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Artistic Thinking in Non-Artistic Field

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"an ordinary object elevated to the dignity of a work of art by the mere choice of an artist."

Marcel Duchamp

1. Abstract

The essay is looking into expanding the practice of art, which will benefit not only the art itself, but also other fields that are not using art in their approaches, at the moment. One of the problems that this paper is trying to address is the limited power that art has in producing change. Some methods proposed in this paper are: the *inclusion* of art in everyday practices (and the other way around) by *contaminating* the non-artistic field with artistic thinking; the expansion of art practices into *substantive actions*; changing mentalities from *problem solving* into *decision making*; and *raise questions by giving answers*. The results of these inquiries are showing art's great potential for transdisciplinarity and the increased power of change that art could have. The implications of this approach are subtle on short term, but on the long run, it could make a big difference not only in the way art is made, but also in the way anything else is approached.

Key words: substantive action, decision making, non-artistic field, transdisciplinarity, ready-made discipline

2. Introduction

I was born in the communist period in Romania, I was only 8 years old when the revolution came (1989), but I remember very well the discussions, the conditions and the atmosphere. I lived in a classic socialist neighbourhood with big, grey, crowded blocks. Most people which were living there were coming from the country side as young workforce for the communist factories. They were giving birth to the first urban generation of that neighbourhood, just like it happened in many other neighbourhoods from Romania in that period. I was part of this new generation and maybe as you can already picture it, the environment was of a working class. This environment was very mixed and very flat, at the same time. Mixed because of the different parts of the country from where people came in that town to work and live, and flat because of the socialist approach on many aspects of life. But some things seemed to be present in everybody's lives: the constant move between countryside and city, not only physically but also emotionally and culturally. Part of this scene is occupied by religion too. The very deep, ancient religious believes were transmitted for 2000 years from generation to generation. In this culture, most people when they are born, are automatically subscribed as members of this cult (orthodoxy). It does not leave much space for analysis or criticism, religion is something that you just do/are/believe in. Even if many people don't really live a religious life, they have a very deep respect for it, just because is religion.

On top of this, the revolution came at the end of the 80's with democracy as a promise and "capitalism" as a fact. A lot of things changed after the revolution.

On a personal level, like most teenagers, I started to have philosophical questions that needed answers. So, in a working class environment, made up mostly of people coming from the country side, the philosophical material was coming more from life experience and from old sayings, than from an academic source. It took me some time to figure it out and I kept philosophy as a passion. In my early 20's I started to understand and care more about the way people live, about the way society evolves, both at a national and international level. The high level of corruption of the Romanian political scene, both in the past and in the present, is affecting all aspects of life, of every citizen. This made me think more about how a society could function and determined me to choose a way in which my passion for philosophy would be put in practice. I didn't want a "conventional", "dirty" tool for change like politics, I felt that I didn't have the kind of space I needed to express my

thoughts, so I chose art instead. At that time I felt that art is offering a great space for giving life to philosophical thoughts and interesting experiments, which I thought would end up in the public space, were they would make a change. Since then, almost 10 years ago, I studied art, I lived and travelled in several places from Europe, I got to know people from different cultures, and the feeling that art can make a change remained there, but it got transformed. I see that most people have a mysterious respect for art. They don't really understand it because art it's not something that most people have access to at a deeper level, but when they are born, are automatically subscribed as members of this cult (art lovers), just like it was happening with people and religion in Romania. But I believe, as Duchamp and the dadaists also puts it almost 100 years ago, that: "there is an unnecessary adoration of art" (dennis liu 2013, min. 18:02). The deep respect for something that one doesn't understand, be it art, religion or anything else, sooner or later will be debunked. For example religion, in history, had a much bigger influence in society than art did. But once science could offer a sense of spirituality and understanding by placing us in front of the wonders of nature, religion, because it didn't make sense anymore, started to fade away, even if the deep respect for it was there for thousands of years. So, by asking people, in the 21st century, to appreciate art because is art, is like asking them for penitence.

Many in the art-world were shocked and vexed when in many western countries art budgets were cut beginning with 2000's, sometimes cuts were even more than 50%. This situation made me think about, on one hand how much people (not any-more)respect art, and on the other hand how much the art-world understands people. Being vexed in this situation, it seems to me a sign of ignorance, arrogance and a little bit of living in the past. Instead of asking itself: "how can I, 'the art-world', make myself accessible to the people"; "what art-world can give to the people so they can understand it in such a way that they can appreciate it?"; the art-world is asking itself: "how could they do this to me?". In this situation I see two variants: it's either the art-world remains vexed¹ and does what is doing, in the way is used to do it, expecting respect "just because", or is going to try and understand and adapt to a world that is changing faster than it can understand itself. Of

1 "Artists Damien Hirst and Tracey Emin have joined a campaign against proposed government cuts to arts funding." (n.a, BBC 2010); "Italian museum burns art to protest austerity cuts" (Thompson, CNN 2012); "Do not enter the Netherlands. Cultural meltdown in progress" (New York Times cited in Dutch Artists 2011, Dutch Daily News 2011)

course the idea of the “art-world” is a big, grosso-modo approach to the nuanced levels on which art functions, and of course there are artists that push forward for changing the concept of art and its practices, but in my view it can be done much more in that direction and that is why I choose, in this case, to generalize.

Going back to art's power for change, I also see that art is made and consumed, at a higher level, as “conceptual entertainment”, as “football for the rich, who changes only those who think like them” as Santiago Sierra puts it. Art and religion have many things in common, they both kept their mystic aura. I hope art will not have the same fate as religion has in the West, though. I believe that art has great abilities to adapt, it only has to be allowed and encouraged, mostly by the educational system. I also believe that art has great power for change in society, but not that much in the way is mostly done today. I am not the only one who believes this: Joseph Bueys and others said it already, and you can find some of their ideas in this text.

Through this paper I am trying to find some answers to my own questions which I have in relation with art, its role in society and my connection to it. The idea of this paper was latent for many years and now it seems to me that it had to appear and take shape. It appeared in the spirit of what is promoting: the call for action. The call for action is something that I felt is needed after my experience with art as a tool for change, which was quite disappointing. My primary goal in approaching art was “change”, the second was also “change”, and only the third was personal joy in experimenting with the beauty of mind and matter. In my case, I guess Dan Graham was right when he said: “All artists are alike. They dream of doing something that's more social, more collaborative, and more real than art.”, a quote with which Claire Bishop begins her book “Artificial hells” (2012, p1).

In this paper, for avoiding confusion, I chose to use the traditional way of dividing knowledge into disciplines, and those disciplines into artistic and non-artistic (non-art-something that is not art or that rejects the conventional forms or methods of art (Oxford Dictionaries)). Most of the examples I mention in this paper, in order to give a sense of what this theory stands for, are to be considered trends and approaches that have some similarities with what I propose, but they are NOT exact models.

The present essay is a draft which is trying to layout an overview of what I intend to further research and develop. I found a contradiction in my experience (mostly with the academic

world), that even if the personal, reflective view is encouraged, when this is expressed without strong references, it's usually very easy overlooked as doubtful and insignificant. But if the same thing is said with "good" references, everything starts to gain weight and becomes more acceptable, easing the responsibility of evaluation, that the reader/public has. The syndrome of *reference's* authority is very old in the academic world and the *recommendation* rush made quite a lot of famous victims during history. Taking this into consideration and the draft status of the essay, which is trying to lay a base for a future research, I let my voice to be heard through a display of an organized succession of connections between personal views and numerous references.

This theory is proposing to find new spaces within, between and across disciplines and also aims to offer new possibilities, which are inviting for the creation of **functional** systems through art. The purpose is to **raise questions by giving answers** and to get over the, somehow "cool", stereotype that "art at its best does not provide answers and solutions; it creates problems" (Aranda, Wood and Vidokle, 2011). I'm looking into strategies and practices that could make this happen and the main approach is to view **artistic thinking** as a vehicle for transdisciplinarity. In order for artistic thinking to get this role, first is needed a more complex research of what *artistic thinking* is; I want also to study what is art's social impact, its evolution as practice and the way it is perceived in society, both in the past and in the present; expanding the artistic practice into *decision making* through *substantive action*, will force the merging of art with fields that didn't use artistic thinking as a tool for understanding, planting this way seeds that could lead to new insights, both in art but mainly outside of it.

In the next part of the introduction I'll speak about methodology, what I consider to be my artwork for this project, the structures that I would like to elaborate and a brief overview on the birth of liberal arts and their revival in the Europe of the 21st century.

My own perspective on how art can have a bigger effect of change in society, determined me to build on Joseph Beuys' concept of social sculpture and also helped me to demonstrate that artistic thinking is an effective way of understanding and producing complexity. There are voices which are saying that in this times, when information and things are happening everywhere at such a big rate(see Moore's law), the classic, linear approach is not effective any-more and that experimentation is the shortest way to

innovation. Thus, in this context, artistic thinking is a very strong and necessary tool in any field, in particular in the ones that have such great impact like politics and economics do. I believe that emphasizing on *substantive action* and on changing the mentality from *problem solving* to *decision making* in art, can bring into discussion much more vividly art's presence in other disciplines and other disciplines' presence in art. I am interested in opening more the possibilities for creating projects that will have roles, on the one hand as symbolic statements, critics, experiments, catalyst for new discussions, and, on the other hand, as fully functional and sustainable systems in society. The approach of liberal arts is an example I use for the model proposed by my theory.

As methodology used and for a better understanding of what this approach implies, I tried to find not only diverse documentation, but also persons who are working in a close vicinity with what I am interested in and whom I interviewed.

2.1 What I consider to be my artwork for this project

a) Envisioning and developing the theory of Artistic Thinking in Non-Artistic Field by reflecting on and connecting different information which I consider to be relevant for this topic. The idea/theory Artistic Thinking in Non-Artistic Field is my artwork. Can be regarded as a standalone artwork and also as part of a bigger project, as it follows;

b) The process of taking this theory into a research environment for further development, with the aim of transforming it in a framework for future courses of artistic thinking in fields where it is not taught. In more concrete terms, I want to further develop the theory within a Ph. D programme, which will help advance it to a position closer to the decision making factors of the educational system, from where this theory could be implemented;

c) The social sculpture which might take shape after the *artistic thinking in non-artistic field* theory will be approached in different educational programmes, and the influence that the students which experienced it will have on society.

I will use the project that I'm trying to start, the one described here, to briefly define some of the concepts I promote. For example ***substantive action***: instead of using *representation*(paintings, installations etc.) or *symbolic actions*(performance or actions with mainly symbolic character) to express the fact that, for example politics, economics and education are not transdisciplinary enough, experimental, complex and open minded

enough, I use *substantive action*(direct change through functional, practical endeavour). Meaning that I try to “contaminate²” the system³ with *artistic thinking*, which I think will make it change. And I do that by working on the step by step process that would take me and my theory into a position from where it can be implemented: I do what it's necessary to finish the master programme, I apply to a Ph.D. programme where I can develop the theory to the stage where it can generate courses of artistic thinking in non-artistic fields (i.e. artistic thinking in economics) and like this contaminate future generations with a mentality that has the potential to make the difference in any field is applied. Thus fixing the problems provoked by the system's lack of transdisciplinarity, experimentation, complexity, criticism, self-criticism. **Decision making:** is the fact that I'm trying to go and act where the decision factors are, in this case the educational system's. I choose the educational system because I think it can have the biggest impact on the long run, so the most effective for what I intend. Having a decision making mentality is putting the artist in a position from where s/he can act and apply vision, not react (**only** by criticising something that already happened) or patch (**only** by solving local problems), as it happens usually with a *problem solving* mentality. I choose to contaminate the (educational) system from within, by accessing the system's decision factors. But the decision making mentality can function also from outside the system by generating new decision factors, that could work in parallel with the system, or make the system's decision factors obsolete. **Raise questions by giving answers**, is the method I use and propose in my theory. Looking at the social sculpture that the appliance of this theory will make in maybe 20-30 years from now, people can look back and pose questions on “how could have been possible that the system needed people from outside to push it to evolve, to update it self?”. And if the anterior question will still be actual than ask themselves: “how can we make a system that updates it self, evolves together with society, not because it is pushed by it?; maybe even have advanced visions before many people in society have” (by contrary of what, I think, is happening now). So my theory/art-work will not bring only answers to how transdisciplinarity, complexity etc. can be brought in politics, economics etc., but will also raise questions. Of course this is a dream scenario and many unexpected things will happen on the way, but for me it looks like a strategy that worth trying and if it would be

2 Contamination, I think, is the most effective strategy for change: minimum input for maximum output. In this case, by influencing the way of thinking in non-artistic field, one can expect that the materialization of that thinking will be reflected in society.

3 Through system I mean all the mechanisms that make our society function (politics, economics etc.).

adopted in various forms by more artists, the impact would be even greater.

2.2 Structures to elaborate

I name “structures” the following because I want to give the sense of their flexibility, of de-constructable ideas which are built by borrowing from different concepts.

a) *Substantive Action in Art*

As Hans Ulrich Obrist remarks in an interview published in Artforum magazine: “a few artists have become world leaders”, and he refers to Edi Rama, the artist who became Albania's prime minister, as being “that extraordinary hybrid” (Hans Ulrich Obrist, 2014). In my work, one of the things I want to develop more is the *substantive action* as art practice, so society could have more of these “hybrids”. For this, I study among other strategies, how artistic thinking can be part of the non-artistic field.

a.1) *Raise questions by giving answers* approach versus “art at its best does not provide answers and solutions; it creates problems” (Aranda, Wood and Vidokle, 2011). The first, *Raise questions by giving answers*, by contrast with the second approach, implies *substantive action*.

a.2) *Aesthetics of substantive action*: In the same way in which the “situations” created by Michael Asher had their own aesthetics, the “situational aesthetics”⁴, I am proposing to reflect upon the “aesthetics of substantive action”.

b) *Ideas as art works*

I would like to re-contextualize in 21st century, when the “thought” could mean faster than ever “action”, Joseph Beuys's idea that because “man, by virtue of his products, has experience of how he can contribute to the whole”, the “thought” can also be an artwork with which one can contribute, be a sculptor of society, and emphasize his remark “it is not just a few who are called to determine how the world will be changed – but everyone.” (Jappe in Harrison and Wood 1992: 890)

4 “By emphasizing the social and psychological sites of art rather than the production of autonomous art objects, Peltomäki argues, Asher constructs experientially complex situations that profoundly affect those who encounter them, bringing about both personal and institutional transformation.” (n.a n.d.)

c) *Recognizing art in non-artistic realm*

I also try to find a possible place of artistic value for the non-artistic realm, which did not find its way in the art appreciative systems. Thus, opening opportunities for new interpretations and new resources for knowledge. Jean-Yves Jouannais has some good observations on this, in his book *Artistes Sans oeuvre, I would prefer not to* (2009), where he is arguing the amount of works and the tip of the iceberg that see the light of day by the choice of an elite. And that tip of the iceberg is considered the culture of a society, in comparison with the vast amount of works that didn't actually see the "light" and which are "the only truth about the history of mentalities" (Jouannais 2009: 36). In the same book is presented Jean Dubuffet's point of view on the amount of thoughts that people have, but are never written or recorded in any way and "the idea of the West, that culture is a matter of books, paintings and monuments, is childish... " (Dubuffet in Jouannais, 2009: 37). In the same tone he continues and says that: "All painters in our museums are failures of painting" (Picabia in Jouannais, 2009: 37). Concluding this way that out there in society is a lot of potential that is untapped just because the establishment can't grasp it all and appreciate it in a measurable way. I believe that the 21st century, because of the technologies that is bringing, will be a great game changer for the condition of what it used to be untapped potential and how we perceive it. This is, I think, the big difference between 21st century and the past.

c.1) *Art awards for non-artistic projects*

This is seen as a strategic procedure for art to contaminate the non-artistic fields. The idea will be developed further in the text.

3. Defining artistic thinking

Even though artistic thinking is mentioned in different contexts, it seems that nobody could really define it. In the following part of this paper I will try to bring forth my own understanding of what artistic thinking is and also mention some references about it.

3.1. Theoretical approach

If art has changed so dramatically during history, and mostly in the past, almost, two centuries, it means that not **how** one is expressing herself is what we consider art, but what has to do with **what** is expressed. This means that we consider art one's understanding of (things in) life. We keep the name “art” yet, fundamentally, its content has changed (Brugère, n. d.). So the way in which an artist sees anything, can be considered artistic thinking. This means that artistic thinking can be applied on/in anything: i.e. economics, politics, science etc. “Thinking” is regarded, in this context, as the embodiment of all channels through which one is perceiving reality (i.e. physical, instinctual, emotional, unconscious, subconscious, conscious states).

