

Research as Practice: Konstfack Research Seminars 2009

During the Autumn Term 2009, Konstfack's Research Unit is initiating a series of seminars dedicated to exploring the diversity of practice-based research at (and beyond) Konstfack. The seminars are intended to provide a forum for researchers, doctoral students and invited speakers to present their research-in-progress and thereby initiate discussion with seminar participants. An additional programme of invited speakers and related workshops will be announced separately.

Thursday 15th October

Rolf Hughes
Research as Practice: An Introduction
4-6 pm, Konstfack, S1

The aim of the current series of research seminars is to foster and support a research culture at Konstfack, with a particular focus on practice-based research, including its many variants such as artistic, design-led and interdisciplinary research. In the belief that practice-based research in art, craft and design is well positioned to develop innovative forms of research practice and communication (and thereby to forge areas of relevance beyond such existing audiences as art, craft and design practitioners, historians, theorists and critics), this opening discussion is intended to ask how one might most appropriately establish a thriving research culture at an art, craft and design institution. How might research be conducted within such a diverse organization, and how might we best support it? How might researchers benefit from research mobility and collective supervision? How many PhD students create a 'tipping point', or should we instead consider not numbers, but the integration of research themes and concerns? And what are the factors that determine how successfully research is integrated with (or isolated from) education? Related topics include: "coffee and cookies" (the researchers' everyday situation); open plan or cell? (the physical milieu of researching); external funding; international perspectives; external collaborations; research dissemination (publications, conferences etc) and impact; "employability"; "best practices" in practice-based research.

Keywords: culture & milieu; giving an account; relevance; significance; hybridity.

Ronald Jones
Research as Practice: An Introduction
4-6 pm, Konstfack, S1

It is well to ask if research in the creative disciplines is merely a form of affirmative action, granted from a belief that broad values may be gained from diversity in the field of research by giving underrepresented groups (artists, designers and craftpersons) a significantly greater chance of doing some form of research, however *Lilliputian*. Or is it that we would believe anything to make it true that art, craft and design had some measurable effect on the larger world once compared to research in medical or political science?

And yet, in particular forms, research in the creative disciplines is not only possible, but presents a credible projection of influence and relevance. It welcomes questions regarding accountability and evaluation. Significantly, seen in this light we could say that research in the creative disciplines was only *one more form of research* that requires no special dispensation. In this form, research in art, craft and design is 'applied', and the research questions pursued, as well as the results yielded, can be said to be otherwise unavailable but through this applied research methodology. Why, then, call it research through practice, artistic research, practice-led research, or anything other than 'research'?

Keyword: research.
Preparatory reading: *Omphaloskepsis* by Ronald Jones (published in *Frieze* 14/5/09). Available online: <http://www.frieze.com/comment/article/omphaloskepsis>

Thursday 29th October

Andreas Nobel
Köttande (fleshspirit)
4-6 pm, Konstfack, S1

Andreas Nobel is a designer and PhD student at Konstfack: "The topic starts within my experience of the relationships between theory and practice, how theory, practice and pedagogy meet and interact and sometimes also interfere with each other. My view is based on previous experiences working with *Uglycute* projects and while teaching at BI (art teacher education), Konstfack."

"My focus lies in the physical activity of designing from, and in, physical materials. The hypothesis is that by cultivating nature (materials) the cultivator gains insights in his/her relationships to other bodies (alive or "dead"), and also insights in these bodies relationships to room (space), and also time (history, present, future). Furthermore: I am an interior designer (*inredningsarkitekt*) doing research. I like to think that this makes me a "mellanrumforskare" - that is to say "a researcher of the spaces in between".

Keywords: theory, practice and pedagogy - their interaction and interference in design processes.

Thursday 12th November

Monica Sand
Getting lost as action and method in the city
4-6 pm, Konstfack, E1

Presentation of the first get-lost-expedition: Work in progress: "I/eye is else where - getting lost as action and method in the city"

In this first collective expedition - *Mirror-Travel 2009* - in the underground of Stockholm, an early morning - we aim to get lost, in order to explore how fear of getting lost or being "out of place" organize relations between the city and the I/eye. The state of getting lost challenge the idea of both urban planning and the contemporary

western identity. The rational subject intend to mirror a spatial order in which place and identity are correlated, that means that to know who you are is to know where you are going and how to get there. The fear of getting lost is not just a fear of losing orientation in space, but a fear of losing the self or the image of the self. The 12 mirrors carried in the expedition confuse and distort the reflection of the city and the self. They serve as well as an exploration of the materiality behind the notion of reflections as a way of producing knowledge in and through the arts.

