



UNIVERSITY OF
GOTHENBURG

HDK-Steneby, Högskolan för design och konsthantverk

C.S.M.P

Color, Space, Machines & People

Robin Victor Dahlqvist
Iron and steel / public space

Exam report:	15 hp
Program:	Iron and steel / public space
Level:	First Cycle
Semester/year:	St/2016
Supervisor:	Tobias Birgersson, Karl Hallberg
External Tutor:	Chris Porcarelli
Examiner:	Heiner Zimmermann
Report no:	

Abstract

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Purpose: To build machines that enable ways of interaction
By bringing together color, space, machines and people.

Theory: Manifest and Project description. Bibliography from project description and reference list in the report.

Method: To create a framework for which tests and experiments can be made within, giving opportunity for interactions and unforeseen results. By Building machines and interacting with color, space and people. The use of color has been paint, spray-paint and tattoo ink.

Result: Three machines, Two tattoo machines, One paint coloring machine and one coloring tool for making holes in spray cans. Three different events of try out -A workshop, performance and public art piece
The people has been, Bigger group of more than 10 people, a collaboration with another artist and a performance audience.

Referat

Examens rapport:	15 hp
Program:	Iron and steel / public space
Nivå	Kandidatexamen
Termin/år:	Vt/2016
Intern handledare	Tobias Birgersson, Karl Hallberg
Extern handledare:	Chris Porcarelli
Examinator	Heiner Zimmermann
Rapport Nr:	

Syfte:	Att skapa maskiner som möjliggör vägar till interaktion genom att föra samman färg, rum, maskiner och människor.
Teori:	Manifest och projektbeskrivning. Bibliografi från projektbeskrivning och referat i rapporten.
Metod:	Genom att skapa ett ramverk i vilket test och experiment kan göras inom, skapar jag möjligheten till interaktion och oförutsedda resultat. Genom att bygga maskiner och integrera med färg, rum och människor. Användandet av färger har varit, målarfärg, sprejfärg och tatueringssläck.
Resultat	Tre kategorier av maskiner varav, två tatueringssmaskiner, en färg maskin och ett verktyg för att göra håll i sprejburkar med. Tre olika händelser av test och experiment för dessa. -En workshop, ett performance och ett offentligt konstverk. Människorna har varit, grupper om tio personer i en workshop, en kollaboration med annan konstnär och ett performance av mig inför publik.

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Background

I've always been interested in the interactions that connects us people together. It could be music, football, dance, art. Whatever it may be, beneath those interactions, there is an unspoken language. A language which we all can understand and know.

Two years ago I was on a cultural exchange in India. We were in the rural parts of north eastern India. Not many people knew English there and the simplest thing, as getting directions, could pose a challenge. But when I decided to have an interactive art piece set up, the spoken language wasn't of any importance anymore. Our actions could instead show the way. We colored our feet red and made traces on a staircase I'd painted white, which led from the water to a temple.

One of my discoveries in India was that by such simple means as coloring ones feet had the possibility to create great interactions. It's

these interactions I search for in my work and to help find them I create a framework for us to feel both connected and free. Once back in Sweden, starting a new course called participation, I had my chance again. I'd gotten a hold of a place in Bengtsfors, an abandoned house, which I started activating again with students from the local secondary school. We would paint everything, from the walls to the ceiling and windows, create sculptures and work with the space. It was important while working with the students to give them the tools to do whatever they



wanted. I arranged for some workshops to get them going. I wanted for them to feel a part of developing the space.

In the process of growing as an artist I've come to realize that my art has to involve other people, either it be by their interaction with my tools or the experience in creating something together.

For this project those tools have been three machines that I've built with different uses, all with the ability to transform and interact with color, space and people. They all bare the mark of me wanting to connect with others and together with these machines I've created three different frameworks for which the interactions has taken place. I call them tools of interactions, I think of them as tools for me to interact with others but also for others to use in a way that the experience can be collective.

The machines is something that has always been present in my life. I've worked with e.g. bikes, chainsaws, washing machines, stereos, mopeds. I have an uncontrollable urge to know how they work and more than often I take things apart in trying to understand them. Because I see the opportunity to learn something from those machines, which I then can use in some other way. Over the years I've gotten pretty good at it.

What got me to that house in Bengtsfors was a washing machine, which I'd rebuilt to a coloring machine. The Idea was simple. I wanted to take apart a washing machine to see how it worked and when I'd done that I wanted to build something different out of it. I came up with the idea of making it do the opposite of washing and throw paint around instead. Finding a space for this machine was the next challenge. When I got the opportunity to try it out in the house and did so, I felt that there was something missing. The interaction wasn't enough with only me and the machine. There was the urge again of sharing the experience and doing something together. Later on I would come in contact with the school and for me it was from that point that the project truly became active.

One of the main driving forces behind my artistic work has been this urge of shared experience and if I can create something that brings me closer to this experience I see that as a great accomplishment.

My projects often aim towards allowing the unintended to happen. Sometimes a whole project of mine can be presented in a way to give the feeling of being only driven by coincidences or by accident. Yet it's true that I keep my eyes open for these coincidental occurrences, I put a great deal of time in constructing the surrounding stage of happenings. What I learned from the Bengtsfors project was that it was a lot easier to work with the students if there was a framework for them to work within. As an artist I couldn't just hand over the tools and say "do something". But if I would give them with the instructions "Let's build wormholes to other dimensions", there was a whole different momentum in the group.

