



**Blurred lines** *between nothing and almost something*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

I'm not dubious of my artistic expression. However, I think it is difficult to place my work in a commercial context. Although I am pursuing a master's degree in furniture and interior design, I consider myself both an artist and a designer, and I do not want to limit myself to one discipline. Does it have to be either art or design, or is it possible to operate in a space where the disciplines meet and the lines are fluid?

We are often told that while art exists in itself and shall express an idea, design must solve a problem and fulfill a function. In the design study, there is therefore great focus on the society. We are trained to create to satisfy the needs of others rather than to create to express something. The focus on forming your own, artistic expression has been virtually absent during my years as a design student at the Bergen and Oslo Academy of the Arts.

With this essay, I will attempt to explain my creation process and place myself in the creative landscape. I will do this by addressing the factors that I believe are essential in any creative process: Curiosity, chance and intuition. I want to investigate whether there are room for a more intuitive approach to a design process, and write about creators who in my opinion operates somewhere in between, connecting design and art. Finally, I will explain what I have learned through working on this essay, and what I want to implement in my master thesis.

Since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, there have been discussions about art-versus-craft. There have been strong voices in both directions, and countless books and articles have been written on the subject. I will only to a small extent address this discussion in my thesis. Nor will I do an attempt on explaining all the aspects of the concept of art and design. The aim for this thesis is first and foremost to put into words a process that I have had problems explaining, as well as to look more closely at the space between art and design.

## 2. BACKGROUND

The English word “art” is derived from the Latin *ars* and Greek *techne*, which meant any human skill. The opposite of human art in that older way of thinking was not craft but nature (Shiner, 2001, p. 5).

The modern system of art is a European invention barely two hundred years old (Shiner, 2001, p. 3). For over two thousand years, Western culture had no word or concept for fine art. The craftsman/artist were viewed as a maker rather than creator, and musical works, statues and poems were treated as serving particular purposes rather than as existing primarily for themselves (Shiner, 2001, p. 17). According to Shiner, “there were neither “artists” nor “artisans” but only artisan/artists who gave equal honor to skill and imagination, tradition and invention” (Shiner, 2001, p. 18).

The great division between art and crafts took place in the eighteenth century. It was now being said that the fine arts were a matter of inspiration and genius and meant to be enjoyed for themselves, while crafts and popular arts only required skill and were meant for use or entertainment (Shiner, 2001, p. 5).

The separation of arts, crafts and design has persisted to this day. The book *Design Art* summarizes what is the broad opinion even today:

The main aspects of design are shape and functionality whilst art usually has to rely on concept and aesthetics. Another difference is that art can be interpreted in a very broad sense, allowing freedom in the choice of materials and production methods. The purpose of design is to create and manufacture serial products. In that case not all materials are eligible anymore and in addition there is the dependence on production techniques (Cauwelart et al., 2008, p. 4).

However, there are several, including myself, who believe that the strict distinction is about to be erased. Jaime Hayon, a Spanish designer, has claimed that:

The word design has changed very much. It certainly does not mean form following function anymore. The categories are dissolving too, between all kinds of creative practice and types of design. Today design is about a hybrid form of creativity, a fluidity. There is no more insisting on “this is art” or “this is design”. That is why this is such an interesting moment. (Cauwelart et al., 2008. p. 42).

The first week of this course we were divided into collaborative groups, my group consisting of Herman, Tie Lit, Chuan and myself (group S). Our take on this was to play a game where we took elements from our logbook: words, sentences and pictures. By playing this game we all got new perspective on our design process and projects. By assessing other projects, and withdrawing from the feelings and attachments in my project, it was easier to make clear reflections. The other’s feedback formed the background for writing this essay:

### **Tie Lit**

“It’s a journey, a linear journey, but also a circular journey. Eventually it weaves a web, like a spider’s web, like a map. You can stop everywhere on the map. Everywhere is meaningful because the existence of the map.



*Fig. 1. Photo by Francesco Tomasinelli and Emanuele Biggi*

But it is not easy to let others into your map and the world it depicts. It also seems to require a reason and motivation to enter your map. The reason cannot be the mere fact that maps exist. So the view of the destination and the path you plan, to get to the destination, it's the extra value that you give to the map. It's how you connect with your audience."

"These added values, and the maps themselves, keep growing."

## **Herman**

"Ali works a lot based on intuition, but what exactly is the difference between intuition and chance? If a jellyfish is washed up on the beach by a wave, or a star stops burning and dies out, we call this coincidence. So, what separates coincidence and intuition? Does it have to be a human action without us being able to describe why it was done? Isn't that a coincidence? I do not always think there is a reason why we do as we do, and I do not always think one needs to look for reasons either."



