

Collaborative filmmaking



Reflection on the artistic development project
about devising film: *Filmdevising*

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Stockholm Academy of Dramatic Arts (SADA)/
Stockholm University of the Arts (Uniarts) 2016

This is a reflection on the artistic development project about devising film titled *Filmdevising* which was conducted at Uniarts – Stockholm University of the Arts.

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I would like to thank:

Cilla Jelf, Kristin Grundström, My Häggbom, Anders Bohman, Stefan & Stephane, Lena Runge, Boel Zetterman, Filmkollektivet Ögat, Siri and Nadja from Scenkonstkollektivet ÖFA, Catti Edfeldt, Bella Seward, Camilla Larsson, Nille Leander, Caroline Rauf, Oldoz Javidi, Maria Hedman Hvidtfeldt, Tinna Joné, Jarmo Lampela, Mirko Lempert, Harald Stjerne and Matthew Allen. And the many, many more who have contributed their thoughts on co-creative processes during this project.

Ylva Gustavsson
Stockholm, October 2016

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English translation by Wendy Davies

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Introduction

Choice of research project

Why conduct research into collaborative filmmaking processes?

The idea of doing an artistic development project about devising film came to me from various perspectives, one of which was the merger of DI – the former University College of Film, Radio, Television and Theatre with what was Stockholm University College of Acting (Teaterhögskolan). After the merger, film crew and acting study programmes were to be provided at the same college, so what could a co-creative process look like as a result?

Another perspective originated from my own questioning of the, often inflexible, production structure that I have encountered in the industry. A third perspective came out of a need to further increase the scope for co-creation within SADA's interdisciplinary film crew education. These film crew courses have a long history of including a higher degree of collaborative creation than often seen in the industry, but new technology – alongside my own thoughts on increased democratisation, on decreased hierarchy and on power-critical approaches – made me feel that there is a need to find new methods and new thinking on collaborativity. I became interested in devising, which is a method that has been used in performing arts since the 1970s.

I was not exactly surprised to find that virtually no research had been carried out into the collaborative aspects of filmmaking. Existing writing on filmmaking is largely about the works created by individual filmmakers, technology in individual disciplines or the relationship of film to society. The film crew and the collaborative structure and discourse of filmmaking are very largely 'silent knowledge'. This knowledge, in the form of experience, is well known to everyone who works in the film industry or has attended an interdisciplinary film school or college. Everyone knows 'how things are done', and film schools and colleges often refer to this structure as 'reality'.

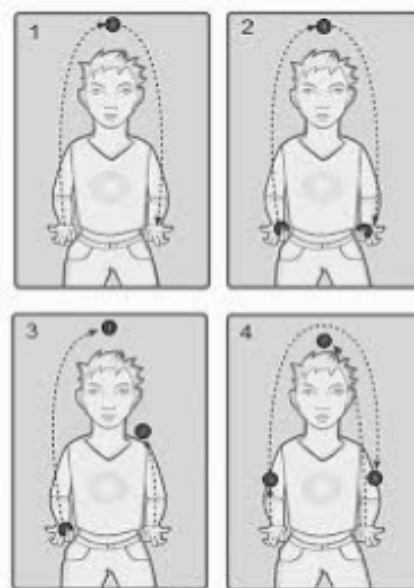
The Swedish Research Council's publication *Forskningens Framtid! Ämnesöversikt 2014 Konstnärlig forskning* (The Future of Research! Subject Overview 2014 Artistic Research) describes existing artistic research into film and motion picture, which has so far mainly comprised projects that look at the relationship of film to society or projects that analyse the artistic methods of individual filmmakers.¹

However, film is a collaborative co-creative process, which is why I have chosen this portal into the subject. SADA is also a co-creative higher education institution. We have 10 different specialisations in moving pictures (motion pictures/filmmaking): seven fiction film specialisations, documentary film, narrative animated film and TV. They all educate creators of stories in moving pictures. They also all participate in various collaborations with other specialisations at SADA. The seven film specialisations constitute an interdisciplinary film crew study programme, in which practically all major course modules are conducted in co-creative teams with a delegation of tasks that is tailored to each specialisation. The documentary film specialisation also carries out some of its film exercises in teams with other film specialisations. Narrative animated film and TV also collaborate to a certain extent in joint projects with other specialisations in the Department of Film and Media. All specialisations also work together with acting and/or mime acting in certain course modules. Investigating the collaborative aspect of

filmmaking is therefore an important part of future artistic research into film. It is also an area that is highly suitable for research at Uniarts because the university has interdisciplinary study programmes. This in itself makes it possible to conduct research 'in house'.

Knowledge theory

From a knowledge-theory perspective, I have been searching for something on which to anchor my thoughts and experiences. I have sought something that the complex structures of interdisciplinary filmmaking could obligingly fit in with. Ultimately there are three theoretical fields that I found relevant to my reflection on the work. As a stage in my theoretical reflection I have used three juggling balls that I have named after the theories, and I have subsequently worked on trying to achieve a balance between them.



Instructions on how to juggle

1. Feminism:

The classic feminist film theories mainly concern how the finished film relates to the surrounding world. Since Laura Mulvey's classic text 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema'² was published in the magazine *Screen* in 1975, this branch of theory has developed in many different directions. The original combination of psychoanalytic theory formation and the study of literature is discernible today in modern film studies, gender studies and queer theory. What Mulvey did was to identify the woman as something that became 'the other one', i.e. not the norm, in the patriarchal film narrative. Mulvey then used classic film examples to illustrate how the male gaze manifested itself as a voyeuristic perspective stitched into the film. Stitched in the sense that the filmic suture, according to prevailing contemporary psychoanalytic film theories, acted as a language that created identification between the characters of the film and the viewer. Mulvey demonstrated how this perspective, which had up to that point been regarded as neutral, was actually a patriarchal norm that had not been questioned before.

In recent years, the structures of the film industry have also been scrutinised from a feminist perspective, for instance based on feminist organisational theory. For example, Women in Film and Television (WIFT) Sweden has produced a number of publications on this issue. WIFT is an

international network founded in Los Angeles in 1973 by women working in the film and television industry. Today it has more than 10,000 members worldwide.³ WIFT Sweden was established in 2003. I was on the first interim board and have since been a board member for two periods of office. WIFT has analysed the gender structures of the film industry, for instance in the publications 'Göra som man brukar' (Doing things in the usual way) and 'Vad är kvalitet?' (What is quality?). This autumn WIFT will issue a new publication, in which organisation researcher Anna Wahl and researcher Ottilia Wahl analyse diversity in Swedish film from all currently accepted angles, both behind and in front of the camera. The term 'behind the camera' refers to the people who create a film. The term 'in front of the camera' refers to the people who appear on screen in the finished product. The study is being conducted in cooperation with the *A-märkt* project. A pilot study for this publication was launched during a seminar at the Cannes Film Festival in the spring of 2016.⁴

There are many aspects of the processes of filmmaking and the norms of the film industry that can be analysed from this organisational theory angle. Another aspect is that the patriarchal structure contributes to the prevailing socialisation process of young men and women who look for work in filmmaking. This process is conveyed by Maria Hedman Hvitfeldt in the artistic development project *I väntans tider* (Expectant/In waiting), in which Maria has described this process in a film script in a fictitious account based on interviews with women who are film or theatre directors. Maria's artistic development project also highlights the structural differences that exist in the industries and educational courses of the worlds of film and the performing arts.⁵ These three examples highlight how patriarchal power structures are created in filmic works, in the film industry and in film schools and colleges.

