I wrote about the first day I was out of quarantine and when I took my daughter, Sara, to the beach. As soon as we arrived, Sara said, 'The sand is soft. I want to take off my shoes.' She took her shoes off and was playing in the sand barefoot,

even though it was only 19 March. The intuitive response to the touching of the sand and the very physical presence allowed what I think Morton talks about and we have picked up on regarding touching and being close as a way of being aware of nature. I believe kids are aware of our surroundings, maybe a lot more than grown-ups. Still, I think *My Stunning Stream* has promoted this awareness also for me.

When running, I immerse myself in the landscape I am running in. I sense my body encountering different weather and temperatures. I see and feel how the seasons are affecting the surroundings and myself.

I do not think Biesta was thinking about sustainability when referring to how American philosopher Alfonso Lingis tries to answer the question 'How do *I* come to be here?' (Lingis 2007: 7, original emphasis). Biesta includes two long paragraphs from the text 'The First Person Singular' by Lingis. I include extracts from the same paragraphs here:

> We awaken and, finding ourselves supported, stir and move, our movements assured of the continuing support of the ground. We find ourselves immersed in light and darkness; air; warmth and cold; and in the density of colours, tones and textures. Awakened sensibility maintains contact with this boundless reality […] I am where my bodily and affective forces are integrated, manipulate things, and confront obstacles. The sense of oneself that arises in a body in action is an *I can*.
>
> (7–8, original emphasis)

Biesta (2022) comments on these quotes that being a self in this sense is about establishing a relationship with oneself. I find these paragraphs by Lingis very relevant contributions for understanding ecological awareness. I think this project demonstrates that sustainability is also a sensory form of connectedness as the body's affective and sensory dimensions are included.

In the following, I elaborate a little on affect as a central concept in this project by also including dissensuality as a related concept.

Affect and dissensuality

In Chapter 2, I have briefly described affect with the help of Massumi (2015) as a form of relationship in which two parties (this might be people or places, human and nonhuman, art and nature) mutually influence each other without this influence taking place intentionally. Affect is about embodied experience and how the body responds to someone or something that cannot be controlled. Affects are intensities that might disturb and move one so much that the individual start seeing things differently, including themself.

The concept of 'dissensuality' is related to Rancière's dissensus, the rupture art can be and cause and the possible disagreement encountering art can lead to. In my work, I argue for

dissensuality to be important for art education because it unites the sensory, the resistance, the disagreement and the passion (Skregelid 2016, 2021c). For me, dissensuality involves the body and stimulation of the senses. This has become of particular importance in this project.

I find both dissensuality and affect to be relevant terms to shed light on *My Stunning Stream: Made with a Little Mischief*. When I run, when I bring my body into action, I encounter a lot on my way that affects me. I also become very aware of my responses to the movements and encounters I provide and are affected by. I also like to believe that me running, and my project are affecting things and beings. Visible traces of me can, for example, be found in my footprints in the snow. My breath encountering the air is also sometimes visible. Audible traces of my encounter with the matter around me are my feet touching the ground or the sound of my clothes moving while running. I have reflected about the builder's feeling uncomfortable with my filming. Their gazes have affected me. The questions of ethics have also come up. Can I continue the filming while they are working? Do I need to find other times to run? Am I becoming too concerned? Does my research position disturb the artistic project?

Research? Art? Activism? Or only running?

I find it a bit hard to classify the project I am describing here. The COVID-19 situation initiated the project in the form we see it now. I run, I film, I upload and I write. At some point, I wanted to share the project with others. The point with Padlet, the platform I am using, is sharing, in addition to storing.

In spring 2021, I sent an abstract thematizing the project to the *International Journal of Art and Design Education* (*iJADE*) conference *Hybrid Spaces* that was to be held online in March 2021. This was the first time I approached an art educational conference with material this personal, and the first time I called it arts-based research. I got good responses, and that encouraged me both to continue running and to write. Soon after, I was contacted by the editor of the publication iJADE, who asked if I wanted to contribute to the Special Issue (Skregelid 2021).

The project is the first research project where I make use of arts-based methodologies, or at least where I make these methods more explicit in my writing. I have so far framed it within a/r/tography, the arts-based, practice-based research methodology, here as characterized by bodily, sensory, relational and exploratory approaches to research described in chapter two (Irwin 2012; Leblanc and Irwin 2019). Lived inquiry is a frequently used approach in a/r/tography (Springgay et al. 2005). Living inquiry presupposes that researchers put themselves *into* the situation rather than placing themselves *outside* of it. It also requires a sharpened focus on affective and intimate bodily moods.

All what is here said about living inquiry as an embodied encounter seems so relevant for both my project and for what is written about ecological awareness above by Morton.