*Fig. 2. Dumbo octopus, photo by unknown*

## Chuan

”If you are caught in time, the immediate present time, then your choice is very limited. Only certain things really correctly belong to that time. But if you want to escape from that constraint. Then the whole world, I mean not just the industrialised world. But the whole world is someplace where you belong”



*Fig. 3. Multivers, illustration by unknown*

### 3. CURIOSITY

Humans are curious beings. We have always had an urge to understand the unknown. Aristotle wrote that “all men by nature desire to know”. Some of us are more curious than others. Actually, twin studies have shown that genes are responsible for 60 to 70 percent of a person’s curiosity (The Eppendorf, 2019).

In order to discover new things, humans regularly surpass their limitations. According to Greek mythology, Pandora was given a jar as a gift and warned that the jar should never be opened. But she could not resist her curiosity, and out came all sorts of disease, suffering and evil that have haunted the humans since (Store norske leksikon, 2018).

The story of Pandora’s jar suggests that curiosity can also lead to suffering. In the book *The Craftsman*, Richer Sennet writes that:

In the working out of Greek culture, its peoples came increasingly to believe that Pandora stood for an element of their *own* natures; culture founded on man-made things risk continual self-harm. Something nearly innocent in human beings can produce this risk: men and women are seduced by sheer wonder, excitement, curiosity, and so create the fiction that opening the casket is a neutral act. (Sennett, 2008, p. 2)



Fig. 4. 1896 Pandora by William Waterhouse

It is undoubtedly a truth in the fact that curiosity and human creation also cause suffering. Oppenheimer’s atom bomb is perhaps the clearest example. We now live in a time where it is becoming more and more clear to us how human inventions through the ages have led to irreparable damage to the planet, and today threaten the existence of all species. On the other hand, one cannot escape the fact that curiosity also has led to revolutionary inventions. One of the earliest tributes to the craftsman is found in a Homeric hymn to Hephaestus, the master god of craftsmen:

Sing clear-voiced Muse, of Hephaestus famed for skill. With bright-eyed Athena he taught men glorious crafts throughout the world – men who before used to dwell in caves in the mountains like wild beasts. But now that they have learned crafts through Hephaestus famous for his art they live a peaceful life in their own houses the whole year round. (Sennett, 2008, p. 21)

I believe that a person's curiosity in a creative practice makes it difficult not to peek through the keyholes of other disciplines. If we are curious in our surroundings and what it inhabits, we might see links or small problems that others don't see. Curiosity is a critical tool for creative makers, to enhance the world if we are critical about what we create.

#### **4. CHANCE**

A design process usually starts with an idea. It may be abstract at first, but then you try to give it context. You write down the idea and draw a sketch. Then it can be further developed. You make a plan for material, form and function. Then you make mock-up in cardboard to predict as many details of knowledge as possible before you make it in the real material. This is a classic design process, cost efficient and predictable. But what if you don't want an accurate result? What if you want to leave some of the process to chance?

Chance play a major role in art, and perhaps especially in abstract art. Jackson Pollock was known for his characteristic, seemingly random style of painting, which consisted of dripping paint on canvases. Hans Arp made collages according to the laws of chance. In the book *Dada & Surrealism* Matthew Gale writes that:

Arp simply tore up the work and threw it on the ground, later finding in the random arrangement a freer and more suggestive method that dispensed with the dexterity and judgements of the finely tuned eye of the artist. (Gale, 1997, s. 63)

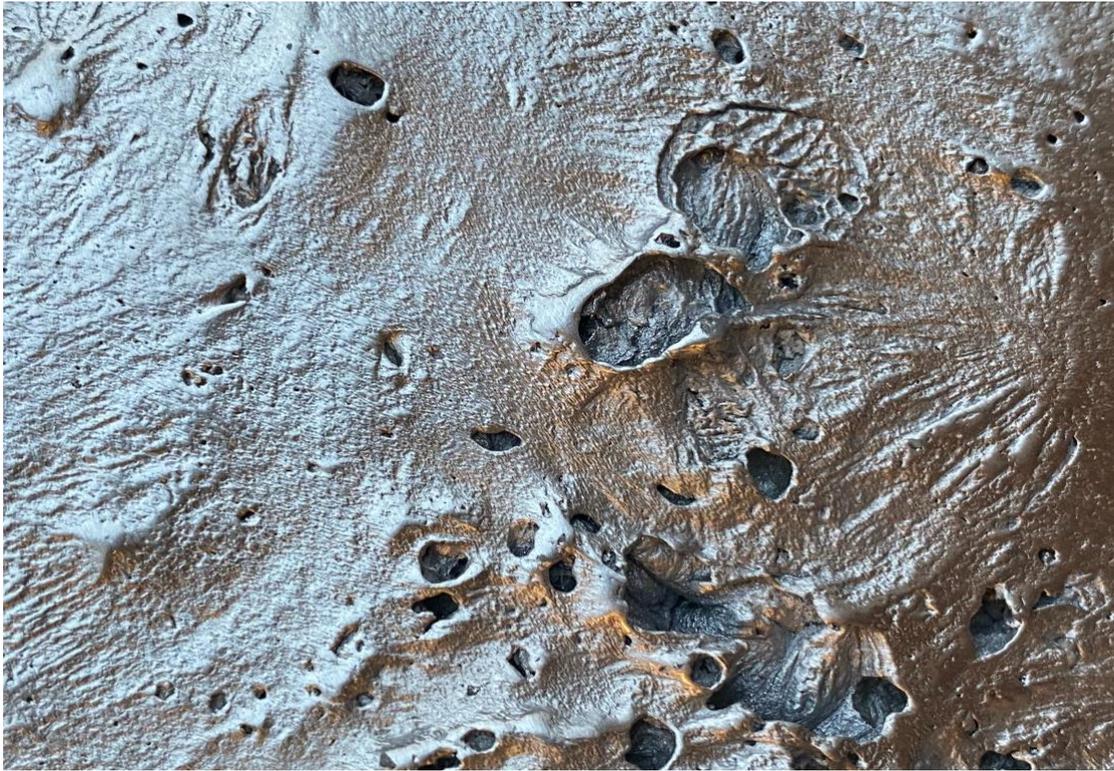
Can coincidences play a role in a design process, or is it acquired to be planned down to the smallest detail to get the desired result? I'm positive that there are room for a different approach to design, where everything isn't planned down to the tiniest detail. In the book

