

Article

Lost and Found—Unfolding and Refolding Aesthetic Learning Processes

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Abstract: The ongoing marketisation of education is a great loss for visual arts education since explorative learning processes are marginalised in favour of more goal-oriented learning. The empirical material analysed in this research derives from the visual art portfolio of a student from an elective university course in visual arts education. Working within Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical framework, we examine the folding, unfolding, and refolding of aesthetic learning processes, suggesting productive concepts and practices. The analysis made us aware of our own pedagogical ideals and the loss of having to disassemble them, in line with the new curricula. The student's visual learning process showed us how to reassemble new and explorative learning processes, assigning aspects of sustainability and an ethics of care in relation to environmental and social questions. We suggest strategies for learning in the folds, where educators are called upon to prepare students for an uncertain future. This demands a creative imagination, an ethical standpoint for negotiating the curriculum in line with differentiation by forming, inventing, and fabricating new concepts and images.



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1. Introduction

The marketisation of education has severely impacted visual arts education. This is a time of great grief and mourning for us teachers at visual arts teacher training programmes. However, growing resistance towards these directions has made us rethink our practice and research and experiment with alternative ways of thinking and acting [1–3]. Working within Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical framework, we want to examine the folding, unfolding, and refolding of aesthetic learning processes, suggesting productive concepts and practices. In other words, the purpose of this research is to add to the body of knowledge on the critique of neoliberal forces in the development of educational curricula [4–9]. More specifically, by using the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari, analysing a university student's complex aesthetic learning process in a Swedish teacher training context, we wish to create a rift in the umbrella of our common sense. As Deleuze and Guattari put it, "We constantly lose our ideas. That is why we want to hang on to fixed opinions so much" [10] (p. 201).

This article focusses on how we as teachers and researchers can manage and make intelligible the relationship between policy-driven activities and our own purposes and goals with visual arts education, based on a teaching practice. We inquire what we have lost as a driving force in the curriculum, and what we can find when digging into a student's learning processes. To this end, we need to examine the complexity of one student's visual art portfolio, which includes several visual arts techniques, reflection work, and links to the curriculum of the student's future profession.

In the Swedish context, the concept of aesthetic learning processes appeared in educational syllabuses and policies at all levels, from preschool, secondary, and upper secondary

school to teacher training programmes, in the 1990s. Here, we understand aesthetic learning processes as a creative, complex, connective, and unpredictable learning processes. It involves the trustful and responsible access to meaning making and desires in aesthetic visual knowledge production (Lind, 2010/2013). In other words, it involves different intersections of knowledge and unexpected linking of thoughts, matter, and objects, which disentangles what we already think we know. The significance of aesthetic subjects was emphasised in the Swedish school curricula reform of 1999 [11]. The Commission of Teacher Education stressed that all teachers should support children and youth to develop the ability to transform existing knowledge through aesthetic modes of expression. They argued that the teacher must challenge the conceptions in general of young people and that this can be done through aesthetic learning processes. This entails exposing them to different cultural experiences and non-verbal languages and offer encounters with culture and different aesthetic forms of expressions. Furthermore, aesthetic learning processes are driven by the pupil's own questions, explorations, and goals, where the answers are not given beforehand [11]. Pupils had time to investigate and learn through a more active mode, rather than being reduced to objects for teaching as a transmission of knowledge. They do not just have to orient themselves according to the teacher's logic but can find out how to think otherwise and act out living inquiries. In the teacher training reform of 2011 though, the concept of aesthetic learning processes was completely erased and the space for aesthetic subjects in schools was drastically reduced [12]. The concepts that appear in the current visual arts curriculum and school policy are aesthetic working methods and aesthetic modes of expression. The focus in Swedish educational policies has moved away from formulations about learning processes to text about goal-oriented, targeted knowledge. As we have argued before [13], the learning process stops in a certain way, when the answers are found or given. The versatile, multidimensional, unpredictable, divergent, and surprising paths to new understanding are being deprived. By focusing on knowledge acquisition, learning processes become shorter and, in the worst case, are reduced to a simple question-and-answer pedagogy. In this process, education becomes standardised and produces categories of student subjectivities that limit the possibility for subjectivation. As Deleuze puts it, "we continue to produce ourselves as a subject on the basis of old modes which do not correspond to our problems" [14] (p. 88). We believe that some of the problems at hand have to do with social, economic, and environmental sustainability and that creative, critical, and affirmative learning processes will be required to manage and unravel these problems. This article investigates how such learning processes can appear and suggests subsequent working methods and concepts to this end.