This resonates with what I said earlier about my everyday practice as an educational site. My running has also become an educational site about sustainability in the sense that I have a deeper and more intense understanding and respect for nature and my place in this universe. I am completely subjected to the changes, not in control. To connect closely to my surroundings, I have had to be aware of the affects and responses. So, while running, I paradoxically slow down to make a space for that to happen.

In the two previous chapters, I have referred to Biesta's notions of world-centred education and how he understands this as existential. He says that this existential education 'is first and foremost interruptive' (Biesta 2021: 36). It interrupts 'being-with oneself' (36). Springgay et al. also talk about being connected to the world when stressing the bodily relation in a/r/tography: 'A / r / tography as such is a methodology of embodiment, never isolated in its activity but always engaged with the world' (2005: 899).

The relationship in question here is a relation between me, my body, my senses, and the environment I encounter while running in the role of an artist, researcher and teacher. What occurs when running and filming is not intentional, and yet, I have made a rigorous frame for the nonintentional to happen. The route is planned. I am running about every second day. I stopped by the same spot. I film the same view. The duration of the film is the same. In this way, a strict routine and rhythm is established and is framing the project. Despite all this, the affect the running and filming has on me is not controllable. I am open for disruptions, whether I like them or not.

Some might claim that turning my everyday practice into research is not very academic. I have been discussing whether I should just run and leave all the fuss about the research behind in the chapter 'The art of running and being (or just running and being?)' (Skregelid 2024b) in the book *Being Human Today: Art, Education, and Mental Health in Conversation* (Biesta et al. 2024). I still ride all the horses, so to speak. The project is now accepted in academic contexts. In addition to presenting and publishing it in art educational contexts, I have also presented it in general educational conferences. *My Stunning Stream: Made with a Little Mischief* was, for example, the point of departure for my keynote at the international *Relate North Symposium* in Umeå in Sweden November 2023.

So, what about the art field? I have approached art exhibitions with some parts of the project. To the annual autumn exhibition, Høstutstillingen 2021 in Norway, I submitted one film, made from all the films I had until them. This resulted in a film lasting for nearly an hour. It was meant to be viewed on a big screen on one of the walls in the gallery space. In the text that followed my proposal for this exhibition, I also added the QR code to my Padlet. My idea was that this could be put on the wall and could also be accessible online. In my proposal to the regional exhibition, *Sørlandsutstillingen*, I did not send the films in another format. I chose to send the QR code only followed by an artist statement. I wanted the QR code to be exhibited in a small-scale format that could easily be placed in the exhibition. As soon as one puts the phone over the code, my Padlet appears, and from then on, this can be shared with others, and the audience can also bring it with them home and share with

Figure 5.4: Lisbet Skregelid, *My Stunning Stream: Made with a Little Mischief*, 2020–ongoing, Sørlandsutstillingen, 2022. Arendal. © Lisbet Skregelid 2024.

others who are not within the gallery space. Both proposals were turned down. My repeated proposals for the autumn exhibition and regional exhibition in 2022 and in 2023 were also turned down. As an activist response, I have put up my QR code in both exhibitions I have not been accepted in the two past years (Figure 5.4). I have also put stickers of the QR code outside, for example at the beach I am running to, and which is very much the heart of the project, thus making it accessible outside the art institution. In November 2022, my project was part of a one-night-only underground local art exhibition *Grønn Kunst* ('Green Art') in my hometown Kristiansand. This was organized by the art collective JAM consisting of the artists Pelle Brage and Julia Bruun with collaborators. In 2023, *My Stunning Stream: Made with a Little Mischief* was accepted to be part of the *International Juried Digital Art Exhibition* of the InSEA World Congress Fault Lines 2023. I have just been sent a certificate that proves this. My plan is nevertheless to continue the project, continue to run, at least until it is accepted to be exhibited within a *physical* art gallery on a national level.

I am continuously writing articles and now also this book, where I argue for pedagogy of dissensus. *My Stunning Stream* project has put my thesis to the test. Still, I claim that this troublesome recognition demonstrates the relevance of pedagogy of dissensus in the way it confronts *me*. I find the project to demonstrate how this pedagogy might lead to resistance and changes in perceptions and attitudes and changes and transformations in the subject. In this case, that would be myself.

Coming towards the end of this book, in the last chapter, I draw attention to how I believe my ideas about dissensus as a productive concept and a pedagogy that is informed by the dissensual characteristics of art correspond with the over one-hundred-year-old ideas by the Norwegian art educator Helga Eng.

