

The Necessity of Big Beautiful Mistakes

Gro Rødne - Johanna Gullberg

There is a well-known need for innovative ways of tackling the burning challenges of today. Complex problem solving, critical thinking and creativity are key competences for the future according to World Economic Forum, 2020. It is therefore problematic that we all – not least architecture students – are embedded in friction-free systems and technologies that cloud the complexities of urgent issues. Friction, risk-taking and mistakes are at the core of true experimentation which in turn is a prerequisite for achieving innovation. The students must therefore train experimental skills and confidence in risk-taking for architecture to keep its societal relevance.

The educational milieu Making is Thinking (MT) at NTNU in Trondheim has worked on these issues for a decade: To interrupt architects' habits by hands-on techniques and approaches such as bricolage and performance in collaboration with other professions. MT also investigates educational aspects of experimentation by applying action research models and theories of transformative learning. We challenge the students to engage in societal issues and deal with risks in real-life experimentations. The aim is to feel at home in complex and uncertain situations in an environment where mistakes are recognized as a necessity and liberating laughter serves as creative trigger.

Our collaborators have been a variety of stakeholders such as actors from the cultural field, children, prison inmates and the theatre company Cirka Teater.

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