2. Practical knowledge theory:

In film crew work, the relationship between the practical knowledge-theory philosophy about *technê* – craftsmanship, technical skill, expertise, and *phronesis* – experience-based practical wisdom is highly relevant. Aristotle's reasoning about knowledge and wisdom is described in *The Nicomachean Ethics*.⁶ We work in interdisciplinary teams, in which each and every one of us needs solid craftsmanship/expertise, but it is in our co-creative communities of practice that we create our work. Here, we need to go beyond expertise and use our experiences of the community of practice to develop the ability to make judgements that guides us in each specific situation. The ability to make judgements requires experience. Experience is something that you do. Hans-Georg Gadamer formulates it as follows in *Wahrheit und Methode* (Truth and Method):

*'It is not simply that we see through a deception and hence make a correction, but we acquire a comprehensive knowledge. We cannot, therefore, have a new experience of any object at random, but it must be of such a nature that we gain better knowledge through it, not only of itself, but of what we thought we knew before – i.e., of a universal. The negation by means of which it achieves this is a determinate negation. We call this kind of experience dialectical.'*⁷

It is therefore a dialectical process. Experiences accumulate and form larger patterns of experiences that increasingly improve our judgement.

In order to formulate experiences concerning film crew work and to try and highlight and analyse what this 'ability to make judgements' is, which is essential for effective film crew work, I have found the philosophy about practical wisdom extremely useful. This philosophy can be used to help 'silent knowledge' find its voice.

3. Theories about the expanded concept of text, New Literacies, and multimodality:

When I examined previous research into the subject of interdisciplinary filmmaking education and filmmaking in teams, I found a research project on the subject of New Literacies (the expanded concept of text), in which a field study had been conducted of a practical filmmaking study programme and thereby also mapping of how the structure, norms, values and 'language' of the film industry are recontextualised in the filmmaking study programme. In turn, this creates a socialisation process into the industry that is written into the course content by the teachers in the practical film disciplines.⁸ Many of us who teach practical filmmaking courses have been originally socialised into a film industry with a strong hierarchical structure and a production process with fixed frameworks. A common way into the industry has traditionally been a type of unofficial apprenticeship system. As teachers, we therefore come from an industry in which we have learnt 'how things are done', and also work under what is sometimes palpable industry pressure to teach how 'things actually work in reality'. The discourse and power structure of the film industry are thus recreated at film schools and colleges. The process to introduce a more academic approach at colleges of the arts that has taken place in recent years has in turn introduced a new structure, a new pressure: that of academia. Research into New Literacies describes how teachers in practical disciplines wear a type of Janus mask, with one head facing two directions at the same time: the industry and the academic world. The field study of the South African filmmaking study programme describes this process and how it is also recreated in the content and syllabuses of the programme.⁹



Janus, the Roman god with two faces that each look in a different direction

For most people, being socialised into the film industry involves having experienced a strong community of practice, but it also involves bringing a lot of baggage with you consisting of set structures and norms that are difficult to alter regarding what makes an effective film creation process.

By revealing and formulating how these structures create meaning, both within research into the arts and in the film industry, I see a possible way of creating an opening for both pedagogy/teaching methods and research within the area of film that will delve deeper than merely reproducing the discourses of the industry and the discourses of research into the arts.

Practical implementation

I chose to divide the project into stages. The first was a research stage. The second was a producing workshop and the third consists of following up and implementing experiences gained into the teaching at SADA.



*Catti Edfeldt, Malin Morgan and Nille
Leander in the 'Workshop in which no one is afraid'*

Stage 1

The research report 'Filmregi – hierarki, anarki eller demokrati?'
(Film directing – hierarchy, anarchy or democracy?)

My purpose with the first stage of this artistic development project was to conduct my own research into what constitutes devising, especially in the sense that it is used in the performing arts, and thereby acquire an understanding of this method. I subsequently wanted to raise a number of questions in preparation for the practical second stage of the project.

EXTRACT FROM THE RESEARCH REPORT

In the first stage of this artistic development project, I have compiled knowledge and information about how a devised performance is created. I have talked to people who have devised theatre and performing arts, such as Cilla Jelf, who was the Artistic Director of Regionteater Väst's project *Från 0* (From 0). This was a process that stemmed from an investigative project among 15-year-olds in the Västra Götaland Region and resulted in a very successful performance that I saw when

it visited Stadsteatern's Skärholmen stage. Cilla and I met several times and talked about the process that the group had undergone. It was in one of these conversations that I came to understand the very important power-critical aspect of devising.

'Devising is a power-critical approach. It is important to have the agreement from the outset. That everyone is on board with the collective process and tries to fulfil the wishes of all the other participants. Then you knead it in as well as possible.'

The above quote is from one of my conversations with Cilla Jelf, who was the Artistic Director of Regionteater Väst at that time.

The agreement to adopt a collective will to fulfil the wills and wishes of all the participants is a very important aspect to me. In the film industry, people often feel steamrollered. Perhaps it needn't be like that.

I have followed a course in devising at SADA, which was led by Professor Ola Johansson. I was present when the course began, I visited the class at a few of their rehearsals and I naturally also saw the final presentation. Ola and I had many meetings and also spoke at length about the alternative forms of theatre of which he has experience. He talked about the community theatre projects that he has worked on and how he structures courses in devising. I have read Alison Oddey's book *Devising Theatre, a practical and theoretical handbook*, which I found very instructive in the subject. Oddey's book provides a very detailed description of several aspects of devising and also theorises about the fundamental conditions for devising. I have learnt a great deal from this book. It is what it says it is: a handbook, and I will continue to use it as such. I have taken on board practical advice, such as this quote:

*'Members of a group beginning to devise theatre must be open to each other. Building and developing honesty, trust and crucially, diplomacy!'*¹⁰

I have also read about other forms of collective filmmaking. Both by and about filmmakers. These include Ken Loach, Mike Leigh and the Amber Film & Photography Collective in the UK. I already had extensive prior knowledge of this and can only confirm what I had already understood after speaking to the people stated above and after reading Oddey's book. This is not the type of collective filmmaking that I am focusing on in my project. Ken Loach conducts research-based film projects, and at the start of his career he worked in more of a community theatre tradition, in which people in specific communities were involved in the idea phase of the filmmaking process. The Amber collective based in Newcastle upon Tyne works in a similar way and creates films – documentaries and fiction – in cooperation with socially defined groups of people. More information about the Amber collective is available on its website.¹¹

Mike Leigh says that his professional function is as a deviser rather than a director. His method is based on allowing actors to work for a very long time on the characters that they play. The characters are subsequently brought together in situations that are filmed in a traditional way. An important point in Mike Leigh's book *Mike Leigh on Mike Leigh* (Faber & Faber 2008) is that he started with very short films – the first lasted just five minutes – because no one was willing to finance an unknown filmmaker's experimental activities.

Various forms of community theatre-type film projects are also run in Sweden. Many of them are in socially vulnerable areas and are aimed at young people. *ErFilm*, run by Stephane Mounkassa and Stefan Sundin, is an example of such a project, in which the experiences of young people are integrated into films that they create themselves with supervision. More information about *ErFilm* can be found here:

<http://www.filmbasen.se/node/8855>

All the above-mentioned collective filmmakers and groups make wonderful and interesting projects. But what I want to do is markedly different. I want to investigate absolute collective artistic filmmaking, in the way that I perceive devising based on Alison Oddey's book and my conversations with Cilla Jelf and Ola Johansson.

After the month of research that constituted the first stage of my artistic development project, I thought that I had understood the basic principle of how this process works for the creation of a theatre production.

Film devising – A possible model for collective filmmaking. The creation process for film differs from that for theatre productions. The logistical practical reality in a film process is much more complex. Where theatre progresses from the creation of the script, via rehearsals to the performance, a film has a much longer path to take. It has to progress from creation of the script, to rehearsals and location scouting via a storyboard, to filming, and then on to editing and sound editing. A film is created in many different places and by many different sub-teams.

In a film crew, some functions only work in the preparation phase, and others in both the preparation and filming phases. Some only work during filming. Editors and sound editors work after filming. Directors and producers follow the film continuously. Everyone else works on parts of the process. There are many questions: if a film is to be devised, which functions must be included throughout the process? All of them should be. How is this enabled? How much and what must each person do? In what way do you involve editors, sound engineers and actors in the visual preparatory work that is currently done by the cinematographer and director? In what way should the set designer, make-up artist and actors be involved in the editing? Could perhaps a lighting technician or a production manager play an active part in the sound editing? Can an actor be the script supervisor?