Chapter 6

A Call for Dissensus in Education

> *Art must be the overall principle for education [...]. In that way, general upbringing can be conceived as teaching and educational work can be transformed to art […] It is not just about making or performing art, it is not just about art subjects in which the elements of artistic technique are taught; but all education must be immersed by art.*
>
> (Eng 1918: 151, translation added)

I have translated the introductory paragraph from one of my favourite quotes in the book *Kunstpædagogik: Nutidspædagogik* ('Art education: Contemporary education') from 1918 (ongoing I'll just use the main title *Kunstpædagogik*). In the book Eng asks several questions related to why art matters in school and society. In addition to arguing for art as an overarching principle, she promotes art education and education that is informed by art, rather than education based on skills and limited notions of knowledge. This may seem both utopian and, at the same time, miles away from the prevailing educational political regime, which focuses on competence goals and measurable outcomes (Slagstad 2018) and that, for a long time, has not prioritized aesthetic subjects, nor the aesthetic dimension in general, as I have mentioned in the introduction of this book.

In this chapter, I sum up the theoretical foundation that is expanding throughout this book by taking a closer look at some of the over one-hundred-year-old radical, but still rather ignored, educational ideas presented in Eng's book. I discuss how these may be relevant for a contemporary educational context and discussions about why art is needed in education and in society in general. In the book, Eng provides insights into the debates and disagreements that took place within the international art educational field at the beginning of the last century. Her arguing for art as an overall principle in school cultivates my claim for pedagogy of dissensus and the use of the dissensual characteristics of art to inform teaching and see education as a place for artistic and explorative practice.

These Norwegian perspectives on the importance of art in education from past to present will hopefully inspire the international educational field in the future and also how we can bring art into the lives of people outside the formal educational contexts.

Helga Eng

Eng (1875–1966) was the first woman ever in Norway to receive a Ph.D. within the field of psychology. She was also the third woman to have a doctoral degree in Norway. Eng is

most known for her long-term studies of children's drawings, a work that was based on investigations of the drawings of her own niece, Margrethe, from the age of 10 months until 24 years old (Eng 1923, 1944). The book *Kunstpædagogik* has a different focus and is a comprehensive account, analysis and critique of art education and the art educational movement around the turn of the twentieth century. The Norwegian and Nordic conditions are especially given attention in the book. Here, Eng writes about what she thinks an emphasis on art and artistic practice can offer the dominant school practice. She is concerned about taking the children seriously and believes that sensory approaches to education, emotions and imagination should characterize their everyday school life. Furthermore, she is of the opinion that teaching must reflect the present and life itself. She wants schools to focus on knowledge needed *here and now*, not so much in the future.

Eng uses large parts of the book to refer to others' thoughts on art and education. The heading of the first chapter can be translated to 'The origins of art education in the past and in a contemporary life: Schiller's "Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung"' (Eng 2018: 5, translation added). The heading refers to the central work *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* by Schiller from 1795. The first sentence indicates the focus in the book: 'The idea of an education through art for art and thereby for life can only start from an aesthetic worldview' (Schiller [1795] 1991: 5). Eng refers to Schiller's concern about how aesthetic education – and how an aesthetic revolution – could help to connect emotions and reason, the unconscious and conscious because man instinctively seeks harmony in this field of tension. Eng also writes about the British art critic and artist John Ruskin's all-encompassing concept of art and his thoughts on how *kunstopdragelse* ('art education') should be given priority over *kundskapsopdragelse* ('education of knowledge') (1918: 17).

These and other ideas about how aesthetics and art should be the focal point for people's lives in general and in school in particular contribute to Eng's view of artistic education as an interdisciplinary endeavour. In her book, she gives an extensive account for how art is integrated in all subjects in school. For example, she says that physical education is of high artistic importance. When teaching science, she calls for an artistic gaze on nature. Eng believes there is a need for a radical transformation of all teaching methods, all the way from kindergarten to university. She thinks that the aesthetic subjects and all other subjects must be seen in relation to each other. Like Schiller and Ruskin, she is concerned with placing an aesthetic approach to life and education through art at the centre – also in school.

In the quote 'Art should not be a subject in school, but a principle' (1918: 151, translation added), Eng rephrases H. Wolgast's statement from a teacher's seminar in the German city Chemnitz. From the same seminar, she quotes a proclamation by E. Weber, who thought that all teaching should have an 'artistic touch' (1918: 152, translation added). A consequence of a view of art as a principle was that the teacher and student should be regarded as artists and that every lecture should be considered a work of art: 'Thus, education is perceived as art' (152, translation added). Eng believes that every lecture should represent the teacher's

artistic being, which she refers to as a '*didaktisk kunstform*' (153) (which might be translated to 'an educational art form'). The teaching material must be alive in the spirit of the teacher, she says. In this way, teaching can 'ignite life in students' minds' (153, translation added). Consistent with an understanding of education and teaching as art, Eng (1918) argues for teaching that is not entirely obvious and understandable but is 'obscured and mysterious as life itself' (1918: 154, translation added). She also talks about education as giving aesthetic form to a material that contributes to 'resistance' (155).

