



KADIR HAS UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
DESIGN DEPARTMENT

**NUDGING CRAFT HERITAGE:  
A NON-TRADITIONAL APPRENTICESHIP MODEL USING  
PERFORMATIVE ARTISTIC RESEARCH  
METHODOLOGIES**

BUSE AKTAŞ

ADVISOR: ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR İNCİ EVİNER  
CO-ADVISOR: ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR YONCA KÖSEBAY ERKAN

GRADUATE THESIS

DECEMBER, 2017

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Doç. Dr. İnci Eviner (Başkan/Danışman)

Doç. Dr. Yonca Kösebay Erkan (Eş-Danışman)

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Ayşe Coşkun Orlandi

Prof. Dr. Ayşegül Baykan

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Prof. Dr. Sinem Akgül Açıkmeşe  
Enstitü Müdürü  
ONAY TARİHİ: Gün/Ay/Yıl

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## **Abstract**

Aktaş, Buse. *Nudging Craft Heritage: a non-traditional apprenticeship model using artistic research methodologies*, M.A. Thesis, Istanbul, 2017

Traditional crafts, an essential part of our intangible cultural heritage, is an object making process in which decisions regarding form, apparatus, and material are based on experiential, tacit knowledge. We are facing the loss of this generational know-how, since certain craft generated objects are no longer as relevant as they used to be. With industrialization and globalization, not only the end products of certain crafts, but also the skills required to perform these crafts are becoming irrelevant and inapplicable within their rapidly changing contexts. Yet, this does not mean that the craft heritage which has been processed and perfected by many generations becomes entirely irrelevant for the current and next generations. Within the many interconnected layers of discovery, knowledge, practice, and development, there might lie a well-thought-out solution to a problem we have today, or we might have tomorrow. Therefore, craft heritage and how we position it within our networks, is an urgent locus of research, discussion and practice for many different disciplines.

*As contemporary practitioners, can we collaborate and coexist with the carriers of traditional craft knowledge in a way which avoids their culture's representation and instrumentalization?*

This study proposes a non-conventional hybrid method in which the components of a traditional apprenticeship are complemented by a variety of transdisciplinary artistic appropriation methodologies. This method does not attempt to safeguard or preserve, or to resolve the contrast between the traditional and the contemporary. Instead, it aims to revitalize and cultivate this contrast as a collaborative and performative platform, re-activating the know-how of a craft through nudging the different potentialities within it.

**Keywords:** traditional crafts, intangible cultural heritage, performative research, tacit knowledge, apprenticeship, broommaking



## Özet

Aktaş, Buse. *Zanaat Mirasını Dürtmek: sanatsal araştırma yöntemlerini kullanan performatif bir çıraklık modeli*, Yüksek lisans Tezi, İstanbul, 2017

Somut olmayan kültürel mirasımızın önemli bir parçası olan geleneksel zanaatlar, biçim, malzeme, araç konusundaki kararların deneyimsel ve örtük bilgiye bağlı olduğu nesne yapım süreçlerini içerirler. Zanaat yapımı nesnelere sosyal ve ekonomik değerini yitirdikçe, nesillereşirli gelişerek büyüyen bu bilgi birikimini kaybetme tehlikesiyle karşı karşıyayız. Endüstrileşme ve küreselleşme ile, sadece zanaat ürünleri değil, bu zanaatleri gerçekleştirmek için gerekli olan bilgi ve yetkinlikler de kendi bağlamlarında uygulamaz ve işlenemez hale geliyor. Ancak bu, farklı nesiller tarafından işlenerek pekiştirilen zanaat bilgi birikiminin şimdiki ya da daha sonraki nesiller için faydasız olduğu anlamına gelmiyor. İç içe oluşan araştırma, geliştirme, keşif, ve pratik katmanlarının arasında, günümüzde karşılaştığımız ya da yarın karşımıza çıkacak sorunlara iyi düşünülmüş bir çözüm yatıyor olabilir. Bu yüzden, zanaat mirasını günümüzdeki ilişki ağları içerisinde nasıl konumlandırabileceğimiz, farklı disiplinler için önemli bir araştırma, tartışma ve uygulama alanı olarak karşımıza çıkıyor.

*Çağdaş yaratıcı araştırmacılar olarak geleneksel zanaat bilgisinin taşıyıcılarıyla temsil ve araçsallaştırmadan kaçınan bir ortak çalışma ve ortak varoluş biçimi bulabilir miyiz?*

Bu çalışma, geleneksel bir çıraklığın bileşenlerinin, disiplinler aşırı performatif sanat yöntemleri ile birleştirildiği, hibrit bir metod öneriyor. Zanaat mirasını korumak ya da geleneksel ve çağdaş arasındaki karşıtlığı çözümlenmek yerine, bu zıtlığı canlandırıp besleyerek yeni bir birlikte var olma platformu oluşturmayı ve zanaatin bilgi birikimini, içindeki potansiyellikleri dürtürerek, aktif hale getirmeyi hedefliyor.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** geleneksel zanaat, somut olmayan kültürel miras, performatif araştırma, örtük bilgi, çıraklık, süpürgecilik

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The last saddler in Konya, Harun Usta, had learned the craft from his father at a young age, and still has a workshop full of tools, devices, and chemicals - basically the full setup which provides the opportunity to process leather right from the butcher and turn it into a harness, a whip, or a saddle. Yet, his tools, knowledge or experience isn't actively used anymore. He very rarely has an old customer or two who come to get their old saddles fixed and refurbished. Or occasionally a firm wants custom-made traditional harnesses for their tourist attraction horse carriages. These are of course not enough to sustain Harun Usta's practice and workshop. Nowadays, the harnesses and saddles which are regularly used by farmers aren't made out of real leather but mostly out of nylon. They don't last as long as traditional leather gear, but they are so much cheaper that customers prefer to keep buying new ones once they start to wear. Consequently, Harun Usta spends most of his days making dog leashes and horse harnesses out of pre-fabricated nylon straps. The knowledge he has practiced and perfected for years about transforming leather in an elaborate way is no longer utilized, and he performs much simpler tasks to make ends meet. He is convinced that his skillset is no longer relevant. He has no intention or incentive to pass on the generations of craft knowledge he is carrying. (Aktaş, "Saddler Harun in Konya")

Situations such as the one described above are frequently encountered: generations of knowledge embodied in the mind and hand of a craftsman, which can not be transferred in a straightforward and traditional way. This phenomenon is dealt with in different ways by different local, national, international organizations as well as professional or amateur individuals. This study aims to add a new and refreshing perspective to this discourse.

With industrialization and globalization, while we are creating new opportunities to share, expand, combine, highlight and develop certain aspects of our respective cultures around the world, we are also experiencing the loss of some of these aspects. As lifestyles, infrastructures, economic and sociopolitical mechanisms transform over time, some traditional crafts find it difficult to remain relevant and they struggle to function within the new social, economic, and political structures. This study, does not aim to propose a way to resolve the contrast between traditional and contemporary practices in fabrication. Instead,

it aims to revitalize and cultivate this contrast as a collaborative and performative platform, re-activating the know-how of a craft through nudging the different potentialities within it, in order to pave the way for the craft knowledge to find bridges towards other disciplines, cultures and practices.



**Figure 1.** Harun Usta's Workshop

Finding a form of engagement with a practice as visceral, intimate, experiential, and unmediated as craft is a challenge today on many different levels, and this study is an attempt to propose a model of collaboration. In light of how craft is and has been institutionalized by different entities, how craft knowledge is activated and transferred, and how different approaches to craft immensely influence the impact of intervention projects. With an

overview and analysis of these dimensions, this study argues that approaching traditional craft merely as heritage generates a communication barrier that hinders possible forms of collaboration, but on the other hand, failing to see the cultural heritage value of craft as an asset, leads to the inability to recognize the generations of knowledge. This study also claims that having a predetermined apriori approach to the dynamic practice of craft, leads to either an instrumentalization or a representation of the craft practice. Instrumentalization occurs through the subjugation of the craft, whereas representation occurs through the act of conceptualizing the practice without experiencing or embodying it. Thus, what defines the approach to craft is the form of collaboration.

The proposed hybrid approach in this study combines a traditional apprenticeship with artistic performative research methodologies; placing the artist, the apprentice, and the researcher within one body. Starting as a simple traditional apprenticeship, the process slowly transitions into a performative research study which is steered collaboratively by the apprentice artist and the master craftsman. The methods used during the initial phase resemble a conventional process of tacit knowledge transfer, in which the master's knowledge is transmitted to the apprentice as is (Sennett, *The Craftsman*, 58). Yet after building a relationship based on trust and common grounds, the knowledge transfer need not be as direct and straightforward (Ranciere 18). Bodies of knowledge from other disciplines or even purely artistic curiosities also guide the process, allowing the knowledge transfer to occur not only from one person to another within the same practice but also towards other practices. This non-traditional apprenticeship model is inspired by performative research practices from socially engaged art and process art fields, since the former experiments with interpersonal relations while the latter experiments with material processes, and both stem from the motivation to make art more a part of daily life. (*Adamson, "Thinking Through Craft" 59*), (Huelgera 14)

In craft; technique, information, communication, relationship and experience are in a constant and intricate interaction (Sennett 159). What makes the proposed model unique and relevant is that the involved, experiential, exploratory and performative nature of it also contains a constant and intricate interaction between relationship, technique, information and experience. It doesn't filter or represent the knowledge within craft through a predetermined

approach, but nudges it on a platform of collaboration which allows the craft knowledge to be activated.

Although there have been numerous creative and involved approaches to craft heritage, a customizable and reproducible methodology has not been outlined. By proposing an adaptable model of collaboration based on a theoretical and practical foundation and then implementing it in the form of a case study, this study hopes to function within the anonymity, collectiveness, and continuity of craft while also having a contemporary creative approach.

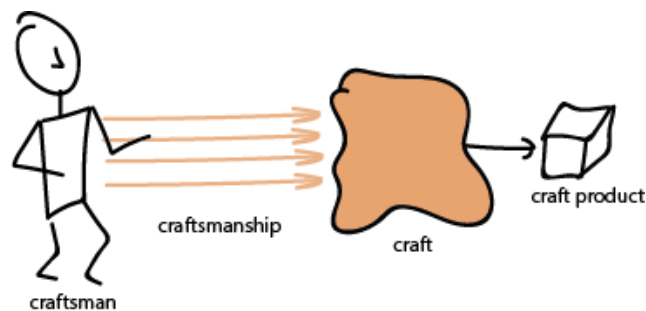
The groundwork of this study started in 2011, when the researcher of this study, Buse Aktaş, planned and implemented a trip around Turkey in which she performed a participatory action research project with different craft communities. Financially supported by the Martin A. Dale '52 Summer Awards of Princeton University, she worked with groups including: the blacksmithing community in Safranbolu, the tea-urn making community in Vezirköprü, the last saddler in Konya, and the broommaking community in Edirne. These preliminary apprenticeships were in the form of field research for scoping and discovery. The visual and textual documentation of these experiences can be found at her blog “Ben hep çırak kalacağım | Always an apprentice” (Aktaş). The findings from this field research, alongside the researcher’s experiences in contemporary art were the first seeds for this transdisciplinary project.

The field research also determined in which community the case study of this study was to be performed. The Edirne broommaking craftsmen were chosen as the community to work with for specific reasons which are detailed in Section 5, but in short it is due to the self-contained nature of the specific community with almost no circulation of community members, and the easily translatable quality of the physical processes within broommaking. The account of the non-traditional broommaking apprenticeship performed in Edirne hopes to provide inspiration and guidance for future researchers and artists in the field.

## 2. CRAFT/SMAN/SHIP

In order to set a strong foundation to the argument of this thesis, a thorough definition of the term “craft” is necessary. How craft has been defined throughout industrialization, will be highlighted. Then, what craft knowledge entails and how it is passed on from generation to generation will be outlined.

### 2.1. What craft/sman/ship isn't



**Figure 2.** Craft Practice

*The role of artisans have never been straightforward. But it is only when artisanal labor is placed in explicit contrast with other means of production (chiefly mechanization, fine art and technological mediation) that craft itself becomes a locus for discourse. Indeed, it could be argued that until its modern separation from these other possibilities, craft itself did not exist, at least in our sense of the term. It is a term established and defined through difference. (Adamson 5)*

Glenn Adamson, in the prologue of his anthology *The Craft Reader*, highlights the difficulty to define craft, and the context-dependency of such a task. Craft, especially after modernity, has been defined through not what it is, but more so through what it isn't. Before industrialization, crafts were a living, breathing, inseparable part of our daily lives. Craftsmen, sometimes in structures like guilds and sometimes more dispersedly, were a part of our social, economic and political systems, producing goods we used in our daily lives. Once other forms of production were introduced to our lives with the Industrial Revolution

in the 1800s and industrialized manufacturing techniques took prevalence, craft slowly lost its inextricable spot in our networks. This change happened over the course of mostly the 19<sup>th</sup> century, yet the pace and how much it affected specific crafts is very context specific, and depends on which products were produced more efficiently in a mechanized manner, in which cultures. Once a certain craft was “outside” of our daily networks, since it was unable to thrive and survive in the form it has had for centuries, it became an object for discussion (Adamson 5). This led to the question if dying traditional crafts should be protected, cultivated, promoted, and kept as a part of our production networks, in a way it has been for centuries.

One of the most influential approaches to craft has been the Arts and Crafts Movement which began in 1880 in Britain, as a reaction to the Industrial Revolution and quickly flourished both in Europe and in North America. It aimed to practice and promote craft based on its differences from industrial production. William Morris, a Victorian designer who pioneered this movement, promoted tasteful and crafted fabrication up against standardized and mechanized fabrication. The focus was on the societal impact of production processes not just on the end users but also on the producers. Morris advocated that craft provides a “pleasant occupation” which allows people to be able to do something for themselves (153). John Ruskin, who was a huge influence for William Morris, phrases this prioritization quite eloquently: “for we are not sent into this world to do anything into which we cannot put our hearts” (Ruskin). Morris, when talking about the change from handicraft to machinery, phrases its effect on society as bitterly as follows: “Statically it is bad, dynamically it is good. As a condition of life, production of machinery is altogether an evil; as an instrument for forcing on us better conditions of life it has been, and for some time yet will be, indispensable” (151). Having a dualistic approach in which craft is the good and noble whereas industrial production is the evil but inevitable, is not limited to the Arts and Crafts Movement.