A simplistic observation on what an artist is doing when “doing” art is that she is taking reality, **creatively** reshaping it and **contextualizing** the new shape in order for the public to contemplate its own reality.

Some notions should be further clarified. Firstly, in the observation above, “reality”(“she is taking reality”) is the reality in which the artist lives (the only reality possible for each individual; one's own reality). And she is taking that reality (because it's the only one that she can take) and reshapes it in a creative manner. Then, she's contextualizing the new shape. The contextualization part is perhaps as important as the creative reshaping because it gives a meaning, a sense for that new shape. Here we find different kinds of variations and at least two of them are the unconscious and the conscious states: at a deeper level, of course, anything that takes shape also creates context around it, and the artist is automatically contextualizing once she's interpreting reality, but she's doing it without a conscious will, without intention. But there is **also** another level of contextualization, that is taking place in a conscious state, with intention. Here, as an artist, you want to give meaning to this new shape, a context, so that you can reflect upon the first reality through a new perspective; or to put it out there for the public to reflect upon their own reality through the perspective you propose.

However, there are disruptive cases like in Duchamp's “ready-made” art, where contextualization made all the processes possible at once. It can be said that it was like a quantum moment.

As a simplified conclusion I propose this formula:

Artistic thinking = Creativity + Contextualization.

But I have to mention that artistic thinking can not be confused with creativity **alone**:

Artistic thinking ≠ Creativity.

Artistic Thinking could also be defined by the model often used in science, where the electron and, later, the Higgs boson, were only seen as present because of their effects on the other known particles. Thus the Artistic Thinking, even if many people are speaking about it, without anybody knowing what it exactly is, could be defined by what it **doesn't do** or **it is not**; or/and by finding as many characteristics possible and see how those affect other related components.

I'm emphasizing the idea of "artistic" thinking instead of "creative" thinking because, as I tried to explain earlier in the text, "creativity" is just half of the ingredients in my approach regarding artistic thinking. In my view, "creativity" is instinctual and art is happening at many levels, not only instinctual. Children have the greatest "creative" minds and some artists base their art only on creativity and primal drive, while others choose to combine in different measures creativity with complex intellectual endeavours.

I believe in the idea that "every human being is an artist", something that Joseph Beuys said after almost 50 years from the moment of "Art is dead" statement and 150 years since Hegel's "end of art". In a BBC interview in 1968, Duchamp was asked what he meant through "Art is dead", and his answer was: "I meant that instead of being singularized in a little box: so many artists in so many square feet...by the fact, **it will be universal. It is to be a human factor in anyone's life, to be an artist but not noticed as an artist.**" (Dennis Liu, 2013) Now, after almost 200 years since the "end of art" idea, and its reiteration in different forms during this time, I still feel that a reconciliation it's needed between the art-world and the art as "a human factor in anyone's life". I think art is happening in much more many places that people in academia, many of the professional artists or the art market are ready to accept. The artistic thinking in the paradigm of the network society of the 21st century, in my view, is the vehicle to make the reconciliation happen.

Creativity is taking a lot of attention in our times in non-artistic environments. It is a raw

ingredient that can transform any employee, which has been standardized and striped of creativity in the educational system through narrow and very distinct disciplines, into a “creative robot” that can come with new ideas, only in the *given context* that the job requires. I think that this is not enough to create bridges between disciplines, or find spaces in between, or move across and transcend disciplines. Creativity is what the employee of the industrial era didn't have because the industry didn't need it, manual labour was needed. Now, the manual labour is either automatized or outsourced and the market needs employees who have to be more than manual labourers, the market needs people with ideas. But people are more than employees and life is more than the market, so the educational system should prepare people for life, instead of employees for the market. Fortunately, the market is also gaining if people are prepared for life, because they will be also very good employees. Maybe not “good” as in “creative robots” who provide services for the given market, but as in people with complex minds who make things for a better society as a whole. In order to have these kind of people, creativity is not enough.

“Artistic thinking” is using creativity(instinct and intuition) as raw ingredients, but it also use critical thinking(which takes rationality, logic, lucidity etc.), freedom and ability to experiment, freedom and ability to transcend disciplines/knowledge, freedom and ability to impersonate, so ingredients which make **contextualization** possible and complex.

That is why “Artistic Thinking” (creativity+contextualization) is maybe the best vehicle for transdisciplinarity and a tool for understanding complexity.

Another way to view it, artistic thinking is following the natural process of our minds, necessary for a good memory: most people with good memory do not have any physical advantage, they only have better contextualization abilities. They link a piece of information that they have to remember, with many other informations. That is how they manage to remember it. Associating diverse informations to one bit of information that one wants to remember, so in other words contextualizing that bit of information, is an old technique developed in ancient Greece for improving memory and it is a scientifically proven process of how our memory functions.

So artistic thinking is bridging creativity, which is something that comes from intuition, instinct, subconscious, unconscious with contextualization, which is a natural process of the human mind for processing information, a rational, conscious event. Thus, by bridging

creativity and contextualization, artistic thinking can transcend in a natural way anything from affective to cognitive.

Another way of defining artistic thinking could be the following:

“How to form the audacity to make moves that have not been already sanctioned, and within spaces where they may not be acceptable? Fostering this audacity is less a structural concern – of how to deal with a given space, of how to access a history or a network of relations, of how to make work visible, and so forth – and more a question of identifying the kind of thinking that can surpass structures and institutionalization altogether. We might call this artistic thinking” (Aranda, Wood and Vidokle 2011).

The rebirth, in Europe, of the deep interconnection between natural sciences and humanities that characterized the liberal arts of the antique Greece, which were later adopted and developed by Romans, continued and practised during Renaissance, and somehow lost and traded with strict separation of knowledge around 19th century, is intuitively announced in the 20th century by Duchamp “the breather” and Joseph Beuys “the social sculptor”, just to name these two. Starting with the middle of the 20th century, the emergence of informational engineering, by contrast with the traditional natural resources engineering, managed through its nature to bring together once again the natural sciences with humanities, changing the paradigm and creating a new need for Liberal Arts approach that is re-making its way into the European educational system, starting with the 21st century.

The kind of thinking provided by liberal arts, opens up a lot of possibilities for inclusiveness and for movement across any discipline. Art has changed a lot within the last century and now, in the spirit of liberal arts, there are much more possibilities for expression.

The problem with materiality and the medium/channel has been discussed within the appearance of any new form of artistic expression, from photography to ready-made, to happenings. Now, it is much easier to paint with concepts, to make an architecture of ideas and create beautiful intellectual structures as art projects. In this case, I am wondering why mathematics, economics or politics are so peripheral channels for artistic expression and why are they so very little promoted as art material?

I feel it is important to mention here that I'm trying to emphasize the distinction between

economics and the politics of economics. And avoid the common confusion between the two.

However, it is not only about how different channels are promoted in art. More important I find to be the way art is viewed. Most of the times art is made in a symbolic way, with the purpose to make an observation, to create awareness or provoke a discussion etc., but almost never to give a solution. It is only since the 90's that we see a closer relation between the artist and society, through participatory, community art works. These are, at the same time, both **offering solutions** and making **symbolic acts**. However, this is possible only if the artist is taking a direct position in the community as a leader, facilitator, mediator, counsellor, organizer, diplomat, negotiator etc. All these are in direct contact with the people and the decision factors: politicians, authorities, private companies. But I think an artist can do even more: s/he can enter into the decision factors arena, from where the problems usually start. Here, politics and economics can become tools for social sculpting, for **making history** and **not only reacting** to it, as it usually happens with many of the artistic projects. But for this, a shift in the artists' mentality has to happen: from **problem solving** to **decision making**. I think this shift has already started to take place and will become more evident with time. I also think that this is only a necessary phase through which our society has to go and this is the time for it.

Even though art changed a lot as a concept, in practice it remained mostly symbolic. Now, political art could expand to **substantive actions**, too.

Let me clarify what I mean through Problem Solving versus Decision Making:

- the **Problem Solving** mentality is, most of the times, oriented towards patching and finding solutions to a flawed system (**react**);
- **Decision Making** mentality has embedded a Problem Solving attitude, but it also has vision. The vision can find totally new systems and replace the old ones (instead of always patching them) or it can find spaces that have never been explored and which we didn't even know we needed (**act**).

Examples of different kinds of Interventions in Public Space (social sculpture)

- i.e. developing and implementing a law, developing a new economic, political, social or educational system, developing a disruptive technological system etc. Reflecting on their

impact on society, on the reasons for what they've been developed, putting them in a larger context (*re-contextualizing*) than the apparently immediate utilitarian purpose, makes these interventions to also have an artistic potential.

3.2 Scientific approach

In the study *Artistic Thinking as Transcognitive Practice: A Reconciliation of the Process-Product Dichotomy* Sullivan Graeme is looking in to some important aspects of what *artistic thinking* is and how it was viewed in different moments of the recent history.

A reader of art education journals over recent years might be perplexed by the array of theories and practices that are proclaimed, but there are some enduring principles at play and some things stand out: **art involves thinking** (Sullivan 2001: 2).

Drawing on research of artists' practice, a model is proposed that reconciles the process-product dilemma by defining **artistic thinking as transcognition**.

The cognitive coalition involves an on going dialogue between, within and around the artist, artwork, viewer, and context where each has a role in co-constructing meaning. This process is iterative and strategic in nature as meaning is encompassed and negotiated. This is described as transcognition. Transcognition is a process where the 'self' and 'others' are parallel and necessary agents of mind that inform each other through analysis and critique.

Diverse thinking processes is a strategy used by both scientists and artists (Feyerabend, 1987; Perkins, 1981; Weisberg, 1993 in Sullivan 2001: 3).

CP. Snow's description of *The Two Cultures* (1959) focuses on the new ways in which art and science were engaged in seeing the world, but because science turned to theory, the two split up and Snow's end up calling the dispute between the two, a dispute between the 'intellectuals' and the 'boffins'. John Brockman in his writing *The Third Culture* (1996), identifies a series of scientists that he describes as **'third culture thinkers'**, filling this way, the gap remarked by CP. Snow (Sullivan 2001: 3).

Marvin Minsky's opinion on the single truth, the pure or the best way to represent knowledge was wrong-headed, saying that "you can't understand anything unless you understand it in several different ways" (cited in Brockman, 1996, p. 163 in Sullivan 2001: 3).

Three distinct research trends are observed:

- the **symbolicist** approach (Sullivan 2001: 3), which explains cognition in terms of how individuals process information – **art as a form of symbolic functioning**.

- the **connectionism** which brings together metaphors about the brain and computers and which models an architecture of the mind that consists of an enormous array of parallel networks that explain learning as a means of 'connecting'. To this extent, **information is in the connections** and "it means that all knowledge is implicit in the structure of the device that carries out the task rather than explicit in the status of the units themselves" (Rumelhart in Sullivan 2001: 4).

- **dynamicist**, a third emergent theory of cognition (Thelen & Smith, 1994 in Sullivan 2001): describes a multidimensional model that has some compatibility with the kind of non-linear models we might envision with artistic cognition. This approach sees **cognition** more **as a dynamic**, systems-like model that is continually changing as a consequence of the **interaction between the thinker and the surrounding environment**. (ibidem.)

In Sullivan's study, it is mentioned that cognition, as a dynamic mix of individual action and environmental constraints, will be attractive to art educators "who favour a contextualist view of thinking and learning." (Sullivan 2001: 4) Moreover, he suggests a way through which we can understand better the scope of artistic thinking and that is to examine whether it's a **process** or a **product** (ibidem).

Art Cognition as Product "is a construct that describes cognition as the consequence of thought and action" (Sullivan 2001: 4).

Art Cognition as Process "is a construct that describes cognition as a socially mediated process. In general we associate this view with the interpretive and semiotic tradition from Europe" (Barthes, 1968; Gadamer, 1960/93 in Sullivan 2001: 4).

Cognition and Context

The **context** is regarded as the main agent for understanding and learning about cognitive development. (in Sullivan 2001: 6).

Cognition is seen as a mental activity that takes place within a socio-cultural context that requires one to **abandon the idea that art is a process OR a product**. Viewing art practice as displaying cognitive processes which are distributed throughout the various media,

language, situational, and cultural products offers the possibility of a more plausible argument (Sullivan 2001: 6).

4. Trends overview:

In this chapter I'll try to underline some trends that I think are influencing parts of society and art into the kind of mindset that my approach is also proposing (substantive action, raise questions by giving answers, decision making mentality).

4.1 Trends in art

Joseph Beuys advocated for the extended concept of art and created the term *Social Sculpture* to illustrate his idea that art has the potential to transform society.

“Only on condition of a radical widening of definitions will it be possible for art and activities related to art [to] provide evidence that art is now the only evolutionary-revolutionary power. Only art is capable of dismantling the repressive effects of a senile social system that continues to totter along the death-line: to dismantle in order to build ‘A SOCIAL ORGANISM AS A WORK OF ART’... EVERY HUMAN BEING IS AN ARTIST who – from his state of freedom – the position of freedom that he experiences at first-hand – learns to determine the other positions of the TOTAL ART WORK OF THE FUTURE SOCIAL ORDER.” (Tisdall 1974, p.48)

It is interesting to see the reiteration of what was once formulated during the avant-garde period from around 1900, in the “neo avant-garde” period of Allan Kaprow and his “Art as life”, of Robert Smithson with his “A Sedimentation of the Mind: Earth Proposals”, of Joseph Beuys's extended concept of art and how these are again looking for a space at the end of the 20th century, beginning of 21st century.

Reflective writing can be considered a trend in opening up the art practice by making the artistic process more accessible to the public for inspiration, debate, critic, analysis. The reflective writing example can be viewed as a system or tool for exploring a new territory in art, which is allowing people to better understand the artistic process and get inspired by it. It's a radical gesture in the art world, which pulls out to the light the story behind the art

work, which was until now almost a religious mystery.

4.2 Trends in society

In the following sub-chapter I will talk about Creative Commons which makes culture more available; creators versus spectators and the rebirth of liberal arts in Europe.

I think art is returning to its origins, to the people. There are several trends we can observe in society, which are a proof for this.

In education we start to see emerging interesting programs, which present themselves to have a transdisciplinary approach. For example Parsons The New School For Design in New York and Paris is promising to their graduates a possible place outside the traditional design realms too, saying that:

“Graduates may work in careers that involve structuring health care policy; rebuilding infrastructure; rethinking public education, micro-businesses, and non-governmental organizations”(Parsons The New School For Design).

Another example is Kaospilot, a hybrid between business and design school, which is promising to their students:

“Our teaching programmes are not designed simply to shape students to **fit the future**, but to help them **create it.**”(Kaospilot)

The rebirth of liberal arts in Europe's educational systems is a strong signal for the change that is happening. Despite the European origin of the liberal arts college, only recently around the year 2000), some efforts have been undertaken to **revive liberal arts education in Europe** ('Liberal arts education', Wikipedia 2014).

During the industrialization period, when people were needed to be just smart enough to work the factories' machines, the education was made in a “**learn what to think**” paradigm which was meeting the work force demand. In the information and (semi)automation age of the early 21st century, the work force demands that the educational paradigm should change into “**learn how to think**”, in order to stimulate “creativity”, but mostly in the **given context** of the job or the system in which one has to function. Hopefully, later in the 21st century, the educational system will not focus only on

creativity in a given context to satisfy the job's needs or the system's needs, but will encourage more transdisciplinarity and push it towards a postdisciplinary society.

As Katarina Wadstein Macleod stated during her lecture on critical thinking, held on the 5th of September 2013 at Konstfack, the approach in modern times was “This is like this!”, while in contemporary times it is transformed in “This is like this... but it could be also like this”. Thus, thinking becomes relative.

Alain de Botton is having an interesting approach on how philosophy should be integrated in society and he proposes a marriage between business and philosophy among other projects in which he tries to contaminate with philosophy the daily life, i.e. online publication *The Philosophers' Mail* (de Botton 2013). De Botton believes that although philosophers have a huge professional satisfaction by being merely “wise and right”, they did not influence the course of society because their work currently reaches only 300 people (Cohen 2014).

In explaining his idea, de Botton distinguishes two themes: the Higher Needs Project and The Commercial Project. The first one is referring to both the individual and collective need to make the best of life at the psychological level. The second one, supplying of goods and services profitably, within a competitive arena. A process seen here as the dominant mechanism of the modern world (de Botton 2013).

Though it might seem that these two are contradictory, de Botton considers that they can and should overlap. Although a business is an idea of human satisfaction put into practice, and profit should be the reward for recognizing it, bringing philosophers into thinking business should lead society to a more sophisticated understating of what business should do for us as a society (de Botton 2013).

