**Youth on the edge of society and their participation in community art projects**

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**Abstract**

A growing number of research studies emphasize that art projects make a difference for youth on the edge of society in relation to social inclusion, increased well-being and stronger relations to formal education/employability (e.g. Carnwath & Brown 2014, Heatland 2008, Jermyn 2001). However, while these studies present inspiring cases and convincingly point to the significance of involving young people in art practices, they often seem less focused on analysing the conditions constituting a positive difference. Based on a recent study (Nielsen & Sørensen 2017), this article introduces six core elements present in young people’s accounts about how art can work across art forms and projects. The approach thus proposes a shift from a focus on validating the positive *effects* of art projects to a discussion of the defining practices, whenyouth on the edge of society engage in community art projects.

**Keywords:** youth on the edge, community arts, empowerment, social change, art practices, alternative social arenas

**Introduction**

In the past decades, a number of research and evaluation studies have analysed the differences art projects can make for young people on the edge of society in relation to social inclusion, increased well-being and a stronger relation to formal education (e.g. Carnwath & Brown 2014; Galloway 1995; Heath & Roach 1999; Jermyn 2001). The cases presented in these studies convincingly point to the significance of involving youth on the edge in art practices; however, the way they are analysed often fail to specify the conditions that need to be present *if* engagement in art is to make a difference for young people (Heath 2008). In this article, we present a recent two-year qualitative study of youth on the edge of society participating in different community art projects. Its core focus has been the participant’s own perspectives on the conditions in the projects that have made a difference for them.

The study involved a broad range of empirical data, including field observations, and different forms of participant-driven interviews with young people in five projects in Denmark (Nielsen & Sørensen 2017). The projects varied in their use of art forms (music, visual arts, photography, theatre); duration (from a five intense, all-day and over-night participation to daily, yearlong participation); schedule (from after-school schedule to fulltime daily schedule); as well as the age of the young people involved (spanning from 14 to 29) and their background (school dropouts, unemployment, diagnoses, crime, homelessness, abuse, addiction, social exclusion, refugee, etc.). Common to the projects was that they all created professional artistic environments (through engaging professional artists, actors, instructors and musicians within meaningful locations, such as at a working theatre with professional equipment or in professional sound studios) and explicitly were oriented towards social change. They also had in common that they valued the talents and interests of the young people and saw them as competent across a range of situations.

The main interest of the study was to investigate how art works in these environments from a youth perspective. While the study also offered insights into the importance of young people’s transitions from one arena to the other and the significant role these transitions play especially for youth on the edge (Katznelson, Jørgensen & Sørensen 2015), this article aims at identifying significant conditions across the different community art projects that contributedto change their perceptions of themselves and their own personal repertoires (Certeau 1988). It presents six conditions identified in young people’s accounts about their participation supported by field observations in order to contribute to further an understanding of which conditions contribute when making a difference for young people on the edge of society.

**‘Youth on the edge’ as a dynamic and relational concept**

In this article, we refer to ‘youth on the edge’ as a broad and dynamic concept, emphasizing that young people’s marginalization is a process produced and negotiated in complex transactions between the young people and the agents, discourses, and contextual settings that surrounds them (Sletten & Hyggen 2013). Though many of the young people we meet in the study are confronted with homelessness, abuse, addiction, crime, mental illness, unemployment and/or failing in the educational system, the concept underlines that we also find them in positions where their marginalization can go in different directions: towards an increasing exclusion, towards more inclusion and towards new possibilities in alternative centres on the edge of the norms of society (Nielsen & Sørensen 2017).

At the same time, the concept places us within a larger debate in youth research where we are trying to identify who the young people on the edge of the society are (Katznelson, Jørgensen & Sørensen 2015). The classical understanding of youth on the edge being closely connected to socioeconomic background (e.g. Willis 1977) seems to be contested during a time where an intensified and demanding landscape of choice is surrounding youth life. Though structural inequalities still play a major role in the actual possibilities of identity creation (Rasborg 2013), sociologists like Giddens (1996), Beck (1997) and Ziehe (2004) have connected the many possibilities to what they define as an overall individualization of society containing liberating forces, major ambivalences, doubts and limitations. The latter has led to an increased awareness of what could be called a ‘hard individualization’ (Hermann 2007), that no longer is anchored in liberating the individual through personal development, preferences, and differences but orients itself towards comparison, ranking and assessment. Both within the area of education (Biesta 2009; Jackson 2006) and within the number of other arenas defining young people’s lives (Sørensen et al 2013), this so-called performance culture currently seems to increase a sense of stress, pressure, vulnerability and lack of well-being in young people in the Nordic countries (Låftman & Östberg 2013; Ottosen et al. 2014). Hence pointing to the experience of being on the edge of society as a broader and dynamic experience of contemporary youth life as it is being re-defined by, and dependent on, new demands of social and cultural inclusion based on norms and values that more and more young people find to be out of reach (Harsløf & Malmberg-Heimonen 2014; Katznelson, Jørgensen & Sørensen 2015).