*Understanding design*, Kees Dorst writes that he likes to view design as an exploration, and that each design project is a new world to explore:

The key to being an explorer is having an attitude that prevents you from getting stuck. You must be determined, creative and open to the subtle hints that indicate your progress. You must be able to think and react quickly. You should also not be overly result-focused, but ready to learn your way towards a solution. The rest follows from this basic attitude. (Dorst, 2003, p. 192)

In my process, chance plays a vital part for what I want to achieve. When I am creating, I am always searching for something unpredictable. In the first course at the Oslo Academy of the Arts, I wanted to make a pattern in cast sand and cast a stone into liquid aluminum, in an open mold. I thought this was an effective and intuitive way to create an abstract and partly random expression. Before I started, I consulted with craftsmen who worked with casting and natural stone. An art teacher at the Bergen Academy of the Arts told me that when metal encounters with moisture it can explode and hit you like projectiles from a bullet. I feared that this could be a consequence if the sand or stone was not sufficiently dry. When creating a stone sculpture, I visited *Billedhoggerforeningen* at Helsefyr, where I talked to a professional who had worked with casting for a lifetime. He denied that the metal would explode, and that the stone in worst case would crack.

When aluminum with a core temperature between 550-650 degrees Celsius hits a cold marble block and encapsulates it, the gases inside the aluminum want to escape, and they are forced to escape upwards. This in turn creates cavities, air bubbles or holes in the aluminum. For some, this may be an unforeseen event. For me it certainly was, at least the first time I experimented with this. But if I had sufficient knowledge about the metal and its reaction pattern, I could have predicted that this would happen.



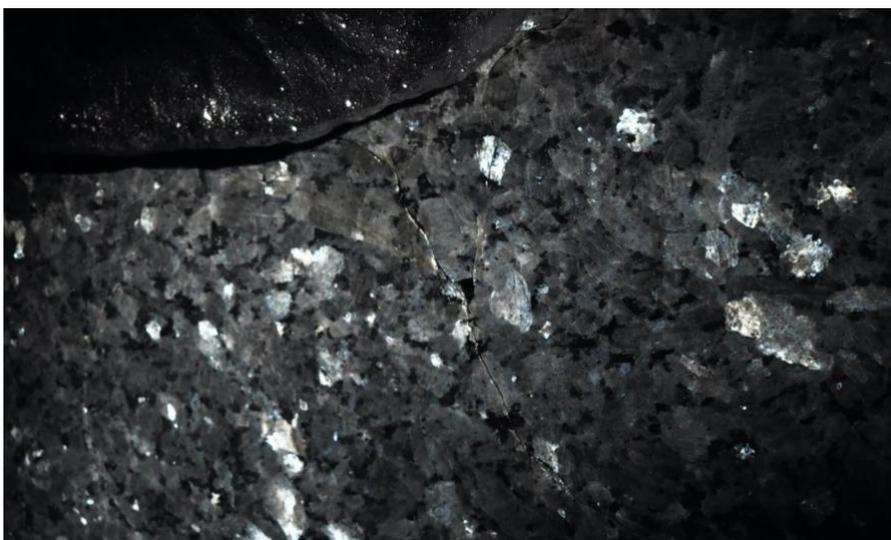
*Fig. 5. Private photo*

I also observed that the outer layer of the marble bounced off. This is a consequence of the fact that the temperature of aluminum and marble falls at different rates and that aluminum shrinks by 2 % when it goes from liquid to solid mass. The aluminum will then squeeze around the stone, which can cause it to break. I experienced this when I chose to try Larvikite, which is a hard rock. In Larvikite, the crystals are large and the stone is very hard. It is therefore less susceptible to pressure. When it gives in, large areas of the stone might break off, and not just the outer layer as with marble. Marble consists largely of lime, and the crystals are small, which in this case is a positive property. In the experimentation process, I learned that using a soft rock is favorable if you want to cast stone into aluminum.