De Botton is proposing for the hotel industry a model in which it could offer a “minibar of the mind” (de Botton, 2013). Following this idea from a philosophical point of view, I think from the art's point of view, artistic thinking in business and economics can ignite the appearance of the next “social business” model or the next “micro-financing” system; or the next “sharing economy”; or “crowd funding” system; or the next universal currencies like Bitcoin is; or even the next model for societies that don't even need money, like the “resource based society” model proposed by Venus Project⁵. The models I use here as

5 <http://thevenusproject.com/> (Accessed 28.03.2014)

examples already exist and most of the times without the direct intervention of artists. Some people managed to stay away from a standardized way of thinking and could develop this projects. It could be said that they present values of artistic thinking. For example, as an artist, I consider that I could easily use these projects as ready-mades and transform them into works of arts. But I can only imagine how the world could look like if (more) artists would get involved in creating such systems as their art works. Or how the world could look like if artistic thinking would be adopted in non-artistic disciplines, bringing much more people at the level where they can think at and develop these kind of systems.

Luckily, as we have seen earlier, there are trends of revival of the liberal arts in education and some signs from philosophy's part to expand its field of manifestation. There are also trends connected to technology which show the possibility to change:

- the Free Software movement started by Richard Stallman in 1983, which is talking about digital human rights and has inspired the Creative Commons movement for free licenses. Creative Commons meets the growing need for creating and sharing culture. This is a model of licenses that, in the internet era, allows people to be free in the way they create and share culture, which transforms their condition of spectators that the last century created (mostly through TV), into free participants and creators.

Just like the basic systems of our society: politics, economics, the state, the production, the consumption, the management of resources etc. have to update them-self to the 21st century, both because the change of paradigm that technology sparked and because the environmental challenges, art should update itself too to this new age. Maybe a new anti-art movement, will regenerate the art-world, just like Dada did 100 years ago. But Dada was happening around the beginning of the 20th century and its context of the separation of knowledge in many, narrow and deep disciplines, that helped us to understand, at it's fabric, how we function in the universe. Since then, we also learned that everything is interconnected and interdependent, understanding that we have to bridge these disciplines in order to create a coherent system in which we can function in a sustainable and innovative way. So in this new paradigm of the 21st century, a regenerated art will not use politics only as subject for criticism, but will impersonate politics, economics will not be only a source for debate, but new economic systems will be generated by artists or in collaboration with artists. The artist will not be "only" an artist, art will not be a separated

bubble in society as it is now. The trends that I observe are making me think that we go in this direction, and the things that are happening to confirm this, I think, should be framed in a way that could accompany this transition.

That is why I consider that artistic thinking is a useful tool for the transition and a vehicle for transdisciplinarity.

The graphic presented on the next page is a simplistic overview of the relation between art and society over time: from the antic Greeks and Romans and their approach to liberal arts; passing through a long period of a very different relationship than the one liberal arts established; arriving to a peak which will disappear fairly quick: the Renaissance, where the artist is capable of having different roles in society and of covering many different fields of knowledge. After Renaissance's disappearance, another long period of -genius like-artist is following. It lasts until around 1900, when avant-garde art started to experiment heavily and also started to include society in its work, but still hanging on the "genius". In the 1960's, Joseph Beuys proposes social sculpting and during that time a lot of things change in the relation between art and society, the "neo avant-garde". Only in the 1990's, a clear collaboration between art and society is possible to be observed through participatory and community art. In the future, a new revival of the spirit of the liberal arts, combined with the possibilities which the 21st century offers, will help a new relationship between art and society to emerge.

ARTISTIC THINKING IN NON-ARTISTIC FIELD

PROBLEM SOLVING

REACTING TO HISTORY

DECISION MAKING

MAKING HISTORY

SYMBOLIC ARTISTIC EXPRESSION

INTEGRATED ARTISTIC THINKING

GREEK - ROMAN ANTIQUITY

LIBERAL ARTS

∞

ARTS FOR THE FREE VS UTILITY FOR SLAVES

----->

ART AS GENIUS' PRODUCT

∞

SOCIETY AS SPECTATOR

RENAISSANCE

1900

ART AS GENIUS' PRODUCT

∞

SOCIETY AS PARTICIPANT TO THE ART WORK

JOSEPH BEUYS

1990

ART AS GENIUS' + SOCIETY'S PRODUCT

∞

ART AS PARTICIPANT IN SOCIETY
(ART AS NGO, ART AS MEDIATOR)

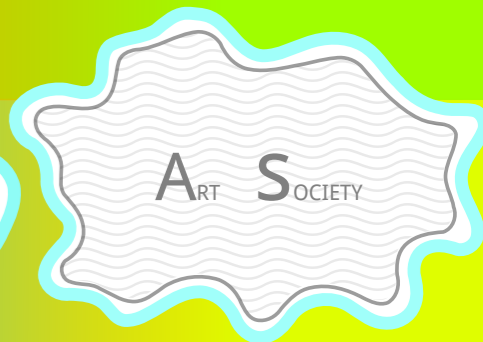
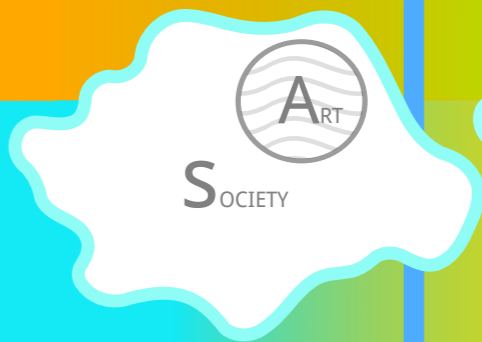
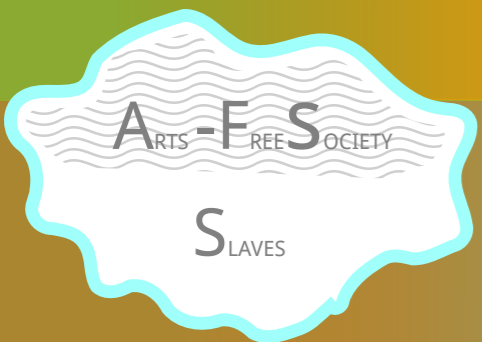
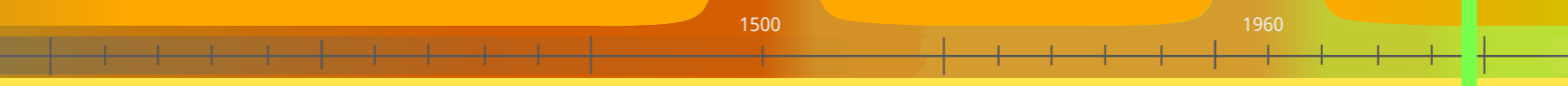
FUTURE

ART AS SOCIETY'S PRODUCT

∞

ART AS SOCIETY SOCIETY AS ART

ART SOCIETY



5. Why Artistic Thinking in Non Artistic Field is important

The following chapter presents some personal views on the importance of artistic thinking in non-artistic field and what drives me to believe in art's power for change.

5.1 “Do artists make or react to history?” (Viveros-Fauné 2012)

I was wondering for some time already, why there are not any mixed courses between universities, having art students studying or writing research at KTH (Royal institute for technology) and KTH students studying technological courses at Konstfack, and other art courses at SSE (Stockholm School of Economics) and SSE students studying financial courses at Konstfack and KTH. Only by bringing together people with different interests we could ignite new collaborations between disciplines, blurring, in this way, the borders between different mentalities.

Out of convenience, we choose to keep old mentalities in place and even perpetuate them, holding human evolution down.

For example, from my own experience, the courses initiated by SSES (Stockholm School of Entrepreneurship) are bringing together students from 5 different universities in Stockholm, with very different academic experiences. This great initiative even if it seems that is contradicting what I observed in the paragraph above, actually it isn't. It doesn't contradict the idea of having mixed courses because the program initiated by SSES is supposedly bringing together students from 5 different universities(not that many from the Art department), in courses scheduled **after** school and it has a very clear agenda: Entrepreneurship.

This proves, once again, that economics, by being open to use art to reach its goals, is more flexible and open to new ideas than the most libertarian disciplines, such as Art, which is not that open to use economics to reach its goals. One could say that economy is trying to limit art for making it more manageable and build economic models on it. I would say that this is a natural tendency of economy, and there is a constant battle for space, in this case between economy and art. But how is the art-world managing this tendency economy has? For example I would like to see the reverse of what economy is doing and develop from the art side, courses of Artistic Thinking in Economics (Politics, etc.).

I am asking myself why so many people in the art-world chooses not to see, recognize and embrace a vital part of our human condition and our present society: the use of resources

(economics). I see economics as one of the most – if not the most – powerful tool for shaping society. I consider that artists should use economics as a tool, as paint and brushes (i.e. develop new economic models), just like economics is using art as a tool to improve its efficiency.

And not only economics, which is only an example because of its power, but any other decision making position should be used by artists. Instead of keeping the art-world mostly as a “pure” resource of beauty, mystery and complexity, from which society gets its inspiration, I propose to get into the “real” world, into the real mechanisms of our society and give them a nuance of beauty, mystery and complexity that leads to a better society in the first place, where political art would not be necessary. I think the following quote, which is also a credo in my practice, is giving a better sense of what I mean: “*Those who love peace must learn to organize as effective as those who love war.*” (Martin Luther King).

Political art is using its great potential to make complex and ingenious comments on how society is functioning, only reacting to what is happening and, often, confirming what people already know or feel in relation with the problems discussed. In the same context of the symbolic way of making political art, the risk of “beautifying” a problem could appear. And this is creating, beside other problems, a conflict of interests, where the artist is making her living from the very problems she's criticizing.

But I think art has great potential and can be also proactive, not only reactive, criticizing from safe places the decision making positions, where action is taking place. As long as our society has power positions in its working mechanism, **power** should be one of the **materials used for making art**, just like paint or words are.

I would like to see an artist, one day, making his/her art project: a life time performance in which s/he will become the president of a country.

Just qualitatively sanctioning the political and economic systems is not enough, there can be done more. These systems (political, economic) and their power positions can be contaminated with art, by infiltrating and contaminating with artistic thinking their functioning. And not only this, the great qualities of the artists can also be used in developing or imagining new alternative decision factors that circumvent or work along with the “official” ones, as the following are doing: sharing economy, crowd-funding, digital currency, Free Software etc. These kind of projects could be much more than just

functional alternative systems, they can stand as critiques to the current official systems and powers, as tools for social sculpting (raise questions by giving answers).

Of course, I speak here in a simplistic form, but maybe it is important to have a simplistic speech in such a complex matter.

The reactions to the approach I propose were very diverse, ranging from the fear of creating new dictators, the fact that “it has already been said” or “it’s already happening”, to “it’s refreshing” or “it deserves more research”. All reactions were useful and contributed, in a way or another, to my better understanding of this theory and its role.

5.2 Why am I doing it

Göransson and Ljunberg are mentioning in their text *Writing from within the creative process*, that we live in Post Modern times where all the big theories are de-constructed, and that we are now looking for multiple meanings, diversities, and change, searching for spaces in between. As much as I would tend to let myself allured by the idea of looking for multiple meanings, diversities and change, even for the search of in-between spaces, I can't omit what I consider a big mistake that happened over and over again during human history, namely the idea that we live in times where big theories are already said and not only said, but also de-constructed. I think that it will always be big theories to develop and debate. The only thing that I think is changed, is that is for the first time in history when we have a vague sense of what we are, due to scientific research and technology that allowed us to look back at our self from the infinite macro and the infinite micro universes. These, in my view, enabled us to have the first signs of a mature being who understands that the only certainty there is, is uncertainty and yet live fairly comfortable with it. (Göransson and Ljunberg, 2009, p. 166). Or how Foucault was describing the condition of our times: there is no longer need for the order of things and discipline (Foucault 1978, 1979 in ibidem).

In this context, I would like to mention and briefly analyse an excerpt from an interview Duchamp gave for BBC in 1968. When the reporter asked Duchamp if he thinks he contributed to the regeneration of “something called art”, as Dada did, he answered that he maybe did this in spite of him-self. And he added:

“there are maybe a hundred people, like that, who had given up to art and

condemned it and proved to themselves that is unnecessary, no more than religion, and so forth. And WHO CARES FOR THEM? NOBODY!"

In the same interview, one minute later, the reporter made the observation that by signing and selling, Duchamp stayed within the standards of art-works. Duchamp's response was:

"Yes, in fact I had to, because otherwise where would I be? I'll be in an insane asylum probably."

On the one hand, Duchamp is mentioning the artists that had given up on art, by condemning it and who have proven to themselves that is unnecessary, but observing that nobody cares about them. On the other hand, he says that he had to stay within the standards of art-works to avoid ending up in an insane asylum.

In my view, this situation is still actual, even after so many years after Duchamp. I try, firstly for my self, to find a middle way, or a different way, to not give up on art and still avoid signing and selling "art-works", to avoid ending up in an insane asylum. For me and for others like me, I think the theory I try to develop, "Artistic Thinking in Non-Artistic Field", is the middle ground that can be beneficial both for art and for the rest of society.

Art and criticism

Some of my personal views are also reflected in theories and opinions presented in this text. Manen Marti in his article for Zerom3 is interviewing Santiago Sierra, which touches upon a very important subject for me, the effectiveness of art in social change:

"MM: [...] What capacity the artist has to provide a basis for critical discussion?

SS: It can be critical but **never effective as a critic**, so it can't. There are discussion forums, but is football for the rich, who changes only those who think like them." (Manen 2009)⁶

After such long time since the works of Duchamp and Joseph Beuys (just to name these two), it is a curiosity for me how it is possible that, in our times, art is still considered "conceptual entertainment" (Santiago Sierra in Margolles, 2004), something with which I, otherwise, agree.

⁶ "¿Qué capacidad tiene el artista para ofrecer una base para la discusión crítica?

SS: Se puede ser crítico pero nunca efectivo como crítico, así que más bien no se puede. Existen foros de discusión pero es un fútbol para ricos que solo cambia a quienes ya venían con el pié cambiado de su casa."

In a different interview, but preserving the tone, Santiago Sierra is touching the idea of what I call *substantive action* in a *decision making* mentality and art:

“P.B. - In this same sense, don't you think that what we do in the art world hardly ever has real repercussions in society?

S.S. - Well, I do think that **art can be very powerful**, and it depends on how you use it. As a matter of fact, art is the favourite tool of politicians, the state and capitalism; art is what the Catholic Church uses with its churches and its performative rituals, in order to fascinate the believer; and art is also all the rubbish television we see where everything is like a fantastic Hollywood script where the dead actors don't even know they are actors.” (Barragan 2012)

What Santiago Sierra is saying is a part of what I am also trying to say through this theory. Art can have a bigger impact on society than it has nowadays. But who is the “real artist”? In the politicians' case: are the “real artists” the ones that are making flags, campaign ads, speeches, propaganda or the ones that are using those for sculpting society in their own view and interests? In capitalism's case: are the “real artists” the ones who are making branding, or the ones are using branding to gain ground on the market and into society? In the church's case: are the “real artists” the ones that are painting churches, sculpting crosses and making funny hats for priests, or the ones that are using those and religion to “guide” the masses in the way they want?

The representation of an idea through symbolic actions, physical objects or even through examples, can give a false feeling of achievement and stop one's real actions of change in society. I think it is very healthy to criticize and observe, but I also think that it is possible to do all these while, at the same time, give answers to some problems. I think that only criticizing and not offering an alternative is a “half way there” situation, it is the attitude of a very bright adolescent that can observe and criticize what her/his parents are doing wrong, but only when becomes mature enough to live on her/his own, by her/his own rules and systems, can s/he leave the parents' house. Participating in this “conceptual entertainment” (Santiago Sierra in Margolles, 2004) is like participating to a contest of “who's the smartest adolescent”.

Art and politics

Negar Azimi was arguing in 2011 in the article *Good Intentions* published by Frieze Magazin, if socially engaged and political art really produce change. A difference between **representing politics** and **enacting politics** is also observed by Azimi and is something I try to develop in this paper. On political art, Liam Gillick is raising the issue of the contemporary art that built a **safe place** from which to criticize or as Andrea Frazer points out to the **institution of critique** versus the institutional critique. By observing this position of the contemporary art, is not hard to draw the conclusion that the system has developed a mechanism that embeds strikes and protests, that includes the moves against the stream. Thus, "**Boycotting everything is no longer an option**" (Azimi 2011). An idea on which I base some parts of the theory, which calls for *substantive action* with *decision making* mentality and **contaminating** with *artistic thinking* the *decision factors* (be it alternative decision factors or the system's).

