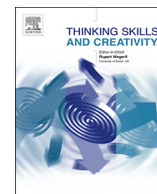




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The polyphony of musician–teacher partnerships: Towards real dialogues?

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to explore and discuss how, on many levels and in many ways, polyphonic dialogues can fluctuate among participants in a multidisciplinary didactic art project implemented in schools, namely, School and Concert – From Transmission to Dialogue (DiSko). DiSko is an innovation project that aims to try different ways to address the significant lack of school ownership to professional visiting concerts in Norwegian schools.

The project method, educational design research, is a combination of approaches that are usually applied to well-known research-based problems. Empirically, researchers and participants carry out successive iterations of experiential case interventions based on ongoing analysis. A central aim of the method is to suggest concrete research-based solutions or new ways of addressing a problem, which is instrumental outside specific case contexts.

Dialogue is a major epistemological grounding for DiSko and its descriptive cases, and throughout the article, the project design and activities are viewed in terms of Bakhtin's concepts chronotope, carnival and polyphony. Through discussions about aspects of the methodology as well as by providing an empirical case example, this article describes how elements of educational design research may be composed in order to maintain an epistemology of dialogue and polyphony.

Eric¹ strikes a row of chords on his guitar.

He asks the class, 'What do you think this song could be about?'

'Play the first chords again?' asks Joan. Eric starts anew.

'I think it sounds like a cowboy song', she decides.

Several hands are up in the air. Eric chooses Aron.

'I think it sounds like *High Noon*', he says.

'*High Noon*? Never heard of it'. Eric shakes his head.

Pupils giggle and exchange gazes. Such ignorance!

'It's a cowboy film', explains music teacher Ole.

'Okay', Eric concludes. 'Should we make a cowboy song then? Thumbs up or down!'

(DiSko² transcription of video footage, 20/10/2017).

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¹ These are fictitious names.

² This is the project's acronym

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1. Introduction

The above vignette provides a glimpse into how a visiting musician, Eric, uses dialogue to address pupils' musical ideas. However, a complicated web of actions and discourses underlie this seemingly simple scene. In this article, I discuss dialogue in relation to an on-going project regarding musician–teacher collaboration in Norwegian schools. The overarching project title is *School and Concert – From Transmission to Dialogue* (DiSko). The aim of the project is to explore how dialogue-based visiting musician practices can be developed in such a way that they can be meaningfully and professionally integrated into everyday school situations.

My main research questions in this article are as follows: In which ways do dialogues evolve and fluctuate between participants in a music partnership project, and how are social roles affected by such dialogues? How can dialogue, as an epistemological grounding for a research project, be maintained by methods derived from *educational design research* (EDR), and how can project data be analysed in terms of the Bakhtinian concepts *chronotope*, *carnival* and *polyphony*?

After closely following the project activities at one school, I found that the dialogic practice evolved and strengthened during the project. Collaborations seemed to emerge from negotiated situational and local project activities and mutual verbal reflections. The analysed project activities can be characterised as being close to pupils' and teachers' everyday life-worlds, thus opening up discussion about how to allow more unfamiliar and radical musical expressions.

The article provides background information about prior research results regarding visiting art practices in schools, followed by theoretical approaches to dialogue (Bakhtin, 1981). Then, it discusses approaches to the project method, EDR (McKenney & Reeves, 2012), and how it connects to the project's epistemology of dialogue. Next, the project in question, DiSko, and the chosen exemplary case are introduced before analysis and discussion. In accordance with the view of polyphony as a non-conclusive concept (Kim, 2016, p. 72–76), there is no conclusion in this article, only a compilation of questions and crossing paths to follow in the future.

2. Background

DiSko addresses the Norwegian artistic visiting program for schools³, the Cultural Rucksack (TCR).⁴ The practice of artists performing at schools is a widespread phenomenon in the West (Christophersen & Kenny, 2018) that has been examined by research over the years (Aulin-Gråhamn, Persson, & Thavenius, 2004; Bamford, 2012; Kenny, 2016; Rabkin, Reynolds, Hedberg, & Shelby, 2011). Discussions about artist–teacher collaborations can be of interest to artists and teachers working with or in programs such as visiting school concerts (Young Audiences Music, 2018), creative partnerships (such as Creativity, Culture & Education⁵) or teaching artist programs (Booth, 2009; Ulvund, 2015). I will not provide in-depth comparisons of these various approaches, but I will mention the one major similarity between them: they are all practices in which artists visit schools.

