

Editorial

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Making, Materiality and Knowledge

This volume of FORMakademisk is a special issue which features articles based on presentations made at *Making - an International Conference on Materiality and Knowledge*, Notodden on September 24-27, 2012 (Making, 2012). This FORMakademisk publication is accompanied by special issues from two other scientific journals, the New Zealand-based *Studies in Material Thinking* (Freitas & Lutnæs, 2013) and the Nordic journal *Techne A Series*, published by NordFo (Johansson & Porko-Hudd, 2013).

The main topic of this issue is *making*. *Making* is here defined as the process of creating something, an intentional activity in which an individual or a group of individuals actively engage in developing and changing something, such as a material, so that it becomes something else. The term was first introduced and used in an academic setting by the Nordic network for cooperation in research education in the development of the *Millennium Program* (Dunin-Woyseth, 2010). The term was then used as a common denominator for the activities which practitioners engage in within the fields of art, design and architecture or, collectively, the ADA fields. The goal of introducing *making* as a collective term was to emphasise the communalities among these professions to determine a common ground and thus develop *making* as a discipline of its own (Dunin-Woyseth & Michl, 2001; Dunin-Woyseth & Nielsen, 2004).

In this special issue, the term is used in a broad context with the intent to introduce a process of *making* which an individual or a group can undertake, but not only within the aesthetic ADA fields. Education or the process of teaching or learning is also seen as something which is made and which involves other intentional processes.

Today, developing the knowledge of the *making* professions and *making* education has gained broad international interest. This interest manifests itself through research projects, research methodological and philosophical discussions, conferences and journals within and across several different fields of study. Since the introduction of the term and its development as a particular field of instruction and research, research has rapidly evolved as research *on*, research *in* and research *through* processes of *making* (Frayling, 1993; Gulliksen, 2009; Sevaldson, 2010).

The Story behind the Conference

The Making Conference in 2012 was organised by NordFo in collaboration with Telemark University College (TUC). The conference was supported financially by NordPlus and TUC.

NordFo was established in 1988 as a forum for collaboration, research and development among teacher education institutions in art and craft, textile and woodwork in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark. Since then, other Nordic countries and areas have been included, such as Iceland, Faeroe Islands, Greenland and Saapmi (NordFo, 2013).

NordFo has organised Nordic conferences since 1988. Two international conferences were also organised in Umeå/Sweden in 2006 and Helsinki/Finland in 2008 before the conference in Notodden 2012.

The Making Conference comprised an organising committee and a scientific committee. The latter was appointed by the Presidium of NordFo in 2009, whereas the former was appointed jointly by the scientific committee and TUC. The scientific committee included the following:

- Associate Professor, PhD, **Marte S. Gulliksen**, TUC, Norway (leader of the committee and deputy president in NordFo)
- Professor, PhD, **Marléne Johansson**, Göteborg University, Sweden, Åbo Akademi, Vasa, Finland and TUC, Norway
- Associate Professor, PhD, **Mia Porko-Hudd**, Åbo Akademi, Vasa, Finland
- Associate Professor, **Bente Ytterstad**, Oslo University College, Norway
- Research Fellow **Eva Lutnæs**, Oslo University College, Norway

Scope of the Conference

The Making Conference in Notodden 2012 aimed to provide an arena to discuss field-specific, inter- and trans-disciplinary knowledge production within *making* disciplines, *making* professions and *making* education. The conference presented three main concepts:

The first concept was *making*, which focused on the activity of making something or the process of changing and influencing something to become something else. This key concept emphasised on the maker as an actor, the one who makes, learns and teaches something about the material. Knowledge as an active process, knowledge as change and the changeability of materials are the keywords which reflect this point of view.

The second concept was *materiality*. This point of view focused on the experience of *making*, of being a maker, the experience of the materials and the materiality and experience of knowledge in *making*. This experience can be conscious or unconscious, and this point of view can address both the content of the experience and/or the conditions for it.

The third concept was *knowledge*. This point of view focused on *making* both as a process and as an exploration in itself, as well as the research of this *making* in materials. Research methodological questions and the scientific theoretical foundations for these questions were central to this point of view. Knowledge also emphasised the need to understand *making* as both a knowledge-based and a knowledge-generating process.

The conference undertook an educational perspective on these key concepts. The questions asked were as follows:

- *How can education in the making professions prepare future citizens to identify and solve possible future challenges?*
- *What are the possible meanings, functions and consequences of materiality and material-related knowledge in such a context?*

The conference acknowledged the multiplicity of meanings around the *making* professions. Critical and constructive exchanges of ideas and debates were welcomed. Therefore, in addition to the keynote speeches, large-panel discussions and prepared peer-responses on presented papers were arranged.

The Conference

The conference gathered 173 scientific participants from 16 countries and 4 continents. All 145 abstracts submitted were evaluated by a select team of peer reviewers in April and May of 2012, and 109 papers were presented at the conference. All abstracts were published in the Book of Abstracts (Gulliksen & Riis, 2012). In addition to the scientific participants, 74 Norwegian and Sápmi MA students participated. Led by Professor Liv Merete Nielsen, the students followed the keynote lectures and selected paper presentations, held seminars, building network and discussed their MA projects.

From Conference to Publication

This special issue contains invited articles and research articles based on contributions at the Making Conference. As the online open journal system allows us to publish one article at a time, this editorial will present each article as it is published.

Invited Articles

Invited articles are articles written by keynote speakers or on the basis of keynote presentations presented at the Making Conference.

