

## KIM ENGELEN

### *The New Studio Visit – Alternative Feedback Session*

#### Summary

This project aims to explore alternative modes for handling the traditional form of the studio visit, with the goal to both constructively intervene as well as perform research. Specifically, the project offers three alternative models that can be performed and experimented with, and explores these models through a series of workshops that teach and perform them.

#### Background / Context

The studio visit is a commonplace practice in art education. According to Svensson and Edström's<sup>1</sup> study they are considered the most important by a majority of students. However, given the structural importance of the studio visit in contemporary art, there is very little critical work on it. This project does not aim to either negate the existing tradition, nor to offer some global theorisation, but rather in a limited, experimental way, offer a basis for new approaches, resulting in new frameworks, questions, and possibly results. Crucial to this project is the insight that we can improve the studio visit or at least talk about the studio visit as artists amongst each other, rather than from an institutional perspective. This is taken as a foundational idea and principle.

#### Methodology

The project explicitly outlines three concrete, practical models. To even offer a new model, or try one out, requires a self-aware practice of experimentation on the part of anyone undertaking it. This issue – trying out explicit models of feedback and presentation – is not typical for the visual arts, but is a more common method in acting, poetry and other modes of cultural practice. This unusual quality means that this project is not for everyone, and is available only to the self-selecting group of those interested in undertaking

a new mode. This self-selecting group could come from any of the contexts in which studio visits are typically performed – the academy and post-academic art institutions; amongst peers; and even in professional contexts (although that would also require an additional type of commitment, that of shifting typical professional roles).

The Three Models are:

- 1 The Spectator Studio Visit
- 2 The Structured studio Visit
- 3 The Personal Studio Visit

Note: see appendices for full descriptions of the models.

The method of disseminating them, and thus offering them as possible models for others to use, is done via two workshops at the UdK (Berlin University of the Arts) in Berlin.

#### Personal Motivation

In essence the project consists of experimental attempts to establish new ways of discussing art with each other, and offering them to other people. This love/hate relationship with and experience of studio visits has occurred throughout my own art education and experience of professional practice in both Europe and the US.

#### Results of the Two Workshops

- 1) A new text reflecting on the studio visit itself and the New Studio Visit in relationship to it. This also includes feedback from participants.
- 2) Dissemination of the models as part of an expanding, ripple-effect practice of intervening in contemporary art.

#### Lay of the Land / How My Project Relates

Dr. Ann-Mari Edström's, Malmö University PhD thesis Learning in Visual Art Practice

(2008) consists of four articles. In article III "Art Students Making Use of Studio Conversations"<sup>2</sup> she explores how student-artists use the studio visit, and what qualities they develop by doing so. Her empirical study analyses how students use studio conversations, within the context of a Master of Fine Arts programme in visual arts in Sweden, specifically from the perspective of the artist-student. In her analysis she situates five aspects: A) Who to talk to. B) When to talk. C) Expanding the student-artist's options concerning ways of doing something. D) Testing the artistic expression, to see how others receive the artwork/How am I communicating? E) Context of the student's work, relating to the artwork in a wider context/Where am I communicating?

In Edström's study the student-artists in aspect D are testing their artistic expression by using the studio visit as a way to find out how others interpret and receive their work. In aspect E they explore how their work is situated in a wider (art) context, or practical-professional context in which the student-artist works. They are doing this as a form of 'reality-check' by showing their work in order to see how their artwork is received.

Edström's results show that for aspect D (the testing of their artistic expression), the students next to the studio conversations occasionally use fellow students and friends for this purpose as well. What interests the students here is the discrepancy between how they themselves look upon their artwork, and how others experience it. Inviting someone in to interpret the artwork is a way for the students to gain access to this discrepancy, and work on it if they want to. In aspect E student-artists widen their perspective of where in the art world their work would sit. The visiting artist can give (theoretical) references, locate the work in the wider (art) context or practical-professional context, or refer to the closest and related traditions to the student's work.

In the Spectator Studio Visit model, the 'reality-check' aspect is specifically extracted from the traditionally practiced studio visit. Both visiting and visited artist agree beforehand that the Spectator Studio Visit model will be used for the studio visit.

The Spectator Studio Visit is a mix of uttering the formal aspect of the presented work, and interpretation of it by the visiting artist. The visited artist keeps silent. The moment of choosing this model is most likely when the work has reached its final form, when the work is installed, during an exhibition, or other forms of presentation. For a full description of the Spectator Studio Visit model see: Appendix A, Model 1 The Spectator Studio Visit

This is a way for the visited artist to witness how a singular spectator sees and interprets his/her work. The visited artist can choose this model when s/he wants to know how the visiting artist interprets, examines and assesses the work.

Christian Wideberg's, Göteborgs University Doctoral thesis *Ateljésamtalets utmaning – ett bildningsperspektiv [The Call for a Studio Challenge – An Educational Perspective]* (2011)<sup>3</sup> is an investigation of the studio critique i.e., the teacher/student studio interactions that take place as part of two higher education programmes in the Fine Arts in Sweden. In his thesis he tries to explore what is essential to the studio critique, and how to understand its context and integrity. He examines how a teacher captures the opportunities and challenges that occur within the force field of the student-artist's intention of his/her ideal and formal knowledge. In his dissertation he explains that the studio critique can be regarded as a process where the student reaches a deeper knowledge of self, and of his/her artistic goals, and where subjective and creative impulses are essential for the developmental growth of this form of living knowledge.

Wideberg's paper offers an historical overview of the studio visit, transcribed interviews, a logbook and studio critiques. His core theme is the process of growth of the student, which, he writes, embraces the potential of the studio critique to nurture and attain quality.

In my MFA thesis "The New Studio Visit – Alternative Feedback Session" I don't use the word studio critique as I think that there should be the opportunity to create a situation where there could be peer-to-peer, and teacher-artist to student-artist studio visits, in which there is

4. Christian Wideberg, "Ateljésamtalets utmaning – ett bildningsperspektiv," *ArtMonitor* 26, 30, no.1 (2011): 179

5. Ann-Mari Edström, "To Rest Assured: A Study of Artistic Development," *International Journal of Education & the Arts* 9, no.3 (2008). <http://www.ijea.org/v9n3/> (accessed May 7, 2013)

a process of cooperation within the best interests of the visited student-artist. This at least at the moment when the studio visit takes place. The word critique also implies that the student-artist is being evaluated. In my opinion this is not an aspect that should be brought into the studio visit situation, since it dilutes the feeling of autonomy and thus freedom and possibility to experiment with the actual studio visit by the visited artist should s/he want to. The trialling of the studio visit is what I try to investigate through The New Studio Visit at the UdK in Berlin with student-artists who are interested in trying out new models for undertaking a studio visit.

Wideberg observed the behaviour and attitudes within the studio visit, in which both student and teacher were so busy with their own thoughts that they failed to reach each other. When the studio visit is over the teacher does not know the student's need or concerns. Other scenarios included studio visits where the teacher either took control, or on the contrary remained too far in the background. The teacher can be eager, self-absorbed and inattentive, or so busy with processing the information that s/he missed the essence of what is being said. Such situations often occur even though the intention of the studio visit is to nurture the student's artistic expression, and to contribute to their process of growth. This is the main result of Wideberg's study: to embrace the potential of the studio visit to nurture and attain quality.

He divides studio critiques (or visits) into two complex and interwoven interactions: 1) Where the student and teacher seek a common ground in a mutual process of understanding and accord, 2) Interactions where the integration of intention and quality is strived for. Furthermore he describes that it is the teacher's aim to find that point of interface between the student's intention and the material qualities of the student's work.

By using this format the goal is ultimately growth, and to maximise the student's potential and thus the development of the student's talent. When the main topic has been found, a different interaction begins:

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"This process addresses the challenge of integrating concept and material, the ultimate goal of which must be a seamless fusion of the two if the finished work is to possess sublime qualities. If the discussion does not come to this point, then both the teacher and the student seem to lose enthusiasm, and the studio critique derails. In and through its two dialogues the studio critique describes a complexity that demands attention and mutual respect."<sup>4</sup>

The student must somehow find the opportunity to grow on the impulse of free will. So, it is not enough for the teacher to enter the studio visit with ideas and demands, even if these come with great drive and initiative.