Keywords: getting lost/out of place, reflection/mirror, I/eye

Thursday 26th November

Nina Hällgren
Urban Sound Design - methods for spatial sound analysis Inventory of language and place (Phase I)
4-6 pm, Konstfack, E1

This research aims to explore the parameters that determine our sonic world. To understand the complex relation between architecture, action and acoustic quality, an inventorial approach is undertaken during this first year. The interdisciplinary library of relevant concepts needs to be extended and brought in use. To enable this one needs to understand the existing level of knowledge and how it is communicated (*language*) as well as exploring a specific urban area of interest (*place*) in terms of sonic quality.

Keywords: Conceptualization in terms of language, sound and spatial knowledge

Ricardo Atienza
Thinking of place through sound
4-6 pm, Konstfack, E1

In Western culture, graphical expression has long dominated urban, architectural and material design. This cultural and technological tendency gives a clear priority to the sense of sight and to spatial dimension. The spatial and visual predominance leads frequently to an external and static "point of view". No temporal variation is taken into account; a place is "visualized" without its own life.

Sound is an essential expression of everyday life, but a neglected sense in our usual conception methods and tools. However, sound is a privileged "voice" for temporal phenomena and embodied perception, (which should be) fundamental parameters of urban and spatial comprehension and further projection.

Keywords: Sonic conception

Thursday 3rd December

Dan Spegel
En audiovisuell experimentverkstad
Language: Swedish
2-3.15 pm, Konstfack, Svarta Havet

The project *An audiovisual experimental studio: new technology - old ideas* aims, through both creative artistic practice and theoretical reflection, to explore the relationship between sonic and visual elements. The discussion around the audiovisual expression, has often been conducted in an undertone, perhaps because, it has fallen in between two worlds. On one hand the art and film worlds, and on the other the music/sonic field. The main aim for this project has been to find a position for the audiovisual work, on its own terms.

Thursday 3rd December

Marcus Öhrn
Magic Bullet Language: Swedish
3.30-4.45 pm, Konstfack, Svarta Havet/S1

Since the Swedish state established its own bureau for censorship (*Statens biografbyrå*) in 1911, thousands of clips have been censored - to spare the sensibilities of the audience. These clips have been stored in the archive of the Royal Library. The project *Magic Bullet*, explores various tendencies in this vast material.

In the first part of the project, artist Marcus Öhrn, made a 49 hours long film (*Magic Bullet*) of the material edited in chronological order. During 2009, the film been shown at Gothenburg film festival, the conference NordMedia in Karlstad and as an installation at the Royal Library. The installation gives a view of presumed harmful types of sexuality.

Friday 4th December

Please note: on the 4th of December, there are parallel sessions

Anna Lundh
(Ut)Sagan om den stora Datan Language: Swedish
12-1.15 pm, Konstfack, Svarta Havet

The project (*Ut)Sagan om den stora Datan*, (telling) Tale of the Big Computer, is based on the utopian swedish novel *Sagan om den stora Datamaskinen*, written 1966 by the scholar in physics Hannes Alfvén. The book received quite a lot of attention and the composer

Karl-Birger Blomdahl decided in 1967 to adapt the material into an opera. The plan was to tie engineers and researchers into the project in a multidisciplinary way and also to use the latest sonic and digital technology. Sadly the project never started, as Blomdahl suddenly died in a heart attack. The artist Anna Lundh has pulled the threads of this vast material - this "vision of a vision". Sketches, correspondence, written material as well as newspaper articles forms an archive, which Lundh from an artist's perspective has explored to ask questions about the past, the present and possibly the future.

Ulf Klarén & Karin Fridell Anter
Så vitt vi vet - Nominellt kulörta färger som vithetsankare Language: Swedish
2-4.00 pm, Konstfack, Perceptionsstudion

SÅ VITT VI VET (WHITE - AS YOU LIKE IT) is a R&D project in the arts, exploring white colours as perceptual "anchors" for the perception of other colours in the visual field. This has great practical impact on everyday work with colour design. In previous research such effects have been investigated for colours nominally placed on or near the scale of neutral greys. In the current project we study the corresponding effects of colours that have a stronger nominal chromaticness but still can be perceived as white in certain situations.

