

## Timo Jokela

### The Art of Art Education

I'm an artist, a researcher and a teacher. There is no doubt that art is the main force to give energy and motivation to work with other people and with younger generations. Contemporary art has challenged art education to look for new communicative working methods. From the perspective of art teacher education, these principles of contemporary art cannot be realised in the form of traditional workshop-based learning or classroom-based teacher training. Art education as teaching of contemporary art must meet the same requirements as the school system in general: critical opening towards the surrounding world and the development of participatory collaboration between different actors in society are to be part of art education. Therefore, art educators have to be able to analyse their own position not only as teachers, but also as artist, cultural workers and mediators of cultural values. In order to be able to be an active practitioner with critical evaluation abilities, the art educator needs new kinds of cooperation skills.

I have developed principles and realizations of collaborative project-based studies and artistic action research related to it as a part of art teacher education and community and environment art in Northern European socio-cultural context. The development work is still in progress, but the results are already visible. Art activities, written reports, and visual documentation have increased the social impact of art education in the worlds of art and school, as well as in the sector between art and the environment. The work of art educators has become visible and evident for other people. The artistic action research on the projects indicates that as a relatively new discipline in academics, visual art education frames its research questions from its own perspective and seeks to answer them on the basis of its own research data, without having to resort solely to the methods of other disciplines. Only by doing so can art education create its own research tradition and form a new discipline in the ontological sense. As far as I can see, the most significant ontological aspect of art education is its empowering process - the art of activism. Successful project work and artistic action research makes the participants believe in their own capabilities and skills. That happens not only with students, teachers, and participants, but also within the discipline of art education as a whole. As a result of these process we can speak about "the art of art education".