My method for how I work is:

- I construct a framework in which I can work together with others and anything can happen. I create a framework for freedom.

- Within this framework I create tools with which the interactions can be made and they have the possibility to connect us.

“Empathy begins with the self-reaching out to another self, an underlying dynamic of feeling that becomes the source of activism . . . creative works can be a representations of or an actual manifestation of relationship. A very significant relationship is between the artist and his or her audience”¹

When I’ve learned something new I have a hard time not sharing the experience. I will share my experience of these machines in a sufficient way to give some insight in how they work, what they did, what situates them, what connects them and what my results were. After this I will summarize all the machines, experiences. I will reflect upon them in relation to my objectives I had when I started this project.

Tattoo machines

The first time I tattooed myself I was about thirteen years old. I used a needle and some ink from an old ballpoint pen. For as long as I can remember I’ve been intrigued by tattoos. I always wanted the rub on tattoos from the toy store. For me the tattoos become an extension of yourself and sooner or later they are as much of a part of you as your nose or arms. I’ve always found it interesting to look on other people’s tattoos and to see the tattooer working.

“Stockholm har världens mest tatuerade befolkning, om man bortser från vissa urfolk. Var tredje stockholmare mellan 18 och 49 år, 33 procent, beräknas ha en tatuering enligt den globala undersökningen Metropolitan Report.”²

For this project I have decided not to investigate the social stigma or history of tattoos. My work with the tattoos is an investigation in the technique, machines and approach towards how one can tattoo by

1 Mapping the terrain, new genre public art, edited by Suzanne Lacy, Bay Press 1995, 36-37

2 <http://www.dn.se/livsstil/markta-for-livet/> 2014-05-24 Ingrid Borggren - 21/4-2016 15:37

using my method.

I'm interested in using tattoos as a tool for interacting with others and making others interact with each other. There's a lot that can be challenged in this field of art and making the act of tattooing more conceptual, As Santiago Sierras *-160 cm Line Tattooed on 4 People* or Linnea Sjöbergs *Salong flyttkartong*. I share her attitude towards tattoos and she's been an inspiration in her performances and use of tattooing.

*"The key idea is 'Act Before Thinking': deny the reason, be irrational, be completely free in what you do with yourself."*³

My first machine to build in this project would be the tattoo machines. A tool to modify the body and permanently making a mark.

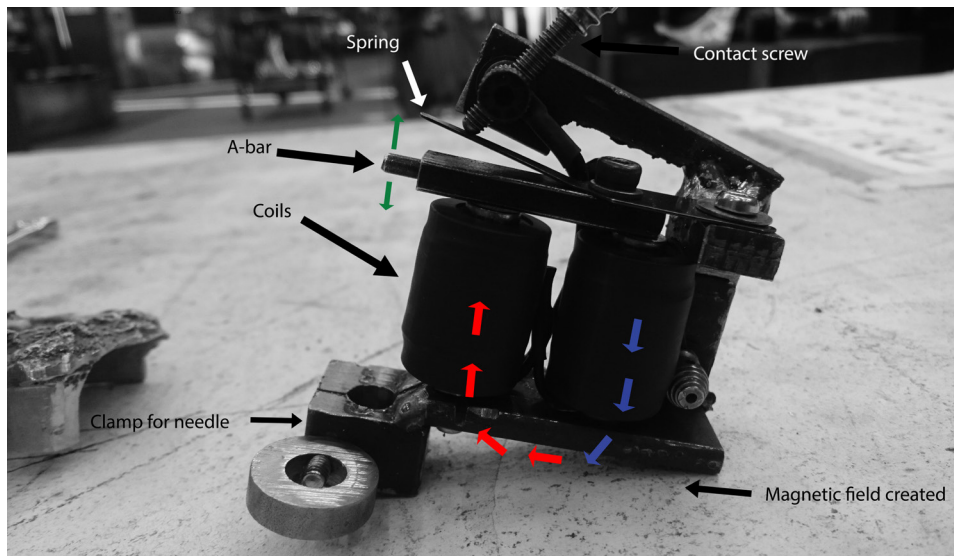
My approach towards building these machines has been filled with rational decisions and I wanted to make a fully functioning machine. Later on the application and use of the machine has been intuitively. I wanted to share the joy of tattooing and I wanted to make a tattoo machine from scratch to then mark myself and others with. I saw it as a challenge to build and create this machine from nothing, which in the end would leave permanent marks on the body. The tattoo machine has a history of being built by found materials and what people had available. In the prisons i could be steel wire, batteries and shavers. I decided not to make the prison style machines but a machine often used by the tattoo artists today, a coil machine. I would do it myself but with found materials and with my knowledge of the material and craft.

I started off with reading about tattoo machines Online and how others had built them before me and I began building the coils for the machines.

The coil is an electro magnet in the machine. Essentially a copper wire wrapped around a metal core. When given an electric current it activates this magnet and it will pull down the A-bar which is connected to a spring.