Internationally, there seems to have been a similar development regarding neoliberalism in visual art education, and we find that a new form of goal-driven individualism has entered the curricula and the practice of the arts [15–20]. Kalin [18] investigates how the key values of social democracy have been co-opted by neoliberalism. Her research focuses on how creativity has been relocated from the sphere of art and aesthetics to the realm of innovation measured in terms of economic productivity. The aim is to inspire and disturb visual art educators to start thinking critically and reclaim creativity as educators. This is done by analysing official documents such as the Partnership for 21st Century Learning in the USA and the Finnish National Curriculum Framework along with current research in the area. Kalin demonstrates various ways of resisting the neoliberal notion of creativity. For example, she uses Agamben's concept of decreation (p. 121), which includes "... a potential freedom and fear of the unknown, along with the trepidation that might come with the loss of control inherent in not being sure of the paths and ends of learning in advance" [18] (p. 129). Ruck [19] highlights how art educators in this neoliberal era are used to art-washing schools to make them more attractive to middle-class parents. Art-washing is defined as using art and artists for gentrification, providing an area with a certain coolness and aura of creativity. Through an ethnographic study of four schools in England, the complex ways in which gentrification, creativity, and education are intertwined are demonstrated in this analysis. The results show that both schools and artists are

becoming more entrepreneurial and driven by market thinking. In a context where parents are considered consumers on the school market, this leads to inequality and marginalisation. Wilkinson [20] investigates the values of creative arts teachers and students in higher education institutions in England through interviews. He finds a collision between art educators' privileging "the personal" and students' regarding themselves as consumers that should be provided with an education that "works". Personal education involves qualitative aspects of pedagogy, such as exploratory approaches to learning. Atkinson [15] argues that managerialist strategies involve highly controlled pedagogical spaces and advocate for "a pedagogy of the not-known" and "a subject-yet-to-come" (p. 46). However, a pedagogy of the not-known is not necessarily good and managerialist education is not all bad, according to Atkinson. Instead, managerialism in education has overshadowed and hindered open-ended learning processes. Neoliberalism in education has led to prescribed learning and has marginalised learning that works with risk and uncertainty, which Atkinson calls "adventure of pedagogy" [16] (p. 9). Furthermore, Atkinson suggests that a neoliberal ideal in curriculum relies on reproducing what is already known, following prescribed stages of learning to assimilate students' learning processes and subjectivation.

Previous research on visual arts education and neoliberalism thus suggests that creativity has been taken over by a neoliberal agenda for economic productivity and profit, rather than fostering democratic values and a future social, economic, and environmental sustainability. This is in line with the development of the Swedish visual arts education curricula. The research presented suggests that we as educators need to reclaim creativity through critical thinking and working with unpredictable learning processes, thus preparing students for an uncertain future. Despite students regarding themselves as consumers of education, we as educators must persist in challenging and supporting the students through explorative and open-ended learning processes. A common ground for the research in this area seems to be the emphasis on exploring the unknown, activating and working with personal experiences, and facilitating an adventurous learning process. The question is how this can be done in the educational practice of the future, negotiating and challenging the present goal-oriented discourse with the ideals of explorative and uncertain learning processes. Then the goal must be managed as an enquiring process, opening up action spaces and creative zones.

2. A Pedagogical Life; Folding, Unfolding, and Refolding

A theoretical framework for this investigation is the philosophy of Deleuze, and Deleuze and Guattari [10,14]. Wallin [9], Jagodzinski and Wallin [5], Semetsky and Masny [7] all engage in a contemporary discussion on curriculum theory and educational philosophy based on the philosophy of Deleuze and Deleuze and Guattari.

