



THEORY 3 —*synthesis*
 *** INVITATION ***
 Limit: 6 seats, remainder: Zoom (cf, new C19 restrictions)

Logbook-entries:

By the time the second-year MA students complete Theory 3, they have become acquainted with 3 log-keeping practices, called BlackBook.

- BlackBook 1* in the first term of the MA. Course: Theory 1 (in design practice)
- BlackBook 2* in the second term of MA. Course: Theory 2 (development)
- BlackBook 3* in their third term of the MA. Course: Theory 3 (synthesis).

Rearview mirrors:

In our MA-programme, the students are placed in the driver's seat. In theory-class, they are asked to theorise. And thereby enter conversations with references that they have collected in their research in **studios, theory classes** as well as **independently**.

The theory-classes provide a *basic setup* for the students to *task their own work*, *collaborative methods* and *professional listening*. And a system of *rear-views* that enable the students in 3 defined stages.



Place: BlackBox in KHIOs Medialab
 Dates: December 15th, 16th & 17th
 Time: 09:00-16:00—every day!

In the wake of the pandemic a safety-net of small groups—cohorts of 4—were set up to prevent isolation and enhance mutual professional support in a phase of the MA concentrating on theory development. The professional content of these were followed up this term in QUAD groups. They are assist each other during presentations.

Theory 3

synthesis

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An important dimension of the 3 theory-courses at the Design dpt.'s MA-programme at KHiO, is giving importance to materials acquired through independent work, lectures/seminars, research in the library, exhibits, shows and the internet. The *logbook*-entries play a crucial role in this connection.

In the first year, the logbook—called the *BlackBook*—is always submitted with some hesitation: not because of insecurity, but rather because collating the entries into a single volume (a *collection*) and sticking one's *name* on it, is a major step. It is the *first* step in hatching a process of theory development.

The characteristic difficulty of this initial moment resides in that the process is *neither* invited *nor* imposed. Given a few general criteria—such as the number and gross structure of entries—the first-year students have to find their *own* way, and discover the logging practices the works for *them*.

Thus, the challenge of moving freedom *from* a preconceived liberty—often expressed by *shopping*, in our society—to exercise and discover this freedom. It is what J.P. Sartre called the *adventures* of liberty: the query on liberty as an *existential* path; resolutely *beyond* the confines and premises of liberalism.

In the second term, the nature of this step—which at first appeared as *inconsequential*—becomes *clearer*, simply because it is *received* by someone who *reacts*: here, it is the teacher receiving and reacting, by providing individual written *feedback* to each *BlackBook*. The main point being: a live reaction.

When the students—on these conquered grounds—start working on their *second* *BlackBook* (subtitled 'research portfolio') they articulate their first queries in experiments, narratives, formats and scenarios. This phase is generative of practice, and prompts the writing an essay (self-chosen topic).

The essays are collated into a book-volume *made* by the students: here too, *doing is believing*. The existence of the book acts as a proof—*work done and seen*, once more, but at a *different* level than in the first term. In the spring term a dialogue with the *references* collected during the year, fall into place.

Finally, during the third term of the MA—in the late autumn—the students have 6 weeks to develop a theoretical foundation, for their final projects in the spring. Here, the *BlackBook* (the *third* one of its kind) is subtitled a 'learning theatre'. This format includes an *essay*, a *presentation* and a *lineup*.

The essay is a *written* essay. The presentation is *oral*. The lineup is *material*. Essentially, Theory 3 is about *collating* these elements into a *collection*. And a tricky challenge is to somehow hatch an understanding of how something inert—such as *theory*—can contribute to something proactive as an *attitude*.

The reader will acknowledge that we readily connect writing to a form of "in-action". Similarly, those who have discovered *work* as a way of life, will have found a way of "resting" in it: that it paradoxically encloses a passive/peaceful core. An attitude receptive to the *frictional* elements of practice-learning.

 you are here!