Another phenomena is the easing of conscience through artist residencies, symposia and workshops, working with people in resource-poor or conflict zones. The beneficiaries of the eased conscience are not only the artists who walk away satisfied that they've done their part of the cause, but also the other actors like the funding bodies, the officials involved etc. This form of "cultural latrine-building" (Azimi 2011) is ameliorating a bigger issue, having a problem solving mentality and is easing the consciences of the people that otherwise could do much more if their conscience would fit the bigger problem.

"Are artists easing their own consciences by doing good, above all?" (Azimi 2011). Well, I would say that this question is, in a way, a sign of the superficiality, but mostly the weakness that art has for making change happen.

Liam Gillick was suggesting in an article published by The Guardian in 2007, that "What artists can do is occasionally step outside their normal practice and stand as citizens against the delusions of their leaders" (Azimi 2011). I believe that there is a superficiality in many parts of the contemporary art and is obvious that Gillick (in Azimi 2011) sees the power of the citizen as being bigger than the power of contemporary art. But I have to disagree with Gillick on the fact that being a citizen and making art are not compatible simultaneous. Or putting it in an other way, *citizenship can be the work of an artist*. And this is the big problem, I think, with today's approach: the clear distinction between making art

and living (as a citizen, as a politician, as an economist, as a human being), just to keep intact the “normal practice” of art.

“If contemporary art is not well-situated to respond to conflict in the world, does the industry of political or engaged art simply mimic and even shadow more ‘engaged’ action, and in the meantime, create a safe place for expression far from the ugliness of real life?” (Azimi 2011)

About relational aesthetics and political art has been many things said, but Azimii is pointing out very direct issues like:

– exchanging experiences and ideas in a room, does really make a change and push for protests better than writing a letter to the local representative, or taking a public stand? (Azimi 2011)

– the political art as a confirmation apparatus, where art projects are keep repeating what everybody knows already: wars are bad, gay people should have rights too, poverty exists etc. And what it does is only to affirm that the consumer of art is actually part of a community of like-minded people. (Azimi 2011)

The stand Azimi is taking: “**Art may be better off asking us as many questions as it answers**”, is actually what the theory I propose is trying to offer as a mindset and practice in art: “**Raise questions by giving answers.**”

Art and society

Another reason why I believe in this theory I bring forward, which is looking for inclusion of artistic thinking in non-artistic fields (and the other way around), is because I don’t want to live in a society where some of the smartest and most complex people, are struggling to integrate after they finish the art school. I would like for these people to lead the way, to offer solutions and visions:

- in US “the visual and performing arts students are faring the worst: 42% feel that college didn’t prep them for employment”; “the visual and performing arts majors have the most regrets, with 47% saying they would study something else given the chance” (Adams 2013, McKinsey & Company 2013);

- the stereotype of the poor artist is already too old to be acceptable in the 21st century, even it says a lot about the society that functions in the kind of system in which the poor artist is a stereotype.

Moreover, it is not only the art students that I care about. In US, “half of college grads are working jobs that don't require a degree” (Adams 2013) and “40% of grads from the nation's top 100 colleges couldn't find jobs in their chosen field” (Adams 2013, McKinsey & co. 2013) By taking into consideration the rest of the schools and areas in US and by excluding the degrees for lawyers, college professors, doctors etc. we can see that “only 27 percent of college grads have a job related to their major” (Plumer 2013).

US discussed about reducing places for students in art schools:

“The decline in the number of liberal arts degrees has huge implications for employees' abilities to successfully communicate and innovatively solve problems. [...]We can train you on how to do the hard skills, but what we have a more difficult time training people for is critical thinking and communication.” (The Fiscal Times Staff 2013)

On one hand, the theory I propose is trying to promote artistic thinking in non-artistic field. On the other hand the statistics show that many art students are ending up working in other fields than art. I think it's improper to say that the art students that are ending up working in other fields than art is artistic thinking in non-artistic field, even though they bring maybe involuntary into the non-artistic field, something from the artistic education they received. But that process is a secondary effect of what society can offer to them, which most of the times is provoked by constraint, by negative situations of lack of money or jobs, and can not be considered artistic thinking in non-artistic field in the way my theory is trying to capture it, even if it happens at some level.

The Italian cultural economist Pier Luigi Sacco is presenting data that speaks from itself on how art, in its current form, is very much influencing innovation, well-being, health and development. Saying that the cuts of cultural budgets that Europe had seen in last years is exactly the opposite of what it should happen. He shows that if a country wants to boost its ability for innovation, the public money should be invested also in local theatre groups, music training, dance centres and others, from young age and up (Lekvall 2012). We can

only imagine what society could look like if art would expand even more in most of our activities.

But maybe its not only the superficiality of the policy makers that decide on these budget cuts, maybe its also something else that we should look into: where is art's research on how to update itself to the 21st century's context and how does it reflect in practice? As we see, in mathematics, for example, mathematicians ask themselves “what are the characteristics of the explicit mathematical connections that teachers are able to articulate from their practice?” (Mhlolo,Venkat and Schäfer 2012). Or the research from art's point of view on the “knowledge and skills learners require to participate in a globalising twenty-first century world”. After research was made, but not from art's point of view, it seems that is an agreement between developed and developing countries that “higher order cognitive skills and processes are necessary for more equitable educational outcomes and economic productivity” (Muller & Subotzky, 2001).

My proposal, maybe because it speaks about expanding art in areas like economics, politics etc., it sometimes provokes confusion and even fear of being in accordance with the neoliberal agenda, but I consider it to be totally the opposite. **I think that the only way to change neoliberalism is to contaminate it, not fight it, with art.**

“Art may be better off asking us as many questions as it answers.” (Azimi 2001)

Art and economics

Two simple Google searches on “**entrepreneurship in creative industries**” and “**creativity in entrepreneurship**”, returned results for the both of the searches which are proving that economists have a pretty clear agenda and that they are fighting for it, even if it means to embrace “creative” people and use them in expanding the boundaries of entrepreneurship. But what are “creative” people doing for their agenda? They either work in a symbolic manner trying to detach as much as possible from the system and create a pretty weak resistance which gets transformed at one point into an “**institution of critique**”, or they get absorbed by the system, ending up working for the system, almost never trying to **embrace (absorb) or contaminate the system** as strategies for change.

One system that could be analysed is the Social Business model, which can raise some questions: is the growth values of the economic system perverting NGOs' social values or the NGOs' social values are changing the focus of the economic system? Is our society changing its way of functioning towards a free competition for doing good and for a sustainable way of living, or are we going to absorb the last counter balance to a growth driven society and accelerate the free competition for growth by any means? Are we going to use economics as a powerful tool, maybe the most powerful tool, to bring humanity to the next level of our evolution, or are we going to use it as a religion, as a way of living in itself? Is this going to change things and will capitalists also be "nice" (n.a. 2014) in the way they make money, not only in the way they give them away? ("It is far closer to the real spirit of art to run a factory that is attractive, to be kind to workers, and to treat colleagues well than to bully, fight and exploit for a lifetime, then give a Renoir to the National Gallery in one's last years" (n.a. 2014).)

I'm focusing here more on economics because I think it is the main drive of our advancement and a very powerful tool. It is a tool that, in my view, should represent a big interest for artists if they want to change society. Of course, it is not the only area that can have an impact on society. The Social Business model is just an example of how a system can raise a lot of questions and give also an answer to our needs. Social business is not CSR (corporate social responsibility), but things are not yet clearly defined. Some social businesses are more "social" than others: some are just giving the profit to charity, some are concerned on helping through the manufacturing of their goods and services and keeping the environment clean and pay the workers a fair salary and care about their working condition and being transparent to the customers on all these measures. Because people are more and more aware about these facts, a Social Business will be the choice for many of them when they will want to buy something they need. We live in a society where we have to buy the goods we need and the transfer of values and change of systems will not be radical. Thus, social business is a smooth change and will be chosen by people because they know they can do good when they buy the things they need. In this way, the companies which want to survive, will have to transform into a social business.

The system was created by bridging two areas: social and economic. Of course a lot of companies will take advantage and hide under the name of social business in order to make profit, and, of course, there will be confusion for a period of time about what con-

cerns the consumers' perception on this model, but one thing is sure: the need for social impact is so big that a new business model had to appear and now, the business landscape seems a little bit different from what it used to be in the past. All the eventual strategies to exploit this business model are not the subject of this paper. The main idea is to see that in order to change things, in this period that we live in, we have to think about giving nuance to things, about merging, bridging, experimenting.

By bridging different areas and creating functional systems, new forms of organizing society will emerge. **Artistic thinking is the way of thinking that can contextualize creativity in a transdisciplinary world.** If the social business model would have been developed by an artist (as we define artist in the contemporary art world), I think the project would have been an important work of art. Because we see art in a narrow way and because art education is not encouraging this kind of projects, the Social Business model is an economic engineering and is developed by an economist. If artistic thinking would be present in economic education, I think we could see more new concepts like Social Business model.

“The isolated concept of art education must be done away with, and the artistic element must be embodied in every subject, weather it is our mother tongue, geography, mathematics or gymnastics[...] it is not just a few who are called to determine how the world will be changed – but everyone.” (Harrison and Wood 1992: 892)

Why should artists be interested in seeing, for example, economy as a tool for making art and why should economists be seen as potential artists? Because art will have more powerful tools to work with, artistic thinking will make it's way into economics and art will gain ground into decision making areas and into people's everyday life. (Of course art can, in this very moment, do art projects using economics, but is it a common practice? Is it encouraged by the art educational system through courses, projects, practises?)

Why should economists be interested in being part of the art world? Because by recognizing the potential of artistic thinking in economic activities, which creatively changed economy in a transdisciplinary phenomenon (see the Social Business model above), they can promote this kind of thinking in the future development of economic systems. (Of course they can, in this very moment, do economic projects that exercise a certain kind of think-

ing, but are they doing this in the educational system through courses like “Artistic Thinking in economics”? Or: Is the educational system exposing students in economics to the idea that they can be considered artists by doing economics? Are they encouraged to work with artists for developing new ways of thinking about economics, instead of being encouraged to employ creative people for bringing bigger profits to old economic structures?)

The differences I see between the mentalities nurtured by Creative Thinking and Artistic Thinking in Economics are:

1. Creative Thinking in Economics: how to produce new ways to make more money?
2. Artistic Thinking in Economics: how to develop new economies (i.e. sharing economy), or a society with no money at all (i.e. Venus Project), or new funding systems that are enabling people (i.e. crowd-funding), or new currency systems (i.e. Bitcoin)?

This reasoning can be applied to any other discipline.

Going back on “it is not just a few who are called to determine how the world will be changed – but everyone” and also touch upon the elites and the social participation in art, I would like to comment two excerpts from Claire Bishop's book *Artificial Hells*:

“High culture, as found in art galleries, is produced for and on behalf of the ruling classes; by contrast, ‘the people’ (the marginalized, the excluded) can only be emancipated by direct inclusion in the production of a work. This argument [...] assumes that the poor can only engage physically, while the middle classes have the leisure to think and critically reflect.” (Bishop 2012: 37-38)

“Social participation is particularly suited to the task of social inclusion risks not only assuming that participants are already in a position of impotence, it even reinforces this arrangement.” (ibid. 38)

Of course that "social participation" projects are used more often and are more appropriate for "social inclusion", but this doesn't mean that it is efficient only in this situation; of course that "social participation" projects assume that the participants are already in an impotent situation, otherwise the existence of the projects wouldn't make sense any more, at least not for "social" inclusion; of course that it REINFORCES the argument that the participants

are impotent, because they are. This means that it recognizes the problem and wants to find ways to repair it.

Instead of creating a space where we think and produce together, we separated thinking and vision in the hands of politicians and economists, while the rest of us are busy with producing and documenting. We mime the participation to the “collective” vision, through a vote once every 4 years, where is possible to choose only between visions that are already established within political parties.

The difference between the performance of a politician versus the one of an artist (supposing they have the same result in society) is that the artist's traditional role in society is different from that of the politician. The artist has the freedom to appear “irresponsible” in order to express an idea, this making the artist “the fool” from Shakespeare's King Lear. But what if “the fool” would have the king's power, how would the world look like if it would be ruled by “fools” also and not only by kings?

For example religion, if it is observed from the social sculpture perspective, through its amazingly powerful stories, changed our society for thousands of years and still does. This gives me the impression that most people are capable of abstract thinking. And this lays down next to concepts like “money” and “documents”, things that does not exist in nature, but which we can imagine in a way so powerful that it makes them real. In science, it happens all the time that abstract concepts are used in order to prove “real” facts. However, even here problems appear when the “real” facts of one period in time are the mistakes that can be seen only later in the future. For example Newton, when he couldn't explain the unstable orbits, he had only one explanation and that was God. Only later in time, we (Laplace) discovered that this could be explained scientifically. Another example is how the studies of genetics met the political interests of the beginning of 20th century and how they convinced and legitimized a way in which too many people thought in terms of racial hierarchies, which led to some of the biggest genocides in human history. These kind of abstract concepts like “religion”, “money”, “documents” can and do sculpt society if they are used by decision factors, like priests and politicians, in the examples presented above.

What I am trying to say is that if (political) artists do not create new concepts and new decision factors or if they don't work directly with the ones which already exist, most of

their art will *react* to the history made by others, instead of them *making* history. For example, if ancient Greek reformers like Solon (lawmaker and poet) and Cleisthenes would not have thought about and given birth to the idea of democracy, maybe today we wouldn't have had a democratic system (where many argue that a vote every four years can be called a democratic system). Therefore, to those artists who think that the democratic system can be improved, I propose to come up with functional systems/concepts as art projects. And to those who think of a better system than democracy, invented by ancient Greeks, I propose to come up with it as their political art project for social sculpting. Better economic system(s)? Present them as your artistic project. These projects give not only solutions for a better society, but have also the potential of criticizing, in different ways and on many levels, the present systems and values in which we live. In the same way "political philosophy" was born and then created functional systems and concepts more than 2000 years ago, political art can create functional systems and concepts in the 21st century. The dramatic trajectory that the 20th century's art took is a proof of this potential.

With the risk of sounding simplistic, due to the embedded pragmatism of the theory, I think this phase has to be consumed by our society.

Some people were vexed by the idea of art accessing the power of the decision factors, but as we have seen both in the case of the ancient Greeks, who implemented the first forms of democracy, and in the case of the birth of independent United States of America, one needs to first get in a power position in order to bring democracy and spread that power to the people. Even if the purpose of this paper is not to speak about power and all its nuances, I think it is important to mention it. It is also important to speak about the fear of power in a society where the individual has the chance to become more and more empowered by technology and by our understanding of life. At the same time, the same technology can also be a matter of absolute power over the individual if it is used wrongly by a handful of people (see the revelations Edward Snowden released in the case of NSA, GCHQ, FSA). Thus, it is not power the one we should fear, but the people who have access to it, the way we understand it and the means in which society can or cannot control it. Power and decision factors, I think, will exist in a form or another for a long time in our society, so it is very important for everybody to consider it and engage with it. But, in the context presented in this paper, it is also important for political artists to accept this and

to start working more with substantive actions, beside symbolic actions and representation.

6. Examples

In this chapter are presented a few examples that could help to a better understanding of what the theory of artistic thinking in non-artistic field is about.

6.1 Politics

”Even in our age of endless multitasking, few artists have become world leaders and few world leaders artists (George W. Bush’s watercolors notwithstanding). But Prime Minister Edi Rama of Albania is that extraordinary hybrid.” (Obrist, 2014)

Recognizing the fact that Emi Rada is the “extraordinary hybrid” of the artist and the world leader, as Hans Ulrich Obrist puts it, I want to avoid the confusion between the case of an artist who is also a politician and makes *art and politics*, and the case of an artist-politician who makes *art through politics* (i.e. Joseph Beuys’s Green Party as social sculpture). Even if I prefer, in today’s politics, an artist as a politician instead of, for example, a lawyer as a politician, I want to clarify the distinction and focus on *art through politics*, where art is made through *substantive actions*. The following example is getting closer to this situation:

“OBRIST: It would be a Gesamtkunstwerk. In fact, I can’t help but think of your early projects as Beuysian social sculpture at an unprecedented scale: In 2000, for example, you initiated your 'Clean and Green' project, in which illegally built structures were knocked down to create more park spaces. It reminded me of Beuys’s slogan for his 7000 Oaks [1982–87]: 'City forestation instead of city administration.'

RAMA: Culture is infrastructure. It’s not mere surface. [...] We organized the only biennial in the world that didn’t really cost anything.” (Obrist, 2014)

Talking about the façades painting project, Rama says it was a cheap and effective way to change people’s perception of their country and their common space. And not only that, but the project generated the first good international press about Albania after the regime change (Obrist, 2014). The above examples and other that Rama gives, are only a glimpse of what artistic thinking could offer in politics and any other field.

