

In this kick-off lecture I will go through book presentations, MA alumni presentations and working with a logbook that we call BlackBook 1. And, of course, the relation between these tasks. Because you are going to do them. The outline is posted on Canvas in the course description. We will work 3 hours from 0900-1200 in class, you continue working in the afternoon. Regularly. Dating your work.

I will proceed by describing the *regular* tasks as *briefs* and then show you an example of each, tying the loose ends as I round up and conclude. Starting with the book presentation. You will all do a book presentation. The task is to select a book and present it in class. Usually, we will have 4 presentations in 1 hour. Which means that you have 15' to present and host a discussion.

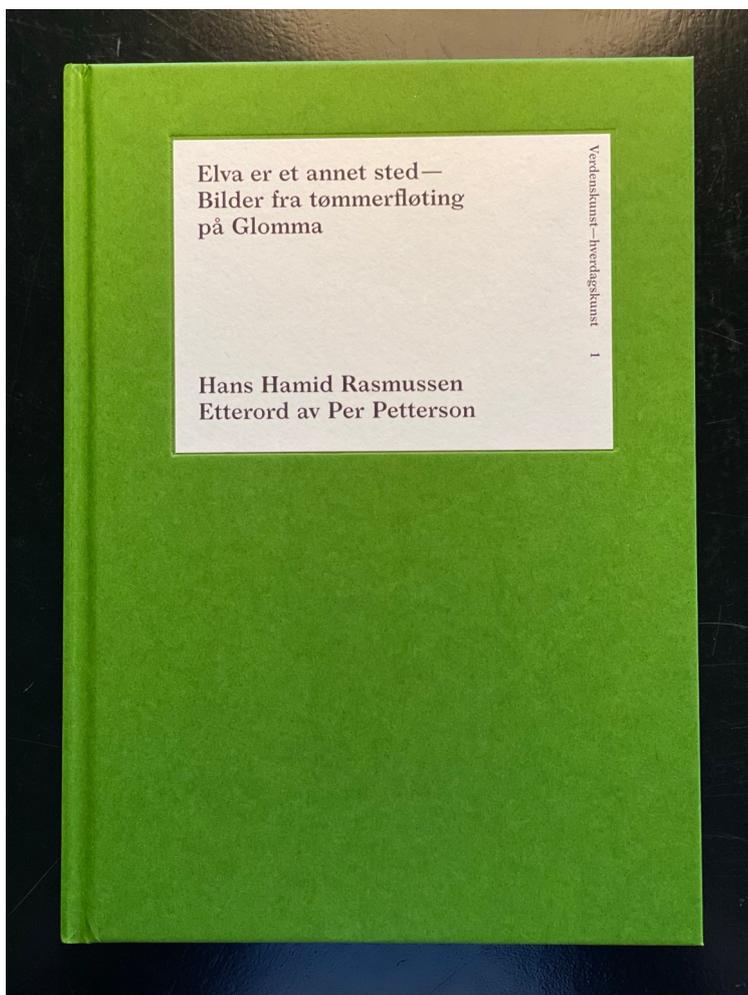
The brief is like this:

1. Select a book [from library, home, museum, wherever... with a professional interest]
2. Tell us how you found it or it found you [your journey to the book in story]
3. Analyse the book as an object [down to measures, covers, end-paper, structure, layout, photo, and text]
4. Select a text from the book, a passage where you strike gold [surprising, perhaps, but when you think about it, intuitive and precise]
5. Close the book, put it back where you found it: what do you take away? the baggage...
6. Reference the book in APA7th [it's a reference style found on <https://kildekompasset.no/en/>]

That's it. Learning outcome: you learn to mine for text passages based on a method in which you use your hands and senses. That is, to research books rather than reading the entire thing. By using

a sensorial method you have a reference you can return to. So, what you do in class, you adopt into your mainstream practice, when you go and spend some time in the library.

1. Select a book



1. My translation of the title: *The river is an other place*. Subtitle: *pictures from lumber-rafting on Glomma*. Glomma is the longest river in Norway. It flows **621 km** from Røros in Trøndelag to the city of Fredrikstad, South-East of Oslo. It doesn't rank among the longest rivers in the world—like the Nile or Ganges—but it is still quite long and powerful.

