

Saimaa University of Applied Sciences
Fine Arts /Imatra
Master's Degree programme in Fine Arts

Yasushi Koyama

Art for Children project
- Contemporary public sphere and new public art -

Master's Thesis 2016

Abstract

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Instructor: Denise Ziegler, Doctor of Fine Arts

The purpose of this thesis is to research for the possibility of Art for Children project as a new public art project in the contemporary public sphere. This thesis is written using the art theories of Public Sphere, Art Activism, Social Sculpture, public art and the examples from my "Art for Children project". In addition I will analyze my art of Art for Children project with three elements - material, form and color by comparing with the art of Yoshitomo Nara, Katja Tukiainen, Kim Simonsson and Pasi Karjula.

Key words

Public sphere, Jürgen Habermas, Counter-public, Agonistic public sphere, Virtual public sphere, Adult public sphere, Joseph Beuys, Boris Groys, Art activism, Social Sculpture, New genre public art, Public art, Interactive art, Sustainable art, Well-being art, Pasi Karjula, Yoshitomo Nara, Katja Tukiainen, Kim Simonsson, Art for Children project, Wood sculpture, Animal sculpture, Wood, Japanese forest, Finnish forest, Cute, Cuteness, Sense of touch, Social inclusion

Content

1. Introduction.....	4
2. Contemporary public sphere	5
2.1 Public sphere	5
2.2. Territory of public sphere.....	5
2.3. Jürgen Habermas’s public sphere.....	5
2.4. Critiques of Jürgen Habermas’s public sphere.....	6
2.4.1. Bourgeois public sphere.....	6
2.4.2. Counter-public	7
2.4.3. Agonistic public sphere	7
2.4.4. Virtual public sphere	7
2.4.5. Adult public sphere.....	8
2.5. Art for Children project in public sphere	9
3. Social art project	10
3.1. Art for Children project as social art project	10
3.2. Social art project on art theories	10
-Comparison of Social Sculpture and Art Activism-	
3.3. What is Social Sculpture?	13
3.4. Why Social Sculpture?	14
4. New public art.....	15
4.1. Social Sculpture as public art.....	15
4.2. New genre public art	15
4.3. Interactive public art	15
4.4. Sustainable art	16
4.5. Well-being art	16
5. Art for Children project	17
5.1. What is the Art for Children project?	17
5.2. Lastenlinna art project 2012.....	17
5.3. Art project in Artist residency SERDE 2013	18
5.4. Art for Children project 2014	18
5.5. Art for Children project 2015	19
6. Material, Form and Color	20
6.1. Material.....	20
6.2. Form.....	21
6.3. Color.....	24
7. Summery.....	26
Image	27
Reference.....	30

1. Introduction

Oxfam says “Richest 62 people as wealthy as half of world's population” in its economic report 2015.¹ The rich have become richer, the poor have become poorer and the middle class is declining in the contemporary global situation. Trickle-down economics doesn't function any more as Tomas Pikety says and the Panama papers show. In this era what can artists do for transformation of the global situation?

This situation of economic separation is the same in art and the cultural field. I see a difference between high art people and culturally weak people such as children, the counter-public, old people, handicapped etc. Normally artists make arts mainly for high art people, art critics, art historians, influential artists, the richer and art authorities. Just as the trickle-down effect doesn't happen in society in general, the trickle-down effect doesn't happen well in art and the cultural field either. This means that cultural benefit and influence don't reach culturally weak people enough when artists make art just for high art people.

As an artist I am willing to make art mainly for culturally weak people and ordinary people to encourage social inclusion in the cultural field to prevent from cultural separation. Concretely I have made Art for Children project recently. I believe that this Art for Children project is one way towards transformation in the contemporary global situation. In the thesis I research for the possibility of Art for Children project as a new public art project in the contemporary public sphere.

2. Contemporary public sphere

2.1. Public sphere

Public sphere is the sociological term from a German word “*Öffentlichkeit*“. It means an area in social life where individuals can come together to freely discuss and identify societal problems, and through that discussion influence political action. It is almost the same as “public space” to express and to discuss social problem and political action.

2.2. Territory of the public sphere

Public sphere is fundamentally fragmented. It is based on practice and the relationship with audience. Elements of public sphere are in Media, Parliament, Politics, Newspaper, Letters etc.²

2.3. Jürgen Habermas’s public sphere

Jürgen Habermas is a German sociologist,^{Image 1} In 1962 when he was a student of the Frankfurt School of Social Research that advanced a Marxist critique of western capitalism, he wrote down the book “*The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*”.^{Image 2} It is one of the most influential works in contemporary German philosophy and political science and has been an important contribution to modern understanding of democracy. The following is a content from the book.

