

ABSTRACT

Learning from the tree - The Architecture of climbing is a continuation and further understanding of my work in the *Body & Space Morphologies: Catharsis - Acting and The Collective studio*. The aim of the work has been to allow for a process to take place. A process driven by my (dis)ability to stay in the act, without the purpose for a final outcome, to master an act, to re-learn the craft of pure acting and pure play, to simply take part in that what I aimed to act with and within.

The work started with the initiative "I want to climb a tree". My intention was to rediscover - or discover for the first time -, the space that I can inhabit in the tree, and the space the tree inhabits in my world. Inspired by Plato's quote that "trees and fields tell me nothing: men are my teachers" and Socrates' quote that "the unexamined life is not worth living", I have re-introduced the tree as the subject for myself (and others) to act with. Born and raised in the farmlands of Norway, I wanted to find out for myself what the tree could or could not teach me.

The tree is both an object, a space and a structure most people have a relation to. But what is this relationship? Is it a space of our childhood only? A space we as grown-ups no longer are capable to enter - neither with our body nor with our mind? What happens if a young architect student dedicates himself to climbing trees again?

Introducing the tree once again to myself and to others, I also introduce the climbers to some of their forgotten childhood memories. A tree is climbed without rules or thought behavior. Climbing a tree is a personal act, perceived and acted out individually. One can grow with the tree, one can climb with the tree, and one can climb past or beyond the tree. How does one climb together with the tree, and what can be experienced if one does so?

The pure acting and the time spent in the tree, without any other purpose than the acting itself, provoked a looking at space that the tree contains and creates. A space discovered that was not perceived or imagined before. A literal architectural space, a phenomenal space and a social space. A space with certain properties and conditions that I will continue to seek out in conventional architecture too.

Acting with tree(s) has become a personal journey. Being restless and anxious, I had to learn again to spend time with, come close to and care for the tree. After climbing the tree many times, I have not only become a master in the act of climbing trees, but I have gotten new knowledge in the ways of looking at, and perceiving of, the tree, the city, my rural home, architecture, nature and culture.

While my journey in the climbing of trees made an extensive video data base probably also interesting to other fields and studies than just architecture, I have chosen to present my studies for this diploma in the form of a book in which I hope to be able to re-introduce the reader to the world and architecture of the tree. Both as it is a tree, and when it has become wood.

"Today, too, I experienced something I hope to understand in a few days"¹

¹ quote from the short film "The Perfect Human" (1967) by Jørgen Leth

The book shows a selective collection of trees I climbed on, of trees I climbed together with others, of trees I lived in for some time, and of trees I grew close too and developed rituals with – also the making of architecture.

A selection of 12.5 hours of video can be seen in my video-archive following the link below:

<https://ahocloud.box.com/s/xse3yc4lv6brqr6rg55ddvth5t9mwr8>