In her book, Eng draws attention to the importance of the teacher's role, sensory life, emotions and imagination, what we, with the help of O'Sullivan (2001) and Massumi (2015), can describe as affect, which I have written about in Chapters 1 and 5. Eng also emphasizes the importance of offering resistance in teaching and that the aesthetic should infiltrate our approach to the world in general and the way we teach. Education that provides resistance is central to how Biesta describes 'world-centred education' (2021). Initiating resistance or embracing resistance is also significant to my argument for the potential of pedagogy of dissensus.

In the following, I explore Eng's argumentation for art as a principle more in detail and see this in relation to Biesta's understanding of a world-centred education and how it connects to my own calls for dissensus.

The importance of teaching and time

The teacher that Eng describes in her book is an *artist teacher*. Eng sees the teacher as an artist and teaching as a work of art. The teacher Eng portrays makes use of improvisational and processual approaches as opposed to more analytical and rational methods. By translating a passage from her book, I hope to demonstrate the relevance of her educational ideas over one hundred years after they were first published:

> No rigid regulations or formulas must inform the teaching. What will guide it is the teacher's perception of what his or her students right now need and can receive and how it must be given to them to become a forming force in their minds. Artist teachers reject the usual dogma of questions and answers because it only acts as a superficial play with the intelligence of the children. It prevents a deep and profound acquisition of knowledge because it draws attention to the external form of presentation and demands for instant perception and reproduction, and, it deprives the child's joy over what it gets to see and hear. More valuable is the deep and quiet growth, even though it does not give such excellent results either now or at the exam.
>
> (Eng 1918: 153–54, translation added)

A school that emphasizes measurement, testing, excellent exam results and evident correspondence between the teaching and pupils' results is something other than the school

Eng here talks about. In contrast to Eng's emphasis on the teacher's important role, the art educational movement she is often associated with puts the child at the centre and prefers a more withdrawn teacher in the classroom. Lowenfeld and Brittain (1976) believe that children should be allowed to express themselves freely and spontaneously, without disturbance from controlling adults or strict measurable criteria. They go as far as to claim that the teacher could do a lot of harm by having a too-dominant role. They are also anxious about what impact seeing art could have on children's ability for free expression.

Reading Rancière's *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* and the story of the teacher Jacotot, the teacher who could teach what he did not know himself, as referred to in the chapter about the pedagogy of dissensus, one might think that the teacher does not play such a large role for Rancière. Biesta (2014), however, writes about how the teacher is still central in Rancière's book: 'What Rancière is aiming for, in other words, is not a school without a teacher, a school without schoolmasters; what he believes is the greatest obstacle to liberation is the "master's position"' (125, translation added). Here, Rancière's interest in intellectual emancipation and radical equality as a point of departure is combined with his fascination for how Jacotot is teaching. Jacotot is not leaving his students for themselves; rather, he plays a significant role (Rancière 2003, 2009).

Biesta (2014) believes that there is still room for authority, a form of positive power or will, but that this is not based on *differences* in knowledge or insight. He also believes that the teacher 'brings something new into the pedagogical situation, something that was not there before' (Biesta 2014: 68, translation added). In the book *The Rediscovery of Teaching* (2017b), Biesta argues for focusing more on teaching than learning and call for 'teaching as dissensus' (82) that disrupts 'egological ways of being' and that is linked to emancipatory ambitions in education. In this way, Biesta (Skregelid and Biesta 2022) also emphasizes the importance of time, slowing down and 'suspension' (40). One must strive for more than short-term learning outcomes, daring to let knowledge mature.

Both Eng and Biesta emphasize the teacher's central role and are challenging the fast pursuit of knowledge. It can take time before the teaching content is absorbed. The chapters in this book demonstrate that knowledge takes time to acquire. The immediately perceived relevance rarely arises when pupils and students are challenged with artistic approaches to education and encounter dissensus-oriented teaching. In what I have previously referred to as the aesthetic art educational regime (Skregelid 2016), the teacher is recognized as an authority and is much more than a facilitator. My use of the concept of regime suggests that education is always ideologically motivated. The role of the teacher I also see as being related to being a director within the field of theatre. A director signals a professional and clear leadership while still welcoming a range of interpretations by the actors. The Norwegian art critic Kjetil Røed has pointed out how the Swiss philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who is often associated with the free upbringing of children, sees the teacher as a theatre director (Røed 2014). Biesta's recent elaborations (2021) on Rousseau's *Emile, or On Education* (Rousseau [1762] 1979) also sheds light onto the teachers' role here. Biesta

says that the task of the educator is to keep the forces from society and passions from inside the child at bay and that the teacher Rousseau refers to tries to provide a distance between Emile, the world and Emile himself. By offering time and breathing space, the children can navigate in this middle ground without being ruled solely by society nor the desires and wills of the child.