In article II of Edström's research<sup>5</sup> she focuses on changes in the student-artist and their work as part of their artistic development. The connection between self-direction and 'resting-assured' is regarded as the main result of the study. She describes the notion of 'rest assured' to draw on the relation between the work and the student-artist as an experience of confidence and trust, within three aspects: the intimate, uncertainty and the working process. The student-artist themselves indicate that they tend to attribute the alienation they experienced with their work to the strong influence of others, i.e. their supervisors or teachers. This delays their capacity to 'rest assured' in the intimate and the working process.

In the Structured Studio Visit model the visiting artist feeds back what s/he has received from the artist. The visiting artist verbally repeats what s/he has understood from what the visited artist communicates about his/her work. For a full description of the Structured Studio Visit see: Appendix B, Model 2 The Structured studio Visit

This model aims to provide the visited artist with a 'tool' which is the repeating/the reverberation of the visited artists utterings, in order to help the visited artist to further develop how to present his/her work by articulating his/her thoughts, areas of interest, processes, techniques, ideas, challenges, questions, objectives, concepts and other possible topics that the visited artist un/consciously tells the visiting artist in a manner in which the visiting artist understands him/her. The intention

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is that by doing so the visited artist will gain a better understanding of what the labour/artistic process is really about; that is, what is important about the work for him/herself.

The moment of choosing this model can be when the visiting and visited artist meet for the first time, or when the visited artist is not yet familiar with the visited artist's new work.

In relation to the Personal Studio Visit model, I want to highlight Katrin Hjelde's PhD thesis *Between Fine Art and Teaching: Reflecting Creative Passion* (2008) from Chelsea College of Art and Design, University of the Art London.<sup>6</sup> Here she explores the role of creative passion in relation to fine art teaching. Creative passion is described as a cluster emotion: an emotional resonance that contains a collection of emotions such as obsession, love, jealousy, confusion, and fervour. The emotion of creative passion according to Hjelde can be used as a powerful tool in learning in fine art. Students need to undergo learning shifts to obtain competence and confidence. These shifts need emotion.

Chapter 11 of bell hooks' *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope*<sup>7</sup> starts with the sentence: "To speak of love in relation to teaching is already to engage a dialogue that is taboo." hooks talks about the teacher-student relationship. When professors care deeply about the subject matter, teach this with love, and love the process of teaching this is regarded as something good. But loving the students is not regarded as something favourable. Emotional connections tend to be suspect in a world where objectiveness and the mind are valued above all else. According to hooks, in teaching and learning in a humanistic situation objectivism can't serve as useful basis. Teachers who fear to get too close to students may objectify them in order to maintain objectivity. They could see the students as empty vessels, with no opinions, thoughts, personal problems and such. Conversely, students don't learn from teachers who are disconnected, dissociated or self-obsessed. According to the dictionary, to educate means giving intellectual, moral, and social instruction to someone, typically at a school or university. According to hooks, caring teachers know the root meaning of the word to educate: to draw

out. They nurture emotional growth both emotionally and academically, which is the context where love flourishes.

Furthermore she writes about competition in the educational setting, which disrupts connection, making it impossible for students and teacher to connect. According to hooks the insistence on objectivism negates community. Students are thought to see each other as competition rather than comrades. She goes on to argue that dominant culture is contrary to mutual partnership, promoting calculated objectivism that is essentially dehumanising. The focus on a love-ethic, not to confuse with romantic love, is defined as a combination of care, commitment, knowledge, responsibility, respect, and trust. With the basic principles of love as interaction, the mutual pursuit of knowledge creates the conditions for optimal learning. Teachers are then learning while teaching, and students while learning and sharing: "When students are encouraged to trust in their capacity to learn they can meet difficult challenges with a spirit of resilience and competence."<sup>8</sup> When there is no care or no recognition of their inner conflicts, students shut down, and the status quo has been upheld. When teachers open up so that students can address their worries openly, they can offer affirmation and support.

Teachers don't want to become therapists, and do not want to respond to emotional feelings. However if the student is shut down teaching becomes impossible. Therefore hooks argues the need for conscious teaching, teaching with love, and becoming aware of psychological conflicts a student might have that may block the student's capacity to learn. This could mean that the teacher steers the student towards therapeutic care. When the teacher establishes appropriate boundaries s/he doesn't need to fear becoming engulfed or entangled in the student's dilemmas. If teachers want students that are fully and compassionately engaged with learning they can't ignore emotional feelings.

The Personal Studio Visit takes its point of departure from the idea that the visited artist specifically chooses this model in order to talk with the visiting artist about personal matters that may be worrying or occupying his/her

6. Katrin Hjelde, "Between Fine Art and Teaching: Reflecting Creative Passion," in *Unspoken Interactions: Exploring the Unspoken Dimension of Learning and Teaching in Creative Subjects*, ed. N. Austerlitz, 141-151 (London: The Centre for Learning and Teaching in Art and Design, 2008).

7. bell hooks, *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 197

8. bell hooks, *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 132

mind, and perhaps even hindering him/her to work as an artist. This model could also be called upon when the visited artist can hardly think of anything else anymore by enduring emotional stress, and needs aid, guidance or support to start/continue to work again. But it could also be employed in less intense cases where the visited artist simply needs acknowledgment, or as a way of sharing their experience as learner-teachers and such. For a full description of the Personal Studio Visit see: Appendix C, Model 3 The Personal Studio Visit

This model contributes to the human aspect of the art making profession. For some artists the immediacy of certain experiences creates an imperative to engage in dialogue. The Personal Studio Visit model is an attempt to articulate the traumatic or distressing character of being a human-artist with a disruption, problem or situation.

#### Personal / Autobiographical Narrative

At the moment of writing (March 2012-May 2013) there is no official standard or parameter on how to conduct a studio visit. To make an immediate and clear distinction in the rest of this text I call the current practiced studio visit "The Traditional Studio Visit" and my constructed and experimental models "The New Studio Visit." In the rest of this text, and in the description of the models, I will call the student-artist the visited artist and the teacher-artist the visiting artist, since I prefer to think that they have a collaboration together instead of a hierarchical apportionment at the moment of the studio visit.

The name the New Studio Visit might imply that the studio visit should take place inside a studio. This is not the case: it can take place at any location chosen by the visited artist, in agreement with the visiting artist.

The foundation of the the New Studio Visit is mainly based on empirical knowledge drawing on my own experience as an educated artist (Netherlands, USA and Sweden) and fourteen years of autonomous studio practice as a lens-based performance artist. This has been supplemented with knowledge gained from interviews conducted with student-artists on the Traditional

Studio Visit during my 100-day stay at dOCUMENTA (13); the direct action festival during the Month of Performance Art in Berlin; and two workshops carried out at the UdK (Berlin University of the Arts).

In my work as a visual artist the human plays the central role in my work, with the focus on the intrinsic thinking world and the inner strength of the individual. I want to see if I can play with the individual as a work in progress, in the sense that I trial the ethical borders in the production of the work. People keep learning, re/creating and re/positioning themselves. I find this process of change and growth in the individual interesting. It is my belief that any person is able to discover, investigate and shape their being through contact with others. We are all so alike, and yet so different. In meeting with the other, through reflection development can take place. Reoccurring themes in my work are personal development, communication, authorship, ethics, and memory (see: [www.kimengelen.com](http://www.kimengelen.com)).

