

Editorial. Making, Materiality and Knowledge

Marléne Johansson and Mia Porko-Hudd

*This volume of *Techne A* journal is a special issue which features articles based on presentations made at *Making – an International Conference on Materiality and Knowledge*, Notodden, Norway, on September 24–27, 2012. This *Techne A* issue is accompanied by special issues from two other scientific journals; *Studies in Material Thinking* (eds. special issue: Freitas & Lutnæs, 2013) and the *FORMakademisk* journal (eds. special issue: Gulliksen & Homlong, 2013).*

Keywords: making, materiality, knowledge, sloyd

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The main topic of this *Techne A* issue is making and knowledge. 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. In this special issue, the terms are used in a broad context with the intent to introduce learning processes of making which an individual or a group can undertake. Education or the process of teaching or learning is also seen as something which is made and which involves other intentional processes.

The Story behind the Conference

The Making Conference in 2012 was organized by NordFo (Nordic Forum for Research and Development in Craft and Design) in collaboration with Telemark University College (TUC), Norway. The conference was supported financially by NordPlus and Telemark University College.

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 Sápmi (NordFo, <http://www.nordfo.org/en>). NordFo has organized Nordic conferences since 1988. Two international conferences have been organized before the conference in Notodden/Norway 2012, the first one in Umeå/Sweden in 2006 and the second one in Helsinki/Finland in 2008.

The Making Conference comprised an organizing 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 members:

- Associate Professor, PhD, Marte S. Gulliksen, Telemark University College, Norway (leader of the committee)
- Professor, PhD, Marléne Johansson, Göteborg University, Sweden; Åbo Akademi University, Finland; and Telemark University College, Norway

- Associate Professor, PhD, Mia Porko-Hudd, Åbo Akademi University, 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, September 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 emphasized 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 making in materials. Research methodological questions and the scientific theoretical foundations for these questions were central to this point of view. Knowledge also emphasized 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.

From Conference to Publication

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 spring 2012, and 109 papers were presented at the conference. In addition to the scientific participants, 74 Norwegian and Sápmi MA students participated. This special issue in *Techne A* 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, articles will be added as they are finished.

In addition to the articles, this special issue of *Techne A* presents a manifesto written by Professor Mikkel B. Tin. In this manifesto, *Making and the Sense it Makes*, Tin elaborates on what he discussed in the main panel debate at the conference. The text is not a research article but rather an introduction

to the conference theme. As 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 reference (and add the URL for either publication):

Tin, M. B. (2013). Making and the sense it makes. Conceptual manifesto simultaneously published in *FORMakademisk* 6(2); *Studies in Material Thinking*, 9; and *Techne Series A*, 20(3).

Vasa/Göteborg, October, 2013

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