Throughout the chapters in this book, I think the teachers and educators are very much present. In Chapter 2, both the educators from the museum and teachers from the schools play significant roles in the planning of the visits to the exhibitions and in the realization of the activities in the museum. They also play important roles in the follow-up activities at school. Even though the educators are more passive than usual in the discussions by the artworks, they still provide the framework for what is happening. In the teaching of my bachelor students in the same museum space, I claim that I act the ignorant schoolmaster, holding my own knowledge back to let their voices be heard and their knowledge function as base for the projects they make.

In the TCS project that I discuss in Chapter 3, Teiporama, there are few instructions and a lot of freedom. As I comment on, this seems to be a bit challenging because the students have little experience of this. They are rather used to being told what to do and with clear notions of what is expected of them. Even in this activity, the framework for this free space is thoroughly provided for by the artist.

In the Lesvos project described in Chapter 4, the students plan and realize their own projects on the island. The role of the educator is to bring the students and artists to the contested space of Lesvos and ask a lot of difficult ethical questions about being there and working on issues related to the refugee situation. The questions led to what I see as important doubting.

The educator asking questions is also dominating the most personal text in the book, Chapter 5, where my continuous running, filming, and uploading and the quest for routine and repetition cause trouble when it comes to my own calls for ruptures and dissensus in education. Being aware of how this arts-based research project can nurture my own – and maybe others' teaching – demonstrates the value of bringing lived experiences and everyday practices and the reflections of them into discussions about being a teacher.

I think all the chapters demonstrate the importance of the teacher and teaching, even though it sometimes looks like they play a minor role.

The importance of resistance

Eng is concerned about the voice of the children. She believes one should listen to the child and let the child be heard. At the same time, it may seem that Eng is occupied with challenging and disturbing the understanding of what teaching should be, that one should not only listen to the children but do teaching that is ambivalent and that reflects the many

facets of life. As we have seen, she emphasizes the importance of teaching that is causing 'resistance' (Eng 1918: 155, translation added).

In the different chapters in this book, I make connections between dissensus and events of subjectification and argue for the importance of encountering resistance. By making use of the term dissensus from Rancière (2009), I have argued that encounters with art and doing art practice have the potential to disrupt the established. In this way, the dissensual characteristics of art can become a resource for teaching in general. Through various projects, I have seen how the processual, nonlinear and unpredictable qualities of art have challenged pupils and students. Throughout the different chapters, I also show how pupils, students, artist and I respond to resistance in both encountering art, in doing art or in encountering education that breaks with the norms.

In Chapter 2, I write about how art can confront pupils' and students' notions of art, challenging their views on the issues related to science and ethics and, thus, contributing to a disturbance of their worldview. In the same chapter, I refer to how students' regular ways of encountering art are altered by designing their own projects in the museum and inviting their peer students and pupils into them.

In Chapter 3, I have referred to how the expectations of the student teachers were disturbed when taking part in TCS project Teiporama, making installations with tape in their seminar rooms. The workshop represented something new and different. This kind of freedom was not common in their courses within teacher education, nor something they had experienced much in school as pupils themselves or when in work practice as student teachers. In this chapter, the students' responses to the workshop are discussed together with Biesta's (2017a) understanding of a world-centred approach to teaching. When our intentions, actions and initiatives meet resistance and are disturbed, we can either adjust our ambitions or can react with withdrawal. Instead of withdrawing or possibly protesting strongly against this, we can also stay in the 'middle ground' and choose to deal with the challenges (65). Biesta understands this as a world-centred approach, calling it a 'never ending exploration of what it might mean to exist in and with the world' (66). To introduce resistance is to put something 'in the way' (87). In the book *The Wonderful Risk of Education* (2014), he is concerned with an education that offers resistance by disturbing and challenging. Rather than striving for the least possible inconvenience, one can consider resistance as a resource.

Like Eng, Biesta is also concerned about challenging the idea of giving the children what they want and fulfil their desires about citizenship. Related to this, I also ask in my own work whether children and youngsters are aware of what kind of art they want to see when they do not yet have any idea of its existence (2016). Biesta (2017a) writes about how disturbances in education can appear as something one does *not* ask for. He further writes about how one can hope that this disorder can be appreciated eventually:

> What we hope, as educators, is that down the line, the student will turn back to us and will say, express, enact that which 'arrived' as interference, as an intervention they did not

> ask for, turned out to be helpful, beneficial, perhaps even essential for their attempts at trying to be home in the world.
>
> (Biesta 2017a: 88)

The challenge for teachers can be to dare to offer resistance because one is worried about how students, colleagues and management may respond to unconventional teaching. The desire for short-term results and effects can and does prevent teachers from engaging in teaching that provides a possible resistance.