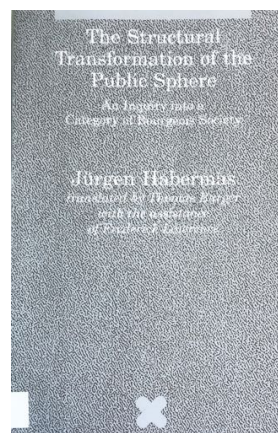
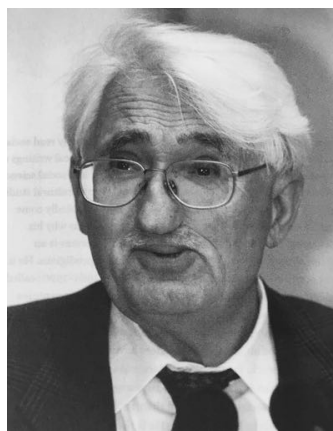


Image 1 (left): Jürgen Habermas

Image 2 (right): The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere

A public sphere began to emerge in the 18th C. through the growth of coffee houses, literary and other societies, voluntary associations, and the growth of the press. Jürgen Habermas noted that the public sphere was originally coextensive with public authority,³ while the private sphere composed civil society in the narrower area, that is to say, the area of commodity exchange and of social labor.⁴ So the sphere of public authority dealt with the state or area of the police and the ruling class.⁴ The real public sphere, in a political sense, arose at that time from within the private area, specifically in connection with literary activities in the world of letters.⁵ This new public sphere spanned the public and the private areas. And public opinion of public sphere got in touch with the needs of society.⁶ This public sphere is conceptually a space for the production and circulation of public discussion that can be basically critical about the state. So the public sphere is distinct from the official economy. It is a theater for debating and considering rather than for buying and selling.⁷ The success of the public sphere depends upon the extent of access (as close to universal as possible), the degree of autonomy (the citizens must be free of coercion), the rejection of hierarchy (each might participate on an equal footing), the rule of law (particularly the subordination of the state) and the quality of participation (the common commitment to the ways of logic).⁸

2.4. Critiques of Jürgen Habermas's public sphere

2.4.1. Bourgeois public sphere

In reality only property owners can speak in a rational way beyond themselves. German-born American political theorist Hannah Arendt wrote down about Jürgen Habermas's public sphere: "How can you actually speak beyond yourself, beyond your living conditions effectively if you are not independent in an economic sense".⁹ Two Marxist theorists, a German filmmaker Alexander Kluge and a German sociologist Oskar Negt said that we do not all have equal access to speech in this bourgeois public space.¹⁰

2.4.2. Counter-public

American theorist Michael Warner published a book "Publics and Counter-Publics".¹¹, Image 3 Counter-publics are a minor or even subordinate character such as homosexuals and feminists in the dominant public sphere. For example a public park is made for a specific type of families such as heterosexual families. It is not for counter-publics normally. Though the public should include many kinds of people, Habermas's public sphere does not include people who are counter-publics.¹²

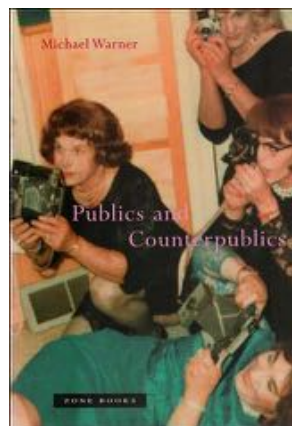


Image 3 Publics and Counter-Publics

2.4.3. Agonistic public sphere

Chantal Mouffe is a Belgian political theorist who is famous for post-marxist political inquiry drawing on Italian Marxist theoretician Antonio Gramsci. In her text on the agonistic public sphere she criticizes Habermas for his separation between the private and the public. She insists that historically there are many cases where private became public.¹³

2.4.4. Virtual public sphere

There has been an academic debate about how social media impacts the public sphere. The sociologists Brian Loader and Dan Mercea give an overview of this discussion. They argue that social media such as Twitter, Google, Yahoo, Facebook and YouTube offers increasing opportunities for political communication and enable democratic capacities for political discussion within the virtual public

sphere. But the two authors also point out that social media's dominant usages are entertainment, consumerism and content sharing among friends.¹⁴

2.4.5. Adult public sphere

Politically speaking, children can't vote. They don't have any political power though they are supported by the family, community, society and government. How much of Habermas's public sphere has any thought about children? In my opinion the public means everybody. Everybody includes children. At the moment democracy is not perfect especially in taking the opinions of children and the younger generation to society and the government. This probably happens because of the economic difference between young and old, the population gap between them and the voting percentage of them.

Those differences have an influence on every social service including the design of public space. Because a public space has been created by adults mainly for adults and therefore adults decide the design of public space without thinking of children's opinions.