Craft theorist and woodworker David Pye, comes from a craftsman family, practiced craft in an industrial setting, taught Furniture Design in the Royal College of Art between the years 1964 - 1974, and he lived one generation after Morris and his peers. He also talks about how craft is considered a better form of making, building off of Ruskin and Morris’s frameworks, but by emphasizing that the line which divides craft from other forms of



production is quite unclear: “Workmanship of the better sort is called, in an honorific way, craftsmanship. Nobody, however, is prepared to say where craftsmanship ends and ordinary manufacture begins.” (341). He details this duality and focuses on how the way craft is practiced, through naming craftsmanship, “the workmanship of risk”:

*If I must ascribe a meaning to the word craftsmanship, I shall say as a first approximation that it means simply workmanship using any kind of technique or apparatus, in which the quality of the result is not predetermined, but depends on the judgment, dexterity and care which the maker exercises as he works. The essential idea is that the quality of the result is continually at risk during the process of making; and so I shall call this kind of workmanship “The workmanship of risk”: an uncouth phrase, but at least descriptive. (Pye 342)*

This duality could be supported even further by definitions provided by the contemporaneous French philosopher Gilbert Simondon who was also interested in technology and its effects on the individual. He defines a product of a fabrication process as “a technical object”. According to Simondon, in craft, there are autonomous steps and processes which are perfect for their tasks, but do not have control over each other. This makes the resulting work an “abstract technical object”, especially since the idea of the end product is only in the craftsman’s mind, and is not systematically defined by any external factors. In contemporary industrial production, on the other hand, all the parts and processes are interdependent, making the system capable of fully predetermining an objective end product, making it a “concrete technical object” (356).

Concepts describing craft/sman/ship such as “the workmanship of risk” and the “abstract technical object” provide us with a definition which highlights the constant dynamicity and in-the-moment quality of craft practice. There is a constant interplay between mind and hand, due to constantly arising “problems” stemming from irregularities of factors such as material, process, and climate. The craftsman establishes “a rhythm between problem solving and problem finding”. (Sennett, *The Craftsman*, 9) This shows that the way of working of a craftsman is also an important component of how we perceive craft culture. Craftsmanship, defined by Richard Sennett as “the skill of making things well”, is not just the ability to practice a craft and produce certain products, it is also the attitude (The

Craftsman, 8). “What all crafts share is not just technique, or hand work on form, but also a probing of their medium’s capacity, a passion from practice, and moral value as an activity independent of what is produced” (McCullough 315). The practice of craftsmanship involves an experiential knowledge in which the mind and the body are in constant and active interaction with each other making craftsmen’s attitude a major part of the practice. Because of this, craft is dependent on its individual practitioners, unable to stand on its own feet independently. Thus craft knowledge has a dual condition not only in terms of the interplay between the mind and the body, but also in terms of its existence in time: a deep and rooted connection to past generations, alongside its very in-the-moment, dynamic, alive, experiential, here-and-now nature. (Sennett, *The Craftsman*, 22)

A craft product might no longer be relevant due to developments in technology, which is why it can’t be practiced the way it has been for generations. Yet, this does not mean that the knowledge of the craft, which is embodied in the last practicing craftsmen, is not relevant for other practices and contexts. Any method which wishes to activate the knowledge within a craft, must accept that it cannot be done without the cooperation of the remaining craftsmen.

*Servitude through admiration or tradition must be cast off. If correct, then the workshop cannot be a comfortable home for the craftsman, for its very essence lies in the personalized, face-to-face authority of knowledge. And yet it is a necessary home. Since there can be no skilled work without standards, it is infinitely preferable that these standards be embodied in a human being than in a lifeless, static code of practice. (Sennett, *The Craftsman*, 80)*

This study recognizes that the knowledge is embodied in craftsmen and focuses on creating a form and platform of collaboration with the carriers and practitioners of the craft knowledge.

## 2.2. Craft Knowledge and its Intergenerational Transmission

*“The difficulty of knowledge transfer poses a question about why it should be so difficult, why it becomes a personal secret.” (Sennett, *The Craftsman*, 74)*

Through working in a state of constant problem-solving and alertness, craftsmen develop their personal tacit knowledge regarding their craft. Michael Polanyi, explains this type of knowledge by stating that "we can know more than we can tell", and coining the term: "tacit knowledge" (x). He argues that it is crucial to recognize this since it shines light on the impossibility of depersonalizing knowledge. His theoretical framework is very relevant for the context of craft, since tacit knowledge is what makes craft so dependent on the still-practicing craftsmen. (Polanyi xiii)

Polanyi, whose interest in knowledge stems from his background in science and scientific research, emphasizes the importance of tacit and experiential knowledge, especially in relation to theoretical knowledge: "A true knowledge of a theory can be established only after it has been interiorized and extensively used to interpret experience" (21). A craftsman, through years and years of practice and experience, inevitably internalizes his/her craft, and her mind and body work inextricably together.

Within his framework of knowledge, Spinoza draws out three kinds of knowledge in Ethics, which are important to refer to when trying to draw out what the tacit knowledge within a craft is. The first kind is "opinion" or "imagination", which is from "individual objects presented to us through the senses in a fragmentary and confused manner without any intellectual order". This type of knowledge isn't "true knowledge" and is in no way internalized. In the context of craft, the mind has no idea what is going on and the body hasn't gained enough practice to get a hang of things. The second kind of knowledge is "reason" which is "common notions and adequate ideas of the properties of things". Again, in the context of craft, the body has started to get a feel of the actions and the mind has a better idea of what the body should be doing and why. And the third kind of knowledge is "intuition", in which we have internalized the knowledge so that we don't necessarily need to reason through in order to reach conclusions or make decisions. In this phase, the craftsman has internalized the experiential knowledge and can reason through actions

automatically and instinctively. The last two are “true” knowledge, which are adequate and can’t be falsified. (Spinoza 267)

The “true knowledge” within craft is acquired through practice and experience guided by a master craftsman through an apprenticeship process. It is important to develop a perceptiveness regarding how the transmission of craft knowledge occurs, not only because it will guide us in proposing new forms of knowledge transfer for crafts which are going extinct, but also, above all, because the moment/instant/action of transfer is when the knowledge becomes at least slightly more apparent to the exogenous non-craftsmen eye. This difficulty of the expression of the knowledge is not only because craftsmen may want to reserve the right to transfer their hard-earned knowledge, but also because there are highly tacit components to this knowledge which cannot be easily explained through words or discrete actions.

Traditional crafts which have been passed on throughout centuries up till today despite the ineffable quality of their tacit knowledge, are living proof of successful bridges of tacit knowledge between generations. These bridges are dependent on intimate interpersonal dynamics: trust, authority, respect, synergy, and patience. The possibility of teaching this knowledge relies on “the pupil's intelligent cooperation for catching the meaning of the demonstration” (Polanyi 5). Not only the apprentice must trust the master and try to cooperate, the master must be confident that the apprentice will make the utmost effort to understand the indescribable: “Our message had left something behind that we could not tell, and its reception must rely on it that the person addressed will discover that which we have not been able to communicate” (Polanyi 6). This reciprocity is required for both parties to willingly invest the time and energy to build a bridge for knowledge. The apprentice has the responsibility to be alert, open and engaged at a maximum throughout a substantial duration of time in order to “discover” the knowledge for himself/herself. To develop a better understanding of the knowledge to embody, which only exists abstractly in the master’s mind, the apprentice has to almost unconditionally accept the master’s authority:

*We have seen that tacit knowledge dwells in our awareness of particulars while bearing on an entity which the particulars jointly constitute. In order to share this indwelling, the pupil must presume that a teaching which appears*

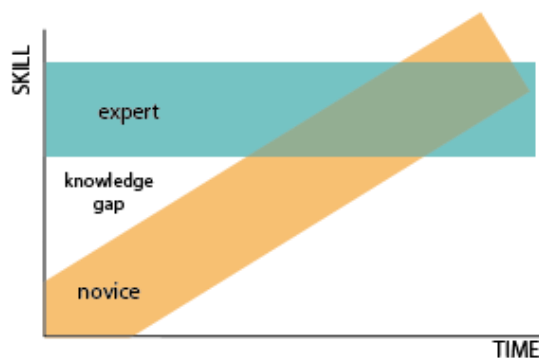
*meaningless to start with has in fact a meaning which can be discovered by hitting on the same kind of indwelling as the teacher is practicing. Such an effort is based on accepting the teacher's authority. (Polanyi 61)*

While the apprentice needs to trust the master that the snippets of knowledge will eventually make sense, the apprentice also holds the prerogative to transform the knowledge while learning it, as it is learned through personal experience. This gives the apprentice great power through the privilege to influence if and how the knowledge might sprout in his/her own body and mind. Even though “the apprentice’s presentation focused on imitation: learning as copying”, the tacit and experiential quality of knowledge makes it impossible to copy without personalization (Sennett, *The Craftsman*, 58). Thus, to claim that craft knowledge is fixed, rigid, and incapable of adapting to any sort of changes is irrational:

*We’d err to imagine that because traditional craft communities pass on skills from generation to generation, the skills they pass down have been rigidly fixed; not at all. Ancient pottery making, for instance, changed radically when the rotating stone disk holding a lump of clay came into use; new ways of drawing up the clay ensued. But the radical change appeared slowly. (Sennett, *The Craftsman*, 26)*

The changes occur slowly since obedience is required in order to become skilled in a craft, and talent depends on “following the rules established by earlier generations”. The knowledge of previous generations must be embodied first, in order to make a contribution. (Sennett, *The Craftsman*, 22). Especially for the purpose of this thesis, it is imperative to recognize the complex power dynamics between a master and an apprentice, and the fact that both parties have a large and particular impact on how the knowledge transfer occurs.

The knowledge gap between a new apprentice and the generations of knowledge and years of experience embodied in a master need to be closed bit by bit, through a durational relationship based on trust, with the use of different social, physical, verbal cues for communication. Nicola Wood, in her work *A Tacit Understanding: Designer’s Role in Capturing and Passing on the Skilled Knowledge of Master Craftsmen*, uses a figure to illustrate how the knowledge gap is closed through bridges of learning and communication:



**Figure 3.** The knowledge gap between expert and novice practitioner (Wood)

In the graph, the novice can go beyond the expert, adding to the body of knowledge passed on by the master. The graph is a bit problematic because the skill of the master or expert remains constant in as time passes, and it is based on the assumption that “skill” can be quantified or qualified in linear terms. This assumption might be valid for Wood’s work, since, in her case, skill literally means the ability to produce the relevant craft product as close as possible to ones produced by expert craftsmen. For the purposes of this study, however, the knowledge of interest isn’t result oriented, and the aim is not to produce a similar if not identical craft product. The aim is to activate the knowledge through an active collaboration with practicing craftsmen. Yet for such a platform to be created, the knowledge gap needs to be compensated for with bridges, which are instances of mutual understanding, of being on the same page. Once the knowledge gap is counterbalanced, with a navigation by the apprentice, the master-apprentice duo can take their mutual understanding in different experimental directions. This approach which adds a twist to a traditional apprenticeship is founded on Ranciere’s distinction between teaching and emancipating in his book *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*: “Whoever teaches without emancipating stultifies. And whoever emancipates doesn’t have to worry about what the emancipated person learns. He will learn what he wants, nothing maybe” (Ranciere 18). In the case of this study, the apprentice doesn’t necessarily learn and copy the craft as is, but learns what she wants. Yet in order for this to happen the knowledge gap needs to be offset through the aforementioned bridges, so that the communication between the master and the apprentice is transparent, direct, and founded on solid grounds.

### **3. DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO ENGAGEMENT WITH CRAFT**

The transdisciplinary model for apprenticeship this thesis proposes, operates within a complex ecosystem of many different approaches to craft. Understanding the different modern interventions to craft and how they have been carried out by different institutions, organizations, groups, individuals, artists, and makers, will provide this study with a necessary awareness of the problems and the intricacies of such interactions.

#### **3.1. Craft As Heritage: Continuity**

The effects of globalization and industrialization on craft practice have been twofold: the industrialization of culture with mechanical production carried our perception and practice of contemporary culture away from craft; however, the following globalization of culture brought culture and craft a bit closer together since the global awareness increased the interest and motivation to cherish particular cultural practices. (Robertson 99)

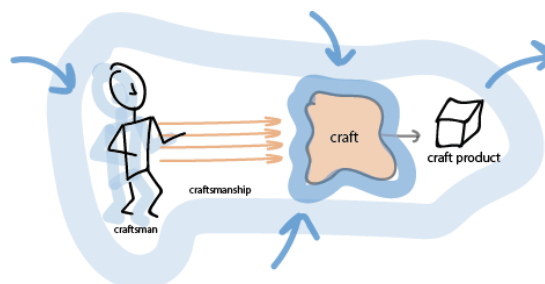
The global approach to particular instances of culture is institutionalized, especially with intranational organizations like UNESCO, which has adopted an understanding that instances of cultural heritage “belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located.”, throughout its decades of work in heritage. Within the scope of UNESCO’s literature and practice, traditional crafts are included as intangible cultural heritage since, “the 2003 Convention is mainly concerned with the skills and knowledge involved in craftsmanship rather than the craft products themselves” (“Traditional Craftsmanship”). UNESCO, recognizing the fact that such instances of intangible cultural heritage are community-based, representative, inclusive, traditional, contemporary and living at the same time, chooses the word “safeguarding”, rather than “preservation”. (“What is Intangible Cultural Heritage?”)

