Essay Material

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1. Introduction

How can collaborative projects with a nonhierarchical structure affect the engagement and expectations of the participant(s)?

The focus in this research is on human interests that are shared within collaborative projects working with a nonhierarchical structure. Which conditions makes people want to work together and share common interests about things that they are passionate about. What makes people feel engaged and interested when they collaborate within a nonhierarchical structure. And how are the expectations of each participant created by different collaborative projects.

Most of the human interests can be categorized, some of the interests belong to mainstream culture and others are part of a specific subculture. According to sociology, anthropology and cultural studies a subculture is defined as a group of people with a culture which differentiates them from the larger culture to which they belong. There are a lot of different subcultures, in each subculture there is a different symbolism attached to clothing, music and other visible behavior by members of subcultures. Within these subcultures people are experiencing, learning, sharing and working together on shared interests. The shared activities or often in the form of projects. Projects that are interesting for this research are the ones that work with a nonhierarchical structure. This means that there is no vertical structure of power, decision-making and responsibility is distributed in a horizontal matter. The focus in on sharing, exchange and collective experience within projects working with this organization structure.

To keep every participant motivated in a collaborative project it is useful to know what the shared or collective goal is. The shared aim within a project can work as a a trigger to make every participant feel engaged. Another trigger to start participation can be the collective experience during a project. To know what makes participants feel engaged collaborative projects are organized involving different shared aims. The collective experience and expectations of the participants are documented. This shows if participants feel engaged within the projects that work with a different collective aim. And how expectations change from the start and end of each project. The outcome of the project is created and influenced by every participant, the group is the author instead of a single person.

2. Background infomation

Looking at the mail art and going trough the history of happenings, experimental music and collaborative art projects gives an insight on different ways to experience participation. To understand and test out different ways of collaboration it is useful to look and understand the roots of collaboration in art projects. Collaboration is described in the dictionary (freedictionary.com) as a process where to or more people work together to realize shared goals. In collaborative art projects the artist can experiment with the process of creation, destruction and experience of the participants. Participants can re-interpret the information or task about a project or event. This reinterpretation can develop into unknown direction or unexpected outcome. To keep the possibly of open interpretation the project has to be open for changes by the participants. In the past visitors of museum's and art spaces are looking at images and objects. The artist Allen Kaprow takes art beyond the visible aspect and invites participants for physical engagement. The visitor experiences the work from Allen Kaprow as a participant instead of a spectator. The work can be experienced and take place anywhere, not only in art galleries, concert hall or cultural. The work of Allen Kaprow is focussed on changing the relation between the artist and observers. Observers can interact and become party of the artwork by participating. Participation is defined and used in many different ways. Participation is described in the dictionary (freedictionary.com) as the act of

sharing in the activities of a group. Different elements can trigger or influence the way people participate. Sharing the successes and challenges and the feeling of being co-owner can stimulate the involvement of the participants.

"Artists have increasingly sought to create situations and events that invite spectators to become an active participant, in dialogue both with their context and with each other. This aspect of contribution is visible engaging the viewer as a consumer and
a producer, giving the viewer the power to kill or sustain/feed a project."
(Claire Bischop, 2006, PARTICIPATION, back cover)

The process during the collaboration can become more important than the outcome.

Most of the participants will always have expectations, about what is most likely going to happen. This is caused mostly by the fact that something is uncertain and can be influenced by previous life experiences. A collaborative project can have a surprise element, or lead to disappointment. It all depends on the project and the knowledge and background of the participants. The artist can play with these conditions if it knows about the expectations of the participants. The approach towards a subject or project can change by learning from the process during the collaboration.

Setting up a situation for self expression of the individual within a collaborative project.

"Noise is best defined as Interference, block transmission, jams the code, prevents sense being made" (Simon Reynolds ,Audio Culture, page 55)

"When you do life consciously life becomes pretty strange" (Allan Karpow, Essays on the bluring of art and life, page 195)

4. Statement of the question or Problem
State the question, assert that this question remains unanswered , argue why this question is worth answering at all

5. Presentation of my work
Show all relevant evidence to support my position

6. Conclusion
Conclusions drawn from my work a summary of the contributions my thesis hase made
A prospect of future research (new and original contributions)
Share my thoughts as to how your thesis can serve as the starting point for future research.

7. References
- Claire Bischop (2006) PARTICIPATION, Whitechapel, The MIT Press
- Annet Dekker (2010) Clickable art, or, what does online participation mean?
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- Adrian Henri (1974) Environments and Happenings, Thames and Hudson LTD
- Cristoph Cox and Daniel Warner(2008) Audio Culture readings in modern music, The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc.
- Herve Fischer(1974) Art et communication marginale, Balland