I think that it is important for people to recognize the meaning of "Public" again. And we should design public sphere not only for adults but also for children.

2.5. "Art for children project" in public sphere

I made my "Art for Children project". At first I made a large animal wood sculpture (around 160 x 90 x 70 cm) for children to touch and hug. And then I showed it to the public in an art gallery. In the end I donated it to children's public place. I have already made these projects several times and donated art sculptures for Children's hospital Lastenlinna in Helsinki, Helsinki Rudolf Steiner School etc. The purpose of the project is for children to get the opportunity to touch art. I had the experience of touching art sculptures in the Open Air museums of sculptures in Japan in my childhood. It was very good experience for me to touch the art directly without distance. Another purpose of the project is also to challenge for the usual idea of "public art" from the viewpoint of children in the contemporary period and also to make public art in the next period. If public art is not for children but only for adults (for men and women), it is not public art but just art for adults.

I made my Art for Children project as a public art project. In my opinion historically public art was started by ancient people as Paleolithic cave paintings such as in Lascaux, France or in Altamira, Spain. I think those cave paintings were for everyone. It means that not only men & women but also children could understand them. But from the end of middle age to the modern period public art was made mainly for men. At that time there were many sculptures of soldiers, revolution, victory etc. Naked women were also often sculpted. In the contemporary period public art started to take care of woman's viewpoint based on the idea of gender and feminism. Nowadays sculptures of naked women are not made so often. Modern sculptures especially abstract sculptures are made more. But do children understand those abstract sculptures? Of course some children can feel something and like them. But I think that it is difficult for most of children to understand those abstract sculptures. So I think in the next period public art should take care of children's viewpoint. It is one of the reasons that I make my Art for Children project in public sphere.

3. Social art project

3.1. Art for Children project as social art project

The following is a part of my press release for the exhibition in Malmitalo gallery, Helsinki 21.10-14.11.2015.

"I am interested in the distance between contemporary art and people. I think that there is the big gulf between them. German contemporary artist & sculptor Joseph Beuys said "Everyone is an artist" and made art activity for society. I empathize with him and agree with his idea of "Art for society". I have made art exhibitions in old people house, children's department in library etc. Recently I have made "Art for Children project".

3.2. Social art project on art theories

– Comparison of Social Sculpture and Art Activism –



Image 4 Joseph Beuys

Joseph Beuys was a German sculptor, Fluxus, happening and performance artist.^{Image 4} His extensive work is grounded in concepts of humanism, social philosophy and anthroposophy. Beuys created the term "Social Sculpture" to illustrate his idea of art's potential to transform society. His famous slogan "Everyone is an artist" was not meant to suggest that all people should or could be creators of traditional artworks. Rather, he meant that we should not see creativity as the special realm of artists, but that everyone should apply creative thinking in their own area of specialization whether it would be law, agriculture, physics, education, homemaking, or the fine arts. His another slogans, "Art = Capital" or "Creativity = Capital," which Beuys often used in his artworks, could

be understood as shorthand notations of his ideas. Those slogans suggest that creativity and art are the new currency for the transformation of society that he envisioned. He said "The greater a person's creativity is, the greater the national income is, the greater the ability is to do things so that they become as productive and effective as possible for everyone."¹⁵

An art critic Boris Groys, well known by art theories, in his essay "On Art Activism" criticized Joseph Beuys saying that "the attempt by Beuys to base social and economic equality on equality between artistic and nonartistic activity does not really function."^{Image 5} He said that's because human capital is based on "unequal distribution of natural gift".¹⁶



Image 5 Boris Groys

I disagree with his writing about Joseph Beuys because Joseph Beuys accomplished a lot of social projects such as Forest conservation activities (1972), creating Free International University (1974), and 7,000 oak trees (1982) based on his concept "Social Sculpture". Although Joseph Beuys wasn't successful politically especially in the election, he made the German Green party. The party is still active in 2016. The German Green party was a member of ruling party with Social Democratic party between 1998 and 2005 and also contributed to the creation of the European Green party. They influenced a lot of German and European environmental policies in the public sphere. I am not sure if it is proper for Boris Groys to say "does not really function". For me Joseph Beuys's activity has been functional enough. I think that Boris Groys's viewpoint is a little narrow. Actually Boris Groys focused on just Beuys's "human capital" and didn't care about a lot of successful social projects based on the most important Beuys's concept "Social Sculpture".