In order to facilitate the creation of functional systems through art, we have to create spaces where art and other disciplines are mixing – **Raise questions by giving answers.**

6.2 “Artists without artworks”

My call for *substantive action* in art is not only for artists that consciously decide to make projects that give answers, but also for recognizing the lives which are lived in such ways that their gestures could be considered works of art. Just like Duchamp called himself a “breather”, Armand Robin was a “listener, a “poet of the airwaves” as Jouannais called these “discrete artists” and who invited to “silences that deserve the greatest respect, or more serious attention” (Jouannais 2009: 44-45). Armand Robin specialized in the decryption of propaganda issued by the totalitarian countries, particularly attentive to radios of the Communist bloc, feeding his listeners with thousand comparisons with official messages, governmental or pirates, revolutionaries of all countries. Armand Robin immersed himself in the “rustling of languages”; he made his life a dive in the dialectic of the Cold War. Even the Vatican, the president of the French Republic, the count of Paris and the minister of information were subscribers to the newsletters which these listening(s) were producing. So here is an example of an artist considered “without art work” which informed, maybe even influenced, some big decision makers, only by doing what he loved, by living his life, without any big intentions, without the “object” of art.

This is a model, which I think will appear more and more in the context of the 21st century, where art can be pragmatic and pragmatism can be artistic at the same time; where just by living life, art can be created. Something that the “neo-avant-garde” reiterated in the 60’s (i.e. Allan Kaprow- “Art as life”). Armand Robin chose the “non-power material” as a poet and his poetry were the hours, the days and the nights devoted to only listening. In the pleasure of the moment he was making compositions in “the discrete circuits of the memory”, his theory being: “literature as a mental thing.” (Jouannais 2009: 47)

Another example is Joseph Joubert, who in Maurice Blanchot's appreciation “had a gift”: “He never wrote a book” (Blanchot in Jouannais 2009: 110). Joubert was only preparing to write, always searching the right conditions that would allow him to write. He was, according to Maurice Blanchot, one of the earliest fully modern writers, who was not looking for writing just to add another book to the multitude of other books, but instead he

was “sacrificing the results”, to discover the source from where all the books come from, and once found, the need to write was already gone (ibidem.).

This is for me a deep immersion in what art is about, an immersion so deep that the only way to reproduce it is by living it in all of life's complexity, not only by declaring it and by producing specific representations of it.

In my experience with people from the art-world, I observed an aversion towards the neoliberals and their impulse to measure and quantify art in order to have something more concrete to work with. I empathise with those people from the art-world, but I see that my approach of merging art and life, the non-production that it implies, it often sparks reaction from people in the art-world, that are very similar with the ones neoliberals have towards art. It makes me wonder why is that? Is it the fear that by "non-production" the artist could not sell and consequently not being able to live out of s/he's work in the context of today's art-world? Is it because the traditional perceptions of what art is (should be), are still deeply rooted in our way of thinking?

Whatever is the answers to these questions, the following observation by Jouannais is making me believe that artistic thinking would be the common language that will connect those who choose to live in silence and those who feel the need to produce. Thus bringing together two forces that can collaborate, learn from each-other and have a bigger impact on society:

“Too many creators, however, are struggling to keep the pace, to 'machinate' their works as proof of their status as an artist. While many veritable artists pass this often vulgar publicity, and spend their genie in silence” (Jouannais, 2009: 66)

6.3 Economics

There are all kinds of examples in the economic sector that could have been just as good art projects, social sculptures, where functional systems are developed by artists to give an answer to the problems that exist or innovate and also raise question regarding power structures, values of contemporary society etc. Just to name a few: digital currency, sharing economy, crowd-funding, universal guaranteed basic income and a more

controversial one like the Venus Project is proposing: a resource based society where money does not exist.

It's interesting to observe the Pavlovian reflex of the art world (almost always in opposition) when it comes to such powerful tools like “money” or “economics”:

Economics is “the branch of knowledge concerned with the production, consumption, and transfer of wealth.” (Oxford Dictionaries). Whether we like it or not, economics does exist in a fundamental way at the base of our society. Thus, it needs to be discussed and acted upon in ways which allow us to transform it and adjust it to serve our needs, because it still is maybe the most powerful tool for change. And if the people who see a problem with economics today don't get involved, then who remains to get involved are the people that don't see a problem with today's economics, or the ones who see it and don't care to fix it. And this can be applied to other aspects too (politics etc.).

I see among many artists a great confusion between economics and the politics of economics, meaning the way economics is developed and applied. But still, if this confusion is made and the question: “Why would you bring art into such a dirty thing like 'economics'?” appears, than the answers would be: “That's exactly why! Because ‘economics’ (meaning here the politics of economics) is dirty. And artistic thinking could bring some new perspectives to it, which will hopefully clean/improve it.” And sometimes I see even worst confusions among artists: between science and the politics of science. Confusing science with the politics of science is like blaming art itself for the raise of Hitler. Because without propaganda, which is mainly art practices, he wouldn't have gained power and maybe holocaust wouldn't have happened. Same can be said about any other dictator or religious empires.

I think it's of a great danger for art and its impact on society if these confusions are perpetuated and maintained. It is of a great risk to divert the scepticism and criticism in the wrong directions and while this is happening, strong tools like economics, science and politics are not used/experimented with, by the proper people⁷ in the proper ways. A wrong distancing and repulsion is created when the difference is not made between the field in itself and the way it is used, and very strong tools, like economics is, are not explored in

⁷ Proper people – meaning in this case artists or people that would like to use and experiment with these tools, but are not encouraged, educated to do it, because of the scepticism directed in the wrong directions: the stigmatisation of economics instead of the politics of economics, of science instead of the politics of science.

times when they need to be explored the most.

I'll enumerate some examples of projects that artists could have been develop, but which are not encouraged in art universities as possibly viable art projects – (maybe some art students would find this approach fit for them and would like to follow the path of studying economics from an artistic point of view): Venus project – resource based economy, Universal Guaranteed Basic Income, Sharing Economy, Digital Currency. Only by simply trying to find new alternatives to the present economic system, it is enough for you as an artist to send the message that some questions should be asked about the economic system by which we function as a society. If you find a system that could function better than the one already in place, you can send even stronger messages about the accredited systems that officially have to find new alternatives, or about the human nature, or different cultures. Or you can study diversity by observing how, in different cultures, different kind of economies are working better and why, or the fact that more different kinds of economies can function at the same time and the “official” systems need flexibility, or how a resource based economy is speaking about the absurdity in which we live today when a lot of people are consuming much more than the resources of the earth can offer. They are not only consuming, but they also throw a lot because the resources are not wisely managed. There are many things that we already know, but coming from an artistic point of view and working on functional systems, can bring new viable systems that the “experts” can't think of. It's about transdisciplinarity and art's openness to adopt, as one of its practices, the following: “raise questions by giving answers”, “substantive action”, “decision making”.

For bridging, in this case, economics and art, I would propose **courses** hold together with **art students and students in economics** on topics like the artistic value of the Social Business Model, Capitalism (Bordas 2013) or the alternatives mentioned earlier.

The famous conductor Benjamin Zander is teaching leadership through classical music using his conductor experience. One of his strong believes is that everybody can understand and appreciate classical music and that everybody should have access to it. According to him, by contrast with what he believes, many people in his branch have as target to raise the number of people who love classical music, from a present 3% to as high as 4%. I think that this unfortunate attitude is present in many other areas of the art-world (Benjamin Zander, 2008). But one of the things that he's trying to transmit, at least in

his leadership workshops, is the very meaning of “symphony”, which is “sounding together”, where we're listening all the voices and enabling them to be heard (“all the voices sounding together”). Because, he says, we are living a great change, we are in a new world, in a global world where we are all connected – “We are in the midst of a gigantic revolution of the spirit.” (Carlton's Training Solutions, 2012). His example is another opened door to what the merge and collaboration between art and non-artistic fields could mean.

Another example that I would like to analyse is the modern microcredit system initiated by the Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, the founder of Grameen Bank. Microcredit is the extension of very small loans (microloans) given to impoverished borrowers who typically lack collateral, steady employment and a verifiable credit history. It is designed not only to support entrepreneurship and alleviate poverty, but also in many cases to empower women and uplift entire communities by extension. In many communities, women lack the highly stable employment histories that traditional lenders tend to require. Many are illiterate, and therefore unable to complete paperwork required to get conventional loans. As of 2009 an estimated 74 million men and women held microloans that totalled US\$38 billion. Grameen Bank reports that repayment success rates are between 95 and 98 per cent ('microcredit', Wikipedia).

Microcredit is part of micro-finance, which provides a wider range of financial services, especially savings accounts, to the poor. Modern microcredit is generally considered to have originated with the Grameen Bank founded in Bangladesh in 1983. Many traditional banks subsequently introduced microcredit despite initial misgivings. The United Nations declared 2005 the International Year of Microcredit. As of 2012, microcredit is widely used in developing countries and is presented as having "enormous potential as a tool for poverty alleviation" ('microcredit', Wikipedia).

I think that the Microcredit system has a lot of artistic potential. It is a good example on how art can use economics as a tool for social sculpting. Beside the ingenious system developed, which is changing a part of our society, it also offers the opportunity for reflection on how it came about, on its role in society, on the political implications and its appearance: why did it need to appear? What problems did it solve? What created the problems? Who was in power to solve them and didn't? How society reacted to it? All

these questions and more are raised because the microcredit system gave an answer to the needs of the people. For the Microcredit system to be considered an art project and, in this way, to gain other perspectives too, it only needs to be put in an art context. I give this example because I think that, in the future, art can be more involved in the decision making process and more active in making history, by collaborating and using other disciplines. I keep repeating this, but art has both the power of transcending disciplines and also of reflecting from multiple points of view, exposing new and unexplored opportunities.

Artistic thinking can transform any project in a work of art by encouraging creativity as one of the default ingredients, letting people's minds transcend disciplines and also encouraging reflective thinking and multiple points of view (contextualization). By deeply analysing a problem and by exploiting as many facets of it possible, new and unexplored paths will emerge.

When education and participation in society will be more and more democratized by technology, we will see regular people with big power of change. For a positive effect to happen, this power should be accompanied by artistic thinking, which allows freedom of experimentation, critical thinking, transdisciplinarity, nuances and multiple points of view on a particular matter.

An example of an artist working with economics is Nuria Guell who collaborated with activists and economists to put together a guide book on "*How to expropriate money from the banks*" (2011).

In the conversation I had with Nuria (personal communication, 18.11.2013), she offered her thoughts about her practice in art. One thing that she's interested in is for her strategy to be replicable. That approach could be implicit or explicit, as in the case of the manual "*How to expropriate money from the banks*". She says that "the idea of the artwork could function as a potential device for thought and also as resource for the people to use". (ibidem.) In her practice she is also interested in working with experts from other disciplines, saying that "real knowledge, today, can only be transversal. So always work with collaborators and use the visibility of art for disseminating those knowledge to other areas that are not their own".(ibidem.) This idea is confirming one of the approaches I propose through my theory, that art can be a vehicle for transdisciplinarity. She uses as

example the political prisoners who chose to work with her: “they told me they wanted to work with me because this way it was certain that the message would reach different audiences, other than those they are always directed.”(ibidem.) Nuria is saying that at this historic socio-politic critical moment, art should be “at the height of it”. In this context, she is trying to work on two levels: within the context of art and outside of it. The transformation into real of what can be carried out through art projects, is more important for Nuria than representing what she is interested in. Taking into consideration the many roles an artist could have, “in this times of urgency”, Nuria observes that art is holding a discursive struggle that manages to subvert the hegemonic powers which are holding and oppressing people. So her interest is that her projects will also live outside the art context, as she wants “to reach other areas of population who are not the elites who frequent art institutions”.(ibidem.)

The concept of “Operability” is important in her projects: “not within the artistic project, but an operability that transcends the art and the project and is effective for the people with whom the project is related.” (ibidem.) Nuria Guell changed lives with her works and she's confident that “one can influence and actually transform through art.” (ibidem.)

Artistic thinking allows people to combine disciplines between them, create new spaces and build bridges to connect apparently unrelated fields.

In my research on the topic of this paper, I had the opportunity to meet Katarina Fredrika-CEO at WWACE / World Wide Academy for Creative Economy⁸.

WWACE highlights, clarifies and integrates the creative, cultural and artistic values and qualities in urban development, leadership development and corporate development. They support their customers to unlock creativity and broaden perspectives so they can maximize their ability to achieve their strategic objectives. Art and culture are used as complementary strategy and development tools.

Katarina is trying to make a great change in the way a project is created, mainly in urban planning. Here, she brings in the artist in the early beginnings of creating a plan, where decisions are taken on how the plan should look like, making the artist a key member in the decision making process. This is in contrast with the traditional way of doing it, where the artist is invited for the last touches on the project (personal communication, October

8 <http://www.wwace.com/>

2013).

I think this approach has a tremendous importance and will have a great impact on our society when will be implemented on a larger scale crossover disciplines. It is already starting to happen and it's growing fast, as Katarina also confirms from her experience (personal communication, October 2013).

The procedures, even the outcomes could be sometimes improved, because it is a new approach and because it is not a very rich framework to work with. But the mindset and the intentions are the most important in this context, and the rest will be improved by experience and more people contributing in this direction.

All cases presented here are only examples that have a nuance of what I'm trying to observe in this text - they are not exact models.

I think that the simple gesture of thinking of yourself as an artist, can already put you in a different position when you treat a subject. And this should be a good enough reason to encourage artistic thinking in non-artistic field.

6.4 Contra-argument

As I mentioned earlier in the text, the outcomes of artistic thinking in non-artistic field can differ. But one thing is sure: it can bring different perspectives and approaches that now are not explored at their full potential, neither by the art world nor by the non-artistic field. For example, in politics a lot of things can be changed by encouraging artists to use politics **also** as a tool for making art (i.e. Joseph Beuys's Green Party as social sculpting), not only as a (re)source for criticism, or by encouraging politicians to develop their artistic thinking. But, as I said, the approach I propose is not guaranteeing success because the outcomes can differ, the only thing that can guarantee is the, so needed, **broadening of perspectives and approaches** on any subject.

As an example for the bad outcomes is the case of the Gabriele D'Annunzio, an Italian writer, poet, journalist, playwright and soldier during World War I. He was active in Italian literature from 1889 to 1910 and after that he had a vivid political life from 1914 to 1924. Some of his ideas and aesthetics influenced Italian fascism and the style of Benito Mussolini. In D'annunzio's view, the constitution made "music" the fundamental principle of

the state ('Gabriele D'Annunzio', Wikipedia 2014).

The hero of his first novel, "The Child of Pleasure," learns that "one must *make* one's life as one makes a work of art." And that was d'Annunzio's credo too (Hughes-Hallett 2013).

D'Annunzio's case is definitely one to consider and learn from.

7. How art is perceived in society by large

In the following chapter I'm trying to make a brief observation on art's situation in today's social-economic context, by analysing a few situations which can describe, in my view, how art is perceived in society by large.

If we think about whether art is making or reacting to history, we can also try to see **how people are perceiving art and artists**. I'll mention the Dutch artist Kerstin Bergendahl and her project Park Lek II.

"PARK LEK II is a utopian art project as well as a concrete intervention in the urban planning process. Kerstin Bergendahl, well-known for her large-scale public interventions and participatory projects, is currently charting thoughts, ideas and structures that the residents in Hallonbergen and Ör perceive in their areas today. Through a process that is both structured and intuitive, different groups are brought together for discussion and dialogue. The artist acts as a catalyst for new ways to think about the shaping of public environments and building processes. The goal is to incorporate the local perspective in the council's plans for Hallonbergen and Ör and thereby supplement and perhaps amend the densification proposal of December 2011."⁹

PARK LEK II is a collaboration between the Municipality of Sundbyberg and Marabouparken Lab, that part of Marabouparken that strives to create opportunities for open-ended and experimental art projects, often located outside the exhibition space itself.¹⁰

Kerstin mentioned that she observed the perception of the artist among people she worked with, and the image of the artist was of a painter wearing a French hat and a scarf. It was

9 <http://www.parklek.com/english.html> (Accessed 16.03.2014)

10 Ibidem.

difficult for them to understand why she called art the mediation she did between them, the construction companies and the state authorities. And it's not only her who has this feeling regarding how people think about artists and art in society, my personal experiences also confirms the same facts.

Art program transforms failing school

In the following example, a news reportage is presenting the case of Orchard Gardens, a school in Roxbury, US. This school, known as a “drop out factory”, had been plagued by bad test scores and violence. Students couldn't even carry backpacks because of the fear that they'd use them to hide weapons. In the school's first 7 years, there were 5 principals that used hundreds of thousands of dollars for security. In 2010, the 6th principal came at this school and he changed everything completely by getting rid of the entire security infrastructure and invest that money in art. The new principal's goal was to use art as a tool for academic success. It changed from one of the worst performing school in Massachusetts, into having one of the fastest student improvement rates state wide (Tur 2013).