*Fig. 6. Marble & aluminum, private photo*

Another factor that opens for unforeseen events is the sand. At the casting workshop at KHiO, we use *oilsand*. This sand is moist so it can stick together and make precise impressions. I found that there are several reasons why one use a positive and a negative mold when casting in *oilsand*. An obvious reason is to get an underside and an upper side that are planned and that can have different relief. What I also learned was that the top mold keeps the smoke inside the mold. When we filled up six different, open forms, a toxic smoke filled the workshop, which triggered the fire alarm and resulted in the workshop having to close for a couple of days. This was one of my first weeks at KHiO, I apologize for the inconvenience.



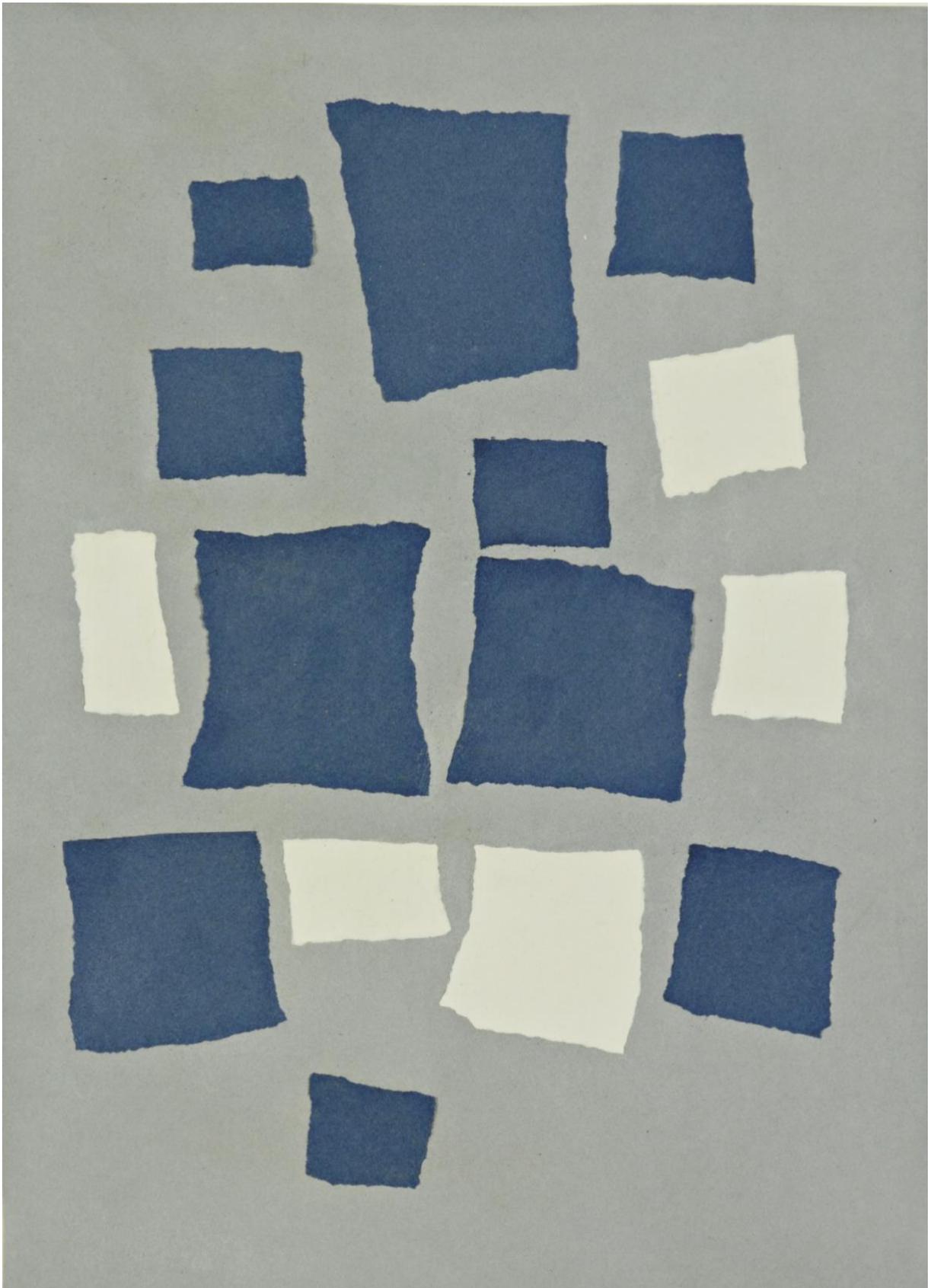
*Fig. 7. Aluminum & Larvikite, private photo*

In my experimentation with aluminum and stone, several unforeseen events occurred, even though I had consulted with professionals in advance. I achieved what I wanted, which was to encapsulate natural stone in liquid aluminum. The expression was also rough and organic, as I wanted. However, I could never have predicted that the surface would get bubbles and holes due to the gases. One can thus say that the outcome was partly accidental.