The contemporary curriculum in Sweden had become end-product driven [21]. This entails a neoliberal imagination and desire to efficiently produce end products in educational systems [22]. The older forms of control are being implemented in adapted ways by repeated assessment and managerial business thinking brought into school at all levels [23]. The problem is that the desire for efficiency and goal-oriented learning may stifle creativity and hinder open-ended learning processes where the answers are not known beforehand. Learning processes underpinned by neoliberalism will follow predetermined routes determining educational achievements [15]. For Visual Arts education in Sweden, the changes in the curriculum will likely result in focusing on techniques and materials, rather than on creative experimentation. The learning then becomes more about imitating the correct working techniques and less about having a complex learning process where students can stretch their imaginative ability.

Wallin [9] attempts to open new ways of thinking about the course of pedagogical life through the creation of artistic effects and philosophical concepts. For example, parkour illustrates an activity or an artistic movement by which the body relates to and traverses its environment in creative and emergent ways. The obstacles in parkour become passages for movement with a difference and a collapse in the distinction between self/other in

desire, forces through which both self/other become what they are not (p. 91). He suggests that a modern curriculum “requires an excess of concepts that are not simply metaphors or catch-phrases, but active forces for creating a queer? curriculum-machine” (p. 187), where the question mark “produces the schizoanalytic question” (p. 187). The required concepts are both foundationally problematic and challenge what appears self-evident, unquestionable, or foundational. This means that the creation of concepts for a pedagogical life must be understood in relation to the kinds of forces they modify and unleash from material repetition.

Jagodzinski and Wallin [5] suggest a radical shift in aesthetics from the imaginary perceptual level to the virtual Real, where aesthetic is re-signified as affect—the moment of intensity, the reactions on or in the body at the level of matter (p. 193). Affect has nothing to do with meaning and knowledge. Affect is not emotion, the structural “feeling”. What arises, according to Jagodzinski and Wallin [5], are “processes, sensations, affect, movement, transition, rhythm, creativity, imagination, the virtual, force the lived experience—not as phenomenology but as non-human materiality” (p. 193). As soon as we connect this to aesthetic education, it appears to us that this aesthetic learning process inhabits both provocations and forces of desire, which are not always something “good”, in fact, a possible abyss and chasm. According to Deleuze [23], “Affects, percepts, and concepts are three inseparable forces, running from art to philosophy and from philosophy to art” (p. 27). Referring to Semetsky [24], all three are needed to produce change and movement. We are affected by the experience, Semetsky confirms, and our thinking enriched with affect is always experimental—a process of trying, testing, and creating a real-life experiment with what is new, a coming into being. As Deleuze states [25], we do not learn by imitating or reproducing, but by active doing and making together.

In Deleuze’s book, Foucault [14], he introduces the fold as the “inside of thought” (p. 78), which is the same as subjectivation. Here, Deleuze discusses the relation between the interior and the exterior, or the subject, in Foucault’s work through the fold. Foucault constantly radically critiques interiority, Deleuze argues. The concept of the fold shows us how the subject and the world are intricately connected. The outside is not a static limit, but a moving matter, which has folds and makes new foldings that together create the inside. The folds are not something other than the outside; the folds are the inside of the outside. Deleuze describes this through an apt metaphor: “. . . an inside which is merely the fold of the outside as if the ship were a folding of the sea” (p. 81). According to Deleuze, this thought haunts Foucault’s writings, and in his later works on the history of sexuality, it becomes the concept of relation to oneself or *enkrateia* [14] (p. 83). The relation to the outside folds back and creates a fold, which facilitates a relation to oneself. Subjectivation is thus created by the folding of the exterior and the force of desire/power into the interior [14].

There are four folds that affect the subject. The first is the material part of ourselves, our bodies, which are surrounded by the force of desire or power. The second fold concerns relations between forces/power and involves, for example, social conflict. The third fold is the fold of knowledge or the fold of truth, which constitutes the relation to truth and our beings. The fourth fold is the fold of the outside itself and concerns matters of life and death, hopes for immortality, salvation, freedom, and so on [14]. The four folds of subjectivation operate like “. . . the material cause of subjectivity, or interiority as a relation to oneself” (p. 86). Deleuze finds that a modern subjectivity is a resistance and a battle between the need to individualise ourselves according to forces of power and the exterior desire to form a recognisable identity that is fixed and comprehensible. Therefore, it is vital to struggle for “. . . the right to difference, variation and metamorphosis” (p. 87). In Deleuze’s book *Difference and repetition*, he challenges the image of thought, that is, the very categories we use to think with. The difference comes before the identity of categories. Thus, the more life becomes standardised and habituated, the more difference, or art, has to be inserted into it. Art is not about imitation but about repeating repeatedly; in this

way art repeats repetition and creates simulations and simulacra, detaching itself from representation [25].