The first article in this section is written by Dr. **Kristina Niedderer**, reader in Design and Applied Arts at the University of Wolverhampton, UK. Her article, *Explorative Materiality and Knowledge - The Role of Creative Exploration and Artefacts in Design Research*, is based on her keynote presentation at the conference. The article aims to develop understanding of design research, especially on ontological, epistemological and methodological issues. She presents a framework and make her discussions through theory and examples from her own work as a designer.

The second article in this section is written by three authors: **Camilla Groth**, a PhD candidate at Aalto University, Finland, **Maarit Mäkelä**, professor of design at Aalto University, Finland and **Pirita Seitamaa-Hakkarainen**, keynote speaker at the conference, and professor of craft science at Helsinki University, Finland. In their article, *Making Sense - What can We Learn from Experts of Tactile Knowledge?*, they examine the tactile experience in the making processes of deaf-blind makers who are clay workers. They discuss embodied knowing and the possibility of thinking through the hands and they propose the possibility of using tactile communication when transferring tactile knowledge.

The third article in this section is written by **Fredrik Nilsson**, professor at Department of Architecture, Chalmers University of Technology, Architect SAR/MSA, and Head of Research and Development, White Arkitekter, Sweden. His article, *Knowledge in the Making - On Production and Communication of Knowledge in the Material Practices of Architecture*, is based on his keynote presentation at the conference. The article discusses conceptual frameworks and approaches in material practice and making disciplines, and argues for the importance of more articulate frameworks both for strengthening disciplines and practices, and for the wider societal contexts in relation to contemporary challenges in built environments.

Research Articles

Research articles are written on the basis of paper presentations at the Making Conference.

The first article in this section is written by **Nithikul Nimkulrat**, lecturer in textiles at Loughborough University, School of The Arts, Leicestershire, UK. In her article, *Situating Creative Artefacts in Art and Design Research*, she discusses the role of artifacts in the practice-led research process on the basis of case studies from her own art practice in working with textile and paper. By discussing the relationship between a physical material and artistic expression in textile art and design, she argues that art and design artifacts serve both as input into knowledge production and output for knowledge communication throughout a practice-led research process. She uses the concept experiential knowledge and argues that the 'creative practice in a research context can contribute to generating or enhancing knowledge, which is embedded in the practice and embodied in and by the practitioner'.

The second article in this section is written by **Terry Rosenberg**, senior lecturer at Goldsmiths, University of London, UK. His article, *Intermingled Bodies - Distributed Agency in an Expanded Appreciation of Making*, introduces an expanded view of making as something not merely individual or tacit but as something which extends the body into the

world and connects human and non-human actors and actants across time and space. He introduces the concepts distributed agency and meshwork and draws upon both philosophical theory and practical examples to make his case of making as an expanded term.

The third article in this section is *Towards Posthumanist Design: With-Water* is written by **Lisa Meaney**, freelance artist/designer and researcher, holding an MA in Design and Environment, Goldsmiths University. Her article presents a practice based investigation of theoretical ideas around agency, irony, relational dialectics. Situated and embodied knowledge is documented through a series of collaborative experiments with water. The article concludes that the enactment of our human-nonhuman, material-semiotic relationships precludes our knowledge. It posits the process based practice of designing from a performative and posthumanist site of irony, embodiment and continuous socio-natural becoming as an effective environmental strategy for design.

The fourth article in this section is written by **Kirstine Riis**, doctoral candidate at Telemark University College, Department of Art and Design Education, following the PhD programme in Humanities and the Arts, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Faculty of Humanities. In her article *A systems theory perspective on the relationship between practice and research in the making disciplines* she discuss the relationship between practice and research in the making disciplines based on systems theory and constructs and emphasizes the fundamental difference between the practice system and the scientific system. In her article Kirstine Riis considers art and design research as a subsystem of the scientific system, and argues that this approach may strengthen the further development of art and design research.

The fifth article in this section is *The Unheimliche Approach in the Making of Interiors*, written by **Karel Deckers**, educator, architect and doctoral candidate, Chalmers University of Technology, Göteborg and KUL Leuven, Leuven. The article presents part of Decker's ongoing Phd research aiming to understand, and potentially incorporate, the unheimliche into interior-architectural design teaching.

The sixth article in this section is *Making design representations as catalysts for reflective making in a collaborative design research process*, written by **Jessica Schoffelen**, PhD student/lecturer at Social Spaces, MAD-faculty, UHasselt and **Selina Schepers**, **Liesbeth Huybrechts** and **Laura Braspenning**, all Lecturers/researchers at Social Spaces, MAD-faculty, LUCA/Faculty of the Arts, KULeuven. In their article they reflect on a research trajectory that explores how to support students in intertwining making and reflecting throughout the design research process. They argue that combining design representations with structuring rules of play in a design research method and using these representations throughout the whole design process can improve collaborative reflection-in-action (Schön, 1983), or reflection-in-making, since it allows students to work in a more iterative manner.

Invited Manifesto

In addition to the articles, this special issue of FORMakademisk presents a manifesto written by Professor **Mikkel B. Tin**. In this manifesto, *Making and the Sense it Makes*, Tin elaborated on what he discussed in the main panel debate at the conference. The text is not a research article but is rather an introduction to the theme. Because this text is published in all three journals simultaneously, it unifies the three publications and celebrates the importance of the *making* professions. When citing this text, please use the following:

Tin, M. B. (2013). Making and the sense it makes. Conceptual manifesto simultaneously published in *FORMakademisk*, Vol 6:2, *Studies in Material Thinking*, Vol 9, and *Techne A Series*, Vol 20:2, and the URL for either publications.

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