If I had repeated the process a hundred times and tested different techniques, I could probably have achieved a smooth surface without holes and bubbles. And that's the reason why I work the way I do. Once I have experimented with one material, I move on to the next. It is the curiosity of the unknown that drives me. For me, creativity and curiosity go hand in hand. And I think that the more knowledge you get in a field, the less room there will be for the unforeseen. When you start repeating something, you acquire more and more knowledge, and then you may automatically begin to strive for perfection. This is perhaps also something that separates my process from a craftsman's. A craftsman will try to hide his faults, while I want to them to show.

It's not that I do not have a plan when I start a project. I know what I want to do, but not where it ends up. I am open, and facilitate that arbitrary and unforeseen things can happen when I create my objects. I want parts of the process to be out of my control. When Pollock dripped paint on the canvas, it was a deliberate act to achieve a result that looks chaotic and random, and not least an abstraction of what the painting was originally. What was unintentional or unforeseen in this process is how the paint ran across the canvas. Here, there were probably several factors that came into play, such as the consistency of the paint or how the canvas was placed. Even if he had the same starting point every time, the paint stains that hit the canvas would never be exactly the same. This was beyond his control, and his mood and mental space will affect the result. This is the kind of coincidence I want to use in my creation process.

Were Arp's collages as random as one might get the impression of? The grid-like composition may be evidence that he did not fully relinquish control. Examination has also revealed that he used heavyweight, fine-art, paper, and that the edges were torn on a slant to reveal their inner fibers. According to MoMa, "it suggests a counterintuitive interpretation: that the work may be as much a visual representation of chance as a product of it" (The Museum of Modern Art, 2019).



*Fig. 8. 1916-17 Untitled (Collage with Squares Arranged according to the law of Chance) by Hans Arp, 2020, MoMa*

## 5. INTUITION

The term “intuition” is defined as “an ability to understand or know something immediately based on your feelings rather than facts” (Cambridge Dictionary). In philosophy, intuition is described as an immediate and direct view or recognition of the object of knowledge, as opposed to a step-by-step (indirect, mediated, reasoning) cognition (Tranøy, 2019).

As a designer, I’m not taking myself too seriously. I’m not a perfectionist and I’m not patient. I work hard and efficient, and I’m intuitive and extremely productive. When I design, I start by exploring a material. I try to find new ways of using materials by adapting techniques from different fields. I often ask stupid questions to craftsmen with decades of experience, and then try to do what they say won’t work; like casting rocks into liquid aluminum.

I don’t completely trust the knowledge and experience of others. Instead I want to make my own experiences and acquire knowledge on my own, by interacting directly with the materials. I am a collector in a sense, always looking for new tools, working my way through the different crafts, from glass blowing to stonework. I’m all over the place, never going deep in to one subject, just gathering what I need for what I want to achieve. My drawing skills are poor, but I embrace that and sketch directly in to the material I want to use, skipping the mockup stage to have more time to learn from the material. I consider the weight and the surface; is it massive or hollow, fragile or robust? I work with or against the materials strength and weaknesses, and let the material define what the result will be. It’s like I have a constant interaction and sparring with the material throughout the process.

Working in this way can result in different products, and I find the freedom and surprise elements in this way of designing, more appealing than the “sketch-mockup-final prototype”-method. By working directly with the material and sculpting with different tools, I make decisions about aesthetics, form and surface, and get material knowledge that I wouldn’t get by going straight from mockup to prototype.

At the design studies, it is expected that you do several sketches and have a clear plan before you even consider touching a material. During my studies, I have often been criticized for lacking a plan and not documenting my steps towards the final result. But when you work as intuitively as I do, with the material as my entrance portal, there is not much of a plan or research behind it. And if I document my process, e.g. by taking pictures along the way, I am no longer in the moment, and there will be an interruption in the state of creating.

You have *learning by doing*, which is the only method that I to a certain extent have been able to identify with. Beyond this, I have had the feeling that there has been no room or acceptance for this way of working.



Fig. 9. 32 hours of welding, private photo

I addressed my concerns with writing a theoretical essay to Isack Wissløv. He gave me some references; one of them was a book by Tim Ingold called *Making: Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture*. This book is a collection of Ingold's lectures and experiences. The book captured me instantly, from the first page where he talks about *knowing from the inside*. Ingold writes that:

The only way one can really know things – that is, from the very inside of one's being – is through a process of self-discovery. To know things you have to grow in to them, and let them grow into you, so that they can become a part of what you are. (Ingold, 2013, p. 1)

What I have found so hard to describe, he describes so thoroughly and precise; the strive of understanding through being, and through a conversation with the material at the exact moment of creation.