When the A-bar is forced down by the magnetic field it will break the circuit to which the front spring is connected to and the magnetic field will collapse. Without a magnetic field the spring wants to move back to its original position and the motion is repeated for as long as the machine is given current. This is what makes the needle go up and down and into the skin. The top of the needle is connected to the A-bar

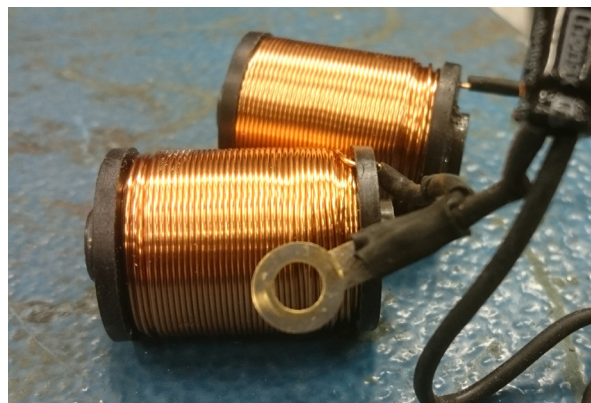
3 <http://www.dazeddigital.com/photography/article/23600/1/linnea-sjoberg> 24/4-2016 - 10:15



To wind the coils with the copper wire I had to build machine to do this properly. For this machine I used an old windshield wiper motor that I connected to a foot pedal so that I can have both hands free when wrapping the coils. It took me many tries to get coils evenly wrapped with the wire, if you do it a little bit messy in the beginning it will exponentially become worse for each pass you do over it. Ending up in that you have to redo the whole process again. Using old wire from a stereo wasn't the greatest material but the best I could find since it has to be an isolated alloy on the wire and no thicker than 0,5 mm. You can either choose to wrap the coil 8, 10 or 12 times. The amount of wrappings of wire on the coils will determine how strong the magnet will be.

Depending on what kind of tattooing you want to do with the machine, you can choose how many wrappings you want for the coils. If you want to tattoo with big or small needles or if you want it to be a fast or slow machine. I've built about four sets of coils so far.

The materials I used was old copper wire from a transformer in a stereo, buttons as plastic washers, electrical tape and a core of metal which I turned on the lathe.



I prefer to find parts for my machines rather than buying everything. Putting something discarded to use again is something important considering how we choose to use resources today and not making use of what we already have. I've also found that when searching for materials instead of buying them, there is a good chance for new encounters and meeting new people. It also gives me the opportunity to share my knowledge and what can be done through craft and art.

Once all the wraps are in place you solder the coils together with a capacitor. The capacitor is an electrical component which can hold a charge and delivers an even pulse of electricity through the coils.

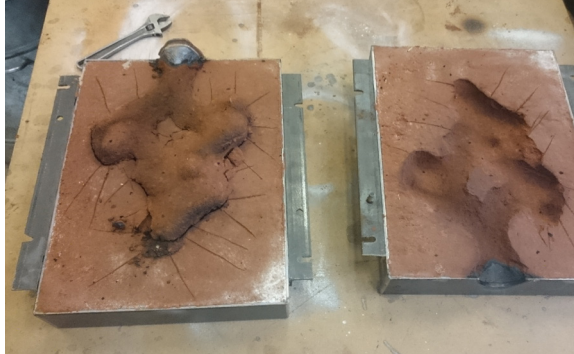


This little part is crucial and also determines how the machine will run. The charge it will hold is determined by the capacitance of the capacitor, which is spelled in microfarad. If you have a capacitor with low values, say 22 uF the machine is fast but not so powerful there for good for lines with small needles. If the value is high, 47 uf, the machine will run slower but with more 'punch'. Good for big needles which have to penetrate a bigger surface of the skin at the same time, when shading or filling areas with color.

For the frame I had decided that I wanted to try and cast them in bronze. The bronze gives certain properties to the machine. It acts as an shock absorber since the material is pretty soft and it's very conductive. We learned to cast bronze during the autumn and I wanted to further develop my skill and do sand castings. I especially like the sand casting because you take an object, press it in this sand and then fill the void created with another material.

It's a very straight forward technique which can be easily done many times but only once in the sand you've packed, after you've casted you have to repack the frame. So it's a onetime use only.

The raw material of the frames was from pieces of the woods from the area around Dals langed. I used bark, sticks and moss which i glued together to create the frame. I wanted the texture and feeling of



the forest to show how the machine has been part of something else in an earlier life. And that now these pieces have been put together to form the machine. Later on it will become rust, dust and pieces. The bronze I used was also from an old sculpture which I casted in the autumn. It's a special sensation to cut up a sculpture which you worked so much on and melt it down to something else. It shows the fragility of the material and how easily it can change from one state to another. For me it was important to take the old sculpture and transform it into something else.

In a way to show transient properties of everything we choose to surround us with. The bronze casted frames turned out nicely but also demanded a lot of work with filing and polishing. It was hard