In the contemporary world there has been a new movement of "Social Sculpture" since The Occupy Wall Street demonstration started on 17.9.2011. Thousands of people are occupying public spaces around the world to change the idea of capitalism and to reform the conditions of socio-political and economical life. A "Beuysian" interpretation of Occupy Wall Street sees the demonstrations as the direct action to invert the top-down hierarchy of contemporary global capitalism.¹⁷

Joseph Beuys was a person who acted. But Boris Groys is a person who writes and doesn't act. Joseph Beuys made social activity based on his concept "Social Sculpture" when he was alive. On the other hand Boris Groys doesn't make any socio-political action based on the concept "Art Activism" though he has curated many exhibitions and many other artists have made activities based on Art Activism. He wrote his articles mainly for high art people such as influential artists, art critics, art historians and art authorities but not for ordinary people. Nowadays it is quite hopeless to expect the trickle-down effect of art and cultural critiques compared with 70s-90s because of the big cultural and economical difference between the upper class and the declining middle class. Briefly it is very difficult for high art people to include ordinary people into Groys's theory. It means that Groys's theory doesn't empower ordinary people well enough to reform the global situation, even if his theory is good.

Of course Art activism has been one key element of social protest from the art field to the socio-political field in the contemporary world. Art activism integrates the use of public space to examine socio-political issues and to encourage community and public participation in social change. The aim is to realize social change by cooperating with ordinary people to bring about participation in dialogue, to raise consciousness and to empower individuals and communities. Actually I admire some Art Activists such as a Chinese contemporary artist Ai Weiwei. And I agree with the ideas that art should be more functional in the society and that art should be used as a design for social change.

But Art Activism wouldn't be a good way to express the Art for Children project because although the purpose of social change would be similar for both activities, the expressions of these activities would be different. The expression of Art

Activism includes strong political protest and an aggressive message. On the other hand the expression of the Art for Children project does not have a strong political protest but rather it has social awareness, social inclusion and a peaceful message. The way of my Art for Children project should be a more peaceful activity for children, family and the public.

So I think that Art Activism is not a way to express my Art for Children project. I prefer the social art project of Social Sculpture rather than Art Activism.

3.3. What is Social Sculpture?

Social Sculpture is a concept used by Joseph Beuys. Social Sculpture is not a sculpture that a normal sculptor makes, but it is the social art activities to try to create human society by using the various social art projects. The concept is based on his idea "everything is art". In the concept "Social Sculpture" a social art activity created by any citizen is considered as a sculpture.¹⁸ He said "A Social organism as a work of art... Every human being is an artist". He also said "art that no longer refers solely to the modern art world, to the artist, but comprehends a notion of art relating to everyone and to the very question and problem of the social organism in which people live."¹⁹

One of the most well known projects of Social Sculpture is "7000 Oaks – City Forestation Instead of City Administration" (German: 7000 Eichen – Stadtverwaltung statt Stadtverwaltung).^{Image 6} It was first publicly presented in 1982 at the documenta 7.²⁰



Image 6 "7000 oaks" in documenta 7 in 1982 in Kassel, Germany

Beuys planted 7,000 oak trees over several years with the help of volunteers in Kassel city in Germany, each with an accompanying basalt stone.²¹ The project has become an important part of Kassel's cityscape nowadays though at first the project was controversial.

3.4. Why Social Sculpture?

Joseph Beuys felt unhappy that the art had belonged only to some groups of art lovers in 1960-70s. So he tried to drag art into the social fields of politics, the economy and the environment. And he wanted people to get involved in art through those social fields and thought that art is related to everyone and to everyone's life.

In contemporary art, conceptual art has been accepted since Marcel Duchamp exhibited a ready-made urinal as an artwork "Fountain" in 1917. He has been called the father of conceptual art. In his last years he didn't show any of his artworks and continued to keep silence.

In 1964 Joseph Beuys criticized Marcel Duchamp strongly as "The Silence of Marcel Duchamp is overrated".²² Even though Beuys admitted Duchamp's innovation in contemporary art, he insisted that Duchamp is the very person who misled art into somewhere difficult and apart from ordinary people. Beuys tried to revive art as a "useful skill to live for everyone" that is the original meaning of art.²³ In his trial and also in the influence of Rudolf Steiner's idea of social three-folding the concept "Social Sculpture" was born. He thought that art was related to everyone's social life and that everyone's creativity was related to one's working life.

4. New public art

4.1. Social sculpture as new public art

Beuys made the social art project of “7000 Oaks” (1982-87) with help from participants as volunteers. In the concept of Social Sculpture his social art project included a lot of participants in a public space. The participants were ordinary citizens. They joined in his social art project. Though the project was controversial at first, thanks to the existence of the participants and the contribution to environment the project became successful in the end. The concept “Social Sculpture” showed that art could be a process rather than a product and could include social exchanges. It was realized in the “new genre public art”. New genre public art evolved in 1960s – 70s and gained currency in the 80s.²⁴

4.2. New Genre public art

In the 1990s, there was the clear differentiation between these new practices and previous forms of artistic presence in the public space. One goal of new genre public art was the most famously articulated by Suzanne Lacy. She defined it as “socially engaged, interactive art for diverse audiences”.²⁵ In this way public art functions as a social intervention. The currency of new genre public art includes contextual art, relational art, participatory art, dialogic art, community-based art and activist art.