The aim of TCR in Norway is to provide all pupils with 'high-quality artistic experiences' (Norwegian Department of Culture, 2007, p. 9) regardless of their sociocultural, geographical or economic backgrounds. Bjørnsen (2011) claims this to be democratic (since all pupils are exposed to live art), but not democratising because teachers and pupils are not given the opportunity to communicate their wishes or their conceptions of what 'high-quality art experiences' might mean to them. Other research points out that uneven power relations and missing dialogue result in feeble engagement by schools and teachers (Breivik & Christophersen, 2013; Christophersen & Kenny, 2018; Holdhus & Espeland, 2013; Snook & Buck, 2014).

The music part of TCR adopts a tour-based approach in which pupils in compulsory schools attend performances by professional music groups. When the musicians arrive at the school, the pupils and teachers gather in the gym hall or another arena to listen to a 45-minute concert, after which the musicians leave for a new school.

The underlying philosophy of traditional intervening artistic practices can be found in what I call the work-oriented paradigm (Ashcroft, 2015; Eagleton, 1988), where art is regarded as inherently good and perceived as a subject in its own right, regardless of the context (Bourdieu, Broady, & Palme, 1993; Goehr, 2007). Within this paradigm, the artist is viewed as someone who is doing good (Holdhus, in press; Rykkja & Homme, 2013) and as someone who has the right to possess the artistic power of definition and is entitled to present the (ignorant) masses with something that the artist believes they lack in their lives (Bjørnsen, 2011; Bourdieu, 1993; Bowman, 2007; Espeland, 2010). That is, in my opinion, the reason why the Norwegian Department of Education consents to letting TCR artists into schools without demanding democratic discussions about relevance or approach (KKD, 2007). As such, the work orientation that places artists in power emerges as a strong societal belief (Bourdieu, 1993; Breivik & Christophersen, 2013; Kester, 2004; Rancière, 2014).

According to Bjørnsen (2011), TCR is a result of a national cultural policy which, since the 90 s, has displayed an increasing object orientation towards *Bildung*⁶. Object-oriented *Bildung* is a direction that 'takes great works of art as its point of departure and where personal growth can be achieved through exposure to these' (Bjørnsen, 2011, p. 4). DiSko thus serves as a critique not only of TCR but

³ In Norway, the subject of music is taught once a week throughout 10 years of compulsory schooling with 96.5% of the actual population attending public school.

⁴ The Cultural Rucksack (TCR) is a national school program for arts and culture in Norway. Its aim is to provide access to live artistic experiences for all schoolchildren. See <http://www.artsforyoungaudiences.no>.

⁵ <https://www.creativitycultureeducation.org/news/>

⁶ *Bildung* is a German word meaning education or formation, and it refers to the German tradition of self-cultivation (which is related to the German word for creation, image and shape), wherein philosophy and education are linked in a manner that involves both personal and cultural maturation. (*Bildung* (n.d.). Retrieved December 8, 2018, from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bildung>)

also of an object-oriented Norwegian cultural policy, highlighting agency, democracy and creativity as alternative ways for audiences to access artistic and aesthetic ways of learning and living (Woodford, 2005).

One could discuss whether it is a good idea for artists to visit schools. However, in Norway, there is unanimous political agreement that pupils should receive visits from artists, and substantial amounts of money are given in the form of grants each year for this practice.⁷ One of DiSko's aims, then, must be to highlight mechanisms that can make visits from artists mean more to schools, teachers and pupils than something 'done dutifully' (Holdhus & Espeland, 2017, p. 13).

3. Designing dialogic educational design research

In 2016, my research environment⁸ applied for and was awarded the innovation project DiSko. The project runs from 2017 through 2020. At the time of writing, we are two years into the study, which engages several researchers, musicians, pupils and teachers. DiSko researches facilitation and elaboration of possible dialogical musical encounters between musicians, teachers and pupils. The expected outcomes of DiSko are research-based dialogic approaches that we suggest are alternatives to monologist concert interventions.