Film comprises moving pictures with sound. Theatre comprises people who act in a space. The two use different processes. In a devised filmmaking process different elements must be taken into consideration compared to those considered in a devised theatre production.

Moving pictures:

Alison Oddey describes the importance of creating a joint multivision. What could this constitute for a film? Film is conveyed through moving pictures. Devising the visual language is just as important as devising the narrative. The cinematography is part of the entire process. Devised filmmaking is definitely not a case of filming a devised stage performance. It instead comprises creating the visual language for a film collectively, making

the visual language an important issue for everyone in the group.

Secondary skills:

When devised theatre is created, it often becomes apparent that members of the group have various secondary skills. A set designer wants to act a part. An actor wants to take care of the lighting, etc. In a devised film production it is probably even more important that all members choose to take care of at least two functions. The crew would otherwise be excessively large. If all members of a traditional film crew of around 30 people worked on a feature film for a whole year, an astronomical budget would be required.

Finding a form of task allocation that is financially acceptable with the help of secondary skills is also a key issue for the next stage of this artistic development project.

Ylva Gustavsson, Assistant Professor of Film Directing, September 2013

END OF EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT

Epilogue to the report

Three years have passed since I wrote the research report. Since then the research has continued in parallel with my implementation of the later phases of the project. I have met and talked to many people who work with and/or develop methods for interdisciplinary co-creation of film in various ways. In the industry, the Ögat film collective has had the premiere of its first feature film *Det moderna projektet* (The modern project), in which the three core members of the collective, Anton Källrot, Jonathan Silén and Ylva Olaison worked with an ensemble of actors and developed the content and shaped the film together. Parts of the dance collective ÖFA have started to make films and have woven ÖFA's non-hierarchical and power-critical method into the filmmaking process. In the performing arts, devising is virtually the norm today, and a number of stage performances were devised during SADA's major project *Unga StDH* (Young SADA). Students in the Department of Performing Arts talk about devising as if it is something outdated. They want to create post-humanist object performances instead. For example, I followed the project titled *Havet* (The Sea) last spring as a supervisor. Although the project was very largely devised, the students did not really want to call the method devising. As part of SADA's film crew education, a student project was also conducted in which the pre-production method was clearly devising. The short film *Catwalk* was created by a film crew which was part of the short film course in the autumn semester of 2014.

Filmmaking is also undergoing extremely rapid technical development. Digital tools have improved and have in many cases also become cheaper in the past few years. SADA conducted its first VR project in the spring of 2016, and a digital pre-visualisation studio was in the process of being established in the autumn of the same year. I describe this in more detail in the section titled 'Filmmaking education and devising'.

It is now completely clear to me that the digital development of the future will place even more demands on the collaborative abilities of film crews.

Stage 2

Pepparkakshuset (The gingerbread house) and Workshopen där ingen är rädd (The workshop in which no one is afraid)

I conducted this series of workshops with six film colleagues in 2015 with the aim of testing devising as a method for making films. It resulted in documentation comprising stills, audio recordings and a film lasting about 20 minutes.



Camilla Larsson and Bella Seward in Studio Lagnö

The group:

When I established a group to work on this project, I made a number of choices. One was to work with people who have extensive experience of filmmaking. My idea behind this was that the collective experience of the group would create a climate of greater openness to new experiences and less fear of thinking laterally. Later, in the reflection process, I found support for this in the words of philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer.

*'Rather, the experienced person proves to be, on the contrary, someone who is radically undogmatic; who, because of the many experiences they have had and the knowledge they have drawn from them, is particularly well equipped to have new experiences and to learn from them. The dialectic of experience has its proper fulfillment not in definitive knowledge but in the openness to experience that is made possible by experience itself'*¹²

Group members:

Catti: Catti Edfeldt mainly works as a film director and children's casting director, but has practically done most 'soft' parts of filmmaking (i.e. all non-technical tasks). If you count from Catti's first film roles in the 1950s and her collaboration in the 1960s and 1970s with Olle Hellbom, chiefly as assistant director in a large number of children's films, to her own films that she directed in the 1980s and 1990s (*Sixten*, *Vera med flera*, *Eva och Adam*), she has worked on about 100 film projects over the course of roughly 50 years. Catti and I worked together during

the creation of the film *Förortsungar 2006*, which we co-directed. Catti is also one of the people who formed the film collective at Lagnö Gård in Trosa in the 1970s. Catti and several of the other filmmakers in the collective still live at Lagnö.

Bella: Most people who have worked in the Swedish film industry in the past 30 years have met Bella Seward at some point. I have collaborated with Bella in the past five years, both during filming processes and in projects that we have developed together. Bella has been the production manager and line producer on many films and has also produced or co-produced a number of films. Bella has worked together with thousands of people since graduating from DI – the former University College of Film, Radio, Television and Theatre in the mid-1980s and has seen the industry change and transform several times. She has been looking for context in the past couple of years. The film industry has become opportunistic and cynical, pre-production times have been shorted, people are unhappy in the film crews, no one knows what anyone else is doing, and the production management in the most recent filmmaking processes that Bella has witnessed has mostly been like ‘firefighting’.

Nille: Nille Leander is a cinematographer who graduated from DI – the former University College of Film, Radio, Television and Theatre in 1995. We were in the same class. Nille has filmed a large number of short films and documentary films and a few drama series. She is also frequently commissioned to take stills in the film industry. In recent years Nille, who lives in Skåne, southern Sweden, has also been a camera operator and second-unit cinematographer on more than 100 TV dramas linked to the film studio in Ystad. Additionally, she has now started to write scripts and direct her own films. When I contact her about this project, Nille says that she is also looking for new forms of collaboration.

Malin: Malin Morgan is an actor with extensive experience of film work. Malin went to the School of Theatre (which is now part of the Academy of Music and Drama) at the University of Gothenburg at the end of the 1990s. She has been a member of several independent theatre groups and has had several major film roles in various films including *Tjenare Kungen*, *En enkel till Antibes* and *Häxdansen*. In addition, Malin is an author, poet and musician and now also writes scripts. Malin and I meet because Bella phones her when I am talking about the project while sitting in Bella’s kitchen. We have a conversation on speakerphone, during which Malin enthuses about the project. When we subsequently meet, Malin explains that what she above all misses is the existential level in film work.

Camilla: Camilla Larsson is an actor, but also an educator and filmmaker. She also went to the School of Theatre (which is now part of the Academy of Music and Drama) at the University of Gothenburg at the end of the 1990s. A few years ago Camilla also took SADA’s freestanding course in film acting, and that’s where we met. Camilla has acted many film roles and has worked in independent theatre groups and national theatres. In addition, Camilla writes scripts and also wonders why a ‘dive in’ mentality so often exists in the world of film.

Carro: Caroline (‘Carro’) Rauf is also an actor. Since the end of the 1980s she has been part of several independent theatre groups and has worked at county and national theatres throughout Sweden. Carro has also acted a large number of film roles over the years and also works in

catering. I think that the first time I met Carro was when she took part in a school film production at DI – the former University College of Film, Radio, Television and Theatre more than 10 years ago. In the 1990s Carro went on a film directing course at IHTV, the Swedish School of Television, in Gothenburg and planned to combine the two areas. That's not quite how it turned out. Carro found that the attitude that an actor is an actor is quite engrained in the film industry.

All three actors tell of how they have played a large number of parts as someone's girlfriend, someone's wife, someone's bit-on-the-side, someone's platonic love. There are experiences of both objectification and racialisation. Naturally this does not apply to all roles, and there is also a feeling that things have improved slightly in recent years, but they lack roles with an existential foundation and contexts in which content and artistic expression in films are discussed.

Why only women?