But what I also want to emphasize in this example, beside the great, but in the end a common sense idea, is the final comment the journalist made when describing this case: *“A future made a lot brighter by a crazy idea, that now looks more like a stroke of genius!”* (Tur 2013).

This final comment shows, as we also seen earlier, that art is viewed by most of the people as something exotic. In this case somebody saw the potential that art has to transcend disciplines and improve human life and the journalist, the person who informs and forms the public's opinion, describes this initiative as a *“crazy idea”* and a *“stroke of genius”*. Both of these characteristics describe, in fact, the exoticism and uniqueness of the artistic thinking in everyday life (Tur 2013).

I think this case is good for emphasizing at least 3 points:

1. Artistic thinking can break the status quo of a discipline or function. Here, the principal took a “non-formal” initiative for what his job usually takes.
2. Art can transcend disciplines and improve education and human interaction. Art courses and the encouragement for artistic expression, improved students' development and

human interaction, eliminating violence.

3. Art and artistic thinking are exotic in our society.

Another example, Ben Carson, a well known American neurosurgeon, is speaking about how the Declaration of Independence was signed by 5 doctors and how doctors were also involved in developing the American constitution and the book of human rights (Adventistpotlogi 2013, min. 11:36). Moreover, he is mentioning that only recently did the doctors retired from politics and that nowadays the politics is runned by lawyers, who are taught in school to win through any possible way. And when we have lawyers fighting with each other with the “winning through any possible way” mentality, we don’t fight the problems we have. He is considering that people from other disciplines should be involved in politics also, like doctors, scientists and engineers (Adventistpotlogi 2013). I have to observe that he’s not mentioning artists as being eligible for decision making positions.

I don't criticize art. I don't even criticize the present and past artistic practices. I think each practice has its own role and effect on society. I write this paper because I think art has something special that can be brought in other disciplines and create, in this way, new spaces and new connections. My interest here is the artistic thinking. Due to its critical and nuanced character, due to its freedom from standards and borders, artistic thinking has the unique power of successfully transcending disciplines and creating mixed spaces and also influencing their status quo.

I heard on different occasions that we, as artists, are in a special position when it comes to projects involving the state, companies (“non-artistic” entities), because we can use the perception of art, that people have, which is, let's say, experimental and try our take on that project. If it goes well, then it's OK, if not, we can say it's just art. The advantages, in short term, are that we can experiment and infiltrate without risks. However, on the long run the credibility of how much art can be responsible is affected and, thus, the role of art in society cannot be in more responsible places.

9. What is my approach:

After all these have been said, I have to look back and observe:

- on one hand, the things which I'm borrowing from the past for making my case: **VIEWING ART-** ("Every human being is an artist" has been said); **MEDIUM** (channel) - in theory any

medium is accepted, but not all equally promoted (see mathematics, economy, coding, politics etc.); **PRACTICE** - I call for action – Performance already exists;

- and on the other hand, the context of 21st century, which I think puts all of the above in a new light.

9.1. Contextualizing in 21st century

Internet Society, Network Society, New technologies enable new ways of interacting and organizing, which lead to new mindsets, new paradigms, NEW kinds of ACTIONS.

I'll make a brief introduction of what I see as the 21st century's context, in which the world will function like a big brain where all people are connected, and of course reflect on how this will influence our understanding of art and its practices.

This century is characterized by an exponential growth of information and according to Eric Schmidt, Google's CEO, in 2010, we create every two days the same amount of information that was ever produced by human beings till 2003 (Siegler 2010). Moreover, this is growing exponentially according to Moore's law¹¹. It is estimated that this growth will begin to slow down a little, somewhere between 2013 and 2018. However, futurists are saying that we are heading to "singularity" which is artificial intelligence that can produce technological development almost instantaneously. Processors will be able to be developed only to an atomic level, which is the limit ('Moore's law', Wikipedia). But quantum computers are already here: see NASA and Google, which are totally changing the management of information. The project for building a computer with human brain's capacity and functions is financed with over 1 billion Euros and it started this year (2013) in Geneva ('Quantum computing', Wikipedia).

It is not only about the quantity of data we produce, but also about its quality. Lawrence Lessig who co-founded Creative Commons, is talking about how we exchange culture and build new knowledge upon it, and about how we finally can become authors again from the spectators that the 20th century transformed us in (Lessig, March 2007). There are people like Barthes who were speaking about authorship, but it is only Lessig who made a true change in how people see and use information. This change was possible now due to the

11 "Moore's law is the observation that, over the history of computing hardware, the number of transistors on integrated circuits doubles approximately every two years." (Wikipedia 2014)

new technological developments of 21st century, and it was about time for it to happen. Is not only him who is making a big change in how people collaborate and produce culture, there are also the Free Software and Open Source movements which are providing the Internet society with new frameworks for self-organization without (I would say in spite of) the companies or the state. GitHub and Wikipedia are models for participation where thousands of people working on the same project can generate new knowledge and functional systems. Liquid Democracy, as a concept, and Liquid Feedback as a voting system developed by members of the German Pirate Party in collaboration with other people involved in this project, is changing the way we can vote, control politicians and the way we can actively participate at any moment in developing and deciding, changes in society. Brickstarter is a model of how people can propose changes to their city in a more direct and democratic way. Kickstarter is a platform for crowd-funding, where people can financially contribute to making any idea reality, without greedy stakeholders, without debts to banks or never ending bureaucratic state. Media's landscape is changed by Wikileaks and by anyone who has a smart phone and access to Internet to blog, tweet, and post a photo or a video. Automation is replacing more and more jobs. The digital currencies are changing the dynamics in nations' control over fiat money. Universities are organized by students and are giving free online courses with thousands of students from all over the world. 3D printing is changing the physical world: everybody is able to make their own object, as they want or need it. In the medical environment, it is printing organs. In architecture, it is building a house in a day without any human intervention (Goldin 2014). We see that society is getting more democratized by technology and people can participate more to the way society functions and influence the way it will look in the future. This is the place where "every human being is an artist", where borders are blurring at an amazing rate and any medium or channel is available for anybody to use and where ACTION is more than ever possible.

I think that this environment will change dramatically the way we see and make art, and I also think that it is only now that we can see the true potential of art.

Some would say that the use of art in pragmatic forms will dissolve the power of art, which has to be at the top of the leading ideas of any society. And because of pragmatism's conditions, the artist will not have the time and the environment for deep reflections, which lead to new ideas and approaches. I agree with art being one of the leaders for human

innovation and exploration. I also agree with the fact that, at least, a part of what pragmatism means, could affect a proper environment for the artist to achieve her full potential.

But by looking back in history it is possible to see how most ideas were somehow connected and can now be recognized as being “of their time”. Furthermore, the highly educated persons, be it philosophers, scientists, artists etc. could “feel” their times and some of them, more than others, could articulate and contribute to the ideas that were “floating” around. But almost all were influenced by each other in a way or another. Therefore, the work of an artist, even if innovative, was in a way repeating, confirming or in the best case, putting in a new light the same things that highly educated people, from the same period, were already “feeling” about what it was to come, or about what the edge of the period they were living in was. Due to its mostly symbolic character, art could not have a direct impact on a large part of the society, so it was enjoyed and consumed by the people who already knew, in a way or another, what that artwork was referring to. In that context, art could not influence the society at large, only, in the best cases, in could have an influence through the few people that were consuming it.

But due to the trends that the art practices of the last part of the 20th century, which brought the artist closer to the regular people, to the society at large and into communities, and because of the disruptive impact that the Internet (technology) has on how people connect in a network society, pragmatism seems to be compatible with art. Moreover, it also seems that sometimes pragmatism and art could be one and the same thing. This idea it's already very old, in modern times it is at least 150 years old since Joseph Jaubert and Felicien Marboeuf, and reiterated in different forms along the way by Duchamp, Joseph Beuys, Alan Kaprow. However, it seems that in the industrial age it didn't stick, because the obsession of production managed to dictate the way art is made and understood too. I consider that the information age of the 21st century will have a big influence on how we think about production and this will be reflected in the way art will be made too. I think that the logic of the following excerpt will actually be possible at a large scale:

“Because if the Cathars refuse the procreation, if according to the Eastern monarchism the true ascetic is comparable to a dead person, the discrete

artists who interest us camped to the antipodes of this horizon. Non-production is not for them the deflation of life, it proceeds on the contrary [...] [is] dedicated to life itself." (Jouannais 2009: 115)

The artist always had, in a way, a value of artisan and art always seemed to have a value of decorativeness, be it for the senses or for the mind. Due to the ways in which we were brought up to live in this century (speed, multitasking, automated outsourcing etc.), the decorativeness, either for senses or mind, will not have a space of its own. Instead, it will emerge from a sensible pragmatism or a pragmatic sensibility. The time for being either pragmatic OR sensible is slowly fading away because being pragmatic will be easier than ever. The merge between pragmatism and sensibility could reach the point where it will be one and the same thing. That is why an analysis of the **aesthetics of substantive action** is needed.

"The inspired man is without work. [...] Why I have not written any of my books? (Benabou 1987). [...] The relevance of the philosophical idea of non-production." (Jouannais 2009: 69)

These are observations already made, but now, in 21st century, they are brought to life in a different way. The materialization of thought is enabled by technology to happen much faster than in the past. And this is setting a new paradigm, a new way of seeing and interacting with things around us.

Of course, this trend was sensed by the field of economics and **creativity** is now present in any economic discourse, but the observation I propose is about the ease of doing great things for society and not about new ways of making more money. The commoditization of this phenomenon is just a reminiscent reflex of an old mechanism, which is not a subject for the context presented here.

Marcel Duchamp, Felicien Marboeuf, Armand Robin and others are curated by Jean-Yves Jouannais as "artists without artworks" who chose to be ascetics and not "produce", but instead live and experience. Just like them, with the same attitude, in the 21st century, art can be done without the intent to produce, only by living and experiencing life. The difference is that the level of the impact and the number of people who can influence society is much bigger in the 21st century.

Technology is not only enabling people **to act**, but it also enables an attitude, a state of mind in which **action and participation are a given**, they're not a luxury, a privilege or a rare opportunity.

It is for the first time when people can communicate instantly all over the planet (in theory), exchange experiences, information, and have access to (hopefully) all the knowledge ever created, both in the past and in the present

As we can see back in history, art was always influenced by the conditions present in society at any given time, be them political, economic, social or scientific. Nowadays, the level of participation and collaboration between people has grown a lot because of the technologies we have. So the possibilities for direct participation to how society functions are becoming greater than ever because of these tools. This automatically sets an attitude in people's behaviour, which will ask for direct action and participation as a given, not as a luxury, privilege or a once-every-four-years event (elections). So if direct participation in decision making will become a part of our life, the way we do art will also change in that direction and art will be closer to decision making. Some signs of direct participation have reached even higher political figures like David Cameron who, arguably, speaks about "The next age of government" (Cameron, February 2010). Examples of systems for direct participation which I keep mentioning in this text are Brickstarter, crowd-sourcing, liquid democracy, Investigative Dashboard¹².

How **technology enables people to become once again creators** from spectators (Lessig, March 2007) and how once we become creators again, through technology as well, we can be more democratic and even self organized (Shirky, June 2012), are some of the main reasons why we can "dare" to think about Artistic Thinking in Non-Artistic Field as a feasible approach.

Some practical questions I advance for further analysis:

The population is continuously increasing and if the percentage is kept, there will be more artists in the future. Thus, when it comes to physical art works, how much art is or will be destroyed because of lack of space? Some people say that art will not die because of the lack of it, but because of its abundance. Shouldn't be **art integrated in society, so that**

¹² <https://investigativedashboard.org/>

art projects are parts of society itself? (in a more “pragmatical” sense than: everything that exists is part of society).

As an example, I want to briefly discuss the role of the artist in today's society, the artistic thinking and the "non-artists", starting from the project *On Invasive Grounds* by Katja Aglert. I was lucky enough to participate to a discussion initiated by one of my colleagues, in which the roles had been inverted and we got to question our tutor, Katja Aglert, about her project *On Invasive Grounds*. The discussion took place inside the exhibition. There, due to the discussions we had, I felt that I got a great insight in Katja's way of thinking for that project. In the main context of the climate change, she incorporated a great array of subjects, beautifully connected with each-other. From previous works which studied the lightest place on earth during night, which hints the idea of urbanization and energy consumption, to the darkest place on earth, which took her to the North Pole, where the story of the project *On Invasive Grounds* starts. Here, Katja mentions about the politics of plants, the gender perspective taken by discussing the history of expeditions at the North Pole, the Northern Lights and their chemistry processes that are found also in the way the neon light functions, the politics of the natural reservations, Finland and the story goes on.

While Katja was taking us in this great adventure, I was wondering how the world would have looked like if the educational system would have had the same approach? How would an economist have thought about developing new economic systems if s/he would have learned about consumption through studying about the lightest and the darkest places on earth and their implications, passing through gender perspectives, plants and their politics, and the chemistry of Northern Lights? How would a politician have acted if s/he would have been learning politics by studying plants, understanding the connections with history, the gender perspectives, the relation between the Northern Lights and the neon light and their interconnectedness?

These questions made me think about the role of the artist, the *artistic thinking* and the “non-artists”. I find quite odd the fact that we live in a society where most people are guided by the educational system and the work force toward very narrow disciplines and areas of knowledge, while a group of people (the artists) are guided towards abstract thinking, trans-disciplinarity, experimentation, critical thinking ... only to show in smart and creative ways what stupid things people trained in narrow disciplines do to our society.

9.2 Joseph Beuys versus Artistic thinking in Non-artistic Field

My strategy or my approach is to promote action in art, but not any kind of action because action is already a part of art (i.e. performance). Thus, I try to look at the relation between **Representation**, **Symbolic Action** and **Substantive Action**. The substantive action is the kind of action which I support and try to understand better, but this kind of action is not new: around the 1990's, Participatory Art and community work gained traction and a nuance or a seed for substantive action appeared at a larger scale.

But inside the practice of Substantive Action is also space for change. And it is here where I promote the change of mindset from: **Problem Solving** (patching, reacting) to **Decision Making** (vision, making).

In order to go into Decision Making with art, I try to identify what Artistic Thinking is and how does it function, and *contaminate* the Decision Factors (politics, economics etc.) with it. In this way, room is made for artists into Decision Making and it also enables the development of Artistic Thinking in non-artists who want to function/manifest in different ways, but find themselves trapped in rigid fields.

I try to do this through this paper, which aims to create a framework for future courses in the educational system that will promote rare mediums in art (economics, politics etc.) and will also promote artistic thinking in economics, politics etc.

I think that Joseph Beuys's works would have looked a little bit different and it would have taken much more traction if he would have lived in the 21st century where he would have had Internet, Open Data, Git-hub, Reddit, instant access to information and collaborative projects, instant spread of information, alternative systems for governing and alternative economies. I think that the Internet is the missing link between the right and the left ideologies. It's a new paradigm that is leaving behind many right_wing-left_wing supporters because Internet is something else: one has to have both eyes open in order to see straight and Internet is the "prosthetics" that is making this possible both physically, by providing the space and the technology and also mentally by adapting to the new possibilities.(Unfortunately, as long as people with old mentalities are still in power, the new possibilities will be used in the context of the old paradigms: i.e. NSA's mass surveillance programmes).

“The silence of Duchamp is overestimated”¹³ said Joseph Beuys. But the extension of art by Joseph Beuys and the silence of Duchamp are compatible... after all, it is all about living. In a world, still so new, where we finally understand that everybody should have equal rights, where the technology of the day has the power to democratize society in ways which were never possible, where everybody is equal on the Internet (not any more in the US because of the net neutrality controversy), both Duchamp’s and Beuys’s philosophies are happening at the same time. They are not debatable pioneers any-more; we just have to be able to recognize what is happening. Even if art predicted, discussed and played with the idea of spectatorship versus participation (TV generation versus Internet generation), it seems that art didn't quite manage to really make the whole step into the participatory paradigm.

As Duchamp expanded the concept of art through the *readymade object*, by considering as art a “non-artistic” object, I would like to see the same happening with “non-artistic” disciplines, something that Joseph Beuys already tried to do. Namely, I want to transform non-artistic disciplines into **ready-made disciplines**. In comparison with the way the *readymade object* of the industrialization era changed the understanding of art and its practices, the *readymade disciplines* of the information era will change not only “non-artistic” disciplines into “paint and brushes” for artists, but also vice-versa: there will be created spaces for art in present “non-artistic” disciplines, where people currently cannot express, work or collaborate in different ways than the disciplines allow them to do, and they would be able to try artistic thinking instead. In this way, art can be reshaped and exercised from the “other side” also, the “non-artistic” side, continuing the trend in disciplines’ dynamics: from fix, distinct disciplines to a multidisciplinary, to interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary and maybe post-disciplinary society.