Methodologically, DiSko is inspired by EDR (McKenney & Reeves, 2012), which is a research methodology that aims to achieve solutions to problems in education while generating theoretical knowledge. Research activities usually take the form of experiential case interventions that undergo successive iteration based on ongoing analysis until researchers, in collaboration with research participants, are able to suggest research-based solutions or new ways of addressing the problem that can be utilised outside the specific case context (Barab, Thomas, Dodge, Squire, & Newell, 2004). Researchers develop analysis-driven directions for conducting and exploring alternatives to an established practice. Thus, on the one hand, researchers can be viewed (and view themselves) as participants because they actively discuss, question and express viewpoints throughout the process. On the other hand, researchers contribute discursively to project activities through successive decisions made during the activities. In this way, the researchers gain discursive power along with other framing forces. However, they never determine directions or draw conclusions without consulting the participants (McKenney & Reeves, 2012).

Viewing education as complex and ever-changing, Richter and Allert (2017) claim that EDR must remain reflexive and critical. DiSko's critique of autonomy-aesthetic practices should manifest as a research-based description of how to address problems with lack of school ownership to visiting music practices at schools. However, since dialogue is a core principle of this research, the project should also expose on-going reflexion of the reasons for participant behaviour.

Initially, the design of DiSko was based on critical research questions regarding an established practice run by administrators and producers that, to a minor degree, are connected to daily practice in schools. Methodological imperatives of EDR are 'implementation and spread' (McKenney & Reeves, 2012, p. 77), pointing out the perceived need to uphold a dialogue with stakeholders and actors involved in the established practice that is criticised (Holdhus, in press). To be able to maintain dialogue with (conversive) proponents of the project, actors involved in the DiSko project need to bear in mind critical arguments regarding the project and how it is conducted. This can be seen as a dialogic act of accepting and treating contesting views as legitimate (Gergen, 2009).

Bell (2004) views EDR as a group of approaches rather than a unified methodology. This way of handling EDR offers the possibility that one can make choices that epistemologically align with the groundings of actual research projects. Epistemological groundings thus must guide a project's design, implementation and analysis. An EDR project needs to be flexible enough to react to empirical developments while remaining true to the project's epistemological rationale (Sloane, 2006).

The selection and implementation of methods in the DiSko project is, due to its connectedness with dialogue and dialogic aesthetics, multi-faceted, polyphonic and intended to achieve 'thick descriptions' (Geertz, 1973, p. 3-30). The DiSko project's research design draws on a range of methods and ways of representing data, including films, recordings, drawings, CDs, compositions, poems/songs, photos, sheet music, interviews, focus groups, stimulated recall, (Lyle, 2003), participant logs, observation sheets, questionnaires and core underway reports conducted in close communication with participants (McKenney & Reeves, 2012).

The literature describes this bricolage of methods as *crystallisation* (Ellingson, 2009, 2014; Richardson, 2000). De Vries (2018) suggests that crystallisation is at the core of a reflexive and critical approach to EDR. Crystallisation aims to explore and display contrasts and phenomenal facets of complex human constructs. To respond to the idea of crystallisation, reporting and analysis also should be multi-faceted and take various forms, Ellingson (2009) claims. The applied methods could be, for example, both grounded theory and narrative research and implemented through, for example, poems and research articles. The researchers' reflective voices and vulnerabilities should be exposed during the research process and within reports, and crystallisation facilitates participatory methods 'by providing means to balance the sensemaking processes and voices of researchers with those of participants, who often are members of underserved communities' (Ellingson, 2014, p. 447).

As 'implementation and spread' are dialogically constructed within EDR, these activities are expected to go on continuously to enrich projects (McKenney & Reeves, 2012, p. 77). The reports associated with DiSko are underway reports, which include this article as well as other papers, a project website,⁹ workshops, media contributions and presentations intended for diverse groups, such as participants, interested musicians and teachers as well as TCR stakeholders. The final implementation and concluding reports will be addressed in 2020, aiming at academic reports, an interactive toolkit for designing visiting workshops and a printed book.

⁷ Approximately 210 million NOK per year (25 million USD) is budgeted for this purpose.

⁸ Website, slurred due to blindfold review.

