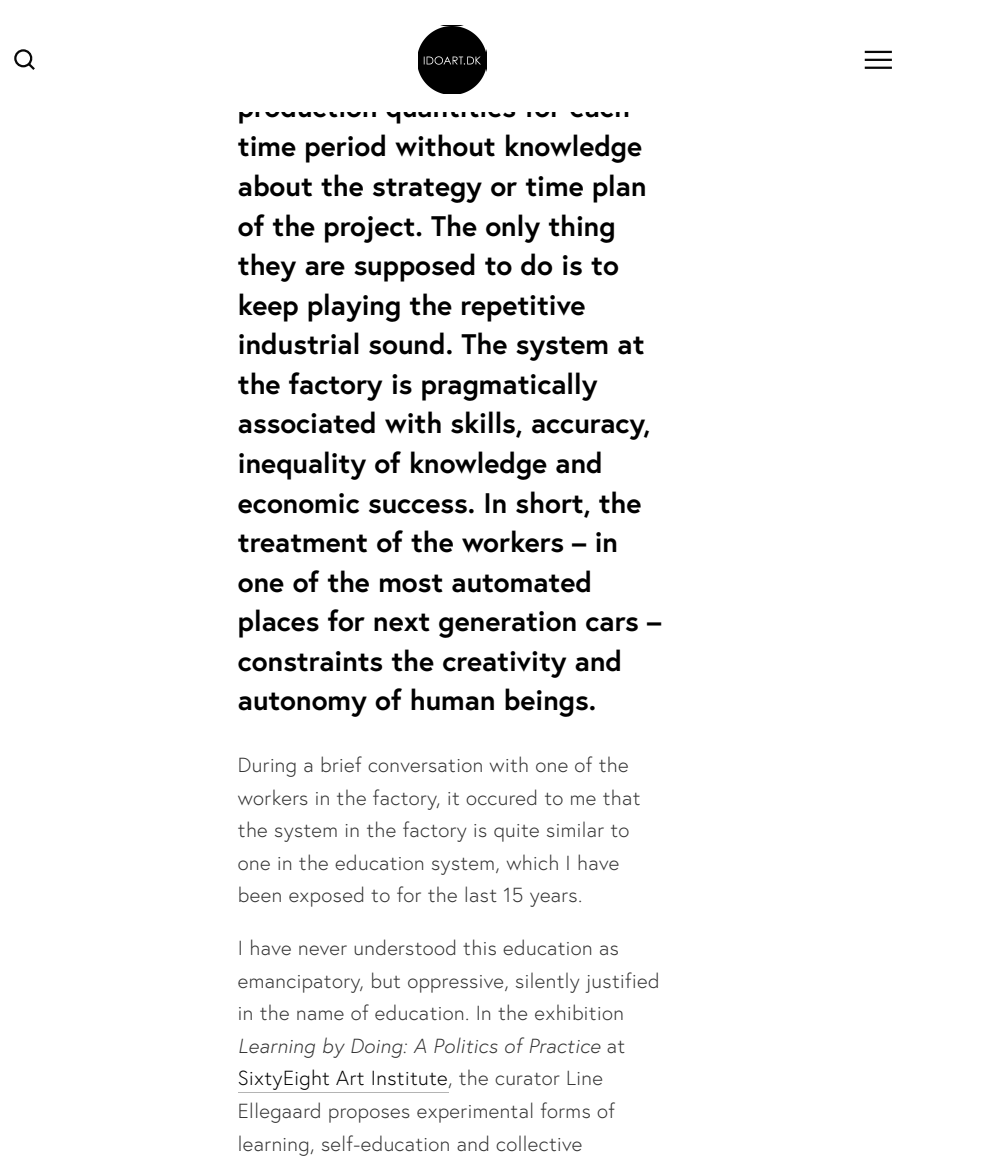


Since last summer, I've been working as an interpreter at a factory in which electrical automobiles are manufactured. In the hierarchical system of the



production quantities for each time period without knowledge about the strategy or time plan of the project. The only thing they are supposed to do is to keep playing the repetitive industrial sound. The system at the factory is pragmatically associated with skills, accuracy, inequality of knowledge and economic success. In short, the treatment of the workers – in one of the most automated places for next generation cars – constraints the creativity and autonomy of human beings.

During a brief conversation with one of the workers in the factory, it occurred to me that the system in the factory is quite similar to one in the education system, which I have been exposed to for the last 15 years.

