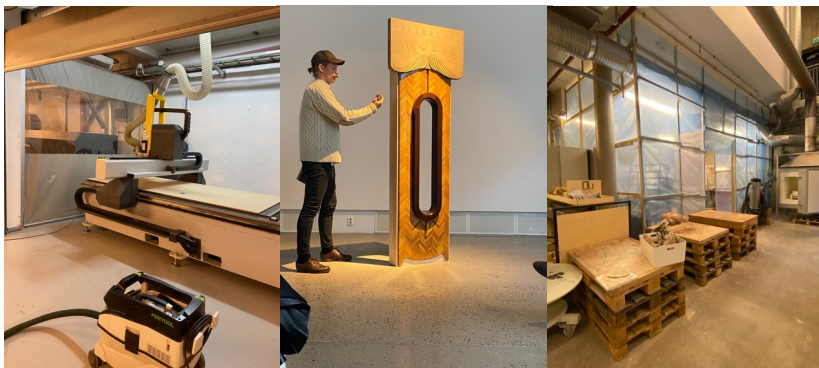


Since this flyer is tagged with the task of ‘unlearning’, this time, I will start—as Norman Potter advises—with zero. After having talked through Sarah Davies’ book about maker-spaces: is KHIO a maker-space, as she describes them? In phases, perhaps, but not really. So: where are we?

The image above features in a course-book in technical drawing from 1848. Together with descriptive geometry, this topic was introduced at our school—colloquially called the Drawing School—4 years after it was established in 1818. The curriculum was inspired by the *École Polytechnique* in Paris.

Child of the French Revolution in 1789 and harbinger of industrialisation. The basic subjects of engineering was part of our school’s curriculum till 1910—88 years!—when a school of engineering (NTH) was established in Trondheim city. Basically it taught art, engineering and crafts *between*.

So—ladies and gentlemen—welcome to KHIO. Though the corridors here can be uncanny, when we look around wondering “what’s cooking”, the machines are exactly what they seem. They are industrial machines. There is no crafts-tradition at KHIO: there is art, industry and a *between-space*.



If you walked around taking photographs at KHIO—focussing on the workshops and machines—how much would you have to *fake it* in order to make the school look like an industrial facility? Probably *not* very much. As we moved into the facilities in 2010, the big ceramics furnace was sensational.

At that time, it was one of the biggest ones in the world (I heard that there was a bigger one in China). Everyone visiting the school is awestruck by the machines, the workshops and the facility. And the school has been very proud to show them. But do we really understand *why they are here*?

I am not so sure about that. They are expensive to maintain and run. A large “mouthful” for a school like ours. Picking up on the story on the front-page, however, a working-hypothesis is that the industrial scope simply became a heritage of the school: an industrial scope with the machines *on campus*.

Though the school has alternated between being called a bastard child of the *Bauhaus*, and standing in a crafts tradition, neither is true. The crafts defined on a sliding scale *between* art and industry. And the curriculum in drawing, form and colour was not foundation-course: rather a *turbine*.

By this I mean that the reflection at school was powered by drawing, form and colour *throughout*: they constituted a reflective touchdown for life-long learning among the students that had been taught there. Even today, the students from the school—now old—call our school the Drawing School.

The people working in *drawing, form and colour* were specialised, certainly. But since their professional activity was located at the precise spot where art and industry (previously engineering) met, they developed a form of knowledge which was a strange mix between modernism and alchemy.

In our day, it is a little bit curious that this narrative remained *tacit knowledge* (remember Joan’s point in the discussion last time): rather obvious when looking at the technical facilities of the school, but somehow extremely difficult to *tell*. This narrative about the school doesn’t exist.

Or, we started to round it up in 2018 when we celebrated the school’s *bi-centennial*. The history books that exist focus on the institutional story—the long political process of establishing the school and the funding for it—or the output from known and successful artists who studied and taught here.

So, if we have not been interested in this up till now, why should it start to tickle our curiosity at present? I have been thinking about this question since Anja asked her’s about the vision of design at KHIO. I think that a number of pieces fall into place on the polytechnical backdrop.

Defining oneself artistically (in reflective formats such as the BB) and industrially (the level of machinery and tools available) provides the designer with the big *free-space* in between. This is *awesome*, certainly, but perhaps a number of personal and professional choices will find care in this story.