**Three correctives to past studies and evaluations of art projects**

The study’s focus on youth on the edge and their participation in community art projects takes us into a growing international research field that has provided a number of important studies for the past two decades or more (e.g Carnwath & Brown 2014; Heath & Roach 1999; Jermyn 2001). A number of these studies are overly enthusiastic about the positive effects of art towards a better social inclusion, well-being and integration in education or job market for these young people, while other studies emphasize what we define as “three correctives” to the first. The first corrective critiques their tendency to promote the ability of art projects to create social, emotional, and educational changes in young people for not being anchored sufficiently in longitudinal, empirically based and theoretically sustained research (Heath 2008). The second corrective critiques the assumption that art projects *give* voice and agency to young people. It argues that this assumption is based on four misunderstandings: 1) that learning is a mono-linear, causal process; 2) that positive experiences with learning in one context ‘naturally’ floats into other areas; 3) that learning within art can be measured the same way as other domains; and 4) that young people’s participation in art is a means to (or a compensation for not being able to) be part of other, more important learning spaces (Heath 2008). Both the assumption, and its implicit understanding of learning, takes attention away from the conditions that need to be present *if* engagement in art is to make a difference for individuals and communities.

The third corrective points to a tendency to accommodate the effects of art projects on young people to current policy discourses and the norms and values they represent. Art and educational researcher Hickey-Moody (2013) shows in an in-depth study of youth on the edge in art projects how this tendency creates a risk of designing projects, that instead of supporting young people to find their own voices and expressions, discipline them into the hegemonic order of the surrounding society. Art then becomes an instrumental part of a policy that intends to make young people stop doing certain things (e.g. stay out of crime, addiction, etc.), or do other things (e.g. do better in school, find jobs, etc.), rather than a way for them to encounter their own answers to the questions and problems they face. Thus, for Hickey-Moody, the challenge within much of the current studies and evaluations of art projects is not that they vail the conditions that need to be present to make a difference for youth on the edge, but what this difference is about:

In line with critical theory, we insist on an ongoing exploration of how we can understand and work with the arts in art education not as technologies for social control, but as methods that create new scapes and sensitivities, new ways of knowing and being. (Hickey-Moody 2013: 1)

In the quote, Hickey-Moody points to the necessity of seeing artistic expressions—music, film, dance, images, words, etc.—as a possibility for young people on the edge of society to articulate and create new understandings and new everyday belongings on their own premises. She thereby makes visible how young people’s engagement in art projects also can become a critique of society’s understanding of what it means to be on the edge that might even lead to a change in the way they are perceived.

We used the three correctives as inspirational stepping-stones for the study behind this article— both in the methodological design and in our analysis of the material. They led us to take a closer look at the conditions emphasized by the young people participating in the projects we studied and to stay open to the young people’s own definitions of what positive change meant to them—rather than measuring the changes defined by the projects.

**A mix-method study**

In the study of the youth’s participation, we used a variety of qualitative methods designed around three phases. The first phase we designed as an explorative phase using hour-long life story interviews with nine young people who had been part of community art projects at least four prior years. The method gave us a sense of the situations, events, actions and moments of change the participants chose to emphasize in order to create an order in their life story, underlining how they placed their participation in the projects in a larger trajectory of events (Felman 1992; Rankin 2002). Based on the life-story interviews we began identifying core aspects of the various trajectories the participants followed into and out of the projects, as well as a tentative, early identification of processes and conditions in the projects that appeared significant to them.