Safeguarding, according to Article 2.3 of the 2003 Convention, consists of “measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects

of such heritage.” Yet UNESCO also emphasizes that an instance of heritage should be “safeguarded” only if it is also recognized and supported by the practicing community:

*As indicated in the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, only intangible cultural heritage that is recognized by the communities as theirs and that provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, is to be safeguarded. Any safeguarding measure must be developed, and applied, with the consent and involvement of the community itself. In certain cases, public intervention to safeguard a community’s heritage is not even desirable, since it may distort the value such heritage has for the community itself. (“Intangible Cultural Heritage.”)*

Emphasizing the importance of “safeguarding without freezing”, UNESCO assists with the safeguarding of traditional craftsmanship in different ways. Example approaches include: offering financial incentives to make the knowledge transfer advantageous for both the master craftsmen and their apprentices, reinforcing local traditional markets or creating new ones, ensuring the craft communities have access to required resources in order to practice their craft, through legal measures or environmental interventions such as planting trees and plants which are needed. UNESCO has also co-organized numerous regional workshops to bring together individuals from different and relevant disciplines to talk about different traditional crafts and its potentials in being used (“Safeguarding without freezing”). This is a holistic approach, in a sense that it is considerate of the different components of the craft practice: the craftsmen, the community, the way the craft is practiced, and the resulting craft product. However, as illustrated in Figure 4, an approach which sees traditional craft as a delicate part of cultural heritage in its entirety, can only design interventions which cushion the craft through providing the right resources and climate in order to maintain and perpetuate the existing flow of the craft.



**Figure 4. Safeguarding**



The Convention chooses and documents Best Safeguarding Practices in order to help provide resources for inspiration through the different case studies. A best practice recognized in 2009, for example, is a programme of education and training in Indonesian Batik, making this traditional craft a part of the school curriculum for different age ranges. The aim in this practice is to increase the awareness and appreciation, and to include the knowledge and practice of this craft within the existing and functioning formal education system from kindergarten all the way up to higher education. ("Education and Training in Indonesian Batik Intangible Cultural Heritage in Pekalongan, Indonesia.") Another best practice from Austria, recognized in 2016 by the convention, involved Regional Centres for Craftsmanship, run by local traditional craftsmen in order to provide a hub for training, interdisciplinary collaboration and public engagement ("Regional Centres for Craftsmanship"). These safeguarding practices, which treat traditional crafts as heritage, focus on the craft's effect on the community's sense of identity and continuity. This approach leads to a representation of the craft, since such institutionalized practices require that the instance of cultural heritage and its value for both the local and the global culture are laid out with rational and analytical details. Thus, the scope, definition and motives of such projects inevitably ignore the undeniable tacit and dynamic facets of crafts, since it attempts to quantify or qualify the value of the craft practice.

*Good work of this sort tends to focus on relationships; it either deploys relational thinking about objects or attends to clues from other people. It emphasizes the lessons of experience through a dialogue between tacit knowledge and explicit critique. Thus, one reason we may have trouble thinking about the value of craftsmanship is that the very word in fact embodies conflicting values. (Sennett, *The Craftsman*, 51)*

The methodology proposed in this study hopes to explore and tease these conflicting values in order to unveil the different potentialities within a craft. Recognizing the intricate quality of craft as intangible cultural heritage, as a connection to our past which is ever-changing through the ongoing participation of its bearers, it offers a mode of in-person participation within these craft communities in order to allow for the discovery of mutually beneficial links for interdisciplinary collaboration and transmission. By not framing or defining the practice by trying to "safeguard" craft, as well as a direct participation in the craft as-is, it

avoids representation and it provides an alternative methodology which might support and inspire new ways to approach, utilize and collaborate with the different components of a specific craft heritage. The frameworks proposed and enforced by UNESCO also categorically place the practice of craft within the definition of “traditional craft” amongst instances of intangible cultural heritage. The way the institutional approach is structured sees the “cultural value” to be dealt with in the traditional craft as a whole, rather than studying the value of its certain components independently. This study takes a different approach by focusing on the value of the body of knowledge within the craft, and its possible value in other contexts unrelated to the craft.

Another problem of treating traditional crafts as heritage is that it might lead to the instrumentalization of the craft. This especially ends up being the case when traditional crafts are put in contrast with industrialization. “From Crafts to Design” is such an example, as an initiative by the modern art museum in Istanbul, facilitating collaborations between five designers and five traditional craftsmen. As stated in the catalog “the project offers a strong opportunity for expert hands and expert minds to collaborate and create products” (Akan 12). It is an important step to recognize craft tradition as a resource for the creative industries and initiate a collaboration in light of that recognition, yet it is extremely counter-productive to approach the “expert hand” and “expert mind” in a dualistic manner. As explained in the previous sections, the tacit knowledge within a craft practice involves the mind and the hand shaping each other through experience. Not only they are both in action within craft practice, it is almost impossible to pinpoint which decision is made with which throughout. The framework of “From Crafts to Design”, by fixing the positions of the craftsmen and the designers in a dualistic manner, doesn’t seem to allow for much flexibility regarding the nature of the interaction and involvement between the two parties. This occurs since the designers of the project are only working from fragmented, subjective, abstracting representations of craft which aren’t founded on experience with the separate crafts. It seems to pre-suppose the specific type of material expertise exists within the craft can be utilized and unveiled with a collaboration with a relevant designer, through a co-created a design object. Even the visual documentation of this project illustrates this dualistic approach, as seen in Figure 5, in which the craftsmen are using their hands while the designers are thinking, watching and sketching. And, aesthetizing the traces of “imperfect gestures” within the end product which are “imperfect in terms of the original design intent”, as a

contrast to industrial production, fails to see craft as a dynamic discipline in itself with its own set of standards and dependencies. It fails to understand that the craft object is an abstract technical object, and the design intent is only in the craftsman's mind. Despite these inadequacies, the project was a marketing success and a solid step away from only commissioning work to craftspeople, by encouraging more collaboration and give and take during the design process. This collaboration platform instrumentalizes craft practice for modern design purposes, but at least the craftsmen were in direct contact with the designers. (Karakuş 17)



**Figure 5.** Designer-Craftsman Pairs from Crafts to Design

The practices highlighted above put craft in a position against globalization and industrialization, and generate a sort of power dynamic in which craft is “granted” opportunities within existing systems, rather than letting it strive to find its own way. This is the type of instrumentalization the model proposed in this study strives to avoid. Approaching craft and its practice as an important component of our heritage and cultural

and communal memory, does not necessitate a hierarchical or a dualistic stance. There can be other approaches which tease these different relations of production.

On the other edge of the spectrum from safeguarding practices, for instance, there are more destructive, controversial and provocative approaches to craft as heritage, such as Ai Weiwei's "Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn" or Eduardo Abaroa's "The Total Destruction of the National Museum of Anthropology". They are both taking part in an institutional critique of the sociopolitical realities within China and Mexico, respectively, and aiming to provide a new perspective regarding the dynamics of cultural authority. ("Ai Weiwei Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn.") Abaroa is critical of the hypocritical political position of the National Museum of Anthropology, and claims that his project "is a rational response to the state's cynical attempts to harness the symbolic power of indigenous communities and their pre-Hispanic artifacts while simultaneously destroying the rights, livelihood, and national environment of their direct descendants" ("Eduardo Abaroa"). Both Weiwei and Abaroa, are interested in how people living today are affected by power dynamics shaped through the manipulation and management of tradition, heritage and ancestry. Interested in questions regarding power and state, much more than the details of the craft practice itself, they pose interesting questions, especially for large scale heritage projects implemented by governments and intergovernmental organization in line with their political strategies. Although these artists are working through the medium of representations, they are using them to critique forms of institutional instrumentalization, which makes them a relevant and important example for this study.



**Figure 6:** Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn ("Ai Weiwei Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn.")

Grayson Perry is a cross-dresser contemporary artist who practices pottery as a part of his art practice and is also a receiver of the Turner Prize. He highlights how the society perceives a craftsman: “Well, it’s about time a transvestite potter won the Turner Prize. I think the art world had more trouble coming to terms with me being a potter than my choice of frocks.” (552) As a contemporary artist who makes ceramic pots, hand stitched quilts and bold dress designs mostly for himself to wear, he is interested in the identity of craftspeople within the contemporary art sphere especially in relation to gender politics. When he talks about the difference between craft and art, he mentions that craft can be taught whereas art can’t be. You can follow the lead of your master after your apprenticeship, yet that much of a resemblance does not work within the arts. Perry paints his pots with images which contain layers of meaning involving his identity, and has openly stated that just the pots wouldn’t be enough: “People say, ‘Why do you need to put sex, violence or politics or some kind of social commentary into my work?’ Without it, it would be pottery. I think that crude melding of those two parts is what makes my work” (“Grayson Perry”). Perry’s work doesn’t represent craft as he himself is a practicing craftsman, but it instrumentalizes it. Yet, since Perry has worked on championing the craft skills he utilizes, and thinks about the connotations of what that craft means within the context of his own work, his instrumentalization is honest, self-reflective and transparent.



**Figure 7.** Grayson Perry (Lewis)

The works which create or work with representations, offer only fragmented views of traditional craft, separating the inherent components of its practice. How these fragmented

views which become spectacles affect these instances of culture, could be understood better especially in light of Guy Debord's idea of "separation" which he details in *The Society of the Spectacle*:

*The images detached from every aspect of life merge into a common stream in which the unity of life can no longer be recovered. Fragmented views of reality regroup themselves into a new unity as a separate pseudoworld that can only be looked at. The specialization of images of the world evolves into a world of autonomized images where even the deceivers are deceived. The spectacle is a concrete inversion of life, an autonomous movement of the nonliving. (7)*

Interventions in which craft becomes a subject or a spectacle to ponder and self-reflect on, by approaching it in frozen fragments rather than as a living unity, also transform it into a pseudoworld, preventing it from becoming an active, relevant part of life as it needs to be.

### **3.2. Craft As Collaborator: Creative Potential**

Approaching craft as heritage, turns craft into a subject (representation) or object (instrumentalization) of interest. Although rare, there are also instances in which craft knowledge is used in solving our modern-day problems. In such cases the craft practice is a collaborator rather than a delicate component of our culture which needs to be safeguarded and protected. The craft isn't represented as the knowledge is actively used, and the crafts community and practice is not instrumentalized as there is a mutually designed form of collaboration rather than an externally dictated one.

Theaster Gates, a Chicago based social practice artist, had a piece in the 14th Istanbul Biennial named "Three or Four Shades of Blues" after an album by Charles Mingus, recorded at New York City's Atlantic Studios. He followed loose yet deeply personal connections and juxtaposed Atlantic Music jazz records with historic pottery and offered an exploratory and open-ended platform for further discussion and exploration. He spent the few weeks making and re-making an intricate 17th-century Iznik bowl, inviting others to collaborate with him, such as the well-known Japanese ceramicist, Koichi. He demonstrated the importance of process and repetition, not only for traditional craft practice, but also for developing some sort of understanding of cultural heritage: "The bowl is really the heartbeat

of the space. Over the next few weeks I will ponder this bowl as a way of pondering Turkey, and that maybe through the recreation of this bowl I might learn something.” Being transparent about his motivation to gain personal knowledge, Gates also accepted the fact that his endeavor is a difficult and almost impossible one given the intricate nature of such knowledge and the time limit of his involvement. Through his installation, which showed a workshop in practice, rather than end products, he highlighted the slow and personal process of learning and making while opening the doors for unexpected encounters between different cultures and creative disciplines. He avoided the freezing and predetermined framing of cultural heritage which would have led to a kind of representation. His humble attitude did not subjugate craft heritage, and thus he avoided instrumentalization of the craft practice. ("Blues'un Üç Veya Dört Tonu.")



**Figure 8.** Theaster Gates (Karaoyosal)



**Figure 9.** Three or Four Shades of Blue (Rodgers)

Theaster Gates is also a great example of transferring craft knowledge independent of this project, since his father was a roofer and he has used a great deal of roofing materials and methods in his paintings and installations. He also deeply respects the labor his father put in as a roofer, and realizes that he gets to use the hard-earned knowledge in a more personal and creative manner: “I feel in some ways that there is a generational gift that’s happened – where my dad taught me this amazing skill and now I get to use it to make things that I really believe in”. (Gates)



**Figure 10.** Theaster Gates’s roofing inspired projects (Editorial)



**Figure 11.** Theaster Gates working on his roofing inspired projects (Poole)

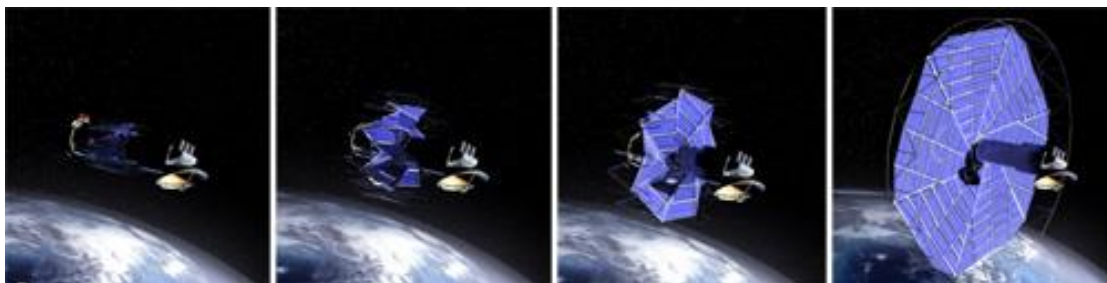
There are other examples of designers/makers/practitioners, who have utilized craft knowledge in their own fields. Robert Lang is a physicist who has been practicing origami more than 40 years. He has combined his knowledge and experience in both mathematics and origami, and developed methods to generate origami patterns which could fold into about almost any shape. While some of these origami objects served only aesthetic purposes, there were quite a few with practical applications to real-life engineering problems. Origami has been used for medical devices, air-bag designs, and even expandable space telescopes.