4.3. Interactive public art

In the 2000s some forms of public art were designed to encourage an audience to participate in a hands-on way. For example Ontario Science Centre has a public fountain sculpture that is also a musical instrument (hydraulophone).²⁶ All the members of the public including children can play it at any time in 24 hours. The interaction between public art and people is becoming important for contemporary public art. This kind of interactive public art always has a hands-on way with the communication being through not only the sense of sight but also the sense of touch, the sense of smell or the auditory sense.

4.4. Sustainable art

After the 2000s sustainable art has been promoted as an art term that can be distinguished from environmental art and is in harmony with the key principles of sustainability, which include ecology, social justice, non-violence and grass-roots democracy. Sustainable art is a wider concept than environmental art, which is primarily focussed on curing ecological problems, recycling, and the healing of nature. Contemporary artists increasingly take on the role of alternative knowledge producer by producing, mediating, exchanging alternative models and dealing with issues of culture and politics.²⁷

4.5. Well-being art

Since 2010 well-being art is becoming popular in hospitals, living areas and parks through a Percent-for-art program where one percent of new building project cost should be used for public art. Well-being art is effective in giving people better mental, emotional and spiritual well being, more comfortable living quality, a safer environment, reduction of violence, increased living satisfaction and increased communication. In the hospital along with medicine and care, there is increasing evidence that the arts can significantly improve health and wellbeing as well as prevent illness.²⁸ In Finland the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture initiated “Art and Culture for Well-being” which was an action programme in 2010 - 2014. The aim of the programme was to promote health and Well-being through art and to strengthen social inclusion for all the individuals, communities and societies.²⁹

5. Art for Children project

5.1. What is the Art for Children project?

I aim for my "Art for Children project" to be one of the most kind and peaceful art projects for humans in the world. I make art for children to understand what it is, to feel art with the sense of touch and to give happiness to them. Especially I cherish the sense of touch in a hands-on way. So my Art for Children project has the feature of interactive public art. And the purpose of the project is for children to touch and hug. Children are participants to create the new environment with a large animal sculpture through the interaction of touching, hugging and seeing. Actually the project is not only for children but also for parents, nurses, doctors, teachers, cultural directors, art teachers etc who are related to the children's public space. So I hope they also will become participants of the project with children. In addition the Art for Children project contains the feature of well-being art in Children's hospital, schools and public parks. I will show those features of my "Art for Children project" by using concrete examples.

5.2. Lastenlinna art project 2012



Image 7 Big Panda in Lastenlinna in 2012

The idea of "Art for Children project" came from my large sculpture "Big Panda" that I donated to Lastenlinna in 2012.^{Image 7} One of my large works "Big Panda" is more than 1 meter high and weighs more than 100 kg. To complete the work I carefully carved into a large tree. "Big Panda", with his hands up to the sky, was donated to "Lastenlinna", the Hospital for Children in Helsinki, where it has since delighted visiting children. One nurse commented that "We have been

very happy with Big Panda, it has given us and our little patients and their parents a lot of happiness every day with his open arms!"

5.3. Art project in Artist residency SERDE 2013



Image 8 Panda mom & baby in Aizpute, Latvia in 2013

In 2013 I made a work of public art in a park in Aizpute, Latvia. The large work "Panda Mom & Baby" is 1.5 meters high and weighs about 400 kg.^{Image 8} The panda mom, holding on her baby tightly, gives kind and warm feelings to everybody. It was made for Aizpute city in the granted project at the SERDE artist in residence program in Latvia. The work "Panda mom & baby" is placed in the park at the heart of Aizpute city. On 21.6.2013 we had a small opening ceremony of it with the Mayor, citizens and some children. I got many bunches of flowers from them. It was a very nice moment!

5.4. Art for Children project 2014

In 2014 I made Art for Children project 2014. I made 3 animal wood sculptures for children to be able to touch & hug. Then I showed them in my exhibition in Galleria Jangva in Helsinki, Finland. After the exhibition I donated these works to children's hospital Lastenlinna in Christmas 2014 as Christmas gifts to bring children happiness and joy. Those animal sculptures are besides the previous work "Big Panda".