While the first phase had a strong temporal aspect, we designed an in-depth focus on the participation in the second phase. Informed by the first phase we used field observations of the participant’s participatory patterns in five community art projects in different regions of Denmark and 15 hour-long, individual, semi-structured interviews with participants from each project. We began each interview listening to or viewing together one or two pieces of work selected by the participant, followed by a discussion of the processes around its creation. By anchoring the interview in the participant’s works of art, we wanted to ensure that their experiences with the art practices were made accessible. What was the work about? How had they experienced it? Why was that important? It meant that the participants were quite precise and concrete about how they worked, what they experienced, and how the participation related to their history and life in general.

During the final and third phase, we re-visited the projects seven to eight months later in order to make another round of hour-long individual interviews with ten of the same participants. This time we began the interview with a ‘journey mapping’ (Nielsen & Cortsen 2018) where the participant mapped his or her project participation based on a question of “what were the most important elements for you”. The mapping was introduced as an open-ended task where the participants themselves defined the elements, the time period (e.g. before-during-after, part of, all off, etc.) and the format (e.g. timeline, mind map, drawing, etc.). The journey mapping served as a flexible space where the participants had time to reflect upon and make sense of the project they were part of. The interview itself circled solely around the map just produced with the participant explaining the significance and interconnections of the different elements and processes it involved. The interviews often included re-work of the journey map during the dialogue due to new elements coming up while explaining and negotiating meaning. Hence the map turned out to be a morphable overview for the participant to reflect upon and re-present.

The three phases each played a role in our identification of the following six conditions emphasized by the participants as crucial in making a positive difference for them. It can be described as an explorative and iterative analytical process where we, through different methods, gained new perspectives and specified and conceptualized the conditions. From a focus in the first phase on the significance of the participation seen in relation to the broader story of their lives to a stronger sense of what this participation involved and how the young people connected to it, we emphasized patterns and commonalities as well as variations and differences. Not in order to differ one project or art form from the other, but in order to create a more sophisticated understanding of the ways various conditions for social change interact in the processes involved in community art projects. The analysis was inspired by realistic evaluation (Pawson & Tilley 1997) in the sense that we focused on what works, for whom and under what conditions. During our analytical process, it became clear that the young people’s participation both contained conditions related to the artistic processes, *and* conditions that can also be found in other kinds of alternative arenas working for social change for youth on the edge. This analytical categorization was inspired by the work of anthropologist and linguist Shirley Brice Heath’s decade-long study of 120 community-based organizations, where she differentiates between conditions sustaining young people’s participation and performance, shared by all kinds of alternative arenas for social change, and conditions particular to community arts projects (Heath & Roach 1999; Heath & Soep 1998). In our study, we defined the first as conditions relating to ‘social pedagogical processes’, which can also be found in other kinds of alternative arenas working for social change (Hämäläinen 2003), the latter as conditions relating to ‘artistic processes’.

Though our empirical data primarily were produced in interviews with young people and aimed at grasping their perspectives (Coffey & Farrugia 2014), the conditions for social change we emphasize in the article can be understood as an exploration of a “stratified reality” focusing on an interplay of the participants and the projects—as narrated by the young people—and of agency as well as more structural elements (Ibid., p. xiii). It is informed both by the empirical findings and an extensive use of theory developed in other research within the fields of art, youth studies and social change (Certeau 1988; Davies 2000; Heath & Roach 1999; Heath & Soep 1998; Hickey-Moody 2013; Hickey-Moody 2016a; Hickey-Moody 2016b) and aimed to inform the thinking of practitioners, policy makers, foundations and the public.

**Social pedagogical processes in community art projects**

In our study, we identified three conditions for social change relating to the ‘social pedagogical processes’.

*Little publics*

The first condition we define as ‘little publics’, a concept borrowed from Dewey (1927) and actualized by Hickey-Moody (2013). They refer to situations in the projects where the participants show to others what they are working on or present their final works of art. Hence, they both refer to the everyday practices of repeated recordings, rehearsals, feedback/critique sessions, etc. where the audience is composed of other young people and professional artists from the projects, and to larger events like exhibitions, performances and concerts, where friends, parents and a broader public form part of the audience. Both make the young people’s works of art—and the stories and experiences they contain—visible to themselves and to others and serve as spaces for feedback as well as inspiration for future work. Lea, age 24, explains how that can lead to a change in their own perception of themselves as well as others. Before starting in the community art project, where we met her, she had had several fallouts from formal education. At an exhibition of her works of art organized by the project, her family showed up:

I remember my teacher told my dad, who was at the opening: “Lea, she works so hard. It is amazing to watch.” And he was like: “What? That’s not what she usually does”. And I really didn’t use to work hard, because I hadn’t found anything that interested me, but I did at the project and suddenly my parents could see what I was able to make. They had been angry at me for dropping out of school, but suddenly at the opening they were like: “Okay, it’s amazing, that she has done this.” And to me… it was like: “Okay, I’m actually able to do something”. (Lea 2016)

In Lea’s story, the little publics—like the exhibition where her parents could see her work—offer a possibility where young people can show what they can do and get recognition. Many of the young people in the study explain how this involves a transgressive feeling of being at ‘risk’, followed by a feeling of overcoming what they (and others) thought possible. Often the participants refer to the little publics as spaces that permit them not only to be seen differently, but also to overcome prejudices or limiting conceptions. Along with making new resources and potentials visible to themselves and their surroundings, they explain how this experience enables new future horizons to appear to them. For some of the participants this involves a possibility to formulate positive alternatives to the norms and values of society and the hegemonic order of its public discourses that often categorize youth on the edge through deficit-positions (without job, without education, etc.).

*Rituals, routines and rules*

The second condition we identified across the different community art projects we define as ‘rituals, routines and rules’. They often go unnoticed in studies emphasizing art practices as free and creative spaces (see Bamford 2006), but in the accounts and observations in our study, they play a significant role in structuring the young people’s participation. Though obviously different in a conceptual sense, we do not differ between rituals, routines and rules since they play overlapping roles in how predictability and recognisability create a collective frame around the participant’s creation of art works. Interestingly enough this frame is highlighted by the participants, both for its capacity to order the often unpredictable artistic processes, as well as giving a new rhythm and temporality (Ehn & Löfgren 2009) to their own often fluid and blurred everyday life on the edge of society (without school, without job, without routines). Here Emilie, age 22, explains what a normal day looks like in the project in which she participates, where the participants work with analogue photography:

We meet at 10 am. Then we drink tea and get the bags that contain our images and then we first go through them ourselves. Afterwards each of us put our images on the table and then we all look at them together and the others can comment, and you can also tell a bit about the situation where you’ve taken the image, or who is in it and where it is, and then you get the feedback from the others. Maybe they think something has turned out really well. It is also nice, that when you take an image, when you get that camera that you know you’ll show it to someone afterwards. Well, then afterwards the teacher shows us… when we have an assignment she shows us a lot images for inspiration. Different artists, different ways to work around it. (Emilie 2016)

Though varying from project to project, most of the participants we met were able—just like Emilie—to describe what a regular day looked like at their project. In their accounts, it also becomes clear that the rituals, routines and rules that create this predictability in the projects always draw upon the artistic process itself. Thus, the rituals, routines and rules are motivated by or integrated into working with art in the projects. In Emilie’s recount of a regular day at the project, the routine of showing their images to each other becomes a point of orientation in her individual work with the camera.

It also becomes clear that the rituals, routines and rules create a strong but flexible and pliable frame around the young people’s participation. This frame can contain the fluctuations that often define the lives of youth on the edge and also—though much lesser—during their project participation. The frame encourages the young people to show up (they feel necessary and included), but the day and the activities can go on for the other participants if they do not.

*Community*

The last condition we identify to be a significant part of the social pedagogical processes we define as ‘community’ (Bruselius-Jensen & Sørensen 2017). It refers to the communities the participants form with each other in the projects and with the professional artists. In the young people’s accounts, these communities are characterized by inspiration, support and mutual interest in the art work. They involve the creation of certain ways of talking together, humorous and personal messages and everyday gestures that make them feel welcome and recognized—especially on days when they are doing less well.

In close connection with the little publics and the rituals, routines and rules, the communities are based on a strong confidence and inspiration. Naadir, age 21, explains how a new sense of ‘can-do’ when working together has to do with both being reflected in the stories and the whereabouts of the others, along with the value that is seen in the diverse experiences and talents that each of them bring into the group:

We know we can help each other with each other’s music, and we can… be ourselves with each other, not having to hold anything back. Many times I have told the others something from my own life that I hoped the others could learn from. And they have told me things that I have learned from and gained insight from: “Okay, this is why you write about those things, that is why you like to rap about that.” We all have our stories… that are equal or are different, but nevertheless create a unity. (Naadir 2015)

Like Naadir, many of the young people we meet in the projects have either felt socially excluded in school and other social arenas, or they have been part of communities defined by deficit-positions (Brinkman & Petersen 2015). The communities they become part of in the projects offer a way out of the blind alleys of loneliness and vulnerability that both isolation and deficit-communities have created in many of the young people’s lives.