#### Background

In 1999 I graduated from the Academy of Art and Design (AKV I St. Joost) in the Netherlands, under the guidance of Alex de Vries, with teachers Hans van de Broek, Paul Goede, Voebe de Gruyter, George Korsmit, and Toon Teeken. More than ten years later I studied for four months at the Graduate Program in Fine Arts at CCA in San Francisco, California, with Associate Professor Ted Purves, and under the influences of professors such as Tammy Rae Carland, Kota Ezawa, Desiree Holman and Lynn Marie Kirby. Currently I am in the process of graduating from the Malmö Art Academy/Lund University as a MFA in Critical and Pedagogical Studies, with Artistic Director Gertrud Sandqvist, Program Leader Maj Hasager and professors such as Joachim Koester, Matts Leiderstam, Sarat Maharaj, Hague Yang, and many more visiting artists.

In February 2012 our Critical and Pedagogical Studies group had a seminar "On Art, Around Art and Beyond Art" with Jürgen Bock, Artistic Curator and Director from the Maumans School in Portugal. For his seminar we read amongst others John Miller's "The Pedagogical Model:

To Make Shame More Shameful Still by Making it Public."<sup>9</sup> Through this seminar and by reading that text, I started to ponder on how I learn as a visual artist and student. And I started writing my idea of the most perfect studio visit. This text I called "The Studio Visit Manifesto, a Pedagogical Model for a Structured Studio visit." With the Studio Visit Manifesto I wanted to promote a new idea for carrying out a prescriptive form of studio visit that I believed would be helpful for student-artists. My primary and initial interest in this was language. At this stage I looked for conversations with fellow student-artists and started to interview student-artists on the topic.

With the help of Rob Prunel we created an online questionnaire in order to get feedback from student-artists to understand what they desire from a studio visit, and to shape the Studio Visit Manifesto accordingly (see: [www.kimengelen.com/sv](http://www.kimengelen.com/sv)). Almost no one filled in the questionnaire, so I learnt that if I wanted to know the answers I had to ask and interview the student-artists personally. Here is an excerpt of one interview conducted during dOCUMENTA (13) which has been transcribed:

On the Studio Visit and the perfect tutor (June 5, 2012/student MFA/Kassel, Germany): "Someone that is doing stuff that I find interesting, someone I can learn from, when it is with people who I have talked to before and I can talk to them again, then I prefer people that give a lot of feedback, I don't like it when they are advising, on how to solve my work. I want people to discuss my concern in my work with, more like the theme, the idea or my method of working, or my thoughts around my work that I am struggling with, people that give from their own work and experience, so that it is more a conversation, to see my work in the context of their work, then it is not an anonymous teacher. Artists, curators and writers I have good experience with.

A studio visit to me is a conversation with one person about concerns that I have in my work. I have questions and I expect to discuss these questions. I expect to discuss my work, or their work or other artist's work. A studio visit can't really fail I don't think of fail. The most important factor to have a studio visit is that it is nice to have someone

who freely talks with me about my questions and concerns for one hour. That feels very luxurious to have that opportunity. To ask someone out on whatever my concern is. Also to get out of my head. Once a month is good for me. I want to receive references, I have conversations with other artists, not orally but artistically, and it is difficult to find people to talk to, this way could give suggestion of people's work to look at, also as suggestion to talk to. It makes my ears open for the name, so when I read something in a magazine I remember this artist. Because the pictures I see when Googling does not always gives a lot. References can be interesting because they might see something in my work that I haven't recognized in my work. And that can tell me more about my own work, or tell me what I am doing. A different name could be; work conversation, but the name should contain that you get to choose to whom you talk to and that the talk is about your work. With the studio visit it is nice, because they visit you. But it could also be a walk in the park."

Whilst doing these interviews I realised that one perfect studio visit model for all artists, at all times, working with different media, was difficult to maintain. By thinking about the different potentials of the studio visit I developed five experimental studio visit models.

The text, and with it the context, went through various changes, and the title changed into "The Studio Visit Manifesto: 5 pedagogical Models." I felt the desire to offer the five pedagogical models to art academies and universities in fine arts in order to try out five experimental studio visits with student-artists and teachers who were interested in the studio visit as a pedagogical tool. And for those who were interested to try out five experimental studio visit-models, which divert from the traditional studio visit.

With "The Studio Visit Manifesto" I wanted to demonstrate how the five studio visit models are a more specific approach to, and variation of, the current widely-performed studio visit. Next to the program readings related to pedagogy, I read among others bell hooks, John Dewey, Paulo Freire, Henry Giroux, Jens Hoffmann, Jacques Rancière, Shin'ichi Suzuki, Anna Tilroe, Sarah Thornton, in search of some justification for my

9. John Miller, "The Pedagogical Model: To Make Shame More Shameful Still by Making it Public," (1995) <http://www.societyofcontrol.com/akademie/miller.htm> (accessed May 7, 2013)

manifesto. The five studio visit models were written from the perspective of the artist with the focus on the artist's advantage, and structured by interviews and talks with student-artists on art, the art world and the studio visit. I thought that the five models would help to develop the artist's work and their rhetoric skills, and as a result that it would empower the artist, particularly in feeling more at ease with their work, and their role or situation as artist. In the studio visit context both artists (the student-artist and the teacher-artist) would agree beforehand on which of the five models would be chosen, and thus in what manner the studio visit would take place. The student-artist would be the one to choose the model since s/he is the one who invited the other artist to aid him/her in the process of development, thus making it clear that it is actually the student-artist him/herself that is, or at best should be, self-directing. Which is the current student-artist in a large extent as well; the only difference being that s/he cannot choose between different formats to conduct a studio visit.

During the process I discovered that a lot has been written on the studio, but not so much on the studio visit. As such I wanted to delve deeper into the definition of the studio visit, and talk about preparation, location, time/timing, reiteration, expectations, references and evaluations. "The Studio Visit Manifesto: 5 Pedagogical Models" was an investigation into the potential of the studio visit for the student-artist, and it defended the right of any person to discover or learn something for themselves: a "hands-on" or interactive heuristic approach to learning by five new ways of exploring the topic the studio visit.

In our Critical and Pedagogical Studies programme we had the opportunity to do an internship, and I could make use of this possibility to independently look for an internship in Berlin. So I contacted art academies and universities to find out if I could run a workshop to introduce the five models to participants and let them experience them. In November 2012 I managed to run a workshop at the UdK (Universität Der Künste Berlin).

Through the guidance of the Critical and Pedagogical Studies Program Leader and artist Maj

Hasager and Artistic Director Professor Gertrud Sandqvist from the Malmö Art Academy/Lund University, I learnt that a research project investigates, rather than answers, questions regarding the different potentials and possible models of a studio visit. Dr. Martin Schmidl, artist and research associate from the Art in Context program of the UdK, and my intermediate contact for the second workshop at UdK, suggested that I should also think about the surprising and/or private aspects of studio visits. As well as the fact that not all artists want to become part of an experimental setting. A studio visit is often a professional meeting, but can also be a very personal or even intimate setting. And so the manifesto developed into this MFA text on how the new studio visit had been practiced and how the participants perceived it. "The New Studio Visit – Alternative Feedback Session" does not focus on five but rather three studio visit models: The Spectator Studio Visit; The Structured Studio Visit; and The Personal Studio Visit. See appendixes for full description of the three models.

If there is a higher ideal connected to the three models, then it is that the New Studio Visit expects equality between the student-artist and the teacher-artist, commitment and determination from both sides, and that it helps to develop the artist's work and increase of their vocabulary, rhetorical skills, and the knowledge of their position as artists.

This text does not imply that the models offered should be the only applicable ones; nor does it suggest that they are the best models for all artists, or even models that are suited to all student-artists. "The New Studio Visit – Alternative Feedback Session" simply offers parameters that can be chosen, and selected by the visited artist, with the cooperation and help of the visiting artist.

#### What happened at UdK

##### Introduction of UdK (Universität Der Künste Berlin)

Berlin University of the Arts is one of the biggest, most diversified, and traditional universities of the arts in the world.<sup>10</sup> The teaching offered at the four colleges of Fine Art, Design, Music

and Performing Arts, as well as at the Central Institute of Further Education, encompasses the full spectrum of the arts and related academic studies across more than 40 courses. Having the right to confer doctorates and post-doctoral qualifications, Berlin University of the Arts is also one of Germany's few art colleges with full university status.