Ingold believes that it is through seeing, hearing and feeling – by being aware of what the world has to tell us, that we learn. The world itself becomes a university, which is not only meant for trained teachers and registered students, but for all people and species with whom we share the earth (Ingold, 2013, p. 2).

He also talks about how we can't make the future without thinking it. But what is the relation between thinking and creation? If you ask a theorist and a craftsman, you will get different answers. The former creates through thinking, while the latter thinks through creating:

The theorist does his thinking in his head, and only then applies the forms of thought to the substance of the material world. The way of the craftsman, by contrast, is to allow knowledge to grow from the crucible of our practical and observational engagements with the beings and things around us (Ingold, 2013, s. 6).

This is what Ingold calls the *art of inquiry*. In the art of inquiry, the conduct of thoughts goes along with, and continually answers to, the fluxes and flows of the materials with which we work. The materials think in us, and we think through them. Every work is an experiment, in the sense of prising an opening and following where it leads. You try things out and see what happens (Ingold, 2013, p. 6-7).

In the course 'The 4 As: Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture', Ingold and his colleagues wanted to train the students in the art of inquiry, sharpen their ability to observe and encourage them to think through observation rather than after it. The structure of the course made the boundaries of the four disciplines vanish (Ingold, 2013, s. 11-12).

We are, writes Ingold, used to thinking of 'making' as a project. We start with an idea of what we want to achieve, and which raw material we need to achieve it. The project is completed the moment the material has been given the intended shape. At that point, we say that we have produced an item. This theory of making is in philosophy known as *hylomorphism*, from the Greek *hyle* (matter) and *morphe* (form). In hylomorphism, making is considered as the

unification of materials supplied by nature with the conceptual representations of a received cultural tradition (Ingold, 2013, p. 20).

Instead, we should think of making as a process of growth, where the maker from the outset is placed as a participant in amongst a world of active materials:

These materials are what he has to work with, and in the process of making he ‘joins forces’ with them, bringing them together or splitting them apart, synthesising and distilling, in anticipation of what might emerge. (Ingold, 2013, p. 22)

This is what Ingold calls form-generating – or *morphogenetic* – process. Even if the maker has a form in mind, it is not this form that creates the work; it is the engagement with the materials (Ingold, 2013, p. 22).

This way of engaging and living with the nature and its materials, following your intuition and reason, represents a dream situation for me as a maker and designer. However, it probably doesn’t suit all people. If you prefer a thoroughly planned, from sketch to mockup-method, you should stick to it. But if you, like me, want a more intuitive approach to design, you may find great pleasure in detaching yourself from the processes in which we have been trained and simply follow your instinct. We are all individuals and encounter the world with different tools, both genetically and with experience based knowledge. Some are born more curious than others, but I think that all people have the tool of intuition; the tool of rapidly making a decision that feels right.

Ingold describes in many ways what I have had trouble describing myself, to justify the way I pursue my process of making. As it feels like the book is written for me personally, it is difficult to be critical of the content. If I am to comment on something, it must be that it seems to be a somewhat egocentric way of approaching design. Rather than striving to solve a problem for others, it is more about creating something for the sake of creating, developing oneself and growing as a human being.

Whereas it is said that art exists in itself and is meant to be enjoyed because it is art, design always have to serve a specific purpose and achieve a goal. Art does not have a set of standard rules, while design does. I am looking to break down the walls between art and

design by seeking the abstract and unknown by methodically unstructured guidelines, taking the expressive form from art to design. In short: I want to take the art method into design. It is not about removing function, but opening up to a freer design process.

## 6. PESCE AND JUDD

From this I think it is natural to talk about two creative giants in the twenty first century of art and design: The minimalist artist and furniture designer Donald Judd and the colorful architect Getano Pesce. Pesce works multidisciplinary, as did Judd until he passed away in 1994, but they have very different approaches.

81-year-old Pesce is still very much relevant today. He is exhibiting his works at *Art Basel* in and *Salon 94* in Miami. In my opinion he is one of the most talented multidisciplinary creative makers of our time. Already at seventeen he could have perused his career as an artist, but despite his recognition and success he enrolled at the University of Venice's Faculty of Architecture. At architecture school, he thought the approaches were too traditional, so on his own he visited chemical factories where he learned about plastics. This became one of his main mediums.

One of Pesce's many objects is a bookcase called the *Carenza*. It is made from mold without airholes, and resembles a demolished wall. The rough edges of its shelves and posts is the result of fissures in the material made by trapped air. Normally such defects would put a manufacture to shame; here they are what gives the piece character (Bartolucci, 2003, s. 51).



