Involving communication for children – Through art based methods

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Motivation and purpose
This project focusses on new ways of communicating and designing networks between cultural institutions and knowledge institutions. The purpose is to facilitate participatory cultural experiences with the aim of inspiring and motivating children and youth to actively participate in developing and testing various cultural activities. The project is a collaboration between The Art Museum, The Historical Museum and Theater, and University College Nordjylland (UCN) represented by Social Education Studies and the Natural and Cultural Education program, and furthermore a district school and daycare institution. All are situated in the municipality of Hjoerring. The purpose of the project is to develop pedagogical designs supporting a participatory pedagogy that include children and youth.

Content
The purpose of this design is to qualify the practical methods that the cultural communicators and social educators require while working with children meeting art and culture and hereby allowing the involved parties to actively contribute in reflective processes using their senses, dynamically creating esthetic knowledge. Children’s access to cultural institutions can hereby be improved by working together through network and cooperation. Furthermore, the results of the project will be implemented in the educational curriculum for pedagogues.

Bases of the project:
Due to the fact that social education studies is Denmark’s largest education, and that social educators are professional communicators of culture in all corners of Denmark, it only seems natural and expedient that the University College participate in collaboration with cultural institutions. Over the years, artistic and cultural subjects have been reduced in social education studies, and this has created a need for more collaboration with professional artists and cultural institutions. This collaboration can ensure that the experience of presence and “magic” that children meet, when they are exposed to arts and culture, is maintained and processed, strengthening personal growth, moral education and learning in children.
**Theoretical approach:**
The theoretical approach for the project is based on Jerome Bruner’s cultural understanding and inspired by the following which has been freely translated:

"It is first and foremost through our narratives that we construct a version of ourselves in the world and it is through our narratives that a culture gives its members models for identity and action."  
(Bruner 1998: 43) The Culture of Education

and Astring and Sørensen’s three ways of knowledge understanding as the foundation of learning:

“These three ways of learning (the discursive, the esthetical and the empirical) are to be thought as equals and are hereby just as important.” (Astring and Sørensen, 2010: 86)

**The news value of the project:**
The innovative approach of the project is that of the formalized networking and cooperation between UCN, the pedagogy education, daycare and schools and cultural communicators. The designs that are developed in the project are also expected to have news value.

**Evaluation of the project:**
UCN will evaluate the pedagogical development possibly in cooperation with the University of Aalborg along with follow-up research in relations to the project.