First workshop (internship):  
17 & 18 November 2012, 12:00 – 18:00  
UdK (Universität Der Künste Berlin)  
Hardenbergstr. 33, Room HA33-150  
Berlin-Charlottenburg

Second workshop:  
24 & 25 April 2013, 12:00 – 16:00  
Universität der Künste Berlin/ Art in Context  
Einsteinufer 43-53, Room 27  
Berlin-Charlottenburg

#### The workshop

In the first workshop at UdK in November 2012, the participants practiced five studio visit models. In the second workshop in April 2013 the participants practiced the three studio visit models which are described in this text: 1) The Spectator Studio Visit, 2) The Structured Studio Visit, 3) The Personal Studio Visit. The first day of the second workshop started with the Spectator Studio Visit, followed by the Personal Studio Visit Model. The second day started again with the Spectator Studio Visit and was followed by the Structured Studio Visit. The models were practiced for 30 minutes. In both of the workshops the participants practiced the models in two roles: as visited artist and visiting artist. In both the first and second workshop only one student of UdK was present, and not all of the participants were able to attend both days. For the first workshop nine people had initially signed up and five of them participated, of which one was a student. For the second workshop in the preliminary signing-up ten students had shown interest. Again nine people had signed up, of which five participated. And again, one was a student. Interestingly most of the participants in both workshops were not student-artists, but professional artists who found out about the workshop through different channels.

The quotes in the following part are:

K.B.: Professional artist and teacher/participated in the first workshop, both days  
J.D.: Professional artist and teacher/ participated in the first workshop, day two and participated in the second workshop, day one  
M.S.: Professional artist and teacher/participated in the second workshop, day one  
P.S.: UdK student-artist/participated in the second workshop, day two

K.B.: "This core tension between fear and change or some might say between fear and grace or the poetry of chance seems to be at the heart of the studio visit. Of course, that's how I see it, and it could also be seen more clinically as a routine or almost mechanical device for sharing the 'suchness' of the artist's experience with others, or for the artist to achieve greater perspective or clarity about their process or future plans. But as we were saying at the end of Sunday's session, the very expectation of vulnerability that rears its head as soon as a studio visit is suggested or proposed makes the psychological dimensions of vulnerability/fear/chance/grace the first hurdle to consider. You didn't suggest it, but it wouldn't surprise me if the missing participants for the workshop of both days could have been due to nerves for a few of them. Just a guess. It takes a certain self-assuredness to put oneself in the middle of a lab experiment with complete strangers."

In the beginning of the workshop there was a brief explanation of how the day would look: the models would be practiced in two roles, and the models, in both roles, would be practiced for 30 minutes. Then, when the models were practiced, everybody would come back to the table to discuss their experience, and the models in the group. At the beginning of every new model I read the model out to the participants. And when the number of participants were uneven I participated as well.

K.B.: "Very well organized, managed and directed which not even low-attendance could deter. It is easy to imagine another presenter with less assurance and calm method setting a very different tone for the participants and restricting the space or sense of spaciousness that is so vital for discovery, risk and exploration."

These 3 models of “The New Studio Visit – Alternative Feedback Session” are constructed and experimental models, and were offered in the form of a workshop in which there was no grading or evaluating by the school administration or tutor. Taking part in the workshop was entirely on a voluntary basis without gaining credits.

K.B.: “The studio visit models were overall an excellent revelation. Including: that a studio visit could be seen to have models and methods of approach and direction, that naming studio visit models instantly alters the experience from one of amorphous and uncertain chemistry resulting from an encounter to an event that has boundaries and controllable directionality. That the studio visit models therefore have different advantages from the point of view of either artist or visitor. That entering or applying a particular model creates specific terms of engagement that, though contrived, provide opportunities for greater insight and discovery. That the proactive choice inherent in any model would allow for the possibility of greater comfort for the visitor and in cases some reduction of anxiety for the artist.”

J.D.: “But what I liked about it when I was thinking about this whole process the other day, and in American English we say “when you only have a hammer everything starts to look like nails,” so the tools, the apparatus, the tool that you bring with you also conditions the approach you have. And what was interesting about this, because this is a new approach to me, I also could then see my own prejudices, basically. What I’m interested in when practicing the Spectator Studio Visit became quite explicit to me; the parts that I was interested in thinking about versus the parts that I was not interested in thinking about. There were certain things that were very obvious that I didn’t even think about until almost towards the end, because they were not really priorities for me, so I just addressed the priorities for me. I find that very constructive, to see my own prejudices or my own priorities made clear like that.”

P.S.: “I think one already plays models. When we make a presentation for other students at the University then that is also a model. How we think that it should be. But it is good to be consciously dealing with these models, because

we want to get different sorts of results. And when we receive information from the other person then we can be conscious, and consciously choose this first model for example. So that one knows, okay how many models are there and then one can also personalize it somehow, one doesn’t need to exactly follow the models. One could do a mix of two models for example, depending on the situation.”

K.B.: “I think they are all effective and powerful approaches. The naming of the studio visit models instantly alters the experience from one of amorphous and uncertain chemistry resulting from an encounter to an event that has boundaries and controllable directionality. The personal one I’m leaving to the side since I didn’t experience it and also because I suspect, perhaps wrongly, that it’s more difficult to develop as a method since its boundaries are harder to maintain. But with some changes to the packaging or naming of it, perhaps not. It’s interesting territory.”

In the information email I had sent out before the workshop took place, I had asked the participants: “Please bring artwork of yourself. Make sure that you make a selection. For example not more than 5 pictures, or in case of video/audio/performance max. 10 minutes. The room will be open 1 hour before the workshop. This is in order to place, hang or install your work if desired.” Only the UdK student came in earlier to hang and install her works.

The reaction during the workshop was that for durational works either the artist should bring shorter pieces or the timeframe of 30 minutes could be longer. The display of the work was also slightly touched upon.

P.S.: “When one can see the work “for real” it can well be that one could talk longer, while it is not just one sense, not only the eyes look at something on the computer, but perhaps you can touch it or you maybe can come closer or you can smell it, which is very different. And you can also see how big it is, what is the effect of the work in the space [...] It is not the same to look at a picture of a painting, then to see it real and in the space. But when it is a video, you have to see the video from the beginning until the end. Or else you can’t talk about it. And if it would be a video, then you perhaps need the

artist themselves decide if you need headphones or not, all these small things. The display I find very important.” The essence of the participants’ quotes: the very expectation of vulnerability as soon as a studio visit is suggested makes the psychological dimensions the first hurdle to consider. As a result, the missing participants for the workshop on both days could have been due to nerves. The New Studio Visit constructed models where seen as constructive, and by consciously dealing with them they addressed the priorities and helped generate different results. This made the studio visit by proactive choice an event with controllable directionality for both visiting and visited artist.

#### The Spectator Studio Visit Model

The first model practiced in both workshops was the Spectator Studio Visit model. In the explanation of the model it is mentioned that this model can be used to see how the finished work functions, and how a singular spectator sees and/or interprets their work. The visited artist can choose this model when s/he wants to know where the work locates itself, and what it communicates. In the workshop the feedback received on the visited artist artwork was generously accepted and heard with all ears by the visited artist. That the visited artist themselves couldn’t say anything was perceived as interesting and positive, while the participants could see how their work functioned, or experience for themselves what should be changed in order to make it work. Another aspect was also raised: in this model the role of the visiting artist took on a performative dimension.

P.S.: “One comes in a scene and one has to talk for half an hour as visiting artist in the Spectator Studio Visit. And that is very performative really. Everything that has to do with roles is performative.”

J.D.: “So it’s very good to also get the sense of how people respond. Some of the feedback, even on the video part, was super-helpful. To get a sense of how the things look in that quick take is also very helpful, because it’s easier for people to give feedback on intention than on materiality.” There was also discussion on who the visiting artist is, and who one wants to come in and talk about the work.