On the basis of feminist aspects and previous research about women's and men's socialisation into the film industry, I decided to establish a workshop group consisting solely of women. We discussed this in the group and agreed that it could be a good idea to do this, precisely because our individual experiences told us that we would find it easier to reach the core of co-creation if we, so to speak, removed the patriarchal structure's physical presence in the room. This step, of creating a separatist space, is also an existing feminist working model that can be described as follows:

*'Separatism means actively separating a group from someone else with the aim of giving a group, usually a norm-breaking oppressed group, space in various contexts.'*¹³

On the website of *Organiserad feminism* (organised feminism), the separatist space is described as follows:

*'Both the women's movement and feminism can operate and be run in separatist spaces, i.e. only the people who define themselves as women are allowed to participate in and contribute to various activities and meetings. Separatist spaces are, and always have been, a key part of the struggle for gender equality and all other forms of equality, and it is a strategy and method with which to create own, secure spaces with the aim of providing respite from the otherwise generally prevailing oppression.'*¹⁴



Catti Edfeldt, Caroline Rauf, Malin Morgan and Camilla Larsson filming during the workshop in Studio Lagnö

Workshop 1 – *Pepparkakshuset* (The gingerbread house)

Our first workshop took place on 13 December 2014. We met in Bella Seward's kitchen in Enskede to discuss film and devising.



Malin Morgan, Caroline Rauf and Nille Leander during our first workshop

The inciting activity

A devised process should have some kind of inciting incident – something that gets the group thinking and talking about something. Something that gets the ball rolling. I decided (and this is the only thing I decided) that we should build a gingerbread house.

I had long thought that the process of creating a film in a team is like building a house. A group of people with various specialisms build the house together. Everyone depends on the others being skilled in their specialisms and everyone depends on there being a vision (a picture of something that does not yet exist) of what the finished product will be. This is exactly the same as in a film crew's process. When Bella and I chatted before the workshop, it emerged that Bella also usually likens the collaborative process of a film crew to the construction of a house. All parts have to work. There is no point in painting the balcony if the roof is on the verge of collapsing.

When I subsequently searched the internet for written information about the film crew process, after some looking around I found a summary from an essay that states:

'In traditional planning, the teamwork of workgroups is isolated by individual work. One way of improving teamwork and thus also planning is to integrate the people who are going to do the work. Visual methodology is one method for integrating. The method is relatively new in the construction industry and originates from manufacturing industry.'

I was somewhat surprised. I thought that I'd actually found something about the film industry. But the essay was written by Tobias Pettersson and it is a thesis in a Bachelor's degree in construction methodology called '*Planering och styrning av byggproduktion med visuell metodik*' (Planning and management of construction production with visual methodology).¹⁵ When I reflected on this I ceased to be surprised, because the two processes used to build houses and make films are actually extremely similar. They are two different communities of practice comprising people with various kinds of expertise who are going to create something together that only initially exists as a vision. The similarities are striking.



Pepparkakshuset (The gingerbread house)

An architect has a vision for a house; a director has a vision for a film. A client finances the project, a company produces it, the vision is written down in the form of a drawing or script. A schedule is drawn up. A budget. Craftspeople with various specialisms are brought in. The management is both central and spread out in various sub-teams. Most people are skilled in more than one field, but no one can do everything.

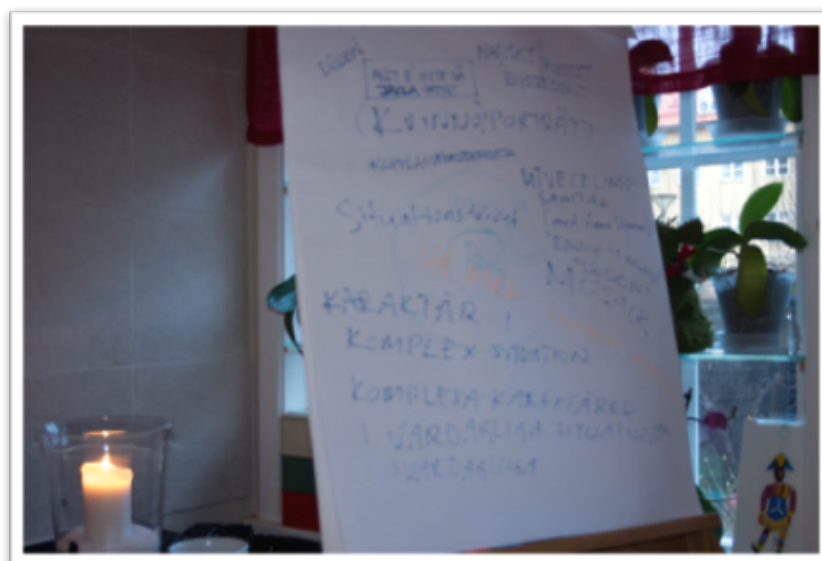
Knowledge inventory:

Before we started building, we made an inventory of our combined knowledge and skills. We discovered that our group consists of actors, directors, cinematographers, screenwriters, editors, musicians, pedagogues, dramaturgists, casting directors, sound engineers, production managers, producers, set designers and prop masters. All of us have experience of running companies in various ways, and we have all worked individually or in groups as entrepreneurs in the world of culture within film, theatre, music and performance (some also have experience of entrepreneurship in the restaurant world). The group also includes extensive experience of various kinds of social work. Together we have worked on several hundreds of films and have 200 years'

experience of working life. We were slightly surprised at the extent of our combined knowledge. We built a house. It was slightly chaotic, but very nice. An aeroplane had crashed into the chimney. Anna Serner, CEO of the Swedish Film Institute, was included in the form of a gingerbread woman, and a gingerbread man was given the name *filmguden* (the film god). We also discussed themes and experience. Everything that we felt was important ended up on the flip chart. During the day we compiled a thematic foundation for what we would do in our next workshop. An area was slowly delimited. We wanted to work on existential stories, with complex women as the protagonists, we lacked development appraisals [also known as performance appraisals] and wanted to work in contexts in which we create the same film. However, one thing was much more important to us. We must not get performance anxiety. We must try to disregard the enslaving demands of performance. A group motto took shape: 'What will be, will be – we're not afraid'.

Although I was. I was actually terrified. What if it all came to nothing? I had written an extremely pretentious application and received SEK 200,000 in funding from the board at SADA. Would I have to go back and say, what exactly? Sorry – the experiment failed. We ended up with a gingerbread house and a bit of recorded audio of some people talking about this and that. All my director nerves throughout my body were stirring and twitching. Organise! Organise! Direction, motivation. Narrative. Where is the narrative? Who is to do what, with whom, and why? Who wants what? Good grief: idea generation. I know a great deal about that. Why have I come up with this wretched gingerbread house? It's obviously not going to be a film. What the heck should I do in preparation for next time? Write a script? Yes, I'll write a script. That's a good idea. Then I went home and talked to myself in peace and quiet. No, I won't organise. No, I won't write a script – only if it's needed. I'll do what we agreed on.

Before we concluded our first workshop we agreed that everyone would bring something that we could work on next time. A text, an idea, something based on our 'theme board' that emerged on the flip chart. That's all I did in preparation for the next workshop. I wrote a text based on the theme board and brought it with me.



The board' on which our thoughts and ideas were compiled during the day. We brought it to the next workshop.

Workshop 2 – *Workshopen där ingen är rädd* (The workshop in which no one is afraid)

We booked in our workshop at Lagnö near the town of Trosa, in the barn that was formerly used for sound mixing by the film collective called Studio Lagnö. The sound mixing work for many classic Swedish films has taken place here. It is now a youth hostel run by Per Carlessen, who many of us know as a film sound engineer and film producer.



Making an inventory of ideas on the first evening in the former sound mixing suite at Studio Lagnö in Trosa. Nille, Malin, Catti, Caroline, Camilla and Bella.