**Artistic processes in community art projects**

While the social pedagogical processes also define other alternative arenas for social change, like sport and other community projects, we suggest that the following conditions are particular for the processes in the community art projects. Though the projects engage the participants in different art forms and in varied ways, we identify three conditions across the projects that appear significant in our observations and the accounts of which conditions contribute to make a difference for young people on the edge of society.

*Shaping*

The first condition we identify to be significant for the young people in the artistic processes we define as ‘shaping’. This refers to the material shaping of words, paper, paint, beats, the body, etc. and is described as closely connected to forgetting oneself (through contemplation and immersion), as well as to manifest oneself (often in a new way to oneself and the world) in the young people’s accounts. Even though the forgetting of oneself and the manifesting of oneself can be seen as closely connected (Eisner 1993), they are experienced quite differently. While the manifestation of oneself often comes out of an experience of exploring intense emotions as one experiences vulnerabilities and strengths through autobiographically inspired works of art, the contemplation and immersion in the artistic processes are closely connected to getting carried away in the work. Camilla, age 23, describes the latter in this recall of how to make it through the difficult days that she experiences:

Sometimes I have these days full of depression, but I try to push it aside and focus on this. *How?* Well, you just concentrate on what you’re doing and how you’re composing a cool drawing or a very simple drawing. And you think while you try to sketch and get the ideas of how it should look. And you sit with the music in your ears, and then, well, then it somehow comes flying to you. (Camilla 2015)

Camilla, who has had a tendency to fall into periods of isolation when depressive emotions would take over, describes how giving shape to her drawings makes it possible to get through them.

Whether they explicitly work with their own personal stories or forget themselves in the shaping of songs, art works, monologues, choreographies, etc., the young people verbalize how it implies intense and long hours. Often this is in sharp contrast to a long trajectory of failures they had in the formal school system, where over and over again they were not able to focus or stay with the material, nor stay attentive in class. In both of these senses, the shaping appears in their stories as closely connected not only to a shaping of the works of art but also of themselves—who they are and what they are able to do.

*Experimental approaches*

The second condition we define as ‘experimental approaches’. These approaches comprise both the repeated, genre-defined, and disciplinary work where the young people experience refining their techniques, and they includethe more open-ended, explorative work creating something that does not already exist. Both are characterized in the participant’s accounts and in our observations by permitting them to fail as an integrated part of the process. Participants’ failing, as a necessary part of creating better works, is often referred to as something they could not grasp or understand before they entered the projects. However, after a short period of time in the projects, they expressed how they developed ways of dealing with failures through correcting them, valuing others’ ideas, understanding ambiguities and new perspectives, or discovering new techniques. Both are related to refining techniques and methods, and accepting that it often takes long hours of practicing to obtain the result they long for. Here, Jacob, age 17, explains how he approaches a song that did not work out for him in the beginning:

*You took part in Ahmad’s song, didn’t you?* Yes, but it turned out like shit, man. *So you didn’t go on with it?* No, no, I just need to practice more. You know, it was… too fast I thought: “I can do this, I’m a champion. Two days have passed since I wrote it, but I can do it.” No, I couldn’t. I need to practice more, and then it’ll be right. (Jacob 2015)

In Jacob’s story, the experimental approach of trying out a song and discovering it did not work is connected to stepping back, looking closely and analysing approaches, and considering possible ways to go on. It is a reflexive process intimately connected to the material, to repetition and to investing oneself in exploring new takes on the work—that is, to dare to fail and still keep on going, though not knowing exactly how things will turn out.

