From the conservation workshop at the National Library of Norway (NLN). Two book-presses in front are *similar*, the one to their right is *different*.

In the MA curriculum of design at KHiO there are arguably 3 elements: **1)** the specialisation; **2)** tools to develop design entrepreneurship in *context*; **3)** developing a culture of *design education*. Learning to task the occasions for a culture of *design education*, is the backbone of what we call *theory development*. In the concept of design education we include both the foundations for a practice of life-long learning for all the students that go out of the MA-programme, but also the sense that tasking the occasions for a culture of design education, is a culture of encounter.

The encounter with the client, the assignment—or, brief—the encounter between project elements, the encounter with colleagues who have special knowledge, and the encounter with 3rd parties. These are elements that you will harvest from your practice as a designer, to keep and cultivate in a logbook. The tools that we have for the development of a culture of this kind in Theory 1 is *class-room*, *groups*, *logbooks* and *book*. The class-room is organised as a learning theatre, the groups in QUADs (4 by 4), keeping a BlackBook and doing book presentations.

The mind-set we develop in 10 distributed sessions is to develop a variety of connected working-habits apt to develop a culture of design education where you learn to educate yourselves, each others and 3rd parties. That is, to be a cultural ferment in a society in quest of design futures. There are other schools that boldly assert that 'we design the *future*' without really asking about the future of *design*. Asking the question of what design can be in a post-industrial era, is the key issue. Design does not operate in isolation and is part of our *cultural history*.



Paper and pigment study of map w/Video Spectral Comparator (NLN). Demonstrated at NLN 22.08.2023 by Chiara Palandri and Giulia Oretti.

By 'cultural history' we mean the larger scope which includes art history, but also to *two* cultural turns in modern and contemporary society. The *first* cultural turn features the turn from the aesthetics of form—art for the sake or art (Fr. *L'art pour l'art*)—to the development of professional cultures at the everyday fringe of pop and industry. The functional language of learning outcomes that you will find in the description of our MA-programme, is a child of this turn. Then there is arguably a second turn which is the turn to *natural* environment as *cultural* heritage.

Dating these two cultural turns is a bit arbitrary. But let us say that the first cultural turn was a child of the 1960s, while the second cultural turn—at least in Norway—came in 2009 (through the philosophical backdrop of 'deep ecology' came much earlier). So, in this framework design is a

professional field hatching artistic propositions for a better life: socially *and* environmentally. Which essentially means that we are the entrepreneurs of a notion of value creation that includes sustain-ability. And develop strategic collaborations to do so. We make our bids on KHiOs strategy: artistic core, strategic collaboration, sustainability. And keeping a track of our achievements.

Moving sustainability *from* being an additional task to everything that we have to do, *to* becoming something normal and integrated into practices that are weary of social justice is our target. Which means that the aesthetics of form as a fringe-value to industrial mass-production, is not a viable design-future. Which means that we have to deal with two defence reactions: the one is to place the designers personal interests at the centre of the professional activity. *Pitfall*: belonging the art-field without being included in it. The other is to seek solace in replicating natural beauty.

Here the pitfall is that it really has nothing to do with sustainability. So, the *other* pitfall is that the output becomes *singular*—it is included but doesn't really belong anywhere—and withdraws from wider scope of cultural history. So, these are two traps that you will unavoidably meet at art school today: the one being an outgrowth/*excrescence* from the art-field, without recognition in the art-field; the other being singular expressions in geometric/material dreams of nature. That is, missing out on the either the first or the second cultural turn, as defined/introduced above.

Since it is by no means something that we can take off-the-shelf, the *normalisation* of the two cultural turns should inspire curiosity rather than frustration. Design is no longer an industrial fringe-culture with artistic roots. In the wake of digitisation it has adapted to multiple contexts, beyond the industrial one. In some schools it has, for instance, adapted to interactions- and systems development. In our school it has—to some extent—become dedicated to the exploration of *materiality*, *public narrative* and *embodiment*: investigating and diversifying the human *life-form*.

The crux of the matter is whether we—at this point—dedicate ourselves to develop the life-form, by mainstreaming aspects of our artistic core which has been kept the domain of specialists. That artistic professional milieus have kept certain knowledges to themselves, is a matter of fact in our cultural history. Not always because they have been secretive/scarce, but also because making oneself understood can be a challenge: because what we have to convey as specialists requires a minimum amount of *training* to be picked up and understood. So, we keep it to ourselves.

However, there are practices of establishing analogies, maturing differences and making decisions that are regularly puzzling to outsiders, because they have been educated to proceed by opposing agencies—such as mind and body—where in the artistic perception these can be quite similar. Where mainstream culture has established that differences constitute a problem, they are essential to criticality in artistic education. Finally, where actions should extend from argument and debate, artistic decisions are often such that propose to do something else. *How so?*

A culture of design education will be pledged to bring these alternative twists and turns out of the closet. Perhaps they are essential and have an important role to play in the present situation? And can we consider them to extend from our *practices* of working up *analogies*? I am using this phrasing because using such words as 'analogically *thinking*' places it out of reach. Because analogies are *not* made up. They are rather *worked out*. Just that differences we make are *matured*

through an impressive amount of work. Which is why we *cannot* speak about categorisation abstractly (because we in an extended sense speak *from* and *with* them).

In their *variety*—the *same*, *similar* and *different*—are *concrete*, and their conceptual appeal is such that an *adequate* response can often appear to be *out of line*. Or, simply *off*. What we are forgetting here is this part of an education. That is, something we are challenged to make sense of in educational terms. If so, it cannot be the exclusive province of art. It must be applicable to something that is *not* art. If making this leap is included and *belongs* to the basic tenets of analogical thinking, then our attitude to artistic methods may be *normalised*. And, as such, politicised (cf, [Alain Badiou](#)).

But how can something such as this leap partake of a practice of analogy? Well if can if what we are trailing is the mutual *constraint* **X** from random factors in production and reception, then what starts with analogy increases in intensity till it hatches a [creative act](#). Which means that analogy is not locked to similarity: it can exceed similarity to embrace difference. It will *absorb* difference as it takes *off* and does [something else](#). Can we imagine such methods to be of service to both social justice *and* environmental sustainability, conjointly? And the decisive step *beyond* [performance](#) to the [performative](#).

**reception**

**X**
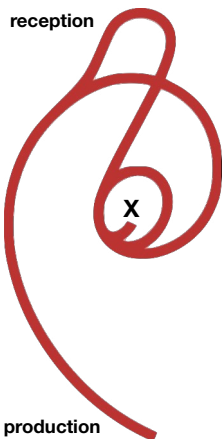
**production**

Analogy of *mutual constraints* between production and reception across the *same*, the *similar*, the *different* and *off*.