M.S.: “Well, it was working, but I think it really depends on who you are doing this with. Because if you are talking to someone whose work you don’t like, there might not be that much to say, actually. So it might be less interesting. And in that sense, again, it depends on who you are with. And also to accept what the person would say. For instance, a traditional painter. I’m not interested in traditional painting, so I would have difficulties in accepting what this person would say, even also about my work, because he or she has such a different perspective on art. And in that sense the person I was talking to J.D. We have a similar approach. A little bit conceptual, reflecting, working with all sorts of media and space also. That was really interesting.”

P.S.: “Because when a person comes and looks at my work. And doesn’t have clue what it is about, and starts to talk about something completely different. Then I think; does my work really don’t function or is it that the person really doesn’t have a clue of aesthetics, while that is also possible. [...] I would like to know beforehand who is this person. Because as I said, for me it is very depending on what they know. While there could come a person, who works in a slightly different area and give me his opinion on art, on my work, and maybe I take this very seriously. [...] So professional deformation; someone who paints, the first things that comes to their mind is the visual aspect and the colourfulness, the materiality. And this she had said in the beginning. And someone who makes conceptual art, however it also gives conceptual painting, but someone who is a pure conceptual artist would perhaps have looked at the letters in the beginning and not the other way around. I was with her work very focussed on thinking what is the concept of this? I tried to get this; the meaning or something like this.”

One of the participants thought it was also a good model for work-in-progress. So on the one hand she said:

P.S.: “I couldn’t say anything and I found that interesting while because of this I noticed what functions in my work and what does not work and what should I change in order to make it work and that was for me very positive to see that. Because when you create an exhibition

later you cannot talk with every visitor. And it is very important that the people when they see your work understand what it is about and tell their opinion.”

And on the other hand:

P.S.: “This model is exactly right when I have a problem with the artwork. When I am there and think: “Oh god, oh god, how do I continue this idea?” Or when I am not secure in something then I think this model is perfect. Because when the work is ready and I like it and think that is a good project then I sort of don't care what others think. But when I don't know exactly where to go, then it is really good to hear what the others think.”

In the role of the visiting artist in the Spectator Studio Visit participants reacted slightly differently regarding the amount of time for this model:

M.S.: “I had to concentrate quite a lot, finding the right words and the right English I noticed that, every now and then, you took the pen and made some notes, that's what I realised.”

P.S.: “I couldn't do it. There are people who like to talk a lot and very long, and those have these skills

somehow. And for them perhaps it would be easier to do that. And there are people who are very shy and can't talk that long.”

In both workshops the presentation of the work was

discussed again after the Spectator Studio Visit was carried out. During discussion of the first workshop some artists said that this model is preferred when the work is presented in the right way. B.B. said that she didn't like to show her

documentary work on a computer. Also K.B. said that he didn't think that PowerPoint was the best way to present his environmental installation.

J.D.: pointed out in the second workshop: “People are working in kind of a post-medium way, there's this emphasis, on more almost on a PowerPoint model of presentation, rather than the classical studio visit which would be like the finished work or the work in process in this kind of silence contemplation thing. And I think it trains people very badly, the PowerPoint. I think because it trains us to think that our intentions and our motivations are actually communicated along with the work when they're really not.”

Some participants pointed out that it depends on what it is that you want to get out of it:

P.S.: “While perhaps there are artists who want to know if their paintings in a pdf on the computer function the same as they would in the space. And maybe they want to show a pdf. Depending on what the artist wants to know. I wouldn't set specific rules for this. I wouldn't specifically say, just your name or only the title of the work, but a little bit free but only what they want to know from the visitor. And play a little bit as well.”

J.D.: “And that it is becoming the new convention. I was looking at some pictures on Facebook, on the one hand that's not optimal, but on the other hand, while it's not optimal it's actually now kind of a convention, so a lot of people actually look at work on Facebook now, and a lot of people are on Facebook in order to show their work. So it seems like a fair way to look at things, to me. There are of course consequences to it. It's also related to the emphasis on the event over the object in contemporary art, so the emphasis on the opening over the exhibition on this everything becoming part of an event as opposed to seeing what the status of the object is for a long time, because if you had brought in a single painting then the details of whether or not it's satisfying or not are unavoidable on a kind of a material level, whether or not it's nice to look at. I think looking at the screen skips some of that.”

In the Spectator Studio Visit model the visited artist keeps silence. The visited artist introduces



him/herself and the work with merely one sentence. For example: "Hello, my name is Kim Engelen, and I work as a lens-based performance artist." This verbal introduction of the work by just one sentence was questioned.

On the one hand it was said:  
P.S.: "I wouldn't set specific rules for this. I wouldn't specifically say, just your name or only the title of the work, but a little bit free but only what they want to know from the visitor. And play a little bit as well. [...] I believe it is important that every artist decides, so that I decide what I say to the others, what do I want to know from the others. And then I can decide for example that I give the title and my name and that is it. While I want to know if the work functions with the title. Or someone else wants to say the context. In what context the works is presented. And then each can decide what information they give and with a particular purpose.

And on the other hand:  
P.S.: "However I did it like this with my works, because my drawings somehow didn't function the way I wanted them together with the other works. But I want them to function and I had to see that in the space, all together, to know why it didn't work and what the others say. And exactly the visiting artist said it didn't worked, and had noticed this immediately. And did say some things I had not expected, for example in the beginning she only talked about the drawings and did not read the letters. Only later she read the letters, and for me the letters are the most important. And so I noticed, okay when the visiting artist reacts like this, that means I must present it differently."

Three different things happened in the workshop regarding time: 1) On the second day of the second workshop two participants stopped while practicing the model together. One participant in the role of the visiting artist stopped after fifteen minutes. 2) Some participants expressed that they would have actually liked more time in the role of the visiting artists. 3) In the role of visited artist the participant said that they were eager to hear what was said by the visiting artist, and that they were all-ears to hear what was said about their work.

M.S.: "I think I would go more into detail. If you would show me your plans for the next show, for instance, I would maybe try to reflect: why do you do it like this? Why does it have to be this colour? Why is it this text? Why do you put it there? In the end it's all in the details. That's what I believe. Now it was just a rough first impression."

P.S.: "It could have lasted longer than thirty minutes and also more visitors could tell stuff about my work. For me, I heard everything, I couldn't stop listening what the other person was saying, while it interested me too. However when I was the visiting artist and had to talk for thirty minutes, then for me it was too long. Because I didn't know the work and I had little information in order to understand what it was about, and it was too long for me."

M.S.: "Now, it was very intense and interesting, half an hour to listen [...] this flow of words and reflections and other relations [...] it's definitely very interesting. You coming from another, I wouldn't say another culture, but another context, this work is reflecting certain cultural contexts, it's very interesting. Useful."

There was one divergent opinion regarding the moment to use the Spectator Studio Visit model:

P.S.: "Well I think this model is for a work-in-progress and not when the work is finished. Because then as an artist you can realise from the beginning of the work if it functions or not, what effect does the work have in another person. Because when the work is finished you might not be able to change it anymore or only just a little bit."

The essence of the participants' quotes: the Spectator Studio Visit model worked for the visited artist, to get a sense of how the things look in that quick take; they were all-ears to hear what the visiting artist had to say. However, during the interviews it was said that the identity of the visiting artist was important, in order to know if their opinion should be taken seriously or not: professional deformation could play a role in this. Although this model is proposed for finished work that is presented in order to understand how the visitor sees the work. It could be helpful for work-in-progress as well, in order to know

how to continue with an idea. The display of the work is important in this model. Finally, showing work on Facebook, and in pdf or PowerPoint formats is becoming a new convention: some reflected that this is a possibility depending on what the artist wants to know.