Sara Kristoffersson
Design of Sweden Language: Swedish
2.30-15.45 pm, Konstfack, Svarta Havet

The blue Ikea store with its yellow logotype, directs everyone's thoughts to Sweden. This global company uses a clear Swedish identity and offers the concept "democratic design", as well as "equality" and "justice", to a vast range of people. Are we really talking about "Swedish design" or a certain globalised aesthetic concept? The topic is examined through a discussion that takes its outset from nation branding, storytelling and consumption theory. Although Ikea is a very important part of Swedish society, there is almost no research in the field, especially not from a design- and art historical point of view.

Keywords: Nation branding, storytelling

Anders Ljungberg
Det emotionella brukandet Language: Swedish
4-5.15 pm, Konstfack, Svarta Havet/S1

When we have something to drink - the silent passing of the liquid within the body forms a sign; a drawing. In everyday life, these kind of events pass with us rarely noticing the delicate encounter with the object. The inherent qualities of the cup or the spoon never get a chance to really expose themselves. Might one say that the use of everyday objects - in Swedish: "brukande" - has emotional and metaphorical content, in contrast to the focus (typical for the industrial era) on the functional aspects?

This project - financed by the Research and Development Board at Konstfack - aims to identify a perspective sensitive to the "presentness" of each encounter with the object. It raises, among others, the question: how might we describe the relationship between material, temporality and use, if we take craft as an outset?

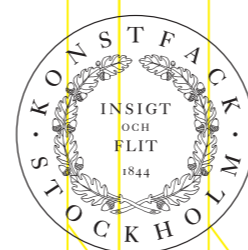
Thursday 17th December

Lizette Gradén
Gifts and the Social Life of Things in a Curator Culture
4-6 pm, Konstfack, E1

In the research project *Nordic Spaces in the North and North America: Heritage Preservation in Real and Imagined Nordic Places* questions like: How are Nordic spaces created and expressed in the Nordic countries and North America? How do such spaces give shape to cultural heritage, delimit identities, and draw boundaries via recognition of difference? are asked.

Since the time of the great emigration to North America, ritual, narratives, architecture, museums, and theatre have defined the Nordic in the United States as well as in the Nordic countries themselves. Today, such Nordic spaces are subject to contestation, not least among the descendants of Nordic emigrants and the more recent immigrants to the Nordic countries.

Keywords: gåva/gift



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Biographies of speakers

- Ricardo Atienza, Ph.D. in Architecture, researcher and sound artist. Work consisting of a transversal exploration of sonic space, from conception to research and teaching.

- Karin Fridell Anter, Ph.D. in Architecture with special emphasis on colour. Docent (Ass. Prof.) at Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), Inst. for Architecture. Writer of several books and numerous articles about colour in its architectural context.

- Lizette Gradén holds a Ph.D. in Ethnology from Stockholm University. Her primary research interests include heritage politics, material culture, rituals and Swedish America. Her dissertation entitled *On Parade: Making Heritage in Lindsborg, Kansas* is a critical ethnographic study of how processes of social inclusion and exclusion are shaped through negotiation of artistic forms. Since 2008 she leads the project *Nordic Spaces in the North and North America: Heritage Preservation in Real and Imagined Nordic Places*. For more information please go to www.nordicspaces.org

- Rolf Hughes, Ph.D., is Acting Director of Research; Professor of Design Theory and Practice-Based Research (both at Konstfack) and Senior Professor in Research Design at the Sint-Lucas School of Architecture (Brussels & Gent, Belgium). A member of the board of AKAD (the Academy for Practice-Based Research in Architecture and Design), his current research interests include experience design (the design of time), practice-led research, transdisciplinarity as epistemological conceptualism, play, and the poetics of critical writing. He has successfully co-supervised several acclaimed doctorate dissertations within critical theory, design and practice-based research.

- Nina Hällgren is a doctoral student at Konstfack and KTH (Royal Institute of Technology). She graduated 2008 at the KTH School of Architecture with the project *Transforming Urban Space - the loss and reconstruction of sound and identity*.

- Ronald Jones, an artist and critic, is the Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies, and holds a Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Studies. He leads The Experience Design Group at Konstfack, and is a guest professor in Experience Design at the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, India. He is the author of numerous museum catalogs and writes regularly for *Artforum* and *Frieze*. He has delivered over two hundred and fifty lectures at universities, museums, and art and design schools including Harvard University, The Art Institute of Chicago, Yale University, The Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris, The Guggenheim Museum, Royal College of Art, London, Center for Advanced Studies in the Visual Arts at MIT, the Architectural Association, London.