For the standpoint of this study, Lang's approach to the origami heritage must be highlighted. Even though he does a lot of cutting-edge innovative work with the involvement of computer science techniques, he also draws a lot from origami heritage, researching work of past craftsmen and mathematicians. In one of his talks, he quite simply phrases the importance of prior knowledge: "The secret to productivity in so many fields, including origami, is letting dead people do your work for you. What you can do, is take your problem and turn it into a problem that someone else has solved, and use their solutions" (Lang, *The Math and Magic of Origami*). Lang's approach and work shows how taking craft heritage seriously in unexpected and transdisciplinary ways, might save us from reinventing the wheel.



**Figure 12.** Origami beetle and its crease pattern (Lang, "Chrysina Beetle, Opus 717.")



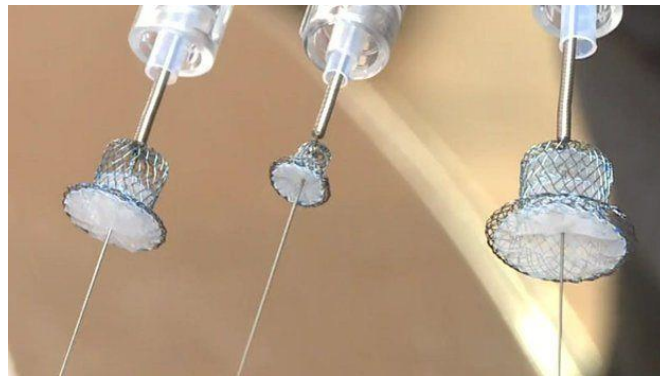
**Figure 13.** Origami inspired solar array (Origami Science)

A similar example which proves Lang's point is, Franz Freudenthal, a Bolivian physician who utilized traditional Bolivian weaving techniques to develop a method to mend holes in the hearts of children. He collaborated with his grandmother's friends when trying to make a device from smart materials which had shape memory, and they came up with a device which doesn't rust, since the traditional techniques allowed them to weave the necessary intricate structures from one piece. (Freudenthal, *A New Way to Heal Hearts Without Surgery*)



**Figure 14.** One of the Bolivian weavers who collaborated with Freudenthal (Freudenthal, “The Life-Saving Weaving of Bolivia's Indigenous Women.”)

These two last examples show how craft knowledge can be turned into a dynamic know-how, utilized and circulated through relevant contemporary solutions. Here it is clear that there isn't a representation of the craft. In the sense of generating a power disparity through subjugating craftsmen's practice, there is also no instrumentalization. Both Lang and Freudenthal were very clever and considerate in the way they connected the two knowledge worlds they were exposed to, yet, it is also clear that these interdisciplinary juxtapositions occurred through chance: Lang started origami to relieve the stress from his work during his undergraduate degree, and Freudenthal's grandmother had a lot indigenous weaver friends.



**Figure 15.** Freudenthal's resulting medical product (Reyes)

Therefore, we can't deny that there must be many traditional methods and techniques developed by generations all around the world which might be incredibly useful when solving today's problems. Especially with the decrease of rare and unique skills due to industrialization and globalization, referred to by Richard Sennett as the “decline of the skills society”, finding a way to take advantage of the craft knowledge becomes a pressing issue to be addressed (Sennett, "The Decline of the Skills Society")

#### **4. A PERFORMATIVE APPRENTICESHIP MODEL**

*‘Become an apprentice and produce bad results so as to be able to teach people how to produce good ones.’ (Sennett, *The Craftsman*, 96)*

The different approaches to traditional crafts mentioned above show the two sides of craft knowledge: the fact that there is an accumulation of know-how and skill perfected by generations which is heritage valuable for not only the specific communities but also for humanity and the fact that these crafts are still a living and breathing part of our contemporary cultures with their last representatives still alive and practicing. Treating craft as heritage helps us pay attention to the cultural value of the knowledge and remember that it provides a historical understanding of our relationship with the physical world around us. Treating craft as a dynamic collaborator, on the other hand, makes us pay attention to the more practical knowledge embodied by current carriers of the craft as a resource for problems, questions or curiosities of other disciplines.

The performative apprenticeship model proposed in this study is a hybrid approach, in which it recognizes the intangible cultural heritage qualities of traditional crafts which requires a careful and diligent standpoint, respecting the community and its structure, but also realizes that it is a living part of our contemporary culture with its last representatives whose knowledge might benefit from transdepartmental collaborations, collisions, and surprises. It respects safeguarding practices and approaches, but is willing to take risks to try to nudge the different potentialities within a traditional craft. It proposes a conceptual and practical framework for a way of working together, in which the social, political, physical actions within craft practice are all considered. The foundation of the performative apprenticeship lies within the rituals of craft and its transmission. It functions within the space and time frame which is dominant in the craftsman’s studio, and adds subjective creativity cautiously and subtly. First the inspirations for this model will be highlighted, then the model will be outlined in three major steps.

#### **4.1. Inspirational Foundation**

*“This for me is how “performative”, if I used the word, would be defined: that is, as enactment that performs itself and in so doing structures a recognition of and reflection on the relations produced and, reproduced in the activity and above all, on the investments that orient them.” (Fraser 127)*

As this study aims to propose an active, vibrant, intimate, uncensored, highly participatory, daring, visceral, exploratory, unpremeditated and transdisciplinary method to interact with craft knowledge, its theoretical framework is also transdisciplinary. The literature around participatory and socially engaged art is its foundation, stemming from Nicolas Bourriaud’s Relational Aesthetics and the more recent restructuring by Claire Bishop’s Artificial Hells. With a foundation on such art theory, it utilizes frameworks of other social science writers and theorists. Rather than attempting to relatively position, criticize, prove or disprove any of these approaches, or having a developed understanding of their origins and implications, this study only uses fragments of these theoretical approaches, utilizing them like a patchwork of conceptual tools while developing the apprenticeship model to be applied in the field.

With the development of post-studio artistic practices after the performative and social turn in the arts after the 1960s, the arts have become much less about the “personal genius” or the lonely creative individual. As noted by curator William Spurlock regarding the 1979 Exhibition Dialogue / Discourse / Research: “There has been a shift in artistic method, from searching inward to searching outward, to a decalcification and broadening of genre, to the process of engaging issues in the world.” (Dertnig et al.) This brings the artist’s practice closer to a craftsman’s, as art becomes more a part of the daily social, economic, and political networks. This has been the foundational inspiration for this study, giving the motivation to blur the boundaries between artist, researcher and craftsman – art, research and craft. Within contemporary art practices, there are two major trajectories which provide an inspiration for this study. The most important one is the social turn, and the second one is the increasing interest in experimenting with different materials.

Socially engaged art gained prominence as a part of the dematerialization process, and also with the urge of more activist artists who wanted their work to become a part of public life not necessarily dependent on the art industry. In the case of such projects “the artist is conceived less as an individual producer of discrete objects than as a collaborator and producer of situations” and “the audience, previously conceived as a ‘viewer’ or ‘beholder’, is now repositioned as a co- producer or participant” (Bishop 2). Artist Placement Group, for example, was an organization in the UK which placed artists in real workplaces in the industry, coined an “incidental person”. (“Artist Placement Group”.) Joseph Beuys who was a pioneer in such works had a very powerful and influential take on social interactions as art, using the term “social sculpture”, and making statements such as: “to be a teacher is my greatest work of art” (Lippard xvii).

Pablo Huelgera, in his book, *Education for Socially Engaged Art* lays out a few taxonomies regarding the different possibilities of social interaction within art practice. According to Huelgera, participation in an artwork can be in four levels: nominal, directed, creative and collaborative. Nominal is when an audience only reflects on the work, directed involves the participator following simple instructions posed by the artist, creative gives the participator room to add to the creative content of the project, and collaborative allows the artist and the participator to develop the structure of the work together. (Huelgera 14) An example of a collaborative artistic research initiative is “Prisoner’s Inventions” by Temporary Services. They collaborated with an imprisoned artist, who illustrated the inventions of his fellow prisoners. The research of objects such as homemade sex toys, lighters and radios developed in a restricted environment, shows an example of an art project in which the content is pre-existing in the community, and the art intervention performs a different form of discovery, recognition, illustration or categorization of existing phenomena. (Thompson 232) This type of “art in the civic scale” as coined by Grörgy Kepes, is a practice that engages with everyday life, and “generates artistic proposals that react to the challenges of our times” (Bauer 39).

Of course, the communication between the community and the artist play a leading role in such projects, and could involve a variety of difficulties: conflicting interests, exchange problems in which a mutually beneficial social or economic structure can’t be clearly articulated or followed through, or information conditions in which the lack of transparency or familiarity might mislead both the artist and the community regarding what to expect.

(Huelgera 31) Not all socially engaged art forms are about collaboration and transparent communication, antagonistic actions are also a part of this body of practice. The artist can take a critical and confrontational position, to prove a point or pose a question. The participator in this case could be voluntarily, involuntarily or nonvoluntarily involved. Involuntary involvement occurs when the participant shows a willingness to participate, yet doesn't clearly know what he/she will be participating in. Nonvoluntary involves surprises, in which the participator find themselves in the action, with no previous consent. (Huelgera 61)

The taxonomies outlined by Helguera are helpful when designing an apprenticeship model, as it reminds the wide range of possibilities for engagement with a community. These different definitions need not be distinct or exclusive, and can be utilized interchangeably throughout the duration of the engagement. For example, one can start with a directed form of participation, then have an antagonistic action, followed by a collaborative artistic process, and so on. The artist can change his/her role along the way in a performative manner, and could do this by surprising or by clearly informing the participators. This makes the success of socially engaged art dependent on issues of trust, communication, power, influence, co-existence; showing its similarities with the communal and social aspects of craft practice.

The contemporary approach to social engagement as art recognizes the process as the art and does not **confuse** it with the physical biproducts, the documentations, or the presentations of the process and accepts that such projects might inevitably take unexpected directions: "A work may operate like a relational device containing a certain degree of randomness, or a machine provoking and managing individual and group encounters" (Bourriaud 30). In light of this understanding, the model proposed in this study avoids a clear predetermined agenda and suggests the artist/researcher to embody a self-reflexive approach to the collaborative interrelation throughout the process.

In craft, it isn't only the interpersonal relations but also the physical material processes which shape the actions. This has been an area interest for Process Artist, who were practicing in the same era as approaches to art "as idea" and "as action" (Lippard ix). Robert Morris, who is a theorist and practitioner of Process Art states:

*I believe there are forms to be found within the activity of making as much as within the end products. These are forms of behavior aimed at testing the limits and possibilities involved in that particular interaction between one's actions and the materials of the environment. This amounts to the submerged side of the iceberg. (Adamson, "Thinking Through Craft" 59)*

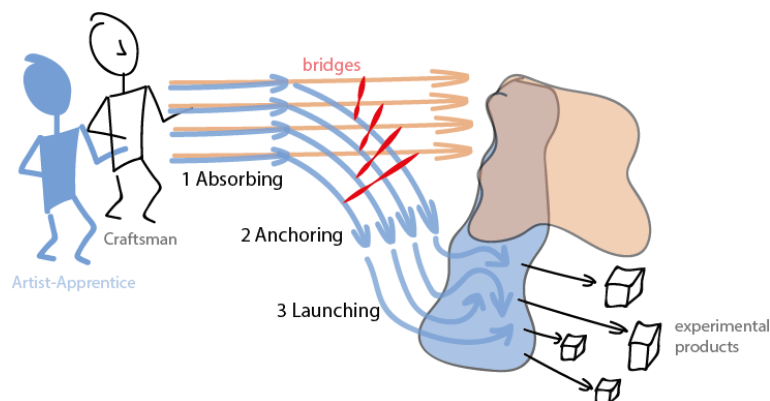
Morris has artworks which focus on the craft process, such as his felt works in which he would cut slits into sheets of felt and hang them on the wall, letting the material decide on the form of the resulting sculpture in relation to gravity. A work of his with a more direct focus on process is *Box with the Sound of Its Own Making*, in which a simple walnut board cube contains speakers playing the recording of its own fabrication (Adamson, "Thinking Through Craft" 59). A similar type of reflection was practiced by Richard Serra, especially in his catalogues of verbs which were about material transformation processes, such as: to roll, to crease, to fold, to store, to bend... (Adamson, "Thinking Through Craft" 62) This approach of reflecting on the actions performed, prove to be highly relevant within the non-traditional apprenticeship proposed. The specific fabrication steps and processes are the most tangible part of the craft knowledge, and an artist which is trying to nudge the different potentials of these processes can easily draw from such contemporary sculpture approaches.