⁹ DiSkoProject website. www.diskoprojektet.no

4. Dialogue, discourse and polyphony

The epistemological backdrop for DiSko is grounded in Bakhtin's (1981) understanding of dialogue and discourse. Bakhtin's approaches to dialogue and discourse are rooted in social constructionism, which, briefly, views humans as culturally embedded in society's constructs of meaning, traditions and ways of acting (Gergen, 1999). Human positions and views are seen as interwoven with societal fields, institutions and roles. This implies that people's actions and thoughts are affected by, for example, gender, religion, family and geographic and historic location. Everyone lives by discourse. In Bakhtin's (1981) words,

Form and content in discourse are one, once we understand that verbal discourse is a social phenomenon - social throughout its entire range and in each and every of its factors, from the sound image to the furthest reaches of abstract meaning. (p. 269)

Bakhtin (1981) views dialogue as a grounding principle for all utterances, not just verbal ones, because dialogue is socially constructed and comprised of actions and enacted values. Dialogue, in a Bakhtinian sense, affects and transforms discussants and discourses continuously and reciprocally. Due to constant dialogue, and thus changes in society and by participants, discourses are continuously moving. According to Holquist (2003), 'A dialogic view on discourse allows multiple voices and types of utterances, as well as a sensuous consciousness of others' voices and languages. Dialogue is simultaneous and experiential no matter how it is experienced from particular positions' (p. 21). Bakhtin was originally a literature theorist, but his concepts and philosophy highlight many aspects of human life in our time (Erdinast-Vulcan, 2013). Other 'moving targets' connected to dialogue are *polyphony*, *chronotope* and *carnival* (Kim, 2008).

A dialogue between participants of diverse discursive inheritances is *polyphonic*. The term is borrowed from music, and it literally means 'multi-voicedness', describing the simultaneous flow of diverse utterances, actions and viewpoints that constitutes dialogue. Polyphony is similar to a multi-faceted literary novel with no conclusion, in which voices, time, places and more or less realistic actions interplay and occur in parallel. It thus depicts a myriad of possible scenarios and occurrences. Bakhtin (1981) describes polyphony as 'a plurality of independent, unmerged voices and consciousnesses' (p. 6), which is grounded in acknowledgement of the other's right to speak, act and contribute according to his or her culturally constructed (though moving) life-world.

Chronotope situates polyphony and dialogue in a time and place, thus defining the necessary contemporary, historical and social contexts wherein polyphony takes place. It is described as time-and-place, as time and place are viewed as intertwined and inseparable. Holquist (2003) puts it this way:

Dialogism assumes that at any given time, in any given place, there is a set of powerful but highly unstable conditions at work that will give a word uttered then and there a meaning that is different from what it would be at other times and in other places. (p. 69)

The third concept is *carnival*, which is derived from the Roman Carnival and European Middle Ages (Lachmann, Eshelman, & Davis, 1988; White, 2014). It refers to various ways of putting aside the known and acting untraditionally and without borders for a short time, thus pausing practices based on inherited power relations, traditions and hierarchies. Carnival represents creativity, fantasy and playfulness as well as humorous ways of critiquing power.

My description and choice of dialogue, polyphony, chronotope and carnival as analytic lenses for this article are not meant to be exhaustive, as Bakhtin's work is complex and variously interpreted. Rather, I use the chosen concepts throughout the text to address DiSko's epistemological groundings through analysis.

5. Constructing the DiSko project

By studying prior research (Bjørnsen, 2011; Borgen & Brandt, 2006; Breivik & Christophersen, 2013; Digranes, 2009; Holdhus, 2014) and listening to participant descriptions, DiSko researchers recognised that monologic one-off concerts were a problem in the traditional visiting artist practice. We wanted to address schools' need for contextualisation and ownership. We assumed that if a state of equity between parties could be established as a principle, ownership, agency and creativity would emerge among teachers and pupils (Pierce, Kostova, & Dirks, 2003). The project was designed based on this assumption, and the implemented scheme has involved 1) an analytic field portrait based on observation, recorded meetings and interviews; 2) musician–teacher collaborations to facilitate and conduct musical activities in classes; 3) analysis and communication of analysis to participants with the researchers' recommendations for further work; 4) participants' response to the analysis and incorporation of responses and 5) another intervention to test the recommendations.

Researchers started collecting data to construct a field portrait of volunteer schools. Throughout the semester, negotiations about which kind of musician to choose for intervention were going on. After musicians were found, the interventions started. Researchers followed the process, and at the end of each semester, a report containing advice for further work was developed with the participants (McKenney & Reeves, 2012). Our approach as researchers is thus analytic as well as creative and design-oriented.

By the end, eight schools will have participated in DiSko. Until now, work has been performed with four schools, including the chosen example, School 1. These 4 schools are labelled *Circle 1 schools*. In 2019, interventions will begin with *Circle 2 schools* and musician groups. This work will be based on the findings for Circle 1 schools as well as the field portraits of Circle 2 schools. DiSko schools are perceived as 'ordinary' do not excel in their aesthetic approaches. However, the act of volunteering indicates competency, or at least interest, in our theme.