I have written about the importance of resistance that both the form and content of the course site-related art on Lesvos caused for myself as an educator and for the participating students and artists. The flexible structure in the course with lectures on demand, individual supervision and late-night discussions, as described in Chapter 4, challenged both me, one who is more used to strict educational frames and the university students used to the same. Dealing with the refugee situation when making art also led to resistance and doubts about being there and doing the course. Through different events throughout the years 2017–19, I have tried to highlight some of the many ethical dilemmas and resistance I faced as an educator responsible for the course.

The chapter about my own running is also demonstrating the importance of encountering resistance in one own beliefs and arguments. Here, the disruption was caused by COVID-19 and the restrictions followed by it. In a recent article (Skregelid 2021c) about the same project. I write the following:

> Educators and art educators, like myself, spend a lot of time ensuring the best possible education of others. But where are we educated ourselves? Where are our ideas and practice challenged? Where do we encounter resistance, so we doubt our habits and norms?
>
> (Skregelid 2021c: 8–9)

My ongoing running, filming, and uploading in *My Stunning Stream: Made with a Little Mischief* continue to trouble me and cause resistance but at the same time doing me good and also making me more aware of myself and my needs. The ecological awareness I talk about in this chapter is also a result of the major mischief the pandemic caused. A consequence is that my attention is not solely directed at me but also towards the surroundings and nature.

The importance of artistic approaches to teaching

As mentioned above, Eng (1918) is very critical of how rules and regulations govern teachers, describing the role of the teacher as important. Eng's description of the teacher as an artist and the teaching profession as a 'educational art form' (1918: 152, translation added) is very much a contrast to the role teachers have today as a result of an economically motivated

education policy, with limited competence goals and the strong emphasis on activities, such as those oriented towards international tests such as PISA (Atkinson 2018; Biesta 2018; Madsen 2018). In contrast to outcome-oriented teaching, Eng (1918) makes a call for an 'impressionist dogma' (1918: 156, translation added), which is about making use of the impressions from the world one is surrounded by into teaching.

By using an artistic and exploratory way of teaching that characterizes the pedagogy of dissensus that I call for throughout the chapters in this book, the possibilities of pursuing the unforeseen and doing what one had not planned for are opened. The open and unforeseen characteristics of art are the point of departure for an education informed by dissensus. As mentioned earlier, such teaching can be challenging, but if you think that experiencing resistance is a key element in being human, art and artistic practice offer just that.

In the text 'What if?', Biesta (2017b) argues for the possibilities of art and 'the educational power of the arts' (18) because 'art is the dialogue of human beings with the world, art is the exploration and transformation of our desires so they can become a positive force' (18). In one of his first books (Biesta 2006), he writes about the teacher's responsibility to take a risk and to teach what one cannot assume: 'The responsibility of the educator is a responsibility for what is to come, without knowledge of what is to come' (124).

To think of teaching as an improvisational art form in which the teacher's 'intuitive response to what his students need right now' (Eng 1918: 153, translation added) contrasts with the way the school is practised today. How much opportunity do teachers have to opt out of 'rigid regulations' (1918: 153, translation added)? To what extent is there room for emotion, sensibility and affect?

The importance of sensibility and affect

As we can see above, Eng thinks the teacher's intuition and feelings should play a vital role when teaching. I have highlighted the importance of the teacher's direction, leadership and time. I have also emphasized the importance of the imaginative and artistic teacher. Although it may not be explicitly projected in either Eng's descriptions of art as a principle or in Biesta's world-centred education, the concept of affect seems to be relevant when understanding what art as a principle can mean today.

As I have touched upon in Chapters 1 and 5, affect is a form of relationship and a form of cognition that is characterized by spontaneous feelings, embodied intensities and instincts. Two parties influence each other, without this influence taking place consciously or intentionally. Affect just happens and cannot be planned for. When an individual is in an affective relationship, one must be open to the other and a something third might arise. The chapters throughout this book demonstrate how encountering art and doing art can cause multisensory affects that are out of the hands of the viewers and participants. Art can generate experiences beyond one's control and comprehension.

Related to this understanding of art and affect, Rancière (2009) talks about the lack of coherence in between the artist's intention and the effect the art has on its audience. Art, according to him, as I have referred to in Chapter 1, must be seen as 'a third way' (22) that neither the observer nor the artist can predict. This is also how one can consider teaching and the relationship between teacher and pupil or student. In the encounter, affective responses are realized, and the experiences both the student and teacher are left with are perhaps different from those that were intended. The connections I have already made between dissensus and events of subjectification and the importance of experiencing a rupture, which contributes to a change, are largely rooted in affective and emotional relationships. Thus, affect is an educational concept because it precisely involves a change, that is, a disturbance, a transformation from something into something else. The concept of affect is also increasingly used in educational research and performative research to emphasize the importance of body, sensuality and emotions as approaches to acquiring knowledge (Knudsen 2017; Østern and Dahl 2019).