5.5. Art for Children project 2015

In 2015 I made Art for children project 2015. I made my largest wood sculpture “Panda mom & child” for children to be able to touch and hug. It is 1.6m high and about 400 kg weight. After the exhibition in MUU Kaapeli gallery and Malmitalo gallery in Helsinki, I donated it to Helsinki Rudolf Steiner School in November 2015.^{Image 9} On 25.11.2015 the school had a small opening party for the sculpture to which I was invited. Teachers told me that not only children but also teachers like the artwork. I enjoyed sharing time with children and teachers in front of “Panda mom and baby”.^{Image 10} Later one teacher gave me the comment “the children are very much enjoying the Panda and it is hugged many times every day!”



Image 9 (left) : “Panda mom & child” with a girl in 2015

Image 10 (right) : “Panda mom & child” with school children in 2015

6. Material, Form and Color

I will analyze the artwork of my Art for Children project using the three elements of Material, Form and Color.

6.1. Material

I like to use natural materials to make art. Mainly I use wood to make animal sculptures. I was born in Japan and have been living and working in Finland for 9 years since 2007. I think that one reason that I use wood is connected with cultures of Japan and Finland. In both countries there is a lot of forest area. According to the research of forest area by The World Bank in 2015, the forest area in Finland is 73.1 % of land area and the forest area in Japan is 68.5% of land area.^{Image 11, Image 12} It is much more than other countries because the average of forest area in all the countries is 31.1 % of land area.³⁰ So I feel that both countries have the cultures of wood such as wooden house, wooden furniture, wooden tool, wooden art etc. By comparison France, England & Italy I think that they have cultures of stone such as stone house, stone road, stone tools, stone arts rather than cultures of wood. I think the cultural backgrounds of Japan and Finland have had an influence on my choice of materials.



Image 11 Forest in Finland



Image 12 Forest in Japan

And I also use house paint as a coloring material. It is a strong coloring material that is suitable on wood. A little shiny surface of house paint gives people a new expression of wood sculpture.

6.2. Form

In my method firstly I check the shape of wood and start to draw an animal using a pencil. In my process I follow the wood shape mainly and use the natural shape of the wood basically from the first step of drawing. Secondly I cut wood into the shape of the animal by chain saw. Thirdly I use chisels to carve an animal sculpture.^{Image 13} Though I still keep the shape of animals, I don't mind if it is anatomical or not. I wish to show more expression of warmth of cute animal sculptures from wood.

I will compare my sculptures with sculptures of Pasi Karjula and Kim Simonsson from the viewpoint of form.



Image 13 (left) : Yasushi Koyama 2015, "Panda mom & child (Process)"

Image 14 (right) : Pasi Karjula 1998, "Paha Taikina"

Pasi Karjula (b.1964) is a Finnish wood sculptor and a contemporary artist. He was also my teacher at the wood sculpture course in the bachelor degree programme in Saimaa University of Applied Science in 2009.^{Image 14} In his class he showed us the video of how to make a wooden boat in traditional Finnish way. I think that the video was an archive from the homepage of Seurasaari Open Air museum. He cherished the process of wood carving especially by using axe and the track that a sculptor struggled to carve wood material. His wood sculptures show the strength of nature and also the one of human beings as the result of fighting with wood material by using axe, knife and chisels.³¹ Though the form itself is calm, the surface of wood sculpture tells of human history with wood and Finnish anthropology in the forest culture. My sculpture has a similarity with his works but it is a little different. I use an axe mainly to peel the skin of

wood. I basically use the natural shape of wood but Karjula wouldn't consider the natural shape of the wood carefully. From my viewpoint the natural wood shape is beautiful. So I would like to use it in the design of my wood sculpture. To make the shape I use a chain saw. I have known that many Finnish farmers have made wooden bears using a chainsaw. The way of them would be similar as far as using a chainsaw. But the difference between Finnish farmers and myself is that I use Japanese chisels to carve the sculpture. Many thousands of round carving tracks on the surface express the accumulation of time and the original identification with Japan.



Image 15 Kim Simonsson 2007, "Spitting girl (Predator)"

Kim Simonsson (b.1974) is a Finnish ceramic sculptor and a contemporary artist. In his sculpture there is a certain innocence.^{Image 15} The children and animals that come out of his artistic vision, using materials like ceramics and glass, stoneware glaze among others, reminds us of the toys that we shared our childhood with.³² In addition Japanese Manga visual flatness is compressed out into his three dimensional art sculptures.³³ Kim Simonsson himself said that he is interested in manga figures and in what they look like.³⁴

I saw his art works in the art center Retretti in Finland in 2008. In the form of his sculptures I can find a lot of features of Japanese Manga especially flatness and not so anatomical figure. It is obviously a three dimensional sculpture but reminds me of a kind of illustration or Manga. In his form a sculpture is not only a sculpture but also an image like a manga figure. This kind of paradox between

the flatness and 3D sculpture is observed not only from form but also from color of white on sculpture. I also use black and white color a lot so that monotone of black and white has an influence on the flatness. In addition I imagine that he cherishes the expression of innocence by making non-anatomical sculptures of children, animals and aliens. So my animal sculptures have the following similarities to his sculptures; visual flatness on sculpture, non-anatomical figures and innocence.