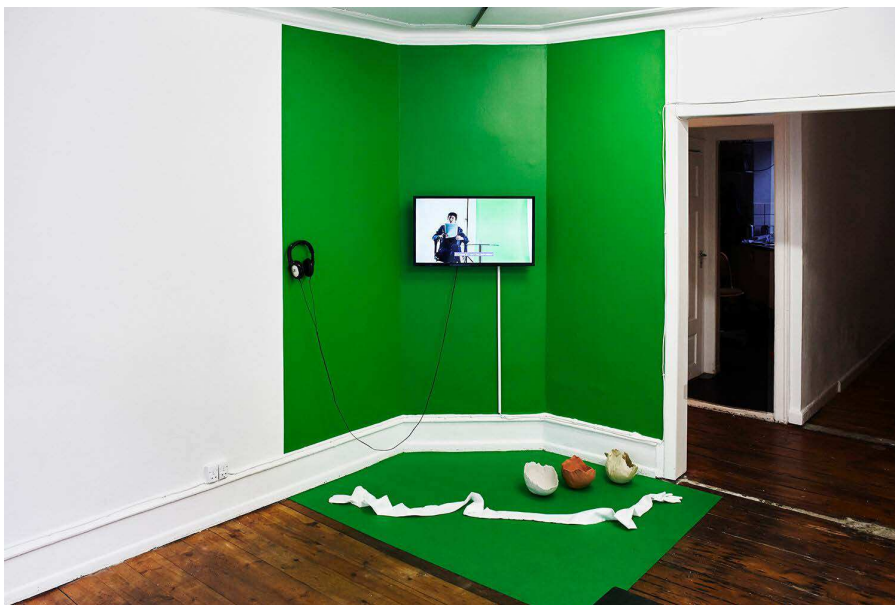
I have never understood this education as emancipatory, but oppressive, silently justified in the name of education. In the exhibition *Learning by Doing: A Politics of Practice* at SixtyEight Art Institute, the curator Line Ellegaard proposes experimental forms of learning, self-education and collective gatherings that challenge oppressive ideologies and neoliberal paradigms of normalisation and institutionalisation.

"Seeking active forms of knowledge production, numerous artists have



art practices. Opposing the traditional mainstream rhetoric, their ways of encouraging us to reflect on the learning process are sometimes quite subjective and challenging."

Seeking active forms of knowledge production, numerous artists have attempted to address the role of education in their art practices. Opposing the traditional mainstream rhetoric, their ways of encouraging us to reflect on the learning process are sometimes quite subjective and challenging.



Rosa-Johan Uddoh, *The Serve* (2017-2019). Performed as part of New Contemporaries 2018-19 at South London Gallery, January 2019. Featuring Jo Pester as ball girl. Digital video, 12 min. Photo: SixtyEight Art Institute, 2019.

A London based artist, Rosa-Johan Uddoh,

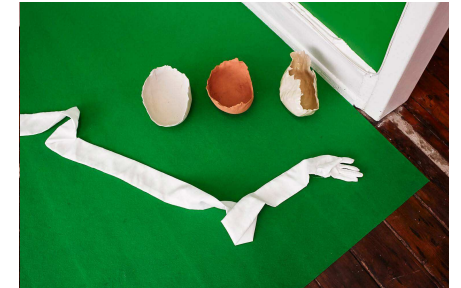


story of the two legendary American tennis players, the Williams sisters, who played a match against each other on Uddoh's little sister's birthday. The story bounces between her and the admired sisters just like a tennis ball. Uddoh's identity-based approach gently touches racial issues with an obvious intention to boost her self-esteem.



Rosa-Johan Uddoh, *The Serve: Set* (Installation with glove, ceramics & green screen).

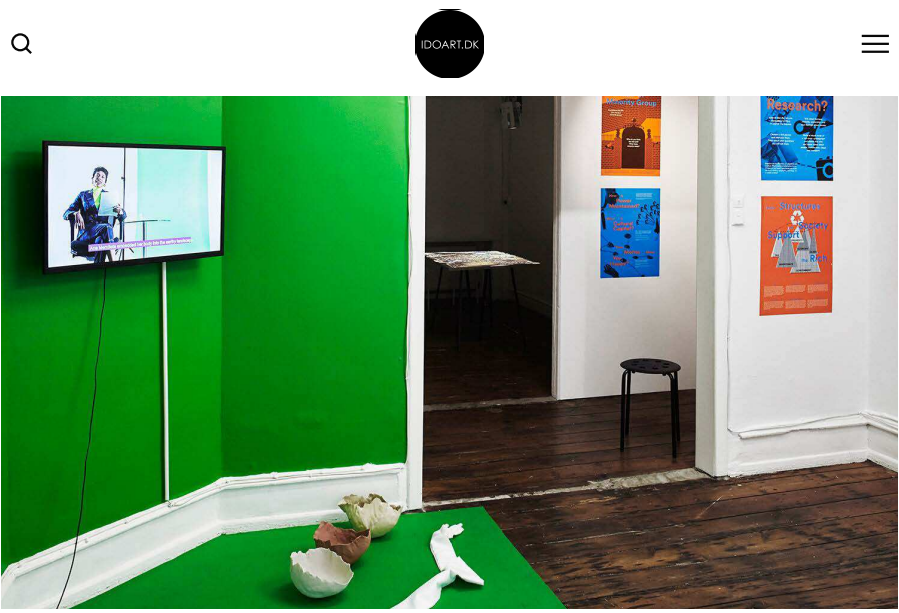
Photo: SixtyEight Art Institute, 2019.