**Figure 16.** Richard Serra's Verb List (Friedman)

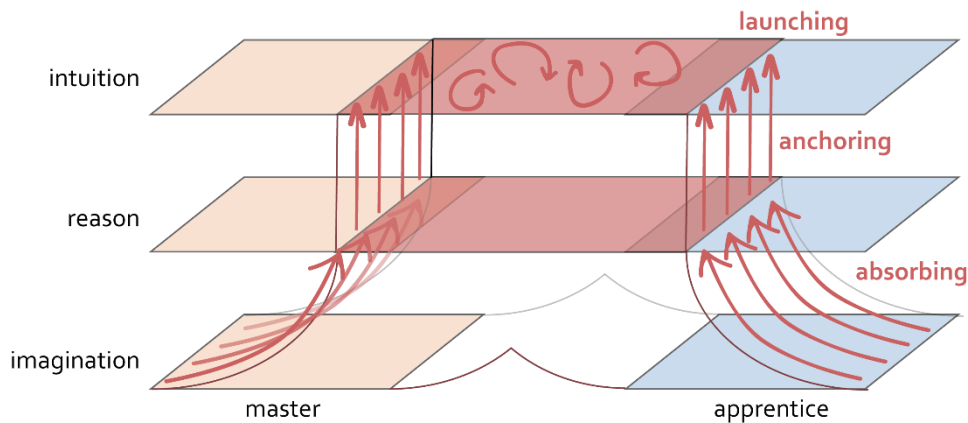
## 4.2. The Three-step Non-traditional Apprenticeship

For this artistic research model in the form of an apprenticeship, the knowledge within the craft is the main material to work with, and first it needs to be understood in order to be experimented with. The three kinds of knowledge categorized by Spinoza provides the inspiration for a three-step framework for this non-traditional apprenticeship: imagination, reason, and intuition. First the artist needs to admit that he/she does not know anything, and work towards understanding how things are made, rather than merely imagining, estimating and guessing. Then, the artist will start to reason through what the craft practice entails, how the process of making is structured, and what are different components of the knowledge within the craft. The artist will also develop a better understanding of the social relations within the craft community and the potential of his/her new position within this community. Then the artist can start experimenting with both the craft itself and with his/her position as a non-traditional apprentice. He/she can more intuitively navigate within and beyond the craft and the craft community. Each of these steps, as illustrated in Figure 17 and Figure 18, are detailed in the sections below. The blue arrows which show the steps of a non-traditional apprenticeship, clearly indicate that the artist/apprentice does not reach the total intuitive knowledge of the master craftsman. Rather, the path deviates as the bridges of knowledge are formed. These bridges which aim to counterbalance the knowledge gap, relate to Spinoza’s theory of knowledge in which one of his prepositions is: “Whatever ideas follow in the mind from ideas that are adequate in it are also adequate” (Spinoza 266). The goal is not to become a master in the craft, but to be “adequately” verse in the language provided by the craft practice, leaving the territory of the first kind of “false” or “imaginary” knowledge, so that the products of the creative process can be “true” and “adequate”.



**Figure 17.** Three Step Performative Apprenticeship





**Figure 18.** Stages of Knowledge in the Performative Apprenticeship

#### 4.2.1. Absorbing: Joining the community as an apprentice

*“This is the first principle of universal teaching: one must learn something and relate everything else to it. And first something must be learned.” (Ranciere 20)*

The initiation of the engagement starts in the form of a traditional apprenticeship, for both social and experiential reasons. The artist does not have a prescribed agenda, other than slowly easing into the community. He/she performs tasks expected from an apprentice, gains the acceptance of the community and makes sure that they are convinced that he/she is worthy of an apprenticeship. This involves proving that one has the diligence, respect, and perseverance required to successfully fulfill the role of an apprentice. Then, he/she slowly starts learning the craft as is. The aim is to get acquainted with the craft practice, absorbing the daily grind and the nuances of the craft. The artist is a silent yet active participator, taking active part in the actions but not initiating any alterations or modifications. This arises from the artist accepting that, at this stage, he/she has false knowledge, if any, about the craft and its practice. Thus, the artist does not attempt to sculpt the social interactions in a way a socially engaged artist working with a community might.

The aim is to tamper as little as possible with the existing social relations for knowledge transfer. Especially in the beginning of a new engagement, communication in the form of a traditional apprenticeship allows for a healthier, less ambiguous, and more transparent communication, allowing the crafts community to apply their traditional social structures to the newcomer. The artist’s task here is only to make sure that they treat him/her as a

traditional novice apprentice, even though all parties know that the apprenticeship might change trajectory over time. The artist needs to make sure that the master feels comfortable enough to treat him like he would treat a new apprentice: giving orders, rejecting suggestions, ignoring questions, and such. This also allows for the artist to empathize on a deeper level with community members, walking on the beaten path all the master craftsmen have somewhat walked through.

It is important to now refer to the social theory of learning, inventoried by Etienne Wenger, which involves four main components: community (learning as belonging), identity (learning as becoming), meaning (learning as experience), and practice (learning as doing). (Wenger 5) The artist in our case, having claimed an *identity* as an apprentice, takes active part in the *community* through *practice* and adds *meaning* to his/her presence. The meaning of the newcomer's presence is shaped through this learning experience in a collaborative manner, and isn't dictated in any way by the artist or by the master craftsmen alone.

Once the artist has learned enough to complete one craft object of acceptable quality – determined by the master craftsmen – on his/her own, the absorbing phase can be completed. This is the threshold, since it allows for the artist to have experienced all the physical steps required to complete the full task, yet also pauses the traditional apprenticeship at a moment when the only way to become more skilled or knowledgeable is to repeat and practice iterations and alterations indefinitely.

#### **4.2.2. Anchoring: Building a platform for co-creation**

*"In order to have a conversation, even if it is a discussion in which the two parts disagree, there has to be things in common." (Appiah 255)*

This next step after absorbing, might be the most complicated step which requires a lot of give and take between the community and the artist, and relies on the trust and common language developed in the absorbing phase. Here the artist must try to find ways in which to use the knowledge and skills he/she has gained in new contexts, while ensuring the active involvement of the crafts community.

Some examples of what these experimental actions might look like are: applying the techniques to new materials, using the physical processes to create new forms, taking a more experiential “process art” approach to the material and the techniques and perform experiments with them, juxtaposing the techniques with fabrication methods from another discipline and so on. These could be endlessly varied according to the context, the craft, the craftsmen’s flexibility and experiences, the background of the involved artist. The artist is responsible of coming up with a few options and testing their reception within the craftsmen community.

Knowing that the craft will be decontextualized in an experimental manner, in order to be true to the craft in question, the support, collaboration and participation of the craft community is necessary in order to avoid the power **misbalance** which leads to the instrumentalization of the craft culture. Thus, during this step, the artist should try to figure out the best form of collaboration with the craftsmen. Should the artist perform the experiments separately, and share the results with the craftsmen in certain intervals? Should they perform the experiments collaboratively? Should the exchange of ideas be antagonistic, in which the artist and the craftsman have roles opposing each other? The form and structure of the bridges of interaction between the traditional craft practice and the experimental practice need to be designed on-the-spot, in collaboration with the craftsmen community. By co-creating the mode of collaboration and not imposing a specific role for the craftsman or the artist, one can purposefully attempt to avoid crude instrumentalization.

Once the artist has developed a new creative platform for co-creation, and there is a mutually agreed upon form of **expanding** collaborative creation, the performative research can finally move to the next and final step.

#### **4.2.3. Launching: Transdisciplinary transformation**

*“What is possible is reflection: that return to oneself that is not pure contemplation but rather an unconditional attention to one’s intellectual acts, to the route they follow and to the possibility of always moving forward by bringing to bear the same intelligence on the conquest of different territories” (Rancière 37).*

Since both the direction of the experimentation and the form of co-creation have now been drawn out collectively, and a level of true knowledge is achieved, the artist can now add all the creative content he/she wants within that direction. The goal now is to try to push the boundaries of the definitions as much as possible while keeping within the agreed framework, seeing how far away one can experiment but still be a part of the traditional craft. Here, “being a part of the traditional craft” is defined through whether the crafts community can ascertain that their craft knowledge is being utilized in a way in which they can somewhat recognize and appreciate.

Here the artist’s aim is to create platforms of experimentation stemming from the craft which might lead to other disciplines. Since there will still be undiscovered snippets of tacit knowledge even in this stage, new things about the craft could be discovered along the way. Thus, the artist should have an open mind while performing and guiding the experimentations, and getting the feedback of the craft community. Here, the craft community, just like Ranciere’s Ignorant Schoolmaster, “will not verify what the student has found; they will verify that the student has searched. They will judge whether or not he has paid attention.”

As the most exploratory phase of the apprenticeship model, the artist shouldn’t be afraid to take risks, as solid grounds with the community has been built beforehand. Ali Akay, in his book *Minor Politics*, talks about progress as elaborated in *Theogonia* by Hesiodos: “Progress is built upon two elements: one is moderation and the other is the lack of moderation or in other words limits and going over the limits. There isn’t a linear progression from moderate to immoderate or vice versa, on the contrary, there is a constant interchange between the moderate and the immoderate according to the period”. The recognition of the importance of immoderacy is important for the artist, especially during this stage of experimentation.

The artist will, in a way, deconstruct the craft, by making the boundaries and the components of the craft more evident. This could be the different material processes within the craft, the teaching methods within certain steps, the way creativity is expressed despite the anonymity prevalent in the craft practice, and such. These different snippets of knowledge are unveiled by the artist throughout the performance, and these fragments of knowledge can be utilized

in different disciplines' practices. The aim of this last step is to make sure the artist develops a sort of tacit knowledge, not in order to become a traditionally skilled craft practitioner; instead, in order to have a better sense of when a collaboration with that specific craft might be fruitful. The artist can now easily refer to that specific craft in different contexts. The artist is now a bridge for knowledge transfer, and has also tried to exemplify the different directions the craft knowledge can take in order to inspire others. By sharing this work, the artist will have initiated the circulation of the craft knowledge in other platforms.

Although this might lead to the instrumentalization of certain components of the craft knowledge, the craft community's cultural practice will not have been instrumentalized in lieu of the apprenticeship.

## 5. CASE STUDY: EDIRNE BROOMMAKING ENCOUNTER

This non-traditional apprenticeship model was implemented in the Edirne broommaking community. First the context of this case study will be elaborated, through drawing a clear picture of the physical, social, economic climate within the Edirne broommaking community. Then how the three-step non-traditional apprenticeship unfolded in this specific case will be outlined.

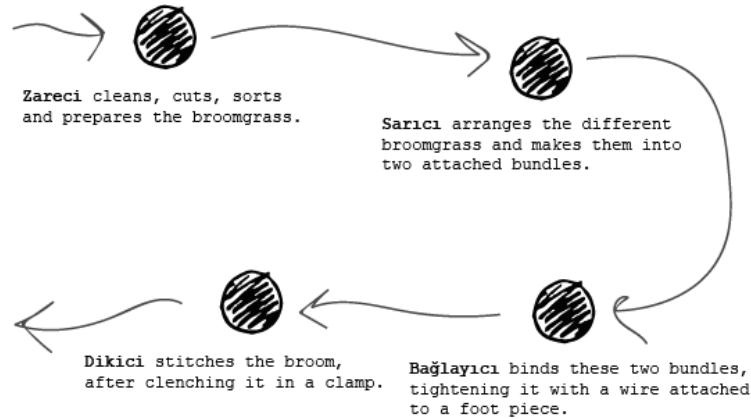
### 5.1. Context

Edirne, a city in Eastern Thrace, has been one of the centers of traditional broom-making for more than decades. Especially in the 1970s, the broom-making community was at its best: vibrant and lucrative. It was a well-respected job which had substantial economic as well as social capital, as brooms were constantly needed and used by households and workplaces. These traditional brooms made out of broom-grass, have started losing their relevance as industrialization slowly penetrated this market with new mechanized fabrication techniques using plastic instead of grass, as well as the fairly recent emergence of vacuum cleaners. The broommaking workshops were spread out through the city, until in the 1990s, when they organized around a commodity exchange market and rented out a large complex in the outskirts of the city and started working together.



**Figure 19.** Broomgrass Auction

In a traditional broom-making workshop there are at least four craftsmen, each broommaker responsible of the different stages of making a broom, as seen in Figure 20.



**Figure 20.** Division of labor in broommaking

It functions very much like a production line, all craftsmen's work dependent on each other with their specific tasks in a linear and serial fabrication procedure. It is a male-dominated craft, in which workshops only have male craftsmen. Women have been occasionally involved in this process, but without physically being in the workshop. Especially when traditional brooms were in demand and there was an overflow of orders, small family-owned broommaking workshops omitted the stitching step, while keeping the first three steps in the workshop. They took the binded brooms to their homes to have the women in their family do the stitching.

There are only a few models for the brooms, and the mutually agreed upon standards are defined with regards to their size and weight. There are no measurement devices in these workshops as the craftsmen's hands have proven to be precise enough to gauge the correct amount of broomgrass used for each component of the broom. Other standards regarding the brooms are personalized, and depend on the master and his approach.

Currently, as of 2016, due to the substantial decrease in the orders, there are ten active workshops left in this compound, and most of these workshops rarely have four craftsmen working at once. The complex, as mentioned above, isn't in the heart of the city so there are effectively no bypassers. There is a weekly organized visit from local farmers, in which they

gather and sell the grass they have produced in an auction. Otherwise there are occasional visits by tourist or photography groups who are interested in briefly observing and recording the craft practice. The broommakers aren't too fond of these second groups, they said they prevent them from working efficiently.

The current ecosystem in Edirne, is a self-enclosed and relatively uniform community with male craftsmen who are in the 40 - 60 age range. Alcohol consumption is endemic in this social circle, in which all broom makers start consuming wine, rakı or beer together in the afternoon. It is rare to find a sober craftsman in the late afternoon, unless it's Ramadan.



**Figure 21.** Edirne broommakers taking a tea break

Niyazi Mamarçık Usta, is the master craftsman selected for the performative semi-apprenticeship, since he is working alone in a workshop, performing all steps of broommaking himself. This allows for a sterile environment in which there are fewer distractions, helping with the focus on the apprenticeship process, which is the relationship between the master and the apprentice. It also made the study logistically more considerate as the artistic intervention would affect fewer craftsmen's workflow. It was also the ideal way for a female apprentice to find her way into the broom making community with the least backlash.

Niyazi Usta started learning the craft when he was eight years old. Having a love-at-first-sight relationship with the craft, he remembers trying to skip school so that he could spend more time in the workshop. He is now 60 years old, and has been practicing and perfecting



his craft for 52 years, with no breaks. He spends about almost 12 hours in his workshop, mostly on his own with the occasional fellow broommaker visit.

## **5.2.Implementation**

This section is written in first person point of view, as I have performed the apprenticeship in Edirne myself. As it has been an experience in which my identity and personal approach were highly influential to the process, and since this is a performative and experiential research project, rather than a controlled experiment, it is important to be as transparent as possible with the account. Especially for future reproductions and alterations of this model and its execution, sharing personal thoughts and feelings, contradictions, good and bad decisions is important.

