

Lesson 0

/ ENG /

Training in Ambidexterity

Eva Kot'átková

19.06.2015 / 06.09.2015

Ambidexterity is the ability to use both hands differently. Despite being an unusual skill, it is not rare to find people considered ambidextrous who were originally left-handed and who were forced to use their right hand, either deliberately or during their childhood, in institutions such as schools, or at jobs where right-handed habits are demanded or expected. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the term “training in ambidexterity” spread and the ability to write, draw or do other activities with both hands was taught. Even today, left-handed people continue to be discriminated against when forced to use certain everyday objects or educational equipment designed for right-handed individuals.

Which are the institutional characteristics of the different systems that structure and shape our lives, and how do they operate? **Eva Kot'átková's** practice begins with her interest in any type of structure that tries to educate, archive and classify individuals in different fields, such as psychiatry, education, culture or sports, considering how they determine social behavior. Taking the concept of ambidexterity as a point of departure and as a place of discrepancy between what is acquired naturally and what is learned, **Kot'átková** presents, for Lesson 0, a project based on the contrast, or the often uncomfortable encounter, between the space of imagination in which

art classes take place and the academic context that often envelops them. The installation transforms Espai 13 in an environment halfway between a decaying classroom and a stage set conducive to education, invoking a creative as well as a destructive force. Training in Ambidexterity places that contradiction in the act of art learning whereby a hand moves freely while the other hand tries to control and direct it.

Beginning with some examples drawn out from the context of art education, art therapy or psychiatry in the former Czechoslovakia, different objects and accessories are scattered throughout the gallery. Made out of metal and standing out because of their large size, we find a ruler, a penholder, a pair of scissors and other tools that could have been used in any art training process for kids and adults. The installation becomes alive with performative actions based on a strange choreography that fuses object and body into one single entity. On the walls we find collages and fragments of texts that describe or represent children, teenagers, and even primates, involved in creative processes, as well as drawings by children and tasks typically developed in art classes. While in the central space creativity and the structures that host it are questioned, in the hallway uncanny devices pile up that make visible a kind of negative imagination or destructive force that is also implicit in all learning processes.

Notions of creativity and destruction mark the entire exhibition, thus pointing to the dislocation that derives from working within certain institutional settings with utopian aspirations characteristic of artistic education. The installation refers to desires and to creative potential while questioning the limits that often are generated from the working environment and from unnecessary rules that restrict invention instead of expanding it.

In connection with **Eva Kot'átková's** show, Friction Pedagogies, Lesson 0's mediation program, takes in this last activity for the series, a reflexive approach to the museum as a pedagogic device. It aims, in this way, to conduct an exploration on the roles found in the educational programs deployed by the institution. It intends to go beyond the critical dialogue common in the public sphere through performative and narrative forms of debate. The goal is to rethink, in a productive way, the possibilities and problems that emerge at the intersection between art and education in the museum context.

Lesson 0 is a long-term, wide-ranging project that reflects on today's state of artistic education. Curated by **Azotea [Ane Agirre and Juan Canela]** and developed for the yearly program at Espai 13, Lesson 0 foregrounds proposals that relate to a kind of pedagogy that falls out of the expected in order to explore other forms of conveying knowledge. The program consists of four exhibition projects signed by **Priscila Fernandes, Rita Ponce de León, Anna Craycroft / Marc Vives** (in collaboration with **Rivet**) and **Eva Kotatkova**. They explore, imagine, and try different methods of learning and of establishing relations with the exhibition space. The four projects are set in motion as developments of Friction pedagogies, a teaching support program conceived by **Aida Sánchez de Serdio** and **Cristian Añó (Sinapsis)** together with **Rachel Fendler**, which aims to build relationships through negotiation with and between various groups from the art proposals that make up the exhibition program. These collaborations aim to foster mutual inquiry among its participants (teachers, artists, students, curators, gallery educators, youth, and cultural and social institutions) on issues related to education and art practices.

Performance

The performance related to the exhibition will take place at Espai 13 on:

- **Thursday, 18 June**, during the opening, from 7.15 to 9.15 pm
- **Tuesday, 30 June**, 11 am to 1 pm
- **Sunday, 12 July**, 11 am to 1 pm

Performer: Almudena Pardo

With the collaboration of:



With the support of:

Fundació
BancSabadell



Fundació Joan Miró * J... Barcelona

Espai 13

Fundació Joan Miró
Parc de Montjuïc
08038 Barcelona

www.fundacionmiro-bcn.org