Rosa-Johan Uddoh, *The Serve: Set* (Installation with glove, ceramics & green screen).

Photo: SixtyEight Art Institute, 2019.

Her dominant monologue reminds me of Martha Rosler's video performance *Semiotics of the Kitchen* (1975) in which she parodies a cookery program. Unlike the elegant and feminine hostesses normally seen on tv at the time, Rosler recites the names of different kitchen utensils in alphabetical order in a very aggressive way. Her humorous norm-breaking behaviour is reflected in Uddoh's critical gaze and friendly smile. Performing in an imposing manner, both artists try to expose the uncomfortable truths between male and female, black and white. As Uddoh says in an interview "*being black means performing constantly*"; her investigation of black identity will probably continue no matter what she achieves or how she is satisfied.



Learning by Doing: A Politics of Practice (installation view). Photo: SixtyEight Art Institute, 2019.

Pedagogical initiatives have long been a form of experimental community-making. Tina Helen and Søren Thilo Funder's collaboration *FACTORY WORKERS UNITE* creates a convivial and playful setting to explore possibilities of the productive knowledge-sharing through a casual activity.

When entering the small room calm voices and minor sounds from people's gestures came to my ears. The artists had their acquaintances put together a 4000-piece jigsaw puzzle while filming it from the ceiling. In the exhibition the film footage is presented on the table from a bird's eye view, which creates an atmosphere in which their activity appears to take place right next to the viewers. The package box of the jigsaw puzzle hanging on the wall in the exhibition room shows that the result of their collaborative work is going to be an image of the classic painting *Children's Games* (1560) by Pieter Bruegel the Elder. The relaxed movement of the participants in the film is a



FACTORY WORKERS UNITE (Tina Helen and Søren Thilo Funder), *Children's Games (Puzzled)*, 2019. (HD Video Installation, 48 min., Dimensions Variable). With Michala Paludan, Vito, Rolf Nowotny, Uma, Frans Jacobi, Line Ellegaard, Karl August, Henrik, Chulu, Katrine Malinovsky, Kristoffer Ørum, Otto, Jakob Jakobsen, Thilo, Johanne Løgstrup, Fargo, Sylvester Roepstorff, Uma, James Day, Ingimar, Åse Eg, Pia Rönicke, Anu Ramdas, Kasper Opstrup, Johanne Østervang, Malik, Solvind, Misja Thirslund Krenchel, Vester og Rasmus Brink Pedersen. Photo: SixtyEight Art Institute, 2019.



FACTORY WORKERS UNITE (Tina Helen and Søren Thilo Funder), *Children's Games (Puzzled)*, 2019. (HD Video Installation, 48 min., Dimensions Variable). Photo: SixtyEight Art Institute, 2019.

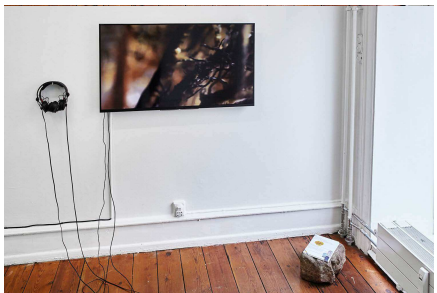


FACTORY WORKERS UNITE (Tina Helen and Søren Thilo Funder), *Children's Games (Puzzled)*, 2019. (HD Video Installation, 48 min., Dimensions Variable). Photo: SixtyEight Art Institute, 2019.