2. How did I get to this book, and how did it get to me? I picked up the launch event on Facebook. I knew the photographer—who is an artist—and had heard about his work as a lumber rafter upon a number of occasions, and also about his project during the last season of lumber transportation on Glomma in 1985, but I had never seen the photos. The artist, **Hans Hamid Rasmussen**,

used to be a professor of textile here at KHiO. A professional relation verging unto friendship.

When telling the story of how I got to this book—and how it got to me—I expand on from a Facebook story, I posted the day after the launch, as a diary-entry on *weekend-activities*. Since the event was advertised on Facebook, I decided that it was adequate responding to it there. The picture they selected for the ad was compatible with the roughy working conditions related by Hans Hamid.

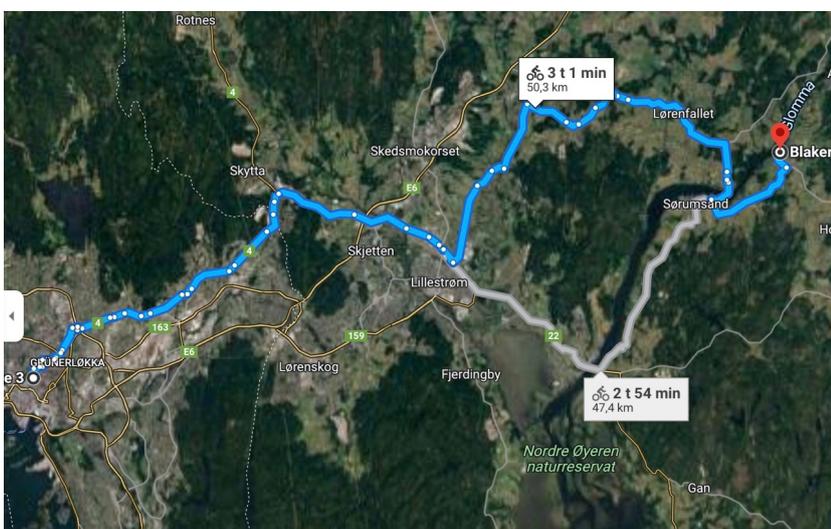


Since I was still in the sensitive mood of an immersive experience from PhD fellow Sally Dean's [mid-term performance](#), where I was dressed up an led semi-blindfolded through a *sensorially enhanced tactile experience* as a *traveller*, in a black box space; I found that I had to de-programme myself, not to fail Hans Hamid. Being a log rafter is rough and tough, not kind and sensorial. It is work, not contemplation. And I couldn't stand the idea of turning up at Blaker—where the book launch was programmed—simply to enjoy the aesthetics of his photos. The pictures are beautiful. But this is also a bit irrelevant. What is related here is a season of life and work on the river Glomma, from the last seasons of rafting in 1985.

So, in preparation of what I thought was awaiting me at Blaker, I had to do some real work. Blaker is a village located about 50km from Oslo. There is a dairy plant there, housing a collection of art, crafts and everyday life has been collected by artist Guttorm Guttormsgaard. It is a location that we have been visiting with several classes. Especially GI led by professor Martin Lundell.



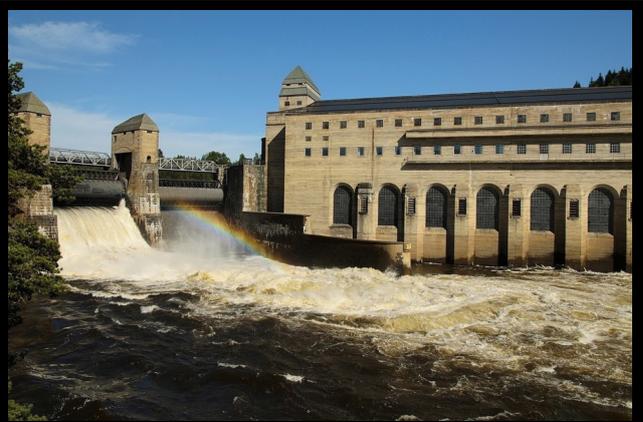
Martin Lundell has a long-standing professional association with Ellef Prestsæter who is a PhD fellow in art history, and the head of the board of the [Guttormsgaard archive](#), inside the old dairy plant at Blaker. The collection ranges from useful tools to art: from Dogon masks (Mali) to works of the Danish situationist and CoBra painter Asger Jorn. It takes about 30' by train to get there.



