DESIGNING TEN TOWERS – WEAVING TEN STORIES:

Environmental art as a tool in development of cultural and creative tourism in Finnish Lapland

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Abstract

The present study observes environmental art as an artistic practice, which intends to be present, respond to a specific situation, with reference for past and gaze for future. This study was developed as a part of Environmental Art for Tourism project (*YMA – Ympäristötaidetta matkailun alueille*), a collaborative project between the University of Lapland's Faculty of Art and Design, the Artist's Association of Lapland, and local tourism enterprises. The main goals of YMA project were: to support collaborative practices, to increase the use of environmental art in development of tourist services and high-quality nature tourism environments, to develop environmental art plans for the partner companies. The project took place in Experience Village Tonttula, located in Kittilä, Finnish Lapland. With a focus on the heritage assets from cultural and natural landscape of the place, a concept for environmental artwork, *ten towers – ten stories*, was developed and visualised. The suggested artwork is a concept for new experience service – a walking bridge constructed of ten towers, each intends to tell a story related local culture, nature and traditional beliefs.

This study pursues several purposes: first, to examine and demonstrate the potential of environmental art as a tool in successful collaboration between artists and tourism companies, which can be beneficial for both; second, to show how environmental art can assist in creating high quality authentic experiences for the development of cultural and creative tourism; third, to compose artistic practice and research together, applying methods from both applied visual arts and service design disciplines, with a focus on the process. The research strategy was art-based action research, which assisted to carry out practical and theoretical practices side by side, with a focus on the process and action. The main working methods were: place-based, iteration and prototyping.

The results of the study can be examined from two directions: of what has been done, and how it has been done. The result of artistic practice is the developed proposal for environmental art work, that can be implemented on the site and function as a new experience environment for tourists. The design process shows how the situation has been approached and developed. The results of this study can be considered as meaningful and beneficial in both personal and broad levels. In a personal level, the results are reflected in gained knowledge, experience and skills in the field. In the broad level, the results aim to demonstrate the potential of multicultural and multidisciplinary collaborations, which are needed for future to fulfil the demands of rapidly

developing world. This study aims to contribute to the academic discourse concerning environmental art practices and collaborative activities between arts and design field and tourism industry, particularly in the north. I hope to encourage artists and designers for further research in the field, which can reveal new possibilities for northern cultural, social and economic well-being, and increase the use of environmental art in the development of high-quality, sustainable environments.

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1. INTRODUCTION

During last several decades environmental art has wandered through time and endless landscapes around the world, encouraging artists to reflect on various social, ecological and cultural issues. With a focus on a specific environment, this kind of artworks, as Beardsley (1998) states meant "to provide an inimitable experience of a certain place" (p. 7). Environmental art demonstrates the artist's duty to reflect the reality of his or her time, what requires from the artist to be fully present, with a "commitment to time and place" (Jokela, 2013a, pp. 12–13). This relates to the main principle of applied visual arts, which is based on dialogical and collaborative practices, while art is created for people and with people, for environment and with environment, applying it into the everyday existence. As emphasized by Jokela (2013a) and Coutts (2013), in a contrast with the traditional methods of individual artistic practice in a studio with self-oriented approach, applied visual arts aim to encourage dialogue with the environment.

Various environmental art projects have been operated around the world addressing different current issues on global and regional levels. In this study, environmental art is examined and practiced as a tool for creating high quality experiences and services in tourism industry, with a focus on cultural and creative tourism. The practical component of the study was conducted as a part of YMA – Environmental Art for Tourism project, with an emphasis on collaboration between the art and design field and tourism area in Finnish Lapland. A rapid growth of tourism industry in Finnish Lapland has created a situation of a demand for new innovative and creative approaches, which can open new channels and opportunities for development of authentic services and experiences. The theoretical background related cultural and creative tourism in general and particularly development of tourism in Finnish Lapland provided significant data for the research. This study aims to provide an example of how cultural and natural assets of a specific place can be used in creating authentic, high quality services and experiences.

This study was carried out as a part of Arctic Art and Design (AAD) master's programme, which has its main focus on practice-based method. Therefore, this study aims to demonstrate how to approach and conduct research alongside practical work, going side by side, assisting to each other. For that purpose, art-based action research methodology was chosen as an approach,

which I have found appropriate to fulfil my intention to gain learning through artistic practice. According to Härkönen and Vuontisjärvi (2018), combining theoretical and practice-based learning, the programme pursues several aims: to prepare the professionals to apply gained skills and knowledge in real world, locally and internationally; contribute to regional development from cultural, economic and social perspectives; demonstrate innovative and alternative ways of working, based on collaboration between artists (designers) and local enterprises. Based on these principles, this study pursues personal and social aims. In a personal level, the focus has been placed on the improvement of my own knowledge and skills, through theory, practice and collaboration with others. On a social level, my attempt was directed towards the deep learning of the situation and development of a specific practice, that aims to contribute to regional development in general, and particularly, be beneficial for the YMA project's partners. In addition, to bring new knowledge for future artists researchers working in similar field.