According to Deleuze, to think is to fold, to double the outside with a parallel inside. The most distant exteriority might be converted to the closest, which Deleuze calls life within the folds (p. 101). Subjectivation is then like the boat, the inside of the ocean, which is the outside. In our analysis, we work with Deleuze's writings about the fold as a tool for thinking and structure the analysis around the four folds of subjectivation described above.

3. Research Methods

The study takes its point of departure from the visual art portfolio of a student from an elective university course in visual arts education. The course was 30 ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) and ran during one semester in 2018. There were 23 students with different experiences, backgrounds, and ages. Author 1 was both researcher and teacher in this context.

The students received an assignment called Place—doing visual research, which consisted of a series of missions in relation to a selected place. The first mission involved choosing a place that the student had a personal relation to and investigating it visually through drawing, photographing, collecting found objects, observing, and writing about the place. In this way, they could both use the methods for different visual art skills and strategies for training the effects of different exploratory tools, including their own body's movements in and between various environments and visual art materials. The students investigated the selected place physically and materially on location, exploring questions such as “What humans/animals/devices (machines?) move around here?” and “Who do you become at this place/location?”. Furthermore, the students were instructed to investigate the place as archaeologists or crime detectives, organising a display with found objects from the place, then arranging, and photographing them. The last task involved analysing and locating discourses, as in ways of looking at the place, and then challenging the dominant ways of seeing the place by creating antitype or atypical images of it, challenging dominant ways of seeing. Each student presented their visual and material explorations in a digital portfolio. We selected the portfolio of Ester as an example of a student's exploration of and experimentation with the selected place through an aesthetic learning process. The student Ester (a pseudonym) is a preschool teacher who wished to study visual arts education to work as an atelierista at the Reggio Emilia preschool, where she was employed at the time. The role of an atelierista within the Reggio Emilia pedagogical framework involves doing explorative studio artwork with children in collaboration with the preschool staff and the local milieu.

The empirical example articulates the unfolding of an aesthetic learning process as a visual investigation. In this case, a story of a place is created as it is told, which relates to a visual performative ethnography [26]. The performativity in visual research has to do with acting and making; it involves recognising the gap between what happens continuously in the present, and what possible events might be actualised. The investigating method of our research partly coincides with Ester's explorations of Bureplatsen; it is about starting a process, and then being open and sensitive to what emerges, following hunches and experimenting as the investigation takes form. Our method of analysis entails simultaneously folding and unfolding the empirical material. The key concept of the fold, [25] works as a differentiating principle. Folding, unfolding, and differentiating has to do with making connections rather than separating and displaying and exploring the continuous fluctuation from one variation to another. Instead of considering learning as merely development or progress, the concept of fold displaces a process to a task, taking new forms when differentiation appears as folding. According to Deleuze, learning “takes place not in the relation between a representation and an action (representation of the Same) but in the relation between a sign and a response (encounter with the Other)” [27] (p. 22). Deleuze gives us an example of how learning is embodied, rather than an imitation: “The movement of the swimmer does not resemble that of the wave, in particular, the

movement of the swimming instructor which we reproduce on the sand bear no relation to the movement of the wave, which we learn to deal with only by grasping the former in practice as signs" (p. 27).

Working with folding and unfolding as a method of analyses, we consider dual thinking (e.g., subject and object or theory and practice) as interwoven, as different sides of the same pleat, which is its performative simultaneity [14,27].

4. Results and Analysis

Through her portfolio, a sensitive aesthetic learning process unfolds as Ester investigates the place, Bureplatsen, located outside the city of Sundsvall in Sweden. The name Bure comes from Nordic mythology where Bure is an ancient creature and the father of the gods in this mythology.

4.1. Unfolding the Location Bureplatsen—Material Aspects of the Place

This place is dominated by an artwork, a large concrete disc placed on the grass, as seen in Figure 1. The disc is 75 × 75 metre and is slightly tilted. The artwork was installed by landscape artists Pettersson and Olofgörs in 2004



Figure 1. Bureplatsen, Ester's choice of place to investigate.