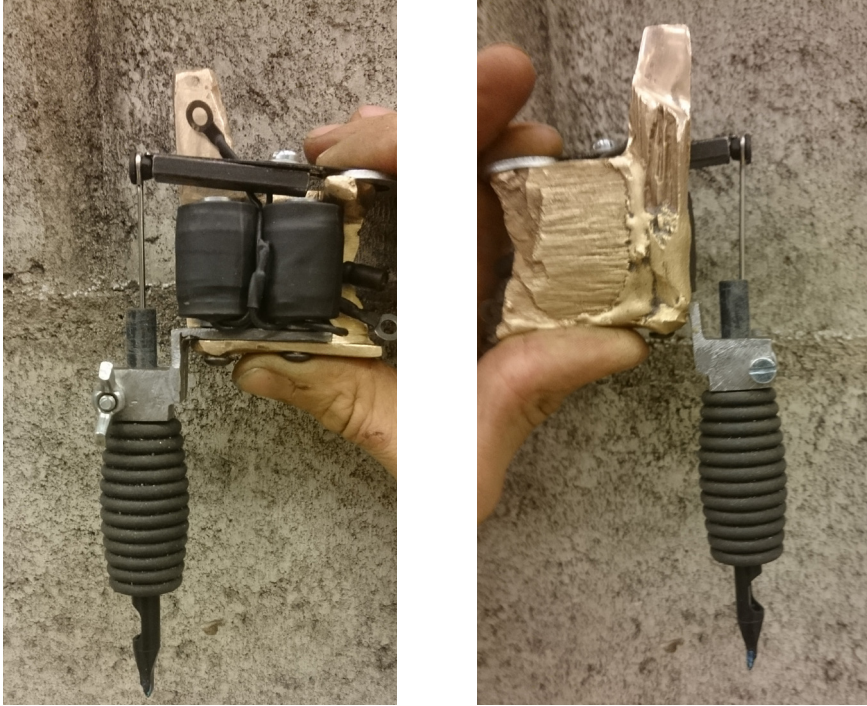


getting right properties of the frames in terms of angles and dimensions. From three casted frames I managed to get one to work as I intended. The others were either too frail or the wrong proportions.

Another part of the machine is the vice in which the tube that hold the needle is placed and has to be hold in place to not move around. The bronze part of the frame which i had intended for this function

was too fragile and wouldn't flex back when given tension. There for milled out the vice so that it too was made of steel.

The first frame and machine was pretty time consuming but I learned a lot about the material, functions and properties of a tattoo machine



and what one must consider when building one.

After this first machine was done I wanted to make a machine as quick as possible and see if it would be equally able to do the tattoo work I intended. It was the start of the Four hour machine. For this machine I used only mild steel and welded the parts together in quite a messy manner.

“The need to be highly skillful in using materials may have excluded some artists from expressing a number of their ideas in craft materials; but other ideas, usually framed as social critiques, can be effectively expressed in these same materials using less skill involving material and tool manipulation.”⁴

The experience from the first machine allowed me to work quicker and I could work more intuitively building the second machine. With skill and experience from building and working with metal my hands have adapted much to what goes on in the mind. This often results in that I prefer working fast. With a racing mind I often translate

4 Sloppy craft, Postdisciplinarity and the crafts, Edited by Elaine Cheasley Paterson and Susan Surette, Bloombury 2015, 7

this to my hands, already building the next object before I've finished what's in front of me. The power being in the borderland between art and craft is the adoption of a thought to action. Backed up by craft based knowledge gives me freedom to pursue projects and ideas. Either it be framed as social critiques or material based objects I can make an active choice.

Now that I had two machines done I wanted to introduce them to others and come out of the workshop.

*"Much of the new art focuses on social creativity rather than on self-expression and contradicts the myth of the isolated genius - private, subjective, behind closed doors in the studio, separate from the others and the world"*⁵



Together with my friend Kim we've started working on a bigger tattoo on his arm. I don't use any stencils or drawings in advance. We discuss the composition of the tattoo but I have been given free hands to do whatever I want on his arm. The act of tattooing my friend becomes also a question of what my choice and what influence he has on result. 1961 the exhibition *Living sculpture* took place where Manzoni would sign individuals, turning them into sculptures. There is an ambiguity in who owns the art on my friend's arm, with me being in charge of what will be put into his skin and left there to age with him, in a way there will always be a part of me in Kim but I don't have to hand out a certificate as Manzoni, since the sign will be there to stay. Though I don't share the urge to claim ownership of a tattoo, this approach towards tattooing would inspire me in how I wanted to make use of the machines.

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Gothenburg Workshop

When I'd started to come to a completion of building my tattoo machines I received an email that Fritidsagenturen in Gothenburg was available for us students the 30th of March and I was quick to reply that I wanted to do something and use the space. Which would lead me to the next step in the project of setting up a event with the tattoo machines. I saw the opportunity for me to try out my machines in a public space.

There was also a big challenge involved, How to get people to either get tattoos or do one themselves? I looked towards different ways in how to get people involved and I decided that I wanted to set up a workshop in disguise. To invite people to a workshop, but on arrival they would be introduced to a performance instead.

People would then be invited to tattoo my body. I had the idea to be covered with a cloth and having a square cut out only for my back, I envisioned a sedated patient on the bench of a surgery room with only the part where the incision would be made was visible. I would be an anonymous body for people to tattoo whatever they wanted. The participants would be handed a machine, shown how it worked and then persuaded to tattoo on my body. All this was intended to be handled by a facilitator, and I would be the object. Similar to Marina Abramović performance Rhythm 0.

The participants were also requested to pay a fee for the workshop. I wanted to create a situation where people would have payed and

then instructed or persuaded to tattoo me. Would people have protested on tattooing a, for them, totally unknown body or would the group become violent and humiliate me?

*“Sierra’s works emphasize the tension between the choice of the participants to undertake the tasks for a wage, and their lack of choice owing to their economic situation and neglected medical conditions. The actions he instigates are metaphors – or poetic equivalents – for all the poorly paid jobs backing the structure of the global market economy.”*⁶

In Santiago Sierra works he pays to tattoo people or humiliate them, and making them do degrading work. By that showing the capitalized society and how unprivileged people are used. In a way I wanted the same but opposite, people would have paid to violate someone else’s body. And rather than using the disadvantaged it would have been a use of the privileged.