- Ulf Klarén, senior lecturer in colour theory and visual form Konstfack, researcher and the director of *Perceptionsstudion*, Konstfack.

- Sara Kristoffersson, Ph.D. (Art History and Visual Studies) is senior lecturer at Konstfack, Design and Craft History and Theory and a critic in the daily newspaper *Svenska Dagbladet*. She has held a number lectures in schools such as The Royal College of Arts, Stockholm University, Beckmans College of Design, Södertörn College University and Berghs School of Communication. Kristoffersson has published numerous articles and essays about art, design, crafts and architecture. Between 1996 and 1999 Kristoffersson was a partner at Ynglingagatan 1 (Y1) - a gallery for contemporary art, design and fashion in Stockholm - where she curated several exhibitions.

- Anders Ljungberg, works with craft and design in terms of objects and silversmithing, also senior lecturer in the field and in design at Konstfack. He is represented at Nationalmuseet and Nordiska museet, Stockholm and is a productive exhibitor both in Sweden and internationally.

- Anna Lundh, graduated in 2008 with an MFA from Konstfack, and has previously studied at Graphic Design and Illustration (at Konstfack) and at the Cooper Union School of Art in New York. The past year, she participated in a 9 month residency program in Lower Manhattan in New York, when she was also a visiting artist at The School of Visual Arts in the New Media department. Her work investigates, interprets, and treats cultural and social phenomena, technology and language, and has been exhibited at institutions including Norrköpings Konstmuseum and Bonniers Konsthall. Most recently she participated in *The World is Flat* for Rhizome, and in *Avant-Guide to New York* at Apexart, both in New York City.

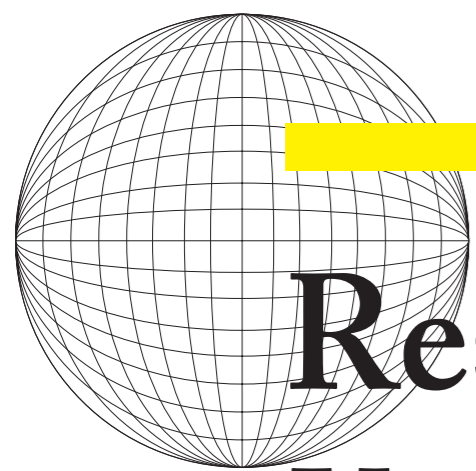
- Andreas Nobel, interior designer and a Ph.D. student at Konstfack and KTH. Former chief editor of RUM, former editor of the design column at VI. Co-founder and former member of *Uglycute*. Teacher at institutionen för bildpedagogik, Konstfack. The working title of his project is *Organic Design/Organisk Design*.

- Monica Sand, artist, Ph.D. and lecturer. Her post doc project at Konstfack *Out of Place with Punctuality and Precision (Gå vilse med punktlighet och precision)* is funded by the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet) 2009-2011.

- Dan Spegel, took his Masters degree in Fine Arts at Konstfack in 2008. He is based in Stockholm and positions his artistic work consciously in the grey area between visual culture and audio culture. Recently he had a solo exhibition at Gallery Hangups, Stockholm.

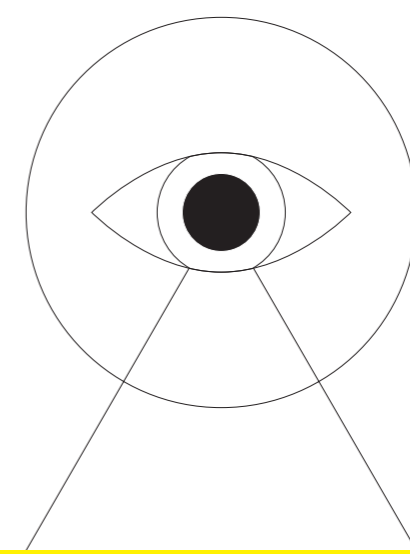
- Markus Öhrn, lives in Stockholm and Niskanpää, Övertorneå. He graduated from Konstfack 2008. He has among other works presented the videoinstallations *We aim to please* and *Individents underjordiska del* dealing with how young people are socialized into the world of grown ups.

grafisk form: Clara Terne



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