Affect such as dissensus and a teaching method that offers resistance cannot be planned because one can never know how people will respond to the teaching. Biesta (2017b) also speaks of teaching as dissensus as 'asking the impossible' (82). He talks about the fact that subjects cannot be produced. However, he says it is quite easy to *prevent* events of subjectification. By not putting ourselves at risk, by not doubting one's own practice, there will not be any chance for questioning habits and norms.

Following this, one may think of teaching as an explorative laboratory where one investigates, without knowing what the results will be in advance and where one allows oneself both to be surprised and perhaps even shaken. Being sensible to the situation and surroundings can also realize what Victor Sjklovskij ([1917] 1988) talks about in the article 'Art as technique' as early as 1917, where he writes about defamiliarization as disturbing habitual perceptions:

> [Art] exists that one may recover the sensation of life; it exists to make one feel things, to make the stone *stony*. The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make an object 'unfamiliar,' to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged. *Art is a way of experiencing the artfulness of an object; the object is not important.*
>
> ([1917] 1988: 20, original emphasis)

If art becomes a pervasive dimension in school, it may contribute to both teachers and students becoming more sensitive to their surroundings. The automated gaze we usually have may become more alert.

In Chapter 2, I refer to the strong reactions to the art by the Norwegian artist Morten Viskum and the images by the Finnish photographer Ilu Susiraja. Most of the secondary pupils and students encounter these artworks with their bodies first before their minds. Many of the

secondary school pupils refer to disgust when seeing the rats and mice in formaldehyde. Some mention that seeing the art causes stomach pain and uneasiness. Some of the student teachers also refer to how encountering the art of Susiraja makes them feel uncomfortable.

The student teachers taking part in the Teiporama workshop, described in Chapter 3, refer to many of the challenges they encountered when put in this open and free space to do what they wanted. Some talked about how making something without a set plan was experienced through their bodies and acknowledged the importance of not only using their brains and cognition, which they find to dominate school.

In Chapter 4, I have described some events that stand out from being in Lesvos during the years 2017–19. I see them as moments of ethical questioning and doubts and embodied dissensus. The feeling of letting my body be surrounded by the Middle Sea at the beach of Petra when seeing the Greek coastguard on the horizon was the first troubled embodied experience I mention. The other troubled event I write about here is walking in the outskirts of Moria refugee camp. I had the freedom to travel to Lesvos and the freedom to go again. This was in stark contrast to the refugees I met there. I recall the hesitation with taking up my camera. The sight and smell of the life vests outside Molivos and the sudden fear when seeing the knife-wielding man is still so vividly present. In all these events, my body and my senses have played important roles in my encounter. I think these experiences affected my way of seeing both the course I was running, but also the sociopolitical situation in Lesvos. If I had not had these difficult encounters that affected me so intensely, I probably would not doubt the existence of the course in the way that I have.

In Chapter 5, I write about how I was affected by the pandemic and how this led to my running. Here, I explicitly comment on how the term affect is related to the project *My Stunning Stream: Made with a Little Mischief*. What occurs when running and filming is not intentional, yet I have still made a rather strict frame for the nonintentional to happen. The route is the same every time. I am running about every second day. I stop by the same spot. I film the same view. The duration of the film is the same. In this way, a rigorous routine and rhythm is established and frames the project. Despite all this, the affect that the running and the filming has on me is not controllable. The films reveal some of the affects the running is causing. When I run fast, my breath is more audible. The image is moving because it is difficult to hold my mobile completely still. The more out of breath I am, the harder it is to stand still. I find it interesting that there is a conflict in me trying to be immersed in the running, as the a/r/tography approach demands, while my mind is wandering away to issues that dominate my head both at work and home.

Why teachers and teacher education matters

The question that motivated this chapter was as follows: What can art as an overarching principle be and mean in today's school? I have here highlighted four areas of importance for

the understanding of art as a principle and significance for how art can matter: the importance of the teacher's direction and time, the importance of resistance, the importance of artistic approaches to teaching and the importance of sensibility and affect. This contributes to my ongoing exploration of what the pedagogy of dissensus can be and what can happen if we let art inspire how we teach.

To practise art as an overarching principle and pedagogy of dissensus, one is first and foremost dependent on a school policy, which enables a real investment in art and culture and the aesthetic subjects in the school. Many ambitions on behalf of art are now made visible in several public documents. Here, we also see comments on the importance of teachers and teacher education. As mentioned in the introduction, a strategy for aesthetic subjects in kindergarten, school and teacher education was newly launched by the Ministry of Education in Norway (Kunnskapsdepartementet 2019). In the first white paper commenting on art and culture for children and young people, teacher education is also mentioned as a place of importance to enhance consciousness about why art matters (Kulturdepartementet 2021).