Ester writes that this place has historical and mythological significance. A tale from the 14th century talks about the cow Ödhumbla who licked a mountain and thereby created the giant Bure. Later, in the 17th century, tales were written about the northern hero Fale Bure who saved the king's son from dying with great bravery. In modern times, this place was used illegally as a dumping ground. To prevent this, landscape artists were invited to restore the place and connect it with the nature trails nearby. The large concrete disc is slightly tilted, and the place is used for concerts, the annual Bure festival, school activities, and even weddings.

Ester examines the surroundings visually and finds traces of humans in the form of graffiti tags, garbage, and stains from candles on the surface of the disc [Figures 2–4]. There are black tire marks on the disc—traces of a vehicle that must have been driven roughly around the disc, leaving rubber marks on it.



Figure 2. Graffiti tags on the side of the disc, traces of human expression and affect.



Figure 3. Assembly of found objects, traces of humans eating, drinking, and smoking.



Figure 4. Tire marks on the disc, traces of vehicles.

Ester writes:

“This place looks very bare, there is a lot of wind and skies, it smells like air. The more I investigate it, the more signs of human activity I find. The human activities seem to be nocturnal since I find a lot of outdoor torches and candles. The place is stunningly beautiful; I see the forest, the valley, and the creek Selångersån. I feel respect for this place, but I don’t feel welcome here . . . When I am on this location, I feel like an intruder, and I worry that I am doing something wrong, that I am not supposed to be here.”

The first fold of subjectivity is material; the folding of the body and its surrounding. Bureplatsen consists of grass and plants, mountains and trees, the sky, the concrete disc/artwork, and garbage. Through her bodily perceptions, Ester describes ambiguous feelings of both respect and that of being an intruder; she feels that her presence here is not legitimate. So, the folding of the body and the surroundings does not happen without discomfort; it is accompanied by an experience of the body as being out of place or

trespassing. It seems that the vastness of the place makes Ester feel unwelcome. Perhaps it is the open space and the roughness of the concrete disc that makes Ester somewhat uncomfortable investigating Bureplatsen. It might also be that she is the only human present there, which makes her feel like she is intruding upon nature and animal life. The folding of the body and its surroundings seems to involve an element of displacement and discomfort. Additionally, profound respect for art might make Ester feel as if she is intruding upon the sanctity of the place.

4.2. *Folding the Relations between Forces*

Through repeated visits to Bureplatsen during the semester, Ester unfolds a series of variations by photographing the place and editing one image digitally. Here, she experiments with the thought of social sustainability and ethical questions about marginalisation [Figures 5 and 6]. She writes:



Figure 5. Photomontage of a homeless person on the centre of the disc.



Figure 6. Pairs of shoes placed on the disc.

“I want to use the location for making visible the marginalised persons in society. I think about questions like who fits in here and who doesn’t feel welcome here. I chose to make a photo montage with a homeless person on the disc. I chose a panoramic view of the landscape to emphasise the homeless person’s right to nature and that which is beautiful.”

She continues by placing different pairs of shoes on the disc.

Upon analysis, it seems that the photograph includes persons that are not visible or welcome here. The shoes mark the absence of people instead of their presence. Ester is folding in the persons that are not here or do not feel that they belong here.

By experimenting with the camera and adding different elements onto the artwork and into the landscape, Ester is folding in social aspects of this place, the disc, and the nature trails nearby. She is asking questions about who this art is for and who is the expected viewer of the landscape. She focuses on questions of care for those who do not fit in or occupy a marginalised position in society. The cold, clear, and frozen surroundings enhance the affective aspects of not belonging. Here, Ester brings in the forces of power and hierarchy in society, folding a larger context of social conflicts into Bureplatsen. Through difference and repetition in her visual work, Ester slowly changes her relation to Bureplatsen. Furthermore, the way we (as researchers) look at this place is also changed by Ester's investigations. Through her visual explorations, she refolds her relation to this place and renegotiates it; she writes that she would like this place to become a place for reflection and care, a place where one can feel gratitude towards life and a sense of connection with nature.