I wanted to get rid of my varnish from art-school and move into character to receive the contents I expected to meet at Blaker, at the book launch. Even with an electric bike 50km is a good stretch. That is, 100km back and forth. I got to the point asking “why did I do this?”. But the answer is immediate: long bike-rides and the work of pairing up the map and territory, is a habit I acquired during the lockdown. Getting out and connect-

ing after long hours of teaching and meeting on Zoom. I get back to this in the file on logbooks.

Between Sørum and Sørumsand I rode over Glomma, which was not only a waterway for lumber-rafting, but also fed a hydroelectric power-station from 1927 onwards. As can be seen, the river is big and powerful on a human scale, but the propensity of humans to scale up their operations by repetition and mechanising straddles even big rivers. The plant was designed by Bredo Greve.



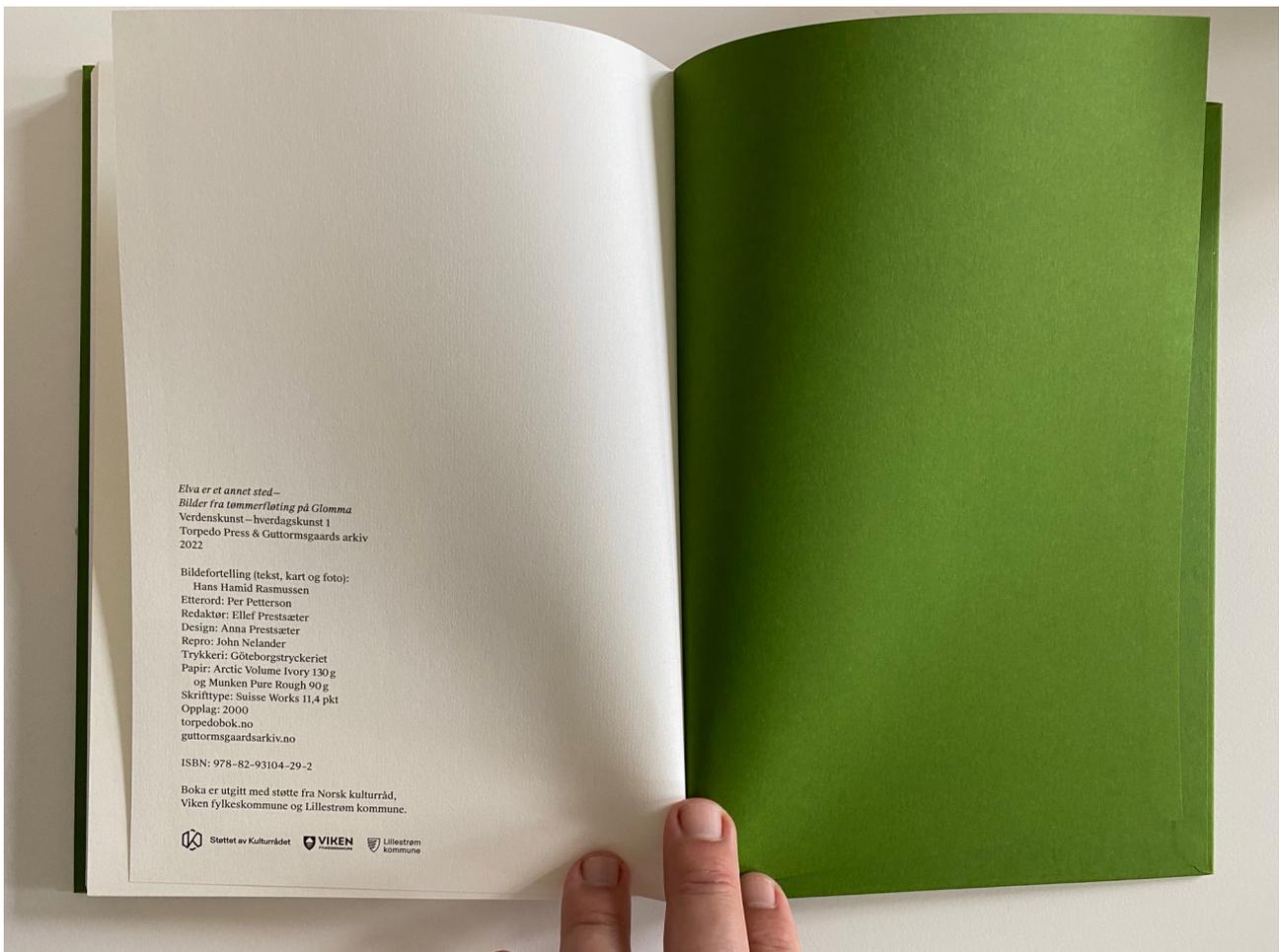
Downstream of the river Glomma (top left) there is the power-plant at the Solberg falls (top right), constructed to electrify the city of Oslo in 1927. The National School of Industrial arts and crafts (SHKS bottom left), was also designed by him. Oddly, a number of the colleagues from the school gathered at Blaker (bottom right).