At the end of this book, I stress the importance of giving priority to teachers and teacher education. To reach all these ambitions, I suggest that the ideas of Eng should be taken into consideration. Therefore, I hope that this little introduction can contribute to new interest in Eng and other historical resources and relaunch this important book where she echoes former calls for aesthetic revolution and a more holistic aesthetic education of society.

Why art matters

While this book has been written the world has endured a global pandemic. In the previous chapter, I write about how this has influenced my research, my educational practice and my life in general. This world spanning dissensus has also affected the way we look at the relevance of art. Suddenly theatres and museums were closed. Concerts were cancelled. What happened was that people missed performing, acting and making so much that they started sharing their art online, in the streets and so on. The major disruption COVID–19 represented was confronted – with art.

Artists have always responded to personal and societal challenges both poetically and through activism. During times of minor and major crises, art is used to express what cannot be achieved by other means. Art might be used to interact with the trouble, to question or mirror the current status quo, or to promote hope and care. This is for example evident in scenes of war. The ongoing conflicts in Ukraine, the Middle East and elsewhere cause tension, uncertainty and distress that are addressed by artistic means. In Chapter 4, I comment on the difficulties and ethical concerns that enter the art practice in the contested space of Lesvos. In Chapter 5, I write about how my running and the project *My Stunning Sream: Made with a Little Mischief* makes me aware about global environmental challenges.

Art that responds to contemporary political, economic and environmental urgencies raise a range of questions. What might happen if art and art education become dominated by a sociopolitical rationale? How can one maintain the integrity of art production and still act in a globally responsible and ethical manner?

In the introduction, I refer to various ways artistic practices are justified. On the one hand, we have instrumental reasoning that claims the importance of art and aesthetic subjects in school for reasons concerning economy, health and the significance of art and aesthetic subjects for how to do well in other subjects. On the other hand, I have referred to what can be considered existential justifications, and how art might be important in life.

This book has set out an aim to balance between the autonomy and the usefulness of art by claiming the dissensual characteristics of art to be relevant for education. By doing this I encounter a problem. This challenge is also acknowledged by Biesta who says:

> [I]t is of course quite difficult to say much about the importance of the arts themselves without referring to something 'beyond' art, but nonetheless, that is indeed the challenge if we want to counter the ongoing instrumentalization of the arts.
>
> (Biesta cited in Skregelid and Biesta 2022: 36)

Biesta points to the qualities of interruption, of suspension and sustenance that art can offer education. Art and education also share some common features as both are concerned about processes of emergence and subjectification – the arrival of the 'I'. I have noticed that Atkinson (2020) touches upon what I want to say here about the connections between art practices and educational practices. He states that art and education are both aesthetic, political and ethical:

> They are aesthetic in the sense of developing new sensibilities in how we experience the world, they are political in that speculation may invoke a stammering of existing practices and social relations and precipitate new ones to appear, new subjectifications emerging from subjectification to existing police orders, and they are ethical in that they enable new modes of seeing, thinking or capacities to act to arise that generate new or modified values for social relations.
>
> (Atkinson 2020: 358)

This leads Atkinson to the notion of 'speculative pedagogies' (358). By referring to Rancière's presumption of equality, and dissensus as a meeting between the force of a policing order and the force of politics, he suggests art pedagogies that through experimentation challenge norms and enable 'potentials for a world to come, a world that is not yet known' (360).

As I have tried to demonstrate throughout the chapters in this book, letting art being the overall principle and enabling dissensus in education, allow us to create moments of

the unpredictable. These are events needed to disrupt the status quo and leave us feeling a little unstable. This instability is based on emerging uncertainties about what we know. Our existing knowledge is thus challenged and disturbed. These moments are often found in the sensuous characteristics inherent in art and the relationship between what is seen or experienced and that what is already known. As such they construct pedagogical principles that ultimately ask for this disruption to be present, but also to offer ways to stabilize the dissensus through notions of care. Based on this journey from what is known to the unpredictable we are offered a new lens to look to a future where imagined utopias not yet known can be realized.

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DISSENS AND SENSIBILITY
WHY ART MATTERS

In her introduction to a pedagogy of dissensus, Lisbet Skregelid includes both theoretical foundations and examples of how the theory is unfolded in different contexts ranging from educational practice to arts-based research.

Motivated by Skregelid's long-held interest in the role of art in society in general, and education in particular, this is a vital new contribution to arts-based approaches to education. Referencing philosophers and theorists such as Jacques Rancière, Gert Biesta, Dennis Atkinson and Helga Eng, the author demonstrates why art matters because of its ability to create necessary disturbance and resistance in education.

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