Day 1

We stocked up at the supermarket and arrived at Lagnö on the Friday evening. Catti, who lives here and has been part of the collective since the 1970s, welcomed us. Per showed us where everything was. We cooked a meal and then sat down around the large table upstairs to start work. Everyone brought ‘something’ based on what we talked about in the previous workshop. We had a dream, an improvisation game, two texts, two scenes and an observation from real life. All input resulted in long existential discussions. We talked all Friday evening. About the film, life and everything in between. We really needed to talk.

Day 2

We got up early the next morning to start working. First we had a technical run-through. Everyone familiarised themselves with the equipment that we had lugged with us from SADA: three types of cameras, a few lamps and some audio equipment. Everyone, regardless of first-hand knowledge, should be able to use the equipment. This is a democratic fundamental principle that we had agreed on.



Nille and Catti – run-through of the technical equipment



Camilla and Caroline – run-through of the technical equipment

When we subsequently started to test ideas, we discovered that we risked jumping into our former professional roles very readily. As soon as we got close to something resembling a typical film scene, we plunged headlong into what we can do best. We therefore decided to actively not do that. We decided to play instead and started an improvisation game, in which we wrote character traits onto pieces of paper and then let the characters alternate between praising and complaining about... well, whatever we wanted them to. Five people wanted to be in front of the camera. Nille, whose foremost skill is cinematography, didn't want to be stuck behind the camera, and we therefore decided to film everything in one fixed take so that the camera could look after itself. This is, of course, also a style choice usually called locked camera, which creates a very specific style for what is being filmed. The camera must be totally still and maintain exactly the same frame throughout. We lit and dressed the room and found some clothes that we liked. We did this together. Everyone participated. Then we simply got started. What happened in front of the camera ended up being totally improvised. We talked with each other between takes. We passed a camera between us to document the proceedings. Parts of our conversation were included in the film.

It took nearly all day. Using the locked camera settings we ended up with two separate scenes *Muren 1* (The Wall 1) and *Muren 2* (The Wall 2).

Later in the evening we tried working with a written scene that one of the participants had brought. It was fun, but we rapidly went back to using old methods. It all quickly started to resemble a traditional rehearsal for filming a scene. We stopped. Instead it all culminated in a major, lengthy discussion about collaboration, our 'roles', the film industry, devising as a power-critical approach, and more.



Nille helps Catti sort out the easyrig

We also got talking about the issue of how film is financed and about the systems of support that are available for film. Those of us with experience behind the camera have witnessed countless script meetings and financing processes. To those who have mostly worked in front of the camera, this part of the film industry is shrouded in mystery. The video camera intended to be used to film the scene suddenly became a roving documentary camera. In the conversation many reflections arose about how devising could actually be used in a professional film production. We decided that this method would work best in pre-production. That it is actually incomprehensible that the members of a film crew, including actors, often do not meet and work together in this way. The fact that the actors do not meet and work together before filming is completely incomprehensible. They have to sit at home and guess what the others are going to do.

One argument against devising is that it can be expensive, but on the other hand, it can also be very expensive to have a film crew who are not synchronised, and in which certain functions can work their way through a filming process without barely knowing what film they are making. When it comes to making films with a fairly large team (a small film crew comprises about 20 people), we think that the crew must be divided into functions in the filming phase itself. But we also think that the crew must in that case have a sufficient consensus to avoid creating an unhealthy hierarchy. The idea of in a devised film project also being able to include subgroups in the crew, such as the 'visuals group', 'script group', etc. emerges at about this point. The subgroups could work more closely together than the whole group. And this set-up would enable people to be part of several groups if they wanted to, and have the opportunity to develop more of their secondary skills – as required and as they wish.

With hindsight I think that this reasoning centres on the ability to judge that comes from experience. That it's our sense of responsibility that speaks to us when we realise that in a filming situation you probably need the person with the greatest expertise to take responsibility for a specific part, but also that people can adopt a new area of expertise if they want to. How can we know what will be effective? We think that such issues will be resolved by the group. Why do we think that?

Gunnar Bergendal writes the following about professions and work teams in *Ansvarig handling* (Responsible action).

*'A work team, unlike a profession, often includes several different types of expertise and experience. It is the action and its responsibility that form the uniting factor rather than the expertise...The different kinds of knowledge are all necessary for the whole, but separately they are insufficient. It is responsible action and its knowledge (practical wisdom which Aristotle called Phronesis) that link them together.'*¹⁶

A film crew that is going to work together needs a mutual practical understanding that extends far beyond the expertise of each member. A film crew needs mutual practical common sense.

*'For practical wisdom the perspective is different (from the perspective for technical manufacture – my note). It is not based on pre-set goals and pre-given thought categories – it cannot be evaluated, but it can be assessed from its own conditions. This is because it relates to the actual circumstances in the here and now, and its virtues are the virtues of practical wisdom – common sense.'*¹⁷

If you ask me what common sense looks like in a collaborative film process, the answer is that the members of the film crew focus on the film – not on themselves. The purpose of the filming process is not to realise the ambitions of the director, producer, cinematographer or any other individual function. Its purpose is to realise the film. Using the film crew's practical expertise does not therefore become a contradiction of a power-critical collaborative working method. The joint film is created in the community of practice.

Creating a joint vision in a community of practice and then carrying out the work based on respective forms of expertise remains very highly democratic. A democratic process also has no

choice but to focus on the work of art or film being created. A process in which, for example, someone lacking sufficient expertise about cinematography demands that he or she be the cinematographer of the film, would instead shift the focus onto that person's process. The process would in that case exist so that this person could realise his or her dream of doing the cinematography of a film. It would quite simply be ill-judged to do this, and it would not thereby be compatible with collective creation. Alternatively, as a possible solution the expert could collaborate with the person who wants to learn a new skill. This assigns importance to the idea of secondary skills. We decided that a person who wants to develop a different kind of expertise must be given that opportunity in a democratic project. It might take a little longer, but so be it. However, the strongest power-critical perspective in a collaborative process is the fact that in a democratic power the group has joint power over the process. Gunnar Bergendal describes this as follows:

*'Practical wisdom is what constitutes the core of this power and it is based on the interplay of human diversity in a community. The power is limitless, but is based on the interplay in the community, which imposes limits on the influence of individuals.'*¹⁸

Day 3

The next day we went outside. We had seen some pretty blue-painted bridges nearby that we decided could be a picturesque story frame for the film. We strolled around and picked stills. We thought that these stills could represent our conversations. That we were building bridges. Most of all I think that we thought it looked nice.

We also filmed close-ups of our faces using a Super 8 camera. Our faces were included in one of the scenes written by one of the group members. We had a bit of film left, so I filmed the stream that flows under the bridges. In doing so, I thought about the dream that one of the participants told us about.

When we went inside again, we recorded ourselves reading a text that one of the participants had brought. As the building is a former sound studio it still has a vocal booth. We entered the booth one by one, started the audio recording and read the text in whatever way we chose to. No one was listening. No one was directing anyone. Each person did their own interpretation. The stills and the recorded text are also included in the finished film.

Joint reflection:

In the evenings of our extended workshop weekend we had long conversations. One of the main points of the workshop was to get the chance to have our say. Not to be in the stress that filming often otherwise comprises. We had also said that no question was too stupid to be asked, and we asked each other things about each other's work that we otherwise would probably not have dared to ask.

Before we went home, we conducted an evaluation and arrived at several conclusions together.

'The "us and them" feeling can be bridged between the film crew and the actors.'

There is often a large gap between the crew and the actors in the filmmaking process. The actors very rarely gain insight into what the various functions of the film crew actually do, and vice versa. This often creates an 'us and them' feeling during filming. The gap frequently consists of a lack of knowledge regarding what takes place in the preparation phase. Sometimes there are also

knowledge gaps between the different ‘departments’ in the film crew. Things that are obvious to one person seem like baffling mysteries to someone else.