6. Introducing school 1

The empirical material for the present article is derived from one of the DiSko Circle 1 project schools, hereafter referred to as School 1. This is a primary school with 230 pupils situated in a semi-rural community in western Norway. The case participants are two classes of fifth-graders (11 years old); their teachers, Laura and Irene; their music teacher, Ole; the visiting musician, Eric, and members of the DiSko research team.

The empirical material for this article was collected over three semesters. The first semester was a mapping semester in which researchers observed classes and meetings and interviewed teachers. In the second (intervention) semester, the musician, Eric, visited the same two classes eight times for two hours each time. In the third (pilot) semester, he made five visits.

6.1. Project actions at school 1

Eric first presented himself to the pupils with a concert in which he played his own compositions and other music he liked. Then, he pronounced the class his band and took them into his world. During the next few weeks, pupils composed music and produced texts, negotiating under Eric's direction. The teachers and Eric met after each intervention and communicated between meetings. Between visits, Eric edited the texts and smoothed pupils' music and then proposed songs derived from diverse pupils' work. The music teacher, Ole, and the pupils rehearsed songs and practiced playing instruments. Ole also helped the pupils to send ideas and sound files to Eric. At the beginning of the pilot semester, Eric, Ole, the teachers (Laura and Irene) and the pupils began rehearsing for a concert 'because that is part of what singer-songwriters do'¹⁰ (DiSko observation sheet, School 1, 03/12/2017). The main performative unit was a choir. Pupils moved in and out of it to play diverse instruments or sing in smaller groups. Eric took on an accompanying role and supported pupils musically. Laura, Irene and the pupils produced decorations and rehearsed movements and performance behaviour. They invited next year's first-graders as well as all pupils and teachers to a performance one morning. The same evening, the performance was repeated for the pupils' parents, siblings and grandparents.

7. Analysis and discussion

In the following, I address the specific conditions for dialogue at School 1 by discussing aspects of chronotope, carnival and polyphony. The categories overlap and are interwoven with each other, but each of them highlights certain thematic aspects of the material. My handling of chronotope involves time and place (Holquist, 2003) as well as participants' topoi, and I address two main issues: professional topoi contributing to the construction of DiSko at School 1 and time. In relation to carnival, I discuss creativity and its preconditions in connection to this special case. Maintaining polyphony can keep a practice diverse, multi-faceted and open. My discussion is centred around the consequences of restraining or promoting polyphony as well as polyphony's impact on a project's choices and analysis.

7.1. Chronotope elements

Chronotope addresses issues of time and space: TCR and the DiSko project and its cases are situated in a specific place and time, namely, in 2018 in a small, sparsely populated, newly rich European country in the far north. School 1 is affected by this as well as by its own history, the current sociocultural situation and the specific group of human agents at the school.

School 1, despite politically steered, results-oriented school policies, seems to have maintained a way of working that values and utilises aesthetic utterances and methods by class teachers. In an interview, one teacher said the following:

At our school, we always start the day with singing; we sing every day, regardless of school subject. I teach pupils songs, so they can sing them by heart. For every year, I make the tasks more demanding, and try to find music that fits their age, but I also use traditional songs that have been with us for a long time. I think they should know them. (Teacher Interview, School 1, 06/06/2017)

The music teacher, Ole, is a pupil-oriented teacher with a pragmatic approach to music teaching. At the beginning of the project, he said, 'I must admit that I have adjusted the curriculum towards the interests of different pupil groups to utilize the potential and pupil's initiatives, and of course, to make use of the things I know I'm good at' (Holdhus & Espeland, 2017, p. 31).

When responding to the initial interview questions, Ole displayed irritation towards traditional visiting concerts. He didn't want to spend time preparing for visits; rather, he wanted to teach and let pupils be active. He said, 'but of course, a collaboration with musicians around a concert will be a resource in a completely different way than just a one-off visit' (Holdhus & Espeland, 2017, p. 29).

During the project, Ole has been working hard to enable pupils to complete tasks. In the interview mentioned above, he expressed a kind of professional loneliness as the music teacher at School 1. The project may have given him a chance to discuss and make music with an equal colleague.