On the other hand the warm expression of my sculpture is different from his sculpture. My animal wood sculptures look warmer than his glazed ceramic sculpture. I think that the difference between our sculptures is from the different materials, art concepts and cultural backgrounds. The material of my sculpture is wood and the material of his sculpture is glazed ceramic. It is a fact that wood looks warmer than ceramic. And it is a fact that the real temperature of wood is warmer than glazed ceramic. In addition one specific difference appears on the sculpture's surface. On his glazed ceramic sculpture the surface is smooth, whereas the surface of my wood sculpture has many tracks made by the use of hand chisels on wood material. Those tracks give a warmer expression to people. In comparing the art concepts of his ceramic sculpture and my wood sculpture I think the expressions of innocence are different. I find pure happiness and humor with my animal sculptures but with his girl sculpture I find pure emptiness and inner insanity. In the end the climate of Japan and Finland could be taking effect on the difference of warm expression and cool expression.

6.3. Color

To paint a sculpture with color I was inspired by Nana-series sculptures by French artist Niki de Saint Phalle when I visited Nice, France in 2010. ^{Image 16} Her colored sculptures were vivid and very expressive. Her sculptures were totally different from the non-colored sculptures that I studied in my art school.



Image 16 Niki de Saint Phalle 1970, "Mini Nana qui court"

And actually in my art career I studied Japanese traditional printmaking in Japan and started as a printmaker. After that I started to get interested in textile designs of Marimekko (Maija Isola, Jenni Tuominen, Maija Louekari etc) in Finland. I think that Japanese printmaking and Finnish textile design have had an influence on my coloring.

I will compare my sculptures with the art works of Yoshitomo Nara and Katja Tukiainen from the viewpoint of color.

Yoshitomo Nara (b.1951) is a Japanese painter and contemporary artist who is the best known for his Neo-Pop paintings featuring the innocent motifs. ^{Image 17} Nara's most frequent subjects are wide-eyed, cartoonish children and animals. Nara's cute children and animals remind us of popular culture, particularly manga comics and animation. ³⁵ Though viewers may neglect to consider his evocative imagery in depth, his popular appeal includes the serious social and personal dimensions of his work—a sense of isolation in a hyper-networked society. ³⁶ He uses simple figure and simple clear outline like illustration, Japanese Manga and Anime. My art inherits the simplicity of coloring style and the flatness of his art. In addition my art has the cuteness and innocence as the fea-

ture of simple coloring style. His art has had an influence on many European artists including a Finnish artist Katja Tukiainen.



Image 17 (left) : Yoshitomo Nara 2012 "Miss Spring"

Image 18 (right) : Katja Tukiainen 2010, "Hyvät Hyssykät III / Good Heavens III"

Katja Tukiainen (b.1969) is a Finnish painter and contemporary comic artist. Image 18 She makes paintings, drawings, installations, sculptures and video arts. Tukiainen's work is related to Yoshitomo Nara and Shintaro Miyake, but she is not their follower though alongside with them.³⁷ Her works are recognized by their joyful colors, especially pink and purplish red, sympathetic figures and expressive style. And also her works can deal with themes of sorrow, longing or suffering as well as pleasure, love and peace. She says "My work is my pleasure". In the art of Tukiainen, innocence and fascination are combined.³⁸ She uses simple outlines, expressive painting touch and cute pink color mainly. Her color prompts the viewers to feel cuteness, positive energy and a feeling of pleasure in painting. I think that my color has the same elements that give the expression of cuteness, positive energy and a feeling of pleasure. I remember that one artist said to me "Your sculpture has cuteness and positive energy. So your talent is rare as an artist". When I compare my art with Katja's art, I suddenly recognize that cuteness is the most important element for both arts. Actually in the book "Kawaii Shokogun" (Cute Syndrome), Japanese aesthetist Soichi Masubuchi claims "cute" and "neat" have taken precedence over the former Japanese aesthetics of "beautiful" and "refined".³⁹ As a cultural phenomenon in the contemporary period, cuteness is increasingly accepted in Japan as a part of Japanese culture and national identity. I consider that this phenomenon is accepted also in Finland and in Europe too.