The group’s agreement for workshop 2 was that everyone should listen to everyone else and that everyone should ask about everything they didn’t understand. During the workshop we discovered that we nevertheless very easily slipped back into our traditional ‘roles’ and started to ‘just get on with it’ instead of communicating what we were thinking. When this happened, we stopped, took a step back and started again.

A powerful experience gained from our workshop was that the ‘us and them’ feeling is bridged in a playful process like this. We started talking about what ‘we’ and ‘all of you’ and ‘I’ and ‘you individually’ actually do at work. Questions started to be asked. Questions that are never otherwise asked. Either because they never spring to mind, or because they perhaps seem ‘too stupid’.

‘The initial work is complicated. We are complicated to start with as a group.’

Working with a large complicated group is not customary in the filmmaking process. However, we agreed that a filmmaking process can by all means afford to initially create a complicated and unwieldy group workshop seeing as this in turn contributes to a more harmonious and synchronised team further on in the process.

‘Find tools, keys, with which to advance in the process.’

When you have played games together for a couple of days and have tried each other’s tools, obstacles to communication disintegrate. They collapse organically, and real communication arises. Several of us perceived that we had found tools and keys with which to advance in our long processes of developing our artistry.

‘Artistic skill exists at all levels in a film crew – it just needs to be allowed to be expressed.’

In many traditional filmmaking processes there is a hierarchical division into artistic, practical and technical functions. In a workshop like this, everyone’s artistic input can consciously be taken seriously and be allowed to come to the fore. The members of the team receive the opportunity to ‘see’ each other’s full potential at the same time as gaining deeper insight into the functions of ‘the others’.

After that, we pack and go home.



The notes that created the characters for Muren 1 and Muren 2 (The Wall 1 and The Wall 2

Conclusions

A conceivable model for devised film

Here, I am taking the liberty of generalising from the experiences that I have gained through this artistic development project and explaining broadly what I think could be an effective model with which to devise a film.

Group skills:

I envisage that a group that wants to devise a film should include people who have basic skills in the following areas as a minimum: cinematography, film editing, film sound, film directing/production (can be the same in a small project), and acting (unless the project is conducted with amateurs or is a documentary).

A somewhat larger film project may also require people with basic skills in: production design/set design, make-up/costumes, lighting, scriptwriting/dramaturgy, music composition, and digital post-production.

Naturally, people with totally different skills can also be brought into the project. Many additional filmmaking skills may be required depending on the size and needs of the project.

The need for joint spaces:

A devised film production needs a physical space in which the material can be compiled and the group can meet. The production also needs a digital room, in which digital material can be compiled and made available to everyone.

The phases of the film project

Instead of talking about the traditional phases of a film project – script development, pre-production, filming and post-production – I am now choosing to call these different phases the compilation phase, the preparation phase, the filming phase and the post-filming phase. Mainly to highlight that ‘production’ does not equate to filming; instead it is something ongoing throughout the process.

Compilation phase:

I envisage a research and idea generation phase that aims to result in some form of script and/or plan for the filming work. Various kinds of material are compiled in this phase. The material may consist of inspirational images, locations, characters, a basic plot for the narrative, props, text, interviews, etc. Material can also be processed digitally in this phase. The group can create digital and analogue pre-visualisations, drafts of sound and music, etc.

In this phase, some areas of responsibility can also be divided up among the members of the group, if they so wish. In that case, the group bases the division on the skills available and on requests for preferred areas of responsibility. I think it is important that no one is ever solely responsible for something; there should always be at least two people sharing each area of responsibility.

In the compilation phase, all participants take part in all stages if possible. Everyone is entitled to have their opinions heard and respected. None of the group members' ideas are allowed to be rejected or ignored.

Script and/or multimodal text:

Is a script being written? I think that it can vary widely. The phase either leads to a script being written, or some other kind of document forms the basis of what the group has agreed to convey. Harald Stjerne, Professor at SADA, has conducted a research project in which he has written prose texts from specific perspectives in the form of documents related to a person.¹⁹ The method has also been used in an educational form, for instance in a course with the Masterclass in Film and Media at SADA, in which we both provided supervision: Harald on scripts and myself on directing. During the course a collective, consisting of film students with various disciplines and acting students, wrote a number of documents with the aim of creating fictitious characters together. This collectively compiled material about fictitious perspectives subsequently became the basis for the script written by film script students. Another example of collective writing was described to me by Jarmo Lampela, former Professor of Directing at the ELO film school in Helsinki, in a conversation about the project titled *Theatre Goes Cinema*, in which a group, after working on themes and characters, together write an open document online.²⁰ I regard these as very feasible ways of writing fiction collectively.

As an alternative to written text, scenes can also be 'written' in some kind of multimodal text, for example in the form of improvisations that are compiled as sketches of films or in scenes developed using digital imaging and audio tools. By modality I here mean systems of semiotic resources, as described in the following quote.

*'Semiotic modality is instead (of the modal auxiliary verb, my note) an organised set of semiotic resources. Semiotic resources refers to the "building materials" available in connection with the creation of meanings and texts. In other words, semiotic resources are materials that create meaning and can be used for communication. When several resources are used in a more organised way, we can start to talk about semiotic modalities, such as pictorial modality.'*²¹

Written material is regarded as a semiotic modality, while pictorial modality can consist of several semiotic resources that communicate simultaneously. But film includes many pictures per second, sound, speech, graphics and music. When it comes to creating a vision for a film, i.e. a picture of what the film will look like before it exists in the physical world, we can therefore talk of creating multimodal texts.

*'Texts that comprise various forms of communication are usually called multimodal. Multimodal texts can, for example, consist of writing and images, speech and music (such as in radio advertisements), moving pictures and music (as in music videos), or moving pictures, speech and sometimes music (in films).'*²²

The preparation phase:

It is important that the correct preparations are carried out before a film crew embarks on filming

work. Knowing what preparations are required is a major part of the specialised expertise. It is at this stage that the cinematographer talks about what lens is required for the shots to turn out as planned. It is at this stage that the director structures the scenes of the film in beats, actions and directions so that the narrative that has been created will be conveyed. The sound engineer chooses microphones based on what will be recorded. The costume designer prepares the clothes, the production design team constructs the sets, etc. Anyone who is interested in knowing exactly who traditionally does what and also wants to find out more about a film director's preparations, would find it very useful to read Jonas Grimås' book *The film director prepares* which describes the entire preparation process.²³

Prior to the preparation phase I think that it is important for a co-creative group to talk about what constitutes power, because expertise always incorporates a great deal of power. A person who understands the technology or method also has power over the expression. I believe that the only way to manage this fact is that before arriving at this stage the group must have created strong agreement in the compilation phase, along with the openness and trust required for all group members to fully take responsibility for their actions in relation to the joint objectives. Experimentation, improvisation and pre-visualisation could perhaps be particularly useful tools in this.

The filming phase:

The filming of a devised film might take place in sections during the compilation phase. It might merge with the post-filming phase. Perhaps each individual decision about each setting to be filmed is made collectively. There are endless possibilities of filming in a non-traditional way. However, in a professional production, i.e. in which people are paid for their work and there are financiers who have paid for the film to be made, I think that devising groups will need to work in the functions in which they possess the greatest expertise. The joint and collaborative aspects consist of finding a mutual context. In other words, a context in which the idea of the film remains cohesive in all its parts and that all group members are thereby cohesive with the film. A group member who, during a filming process, demands the right to do something that he or she does not have expertise for and has not prepared for, would thereby occupy the focal point of the process and claim that this film is solely for me. However, I think that smaller film projects and particularly in the preceding phases can, or perhaps should, be completely open to this kind of experimentation. That it may possibly be something that creates an artistic expansive development in the compilation process and the formation of the process.