*Open-ended works*

The last condition we identify that is consistent among all the different participants that we interviewed is the orientation towards creating a final work of art—a song, a painting, a performance—and its role as a structuring and meaning-giving horizon for the young people’s actions (*first I do this, then I do this—in order to make this*). The participants explain how they use the work of art to orient the process they engage in during the creation of it. However, rather than a defined entity, the final work of art is constituted by the flux of a-yet-to-come that involves the development of skills, evaluations, inspiration and imagination. The final work of art is an ‘open-ended work’, not as much in Umberto Eco’s famous receptionist sense of the concept (Eco 1989) but more, in the ongoing overthrow of its shape and content through the material creation of the work of art and the inquiry into its potential (Rogoff 2006). Klara, age 22, explains what that openness means to her:

This is how it is with art. There’s nothing that is right or wrong. Or probably it is more correct to say that there’s nothing that is wrong. Everything you make is something that didn’t exist before you made it, and now it exists because I made it. *Does that make it different from let’s say math?* Yes, it is great because it can’t go wrong. It can go wrong the way that I’m not satisfied with it, but… but no one else can come up and say that what I’m doing doesn’t work. *And nobody does that here?* No. *Then what do you say to each other when you look at each other’s work?* “Oh, that’s cool”. *All the time?* Yes, no. Sometimes we say: “I think it would look great with some yellow there or something.” (Klara 2015)

In Klara’s story, as in many of the other young people’s accounts, it is important for her that she has the final say in the process. That does not mean—which is also clear in the quote from Klara—that the process cannot go wrong nor does it mean that the young people do not care about how the finished work turns out. In the participants’ stories as well as in our observations, the openness of the final work evokes ambition and an on-going search for high quality. At the same time, this engagement differs from the performance culture they had previously experienced in the formal educational system or in the social spheres they have been a part of. It is not restricted by standardized and already defined goals, norms or measurements but oriented by the creation of something that they themselves define and often in close collaboration or feedback with other participants (Sørensen, Katznelson & Nielsen 2017).

**To become someone in something**

This study makes visible how community art projects create a space where youth on the edge can show themselves and others what they can do, as well as a reflexive space where they put their “imagination at work” (Heath & Roach 1999: 24). What is new in this study is how young people emphasize the combination of strong and collective framings, and through routines, rituals and rules, they organize and create predictability in their participation as we saw in Emilie’s recount of the daily ordering of the project she’s a part of. On the other hand, as underlined in Klara’s explanation of the significance of the open-endedness of art, the young people learn about the free, creative and explorative side of how art works. By offering an insight into the specific processes and conditions of the everyday life in the projects, this study not only shows that context matters, but also what it consists of, i.e. what creates and sustains the positive differences for youth on the edge of society in community art projects (Figure 1).

*Figure 1*. Significant conditions that make a positive difference for young people in community art projects (to the left: social pedagogical processes, to the right: artistic processes)

It is a main point in this study that the positive differences that young people experience in the community art projects has to do with becoming *someone* in the context of *something*. For youth on the edge of society—whose stories are often defined by difficulties fitting in—the way community art projects frame and create communities around the open-ended art practices are significant for their possibility to find their place in contemporary youth life. This contextual perspective makes visible how the positive differences the young people experience through their participation are closely connected to the experience of belonging. Both as the longing to become (someone) fulfilled through the young person’s becoming part of something (Davies 2000), and belonging, as related to the kind of embodied knowledge that characterizes our patterns of movements in a context where we belong (Certeau 1988). The latter highlights how young people, after participating for a while in community art projects, appropriate a new repertoire of improvisations, combinations and operational readings (what Certeau calls ‘tactics’) through which they are able to take advantage of the spaces of possibilities offered to them. In the study, they become able to: 1) understand oneself and stand up for oneself; 2) work through difficult and hard feelings; 3) handle the tasks and challenges they meet; and 4) create a structure in their everyday life.

This also emphasizes that the resources and potentials that emerge from the young people’s participation is not directed towards specific goals or has to be actualized in specific ways. They rather have to be understood as mimicking the open-ended work of art in that they open up for what one of the young people in the study calls ‘better beginnings’. For some of the participants we meet in the study, it means that they are now better able and confident to find their way back to those mainstream trajectories and contexts (school, job, home or social relations) from which they had fallen out before entering the projects. For others, new points of orientation appear that can create a new direction and meaning in their life in ways they had not foreseen before entering the projects.

Thus, when we study how art works for youth on the edge of society in community art projects, it seems more appropriate to investigate further the processes and conditions they imply. We might ask ourselves if those processes and conditions can inspire other arenas like formal schooling (see also Pöllänen 2011) where most of the young people we meet have suffered difficulties and defeats.

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