The musician-teacher collaboration at School 1 seems to display respect for both individuals' viewpoints due to the professionalism of diverse participants' discourses. An example of this is the two class teachers' trajectories through the project. They first

¹⁰ Material cited from field notes, personal communication, DiSkoDiSko reports and interviews is translated from Norwegian.

appeared passive but increasingly contributed to the design and enactment of the project as time went by. At team meetings, their classroom observations brought forth important information.

DiSko researchers have noted class teachers' function during project activities:

Laura is almost invisible in the classroom when Eric is present; however, she has great care for her class and makes small contributions when she views it necessary. For instance, she hugged one of the inactive boys and asked: 'Are you having a good time?' And when another inactive boy sat shaking his hands hectically for several minutes, she went over to him quietly and stopped it in a calm and discrete way. (DiSko observation sheet, 17/11/2017)

In my view, the class teachers caused pupils to feel seen and cared for. I think these contributions would have been difficult for the musician and music teacher because they did not have intimate knowledge of the pupils in question. The class teachers possessed the pedagogical tact (Shulman, 1986) required to act on pupils' signals.

Class teachers' observations were discussed with Eric and Ole during meetings, and Laura and Irene's observations continuously provided the group with important information about pupils' social relations. Polyphony emerged as a result of respect for the groundings for each participant's role as well as the craft required to fulfil that role (e.g. for a teacher to know about pupils' vulnerabilities and troubles and help the team by taking care of them). This contribution of care indicates the presence of aesthetic relations (Bourriaud, 2002; Vist & Holdhus, 2018) that might be salient to aesthetic enterprises involving children.

Diverse professional topoi represent valuable resources in a visiting music partnership, and they can be achieved by acknowledging polyphony through equity-based collaboration (Bresler, 2010; Christophersen, 2013; Eidsaa, 2018). I believe the professional, but pragmatic, approach to music and other types of art utilised by teachers in everyday aesthetic learning processes (Austriing & Sørensen, 2006) contributes to the construction of an enabling context (Craft, 2010) for DiSko at School 1.

The selected musician, Eric, seemed to reinforce this concept. Eric has national success with his recorded music. In addition to his music career, he is an educated teacher. Eric's discourse when working at School 1 is different from that of a traditional visiting musician. Upon agreeing to participate in DiSko, Eric claimed that he wanted to work in a facilitating way: 'From the moment I said yes to this project, I have emphasized that process is the most important. The development is the interesting thing here' (Holdhus & Espeland, 2017, p. 50). At School 1, he functions as a contextually oriented musician:

He improvises and composes on the spot, he can make use of pupils' ideas and make them function in the musical context. He shows a great repertoire of strategies, and he also displays musically how he thinks and why he thinks things should sound the way he wants. Democracy and participation seem to be fundamentally interwoven in the process. However, Eric is the one who makes final decisions. (DiSko research note, 03/11/2017)

Let us consider the last sentence in the above quote: 'Eric is the one who makes final decisions'. A facilitating musician needs to possess an overview of the project in order to subtly steer participants' resources in a direction that contributes to the fulfilment of an idea. Thygesen (2009) notes that 'staging' is one skill possessed by a performative artist; participants can contribute, but it is the professional artist's responsibility to stage the contributions in a way that makes the enterprise aesthetic. Eric's way of working is similar to a methodology of creative teaching and learning (Craft, Cremin, Hay, & Clack, 2013) that fits well into the pedagogic rationale that already seems to be present at School 1.

The musician's weekly visits to the same rooms over a period of time contrasts with a one-off system. After four semesters of research, I find that spending time together contributes to the establishment of dialogic musical meetings because dialogic experiences must have an opportunity to grow that connects with the amount of time spent together. At School 1, the core of the process was the planned meetings between the teachers and musician. This frame offered an increasingly more significant arena in which all parties' agency could be revealed and connected. The musician wants to transmit music, the teachers want to teach music and social skills and the pupils want to create, be listened to, interact and have fun. To establish relations, dialogue, mutual respect and the necessary trust (Holdhus, 2018) to be creative in an artistic partnership of this kind demands time. Thus, such collaborations would benefit if musicians could research the school environment before any project starts, both to get acquainted with the school and to observe the school's 'spirit' and, on that basis, develop and adjust artistic ideas for the particular context of the upcoming collaborations. Such suggestions can be found in Kester's (2004) writings, which touch upon Foster's 'artistic ethnographies' (Foster, 1995) that see artwork as site-specific, heteronomic, relational and dialogic (Jackson, 2011; Rasmussen, 2015). A music workshop conducted at School 1 can be seen as a pedagogical enterprise, but it is also possible to comprehend it as a time- and-site-specific piece of art that cannot be repeated exactly the same way (Fischer-Lichte, 2008).