The connection to Bredo Greve is interesting, because he was the architect who designed the old school where our design and arts & crafts departments came from. It is presently refunctioned as a secondary school for arts and crafts; and, for whatever reason, called *Munch*. A lack of imagination perhaps. I got to see Glomma from the bridge above, and from a window at Blaker (bottom right).

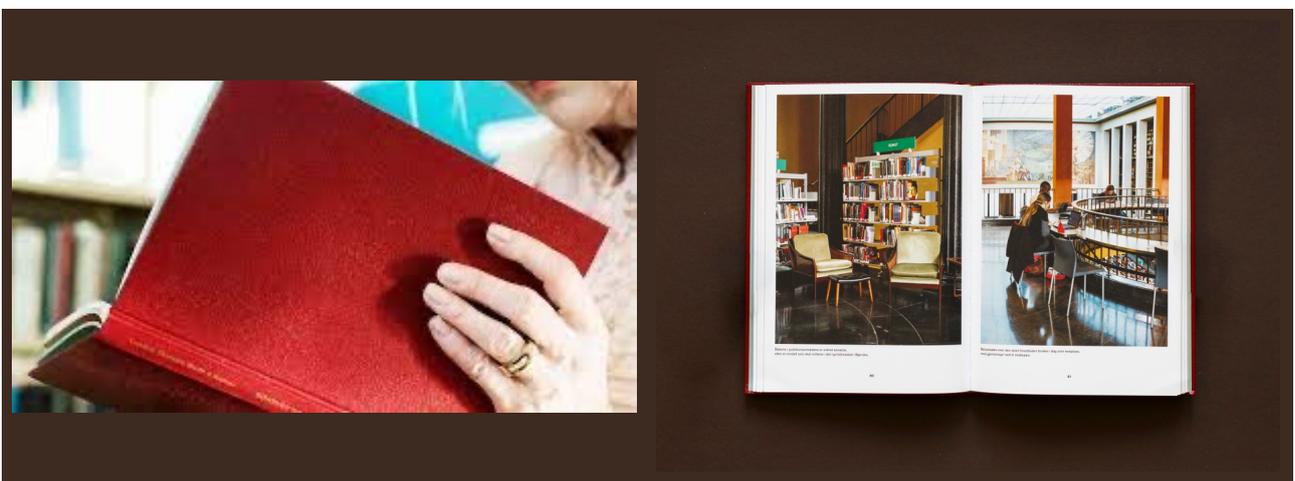
As you can see, it is very easy to start to domesticate the river to the point that it is the human life-world that is placed at the centre of it: our scope becomes *anthropocentric*. But the book that we had come to see/hear launched was not like this. It is rather about care, danger, natural forces at the verge of unleashing against human beings, unstraddled. That is the life of the log-rafter.

3. Now I will analyse the book as an object. That is, I will relate how I looked through it while at Blaker. I had to stay for a stretch because I had to reload my batteries: both my body and my bike's. The book measures 17,5 X 24,5 cm. Shirting and end-paper: 'protocol-green'. It is stitch-bound with blue thread. And there are more details like these on the colophon. Here, at the back of the book.



For those of you who are not in the business of books the *colophon* is something you would like to discover: it is a treasure trove for information about the design and the making of the book: besides Hans Hamid, Anna—and her brother Ellef—are mentioned as designer and editor. The repro is recorded, the printshop (Göteborgstryckeriet), the paper, font, distributor, publisher and sponsors.

If you notice the printshop, for instance—**Göteborgstryckeriet**—this is one that Martin Lundell selected for a project we did together with him as the artistic director and me as the project manager. The title is **Bøkenes hamskifte**, it was published in 2016—with an introduction by Ellef Prestsæter, essays by Martin Lundell, Oddvar Thorsen wrote each our essays. Photos: Steffen Kørner.