Over 200 physically energetic children are actively engaged in different games in the Elder's painting whereas the action of the jigsaw puzzle is peaceful, just like a neighborhood gathering at home. The process



collaboration with certain rules appears. Puzzle pieces are sorted by form, color and pattern, and the roles of the participants are divided. Flexibility, autonomy and creativity are formed in the discursive communication. As one participant says, they are just "fiddling and puzzling", but the act of people transcending knowledge might be more than "doing something that only matters in the actual doing." Creating and sharing unidentified and unintended forms of knowledge in the open, joyous and egalitarian atmosphere, the participants transform the room into an alternative space for experimental learning. Organising the temporary gatherings, *FACTORY WORKERS UNITE* forges a new form of learning site. There is no dreamlike repetitive industrial rhythm here.



Arendse Krabbe in collaboration with lichen, Among sister Venus and earthlings; Bacteria, Lichen and me. One Channel HD Video, Looping, Duration 10:37min, 2017. Sound design in collaboration with Martin Gru. The work was kindly sponsored by Canon. Photo: SixtyEight Art Institute, 2019.



Arendse Krabbe and Mirko Nikolić in collaboration with lichen and stone, interplanetary trans-temporal metempsychic drifters. Invitation to poetic sensory situation. Photo: SixtyEight Art Institute, 2019.

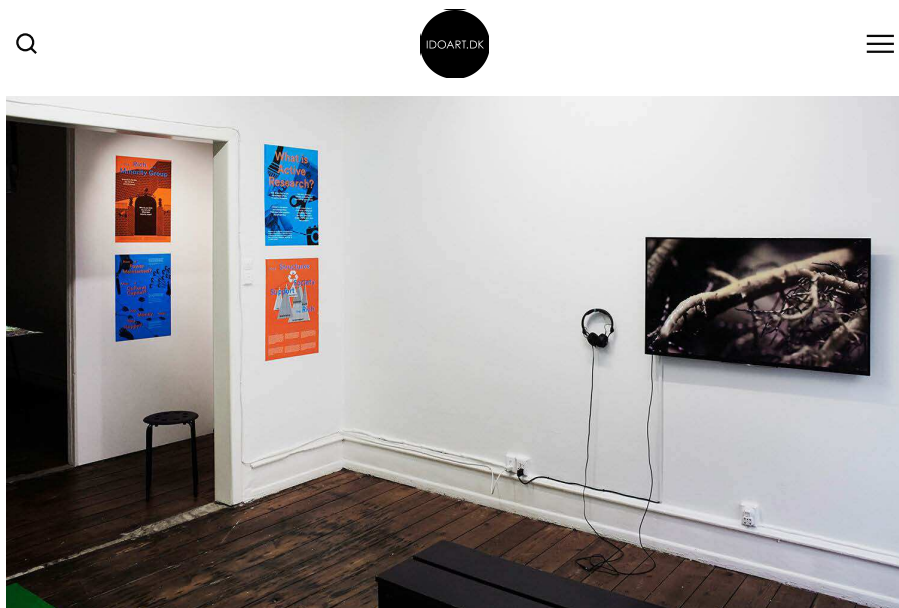
Through active research many artists explore ways to respond to questioning ideas and to build relationships between phenomena. Unlike academic researchers, artists are freer to take subjective attitudes as well as experimental methodologies. Arendse Krabbe's video work *Among sister Venus and earthlings; Bacteria, Lichen and me* draws attention with the

lichen met and what they could learn from each other. Krabbe addresses a central question. What does it mean to be an individual?

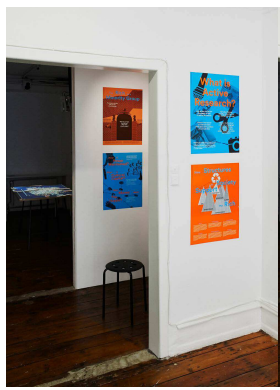
"Through active research many artists explore ways to respond to questioning ideas and to build relationships between phenomena. Unlike academic researchers, artists are freer to take subjective attitudes as well as experimental methodologies."

Concentrating on herself, as an individual who is socially categorised by a standard criterion, and the possibilities to make a connection between different creatures, she seeks a space for embracing differences and complexities. Krabbe brings one additional question derived from the tiny vegetation that is used as an indicator of air pollution in cities.

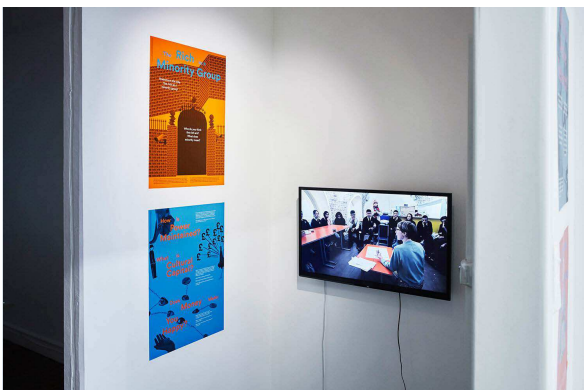
What do we learn from other kinds of organisms? The complex system the artist is celebrating is still hard to understand but such a non-hierarchic premise definitely opens up opportunities of communication that generate partnerships between different bodies.