Fig 10. 1972 *Carenza* bookcase, 2019, photo by Frideman Benda

The *Pratt chair* is one of Pesce's favourites. He actively engages in the process of not only blending the resin with colours, making all chairs unique, but also hammering the mold by hand to get the right volume in the resin.

Pesce thought of objects as individuals. Like people, they too were asking to be different, and to be free. Sameness for Pesce meant bondage. He wanted to mass manufacture originals, to produce a diversified series of objects, and in this way, reconnect craft with industry (Bartolucci, 2003, p. 13).

To me, architecture and objects are like *corpus*, meaning body. It is something we live in and with. People have different ways of expressing themselves. Some are extroverted while others are introverted. How we take care of our bodies and how we dress will also affect how we appear and how others perceive us. Like humans, objects communicate different things, depending on the material and how they are made. A sculptural piece of furniture with different colours and decorative elements stands firmly alone, as a strong individual would in the society. If we look at minimal objects like Donald Judd's chairs or art in general, we can compare it to an introvert person, who don't take much space. You can have several in the same room without too much noise.

In a lecture at Columbia GSAPP, Pesce stated that "there is no barrier between the sector of art. One day you are curious about object, one day you are curious about architecture, one day you are curious about movies etcetera. So, you are multidisciplinary" (Columbia GSAPP, 2018).

You can see the impact Pesce have had on the designers of our generation. Max Lamb is a British designer, who I find to be one of the most exciting creatives of our time. Lamb is working with polyurethane objects that contains the same raw expression as Pesce's bookshelf. Many of the shapes and materials Pesce has worked with are very fashionable and modern in 2020.



*Fig 11. Bench by Max Lamb, 2018, photo Acne Studios*

Donald Judd started as an art critic and went on making abstract paintings. He entered the space of three-dimensional objects because he could not find what he was looking for in the medium of painting.

Judd's metal furniture is made in Switzerland by hand, and his wooden furniture is made in the United States, one by one. His objects have simple geometric shapes with just enough comfort for the intended usage. On his webpage, Judd writes that:

If you like simple forms in art you will not make complicated ones in architecture. "Complicated", incidentally, is the opposite of "simple", not "complex", which both may be. But the difference between art and architecture is fundamental. Furniture and architecture can only be approached as such. Art cannot be imposed upon them. If their nature is seriously considered the art will occur, even art close to art itself (Judd, 1993).

His metal works were not mass-produced but fabricated at a kind of mom-and-mop metal shop in Long Island City, using galvanized iron stainless steel, aluminium brass coloured

Plexiglas, and translucent enamel paints used to customize Harley-Davidsons. Kirk Varnedoe writes that:

The results are not overpowering or impersonal; in fact they are often kind of fussy, slick, and decorative. There is something small-time and peculiar about the fabrication of a lot of minimalist works that suggests not industrial mass production, but old-fashioned craftsmanship. In this sense, minimalism seems to express a nostalgia for small-product America, for chopper shops and body shops or businesses that make metal door frames or install aluminium siding. (Varnedoe, 2006, p. 54)

Judd clearly separates a piece of art from a piece of furniture. But at the same time, he is saying that art will appear in architecture or design through functionality: "A work of art exists as itself; a chair exists as a chair itself. And the idea of a chair isn't a chair" (Judd, 1993).

Both are pioneer makers. In two distinctly different ways, they are showing that it is possible to be truly innovative in the field of design. Their creativity and ways of thinking opens to endless possibilities. Their ability to think outside the box and their strong opinions are motivating and inspiring for a maker in the beginning of his career.



*Fig. 12 1984 Chair by Donald Judd, Douglas fir*



*Fig. 13 1984 Pratt chair by Getano Pesce*

## 7. BLURRED LINES

As mentioned in the introduction, I believe that we are now in a time where crafts, design and art get mixed together. The lines can sometimes feel blurry. Artists make furniture and designers make sculptures. It is a development where the designer has a need to understand materials and techniques, as artists did before the industrial revolution. Design students and graduate designers create products on a smaller scale locally, and the designer takes back the role as a craftsman. Before Henry Ford's assembly lines and machines replaced heavier handcrafts, a craftsman made a product from scratch; from idea to drawings, material choices, form, and aesthetic choices. The craftsman was the designer.

It is a physical bridge between the two different fields here in Oslo; Oslo National Academy of the Arts on one side of Akerselva, and the School of Architecture and Design on the other side. I see the creatives working multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary as the bridges between the different disciplines. They bring knowledge from one field to another, and the knowledge gets exchanged in between artists and designers. This is for me an invitation to do the same, therefore a bridge over the river, rather than slippery rocks.

Rolf Fehlbaum, president of Vitra, claims that:

While limited editions like the Vitra Edition may only interest a small group of people, their impact can be substantial as they provoke new sensations and insights.