*“The key to a successful project lies in understanding the social context in which it will take place and how it will be negotiated with the participants or the audience in question.”*⁷

One of the best learning experiences from the workshop in Gothenburg that I got, was to be honest about what I wanted to do before setting up a performance and work towards a target group. The initial idea of setting up a performance as a workshop was to create a tension in an unsuspecting group. What at first thought would be hard was to find participants but as it turned out it would be hard to find help in facilitating the workshop.

I had taken it for granted that I would receive help from friends in being these facilitators for me and I’d agreed with some of them that they wanted to do it. I hadn’t taken into account how much of an undertaking it was for them to handle this unknown group of people that would show up. The ones I’d talked to started backing out and the day for the performance was only coming closer and closer. I started to realize that I had to rethink the concept of this performance to make it work, since it would be only me that would be there to handle a group and I couldn’t find anyone to help instructing

6 <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/sierra-160-cm-line-tattooed-on-4-people-el-gallo-arte-contemporaneo-salamanca-spain-t11852/text-summary> , Elizabeth Manchester
August 2006 - 22/4-2016 - 07:45

7 Pablo Helguera, Education for Socially Engaged Art, Jorge Pinto books, 2011, 30

people to tattoo.

On the day of the performance about 10 people had emailed me their interest of joining the workshop. I brought all my machines and tattoo equipment for the workshop. I had worked out a new idea. I would teach the participants how the machines worked and then let them tattoo each other or me if they wanted. One of the premises for the tattooing was that no one was allowed to use stencils or draw on the skin before tattooing. Similar and inspired from how I had tattooed Kim.



The people who wanted to tattoo would only use the machines. I wanted the tattooing act to consist of a dialogue between the participants and for the tattoo machine to be the technique we would use. Often you draw up in advance the lines of a tattoo. I knew that if I would have allowed people to start drawing we could have stayed there all night. Making the tattooing as center for the workshop was important and not whether you could draw or not.

During the evening I went into depth of how the machines were constructed and how they worked. Some of the participants had some prior experience in tattooing but didn't know how the machine worked and how to properly set up the machine before tattooing. Several times during the evening there was a lot of tension in the group and with an air of excitement and fear. I had just rounded up this group of people, who some new each other but most of them were complete strangers to each other and me. When I told them that we were going to get tattoos that evening, you could have heard a pin drop. At one point I had to put on some music to ease up the group a little bit.

It was weird realizing how I'd constructed this scenario and how much expectation and seriousness people put in the act of tattooing. With quite a lot of prior experience and legs filled with tattoos by my own hand. I have a more relaxed attitude towards getting new tattoos. Explaining how the machines worked took up a lot more time than I had anticipated and some of the participants had to leave before we could start tattooing, but they expressed how sorry they were and that they really would have liked to get tattoos. Eventually three people would get tattoos, two of them were friends of each other. And I tattooed my friend to show the technique and process of setting up the work station before tattooing.



“The community is very appreciative, and the artist’s projects, in varied degrees, help improve the life of the town. However the curator and the artists share a sense that the experience, as beneficial as it was to the town, did not really create interesting or relevant artworks, which was the implicit goal. Did the artists sacrifice too much in the process?”⁸

I believe the workshop was of great learning experience, both on my part and the participants. What has to be clear is not mixing intentions before going into a workshop. Mixed intentions before the workshop, resulted in mixed feelings towards the outcome.

8 Helguera, 29

It's been important for me to learn from this turn of events and to be clear beforehand how I want a performance to work and plan it well in advance.

After the performance/workshop I started to evaluate the situation and felt that the direction of more workshops wasn't what I was looking for in this project. I didn't feel that doing tattoo performances was in line with intentions as well.

“. . .most people don't consider social interaction to be a part of the realm of art, and this can cause miscommunication. . . they were unable to communicate the importance of regarding their activities as artwork and what that meant in terms of the engagement they were anticipating”⁹

The miscommunication in the workshop was the miscommunication within myself and towards the project. Reflecting upon it and seeing the qualities the workshop actually had, brings me satisfaction now but at the time those qualities were hard to see.

The Great stagnation

When met by more questions than answers I found myself stuck in my own project. A horrifying insight and I didn't know anything anymore. It was like I had been struck by instant stupidity.

It is always easy to look back on a project in retrospect and point out what I could have done different and what the most sufficient way would have been to turn things around.

As an artist it's of most importance to have the ability to view your project from a distance, take a step back, breath some fresh air to see things with clear eyes again. Otherwise you will only suffocate on your own panting breaths. Which I almost did. Being honest towards yourself is not always the easiest thing to be. With our midterms coming up, almost imploding by the sense of not seeing a way out. Something had to change.

“As artists step out of the old framework and reconsider what it means to be an artist, they are reconstructing the relationship between individual and community, between art work and public.”¹⁰

9 Helguera 33

10 Mapping the terrain, 76

The Great liberation

I was faced with that if I wanted to continue this project I had to snap back, and that had to happen fast. There is a big difference in thinking ‘what am I doing?’ in a circular thought process than thinking ‘what am I doing?’ With the ability to look both ahead and in retrospect of, what have I done and what brought me here? When you have gone deep into a project, you easily see every choice as the ultimate sacrifice and every path becomes definite making it easy to believe that a new choice would be hard to make.

“...because, nothing takes root in mind when there is no balance between doing and receiving. Some decisive action is needed in order to establish contact with the realities of the world and in order that impressions may be so related to facts that their value is tested and organized.”¹¹

The tattoo machines brought me to the realization that they didn’t have to constitute the project, I wasn’t stuck with them. And the workshop guided me towards what kind of interaction I wanted more of. Which was more of the intuitive work between me and others, whereas the tattoo machines were feeling a bit too controlled for me. Working with tattoos and people is very intimate. My experiences from the workshop was that it could be hard interacting and performing more tattoos with the public and I chose to direct my machines towards more interactive machines and using paint in the space instead.