Figure 22, illustrates how Niyazi Usta was completing all processes by himself, only getting the necessary materials and tools from the “outside”, and then producing and sharing his finished brooms with the “outside”. The broom outline in the image symbolizes the “inside”, the practice of the craft, and this diagram will be used to illustrate the relationship dynamics between master and apprentice throughout this case study. I am immensely aware that these figures and accounts are mere representations of the experience. This is a common problem of socially engaged artwork. The documentation of the work and its presentation in different contexts will always be a representation of the work as the work is the experience. This specific apprenticeship performed in the Edirne broommaking community has passed and can not be re-performed or replicated in any way. The account of this practice in a thesis form is just an academic instrumentalization of my personal experience as an apprentice. This doesn't mean I instrumentalized the craft throughout my apprenticeship, which I try to detail here by showing the level of collaboration. There are many layers of experience, subjectivity, and finally an analytical and theoretical framework which have been added to the experience in the workshop, and the effect of these layers should not be oversimplified. Thus, the following account, in order to help the reader with the distinction between the work and its analysis and its theoretical implications, also avoids an objective, analytical, theoretical tone.



**Figure 22.** Niyazi Usta's work cycle

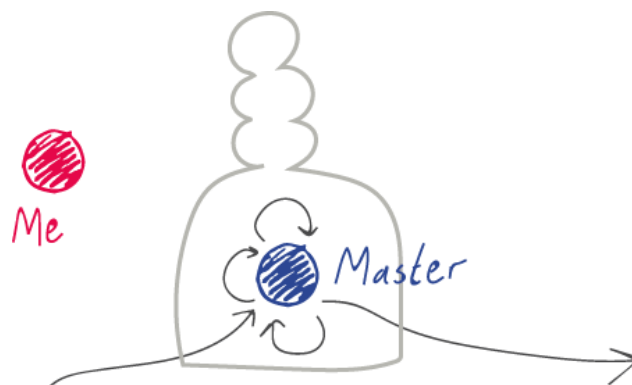


**Figure 23.** Niyazi Usta binding

### 5.2.1. Absorbing: I can make a broom

*"They didn't learn the craft, they should have. Craft wouldn't hurt."* Niyazi Mamarçık

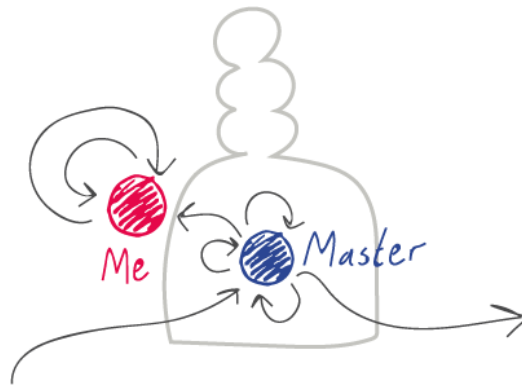
When I first introduced myself to the broommaking community in Edirne, they didn't really take me seriously, mostly because they didn't really believe that a woman would and could practice broommaking. They introduced me to Niyazi Usta, who was working by himself in a studio, and suggested I go and try to work with him. When I first started my apprenticeship, Master Niyazi did not believe I could learn anything about the craft, or that I genuinely wanted to. He half-heartedly answered my questions, did not explain his process, and kept silent for hours at times. (Fig 24)



**Figure 24:** Step One - Acquaintance

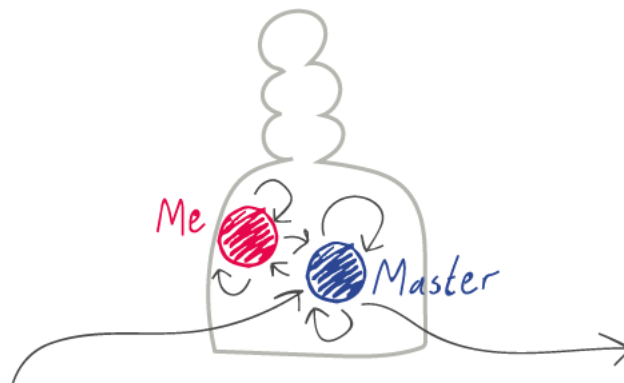
I started getting impatient and frustrated. My presence wasn't being recognized, and the workshop was working in its own rhythm - which I wasn't a part of. I didn't particularly feel wanted, but I knew I needed to make more effort to prove that I wanted to be included in the process of making. I made sure I was in the workshop all the time he was, which was about twelve hours a day. I kept watching him, trying to get a better understanding of his working

rhythm. He would focus on certain piles of broomgrass, performing different steps. I tried to participate, especially with tasks which looked simple, such as moving the different piles of broom grass around the workshop to different work stations or sweeping the floor. During some off-times when he left to get some tea, or get some more supplies from the other shop, I tried to copy certain steps by myself. After a few such days, he finally willingly let me try, handing me over some broomgrass to play around with in the corner. He started instructing me occasionally, with comments like “no, not like that”. (Fig 25)



**Figure 25: Step Two – Acquaintance**

I kept trying, doing and redoing certain steps so that I got a better hang of it. He started including me in some of the brooms he was making. Brooms which I had worked on, with some adjustments, tweaks and fixes by the master, started becoming actual brooms to be used. (Fig 26)

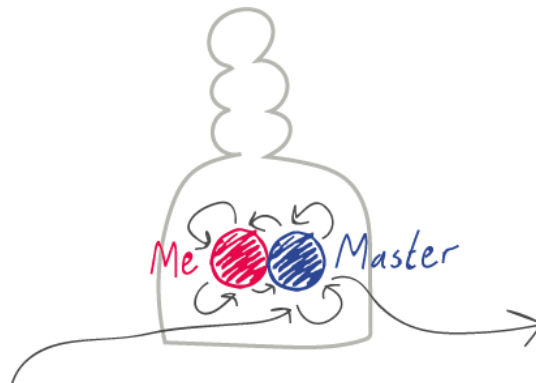


**Figure 26: Step Three – Training**



**Figure 27:**Me preparing broomgrass for Niyazi Usta

Then, he finally left certain steps completely to me. He stopped inspecting and adjusting my contribution, and started working from parts I handed over to him. For example, I would bundle the broomgrass, and he would bind it without checking and fixing. After about 20 twelve-hour days, I was pretty satisfied that I was a part of the workshop's daily routine, and that my master had started trusting my actions. (Fig 28)



**Figure 28.** Step Four – Training

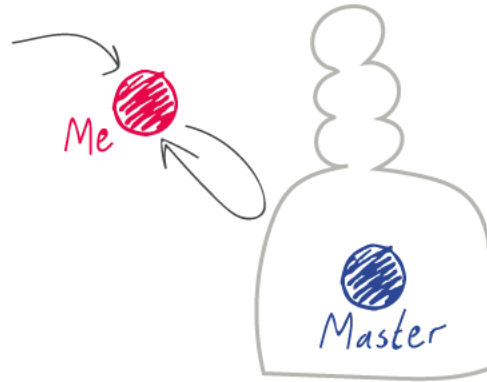


**Figure 29.** Learning how to bind

I could tell that he was pleasantly surprised by my contributions, he had taught me how to sort, clean, prepare, bundle and stitch the brooms, yet he hadn't taught me the binding step. I wouldn't be able to bind in his shop without his permission, as it involved sitting on his broommaking bench. Once I told him I wanted to bind as well, he laughed at me. Binding required a lot of manpower, since you try to compress all the broomgrass, using a wire attached to your foot. He thought that this was an incredibly masculine action, and didn't really see the point in teaching me, as I would never be able to be as strong and as in control as a man. After my never-ending requests and pleas, he finally let me sit in his bench, and walked me through the binding process. Yes, I wasn't as strong as him, and he had to correct me and assist me so many times. In the end, I was able to complete the binding process on my own, for better or worse. He was quite pleased with the results. He started telling his fellow broommakers: "My apprentice can even bind!"

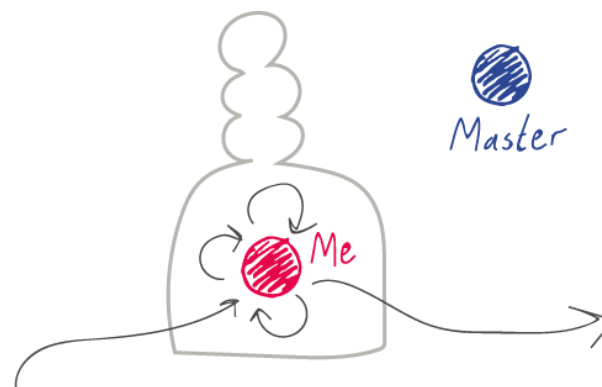
### **5.2.2. Anchoring: What else can I make**

Now that I had completed all of the steps to making a broom, and had gained the trust and faith of Niyazi Usta, I could start thinking of possible experiments Niyazi Usta would also be excited about, so that I could get his active involvement while investing my time on trying to find ways to stretch the boundaries of the craft. I wanted to play it safe, and start cautiously by suggesting only a small, naïve and straightforward adjustment. I simply told Niyazi Usta I wanted to use the techniques he had taught me with broomgrass, and try to make brooms out of different materials instead. I thought he would appreciate my motivation to apply the skills he had taught me in different contexts. His reaction was unexpected. He not only dismissed the idea but underlined the impossibility of it. "No you can't, one can't" was his reaction. This was the simplest and most timid idea I could think of, and I wouldn't have been surprised if he was unimpressed and indifferent. The most negative reaction I had accepted was "Try if you want to, but it wont lead you anywhere." I was quite taken aback by his rejection, which came without hesitation. (Fig 30)



**Figure 30.** Step Five - Confrontation

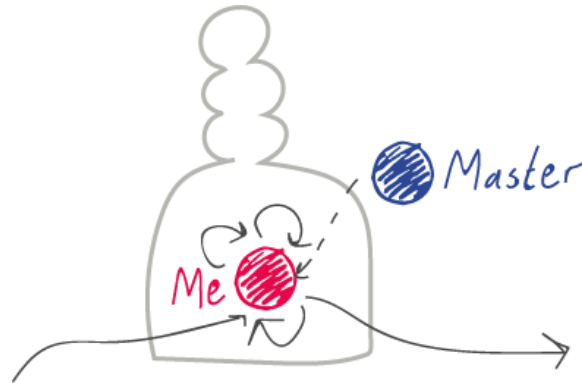
I had felt that I had taken an antagonistic stance, without even realizing it. I had a few days of self-reflection in which I thought whether or not my suggestion was insulting in any way, or whether or not I miscommunicated it. Then, remembering how craft is a very visual and tactile practice, including many instances knowledge which we can't actually express with words, I decided to insist on my idea, but in a different way. I went to my own studio, making brooms out of other materials. I made many experiments, some of them looked like brooms and some of them didn't due to the constraints of the materials or due to my urge to experiment with different forms. I finally took about a dozen of these brooms to Niyazi Usta's workshop, so that we could talk through each of them together. He was completely alienated by the objects I had made, and said "What do I know about these things?" (Fig 31)



**Figure 31.** Step Six - Confrontation

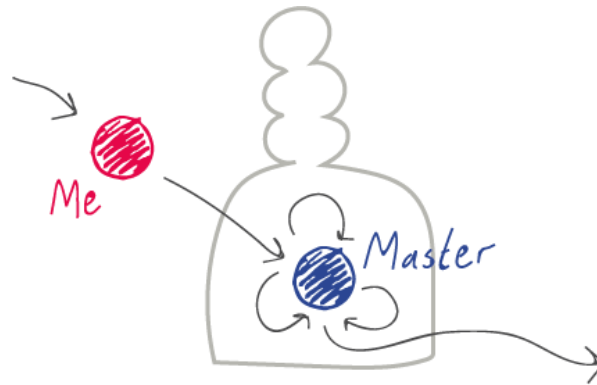
I was surprised that we were still far from common grounds. All I had done with these new brooms was to appropriate what he had taught me. I wasn't adding any creative content, so I wasn't really sure what was so alienating about it. I started asking specific questions on the

brooms that I had made. Technical questions like “this material slipped when I was trying to bind it, so I tried doing this instead, but I don’t think it’s holding it as firmly as it should, do you have any suggestions?” He slowly started making comments, but they were still very distant and not involved. (Fig 32)



**Figure 32.** Step Seven - Struggle

I felt like I wasn’t getting close to developing some sort of anchor or platform at all, but at least I was figuring out what didn’t work and what worked comparatively better. Conceptual ideas or words weren’t taken seriously. The physical objects I had made were deemed irrelevant. Talking about the process at least got me some feedback: a word or two or a very small demo. As the physical process of making was the locus, I realized something I should have considered even before starting this process. It was crucial that I performed the tasks and steps in Niyazi Usta’s presence. I had dismissed that idea early on, since I thought that it might have been a disrespectful intervention: asking to take up space in his personal workshop, doing things he wasn’t approving of. Yet, at this point, I started thinking that there was no other choice. I moved the supplies and tools in my studio to his workshop: the work bench I had made for myself, alongside the other materials I wanted to make brooms out of. I started making sketches and little material experiments, tinkering, and physically brainstorming different possibilities in Niyazi Usta’s presence. I started sharing my ideas with him as I was tinkering and sketching, and he simply told me I wouldn’t be able to carry out those ideas myself, and he made these brooms all by himself. He didn’t listen to any of my suggestions or questions throughout, let alone letting me touch the brooms as he worked on them. (Fig 33)