Experimental objects often do not want to solve a practical problem; they are manifestations of the designer's and architect's creative intelligence, an expression of a critical position, a utopian wish or a formal fantasy. Whether some of the concepts will eventually inspire the design of everyday objects remains to be seen. (Cauwelart et al., 2008, p. 43)

The blurred lines are also represented in the gallery spaces. *Carpenters Work Shop Gallery* represents both fine art, design and craft. This is a niche marked worldwide, and amongst the respected galleries is *The Future Perfect*, *Friedman and Benda* and *Patrick Parrish*.

In Norway, Tron Meyer is one of the artists/designers that works in the space between art and design. He frequently exhibits his work abroad, and has, among other places, exhibited his

works at Patrick Parrish Gallery, a gallery that focuses on the latest new talent in the world of creatives. Together with Henrik Ødegaard and Richard Øiestad, he have founded an exhibition space called *Pyton Site*, where they, as Patrick Parrish, focus on new designers that brings something different to the table of Scandinavian design, art and craft. For me, this is a space that has been non-existent in Norway until now, and that I have searched for and missed during my creative career.



*Fig. 14. 2. Bordsetting, 2020, Pyton Site*

Although the gap between design and art historically has been large, I believe that new creative platforms like Instagram and Pinterest have contributed making the space smaller. Through these platforms, creative people from all over the world can talk, exchange thoughts and collaborate. In this way, new designers may be independent and manage without the galleries and produces. In my opinion, the creative scene is changing, and the gap is narrowing in. All creation grows from the same thing within us humans. We have just separated it in different genres and then ranked them. I'm convinced that the creators who work multidisciplinary will be essential in reuniting art and design as a whole. As Shiner puts it:

Only by a deliberate effort can we break the trance induced by our culture and see the category of fine art is a recent historical construction that could disappear in its turn. (Shiner, 2001, p. 4-5)

## 8. FINAL REFLECTIONS

Earlier in this thesis I have referred to the space between art and design as *the gap*. I think this might be the wrong word for it, and that it is more suitable to say that these people are taking the liberty to work across disciplines, not allowing themselves to be defined or governed by traditional terms. Who said we are locked to something just because one takes an education in a field or specializes in one direction? Through education we get tools that can be used in both our own subject, but also in others. As design students at the Oslo Academy of the Arts, we train our ability to reflect and ask questions. We are first and foremost educated as human beings, not designers that will fit into the society now. Development happens quickly, and what is relevant one day may be irrelevant the next. Thus, perhaps the human qualities that are developed through the studies are more important than knowledge about the subject itself.

Through this essay I have learned the importance of being present. If you let all the distractions of everyday life affect you, they will create a mental layer of fog that enables you to be present. And if you are not present, your instincts and intuition might fool you; because it is a false sense of instinct and intuition. What is truly important easily gets camouflaged, and your dreams and ambitions might become abstract.

I have also learned the value of being what you are and following your own path, even if it's untraditional and not necessary the most common and safe path to your destination. And also that where you are right now, in this moment, is what's important, and not the destination itself.

In Norwegian, we have a term called "dagsform", which means how you feel that certain day. A Monday feels different than a Friday, and all Mondays don't feel the same. What if we follow this feeling, and combine our ambitions and curiosity in a way that feels right for that specific day? If we work accordingly to our daily condition, then we perhaps won't have a bad day. We live in a society that demands a lot from us, and if we should focus on how to live the best life possible, I think that this somewhat naive thought has a great sense of value.

For someone who prefers to work intuitively and who wants the result to have elements outside their control, I see a great value in "dagsform" as a method. If you have a plan for what you want to achieve, and your starting point is the same every day, the result will change accordingly to how your surroundings have affected you that day. I want to use this way of thinking in my creative process. The outcome might be a notebook of experiences and reflections, both as text and as objects.

Although design's main goal is to solve a problem, the market is largely dictated by trends. Therefore, it is not enough to just have a basic understanding of shape and color; you also need to know the market. As a designer, you should create what the market demands, and what fits best into the manufacturer's production lines. This is resulting in hundreds of designers drawing perfect 3D models and creating presentations that they submit to large companies, hoping to slip through the eye of the needle. What is put into production is not necessarily a problem-solving product, but something that fits into the future plans of the relevant manufacturers. In my opinion, this is a problem within the industry, and the reason why it is developing at a slow pace.

The designer in me is capturing this problem and wants to do something to solve it. I think manufacturers should put more resources into communicating with design students or newly educated designers, because it is in them the future lies. By continuing in the same manner, they are in a position of power where they can control everything, but is that the right approach? For them financially, perhaps, but not for society or the environment. This system excludes diversity and progressive ideas.

I am searching for something unknown; a cosmos between order and chaos. A place where there are blurred lines between art and design, and between what's planned and coincidences. I want to enter an ideal state of creation where I am in a different state, a place where everything is in symmetry. It is abstract, and it doesn't matter if it is art or design. It is a sensorial creation in the in between, almost nothing but close to something. We are in another reality where we navigate with our senses as individuals. One day at the time, waiting. No plan, complete silence.

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