4.3. *The Fold of Knowledge; Nature and Culture*

Ester becomes aware of how humans always seem to be at the centre of the world, even in nature. Hence, she starts working digitally with versions of the same photograph of Bureplatsen. Here, animals enter the scene, invade the artwork, and occupy the central position in this place [Figure 7]. She thereby attempts to challenge the human domination of this place.



Figure 7. Photomontage of animal invasion of the disc.

Ester writes:

“With these images I want to challenge the image of this place by focusing on animals. What was the animal life here before the place became an official work of art, and where are they now?”

It is unclear which creature has invaded the disc; but more importantly, these animals invade and overflow the disc. The fold of knowledge in relation to Ester and this place is here articulated as an awareness of anthropocentrism. This folding brings Ester to questions of power relations between art and nature and the planet. She blurs these generally separate categories, folding them together in her visual investigation and conceptualisation. This fold makes visible how knowledge is constructed by categories though there are in fact

no sharp separating lines between areas of knowledge [27]. Rather, the division of, for example, school subjects, gives us an illusion of rationality and exactness.

4.4. *The Fold of the Outside, the End, and New Beginnings*

Ester constructs a small visual narrative that entails images of what Bureplatsen might have looked like before humans were present on the planet and what it looks like now. Finally, she creates dystopic images of the future, where animals take over, an ice age approaches, and ultimately, darkness falls, and all life comes to an end [Figure 8].



Figure 8. The end of the world and new hopes.

Ester reflects on the pedagogical potential of the assignment about investigating a place:

“By working with a place in this manner, I can also see how I could work with students and a place according to the curriculum while caring about the environment. When the students create a relation to a place, they will also start caring about it. “

The fourth fold is the fold of the outside itself—the fold concerning the limits of life and death. Ester stages a visual narrative about the world and the end of the planet. This dystopic narrative folds back into Ester’s professional role as a pedagogue and heightens her awareness of her potential to make a difference as a teacher in the future. She realises that she can use this experience to make her students aware of current environmental issues and emphasise the need for balancing sustainability with equality. Ester suggests creating relations as a means for caring about nature and each other.

5. Discussion—An Education That Has Yet to Be Invented

Addressing the issue of neoliberal forces permeating the educational system, it seems that the struggle for access to difference, variation, and metamorphosis is more crucial now than ever. Visual arts have great potential to promote access to such difference and variation through the folding of sustainable thinking socially, economically, and environmentally. A conclusion from this study is that the more schools become end-product driven and produce standardised education and stereotyped subjects, the more art education must be inserted in it, to strive for the right to subjectivation and differentiation.

As shown in the student’s visual study, it is by variations over time, by difference and repetition that change is achieved. The visual investigation and learning process demonstrated here offer access to the four folds of subjectivation and emphasise the right of access to difference, variation, and metamorphosis. What is changing here is not only the subjectivation of Ester but also the location of Bureplatsen and the way we as authors might

rethink and refold aesthetic learning processes into the current curricula. Our conception of this place changes from a beautiful view of landscape scenery, into the uncomfortable view that concerns environmental sustainability and ethical questions about social injustice. In this way, the place, Bureplatsen, now looks back at us, questioning our privileged positions. Simultaneously experiencing the practices of visual artist, investigator, and pedagogue can disrupt the arbitrary boundaries of fixed disciplinary knowledge [28] as Ester carries out the assignment in unexpected ways. The process that emerges in Ester's portfolio is both experimental and experiential. It is by physically being at the place and investigating it that something starts to change and transform. In other words, the encounters between material, visual, digital, textual, social, ethical, and philosophical matters, objects, and issues fold together and bring about modification, inflection, and alteration. It is by physical events and techniques that something is created. Whether we call it learning or not the effect is new ways of being and acting in the world, even if in minor steps. This suggests that a new concept for learning processes should entail moving outside the classroom and, if possible, outside the institution of school. The analysis shows that Ester's portfolio is an actualisation or materialisation of complex internal and external forces that are folded together by creating a repetitive series of images with variations.