7.2. *Have fun, be brave!*

In the classroom, four boys wrestle wildly while the keyboard girl sits at her desk drawing a dog playing with a balloon. The guitar girl jumps into the classroom, tossing a long-sought-after guitar plectrum on her desk. The boys now conduct a drama where they lie on the floor shivering, as more pupils pour into the room, spreading their arms flying, dancing and mock-singing. (DiSko observation sheet, 11/03/2018)

I found many aspects of carnival in pupils' behaviour during the project, especially when they were immersed in the group and project activities and felt safe, as in the above situation that was observed during a break.

The results of 'mapping' schools prior to the project revealed information about the pupils (Holdhus & Espeland, 2017). They seem to listen to music often using YouTube and Spotify, and they use the Internet and apps to communicate musically and otherwise.

One of their favourite subjects at school is music. Pupils' life-worlds may contribute to dialogue as urges to be physically active, interact, contribute or create—or to have fun. However, we found a type of fear connected to the subject of music (Holdhus & Espeland, 2017). The music teacher, Ole, explains:

Pupils are exposed during music lessons; it is visible and sounding what you do, you get focused. There is an anxiety factor. So, a pupil that might pass under the radar by doing almost nothing in a Norwegian-lesson will be revealed in music. (DiSko music teacher interview, 04/05/2017)

The social climate among pupils seems to be of great importance to music at school—and to carnival:

Pupil groups that can play almost on a professional level one week, can be totally lost the next lesson. The social play among pupils, if there has been a row or an incident in the group, has a huge impact. (DiSko music teacher interview, 04/05/2017)

Both the above examples highlight trust as a reoccurring issue. Acting carnivalesque seems to depend on an ability or craft connected with the activities in question (Holdhus, 2018). However, as the second example points out, in a class of 11-year-olds, this safe playground is unstable and needs to be attended to by a skilled teacher with explicit knowledge about the group (Craft, 2010). This also would comprise daring to ridicule power.

Even under the school regime, with its implicit tensions between pupils and teachers, and being subject to an ever-changing class climate, pupils in the project took creative risks, thus exposing their vulnerabilities. As a group, they contributed to the project's carnival to a great degree, while adults did not act carnivalesque in the same way. The school context, newly established teacher–musician relationship or involvement in a serious research project may have restricted adults' participation in carnival (Biesta, 2015). White (2014), p. 909 claims that teachers' 'role in carnivalesque lies in their ability to recognize its potential for personhood, to provide a platform from which subjective engagement may be launched, and to act as a counterpoint for humour through juxtaposition and incongruity'.

In DiSko, pupils' ideas were constantly drawn into the work-in-progress due to true interactivity (Nielsen, 2011) and pedagogical improvisation (Sawyer, 2011) by adults. The pedagogy employed by the teachers and musician can thus be described as creative negotiation with a hint of carnival. White highlights teachers' carnivalesque way of facilitating pupils' actions, however teachers' and musicians' conditions for acting carnivalesque in the musician–teacher partnership are interesting for DiSko researchers: How is it possible to enhance creativity by the collaborating adults?

Participating pupils viewed working with a live musician as something different than the ordinary school path. When pupils Sophie and Ellen were asked about the project, they told me they liked it very much. However, their answer to my question 'Why?' was, 'Because it is a memory' (personal communication, 27/04/2018). My interpretation of their answer is that they didn't believe that something like this project would be part of their everyday school life in the future. The answer shows that the project stood out as something different to them, which means that the collaboration between the pupils, musician and teachers did create an aesthetic experience off the beaten path (Dewey, 1934).

7.3. Polyphony – towards real dialogues?

The project at School 1 was, first and foremost, process-oriented, but it also resulted in a frontal concert at the end of the project, with a pop-song-like repertoire composed by pupils. Dialogues and aesthetic enterprises throughout the project lead to a touching communal experience that was enhanced by the presence of pupils' relatives. As such, this concert can be seen as a true manifestation of Small's (2011) 'musicking'; everybody who was there had a share in what was presented from stage, through their relations with the pupils.