So, with a little bit of work, the colophon evolves to become a source of not only technical detail about the book, but also a node in the social and cultural cobweb of people and projects. Steffen Kørner—who did a photo essay about the old library in the book—is a former MA students. There is a pattern here. Sometimes teachers and students end up doing projects together after school.

See
separate
video file

The structure of the book is clean: **1)** there is a preface by Hans Hamid Rasmussen (the artist), then there is **2)** a photoessay made today from shoots dating back to 1985. There has been put a lot of work into the digitisation and processing of the files for print. As well as repro work at the printshop. Then, at the end, **3)** a documentary narrative in text takes you through the photographs in story.

As far as the paper used in the book is concerned—Arctic Volume Ivory 130g and Munken pure rough 90g—is pleasant and studied in its relation to print: respectively photo and type. Though I enjoy it, I also have come to expect it from projects involving Göteborgstryckeriet. What I miss, in projects like this where books are stitched, is the colour/hue and material used in the *thread*.

4. A text passage from the book. After having looked at the photos and recognised the body-types from that time—which are different from now—and what they are wearing, thought not likely with fashion in mind for this rough kind of work. It puts me in a mood of appreciating where the language comes from, when I start reading the text of the preface. Hans Hamid is a workman (shining within).

Both the way the photos are shot and how the words come through. They are wrung out of hours of work, and the relations between the folks involved in it through the coordinated and highly specialised tasks of the work-party. There are two passages that I want to read in translation here. One is about Kenth Moglebost, who led the crew, the other from Muslim image-singers in India.

First passage (my transl. p.8): “The very first day I was dispatched into a rough river-current in an unsteady boat. That it went well is not to believe. I did not have much experience in driving a boat with an outboard motor, and the lumber chain that was attached to the boat was difficult to manoeuvre. Today I am thinking that the team-boss, Kenth Moglebost, knew exactly what he was doing when he left me to find out how the job should be done. He depended on that we were able to solve the tasks as they came and on our own.”

There is something about the learning-culture—more generally—that is like this in Norway. You receive some broad instructions, some words of caution while on the job, and then someone comes

from time to time to see how it goes. My diploma after a glacier-course in Jostedal qualified me as a *self-guide* (eigenfører). *Self-reliance* is one of the chief learning outcomes.

Second passage: (my transl. p. 9): “When I retrieved the photos to work with this book, I came to think of the couple Swarna and Manu Chitrakar, two Indian Patua-painters I met in 2003 at a workshop at the Folk Museum DakshinaChitra in Chennai. Swarna and Manu paint pictures on long paper-rolls glued to a thin cotton-canvas. They bring the pictures on tours where they perform on markets and squares. With the scroll in their lap they start the storytelling. The artists are singing while pointing at the pictures. Often the story is about Hindu lore and myths, but the story teller can also relate secular matters, political situations and natural catastrophes. The Patua-practitioners belong to a Moslem minority, and earn a living by painting, immerse themselves and disseminating stories about gods in which they do not believe.”

I love this passage. *Being with the others without being as the others*. There is a human project in that for our times, perhaps. Then I am thinking about the multiple—or, plural society—in terms of gender, group and age. Muslim artists singing Hindu motifs to an Hindu audience, with an artfulness that earns their keep. They are professional communicators. If it is not done well they do not eat.

I think there is a more specific link that connects with the overall tendency of the book, which is to convey photographs that are done on the job, in a language that is the child of hard work and toil. What I took away from acquiring the book was to go deeper into physical exertion: the potential that lies here, in working out words and images, in ways that reach deeper into the substance at hand.

This is what I have attempted in different entry that you can access in the file below, on this KHiODA page, where I provide a reasoned example of how one can work—in this spirit—with keeping and developing a logbook: or, **BlackBook 1** which is it is called at the first stage of the MA in design. However, I hope that its trans-disciplinary reach and extension spurs a broader interest.

*

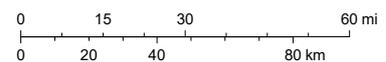
Rasmussen, Hans Hamid. (2022). *Elva er et annet sted—Bilder fra tømmerfløting på Glomma*. Prestsæter, Ellef (ed.). Prestsæter, Anna (design). Göteborgstryckeriet (print). Torpedo Press.

Glomma med nedbørfelt



5.9.2022

1:1 280 000



Kartverket, Geovekst, kommuner og OSM - Geodata AS

Map over the course of river Glomma (with area of precipitation):
NVE—The Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate