

The design process as a way to increase participation in a research project about the art world

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Abstract

This paper describes a design project that is used as a way of enhancing participation in an ongoing research project about the role of the artist in relation to digital media. This is achieved in two ways. First the design process is used as a means to concretize abstract theories through a practical case. The design thus function as a way of transforming the informants into participants in the research process contributing not only with empiric material but also in the analysis. Second, as a way to coordinate the design and expand the group of participants, we design a collaborative tool that mirrors the complex and dynamic system of the art world. In this tool a common assumption about equality as the base for participation is challenged; instead hierarchy is used as a way to motivate participation.

The result of the design process is; 1) Design guidelines drawn from theories about the art world. 2) A beta-version of a groupware that visualizes structuring processes.

The beta-version of the groupware uses a Wiki-like interface for discussion and collaboration, combined with a score level meter that shows the individual activities in relation to the total amount of activity. Participants are scored both for the level of their own activity and the score others put on this work. Scoring is done constantly and in different ways: Linking, commenting, liking/disliking, and rating. Just as in the art world co-branding is an important part of the scoring system, and the individual score level changes when the score value changes for the attached users. As a way to formalize the informal rules the system creates a visualization of the individual strategies in relation to others. The visualization of the score level also creates a kind of gaming experience that clarifies the strategies involved for achieving a higher score, and can serve as a way to motivate participation in the short run.

1. Introduction

In this iterative research and design project the contemporary identity construction of the artist is the starting point for investigation. The practices at the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm are put in context through participatory methods.

In a previous study of the subject 50 art students' mediation on-line as artists was the empirical data (Hansson, 2010). The study shows a picture where two competing concepts of the artist create uncertainty about how an artist should be: either the romantic concept of the genius artist or the institutional concept of the artist who is collectively created by the art world's institutions. In the current study a so-called research circle was initially formed as a way to give participants an opportunity to feed back and question the previous findings, and as a consequence taking the research a step further.

A research circle is an action-oriented method where the participants research their own situation together with a researcher. This is of course not done without problems, to use scientific theory and method is a craft not so easily made transparent, and without prior experience of the culture at an academic seminar participants can easily feel uncomfortable. *Not everyone has an opportunity to embrace abstract theories*, which becomes a problem when trying to transform the informant to a co-researcher.

An overview of the critique against participatory research in development studies shows problems due to unspoken norms of community, and an ignorance of the different interests and diversity found in most groups (Cooke & Kothari, 2001). The understandings of why people tend to participate are also vague, and simplistic assumptions are made about the rationality of participation (Ibid). Winschiers-Theophilus, Bidwell, & Blake claims that the underlying western norm of democracy in participatory research can diminish participation in a global setting. Their research shows how participation in a South African context takes place thanks to an adaption of the local hierarchic participatory culture (Winschiers-Theophilus, Bidwell, & Blake, 2010). Obviously it is problematic that *equality is an underlying norm in the participatory research paradigm and seen as something that will get people to participate*. Here the researcher poses a norm of democracy on what is researched, imposing that the social structure of the situation is unwanted by the participants, and something that will affect the outcome of the research.

As an answer to the first problem, we have in this research used a design process as a means to make abstract theories more concrete. In this design process we challenge the second problem by suggesting that inequality does not have to be something that hinders participation, but instead can be an important condition for participation, something that actually motivates people to participate and creates meaning.

In this paper I initially describe the context of the research circle, then I give examples of how the theories discussed in the research circle and the participants' experiences are concretized in five design guidelines. Finally, I present the result of the design process: a Beta-version of a groupware that visualize structuring processes.

2. A research circle at the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm

An art collage can be seen both as an institution that creates legitimacy for those who manage to pass, and as a place where the artist's identity is shaped and renegotiated. The Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm is an important place for maintaining the local art world

as it is a working place not only for students but also alumni and other artists, and the professors are employed 5 plus 5 years and recruited from an international pool of artists. Therefore, this is an interesting starting point when studying the Swedish part of the global art world. As a way to explore the construction of the artist's identity, a research circle was started 2009 and continued until 2011.

Research circles are mostly used in pedagogy and work life research in the Scandinavian context (Härnsten, 1994; Persson, 2009).¹ A research circle can be described as a study circle² in which experts are involved. The aim is to bring the expertise and experience of the participants at place to the inner circle of research, not only as informants but also as co-researchers and work place developers. The methodology questions the idea of the independent researcher that studies reality at distance from the situated context. Instead, the belief is that the researcher is an influential part of the contextual structures where dominant views of the situation hinder a more objective picture. To change the power dynamics of the research situation, the hierarchies between the researcher and researched have to decrease and be replaced by a more democratic research, where the participants are more on equal terms and also as co-creators of the scientific analysis.

The group was formed by students and project students³ who answered an open invitation to participate. The starting point was to meet in a group of 5-7 people on a monthly basis and discuss the role of the artist by sharing experiences and theories. Each meeting followed the same democratic meeting form: an initial round where everyone got the opportunity to introduce them selves and jointly set the agenda, discussion, and there was a final round as a reflection upon the meeting. The researcher functioned as a moderator and documented the meeting taking notes, and these notes were open for the participants to comment on and correct. The idea of the research project was also emancipatory; the belief was that a better understanding of ones professional role as an artist would provide tools for change. Unlike regular action research, there were no identified "problems" to be solved, as the study was more open-ended.

The initial group of seven was a heterogeneous group of people considering gender, age and artistic genre. Initially there were as many men as women, and one female researcher, but the students that put most time into the work and stayed the longest were male. The average age gap was five years, the youngest was born in 1983 and the oldest in 1951, why they all represented different generations of artists. The initial group thus contained a combined experience of the development of the art concept and how this has influenced the educational environment from the 1970's political action oriented figurative painting, to the performative acts of 2010s. The participants' different strategies in the art world, different perspectives on the concept of art and personal relationships to the artist's identity, were

¹ The practice of research circles is not well documented in research, and publications are mainly in Swedish. See for example Holmstrand, 2003; Härnsten, 2001; Lundberg, 1990; Lundgren, 2000.

² The study circle is an important part of Swedish labor movement. It is a form of adult education common in Sweden where a group of people with a shared interest meets regularly to discuss a common theme. Most common are book circles around a shared reading list.

³ A project student is an artist that for a particular purpose gets the opportunity to work in the workshops during a shorter period like a year.

rich resources for comparison and the empirical ground for the study of different theories about the art. The theories that were discussed were initiated primarily by the researcher but also by the participants: From anthropological network theory, the sociology of art and different feminist approaches. Each meeting generated new questions and thought-tracks that developed a shared understanding of the role of the artist, and his/hers obstacles and opportunities. But to simply read and discuss have its limitations. Not everyone has the same opportunity to get acquainted with the literature or to put it in work at a seminar. As a method to increase participation and make abstract theories more concrete, the idea come up to translate the theories and personal experiences of the art world in a practical "design" of an artist.

3. The design of an artist following the rules of the art world

Theories and experiences of the social is not only informative, they can also be seen as rules for behavior. By following the rules of the art world identified in the theories and from personal experiences, a collective artist avatar would be created, that both adapted the rules and challenged them. The rules can be summarized in five guidelines for the design:

Collective The artist is co-created by the institutions of the art world: artists, curators, gallery owners, the art public, etc. all take part in the creation of the artist.

Decentralized Anyone can claim the right to be an artist. If she performs the role according to the norm she will eventually succeed.

There is no central leadership for the production of art and artists, instead there is a constant negotiation in every little action on both ends and means.

An artist's identity is just like any brand, something that has to be repeated constantly to maintain its presence in time and space.

Status counts Status is important for influencing the informal rules of the game.

The value of the information depends of the sender's position.

What is right and wrong in the arts is relative and changes constantly, depending on the changing status of the actors.

Co-branding is an important feature of the art world.

Challenge the system The norm in art is to break with the norm.

A Game To see the art world as a strategy can clarify the rules of the game and motivate participation.

One can see the artist as a project in which a collective act together to fulfill a common goal, which is the image of the artist. Paradoxically, the picture produced is still primarily an avant-garde type of artist, someone who stands outside the establishment and the group.

Even in highly collaborative areas such as film and theatre the individual artists' identity is important for legitimacy (Baumann, 2001; Strandvad, 2009). In visual art the artist's identity works as a logo, which charges the artwork with authenticity (Fine, 2003; Regev, 2007). This image of the artist is formed by a concurrent range of activities where the production of art works is an important part, but not as important as the texts and images of the objects, which together create a presence of the artist's activity in the mediated global world of art.

The idea was that the group would mediate an artist by simply creating the idea of the artist in various media, in newspapers, on web pages, in social media: A collaborative set of scattered activities that together create a ubiquitous presence of the artist in the mediated world of art. Meaning that the right people should have heard about the artist in some way, and if they conduct a search on the internet the result should give an authentic feeling of presence through different documents that have the ability to legitimize the artist; like press releases from institutions in the art world as well as friends list on social media. This public art project would gradually expand to include a crowd of participants from the art world, representing different interests: gallery owners, art historians, critics, collectors, and so on. In this way, the institutional concept of art, as something created collectively by the art world, could be engineered and made visible but also be discussed through this practical action. In order to accomplish the task a huge group of people needed to be convinced to do things like write about the artist on their blog or in their paper, or create a piece of art in the name of the artist. This virtual artist would outwardly consist of a presentation by the artist on a website, and fragmented activities on the web in the form of blogs, articles and activities in various social forums. Beneath the surface of the artist's website, an ongoing discussion of the actions of the artists should take place and a history of the artist should be constantly renegotiated and revalued.

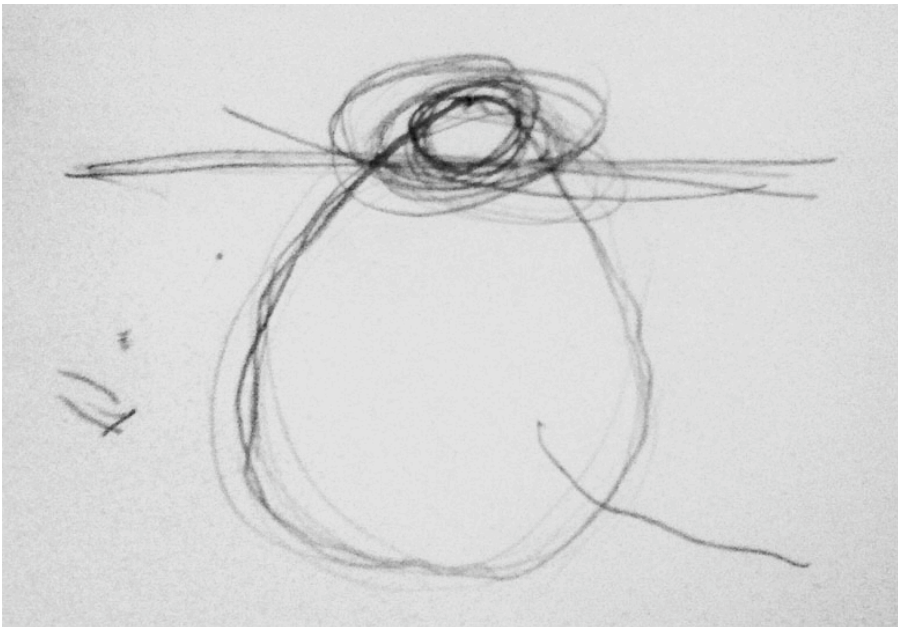


Fig. 1: The system as an egg or iceberg, where only the top is public.

4. Design guidelines for a groupware

To facilitate the development of this virtual crowd-sourced artist the group was looking for a digitally mediated communication tool that could support the process and distribute the work in a wider network. In this search for a communication tool the design researchers at the Knowledge and Communication Laboratory at the Department of Computer and System Sciences (DSV), Stockholm University, were contacted and the group was expanded to include three design researchers who were interested in the project's innovative potential. In this development phase, the initial research circle had narrowed to three participating artists and art students, and the focus was more on the functionality of the tool than the functionality of the art world. The design researchers saw the project as interesting as it was about formalizing informal processes. One problem they saw in many computer-mediated collaboration tools was that these assume a rigid division of roles in which informal power structures are ignored, making the tool not used in practice or not used as intended. Therefore, a tool that would take the informal processes into account was interesting from a general design research perspective.

From this point the group focused more on the technological developments of the tool. The idea was still to use the development as a way to explore the art world and to avoid technical simplification by building on the complex negotiation of what makes something turn into a valuable artwork. The question whether this really would lead to anything concrete was less interesting than what could be learned from the process itself. Even though no one entered the project with the belief that the result could lead to a concrete product, the participants went into it as a performative act or serious game. Here the fictional tool quickly turned into something that everyone in the group had clear requirements and strong opinions about. The group meetings now focused on reformulating the rules of the art world to design guidelines for a collaborative tool that could be used to expand the group work to include more participants.

In the following section I describe how the theories of the art world were translated to design guidelines and how these were implemented in the collaborative software.

4.1 Collective work

From a historical viewpoint the concept of the artist has changed radically, starting from the Middle Ages, when the artist was more like a craftsman, to a romantic genius following the emergence of capitalism, to the artist as collectively created by the art world institutions, the institutional concept of art (Becker, 1982; Hauser, 1999; Thornton, 2008). Following the institutional art concept, the creation of the artist is a collective work, where shared norms about the artist are developed. A digital forum that mirrors the development of discourses in the art world is a forum for discussion rather than decision-making. Anyone should be able to submit ideas and implement them without the need to wait for the majority to vote. *A discursive forum* like a Wiki could work as starting point. A Wiki is an easy to use tool for formulating a common idea through collective writing, and wikis also most often supports additional discussion forums. Here different actions for promoting the artist could be

discussed, and successful actions like any kind of documented presence could be reported and archived.

To advance the development of design ideas, different scenarios were used. The scenarios were suggested by the participants in the group, and were mainly picked from the art world. One of these was:

"You are in a place you think is remarkably dystopian. It would be a perfect setting for a site-specific installation by the artist. Ask what kind of gear / ability would help here? "

Here first the most obvious functionality came up: to make it easy to take a picture with your mobile phone and immediately be able to upload and comment on it in the system. This led to the question of how the various items would be categorized and what kind of results different sorting principles provide. We concluded that a categorization was not dynamic enough and would both complicate the tool and go against the romantic idea of the artist whose actions are beyond simple categorization, but that a certain constrain was interesting as a way to shape the information infrastructure. Instead of a categorization the rule can be to link to earlier documents. This would force the user to refer to at least one source within the system and emphasize the development of a discussion around shared ideas.

4.2 Decentralized

According to sociologists from Goffman (1959) to Butler (2004) identity is something rather instable created by constant repetition. The role of the artist illustrates this well; an artist is an artist because she acts as an artist and does things that an artist is supposed to do and in places where artists usually are. There are no central instances of legitimatizing for becoming an artist. In the dynamic rating system of the art world artists value is decided on a daily basis through a complex evaluation system situated in each action of the system. In order to mirror this decentralized action in the digital system some kind of *voting should be ubiquitous*, ongoing and everywhere.

From a critical and feminist pedagogic perspective the importance of a diversity of communication is emphasized, as the outcome and the level of participation depends on the forms of communication (Bondestam, 2002; Enns & Sinacore, 2005; Howie & Tauchert, 2001; Maher & Thompson Tetreault, 2001). An opportunity to express oneself in various ways are especially important in this context where participants are both practitioners and academics, and used to express themselves in different ways. Therefore it is interesting to build in several ways to be able to participate in the discussion. Comments are for example not only made as text; linking is also a way to leave a comment; another is to rate on a scale.

The voting/measure system was developed through a joint survey of evaluation systems in various social media where the focus was to find simple solutions, and popular concepts. Our ambition was to create an easy to use interface that can attract participation, not to develop the most advanced technical solutions. A diversity of forms for communication is already present in most social media like discussion forums, commenting functions, rating options etc. It is for example common that sites use a "like" option that is easy to click and gives the user a accessible possibility to express an opinion. Many blogs also provide users

with a set of tools to evaluate information and disseminate it widely through services such as Digg and Twitter. The group wanted to reconnect this kind of ubiquitous and ongoing rating directly to the user and make the valuation process visible, as a way of enhancing activity.

4.3 Status counts

Foucault (1982) argues that identity is created but also limited to the roles the actor is assigned. Language, norms and rules limit the opportunities the individual has to form an identity. Historians like Hirdman (2003) shows how the structuring factors linked to people's bodies, history and environment, create different conditions for the individual. Sociologists such as Bourdieu (1993) speak of habitus as a concept of these structures housed in people's bodies and expressed in terms of lifestyle attributes, habits and fashion. Parameters such as class, age and ethnicity co-create habitus. Habitus is thus both something we are born into and something others assign to us, but it can also be developed through individual actions.

The changing status of the art world actors is important information in the art world. What is right and what is wrong in the arts is relative and changes constantly, depending on the changing status of the actors. Co-branding is also an important feature of the art world, where the actors benefits mutually from strategic relations with the right people and places (Thompson, 2008; Thornton, 2008). If an important actor becomes out of fashion, the status of associated actors and art genres loose value and position in the history of art.

Therefore, in order to reflect the importance of status in the tool, status needed to be counted. But who would in practice determine the status of various actors in the system? Should the participants' status be determined when they enter the system? Or should the status be in an ongoing voting procedure in which participants regularly rate each other? The group rejected such scenario. The firm belief of the group was that this would definitely not attract participants.

The solution was to focus less on the actors and instead *count activity*. "Habitus" is instead measured indirectly through the value others assign to the actors' actions. Here we assume, following gender research on communication on-line (Herring, 2008; Kampen & Snijkers, 2003; Nakamura, 2001; Postmes & Spears, 2002; Wright, 2005), that users will react differently to other participants due to what status position they attribute to the actor. People who acquired a reputation inside and outside the system get more attention and their actions are given a higher score.

Of course, this provides no simple answers as to exactly what factors determine how participants treat each other. But it provides us with an indicator of whether there is something to investigate further.

4.4 Challenge the system

One method practiced in anarcha-feminism to increase the participants' awareness of power structures is to observe the conditions for dialogue in the social situation; e.g. who gets the most space and attention, who is ignored, and how domination techniques are used

(Hedenstrand, 2008). The experiences of the group were that a common domination technique in the art world is the withholding of information. What is right and what is wrong to do is seldom outspoken. In principle, according to the norm for artistic freedom, everything is possible and everyone can join the global art community. But in reality, the rules are harsh and few have the privilege to participate. The informal rules governing the fellowship is a tacit knowledge obtained by socializing with other participants in the international art world. Here the group wanted to challenge the norm by using the tool as a clarification of the informal systems, and thus empower the actors.

A sketch was made based on a smartphone interface, as a way to concretize and clarify the tool. The mobile interface accommodates a limited number of functions at a time. The idea was to use this as a design restriction in order to simplify the system and make it understandable, but also as a way for us to identify the most important features.

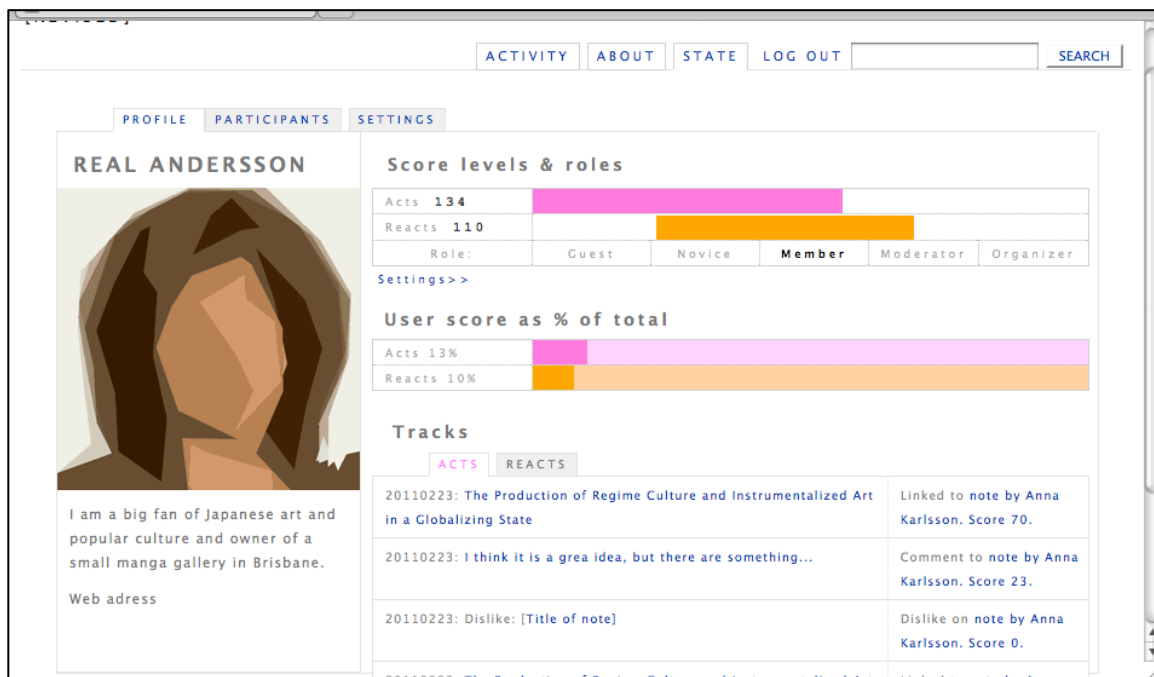


Fig. 2: Html-prototype of the system showing user score levels & roles.

This clarified the tool's two main components: In *activity* activities are proposed and debated. *About* is where the very purpose of the collective work is manifested, but also a declaration of what individual actions are measured against. This illustrates in a simplified way Butlers (2004) theories about the subject, where identity is constructed by available norms and in the same time measured against these norms (about), and where identity is something repeatedly performed more or less correct by the individual (activity).

The participants' *Score level* is measured in two different ways. Initially it was an attempt to mirror Bourdieu's habitus concept: Here your position (Score level) is something that can be developed through individual actions (=Acts), and something others assign to us depending on class, gender and other structuring factors (=Reacts). Of course this can not

measure the complex habitus process, but it creates a nuanced unit that gives an idea of what kind of activity is needed to level up, without going into details.

The valuation is not only done in one direction in the art world, if one is referring to an artist this gives not only the artist greater value, but also gives oneself value by making the reference. The reference is a way to legitimize the own position, but also a way to legitimize others using the same reference. This mechanism also had to be counted. Figure 3 shows how user A gets score for posting an activity, but also when others users creates comments and linking posts.

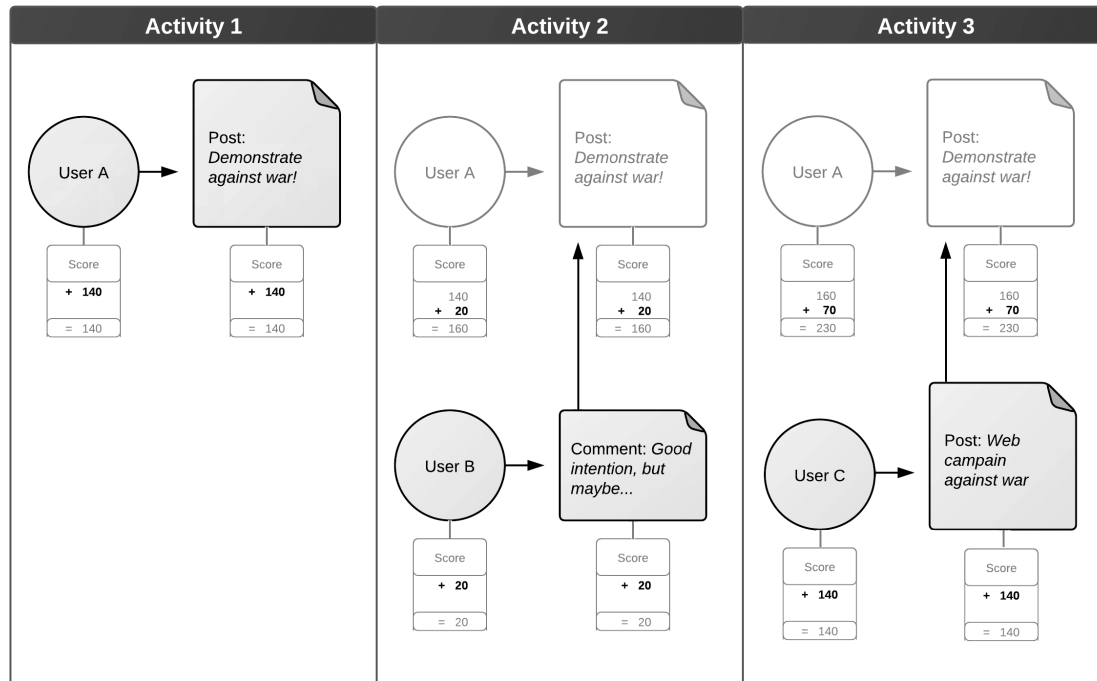


Fig. 3: Example of distribution of scores between users and posts when posting and commenting.

4.5 A game

Bourdieu describes the art world in military terms as field and movements of positions, where different fractions compete (Bourdieu, 2000). Becker describes the art world more as a collaboration, where there are not one but many worlds, in a universe that expands with more participants (Becker, 1982). Whatever perspective one can look at a strategy to legitimize/establish the artist as a kind of game. A game can also be used as a method to clarify the rules and can both be instructive and motivate participation. Most groupware's support the setting of different roles, like administrator, moderator, members and guests, but these are not dynamic and do not mirror the complex interplay in real life role setting. In order to involve the actors of the art world in the effort, a system was needed that reflected the important informal and dynamic hierarchies that create meaning in this culture. A system based on the idea of the participants' equal value would only attract those who do not already have a position in the art system, and the group would find it difficult to attract the gatekeepers it needed to build the artist's identity. Thus we needed to create a hierarchy of some kind in order to enhance participation.

To discuss plans for actions using text is one thing, but total consensus on every detail in the plan can lead to endless discussions and difficulties to get anything done. A degree of expert management of the collective is convenient. But how should the experts/representatives be appointed? Here, the status level can have a practical function; someone that has leveled up in the system might also have a greater influence over the public image, and can function like a gatekeeper within the system. This could be done dynamically, where the user gains more and more influence in the system and eventually gets administrator rights, being allowed to change the parameters that govern the system. Rights may also be terminated because the system has grown or that other users have been more active. This can of course create a corrupt climate, with the consequence that those who have the potential to set the rules set them to their own advantage, and effectively cut off all activity in the system that could mean competition.

		Variables		Roles				
Rights		Score	Status impact	Guest	Novice	Member	Moderator	Organizer
Acts	new post	140	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0
	edit	10	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0
	comment	20	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0
	like	10	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0
	dislike	0	x0	0	x0	x0	x0	x0
	rate	20	0	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0
	Edit public pages	10	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0
	Setting Values	0	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0
	Score needed				0	100	200	500
Reacts	comment	20	x2	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0
	liked	10	x3	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0
	disliked	-10	x2	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0
	linked	70	x2	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0
	rated 1	-15	x2	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0
	rated 2	-10	x2	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0
	rated 3	10	x2	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0
	rated 4	30	x2	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0
	rated 5	45	x2	x0	x0	x0	x0	x0
	Score needed				0	0	200	500
Total score needed				0	100	400	1000	Invitation

Fig. 4. Thresholds, amount and total score of user activity related to roles and rights. The setting is just a template; users can change the roles, variables and score.

At this point in the process, when the normative complexity of the project began to overwhelm us, we began to see the tool more as a way to examine the processes than to form them, like a magnifying glass that can be used as a means to visualize informal social processes. Exactly how the system will form these processes is not something we can predict, but we can create the ability for users to set the roles and the rights, designing their own explicit rules.

5. Design result: A tool to explore collaboration

The result of the design process (so far) can be seen as a model for how complex structuring processes in a groupware can be visualized in a simple way (rather than measured exactly). The system can be summarized in five overall design specifications as follows:

- A discursive forum: It should support development of common questions, rather than decision-making. Anyone should be able to propose an activity and implement it without anchoring it through voting and discussion. Technically it resembles a wiki, a discussion forum that supports open source cultural production. Users have the right to edit their own posts, and to delegate this right. Linking structures the information pointing all actions to earlier actions.
- Ubiquitous voting: Voting is done constantly everywhere and in different fashions: Linking, commenting, liking/disliking, and rating.
- Counting activity: A person's reputation should be measured through her and others' actions. Everyone's different reputation should be taken into account when judging action. The score users give depend on their total score, i.e. their reputation level. The users' total score depends on their own activity and the score other gives the users' activity. User and posts percentage of all scores are dynamic and depends on the total distribution of score within the system.
- Visualized score level: Transparency and visualization of how score is gained clarifies user strategies, system rules, roles and rights.
- Motivating game: Gaining visual reputation should be challenging in order to motivate and encourage participation. Hierarchy can be used as a way of communicating the system and motivate participation.

A collaborative wiki-like interface, where anyone can create a page linked to previous pages and develop this through the collective, reflects the institutional concept of art where anyone can become an artist as long as she follow the rules created in the dynamic negotiation in the network and thus contributes to the common discourse.

A score level meter reflects the importance of status in the art world, where participants are scored both by one's initiative and the value others put on this work. Score is gained for many different activities: Linking, commenting, liking/disliking, and rating. Just as in the art

world co-branding is an important part of the scoring system, and one's own value is changed indirectly if those referred to change their value.

Unlike the art world, where unclear rules makes the system difficult to maneuver, our system creates a visualization of the individual strategy in relation to others as a way of showing alternative routes. The visualization of the score level also creates a kind of gaming experience that clarifies the strategy game in the art world, and can serve as a way to motivate participation in the short run.

6. Discussion

The ambition of this project was to conduct an unconditional investigation of the construction of artistic identity using a participatory methodology. Initially we used a research circle to open up the research process to participants at an art college. Here we encountered typical problems of this type of participatory research. The participating researchers had an advantage, as authorities and more familiar with the theories discussed, but most of all because they had the time. The other participants did this in addition to their regular activities, as opposed to the researchers who did this as part of their regular activities. The inequality between the participants was also an obstacle; the participants' experiences and motives to get involved in the project were quite different. Another problem was continuity, some participants came and went, and there were constantly new participants in the meeting who had to be introduced into the ongoing discussion and the meeting culture.

Using the design process as a means of increasing participation in research can be seen as an answer to the problem of a research situation where participants have different conditions in terms of time and experience. By concretizing theories in a practical and playful creation of an artist, participants can work more easily with the theory and thus get an opportunity to "disagree" and contribute to the development of the theory. Our experience is that the design process also worked well as a way of summarizing the group's opinions on the functionality of the art world, and to connect practice to theory.

The design process also functioned in a performative way. Due to iPhone templates and the linking feature in PowerPoint the first sketch had a Hi-fi look that changed the discussion of the tool and how others perceived it. The staging of the system created an illusion that the system was real and also became treated as something real. The project has been presented at seminars in different contexts both for design researchers and artists. Here people did not question the basic functionality; the feedback was rather about navigation and additional services or about ethical issues related to measuring participation.

However, the idea of the digital tool was to extend the design process to encompass a larger group. But just to claim to be "designing" an artist can be seen as something provocative in several art contexts as it contradicts one of the basic assumptions in arts about the artist's subject. Just bringing such a claim reduces the possibility of creating an open discussion

with all kinds of participants in the art world. On the other hand, negative reactions also contribute to the study.

Then what are the options to involve participants from the art world using the tool? The design is made as a way to concretize and explore theories and experiences of artistic identity processes. On our own part we lacked a digital tool that reflects the unequal collaboration group work can be seen as, where everyone just like in our participatory research group has various opportunities to participate and resources to contribute. But at the same time we did not really believe important actors from the art world would actually use the tool. The reason is that this culture to a high degree depends on the informal networks that are created and maintained in face-to-face situations. Text-based digitally mediated forums are simply too unsophisticated. In addition, a digital forum creates a recording of the conversation, positions cannot thus change easily, and participants are locked to opinions they might no longer stand for. Therefore, we do not assume that the tool will be used for the initial purpose – to create an artist by crowdsourcing in the art world – but by trying to use it, we might understand potential users' experiences and context better.

7. Conclusion

In this paper we have described how we use a design process as a way to increase participation in a research process. The design process is used as a means to concretize abstract theories about the art world, and to put the theories to work. Based on the rules of the art world the aim with the design is to construct groupware that enhance participation in a collective work. Here we challenge a common assumption in participatory research about the benefit of equal participation. Instead hierarchy is used as a way to motivate participation.

The result of the design process is a Wiki-like prototype of a groupware where the participants' reputation is measured and transformed through a dynamic voting process. The participants' score is created by their own activity but also by others' reactions: links, likes / dislike, rating, commenting. This creates a system where both user activity and user status creates the user's score level. Importance is thus given not only to users' actions but users' informal status, here we assume that users will give score not only based on the actual activity but also based on the status they attribute to the actor (that we assume depends on the level of closeness as well as on intersected factors like gender, class, age and ethnicity). The participant advance in the system by gathering score and can, based on the score level, be given different possibilities to influence the rules. Hierarchy can thus be used as a means to foster behavior and communicate the functionality of the interface, but also to create stability and to motivate people with high score to continue to participate.

By proposing a tool based on unequal participation, we question the normative liberal democratic vision common in participatory research and design. In order to get broad participation in a design or research process, it cannot be assumed that everyone should be treated "equally". Instead, one has to take into account the complex power hierarchies that exist in the situation studied or designed for.

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