7. Summary

Though the project name is “Art for Children”, I consider that my “Art for Children project” is not only for children but also for the public. The essence of the project is to insist on social awareness that children are participants of the public in society. The project emphasizes that children are important members of the public in the contemporary public sphere. At the same time the public needs “inclusion” in society to prevent from any social exclusion. Social inclusion is more necessary for children, the counter-public, handicapped people, isolated people, old people rather than for adult women and men. I consider the Art for Children project as a public art project for all those people and as the possibility of a new public art project in the contemporary public sphere. Through the research I became aware that the cuteness of my art is an important element in the Art for Children project in the contemporary art context. Cuteness is different from beauty. It has positive energy and spreads into people’s mind smoothly. I feel that cuteness is easier for people to accept than beauty that has strong messages. So I would like to use the cuteness for my public art project along with participation and the sense of touch. In conclusion my Art for Children project has the features of new public art in the contemporary public sphere. My Art for Children projects have already been functional in the public places especially in children’s public places. I hope the project will be continuous and sustainable as a public art project to aid the future transformation of the contemporary global situation.

Image

Image 1

Jürgen Habermas

From the book "HABERMAS –A Very Short Introduction", James Gordon Finlayson, Oxford University press Ink, New York, 2005, p2.

Image 2

"The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere"

Jürgen Habermas, translated by Thomas Burger,
The MIT Press, Cambridge, 1991, Book cover.

Image 3

"Publics and Counter-Publics"

Michael Warner, Zone Books, New York, 2002, Book cover,

From the MIT Press's web page <https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/publics-and-counterpublics>,

Approved to use by the Subsidiary Rights Manager Pamela Quick at The MIT Press on 24.8.2016.

Image 4

Joseph Beuys

Caroline Tisdall, "Joseph Beuys We Go To This Way", Violette Editions, London, 1998, p31.

Image 5

Boris Groys,

Image courtesy of New York University,

From New York University's homepage

<http://as.nyu.edu/object/aboutas.globalprofessor.BorisGroys>

Approved to use by the Deputy Director for Media Relations James Devitt in New York University on 28.6.2016.

Image 6

"7000 oaks" in documenta 7 in 1982 in Kassel, Germany

From the book "The Art Of Participation 1950 To Now" Robert Atkins, Rudolf Frieling, Boris Groys, Lev Manovich, Thames & Hudson, 2008, p132.

Image 7

Big Panda in Lastenlinna

Wood, house paint, oil ink, 130 x 57 x 40 cm

2011.

Taken by Mikko Kallavuo in Lastenlinna, Helsinki on 6.2.2012.

Approved to use by Mikko Kallavuo on 6.2.2012.

Image 8

Panda mom & baby in Aizpute, Latvia in 2013.

Oak wood, house paint, oil paint, 150 x 100 x 70 cm, 2013 .

Taken by Signe Pucena in riverside park, Aizpute, Latvia on 21.6.2013.

Approved to use by Signe Pucena on 21.6.2013.

Image 9

Panda mom & child with a girl in 2015.

Taken by Yasushi Koyama at MUU Kaapeli galleria on 6.9.2015.

Image 10

Panda mom & child with school children in 2015.

Wood, house paint, oil paint, 150 x 90 x 70 cm, 2015.

Taken by Nina Winqvist who is a school teacher in Helsinki Rudolf Steiner School on 25.11.2015. Approved to use by Nina Winqvist on 3.3.2016.

Image 11

Forest in Finland

from the homepage <http://www.toinenlinja.fi/fi/01889>

Approved to use by Juha-Pekka Järvenpää on 29.6.2016.

Image 12

Forest in Japan

From the homepage http://forest17.com/sinrin2/sin2_9.html

Approved to use by Shigeki Yamaguchi on 30.6.2016.

Image 13

"Panda mom & child (Process)", Yasushi Koyama, 2015.

MUU Kaapeli galleria, Helsinki, Taken by Yasushi Koyama on 16.8.2015.

Image 14

"Paha Taikina", Pasi Karjula, 1998.

Size 80 cm, wood, Tampere Art Museum, contem

From the Ars Fennica's homepage <http://www.arsfennica.fi/1999/karju-fi.html>

Approved to use by Ars Fennica's commissioner Pirkko Siitari on 26.6.2016.

Image 15

"Spitting girl (Predator), Kim Simosson, 2007.

From the book "Kim Simosson 9.9.2009-31.1.2010", Didrichsen Art museum, Helsinki, 2009, p 57.

Image 16

"Mini Nana qui court", Niki de Saint Phalle, 1970.

From the book "Niki de Saint Phalle" Skira, Hannover, Canada, 2000, p104.

Image 17

"Miss Spring", Yoshitomo Nara, 2012.

From the book "Yoshitomo Nara -Self selected works- PAINTINGS", Seigensha Art Publising, inc. Kyoto, Japan, 2015, p143.

Image 18

"Hyvät Hyssykät III / Good Heavens III", Katja Tukiainen, 2010.

From Katja Tukiainen's homepage <http://katjatukiainen.com/fair/goo3/goo3.html>

Approved to use by Katja Tukiainen on 23.6.2016.

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