Returning to the question of aesthetic learning processes, we ask ourselves why we want to hold on to this concept so much and not fully accept the current formulation in the curricula about aesthetic working techniques. The principle of folding, unfolding, and refolding helps us; there is no beginning and no end, a movement brings us back to that which was lost in the curricula and is re-found as aesthetic working techniques, a confrontation that activates us and makes us productive. A structured complexity emerges from the folding processes of analysing Ester's portfolio. Through this investigation, we can make visible what it means to have lost something important. Despite this loss, which we can mourn, we still encounter the complexity and the chaotic events in the student's confrontation with unfamiliar signs, ideas, and concepts, which activates our memories and previous learning that folds back and makes refolding possible. In visual arts education, subjectivation and materiality are intertwined. Whether we learn something or not, art is created by applying ideas and techniques. Aesthetic working techniques, for example knowing how to digitally edit photographs, are also necessary for explorative aesthetic learning processes. Refolding aesthetic learning processes is an act of transformation and metamorphosis; it is to reinvent something. Thereby, it is in the student's learning acts within evolving sets of tasks that we are finally able to disassemble our pedagogical ideals. We find that we have folded together with our ideals about aesthetic learning processes, and the end-product-driven focus in the Swedish curricula. A transformation has occurred in the confrontation between our thoughts, the inside, and the ongoing changes in education politics, the outside. The transformation happens in the confrontation between outside and inside, releasing something from both. Ultimately, the interior and the exterior are part of the same pleat [25].

Change unfolds slowly through difference and repetition, folding in the new with the old. New lines of thought actualise and are refolded in this process. Folding and unfolding the aesthetic learning process of a student has made us aware of our own ideals and the affective moments of grief and loss at having to disassemble them. The difference and repetition in the student's visual learning process also showed us how to reassemble new learning processes, negotiating aspects of sustainability and an ethics of care in relation to environmental and social questions. Folding one thought into another has meant folding the forces from "outside" into our own thoughts and transforming them.

6. Conclusions—Learning in the Folds

Living within the folds and striving for each student's right to difference, variation, and metamorphosis suggests that we as educators need to make a move towards steering documents at a higher level. For example, the Global Goals and Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development [29] suggests three dimensions of sustainable development—economic,

social, and environmental. Our analysis of Ester's visual art portfolio implies that the assignment facilitates connecting to other fields of knowledge, traversing several subjects as well as personal and social aspects. Thus, we find that these three aspects can easily be included within art education through a learning process which we name learning in the folds.

Our suggestion for education yet to come is a strategy for learning in the folds, where educators are called upon to prepare students for an uncertain future that demands a creative imagination, an ethical standpoint for negotiating the curriculum in line with differentiation. Furthermore, forming, inventing, and fabricating new concepts and art is of vital importance. Learning in the folds proposes folding in the issues that affect the students, that are emergent and prevailing in our time and for the future. Drawing on the writings of Hickey-Moody [30], we advocate an affective pedagogy, which entails a socially engaged art practice, or a cultural pedagogy, for encouraging change in community and culture. This is done by making interventions in cultural and discursive logics, where art can be a resource for students to differentiate social issues and communicate complex ideas [1].

In this research, we have noted that by combining methods, such as using both textual and visual material for analysis, the research process becomes subject to metamorphosis in that it disturbs and interrupts ways of knowing that we previously took for granted. The ontological philosophy of Deleuze and the concept of the fold have challenged our assumptions and beliefs about aesthetic learning processes and thereby created a necessary rift in the umbrella of our common sense.

At the end of Deleuze's book on Foucault [14] he asks these questions: "What can I do, what power can I claim and what resistances may I encounter? What can I be, with what folds can I surround myself or how can I produce myself as a subject?" (p. 94). While being aware of knowledge, power, and the self in educational situations, we want to contribute to the existing discourse with some guiding questions in line with the quotation. Learning in the folds comprises of questions such as the following:

- How to carefully fold time into learning processes since differentiation and variation happen over time?
- How to carefully fold place into the learning process to encounter real events and avoid the expected processes of the already known?
- How to fold in movement by blurring the school subjects and work with interdisciplinary and real-life projects?
- How to carefully fold the body and the senses in learning situations, thus creating effective learning situations?
- How to fold combinations of working methods to examine and disturb habitual ways of thinking?
- How to work with difference and repetition as a creative method to fold, unfold, and actualise/materialise the subject of learning, which creates new ideas and questions?

Our suggestions about learning in the fold should be regarded as an education that has to be continuously invented and reinvented for a people yet to come. In other words, it is a strategy always ready to begin, already in the midst of learning events, which is, in movement, open and transformative.

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