Post-filming phase:

I think that there can be one or more editors in a devised group. The sound editing for films is already usually carried out by a group of people. In a devised project, the soundscape could also be created as early on as in the compilation phase and preparation phase. Klas Dykhoff, Professor of Film Sound at SADA, has described a method for working in a non-linear manner and in parallel with sound editing and other editing.²⁴ This is extensively implemented in film crew courses, in which drafts of soundscapes are also drawn up in preproduction. I am aware that this working method also already exists to some extent in the film industry. Proposals and sketches can then be discussed in the group until a consensus on the look of the film is reached. It is, of course, already customary to reach a consensus about the look and content

before filming takes place, but everyone who has made films knows that the development process continues to the utmost degree until the film is totally complete. And it is not until the material has been filmed that it actually exists in the physical world. Until that point it is merely a vision – an inner picture of something that does not yet exist. Another key part of this phase comprises the image processing, grading, special effects, etc. that are done in parallel with editing and sound editing. Today there are now also major opportunities of preparing this work in advance as part of the compilation and preparation phases.

Opportunity to have interacting phases:

I also regard it as highly likely that the compilation phase, the filming phase and the post-filming phase can intersect with each other. It is fully possible to shoot parts of a film, edit them, carry out sound editing, and then shoot additional parts of the film. This is something that a number of filmmakers have long wanted to do and that has also been done, but it is often rejected due to financial and scheduling reasons. It is quite simply easier (and cheaper) to employ a film crew for a focused and predetermined period. The same applies in order to employ editors and sound editors for focused and predetermined periods. Having a film production divided into separate parts – which is usually the case in the industry – also gives a great deal of power to the director and the producer, who are often the only people who follow a film production from start to finish.

Collective responsibility – not just for the content

Finances:

To me it is a matter of course that the members of a devising film group make democratic decisions on what the money will be used for and then have joint responsibility for staying within budget because all financial decisions have consequences for the entire group and thereby for the film itself. I also regard it as impossible to use the pay-setting system that exists in the film industry today, where certain functions receive pay that is many times higher than that of others. Or where there are major differences within an occupational group, such as actors, for example, whose day rates can vary enormously. In a devised film group I envisage that all members must receive equal pay for the time that they have worked.

Legal matters:

In cases where a devised film production is intended to result in a film for public viewing, there are a number of legal aspects that are absolutely essential to take into account. These include issues concerning copyright, agreements and contracts, and labour market laws. Expertise is required to ensure legal compliance in these areas. If such competence is not available within the group, the group must together ensure that a person with these skills is linked to the project. I think that it is incredibly important that a group planning to devise a film, which is not a purely amateur project, is aware of this and that it is part of the collective responsibility that the group must take.

Film education and devising

The future of co-creation in film crew education

The collaborative aspects of the interdisciplinary filmmaking courses at SADA have been developed in recent years, both as a result of how the co-creative pedagogy is used and as a result of the major advancements made in multimodal technology. When I was a student at DI, which was the university college that housed the film crew courses at that time, there were already elements of collaborativity that could possibly have been classed as devising. Various kinds of non-hierarchical group work in the form of exercises and workshops. The co-creative elements in the film crew courses were expanded in the 2000s to encompass joint idea generation and cooperation in project development. In my work on this artistic development project I went even further when I implemented devising as a concept for some of the exercises carried out on the Bachelor's degree programme.



Digital pre-visualisation with film students, led by Mirko Lempert, in the SADA film studio, autumn 2016

Together, we teachers of film have also developed ever larger areas of co-creation during the more professionally structured production exercises, for example through implementation of new technology and new methods.

The artistic development projects and research in the Department of Film and Media that develop methods and technology and try to create solutions for greater collaborativity in various ways, include the following: Mirko Lempert, Assistant Professor of Visual Media at SADA has conducted the artistic development project titled *Pre-Visualisering* (Pre-visualisation).²⁵ In autumn 2016 a digital pre-visualisation studio was established at SADA for use in educational activities. For the film crew courses, this technology will create a larger co-creative space in the development of film projects. I mentioned Klas Dykhoff's article 'Why use linear workflows with non-linear tools?' under the Post-filming phase heading. This non-linear method, in which sound editing takes place in parallel with other editing, is also already used in the education. Film sound students at SADA also work on 'pre-audialisation' as a stage in the co-creative work to build visions for team-based film projects. Anders Bohman, SADA's Assistant Professor of Cinematography is working on an artistic development project about the semiotics of colour and

light. This ongoing project, which I have had the opportunity to gain access to, is also about creating tools that can involve several disciplines at an early stage in the creation of the visual look of a film.

Discourse in the film industry and the academic world

The major challenge for increased collaborativity is no longer technical, but human. How should we, all the people who are part of such an extensive process as film-making, work collaboratively? This is also an issue of addressing the existing cemented discourse in the industry structure on the one hand, and the deeply individualistic academic structure on the other. For example, it is not possible at present to draw up a joint syllabus for a film crew production because each specialisation has different expertise-related intended learning outcomes, although the joint goals are the same. It might be possible to find a way around this, but the specialisations also have different numbers of credits earmarked for team exercises seeing as different kinds of expertise require different amounts of work, which makes it completely impossible to create a joint syllabus. In the regulatory documents it therefore appears that the specialisations and thereby the courses are separated and highly individualistic. Which gives us a very incorrect picture. Our system is not designed for expertise-based specialisations that co-create in communities of practice, although to varying extents. To the film industry on the other hand, our film crew education in its traditional form is fully understandable. The screenwriters write before filming takes place, the editors edit after filming is completed; in between those tasks, filming takes place, in which each individual has an occupational role positioned in a hierarchical structure. The course content that exists in film crew education has for a long time also had a production plan structure like the one used in the film industry. The industry's discourse is thereby directly implemented into the syllabuses of courses and study programmes, in the same way as observed in the South African field study that I referred to in the introduction. The 'reality' of the industry has been part of the education for 40 years. When the academic 'reality' is applied to this structure, it is altered. The structure is 'made academic' in a way that it is not designed for, and it must be remodelled. The structure of the academic world is definitely not designed for collaborative interdisciplinary education, and at the start of this process, course and study programme syllabuses for film crew education were very strange documents that were virtually unusable. But as film teachers have over time adopted a Janus-faced approach and developed the ability to look in two directions simultaneously, we have succeeded in coming closer to the academic world's requirements on formalities. The academic approach is incomprehensible to the industry. The industry discourse is incomprehensible to the academic world. Film teachers at SADA have had to be somewhat Janus-faced, in the sense of taking two different approaches, in their efforts to cater for the industry's and the academic world's requests at the same time.

The need for our own path

As providers of co-creative collaborative filmmaking education we must perhaps take the initiative to bring about a change. Perhaps we have to reject the old industry structure while also ignoring the academic world's individualistic discourse. Perhaps we need to dare to claim that our education steers filmmaking as a collaborative art form forwards in a new direction, without renouncing the requirements for expertise. Additionally, I do not think that our students would be less well equipped for whatever 'reality' they may encounter after graduation if they deepened their knowledge of co-creation. But co-creation is difficult, both to formulate in intended learning

outcomes and to be part of as a student. Uncertainty is created when there are no clear 'roles' in the student exercises. 'Who makes the decisions?' is a common question. One of the foremost intended learning outcomes of film crew education is the understanding that no one 'decides'; processes of responsible actions are what lead to the decisions. The more experience, the better people's judgement in these processes.

Gunnar Bergendal formulates this as follows:

*'Practical wisdom is the participant's responsible knowledge: it is uncertain, even risky...it is moral knowledge that cannot be limited to expertise. The knowledge we must learn before we can do things is something that we learn by doing. The practical judgement's schooling is based on us learning from our responsible actions.'*²⁶

In interdisciplinary filmmaking education, the development of this skill also becomes the most important intended learning outcome of all. Responsible action in co-creative situations is achieved through dialogue and openness, through experience being added to experience and thereby expanding.