I wanted to create more the tools for this kind interaction. With a sense of joy I felt that I could move forward and try out new ideas and build new machines. I didn’t have to know what the result would be in advance.

What mostly situates the tattoo machines from the other machines is the approach to which I have built it and the part of working with randomized results have been constituted in the tattooing act and the workshops. To move forward in my project I wanted for the machines themselves to be developed in a more non-rational manner. Thus the birth of The White machine.

“Joy, sorrow, hope, fear, anger, curiosity, are treated as if each in itself were a sort of entity that enters full-made upon the scene...In fact emotions are qualities, when they are significant, of a complex experience that moves and changes.”¹²

11 Art as experience, John Dewey, 1934 Perigee 2015, 47

12 John Dewey, 43

The white machine

I started working intuitively, starting at one point and see where it would take me. I wanted to create a big coloring machine to paint with. I would use many off-centered dangerously spinning motors. The approach of building this machine reminded me a bit of my washing machine in Bengtsfors and how it came to be. What felt different and better this time around was how much I already knew about the motors, how to connect them and adjust them. The urge wanting to know how things work always pays off in the end when faced with a new challenge.

When I started building the machine I found something I'd been longing for in my project. People would see my creations and burst out in laughter. There was joy in working and joy in showing others the process. You can create expectations and tensions with a machine, when you don't really know how it will work and it has properties that make it feel dangerous to operate, and it probably is which add to the excitement and tension when using it. I have yet to fully understand how this machine works and all of its potentials.



It's constructed of three different electrical motors. One big motor with the force of 0,5 horse powers, which is strong. On to this motor i mounted a plastic cylinder which is a bit off center, making it oscilate and vibrate a lot. I had to fixate it to six pallets so that it wouldn't shake to pieces. Together with this motor there are two more, one smaller just next to the big one which spins closely to it with a small tool to help spread the paint in to finer particles.

Above these two machines I mounted a 12 volt windshield wiper motor, connected to a spoon that would feed the big motor from above with paint.

I wanted to use the centrifugal effect to spread the paint in a space. As Anish Kapoor's Wax cannon completely transforms a space by the force of a machine, I wanted to explore how this machine can leave a trace and transform a space.

*"The sculptor Anish Kapoor has spoken eloquently of the capacity of colors to transform things in the most immediate, formal way: 'It has a metaphoric value which is vast, and this is immensely interesting to me.'"*¹³

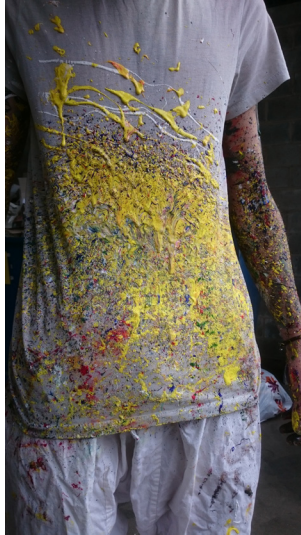
I decided to paint the whole machine white and cover all the machines in metal boxes, I was interested in seeing the transition from *untouched white* to become a result of interaction. It gives the machine a property of showing that action has occurred. Covering the motors with metal boxes also adds to the mystery of the machine. When you can see all the mechanical functions it makes it easier to understand and some of the magic is lost. I also wanted for the machine to develop through use, and get more and more paint on it to create a physical memory. You could look at the machine and try and work out what has happened and what it did. Just like the tattoo leaves a trace on the body after interaction the white machine will leave its trace.

White machine test

So far I've only had the chance to try it once in a pretty small space which I constructed myself, a cube 2 x 3 meters wrapped in plastic. I announced the unveiling of the machine at the school and would perform a performance/experiment with it. It would be the first test run of the white machine and the results that came from that test run were almost overwhelming at first. The machine worked great, it spread paint far better than I could have hoped for. And the splash on the walls were also beyond expectation. The plastic sheets on the walls for the cube portrayed the most intricate pattern of small and big dots, splashes and overlapping paint. Standing inside the cube to operate the machine, I had white clothes on and through my interaction with the machine I became part of the result as well.

13 Color in art, John Gage, Thames & Hudson, 2006, 147

There are many possibilities for what I could do with this machine, using it in bigger spaces, indoors, outdoors. I could use Textile paint to color fabrics. I'm also curious in trying it together with someone. With the white machine I think I've barely scraped the surface of its potential.



The white machine helped me come back to what I'd wanted for these interactions between color, space and people to be.

One of the differences between this machine and the tattoo machines is the way I approached in constructing them. Anything with The white machine could go wrong and it would be a result, somehow I knew that. With the tattoo machines I wanted to get everything right and make a properly working machine to do tattoos with. This involved me a lot deeper into technical aspects than I'd first anticipated.

The result of this was that I learned a lot about the tattoo machines and every aspect of what makes them work. But the gain of knowledge in lathing, milling, soldering would also allow me to more freely explore the other machines.

Before the White machine had a chance to be tested, with the racing mind in my hands. The last piece of my machines started to come to life. The analog tool. A lot smaller than the white machine but yet as effective.