When Duchamp had been asked in a BBC interview in 1968, if he thinks the public can be shocked any-more, he answered that it cannot be shocked any-more by the same means and the shock will come of something entirely different. He implied that the etymology of the word “art”, by his knowledge means “to do”, not even “to make”, but “to do”. And the moment one “does” something s/he's an artist.

13 “Das Schweigen von Marcel Duchamp wird überbewertet”

“You don't sell your work, but you do the action. In other words ART means ACTION, means ACTIVITY, of any kind, by everyone. But we, our society has decided to make a group that will be called artists, a group will be called doctors and so forth....WHICH IS PURELY ARTIFICIAL.” (Dennis Liu, 2013)

“Non-artistic” is now not only the place where art is not made, but it is also in the places of our mind where art is not having a place. Nothing but we and our imagination stopped us, 500-1000 years ago to make art as we do today. The environment we live in, the social conditions, the tools we have, determines what we **allow** ourselves to think and do. But by being aware of that, we can force the deterministic conditions of culture and try to experiment in ways in which we can **allow** ourselves to think things “unacceptable” otherwise. For example, by contrast with what is happening in science, most of the latest forms of art could have been done in any moment in history. It is just that we didn't allow our self to think about art in that ways. Science, on the other hand, is deterministic in the sense that most of the latest discoveries could not have been possible in any point in history. It directly depended on the discoveries made before it. But I see that art and science are inseparable. I see art as a constant battle with the inner-self and the way it relates with everything else, while science is a constant battle with the outer-world¹⁴, so that the inner-self can relate to it better and find its place. Therefore, art has this special characteristic of being deeply connected within ourselves and it depends entirely only on how we **allow** it to manifest.

Using only symbolic ways of expression as art, is like mimicking life, like not living as a human being who eats, thinks, loves, is a citizen, a parent, a child.

Another way to put it is in Karen Barad's words:

“Performativity is actually a contestation of the unexamined habits of mind that grant language and other forms of representation more power in determining our ontologies than they deserve.” (Barad, 2003)

For what Joseph Beuys means, beside his theory on art, his most important artworks, in my view, are: the German Student Party, the Organization for Direct Democracy through

¹⁴ Outer-world in this context is considered to be anything from latest discovery in neuroscience, to Higgs Boson, to the furthest galaxy in the Universe.

Referendum, the Free International University for Creativity and Interdisciplinary Research, and German Green Party Die Grünen.

It is still not clear for me if he adopted a good strategy for promoting the idea of social sculpture and the expansion of the concept of art. Almost 50 years later, I would say that maybe he should have focused more on the kind of art works that I mentioned earlier and less on the symbolic ones. I think that in the case of the symbolic actions, be it performances, situations or installations, the silence of Duchamp would have come in hand to Beuys, if he wanted to accentuate the social sculpture and the nuance that he really wanted to give to what Duchamp coined through the ready-made.

I would like that in the future to have artists involved in the development of key concepts and systems that will lead to our society's evolution, like *democracy*, *human rights*; key discoveries like *Internet*; key systems like *Microcredit*, or *Bitcoin*; key roles like *presidents* of countries. On the other side, I would like that disciplines which don't have, yet, space for artistic perspectives, to allow and nurture those.

For example, I try to understand what the differences and the similitudes between the projects initiated by the Turkish collective Ode Projesi and government's projects are. They are dealing with the same situations: enabling people to be active in society, relate to each other, build together etc. Governments, in theory, should come as enablers, as mediators. Why can't political or economic strategies and philosophical concepts, which stand as base for our social fabric, be viewed as art? The artistic practices and what is considered to be art have dramatically changed over centuries due to our constant transformation of the way we live and perceive life. In an era where most of the people will be connected and where participation and collaboration will be at hand for everybody, *substantive action* is a given, not a privilege. So it could be easily considered as art practice.

I am asking myself regarding the call Claire Bishop made in one of her articles for Schiller's antinomy (Bishop 2006), why stage life in order to understand and live life at its best? Why not have **beside** the art that promises Schiller's antinomy, a kind of art that tries **synonymy between art and life**; where art's ideals and qualities are absorbed by "real" life and "real" life becomes art material (not only inspiration and re-source for criticism). For me, Claire Bishop's call for Schiller's antinomy as an "alternative to well-intentioned homilies that today pass for critical discourse on social collaboration" (ibid. 8)

seems a little bit romantic and nostalgic, if not old fashioned arrogant aristocracy, which instead of encouraging artists to use vision, creativity, sensibility and brightness in order to make out of “real” life an “artwork”, are satisfied with letting the world struggle with hunger, poverty, war and bad politics and promote art only as “conceptual entertainment” (Santiago Sierra in Margolles, 2004), as a slightly schizophrenic pleasure for building an imaginary world in order to ameliorate the “real” life. Even worse, it seems like a religious dogma that promises a better life, always after death. I don't think Claire Bishop is ill intentioned or elitist, but I think that she is playing safe, which instead of pushing for better prepared artists in social matters for better interventions, she is calling for a retreat in a symbolic, old fashion art bubble. I do condemn the system that is encouraging participatory art projects which have almost no expertise in social dynamics and psychology and I agree with the fact that this system can and does create “artificial hells”. For more responsible artists and social interventions, I encourage programmes of collaboration starting in university, between students in art, political science, economy, sociology, anthropology. These programmes should work both ways and artistic approaches should be also taught in non-artistic fields like political science, economy, etc. also starting in the educational system.

Why *indirect* change can be art and *direct* change cannot?

Or why making community work could be art, but being a president, a mayor etc. could not? Making political art, be it representation, symbolic actions or even community work and say that it cannot be more than that in art, it looks, for me, like a lack of courage, a fear of bigger responsibilities or vulnerable positions.

Why can creating situations that only symbolically raise awareness or ignite discussions be considered art and are promoted in the educational system and elsewhere in the art-world, but creating functional systems (i.e. Brickstarter, a political party etc.) are not so vividly promoted as being potential artworks or art practices?

These are some questions that are looking for the answers to emerge from this essay.

Art and activism, activism, a new kind of approach (even if it's a great approach) is creating a better **opposition**, but not creating a better **position**. I think art stayed too much outside the system, protesting and shouting in different and ingenious ways, but without that much influence. So, maybe, it is time for art to work also from inside the system. This is activism

too, but from the inside. Or/and create, from outside, new functional systems as alternative **decision factors**.

Why art and not philosophy?

Earlier in the text were mentioned Alain de Botton and his proposal to bring philosophy into business (de Botton 2013). I think it is a great idea and should be implemented; philosophy should take a more active part in everyday activities. But for me, art is philosophy taking shape. And I mean shape **not only** in the classical ways like sculpture, painting, music, poetry, performance or participatory art, but **also**, for example, in developing laws, economic systems, technological systems or scientific discoveries.

What if everything becomes art through this way of thinking? First of all, in the present art world, there is already a classification and appreciation towards good or bad art. So, even if everything becomes art through this way of thinking, we will have to use the same attitude and discern between good and bad art, but also take more into consideration ethics, direct change in society and other implications. But the most interesting part is: when everybody is an artist, then everybody is invited to use artistic thinking in the best ways possible. This means: being transdisciplinary, experimental, developing a great aptitude for criticism, and contextualizing your creativity in rapport with larger phenomenon of life than your job offers. This few characteristics of artistic thinking mentioned here are asking for a lot of knowledge and understanding of our society and these can be reached through education, maybe the kind of education the liberal arts offer. But definitely this kind of thinking invites and even forces a great understanding of the world around us.

Maybe our perspective on *doing* things versus *living* them should change in order to adapt to this new era. And maybe we should focus more on how this phenomena will change society at large and not think about "how will we know to whom we'll give the prize?". "**The perfect man is without <me>, the inspired man is without work, the holy man does not leave a name.**"(Tchouang- Tseu in Jouannais 2009: 27). Or how Enrique Vila-Matas puts it when he talks about Clément Cadou: "**the ease of one who has no need to create because he has already done it**" (in Jouannais 2009: 23).

Examples can be found in any fields, as we can see in the case of the Wittgenstein family: Ludwig Wittgenstein is believed to be **the philosopher** because he writes his philosophy, not his madness. Contrary, it is believed that his nephew Paul Wittgenstein was crazy be-

cause he repressed his philosophy instead of publishing it, exhibiting his madness instead. Both were extraordinary minds, but one has published his brain, the other did not. Thomas Bernhard bravely dares to say that “one has published his brain, and the other put his brain into practice” (Bernhard in Jouannais 2009: 31-32).

This case is very well analysed by Jouannais and exposed in parallel with the history of art:

“This line that divides the Wittgenstein family also passes through the history of art. This, as it is described, is limited by agreement with two parameters: the artefacts and the signatures. It is satisfied with being a chronology of objects produced and an index of names. It omits the column that would make readable other criteria, namely a relationship of artistic phenomena according to the idea, to the gesture, to energy. This discrete chronic would relate the lives little illustrated of artists who did not produce objects, but have nevertheless exerts a major influence on their period” (Jouannais 2009: 32).

As I said earlier in the text, I think art is returning to its origins, to the people. This phenomenon is happening quite fast and I think that the best thing to do for the educational system and other official systems is to adapt and encourage this trend.

I will use some examples and comment some of the ideas displayed by Jean-Yves Jouannais in his book *Artistes sans oeuvres I would prefer not to* (2009). About this book, in the preface that he wrote, Enrique Villa-Matas says:

“The book had an impressive list of dandies or elegant creators who had opted for the non-creation, people who had realized works for themselves and not in an industrial logic. Felicien Marboeuf, ‘the greatest of the writers who never wrote’ ” (in Jouannais 2009: 18)

In the 21st century's context, described earlier in the text, the artist's attitude of doing art for herself could mean at the same time doing art for society, skipping or excluding the industrial logic. We have plenty examples of this kind of artists who influenced their times without producing anything. Some of the ones that have been recognized are Felicien Marboeuf, Jacques Vache, Armand Robin, Arthur Craven, Firmin Quintrat, Pepino Bello (Jouannais 2009: 20).

As it can be seen, it is possible to influence by not making art in the classical sense of the word. These people had something to say, but they didn't have the means of communication, maybe because their approach was not, and maybe it still isn't considered art. Maybe we still lose a lot of great people because we, as a society, and in particular as art scene, do not create/allow/accept enough ways of manifestation.

9.4 Recognizing art

There's **no such thing as “art”**. “Art” is just a name we gave to an, apparently changing, **approach** on (things in) life.

Duchamp adding to Constantin Brancusi's "Art above all is a fraud": "It's a mirage as well, I believe in the artist as an individual, but art is a mirage." (whitelip1, 2010)

This **approach**, (the reinterpretation of reality), could be conscious, so it can be declared as art by the person who makes it, or it could be practised without that person being aware that it could be art. Thus, in this case it should be **recognized** by others (and called art).

For example the gallery owner Dan Popescu discovered a homeless man, Ion Bârlădeanu, who was making collages on mainly political topics, for many years. Dan Popescu recognized the artistic value of the work Ion Bârlădeanu was making and promoted him as an artist on an international level (Davies 2010). I'm asking myself now: can this kind of process of recognizing the artistic value in the non-artistic field be done only in the situation of a traditional artistic expression, like it is here the collage? Now *we see how art dramatically changed and diversified its ways of expression, and we understand that art is not particularly the way we **express** how we see the world around us, but is the way we **see** (the world around us) in itself*. Because of this, can we recognize the artistic value in non-artistic fields like: philosophies or projects like Wikileaks or digital currencies like Bitcoin etc.? Can it be possible that a new branch of recognizing artistic value in non-artistic fields appear and give new nuances to those projects or manifestations? Can it be a different source of knowledge?

For example the Social Business model was made to address a problem, but it was not made, and **consciously** viewed, as a reinterpretation of reality, as social sculpting, as art.

How will art look if we could rethink from this perspective the history and start recognizing what we missed as being art? And how will art look if we will collaborate

in such a way that some people will do their regular things and some other people will find (recognize) the art in it?

“Andre Cadere, 'unproducer', does not lend himself to the factory. Instead he walks. He is a walker, a natural striker, a protester, a claimant. [...] [Walking] is a political strategy.” (Jouannais 2009: 89)

Using Duchamp's consideration: “an ordinary object elevated to the dignity of a work of art by the mere choice of an artist”¹⁵, I would like to make an exercise as an artist, and choose not an ordinary object, but several *substantive actions* and “elevate” them to “the dignity of works of arts”: *Liquid Democracy* – as the system that will bring the next important model for organizing society; *Free Software Movement* – as the model for creating and using software in a society that will have at its core technology ran by software; *Wikileaks* – a starting point for a new model of informing people; *Brickstarter* - as the model for self-developed community; *Bitcoin* – as the model for a decentralized universal currency; *Sharing economy* – as the model for a new economy; *Crowd-funding* – as the new model for bringing to life any good idea; *Social Business and Micro Financing* – as examples for innovation in giving nuance to economics. This could be one way of “recognizing” art, by giving new perspectives to these kinds of actions. But it is not the only one. If these kinds of actions are “elevated to the dignity of works of art”, then maybe more artists would like to engage in making substantive actions as art projects. And the exercise can continue by replacing Duchamp's “ordinary object” with any discipline (politics, economics etc.), ideas, concepts, or with “nothing”, or with “listening” like Armand Robin did, or with “walking” like Andre Cadere, or “breathing” like Duchamp and play with it. I prefer though the exercise with “substantive actions”, “functional systems”, “raising questions by giving answers”, I think that these are spaces with great potential, but almost untouched by art.

How many are the artists we haven't discovered yet? From the past and present. The artists from the past are hidden or we can't give them a good enough retrospective context. And the contemporary ones because didn't get the opportunity to study or make art, or function in the art-world, but they are expressing their creativity and leave their mark in a different field, **waiting to be recognized.**

¹⁵ *Ready-made definition, Dictionnaire Abrégé du Surréalisme*, 1938, p. 23 (Obalk 1996 in Tout Fait 2000)

“How much intelligence is remaining free, simply attached to nourish and beautify a life, never attend the draft enslavement to a recognition strategy, publicity and production? Many creators have opted for the non-creation” (Jouannais 2009: 32).

9.5 Art Awards

One practical initiative that I would take would be to create ART AWARDS FOR NON-ARTISTIC PROJECTS in science, economy, technology, anthropology etc.

These awards can reveal the artistic potential in non-artistic disciplines. They open both non-artistic disciplines and art to collaboration.

Just through the simple act of giving art awards to non-artistic projects, those projects are re-contextualized and can be viewed from another perspective too. They can also be models for artists to initiate and join these kinds of projects, but they can also be a catalyst for non-artists to view new perspectives of their practices.

Of course many people argue that nowadays anybody can collaborate with whoever they want, nothing is stopping them. This is true at the theoretical level, but in reality if this collaboration is not encouraged through official channels like education, work force, politics etc. then we have a small group of confused people who feel the urge to work between and cross-over disciplines, but they don't have any guidance, any framework, any language to work with. This will always remain an isolated situation.

On the other hand, we have the rest of the people who are stuck in the status quo of their discipline, continuing without being aware of the potential ahead of them.

10. Exhibition:

Because the exhibition is one of the conditions for finishing the master programme, and because I want to push this theory into decision making area of the educational system, meaning that I have to first pass the master programme in order to get into a PhD programme, I'm choosing to conform to the system's conditions and make an exhibition based on this research. Under these circumstances, I try to communicate my theory and also subtract the project as much as possible from this exhibition process.

10.1 Manifesto

Motto - "Silence is a muscle" (Jean-Yves Jouannais 2009)

1. I refuse to make an artwork about my art work.
2. I paint with axons, dendrites and synapses between my neurons and other people's, already connected, neurons (other formulated theories).
3. The text of the research is NOT my artwork, my theory/idea is my artwork. The text is just a description of my artwork (see: *Magritte's "This is not a pipe"*).

Q: What artwork I exhibit?

A: My theory/idea – Artistic Thinking in Non-Artistic Field

Q: What are the materials I use?

A: Axons, dendrites, synapses.

Q: How do I exhibit?

A: a) Because science is not enabling us, yet (see Conectome Project), to get in other people's minds, **the exhibition** will be empty in that sense. (*Just because we don't hear ultra sounds, or don't see most of the colours it doesn't mean they don't exist*).

b) **The description** of the artwork is the paper I'm working on.