Alexis Almström, filmdirecting student 2012-15 and Evin Ahmad, acting student 2012-15 during the shooting of the shortfilm Mazda 2014

This is expansive knowledge, in that one plus one does not make two. It makes three. Learning takes the form of an integral curve, and there is no real way of measuring this knowledge development. It starts slowly, then it suddenly picks up speed. This occurs at slightly different times for the students. The knowledge development does not therefore have a very predictable progression as it can suddenly erupt. In the same way that a work of art or a film breaks through

into the world when it encounters the viewer, students break through into the world when they understand the context of the community of practice.

Implementation:

Much of the experience that I have gained over the years during which I have worked on this project has already been implemented into the film directing courses and into the film production exercises of the film crew courses. We have also found paths for co-creative exercises between the film directing and acting courses at SADA, among other things in the form of effective workshops at which acting students and filmmaking students work together.

In the film crew education, a larger proportion of the production exercises are now also carried out in stages, during which all the students on film crew courses work collaboratively – for example, on idea development. Some smaller exercises are carried out entirely using devising as a method, and I envisage more planned study programmes/courses possibly being based on devising-type methods in future. A course that is purely about devising, to be offered as an elective worth 7.5 higher education credits, is ready in the form of a syllabus and can be taught in SADA's next elective course period. It will then be an elective course open to all Bachelor's degree students at SADA, including performing arts and acting students.

The film director as an artistic leader – in the past, present and future

It may seem strange that I am creating a model in which I have 'phased out myself' as an artistic leader. But it is not actually strange at all. The first question I asked myself in this project was 'film directing – hierarchy, anarchy or democracy?' I can clarify the question as follows: 'If a film director does not maintain a hierarchical structure, will a risk arise of the filmmaking process turning into anarchy with total chaos in which nothing constructive can be created, or can the film director work in a power-critical democratic context?'

My answer to the question is that the film director can work in a power-critical, democratic context.

History:

I ask myself this question because the film industry has historically had a strong hierarchical power structure, but also because there have been alternative structures and ideas about filmmaking – at least from the end of the 1940s up to the present day. It is no coincidence that this started after World War Two. There was extensive access to easily operated and inexpensive filmmaking equipment when war cinematographers' equipment ended up in the hands of relatively young filmmakers. In the 1960s the equipment became even easier to use and film stock became more light-sensitive, and these are usually cited as some of the factors that started the French New Wave of filmmaking. Video cameras came in the 1970s, and the digital revolution with the first DV camera started in the 1990s. Now everyone has a video camera in their mobile phone and software for editing sound and images on their home computer. Today the technology is just as accessible as a pen and paper. For those who want to write with a camera as a pen, this is now an absolute reality. The concept of *caméra-stylo*, using the camera as a pen, was coined by Alexandre Astruc in a text published in *L'Écran français* in 1948, in which Astruc described the

transformation of film from entertainment medium to audio-visual language:

*'To come to the point: the cinema is quite simply becoming a means of expression, just as all the other arts have been before it, and in particular painting and the novel. After having been successively a fairground attraction, an amusement analogous to boulevard theatre, or a means of preserving the images of an era, it is gradually becoming a language.'*²⁷

However, at the same time that Astruc's article was published and the French New Wave took off, the idea of the film director as an auteur emerged. In other words, as the author/writer and the individual originator (and at that time nearly all of them were men).

The present:

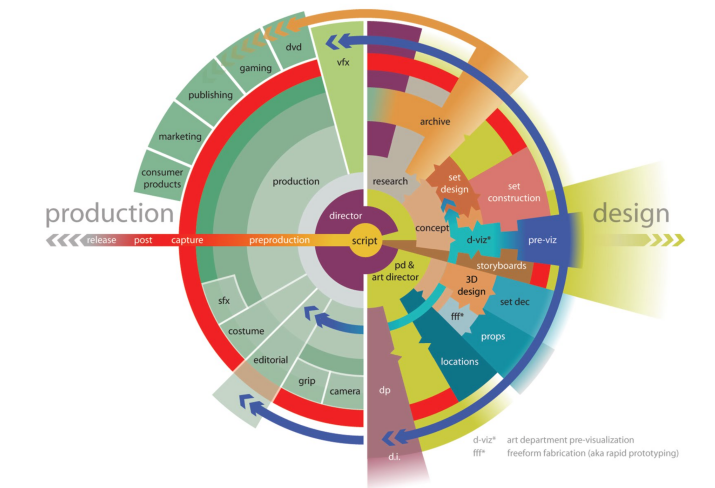
At DI – the former University College of Film, Radio, Television and Theatre, which until 2011 was the university college that housed the film crew education, the auteur idea was officially scrapped in the mid-1990s when the courses in screenwriting were launched. In turn, this was related to the fact that the film industry had started to call for stronger scripts, and the concept of 'the triangle' had been established. I first heard of the triangle during a lesson with Bo-Erik Gyberg at Stockholm Film School in 1990. Since then, this triangle consisting of the director, screenwriter and producer has been the dominant form of development for film projects in the film industry. There have always been other structures in parallel. The auteur idea has definitely survived in the industry, and even today the system strongly favours an individual film director's artistic work. In my conversations with people who work with young filmmakers, in talent development projects or within bodies from which young filmmakers can request support, there is, however, a consensus that young filmmakers now increasingly tend to join together in networks and groups that work collectively to various extents.

My conclusion is that the new technologies as well as a longing for context are driving forces in this development. This does not mean that the idea of the sole, often male, genius will disappear. Personally, I do not think that the idea of the film director as a sole male genius is on the way out, but I can see this idea being challenged from various quarters.

The new technology has also opened up major opportunities for filmmakers who want to work completely on their own and make films by themselves. It can, however, be a long and lonely process to make a film entirely by yourself. One interesting example is the blog about the animated film *The Passenger* called *How to make a seven minute film in just eight years* by Chris Jones.²⁸

The future:

In recent years I have perceived an ever increasing need for co-creative 'space', also in the function-specific production exercises conducted during studies at SADA. Alongside technical developments, the ability to work creatively in a group will place ever greater requirements on flexible thinking and flexible artistic leadership. There is much to indicate that these skills will be needed more and more in film as an art form in the future.



One of the recent years' graphic representations of film production as a collaborative process is this one from the World Building Institute, which was used by Alex McDowell during the seminar 'Awesome Bergman' which was held by SADA on the island of Fårö in August 2015. The seminar, which was a GEECT event (European Grouping of Film and Television Schools), was organised by Mirko Lempert, Assistant Professor of Visual Media, and Tinna Joné, Assistant Professor of Documentary Storytelling, who at that time was also Head of the Department of Film and Media at SADA, which is part of Uniarts.²⁹

Modern artistic leadership will therefore increasingly involve maintaining an overview, spreading enthusiasm and being a uniting force in an increasingly multimodal, collective and co-creative process. I can also envisage a future scenario in which graduate film directors can, fearlessly, choose the power-critical and democratic approach of devising as a method in future film projects, just as readily as traditional filmmaking in the industry. It is highly likely, however, that traditional filmmaking in the industry will in future involve a much more complex co-creative situation than at present. From traditionally having been described as a linear process, filmmaking has now become a circular process, in which the start, end and middle are linked in a creative wheel of interacting phases.

My conclusion following this artistic development project is that a film director can definitely work in a democratic process. Film directing is a necessary form of expertise in the team, just like all the other kinds of expertise are required in a community of practice. In a traditional, hierarchical team structure the work of film created will possibly, and if the process has been a good one, bear the 'signature' of the director. Cinemagoers and film critics will see that the film was made by that particular director. The epithet for such a director is 'strong' and means that there will be a recognisable 'style' that originates from the director's 'pen' or 'brush'. In a devised filmmaking process, the film will also have a 'style': that style will originate from the collective's 'pens' or 'brushes'. The process will shape the film. The process will also be the film to a greater extent. Devised films will perhaps, like many devised performing arts productions, have a strong contemporary feel and convey existential stories about what it means to be human. And perhaps we can say that the film narrative then becomes existentialistic at that point, when the actual fact that the group exists becomes the starting point of the story. The essence, in other words the content of the film, will ensue.

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