The Frenchy

During winter last year I had the opportunity to make an installation in a room at Nobelberget, Stockholm. They had heard about my washing machine from Bengtsfors and invited me to work with them. First I painted everything black in the room to create a background for the paint. The paint which they provided was in spray cans and florescent. After setting off the machine in the room and working with trying to spread the paint around. Feeling that the spread of color didn't really give the result I was looking for I started experimenting with the spray cans, making holes in them and getting more of a color explosion. And it really worked, covering myself and the entire room in paint. At one point a spray can went off in my face, which was a less pleasant experience.

From this experience of dotting spray cans I realized that there wasn't any sufficient tool for making holes in the can and I wanted to develop a tool for this purpose.



The Frenchy is intended for all artists who wants to blow spray cans and see a lot of paint in an instant. I had two goals in mind to make this tool practical when used. It had to be small and it had to be easy

to take on and off. When you take it upon yourself to work with paint in a public space, it's not often that you have so much time at hand. And I wanted the Frenchy to be easy to use, like changing a cap on the can.



In developing this tool I had a lot of help from my prior experience in working with the coils and turning metal on the lathe. I made a cone shaped funnel that would make the hole in the can. I tried out different variations in how the cone would look, making one slightly wider in the opening and trying to put the opening slightly on top of the tip which would make the hole into the can. I didn't want the tool to make it too easy in controlling how the paint exits from the can. Because the point of making a hole in the can is to get the all the uncontrollable force of paint all at once. So far I've made about seven different Frenchy's. Partly because as soon as I shared pictures of the tool Online people wanted one. And as a result of that I was invited to Gothenburg to join a friend to do a piece and try out the new tools.

Gothenburg Graffiti

I drove down to Gothenburg to meet friends and do an outdoor art piece. The work was a collaboration between me and my friend. We wanted to mix some of the classical graffiti art and the use of Frenchy's. The graffiti lettering is credited to my friend and we worked on the design together. For me it was important to try out these tools in the intended environment, putting them up to the test and see how

they worked. Together we came up with different improvements that could be made and I see it as something to develop further. The graffiti collaboration is one example of uses of the Frenchy.

“There is a distinct shift in the focus of creativity from the autonomous, self-contained individual to a new kind of dialogical structure that frequently is not the product of a single individual but is the result of a collaborative and interdependent process.”¹⁴

The intention of my machines is not to say how they *should* be used. I have shown how I used them for this project. For future works and collaborations I always want to have the possibility to adapt and see new uses for how my machines could work.



14 Mapping the terrain, 76

Summery

I have created three machines which all hold the possibility to change the space, by being activated they create an interaction between the user and her surroundings. This interaction has been different from machine to machine and situation to situation. Yet, when looked upon from what they have created between me and the people I connected to through the project I see them as one. I have used my knowledge to create the tools, which I've then put in a framework for interaction

When activating a space there is a transition and change of states. State of mind, state of space. With my machines I wanted to activate and change the state of the space. When you change the state of the space around you; you also change a state within yourself. The tattoo machines has the ability to change the state of your skin, they also have the ability to change how a person could be received in certain spaces.

Over time as this project has developed more and more. With the method of keeping the process of the work as intuitively as possible and take chances as they appear. The need of placing my art in situations and relating them to the outside is what gives all the pieces their power of adaption. They have developed through the interaction with people and space.

The three pieces have been presented in situations that I've wanted to try out and those situations are part of the exploration in the project. There is no definitive space for them and I wish to honor the diversity which my machines hold.

With the Gothenburg graffiti I presented a tool for interaction to my friend and I wanted to see how he would want to use them. Through our collaboration it became something I could have never thought of myself. I look forward to place the white machine in new scenes with other premises to see what results the next test will give me. I will keep the tattoo machines, to have and tattoo myself and others with, as well as searching forward for other ways to use tattoo for communication.

The intention of the exam project has been to find those interactions, all of these interactions have led to wide range of results and things that have happened along the way are some which I've chosen not to address for this project.

What place does graffiti have in the public space or what could the social implications of getting tattoos be. This project has from the start been an investigation in the relations between color, space, machines and people. And holding on to those relations has been important for me when presenting how they are connected without deviating too much from the initial idea. For this project I've created the frame for what holds them together and present them as such.

Objectives from my project description

- *Creating interactive coloring machines that will allow new ways of working with a space.*
- *Finding a space where I can realize my machines*
- *Using different groups either by gender, age, artists or not and analyze the results and outcomes in relation to the activated group.*
- *The tests with C.S.M.P will be a type of performance and documented likewise.*
- *The interaction between what I've created and the people and space involved is the foundation of the project. I wish for my project to be assessed on the result of the interaction.*

All the created machines have allowed me to work in new ways with both people, space and colors. The space has either been set up by me as the cube for the white machine test or the Gothenburg workshop. The Frenchy allowed me to work in a space which I was introduced to through collaboration.

My work in finding these spaces has been both by chance and taking opportunities. When an opportunity has appeared I've started to work with the frame around it to see what could be done. The work in the spaces all had different outcomes and the participatory involvement varied.

For the Gothenburg workshop I had to adjust and be flexible in how to work with the participants.

At the workshop there was a range of participants; Males, females old and young, which was a really nice turn out. There was the woman past middle age, a textile artist with a broken arm that wanted to learn how to tattoo. There was the illustrator who wanted to translate illustrations to tattoos. There was the group who had their own little home studio and had just started to learn how to tattoo.

They had all joined the workshop in a common urge to learn something new and I had the opportunity to share that knowledge.