Learning by Doing: A Politics of Practice (installation view). Photo: SixtyEight Art Institute, 2019.

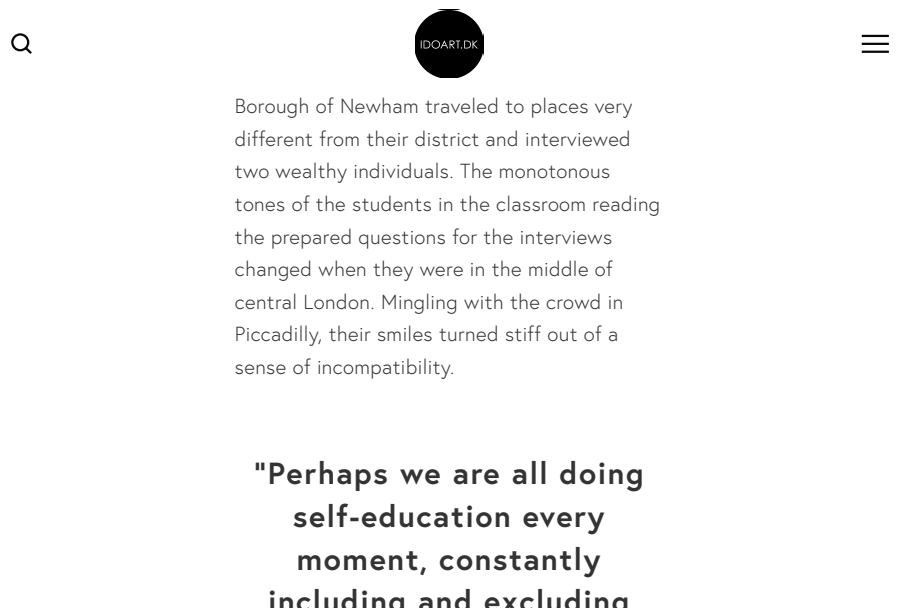


The Alternative School of Economics, Teaching Posters: The Rich as a Minority Group; Power, Capital and Happiness; Structures in Society; What is Active Research? (2016). Lithographic print on paper. Photo: SixtyEight Art Institute, 2019.



The Alternative School of Economics (Ruth Beale & Amy Feneck). Fieldwork: Finding out about the rich (2016). Digital video, colour, sound, 30:09 min. Photo: SixtyEight Art Institute, 2019.

A more concrete response toward the outer world is shown in the documentary *Fieldwork: Finding out about the rich* by The Alternative School of Economics, a collaboration between artists Ruth Beale and Amy Feneck. The



Borough of Newham traveled to places very different from their district and interviewed two wealthy individuals. The monotonous tones of the students in the classroom reading the prepared questions for the interviews changed when they were in the middle of central London. Mingling with the crowd in Piccadilly, their smiles turned stiff out of a sense of incompatibility.

"Perhaps we are all doing self-education every moment, constantly including and excluding ourselves in different relationships, raising big and small concerns and challenging what we already know and what it is."

Just like, as Uddoh describes in her performance, "*being a black woman attending white elite institutions*", and the Williams sisters "*in stark bleached white high neck*" the abstract word "rich" became something they could feel and witness. Even the shifting landscape from the train on their way back to school seemed to tell more than what they learned in the classroom.

The trip examines alternative forms of understanding and experience, which can develop to potential arguments for the changing pressures of our society and further self-educations. Perhaps we are all doing self-



and challenging what we already know and what it is. As John Dewey says, "education is life itself" and we shall continue learning by doing.

"Learning by Doing: A Politics of Practice" at SixtyEight Art Institute is on view till November 16, 2019.

This essay is part of an initiative to foster Danish and English Language critical writings from a range of new talents across the visual arts; and as a partnership between I DO ART and SixtyEight Art Institute.

DAEUN JEONG

Daeun Jeong (b. 1979) is an independent curator who lives and works in Malmö, Sweden. Jeong studied fine arts in Seoul, Korea and received an MA in Critical Writing and Curatorial Practice from Chelsea College of Arts, London.

Jeong is a member of a sustainable art project group Crackker in Seoul and works on art-related collaborative projects that seeks to make connections between Nordic and Asian countries. Daeun has contributed to idoart.dk since 2019.

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