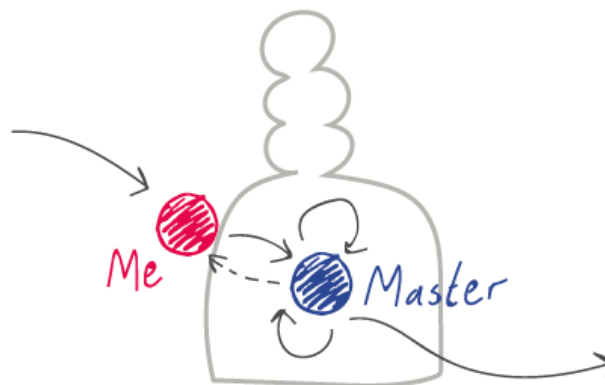


**Figure 33.** Step Eight - Struggle



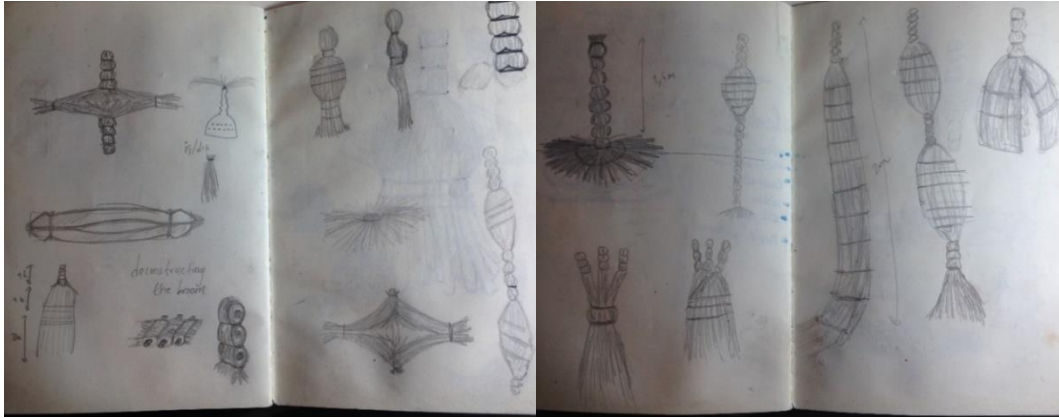
**Figure 34.** Working in Niyazi Master's Workshop

Even though he didn't believe I could carry them out, he showed that he was intrigued by my ideas: he started asking me for new sketches. He made these brooms all by himself as well. After most of these brooms, he would say things along the lines of: "this is the only way to make this kind of broom. As you can see I can make whatever you draw". (Fig 35)



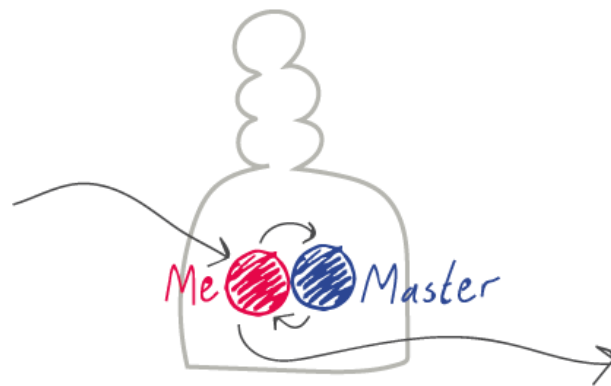
**Figure 35.** Step Nine - Struggle





**Figure 36.** broom sketches for brainstorming

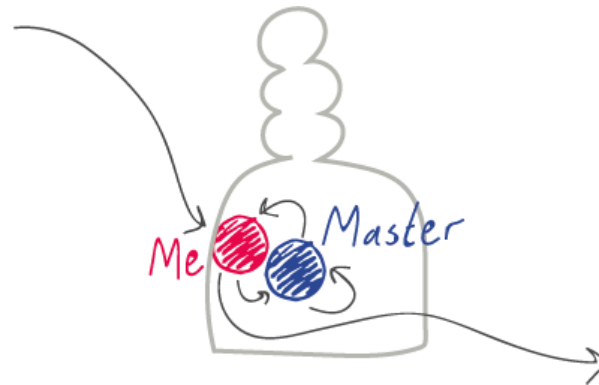
This was problematic for me since I was trying to avoid creating clear distinctions between my practice and Niyazi Usta's practice. To be able to reach my goal, I needed to create a platform in which we were more spontaneously in exchange, rather than turning this into a division of labor which would hinder the possibility of unveiling different facets of the craft knowledge. Luckily, over time, this one-way interaction evolved into a more nested exchange, and we started collaborating during sketches, little material experiments as well as during the actual broommaking steps. (Fig 37)



**Figure 37.** Step Ten - Struggle

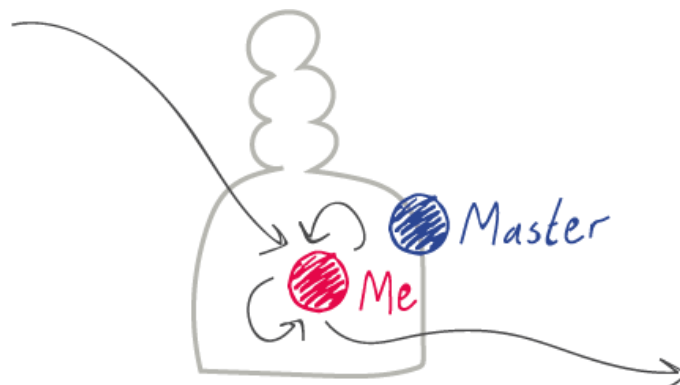
With the more intertwined rhythm of making, I thought we were starting to settle on a way of working creatively together, yet I slowly realized that it wasn't the case. As we kept working together in the workshop, there were times in which I was inclined to experiment, explore and brainstorm on my own with some sketches and materials. I wanted to develop some of the thought fragments before sharing. But, while I was mid-thought, he physically took the experiments from my hands. He fixed, re-bundled and re-bound them suggesting

me ways in which to complete the brooms. I realized that the difficulty in developing thoughts independent from each other, limited the creativity of the process leading us to a more viscous cycle of idea production. Thus, I was more purposeful in my reception of his suggestions. Sometimes I listened and followed through, sometimes I insisted on my own idea and made brooms he was openly disapproving of. (Fig 38)



**Figure 38.** Step Eleven - Struggle

We kept practicing in his workshop, I kept bringing new materials, sketching new ideas, and collaborating with him on experimental brooms. He, finally, started getting curious about each new material I brought. He started asking me what I had in mind for the materials, showing interest in my thoughts regarding the process as well. This was the breaking point, and showed that we had developed and anchored on a platform for co-creation. Now, I was convinced that there was room for unexpected encounters and experimentations, without any sort of result-oriented approach. This felt like the start of a performative practice owned both by me and Niyazi Usta. (Fig 39)



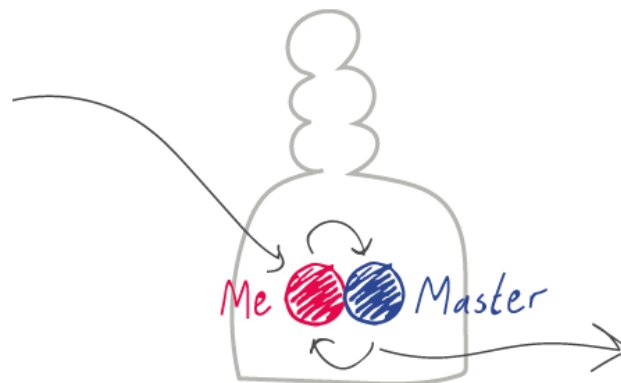
**Figure 39.** Step Twelve - Conciliation



**Figure 40.** Doublechecking brooms with master

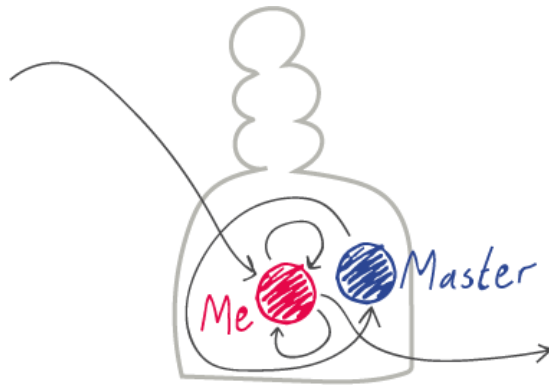
### 5.2.3. Launching: We made it

Niyazi Usta started making suggestions regarding topics outside his expertise, traditional broommaking processes. As it became clear that I would exhibit these broom experiments in an art exhibition setting, he suggested adjustments to brooms with reasonings such as “if we attach the colored string here, this broom might be understood better”.(Fig 41)



**Figure 41.** Step Thirteen - Conciliation

Niyazi Usta started to proudly boast about me in the local broommaking community: “my apprentice makes brooms out of anything!” I felt happy that I had finally regained his trust, this time with regards to more experimental brooms. (Fig 42) I ended up forming a platform of making in which I felt like: either I was actually making brooms out of everything, or everything I was making started registering as a broom.



**Figure 42.** Step Fourteen - Conciliation



**Figure 43.** Broom experimentation – flat and round, made from broomgrass



**Figure 44.** Broom experimentations – string, fur, straw, cable



**Figure 45.** Broom experimentation – shredded paper



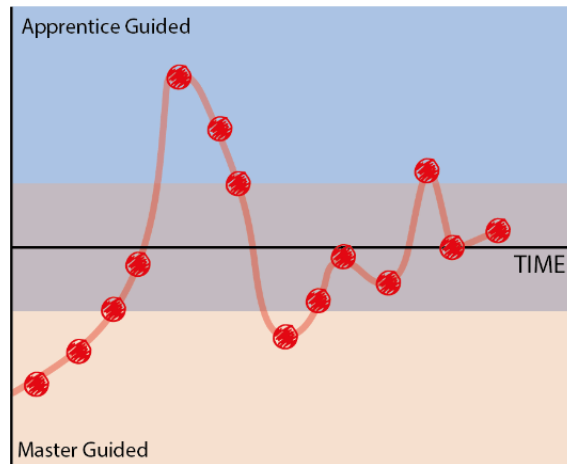
**Figure 46.** Buse Aktaş and Niyazi Mamarçık - Apprentice and Master

### 5.3. Reflections

At first, this seemed like an unresolved and ambiguous point to have reached. I felt that the definition of a broom had stretched uncontrollably, and that now I did not know what exactly were the boundaries of the broommaking knowledge. Yet, the uneasiness showed that a true field for experimentation was created. The non-traditional apprenticeship process had anchored the process to the knowledge within the craft, not to the idea of a broom, or what the role of a traditional broommaker entails. Both me and Niyazi Usta didn't really know where we were going, while working on these hybrid products. We had developed a collaboration and co-existence based on trust, in which a condition of compossibility and shared opacity was in practice. We had practiced and developed a sort of tacit knowledge with regards to how we might work together. It wasn't a clearly defined and structured form of working, it was a process unique to me, Niyazi Usta and our time together.

Throughout the case study, as seen from the account above, the master-apprentice relationship experienced many ups and downs and unexpected turns. The power dynamics constantly changed. As seen in Figure 49 there were times when the master craftsman took over the process of making, and there were times when the apprentice artist was in control of the process. I believe that this case study exemplifies the need for time and patience when trying to create a platform for co-existence and collaboration. Both the master and the apprentice need to overcome certain personal, cultural, professional thresholds in order to get into the hang of not only a new process of making, but also a new form of interaction and collaboration, which avoids one side instrumentalizing the time and effort of the other.

It is also important to highlight that this process is not at all radically different from a traditional apprenticeship. There are a lot of gives and takes in both, not only because it is in the nature of the transfer of tacit knowledge, but also because the traditional apprentice needs to eventually come out of her shell, and produce a personally unique work which sets her apart from the master craftsman in order to become a master herself.



**Figure 47.** Progression of power dynamics throughout apprenticeship

However, this case study differs from a traditional apprenticeship, since the “ending” is not as clear. With me and Niyazi Usta, the process led to a point where the form of collaboration was a bit more stable. I felt that I had a good grasp of the broommaking knowledge so I was able to not only try to apply it in different forms and contexts but also to ask the right question to Niyazi Usta. I was confident that I would be able to utilize the body of knowledge I was exposed to in any future project I undertook. I had experimented enough under the supervision of Niyazi Usta, so I wouldn’t do anything that would totally divert, misunderstand or misinterpret the craft knowledge. I had gained enough of his trust so that if I tried to apply that knowledge in fields I was more familiar with, I could have his support and approval. Since the process is a highly personal and context-dependent one which might fall in to the “workmanship of risk” category, I hope to inspire others to find different ways to co-exist and collaborate with the traditional crafts within their communities.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This study proposes a performative encounter model with traditional craft communities for initiating a collaborative creation process, using a traditional apprenticeship process as a basis. Searching for a new and dynamic way to unveil, activate and transmit the tacit knowledge embodied by craftsmen, it takes a transdisciplinary approach, fluidly combining and utilizing methods and ideas from a variety of disciplines including art, sociology, ethnography, philosophy, craft theory, knowledge theory. It proposes a unique approach to craft since it outlines and executes a performative apprenticeship as a way to discover and transmit the tacit knowledge in traditional crafts, with methods inspired by artistic practices.

Identifying a gap in the spectrum of possible engagements with traditional crafts, this study outlines and executes a model attempting to tap into that gap. Rather than approaching traditional craft heritage as a delicate and fragile victim of industrialization and globalization, which might be the case with a safeguarding attempt, this study advocates a more hands-on and involved approach. It cherishes the heritage value of craft, but does not directly aim to preserve craft practice in a self-contained manner. Instead, it tries to find a way to channel the craft knowledge into our contemporary social, economic, creative and political networks. But, it also attempts to avoid the brute instrumentalization and representation of the craft, which tends to occur when the internal norms and methods of the craft practice and the nature of craft knowledge aren't recognized, understood or experienced by the external engager.

This is why, the engagement model in this study is structured like an apprenticeship model, keeping in consideration the durational, gradual, repetitive, communal, subjective, and personal nature of traditional craft practices. How the model differs from a traditional apprenticeship is through the adaptation of Jacques Ranciere's learning theory in which learning from a schoolmaster does not necessarily mean learning what the schoolmaster already knows. This approach allows for the transfer of craft knowledge to other non-craft practices.