#### The Structured Studio Visit Model

In the Structured Studio Visit model, the visited artist must learn to present his/her work and articulate his/her thoughts/ideas/problems/questions/work and such. The visiting artist must verbally repeat what s/he has understood from what the visited artist is showing, telling or asking. This s/he must do until s/he has understood the artist correctly.

This model was practiced very differently: in the first workshop some people where very concentrated and some people couldn't really carry out the model. They slipped back into the normal way of having a studio visit: in particular they did not repeat what the visited artist was saying. Instead, they started asking questions to the visited artist, and in this manner then also led the studio visit.

On the second day of the second workshop two participants tried out the model, but partially failed. They complained that they felt stupid, and aborted the exercise all together. For those who really engaged the outcome was successful: J.D.: "So in a way you have a first impression as with someone's face or something. Which was in a way the Spectator Studio Visit. So that is very interesting and that the same insight was actually confirmed during the Structured Studio Visit is what I remember the most was when became clear to me that performing outside was somehow fundamental to my work. Actually, and at that what I was getting something from performing outside. That I wasn't getting in other ways or getting me somewhere else. And that really came out about through the process of repetition and hearing my own babbling. I guess forced to not set down in writing but to be repeated back to me like that was definitely a confrontation which was jarring but also clarified some things in terms of what my own priorities where. So it was a very constructed moment of self-consciousness

and actually I think it really let me to, it had a concrete effect on the next piece that I began and in which I decided that the piece to make and to sort of dramatise this issue of performing outside, or inside, even more that the piece would have wanted that one part was outside and one part was outside. That is the thing I remember best about it, was just my own experience of reflecting my own work and then there was I guess secondarily a little bit of other discussion about other people's work and also a sort of that the whole thing in general. But I had a pretty substantive kind of thinking through on that day. It was substantive for me, and so my own experiences of myself was what I remember best really."

K.B.: "[...] entering or applying a particular model creates specific terms of engagement that, though contrived, provide opportunities for greater insight and discovery."

The essence of the participants' quotes: with this model some people were very concentrated, although some slipped back into the traditional way of having a studio visit. For those who did really engage the outcome was successful, this through the process of repetition, and hearing the visited artist's own babbling. To have one's ideas repeated back was seen as confrontational and somewhat jarring, but it also clarified things in terms of what the visited artist's own priorities were.

#### The Personal Studio Visit Model

In this model the visited artist had the freedom to talk about any topic of choice that may be causing a problem or struggle; either an issue that directly or indirectly connects with their work as an artist or a problem or struggle in their life as an artist. This was the model that generated the longest conversation as part of the group discussion in the second workshop. One of the



participants did not practice the model because of a language barrier with his training partner. Nevertheless he tried the model, and reflected that for him trust is an important factor in the Personal Studio Visit model:

K.B.: "As an artist, each model had valuable qualities but some seemed more likely to be realistically embarked on than others. For instance the Personal Studio Visit model, though I didn't have the opportunity to experience it, in practice is one that for me would depend on a great deal of trust. To be truly listened to with focus and attention allows one to externalise and therefore own and experience one's thoughts for their having been spoken, but the speaker must know that these thoughts, listened for with great attention, are entrusted safely."

J.D.: "The real difference between this model and other ones might be that it gives you the liberty to assert what you want the framework to be. The way you describe it is incredibly broad. But in practice maybe you have to say it's that broad in order to really give the licence to then do something kind of specific, which is to say like: "I'm kind of frustrated with this problem." And sometimes also having a problem is a good thing in art; this thing you're turning around over and over again is a good thing. And I was thinking: have I ever had studio visits before where I took the liberty to assert that I was asking for someone to come and help me with my problem? And I have. But what is different is that, when I've done that before, I've kind of got the feeling like it didn't really work that well, and I'm trying to think why? I felt like what ended up happening was people wanted to reassure me. So when I would ask a friend to come and, say for instance, like with this exact project I've shown this to people, I'm like, I'm swimming in this and I have no idea what to do. And they'll be like: "Oh, it's all good," they want to reassure. They want the bad feeling to go away, as opposed to walk through the substance of the issue. [...] And that's something that I have thought about and never looked at so clearly and crisply so often."

The framing and naming of the Personal Studio Visit model was discussed in length. Many alternative names were suggested, such as the Problem-, Open-, Issue-, Free-, Knot- and Struggle Studio Visit model. Some thought it should

be problem solving, others said no, just a place where we need to address issues. What I am after in this model is a space for the acknowledgement and verbalisation of the artist's personal struggle. I don't expect this model to untie the knot or solve the problem. But I do believe that it could help to have a second artist look at the issue, since a peer-artist can relate to this in a different way than a friend who wants to be friendly or a therapist who doesn't necessarily know the art context of the problem. With the Personal Studio Visit model I specifically lifted that element out of the current traditional practised studio visit, in order for the visited artist to verbalise the problem and to directly address it. That is, to enable the visited artist by letting him/her verbalise, expose, identify, and address their problem:

J.D.: "A therapist does in general not really know that much about the relationship between video and installation and local memory. So the other one is very clear how it works in a way, the first one we did. How it works and why it works? So the Spectorator Studio Visit model works because you refrain from ... you make space for someone to give you a very focussed reception of the work in a very direct way, in a very concentrated way, almost as something like a task: "Now I'm going to talk about it for half an hour." And you don't stop talking because the other person is not talking. That enables something. Why is it necessary? Because when you do invite people over to your studio, when you have a meeting at school, you don't really feel the licence to put the problematic aspect first, to put the issue first, to put the personal struggle first. I guess. In general, when you have meetings with people, you don't feel the licence to do that. So maybe by having the structure ... you make that explicit at the beginning. I don't know if maybe the title is not the most important thing, but to clarify what it is and then the title will come out of that, because you definitely want it to be personal. Maybe you have to make it so dramatic to then feel the licence to be like: "Okay, come along with me, with my leg performance photo problem," which is kind of a weird thing to share, in a way."

M.S.: "I quite liked your approach, going directly into this very personal thing, because usually we don't do it. We do it with people we know very well but never with people we don't know. As far

as I can tell, what you did, and you did that first, you were the presenter, and you immediately went straight into a very personal level. I think that's the way actually where you get something out of it. More if we would have talked about other things and this and that and in the end a little bit about you. You addressed your problem and then we had half an hour to talk about it, which was very straightforward. I asked the question because I saw the opportunity to actually solve something I have in my mind, something I have not talked about with other people. You see, I saw the opportunity, and I took it. Maybe, if you say it's an opportunity to maybe get useful hints about how to solve this or so."

The essence of the participants' quotes: the participants reflected that the Personal Studio Visit model had to be described broadly and dramatically in order to really give licence to then do something specific. This model provided a way to walk through the substance of the issue. And by going straight into a very personal level or a personal issue, the result was to see the problem clearly and crisply, and as a way to get something out of it. The structure of this model provides the means to do this. It was said that usually we don't do that: The problem was addressed and then we had half an hour to talk about it, which was very straightforward. Finally, it was also mentioned that having a problem is a good thing in art.

#### Vulnerable Position

Before and after the workshop short, interesting discussions took place. When the first workshop started one of the participants arrived earlier and we chatted a little bit about the mystery of a studio visit, and that it differs enormously depending on the person you are meeting. One never really knows what is going to happen. And one never knows if it is going to be helpful or not. As the visited artist you and your work are largely in the hands of the visiting artist, which requires a certain amount of surrender:

K.B.: "We spoke briefly about the mercurial subjects of vulnerability and mystery and that's hard since there is a lot to unpack where art is concerned. Each person's philosophy of art or making art or seeing is so distinct and that's half

the magic right there. And everyone has different goals - some to pay the rent, others for wide recognition, some to just explore as they can. It's boring to generalise but as I see it the goal of most artists could be said to touch and name ineffable experiences through their art. To do so successfully, whatever that may mean, requires tolerance of uncertainty or an openness to the constant flow of change. Defensiveness, anxiety over outcomes and fear in general might be said to be the antithesis of such an open or vulnerable state whether from a creative or receptive point of view. These are all truisms of a sort, but ones that get to the nitty-gritty of studio activity."

