

I am 15 when I drop out of school because I am too eager to learn and what I learn in school seems, to me, entirely fruitless, idle or outright absurd. I am certain of this in ways in which you can only be certain about your ways, when you are 15. Self-professedly poised, but in all likelihood irritatingly nonchalant in my unwarranted pubescent confidence as I inform my parents I am leaving school and I am leaving home for heutagogical exploration. By that I just mean learning by doing, learning by learning about doing and then undoing that learning to learn what I'll actually be doing, which is frankly what I am still doing, now. By then I was not aware of the concept of auto-didacticism and even though I am now, I like the idea of being 'unschooled'.

'Unschooled' is an austere simple term lacking sophistication, lacking scholarly pondus, but I disagree with the strongest synonym-match - 'uneducated', because to be erudite, versed and studious can come from other sources than one in which you are taught. I have been thinking a lot recently about my own high school dropout-ism, my de-scholarification as it were, as I had to outline my non-existent qualifications on the many empty lines left for me to be filled out on a sheet of administrative process of enrolling me as a teacher at an art school, the kunsthochschule where I now teach, just for a semester, hardly tenure, but just about long enough for me to nestle it into the punchline of this anecdotal prelude to my text about thoughts about learning.

As inverted pedagogy, a concept in which you learn as a child, I learned so much about myself by becoming a mother. Which is even more paradoxical because becoming a mother is a kind of fully-fledged eradication of self. First you're brutally torn from your ego, whose deathrattle you can hardly hear because it is drowned out by the voice that is your pain, that is your voice, you are the pain, and you are no longer and never not the same as before you experienced that pain, which I've since learned is equivalent to breaking every single bone in your body simultaneously, of which we have 206, which seems to me, even though I can't do maths, a correct calculation.

I learned, by this becoming, that there is so much stuff I don't care about, and that I should stop paying attention to, and, or, do things, that I don't care about. Things and feelings and events which now hold so little importance, so little sway on my value system of life, that it seems a wonder that I ever made space for it at all, and ample space at that. This sounds like a simple lesson, a cheap lesson, a fortune cookie kind of lesson. But it cost me the pain of 206 broken bones, which to be honest seems a little low now that I think about it, so I can truthfully say it's the most painstaking lesson I've ever learned.

I find the concept of experts difficult, this of course depends on the expert and their expertise.

I can't lie, I won't lie about biases towards knowledge, but we live in complex times for self-gathered knowledge and information and stating them as facts.

Quasi-authorities,

Quasi-connoisseurs,

Quasi-maestros,

Quasi-masters, virtuosos, specialists, superlatives,

Quasi-crackerjack-besserwissers.

But just because you're an amateur doesn't mean you're a dilettante.

I get giddy about reading, which is almost always a form of learning, no matter how unintentional. Giddy, nutty, ditzy, batty, I get infatuated-kind-of-happy, sharply inhaling while I look at you read, because I can hear the words that come out of your mouth, kind of happy. Ingesting text, words, stories, narration, even holding books, finding the perfect height in which it sits on a pillow piled up on your chest as you recline, double chin deep in a half lethargic but attentive, until you're not, until you're in fact asleep, because you found a way to be entirely submerged under your duvet whilst holding the book just so - somehow cantilevered in a position so that even awake you know you're about to be asleep-kind of mode, is the most delicious delight of all.

I get equally excited about writing, the best of which I do half asleep, too tired to become half awake, reach for a pen and note it down, because in this process I'll lose something of the writing which is what makes it the best of it. I wrote the first version of this text half asleep on Monday night and it was far superior to the one I am reading you now, finished this morning, but began the same way, except in my half dreaming sleep I caveat the reading by first apologising for not apologising for this text being too long, which one could psychoanalyse if one had an inclination do such things, then saying that first of all I would like to thank Shahin Zarinbal, and that everyone should get a gallerist who wouldn't stop short of holding your hair as you vomit throughout a two day drive to Italy with food poisoning, because you decided to show 3 meter tall works to which he said, of course, but then realise that the more appropriate complement-anecdote for the evening might be to say you should get yourself a gallerist who spends 2 euros on your daughter riding the tu-tu-train AND the motorcycle in the entrance of Edeka, whereas I usually just tell her to get in and "use her imagination".

I think a lot about hidden circumstances that we learn nothing of, that we could learn so much from, that gets polished away, but within this, is where the human lies. And in this soft, supple, sometimes thorny material is solidly stuck that which we relate to, on a level which surpasses theory and stark, clean, cold information. I talk to my students about this, how we can relate to each other and each other's work by understanding the circumstances of the work, but also of the person, the inevitably complex nexus which is the intersection between the person and the work. A in-between, not as a corridor, as the direct route to the destination, but as an-inbetween as a destination, in Swedish we call it '*mellanrum*' which is one of my favourite words, but when I translate it to middleroom it loses what I love about it and becomes physical instead of philosophical.

This *mellanrum* is the burrowing of a messy hole, made with the wrong tool, then, adding brute force to fit a plug within and finally, with an ever so slightly too big or too small screw bit, attempt to assemble the whole thing seamlessly whilst the machine won't grip and sharply with each turn, grinds the star shaped edges down to the point where removing it again becomes an impossibility and you're left with this triumphant failure of craftsmanship in what you hoped might be a polished surface.

I had thought of a great anecdote as a prelude to me quoting myself in German, from another time that I read a text for Luzie Meyer, which was that I went to a reading and discussion the other day where Jenny Willner through her talk about political death in exile speaks of Peter Weiss's obituary which was written by, and

now I forget her name and have to message Joel Scott who translated The aesthetic of resistance and he tells me it was Weiss's Swedish translator, Ulrika Wallenström, who Jenny Willner, the assistant professor at the Department for Comparative Literature at the Ludwig Maximilians University in Munich, tells us, quotes her own translation in the obituary for Peter Weiss. It's an unevenly borrowed hole made with the wrong drillbit which ends up looking sharp as a button.

In 'ganz voll wenn es fehlt', the text I end up writing in German, even though I barely speak it, for Luzie's audience at Kunsthalle Bremerhaven says -

*“Unter der Korrektheit, die der perfekten Aussprache erliegt, ist der Sinnfehler begraben.*

*Der ganz normale Luxus der Zunge.*

*Ich strebe nicht die ultra raffinierte kuratierte Syntax an, sondern erlaube stattdessen den Fehler, etwas Raum, etwas Pracht.*

*Da ich nicht möchte, dass meine Sprache in der Maschinerie verloren geht und an Ort und Stelle geschämt wird, möchte ich dem Fehler einen guten Ruf geben.*

*Feiern Sie Pannen, Fehltritte, Fehlübersetzungen, den tauben und aus dem Schritt geratenen Mund.*

*Überall gibt es Fehler!*

*Aber ich lasse sie herein, da die Erhabenheit des verfeinerns und endlosen Übens bis zu einem Punkt, an dem Fehler nicht mehr gesehen oder gehört werden, wie ein Gegenmittel zu meinem Alltag und seinen chaotisch überladenen Oberflächen erscheint.*

*Und das verborgene Material des Küchentheken-Realismus hat einen starken Charme, der genutzt werden kann, da es zuordenbar ist.”*

So I don't mind telling you that it's now 11.25 the day of the show. The work in this show is not ready, the text is evidently not written and whilst my dearest and most stunning friend Adrienne has two fabulous outfits planned, I ask her to bring me something to wear since I'll surely end up a ground down star shape, wearing my install clothes to the opening.

Speaking of 2 euro rides, the Nobel prize winner in literature now gets almost exactly a million euros. Back in 1964 it was 250 000 Swedish krona which is 22 000 euros in today's money which is practically nothing in comparison, well it's not nothing, it's a tonne of money but very little in comparison to today's standard, which itself is baroque. *Money money money, money money money money*, that's an Adrienne Herr quote.

When Sartre rejected the Nobel prize in 1964 he said that he had been “tortured” by the amount of money with which the prize comes.

“Either one accepts the prize and with the prize money can support organisations or movements one considers important – my own thoughts went to the Apartheid

committee in London,” he said. “Or else one declines the prize on generous principles, and thereby deprives such a movement of badly needed support.

“But I believe this to be a false problem. I obviously renounce the 250,000 crowns because I do not wish to be institutionalised in either East or West. But one cannot be asked on the other hand to renounce, for 250,000 crowns, principles which are not only one’s own, but are shared by all one’s comrades. That is what has made so painful for me both the awarding of the prize and the refusal of it I am obliged to make.”

but

“The writer who accepts an honour of this kind involves as well as himself the association or institution which has honoured him,” he said at the time. “The writer must therefore refuse to let himself be transformed into an institution, even if this occurs under the most honourable circumstances, as in the present case.”

Despite the eternal gesture Sartre doesn’t seem to have intended the kind of provocation one wishes for in avant-garde maneuvers of refusal, and we’re left with an apologetic slippage from the mere navigation away from crisis, negotiating the legitimacy of the nomination. I say this only because he didn’t know he was nominated and states clearly in a letter that he wished he had known beforehand so he could have quietly slipped away. A french exit in place of a grand gesture that it became. But then the lack of more stereotypical protest is not necessarily the presence of an ineffective one. This particular one, even though its volume unintended, has carved out a hollow in our modern history of literature and acts of protest through it.

When speaking of “becoming transformed into an institution” perhaps it’s easy to forget the fact that Nobel invented dynamite, thus the gentleman’s portemonnaie is that of a weapons dealer so it’s really not a far fetched narrative to say that it is a prize invented by the cultural-industrial complex.

There are thus gaps in the work, because the work is in the gaps. The absence of books is the presence of war, or the presence of objection. Gaps for wars needs no allegory for the fact that art does not happen in a vacuum, and the Jean Paul Sartre breath of space, means precisely the same.

But resisting the sectioning of self into the culture-production relentlessly in its pursuit for conformity can put one in a state of crisis when attempting artistic meaning production.

In a gap nothing happens for something to be able to occur, it is the said as much as the unsaid. Just as gaps in records are a way of determining time, redactions are also information.

But how to write about the current gap, hole, chasm, crisis critically when the crisis of criticality has already written itself over and over again throughout the gap. I’ve written about it at length, quite frankly I am having a criticality quasi-quasi-crisis.

When deciding on the background colour for the invitation for this show we decided between a kind of 90’s petrol blue and a foam-like light yellow and went with yellow cause it was ‘happier’. Is this a verifiable political efficacy of a critical negativity - turning to happiness?

Or is happiness baroque because of its contrasts? Within the aesthetics of resistance could a laughter which starts out as a cackle, chuckle, chortle, which is perhaps my favourite - a soft partly suppressed laugh - but grows into a bellowing laughter before shrinking into the kind of soundless laughter which leaves your stomach in a spasming cramp, be an act of resistance? A resilience to misery, malaise and melancholy?

Since good vibrations is not only a beach boys kind of happy go lucky concept but an actual proven scientific technique of positive resonance can we learn to love as a strategic technique to put a spanner in the works of the spread of hate? It sounds banal and postcard maxim-esque but when one has exhausted one's intellectual faculties can we just hug?

I think of Pauline Oliveros' concept of Deep Listening when I think about learning. Which is listening to everything all the time, and reminding yourself when you're not. But going below the surface too, it's an active process. It's not passive, as in hearing is passive in that sound waves hinge upon the eardrum, but you can do both. You can focus and be receptive to your surroundings. If you're tuned out, then you're not in contact with your surroundings. You have to process what you hear. Hearing and listening are not the same thing.

So could one drown out what we hear in order to listen better?

Unni walks into my room and immediately observes my late night theft from her snack cupboard which stores all the things she loves as well as all the things she is not allowed to eat yet, synthetic candy which gives to me and says "Please save this for when I am older". Her whole premise of "older" is candy! (exclamation point). "I see you had a bag of wotsits" Wotsits come in small snack sized bags from the uk, and are Unni's favourite niggles, but despite their clever name, spelled phonetically, w-o-t-s-i-t-s, they are essentially cheese doodles. I chortle, heartily.

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