In The white machine test I used a space and a machine as an act of performance for an audience. As much as it was a test on my part in seeing how my machine would work I wanted to share the experience of how one can move and work in space with colors and machine. The clear plastic around the cube was to take the participants as close as possible to the action.

With the Frenchy I was invited to a bit uncommon ground and had the chance to explore a space which someone else could guide me through.

The exploration of space, as I see it, has started in the smaller space within me and when I've started to build and create the machine a bigger space has opened up before me.

When I create and build objects I see them as helpers that can take me places and show me new uncharted territory. This is why I like working so much with the machines because they all have opened up new possibilities for me. In the future I want to build and create together others from the start and a interaction can start from a much earlier stage. But going into depth with the technical aspects and learning through trying and building in my own little space has also been of much joy.

I have also come to realize regarding my last objective, that I want people to interact with what I'd created, to not be the whole truth. I wanted for an interaction with what I'd created, but it's also been important for me to take part in that interaction. There for I wish to change it to; "The interaction between what I've created and the people and space is shared experience between me and the others. The foundation of the project is to share a experience of interaction. I wish for my project to be assessed on the creating of shared experiences and the results of the interactions."

The use of my Gopro, which has been my main technique for documenting this project has been a really good experience. And I have found a satisfactory way to document my project. With the camera head mounted I've had the possibility to move and work with both hands free. Also in having the camera on for a longer period of time has the ability to capture those moments which you could have missed otherwise. Clipping and compiling these clips to movies has been a way for me to express the tension and feelings in what happened when I used the machines. When the center of happening and action has been when the machines are in use, I've found the videos to be a good medium in bringing back some of the feelings and giving the viewer a taste of what has happened.

For my personal evaluation of the project it's been like reliving the day in the evening, looking through my videos. At some point when I've forgotten that the camera has been on, while discussing my project with other students, it's been really good to hear my own words about project.

Through my three years of experience at this school I've have done a huge development both technically and artistically. In this text my primary focus has been to show how my technical knowledge has been applied to my artistic intentions. What my explanation of technical development has overshadowed is the relation to which my development in craft has been. Is the Frenchy or tattoo machine craft?

“This begs the question: does the subversion of technique automatically erase the origin of the work within a craft discipline and transform it into a work of contemporary visual art? Furthermore, does the use of craft material by visual artists eradicate the craft side of the work? In order to formulate an answer to these questions, one might ask: how can craft stay true to itself, keep its identity, while at the same time push its boundaries of both technical and conceptual exploration? What language needs to be used to have a discourse that is current and progressive without being repressive?”¹⁵

In relation to craft my work is progressive and I've expressed my work with metal in many different ways. The work with bronze was both an investigation in the material as it was to manipulate the material into a machine for use in a social context. Looking at the Frenchy I see qualities of corpus and a tool which in itself is decorative and can act as an accessory for the user. Qualities I have yet to investigate. Regarding my approach towards gaining knowledge, learning, doing by myself, taking apart. The craft has opened up new paths for me. Through the craft I go on a journey to find the interactions and connections, which I keep coming back to. Because it's there and always there my interest will be and I have found craft to be a great way to connect. It's of great importance to my work but nothing takes that first place. The connection, the unspoken language, which we all understand and speak.

15 Elaine Cheasley Paterson, Susan Surette, Sloppy craft, 63

In India I worked with traces and foot prints. I left traces on the white machine. I left traces on a wall in Gothenburg. I left traces on myself and other, permanent marks of ink on the body. What those traces speak of is the fact that something happened. The space was activated and others can have the joy of seeing the aftermath. The traces left on the mind of the people I touched in this journey is exclusive for us. And in the end everyone will curse themselves for not being there when it actually happened.



Discussion and Conclusion

On the discussion of the exam presentation many interesting thoughts were raised and gave me new perspectives of the work.

While working towards interacting and bringing people together, I found that I maybe hadn't stressed enough how much this interaction is an interaction with me. I see my part of the project almost as the conductor of the symphony. I don't wish to be the center of attention but I have to admit that find great joy in seeing how something I've constructed can take on a life of its own. I think it's easy to neglect ones role in an art project, since much of the attention is towards what the project can bring forth. I've also come to see the importance of assessing one's own role in the project and what it does with the interactions and meetings. Because if you don't evaluate what your part is I think it's easy to shift focus towards what everyone else are doing or what's potentially not working as expected. At that point I think it's important to look inwards and do some introspection.

We also came to talk about whom I address in my art. Reflecting upon this, I found how much I search and work with subcultures of society. The graffiti, the tattoo art and a aggressively interactive coloring machine. I think attracts a certain group of society. Even though many still frown upon tattoos, we've come a long way. With the workshop in Gothenburg I was positively surprised of the wide range of participants. My work can also work as a way for me to deconstruction preconceived ideas and stereotypes which I have.

In regard to whom my work pleases and the question whether I should try the opposite towards the participants, I think the discussion failed to address the fact that even though my work can be of pleasure for us involved, there is always a high risk off displeasing a public. I think my work has the quality of, that if you're not initiated, you'll have a harder time to understand what's going on. The group feeling is something I definitely can develop further and working with the momentum of a excluded group rushing forwards and almost seen as a danger if you stand in its path.

So far much of my works of interaction has been with people that share many of my values and ideas. It could be interesting for the future to work with groups I don't agree at all with. How would that interaction develop? Maybe create an artwork which attracts people I usually would disagree with?

With food for thought and many ideas for the future I'll continue search for connectedness and the great interactions.

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