#### Hierarchy

With these models and/or the structure of the workshops I am striving for a situation where artists have a form of collaboration with each other and thus avoiding strong hierarchy. All sorts of other issues can slip into a studio visit, so it was good to hear that all the participants were focussed, and really tried to interpret the work, and were truly looking into the material:

J.D.: "So on the one hand the craziness level or all the emotional content of presenting oneself goes down as you work a bit longer. The other thing that happens though is the "professionalism" goes up. So then, the presentation of vulnerability is a little bit different. I think one of the participants said that the person presenting the work is always in a vulnerable position. I suddenly thought when we were doing the Spectorator Studio Visit model: "What if one of us was Anselm Kiefer?" Would the hierarchy really change if you were showing your work to Anselm Kiefer? Would you feel more vulnerable because he's someone who is very widely acknowledged, or would you feel special because he is paying special attention? Or if I was Anselm Kiefer, would I feel extra vulnerable? In theory, why would I need critical feedback? Why would I be interested in what anybody thinks? Then it starts to go into this other territory. Maybe that would be a limitation of this model."

M.S.: "I think the presenting artist is always in a vulnerable position, as long as they take it personal. But as soon as they get rid of this thing, this vulnerability is not there anymore. This I

of my own experience. But still, the speaking person is in a powerful position. He can hurt the other or try to hurt the other person. But here I don't feel hierarchy."

#### Don't Take it Personally

There was a slightly different atmosphere on the second day of the first workshop compared with the first day of the second workshop. This could have to do with how the visiting artist approached the work, and how the visited artist mutually reacted. It could have been the chemistry of two different generations coming together. Or the different mediums the artists worked in. Or a different cultural approach to the studio visit conversation: polite or very direct:

M.S.: "But because I don't know you, I try to be polite. But I know as an artist it is very helpful. I'm an artist too, and I like to know what other people think. I remember, ten years ago, I took it very personal and it offended me personally when someone said: "This is weird," or "Why did you do that?""

J.D.: "It takes to learn how to not take it personally. But for me, it's almost more like the volume level and not about my own craziness has gone down significantly. [...] "Oh my god, it's all terrible, I'm falling apart. Oh, I'm still here.""

P.S.: "I said everything that I thought, although that I didn't know the other person. So it was a bit risky, but I don't mean it vicious, it is a professional business. I don't care if I know the other person or not. One should really say it, or else it doesn't function. When everybody is polite, then this politeness doesn't work. While then people say only things that one wants to hear. And that is a problem in this model. While with this model you really have to tell the truth, also when it doesn't sit well with the other person. It is just an opinion and that should one accept. So as a professional and not take it personal. That is also a cultural difference. People from other cultures react differently. In my culture we always just say it."

#### Who is it For?

Some thought it could be beneficial for student-artists. However in the two workshops most

of the participants where professional working artists and in both workshop these included teacher-artists.

This concurs with the arguments in Ann-Mari Edström's article III "Art Students Making Use of Studio Conversations"<sup>11</sup> in which she explores how student-artists use the studio visits, and what qualities they develop by doing so. I think art students are in the position where they are relatively free and where they could try out the models in a safe environment. Although I understand, when offering the models in the form of a non-graded workshop, that it would give complete freedom to explore the models. One of the students mentioned mixing up the models as well:

K.B.: "I think that working with students is very promising since those that are going to take the risk are best positioned to demonstrate to others. But then again, there were no students in our group on the second day. It might be true too, that 'workshops' would be a way to move it forward as well since those that show up are those that want to be there; a self-selected group."

P.S.: "Yes I think so. I think one already plays models. Actually one always plays models. Other models. When we make a presentation for other students at the University then that is also a model. How we think that it should be. But it is good to be consciously dealing with these models, because we want to get different sorts of results. And when we receive information from the other person then we can be conscious, and consciously choose this first model for example. So that one knows, okay how many models are there and then one can also personalise it somehow, one doesn't need to exactly follow the models. One could do a mix of two models for example, depending on the situation."

J.D.: "I said it before: "When you have a hammer, everything starts to look like a nail." And I think what that means is that in some ways the current existing studio visit structure, it has an un... I mean I could imagine having someone do studio visit on the basis of or sort of evaluating their trying to assist someone in having a very different model of being an artist, then being or trying to be a professional artist in the contemporary art

world. But I think that the studio visits in schools is of course structured by the unspoken assumption that that should be the goal. The goal of the art school is to encourage people to be professional artists in the contemporary art world. So the studio visit exists to help people move in that direction. Not necessarily to move into their own direction or in a direction with a different value system but very much to move in that direction. So could I imagine that the way the current studio visit works not be good for some people. Yes definitely, in two or three senses. One is, people who are too young or haven't elaborated on their own ideas yet and so then you are in the position in the same way that makes sense to have a group critique for homework assignment some time, because a homework assignment doesn't show who the person really is. There is no point really to spend some time talking about it. In the same way for younger artist sometimes studio visits doesn't really makes sense in the conventional way of talking about their work. On the other hand the conversation can get quite sprawling, which is nice. The other people wouldn't be effective for who in some way whose work is not so focussed on one person judgement and I am trying to think what I mean by that. I don't really know what I mean. The third way, some people don't want people in their studio. And maybe the reason why they don't want people in their studio is some don't want people to know. If you gave them the opportunity to dictate the term a little bit more, they might want people in their studio."

The essence of the participants' quotes: one of the participants said that the speaking person is in a powerful position. He can hurt the other, or try to hurt the other person. The person presenting the work then is always in a vulnerable position, as long as they take it personally. And it takes time to learn how to not take it personally. One of the participants also said that as an artist she would like to know what other people think. Added to this, that art is a professional business, and that one should really say it, or else it doesn't function. Some thought that the New Studio Visit could be beneficial for student-artists. And 'workshops' would be a way to move it forward since those that show up are a self-selected group.

Summing-up who it was also for: 1) People who are too young or haven't elaborated on their own

ideas yet. 2) Artists whose work is not so focussed on one-person judgement 3) People who don't want people in their studio. If they would have the opportunity to dictate the terms a little more they might want people in their studio.

#### Conclusion

Since the studio visit (or the "individual session", "one-on-one tutorial" or "one-one-one critique") is still the predominant form and a defining trait of learning and teaching in fine art, I think it is important to define and investigate this method of critique, feedback and conversation by discussing the (new) studio visit. The New Studio Visit – Alternative Feedback Session may contribute to the discussion how artist-students learn, what the aims are of having a studio visit, and what possible benefits the studio visit can offer. This text is an explorative research into the New Studio Visit; how the New Studio Visit has been practiced, and how the participants perceived it. It is explorative in the sense that little research has been carried out within the area of the studio visit. And as far I am aware, no new model to conduct a studio visit has been presented. What happens if we bring in new models to undertake a studio visit from the perspective of the student-artist? This is what I marginally tested at the UdK in Berlin. And it could be interesting to further specialise the use of the studio visit by the student-artist.

The Spectator Studio Visit model worked for the visited artist, allowing them to get a sense of how things look in a quick take. Equally, the participants who took the role of the visited artist were keen to hear what the visiting artist had to say. However, during the interviews it was said that the identity of the visiting artist is important, in order to know if their opinion should be taken seriously or not. Professional deformation could play a role in this. Also the presentation of the work is important in this model. It is becoming a new convention to show work on a laptop, using QuickTime, Facebook, pdf or PowerPoint. Some reflected that this is an area of possibility depending on what the artist wants to know.

With the Structured Studio Visit model some participants where very concentrated whilst some slipped back into the normal pattern of a studio

visit. For those who did really engage the outcome was said to be successful. For the visited artist, the process of repetition and hearing one's own babbling was seen as a confrontation which was jarring, but also one that clarified things in terms of what the visited artist's own priorities were.