In the proposed three step collaborative creative production model in the form of an apprenticeship, the artist first performs the absorbing phase in which he or she learns the main actions within the craft, gets a hang of the daily grind in the workshop, and builds a relationship based on trust and transparency with the craftsmen. The second stage is anchoring in which the artist starts to experiment, in order to create a creative platform of collaboration. This platform is for the artist and the craftsman to exchange ideas, explore new forms of making, and create products which aren't exactly what the traditional craft produces. Therefore, this step requires a lot of discussion, experimentation and give and take in order to find a means of production which is comfortable and lucrative for both parties. After this is established, the final phase is launching. Here, the created platform is utilized in a creative and open-minded manner. Many variants of "products" are produced, and the artist and the craftsman collaboratively practice the creation process which was previously established. They continue exploring through making and they strive to utilize the creative platform to the best of their abilities.

The model was performed in the Edirne broommaking community as a case study. It is told in first person point of view, since the personal and subjective experience is instrumental to understanding the processes of learning, collaboration and creative production. The evolution of the case study highlighted in the previous section clearly shows that the collaborative activation of tacit knowledge is a thorny, involved, and complicated and evolving process in terms of creativity and communication. It also shows that reflecting on the relationship dynamics within such a knowledge transmission process opens up many doors, leading to many different possibilities of collaboration. Although it is a long process, it is fruitful since each trial and error unveils different aspects of the craft which could not have been made apparent with other, more conventional, non-performative forms of research and collaboration. This becomes clear as we can observe that it is very difficult to distinguish three distinct phases throughout the duration of such an experimental and fluid process, especially given the case-specific, unique relationship dynamics. Thus, the case study showed that the three steps can only act as a loose guide throughout the performance, and the rest is left for the artist, the community and the context. In the study presented here, the clear advantage of having these three distinct steps were in helping to understand, analyze and frame the process after the fact in order to structure the presentation and the discussion of the performance.

On a more holistic level, the case study in Edirne shows the possibility of a collaboration with traditional craft communities without having a dualistic approach and without treating craft as an “other” means of production. The performative artistic approach proves that one can create a social structure in which craft and another creative practice act on the same page or platform. Given a relationship based on trust, as well as an artist willing to let go of the creation process at times, one can create a form of practice in which the artist is involved with both her mind and her body, developing her own personalized knowledge throughout.

The interpersonal relationship between master and apprentice is the creative work which fulfills the goals set for this study: unveiling and transferring craft knowledge by creating a platform of collaboration without instrumentalization or representation. The creative process which took place in the broommaking workshop was direct and it involved a collaboratively determined decision-making process. Yet, of course, the documentation of this experience, the thesis form of this study and the presentation of it in other contexts inevitably involves representation, as the experience can not be re-experienced. This was one of the main challenges of this study, and methods to address and tackle the disconnect between the active performance and its presentation could still be expanded upon. The performance is experiential and personal, whereas the presentation is limited in terms of its form as it needs to fit into a certain framework: thesis, art exhibition, presentation. The transfer from the former to the latter has many complications and challenges. This study, through having a transparent personal account in first person point of view, offering very few photos of the process and mostly sketches made by the artist, and separating the account from the theoretical approach and argument, takes one approach. This allowed for a filter-free account of the story, but also led to a slight partition between the theory and the practice. Future studies could discuss and experiment on what might be a more effective approach to bridge the gap between the performance and its account, especially for the context of an academic discussion based on experimental action research.

In conclusion, this study proposes an alternative approach and attitude to engaging with traditional craft practices. First of all, it approaches intangible cultural heritage not merely as a phenomenon to be preserved as is, but as a cultural part of our modern life to exchange ideas, interact, and collaborate with. Differing from traditional cultural studies approaches,

it doesn't aim to protect, preserve or analyze the practice as a whole, rather, it aims to activate and cultivate the body of knowledge within the practice. Secondly, it highlights the productivity of a traditional craft environment as a context for a performative artist who also produces artifacts. As a group of makers who have been transferring production-specific knowledge for generations through master-apprentice relationships, a craft community provides a social structure in which communicating through making and making through communicating is key. This not only provides a rich and rooted cultural and interpersonal context for a contemporary art practice, a socially engaged art approach also allows for an explorative engagement model. Finally, the explorative and self-reflexive approach from the artist also allows for a contemplation on the relationship dynamics between a craft community and the "outsider" – in this case – the artist. Through a constant reconsideration of the form of collaboration and the freedom to adjust it throughout the process, avoiding representation and instrumentalization becomes a possibility.

If anything, this study makes it apparent that there is a large room for exploration with regards to how we interact with craft heritage, and hopes to have demonstrated that the possibilities of engagement are endless. As Glenn Adamson puts it in the *Craft Reader*: "If there is a single lesson to be learned, it is that craft is not simply antimodern. It is rather a strain of activity that responds to and conditions the putatively normative experience of modernity, in many and unpredictable ways."

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## Buse Aktaş

[buse.buse.aktas@gmail.com](mailto:buse.buse.aktas@gmail.com)

buseaktas.wordpress.com

+90-532-315-7433

### EDUCATION

- Harvard University**, Cambridge, MA, USA September 2017 – Present  
Doctor of Philosophy in Mechanical Engineering
- Kadir Has University**, Istanbul, Turkey January 2018  
Master of Arts in Design (concentration in cultural heritage)  
Coursework including: Ethnographic and Qualitative Analysis of Culture; World Heritage Sites; City and Spectacle; History and Theory of Art and Design; Design-Art Studio; Design & Health; Interdisciplinary Design Studio  
Thesis: Nudging Craft Heritage: a nonconventional performative apprenticeship model using artistic research methodologies
- Princeton University**, Princeton, NJ, USA June 2014  
Graduated Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science - GPA 3.68/4.00  
Major: Mechanical Engineering  
Senior Thesis: Workplace Design for the Disabled: Modifying an Assembly Sequence  
*through an interactive participatory design process, a linkage based mechanism was designed to simplify a task sequence so that it required less force and precision from the employees with disabilities. Multiple prototyping techniques were utilized including CNC machining and 3D printing.*  
Certificate: Visual Arts (with concentration in Sculpture)  
Senior Thesis: Daire  
*a conceptual and materialized study of circular boundaries using performance, installation, sculpture, and documentation as medium*  
**Emerge! Global Bazaar**, President - organize an annual bazaar to fundraise for participant global social initiatives.  
**Princeton University Band**, Percussionist (quad tom, snare, bass drum player)  
**Engineers Without Borders**, Member of Princeton Ghana Chapter - Library Management & Travel Team (Participated in a two-month implementation trip in the summer of 2011 for the Ghana School Library Initiative)  
**Princeton Engineering Education for Kids**, taught basic engineering principles to middle school students using Legos & K'Nex  
**Princeton Autonomous Vehicle Engineering**, manufactured parts of a robotic arm.
- Robert College**, Istanbul, Turkey June 2010  
Ranked Third  
Managing Editor, Copy Editor and Interviewer for school newspaper Bosphorus Chronicle  
Community Involvement Project Leader (two projects: one in an orphanage, the other in a retirement home)
- Pratt Institute Pre-College Program in Industrial Design**, Brooklyn, NY, USA July 2008  
Course credit in Foundation to Art and Introduction to Industrial Design

### WORK EXPERIENCE

- Arçelik A.Ş. (Beko)**, Sütlüce, Istanbul, Turkey September 2016 – December 2016  
*Omni channel Transformation and Change Management*  
Coordinating the internal and external communication plan for the corporation's trans-departmental transformation which aims to guarantee a seamless consumer experience, by catering to the major pain points throughout the consumer journey.
- Innovation Process and System Development* October 2014 – September 2016  
Designed and piloted multiple new human-centric, emphatic, creative, collaborative processes to foster innovation in the company, by integrating all involved parties: design, R&D, sales, marketing, retail, manufacturing, call-center, after sales services, consumers. Moderated a multitude of design thinking and co-creation workshops. Performed nation-wide participatory action research of the local retail channel in Turkey. Worked on a co-creation initiative, in collaboration with Professor Frank Piller from RWTH Aachen.
- İnci Eviner**, Çukurcuma, Istanbul, Turkey July 2014 – October 2015  
*Studio Assistant*  
Provided assistance in all studio activities to the contemporary female visual artist. Responsibilities included: material preparation, prop design, set production, silkscreen printing, text translation, studio visit coordination.
- TAK Kartal**, Kartal, Istanbul, Turkey August – October 2014  
*Engineer/Artist*  
Worked for the design studio in partnership with the Kartal Municipal in Istanbul. Designed and organized various participatory design processes, workshops and events for community members, designers, engineers, urban planners and architects.
- Materials and Applications**, Los Angeles, CA, USA July – August 2013  
*Engineering and Arts Intern*  
Assisted with public art projects, such as 'Project S'more' which was an experimentation with the structural capabilities of plywood. Responsibilities included: concept development, event and workshop moderation, manufacturing and installation.
- Restaurang Allemansrätten**, Stockholm, Sweden June 2013  
*Production Assistant*  
A gastro-political outdoor art performance about the concept of 'commons'.  
Responsibilities included: research, concept development, prop and setting production.
- Complex Fluids Lab**, Prof. Howard Stone, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, USA September 2011 – May 2012  
*Research Assistant*  
Made microfluidic devices and ran experiments with them to coat magnetic beads with different fluids. Experimented with double-coating and the polymerization of the coating

East Asian Library, Princeton, NJ, USA

September 2010 – May 2014

*Student Captain and Desk Attendant*

Responsible of organizing the schedule for fellow student workers and 10 hours a week shifts at the circulation desk

**Fluorescence Microscopy in Modern Cell Biology Course**, Koc University, Istanbul, Turkey

August 2012

*Travel and Logistics Assistant*

Assisted international lecturers throughout their stay and guided a Bosphorus tour

**Boğaziçi University**, Istanbul, Turkey

July 2009 – August 2009

*Research Assistant*

Assisted a doctorate thesis project on acoustics and vibrations of an automobile. Calibrated precision microphones and accelerometers, interpreted data to optimize automobile features.

## AWARDS

**Outstanding Achievement Award – Arçelik A.Ş.** – *for initiating innovative and transformative projects for the corporation*

**BStart Grant – Istanbul Independent Art Association** – *production budget for an artistic performative research project*

**Joseph Clifton Elgin Prize – Princeton University** – *the senior who has done the most to advance the interests of the engineering school in the community at large.*

**Dean Hank Dobin Prize in Community Based Independent Work 1st Place – Princeton University** – *best thesis or junior paper which involves extensive research in a community setting and provides recommendations, new information and analysis, and/or other resources useful to the community.*

**Enoch J. Durbin Prize for Engineering Innovation (1st place co-winner) – Princeton University** – *a senior in the Department where independent work or thesis has shown special interest and aptitude in engineering innovation.*

**The John Marshall II Memorial Prize – Princeton University** – *financial support for undergraduate independent work with preference given to projects in aerospace engineering. Prize winners are selected by the Undergraduate Faculty Committee based on written proposals*

**Jim Seawright Award in Visual Arts 2014 – Princeton University** – *annual award to a student whose work exemplifies exceptional originality*

**Membership in the Society of Sigma Xi – Princeton University** – *awarded upon graduation*

**Lucas Summer Fellowship Award 2013 – Princeton University** – *presented annually to several juniors for summer thesis work in any media*

**Martin A. Dale Summer Award 2012 – Princeton University** – *Grant to implement an independent summer project: a 12-week field research project on traditional crafts which are going extinct in Turkey.*

**Jim Seawright Award in Visual Arts 2011 – Princeton University** – *annual award to a student whose work exemplifies exceptional originality*

**Certificate of Excellence – Robert College** – *for being in the top ten of class in Robert College*

**The Mary Mills Patrick Award – Robert College** – *for best academic average for girls during high school career*

**The Sait Halman Prize – Robert College** – *for excellence in Computer Science*

## RESEARCH PROJECTS & PAPERS

**An Inappropriate Apprenticeship: a performative interaction with the craftsmanship heritage of broom-making**

*fieldwork in Edirne, exhibition in Istanbul, paper and presentation at Cross(-)abilities in Design conference in İzmir*

**things one might lose on the corporate road of innovation** – *field research in Arçelik + publication in transjournal, Arizona, USA*

**tracing contact** – *performative research script for I am NOT tino sehgal by Nahmad Project in London, UK*

**Whitegoods retail channel in Turkey: an ethnographic action research study** – *field research in Arçelik + report + presentation*

**The multi-faceted effect of the Ahi tradition on traditional arts and crafts in Turkey** – *field and archival research + paper*

## INITIATIVES & EXHIBITIONS & COMMUNITY SERVICE

**Seminar** – *participative workshop and exhibition at BAK, Utrecht, Netherlands (will participate as moderator and pseudo innovator alongside 7 other artists)*

**Play is Freedom** – *group exhibition in Bomontiada, Istanbul, Turkey*

**Pop-up Art Exhibition** – *group exhibition in Kadıköy, Istanbul, Turkey*

**Sentimental Thinking Initiative - 14<sup>th</sup> Istanbul Biennial** – *nominated – discussed work with Egyptian artist Anna Boghigian*

**Sculpture Map** – *founding member of an independent mapping project, aiming to archive all sculptures in Turkey including their stories*

**AYDER - Dreams Academy** – *designing and moderating creative art and design workshops for disabled and socially disadvantaged students*

**AÇEV** – *certified gender issues lecturer, holding periodic seminars for the employees of Arçelik.*

**ThinkAfrik** – *providing engineering, business development and strategy support for the Ghanaian socio-impact company promoting education and entrepreneurship in the STEM fields*

## SKILLS

Apprentice level trained and certified in TRIZ (Theory of Inventive Problem Solving)

Strong knowledge of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Java, MatLab, Rhino, Grasshopper, Creo, Photoshop, Illustrator

Familiar with AutoCad, 3DMax, Autodesk Inventor, ProEngineering, Visual Basic

Power tools and machining – woodshop, metal shop, CNC mills, laser cutters and 3D printers

Blacksmithing– forging, welding, using a furnace

Ceramics – wheel throwing, glazing, carving, sculpting, mold-making and casting

Native Language: Turkish. Fluent in English. Basic proficiency in German. Can read Ottoman Turkish.