Q: What is the exhibition aiming for?

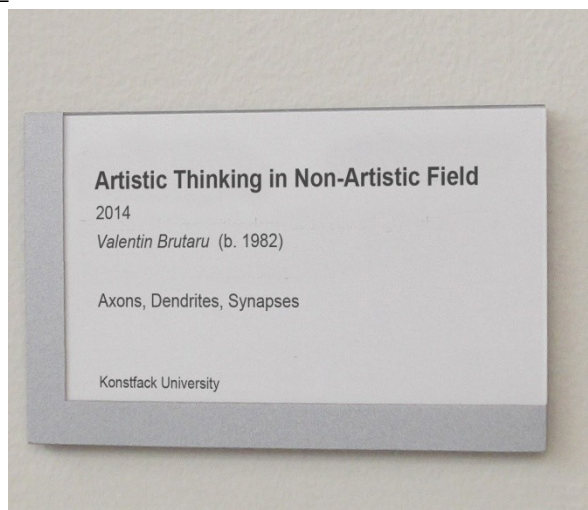
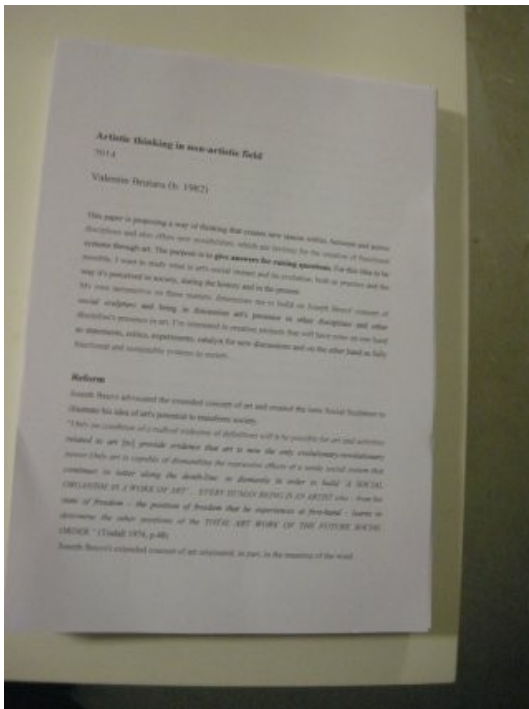
A: a) Expanding the concept of art to consider "ideas/theories" as artworks. Thus, it reaffirms what the theory Artistic Thinking in Non-Artistic Field is emphasizing: the concept of art can be expanded and it can include everything.

If ideas are art works and everyone has ideas, then *"every human being is an artist"* (Joseph Beuys). And just like in the classic structure of the art world, there are good (appreciated) artists and not so good artists.

b) Strengthening the idea that there is no "need" of "proof" in art.

c) Creating a space for thinking about how much we don't "see" ("see" as understanding)

(It tries to contradict Konstfack's rules for "producing" for the Spring exhibition)



I consider that a “new” idea is the result of the unconscious and conscious process of curating other people' ideas and their implications. So, the idea I have described in this essay: “Artistic Thinking in Non-Artistic Field”, is the result of my curation of other people' ideas, it is a conceptual structure. This idea “Artistic Thinking in Non-Artistic Field” is, from my point of view, an art-work and I choose to exhibit it in the context that Konstfack is offering. The idea is, from my point of view, an art-work in itself, but is also the first part of a broader approach I have on this matter. As I presented in the beginning of the essay, what I consider to be my art-work is: the “idea” as the first part of it; the second part is the process of developing it in a framework that could be implemented in the educational system; the third part of the art project is the observation on the social sculpture that the implementation of this idea generated.

In this context, one of the reasons for which I choose to exhibit nothing that can be sensorial perceived, is that whatever would have been, it would have presented an “inability to resist the process of its subsequent fetishization through decorativeness.” (Gintz and Aminoff 1993: 114)

Joseph Kosuth enounced, in 1965, that “the essence of art is strictly linguistics. Giving a form to art is inadmissible because any realization is failed, at best, in the formalism, worst in the decorative. In the haemorrhage of its visibility” (Jouannais 2009: 116)

I want to focus on and preserve the idea's “purity” - “What my work is aiming at is, above all, realism: I pursue the inner, hidden reality, the very essence of objects in their own intrinsic fundamental nature; this is my only deep preoccupation” (Bracusi n.a. n.d.) Constantin Brancusi was arguing this when he was described as an abstract artist. Any kind of representation of the idea can affect the way it is perceived, by distracting the attention. By exposing the idea through representation, a lot of room for interpretation is created. Any detail is another gate to other interpretations, thus I choose to think that “less is more”. If at an art exhibition is exhibited a book for example, the first thing is to look at it and interpret the physical context and try to understand the idea through it: how the lights are, how it is relating to the space, if it is a big or a small book, with hard cover, paper cover, colours on cover, text on cover, images on cover, the format of the text, who published it; how is the text written: is it a novel, a research, a personal story, an observation, is it poetic etc. And if the book is presented at an art exhibition as the art work

then the idea is interpreted through all these details. In this case, I think it is more important to focus on the idea as much as possible and this is why I choose to strip it of all representations. Constantin Brancusi believed also that “The artist should know how to dig out the being that is within matter” (Anca 2008).

Considering that the context of the exhibition is somehow obligatory and because I want to have as little intervention and contribution possible to the exhibition, I let the situation created by the exhibition to create the space for me. I specifically asked to receive the space, in the exhibition venue, that remained after everyone got the space they asked for. So that space, which is not chosen by me, is creating a dimension for the portal to my idea/theory and to other people's ideas (mentioned in the paper). Like this, I think, the exhibition will achieve the goal of non-representation: a space that is not chosen by me describes a portal to my idea/theory (the theory is a part of what I consider my artwork). The communication with the public will be made through the description, which is situated outside of the exhibition space and which is just a description, it is not part of the artwork.

The description – For this exhibition, I tried to develop a situation/space where I consider that the theory can be exhibited as an artwork and communicated without any representation: the description of the artwork is a space that bridges the art work and the public and it is situated outside of the exhibition space. I think it is a very neglected space and it can have a much bigger role in involving people in art. As a thought exercise, we can interpret this as an example of how art can expand its territories to and through “non artistic” means. The description usually is not part of the art world, many times is not even used and most of the times when it is used it is treated very superficial, minimalistic and cold. I like the neutral role of the description, of bridging the artwork and the public, and I think it can be treated with more care, respecting in this way the public. I think the description can also come in different forms, at the same time. People have to have the chance to choose, and for this I propose 4 types of descriptions, to be made available at exhibitions or similar art events:

Type 0 – I choose not to display information about the artwork in a way that can be viewed without will (no big writings on the wall or similar displays) - (for the part of the public who enjoys interpreting and discovering the art-work entirely by themselves);

Type 1 – a description with the role of a hint, indicating what the artist's intentions are -

(the public is free to use the hint or not, in their interpretation of the art-work);

Type 2 – a description that provides brief information and context for following the art-work (a guiding map) - (the public is free to use the information or not, in their interpretation of the art-work);

Type 3 – a description for diving into the artist's mind through her reflecting writing - (for those who choose to see the art-work from the artist's point of view, discovering the intimate processes that led to its present form).

I think that by giving these options we include (not exclude), train (not ignore) people who would like to enjoy art, but they can't "read" it without a "map". Some of these people will also enjoy the "in depth reflective writing" and maybe will be "converted" to making art themselves. In this way, art is conquering new territories. Artists are trained for years to develop themselves, so why don't we use the exhibitions as opportunities to train and share with the people who also want to connect to art?

10.2 Art without artworks – a case for liberation

Matter has been viewed as a subaltern of form and referred to as "medium" or "channel". However, matter is the "physical constituent of the artwork" and, thus, it becomes a material: "a container of information with very little meaning and interest compared with the contents emerged from its formalization" (Hofman and Pau 2012).

The question of how to preserve artworks gave way to a more profound question: "What is actually the artwork?" (Hofman and Pau 2012) This query can be deconstructed into several other more specific questions which regard: the material experience (is it the idea, the artists' intentions, or, maybe, a mixture of the previously mentioned); the artwork's aspects which should be preserved; documentation (can it replace or become the artwork?); the place of the objects in the Media Arts memory construction; the possibility of a Media Arts memory without artworks (ibidem.).

In a certain way art is done with art, in terms of what we have come to call art. We keep the name—art—yet, fundamentally, its content has changed (**Brugère** n.d.).

The notion of artwork and its accompanying idea of art have been abandoned. Art in the 20th century has been haunted by "artists without artworks" who have essentially chose

not to create, but have taken up the status of artist “living for one’s self, outside of all artistic production” (**Brugère** n.d.).

When the myth of the art's exceptional character and its autonomy are erased, the artwork disappears. It becomes experience, experimentation, intervention, which reflects on ordinary life, and affirms art's vulnerability which defies the logic of power. Thus, art tries to reunite “the tangled web of experience” with what embodies its own work – formalization. However, in the words of Brugère, formalization itself changed and became relational and uncertain (**Brugère** n.d.). The work of forms, which is now fragile and tenuous, must always begin anew considering its tendency to merge into lived experience or into the world's complexity (ibidem.).

Somehow in the same register, Andrew Gallix (2010) refers to Marboeuf as a legend, highlighting the fact that, due to the lofty idea he entertained of literature, his works remained imaginary. Furthermore, Gallix cites Proust who regarded “silent authors” like Marboeuf as “dormant volcanoes” and who raved about the pages he chosen not to write as being “sheer perfection” (Gallix 2010).

In Gallix's view, Marboeuf symbolizes the past and present anonymous “Artists without works”. Moreover, Marboeuf is used by Jouannais to stigmatize those who made a career and who produce new material in large quantities as a way to “reaffirm their status or inflate their egos” (Gallix 2010). As Gallix sees it, Jouannais used Marboeuf to stigmatise publishers, as well, who were guilty of flooding the market with “little narrative trinkets” which they sold as real literature. In doing so, Jouannais was able to define a rival tradition with roots in “the opposition to the commodification of the arts that accompanied industrialization” (Gallix 2010).

Are artists without art works the death of art? I would say they are a sign for the **liberation of art**, the democratization of art. An idea that seems to keep reappearing since Felicien Marbouef and Jacque Vache, about whom Andre Breton said in the *Manifeste du surréalisme* in 1924: “Vache is the Surrealist in me” (in Jouannais 2009: 39). And it will continue to appear until the right conditions will make it possible at a larger scale, which in my view, is not very far from the present times.

Jacque Vache 1911-1912: **"The object of art is the enemy"**(ibidem.).

11. Conclusion

Considering the draft status of this paper, which tries to lay out some matters for a future in depth research, a conclusion is more like a “to do list” than a “take away”. Nonetheless, the paper is an attempt to elaborate a personal view I have and to clarify, firstly to myself, some of the issues of the different positions that art takes in society and my relation to them. When I started to think about studying and making art, I saw art as a precious tool for change. Even if I studied art, I consider myself far from being an “expert” in art. This is definitely, in a way, a downside for the way I see art, because more information could lead to a better understanding, but at the same time, not being an “expert” could also be an advantage because it gives me the freedom to speculate, have courage in making statements (some would call it ignorance or oblivion), be distant to art's “sanctity” (some would call it blasphemy), see its value also outside of its “classical” environment, designation.

In an attempt to prove the transdisciplinary value of artistic thinking, I tried to find documentation from various fields for developing this paper; I tried to find some examples that will give a sense of what is this approach about; I tried to interview some persons whose works are close to the examples I used and I also tried to find trends and contextualize all this, both historically and in the 21st century.

One attitude that I propose for change through(using) art, is that when an artist doesn't like something in society, to stop making **only** an art “product” through which s/he's criticizing that problem, and **also** start trying to establish which are the decision factors and the systems that can resolve that problem. And make art from accessing, developing and/or creating those decision factors/systems. This means to think in terms of not doing **only** art about the problem, but **also** to think about making art for solving the problem – **raise questions by giving answers.**

So if you don't like the politics of your times, make a political party and/or develop new ways of organizing politics (i.e. Liquid Democracy) and make art out of them. If you don't like the economics of your times, join the system and change it from within and/or start alternative systems (i.e. Sharing Economy, Bitcoin) and make art out of them. If you don't like the public administration, join the system and change it from within and/or make

alternative systems (i.e. Brickstarter) and make art out of them. I see two main ways for effective change: 1) accessing the decision factors from within the system; 2) developing new decision factors, from outside the system, that will circumvent (replace/work in parallel with) the main “official” decision factors. Of course that any other gesture or strategy (artistic or not) is equally important, but we have to be aware that it is not equally effective. Effectiveness, of course, can happen on many levels, but a balance in reasoning should exist here though: for example, a placebo pill can “treat” a superficial headache; love and good emotional state could contribute to recover, but it is a problem when it is expected from using **only** these, would treat a more serious disease. It reminds about the ancient times when it was expected from prayers and magic rituals to treat diseases or resolve most problems. Regarding effectiveness, one extreme view could be, of course, the reductionist one, which doesn't allow nuances. But another extreme could be the statement that everything is effective in its own way and what it is, is what it should be. This kind of thinking, on the one hand is legitimizing all the crimes and other bad things that happened in human history, and on the other hand it doesn't leave any room for saying that we can do better.

Some of the things that I try to promote are the **addition** of **substantive action** to art practices and a kind of clarification of what to expect in terms of social change from the point of view of the effectiveness of **symbolic gestures** as art, versus **substantive actions** as art, and how those two can work together.

In a context where a lot of artists **produce** for change and **react to history** as art, an artist who **lives** the change and **makes history**, could seem like not doing art at all, because the “object” of her art is not explicit, but implicit, because she's not “producing” art, but living it.

Maybe for many artists being a politician, for example, would not be very appealing, but for some it would fit like a glove. For the latter, art should have a place, art education should offer them a framework for studies, just like it does with painting, performance or any other classical practice. Even if the job of a politician will be mostly dealing with diplomatic or administrative stuff, the rare moments when vision is asked for, when the multiple perspectives are needed, when critical thinking is needed, when expressing or communicating in different ways would come in hand, the artist within can make the whole

difference in taking a good decision that will impact society. Just the idea of playing two roles at the same time, the artist and the politician, is already changing one's attitude, one's perspectives and, finally, one's possibilities. The same is true for economics or any other field.

But this approach is not only for artists, it is also for people who prepare themselves for any other vocation, because artistic thinking as we have seen, exists, even if it's not yet defined. But as art is taught for thousands of years, without being defined, **artistic thinking** can also be taught as a **vehicle for transdisciplinarity** and beyond.

From the point of view of social change through art, what I consider to be one of the most important steps since Duchamp is participatory art. I think that everything that was in between, was prototyping what participatory art is firmly announcing: artistic thinking as a vehicle for transdisciplinarity. Participatory art seems to be still in a transition state. But by adding *substantive action* with a *decision making* mentality, and thus making a step forward from the present *problem solving* orientation, and by studying artistic thinking and finding ways to apply it in non-artistic fields, it is created a great space for social change, and not only, where a lot of untapped potential could find its use.

Further research is needed and some of the things here to mention are:

- historical context for the big moments in which the artist was manifesting also in “non-artistic” fields: Greek antiquity, Renaissance, Hegel's “end of art” to participatory art (collaboration with art historians);
- artistic thinking insights from research on reflective writing, emphasizing on the relation between Representation, Symbolic Action and Substantive Action (collaboration with artists);
- artistic thinking in science lab, using neuro-aesthetics, emphasizing on the Aesthetics of Substantive Actions (collaboration with Neuro-aesthetics Institute);
- finding and working with artists interested in *raising questions by giving answers*;
- analysing statistics on different aspects of art and the art-world in society and interviewing artists that “didn't make it” in the art-world (collaboration with the national centre for statistics, cultural observatories)

- understanding from the educational point of view how artistic thinking can be taught in non-artistic fields (collaboration with art and non-art professors);
- analysing in depth the idea of artistic thinking in the 21st century's paradigm of a network society (collaboration with experts of cultural studies and new technologies);

Some of the final goals would be to set the framework for courses of Artistic Thinking in non-artistic fields, like politics, economics etc., to encourage the educational system to mix courses between universities (i.e. some economics courses to be taught to the students studying economics, but to be held at the art universities and the other way around. Thus a mix between students could happen naturally, where ideas and mentalities take shape in an organic way, where people are treated like complex living beings, not like robots that have to learn how to execute certain tasks and interact only with their own “kind”). I don't want to dissolve the idea of art or its importance, by contrary, I want to enforce it by enabling it in as many people as possible.

I think art can play a much bigger role in society and by following the trends, artistic thinking will be a driving force in 21st century for transdisciplinarity and understanding complexity.

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