The participants also reflected that the Personal Studio Visit model had to be described in broad and dramatic terms in order to really give licence to carry out something specific. This model, by its very nature, provided a way to work through the substance of the issue. And for some, by going straight to a very personal level or directly into a personal thing, they were able to see the problem clearly. It was also mentioned that having a problem is a good thing in art.

The speaking person is seen as the one in the position of power: s/he can hurt the other, or try to hurt them. The person presenting the work is always seen in a vulnerable position, as long as s/he takes it personally. And it takes time and effort to not take it personally. One of the participants said that as an artist she would like to know what other people think. It was also said that art is a professional business.

Some thought that the New Studio Visit could be beneficial for student-artists. And 'workshops' would be a way to move forward since those that show up are a self-selected group. The models of the New Studio Visit go into one specific element of the studio visit with great depth. "Placing a first year MFA practiced-based student in a situation that demands self-direction does not result in a self-directed student."<sup>12</sup> I also think that in this case the models could provide practical benefits, particularly when student-artists see three possible ways of having a studio visit, whilst also having a structure to navigate with.

With The New Studio Visit – Alternative Feedback Session, in perhaps an experimental way I hope to contribute to a form of knowledge sharing on the topic of the studio visit. Although I can imagine that a more longitudinal practice of the New Studio Visit will show if it has valuable factors for the visited artist (student-artist), strengthening and growing or role inside an educational setting.

#### THE NEW STUDIO VISIT – ALTERNATIVE FEEDBACK SESSION

In all models of the New Studio Visit both artists (the visiting and the visited) agree beforehand which of the models will be chosen and thus in what manner the studio visit takes place. The visited artist is the one who chooses the model since s/he is the one who invites the other artist, or other willing visitor, to aid him/her in the process of development. Making it clear that it is actually the artist him/herself that is, or at best should be, self-directing.

#### APPENDIX A, MODEL 1 THE SPECTATOR STUDIO VISIT

In the Spectator Studio Visit model the visited artist keeps silent. The Spectator Studio Visit is a mix of uttering the analytical aspect of the presented work and interpretation of it by the visiting artist. The work is the only "speaking" aspect. The visited artist him/herself keeps quiet (in case s/he is not part of the work). S/he is merely a present, non-reactionary body. The visited artist can make notes in case s/he wants and in case s/he doesn't need to perform or has to activate the work somehow. The visited artist introduces him/herself and the work with one sentence. For example: "Hello, my name is Kim Engelen, and I work as a lens-based performance artist."

The visiting artist states what s/he sees, by verbally describing it. That is, what is aesthetically/technically presented: colour; text; elements; structure; pattern; size; amount; length; style; person(s); sound; smell; and so on. This has to be spun out as wide is possible: the technique and medium that has been chosen; the style; time; the way the work is presented; the relation with the work to the location; and so on. The aesthetic/technical verbalisation can be interwoven and has no particular order. Then the visiting artist may say something about the interpretation of the presented work. The visiting artist may give some rational, conceptual and/or emotional reactions. S/he may give some reflections and associations that s/he sees, or experiences, since this is a way for the artist to witness how a singular spectator sees and/or interprets his/her work. The visited artist can choose this model when s/he wants to know where the work locates itself, what it communicates, and how the visiting artist interprets, examines, and assesses the work. This model does not facilitate a dialogue between the two artists during this particular studio visit. When the visited artist chooses this model, s/he chooses not to converse or discuss the work so as to not influence the visiting artist other than by the presented work. The moment of choosing this model is most likely during the installation of the work and/or during an exhibition in one way or the other. The visiting artist can however ask a question such as: "Can I touch the work?" Although this question, in itself, might reveal something that could be of importance to the artist. This might neither be clear to a spectator or the audience in a presentation setting where the artist is not present to answer the question. The question does not necessarily need to be answered. Thus the visited artist is allowed to remain completely silent; to just see and hear, and in this manner witness how her/his work is seen, heard and touched upon.

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APPENDIX B, MODEL 2  
THE STRUCTURED STUDIO VISIT

This model demands attention and mutual respect. The task of the visiting artist is to facilitate the artist as best as possible. To be able to do this s/he firstly needs to understand the artist. This understanding of the work is a shared responsibility: 1) The visited artist must learn to present his/her work, and articulate his/her thoughts/ideas/problems/questions/work and more. The visited artist starts the talk, and thus gives direction to the talk, and can communicate about any matter that is important for the artist at the very moment of their meeting. The visited artist decides if it is a talk about the idea-, process-, material-, development-, economical-, personal-, critical-, emotional part or aspect of the work or any other implication that is important for the visited artist and his/her practice. When the visited artist feels that the visiting artist has indeed understood him/her they can move on. If not, the visited artist must repeat until s/he feels the visiting artist has understood. 2) The visiting artist must understand the visited artist. Therefore the visiting artist must verbally repeat what s/he has understood from what the visited artist is showing, telling or asking. The visiting artist must (learn to) repeat until s/he has understood the artist correctly. It is not enough for the visiting artist to say: "I have understood you." No, the visiting artist has to repeat it again in order to give back to the visited artist what s/he has understood. This is so that the artist hears his/her own words back, and also that s/he knows and feels that the visited artist has understood him/her. 3) Both artists must try to not lose their patience in case the visiting artist does not understand something, or the visited artist gets lost in his/her words. It is not the purpose of this model and thus not important to investigate whether the visiting artist is a good listener or not, or if s/he is capable of understanding or not. Nor if the visited artist is not (yet) good at communicating their work, problem, process or what not. The goal is that the visiting artist understands the visited artist. This can be easy but can also be difficult. In case of difficulty there is apparently something to learn, and neither should give up. It is possible that there is no natural chemistry between the artists. This might form a greater challenge because the visiting and visited artist cannot move forward until the visiting artist understands the artist. But exactly this challenge can be bridged by repeating what the visited artist has said, and through this way come to understand the artist.

Unless the visited artist is a very good listener and this is something s/he already practice and is good at. S/he can use in between sentences, such as: "So what I hear you say is that you work mainly with video;" "So how I understand it is;" "To clarify again;" or simply "So;" It might feel unnatural to repeat again and again what you have heard. This means that as the visited artist continues to say the same things, it becomes clear to the visiting artist that is what they need to repeat back to the visited artist in order to make the visited artist aware of this.

APPENDIX C, MODEL 3  
THE PERSONAL STUDIO VISIT

This is the model in which you have the freedom as a human-artist to talk about any topic you choose. Maybe you feel like talking about: money issues; commerciality; trends; discrimination; feminism; gender transitions issues; religion; loneliness; isolation; personal meaning in your work; the overly white male western work visible; the dematerialisation of art; nepotism; elitism; the increased level of theory and discussion in art education; the market-driven, and artist-saturated art world; and so on. Topics that indirectly, but also directly, connect with your work as an artist, your lifestyle, or simply your life as an artist. Within this model you choose to have a studio visit in which you specifically talk about your concerns, problems, hiccups, professional development, marketing, coming out, addiction/s, depression or whatever it is that worries you, or occupies your mind, and hinders you to work as an artist. Or more intensely still you notice how personal issues affect your work so much that you feel the work might even develop or is already moving in a different direction because of these issues. When choosing this model the visiting artist is well aware of the fact that personal matters are going to be discussed. This is so that s/he is not overwhelmed or bored with the studio visit since this would hinder the visited artist to speak freely and frankly. This model can be called upon at any time in the art making process; since personal matters such as sickness or even death of a loved one can come unexpected.

You can have a walk or go with your visiting artist to a certain location, exhibition, person, job, migration office and so on. The only rule or boundary is the time frame you and the visiting artist have agreed upon. Both must communicate and protect their own boundaries of what is socially, legally, and financially acceptable to them, since there are no real restrictions or rules except the agreed time frame, and the context of artistic development. This model could also be called the free model not merely because the studio visit could take place outside of the studio context but also because it addresses personal matters, and could be informal, or still be placed in a formal setting.