I must admit, I was carried away by this experience. However, it did not seem especially radical to me. Rather, it seemed like the participants had been working to accomplish something new that was still interwoven with the old. This is how Bakhtin views discourse: as always containing both the old and the new and being forever in motion due to the strengthening or fading of forces (Bakhtin, 1981). People, practices and polyphony are elements constructing discourse. To try and change artistic enterprises and their valuation from autonomic to heteronomic and from monologic to dialogic might appear as a slow, on-going process.

I wonder if polyphony was subdued by consensus in the case of School 1. What would have happened if we, as researchers, had intervened with a decision regarding the choice of musician(s) and tried to establish a dialogue between the school and, for example, a free jazz collective, a group of refined classical musicians or musicians from India? And what about the results? Would the teachers have participated as eagerly if the researchers or musician had insisted on more non-traditional artistic forms? What if options were the production of an outdoor soundscape or site-specific musical happenings all over school? What if we had insisted on pupils taking the lead?

DiSko researchers can facilitate polyphony by deliberately creating school teams that are diverse in their topological stances on pedagogy and aesthetics. Polyphony will contribute to creative dialogue due to its potential for carnival, but there is the potential for conflict when groups and individuals with contrasting epistemological topoi negotiate. If voices come forth as radically opposed, there is a risk of cacophony instead of polyphony. Arranging for conflicting groups to develop and complete musical workshops might not be productive for DiSko, who aims to produce prototypes for dialogic-based workshops. However, in the end, are all these arguments excuses? Is there a danger of creating idyllic consensus (Bishop, 2004)? Should the project aim to be more daring?

In any case, DiSko researchers should explicitly allow a large amount of ideas to flourish and be developed within the partnerships we arrange. Could emphasising adults' participation in carnival be a path forward (Irving & Young, 2002)? This raises new questions: How can we encourage carnival among adults in the project, and how can we help musicians negotiate music and creative approaches

off the beaten path without compromising dialogue and polyphony?

The discussion of potentially aesthetically radical results touches upon the issue of ownership. Am I, as an analysing and engaged researcher, in a position to judge the project's outcome at School 1 if the project actions make aesthetic meaning and grant ownership and the power of definition to participants? The issue of ownership necessarily involves assigning the power of definition to the actual participants (Pierce et al., 2003). Locally, then, the answer to the above question must be 'no'. What happened at School 1 belongs to the participants, and not to me as a researcher. This enables a radical take on DiSko's general project aims. When class teachers at School 1 cared for the pupils, some would describe these actions as aesthetic acts, moving towards Vist and Holdhus's (2018) claim that care and intersubjectivity are characteristics of relational aesthetics. To a large degree, this issue of care replaces the view of art as artefact and product and points at art as a relation in which participants are enclosed, leaving 'process' and 'product' as parameters of an aesthetic enterprise. As a consequence of this, I must ask myself whether I am actually valuing the aesthetic intersubjectivity that ultimately must characterise relational and dialogical aesthetics (Bourriaud, 2002; Kester, 2004).

All these questions may point at polyphony concerning the DiSko project itself: Should DiSko aim to address a polyphony of results? Should we strive to facilitate radical products and controversial relations on the one hand while working towards local ownership by acknowledging care and intersubjectivity as aesthetic outcomes on the other?

8. Writer's coda

In this article, analysis of the researchers' positions has been downplayed. This is because of the complexity it would have brought into the analysis and text. Although the DiSko researchers have contributed to this article to a large degree, I dominate the present text as its writer, with my choice of case, composition of the text, and explicit interest in urging a change in the view of how artists approach schools. I also may add my vulnerability.

Adopting a Bakhtinian, dialogistic view of one of the cases in our design research project has deepened my understanding of dialogue's function as epistemological grounding for the project and revealed to me its multiple layers, intertwining questions and non-conclusiveness as virtues. Viewing empirical data in terms of dialogue, chronotope, carnival and polyphony has yielded this result. However, other analytic choices would have certainly revealed important aspects of DiSko that these parameters cannot. As such, the project's polyphony encourages us to use various analytic tools, even if dialogue will always be the epistemological grounding of the project.

I hope it will be possible for others to use the discussion and analysis of the project experiences described in this text to plan collaborations between teachers and musicians (or other artists). However, due to the constant ambiguity and becoming in the world, ways of the discussed case as well as the analytic approaches in this article must be regarded as suggestions or tentative ways of conducting artist-teacher collaborations and how to research them.

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