Orientated on Arctic region with a consideration of its specific features, AAD master's programme aims "to promote intercultural competence and cultural sustainability in the Arctic" (Härkönen & Vuontisjärvi, 2018, p. 87). Theoretical and practice-based activities in northern environment require cultural and environmental sensitivity, due to the vulnerability of the region from various perspectives, as Huhmarniemi (2013) states, "ecological sustainability determines the choice of materials and production methods, whereas cultural resistance determines cultural sensitivity" (p. 46). Therefore, during the working process, specific features of northern environments and cultures were taken into consideration, followed by a respectful and sensitive attitude. The materials were carefully chosen from local cultural and natural landscapes, the production methods were mainly based on traditional handmade techniques. Alongside the place-oriented approach, the study strives to find relevance in a global level, the approach and developed processes can be considered and applied as an example in other places in the world.

The study was conducted in the intersection of art and design, implementing tools from both applied visual arts and service design. Place-based research was carried out in order to gain deeper insight into the historical, cultural, social and environmental background of the project location. The design concept was prototyped and tested with participants in the prototyping laboratory SINCO (service innovative corner) located in the University of Lapland, the use of

this service design tool aimed to provide deeper insight into the situation and reveal possibilities for improvement and development. Working in the intersection between art and design created dynamic processes and opened up a potential and benefits of multidisciplinary approach.

The study is relevant for the current situation with a gaze towards future. In rapidly developing world, the need for new expertise, multidisciplinary and multicultural collaborations, and creative approaches are required to fulfil the demands. I hope, this study will provide valuable knowledge and data for other artists researchers working in the intersection between art and design, and looking for collaboration with other spheres of society, striving to contribute to regional development in social, cultural and economic spheres, through artistic practice.

To conclude, this study pursues several purposes:

1. Study aims to demonstrate an evidence for the potential of successful collaboration between artists and tourism enterprise, which can be beneficial for both.

2. To show how environmental art can assist in creating high quality authentic experiences for the development of cultural and creative tourism.

3. To compose artistic practice and research together, illustrating the connection between the practical and theoretical practices, with a focus on the process.

4. To demonstrate the combination of tools and working methods from both AVA and SD that can assist in conducting artistic practices.

Research questions are following:

1. How environmental art as a tool can assist in collaboration between art and design field and tourism industry in Finnish Lapland?

2. How working methods from both applied visual arts and service design can be applied in the processes of art-based practices?

Outline of the study

This chapter explains the context, aims and relevance of the study, introducing the main topics and research questions. Following *Chapter 2* introduces the objectives of YMA project – Environmental Art for Tourism, the partner company's geographical features, ideology and goals, and reviews general information regarding historical background of the tourism development in Finnish Lapland. *Chapter 3* provides a theoretical framework of the research, and demonstrates the insight into the researched topic, identifies the area of knowledge that the study intended to examine and widen. The theoretical framework reviews three main themes: environmental art, cultural and creative tourism, Arctic art and design, with a focus on applied visual arts and service design, its processes and tools. In addition, this section provides two examples of art projects from Norway and Scotland, where environmental art functions as a tool in development of tourism services. *Chapter 4* clarifies the research task and questions, methodology and data collection methods used to conduct the research. The following *Chapter 5* describes the practical component of the study, on which the data has been collected. First, the chapter introduces the task of the project and the participant; then explains the working process, timeline, and methods used to assist the development of the project; then, the chapter demonstrates findings of place-based research, supported by visual material; and finally, sketches of the developed artwork concept are presented and explained. The working process has been discussed and analysed through detailed description of each development step. The following *Chapter 6* gives insight into challenges and opportunities, suggestion and recommendations. And finally, *Chapter 7* discusses the results of the study and prospective research steps.

2. CONTEXT

2.1 Experience Village Tonttula

The practice-based element of this study was carried out as a part of YMA *(YMA – Ympäristötaidetta matkailun alueille – environmental art for tourism)* cooperation project of the University of Lapland's Faculty of Art and Design, The Artists' Association of Lapland, and the four tourism SME in Finnish Lapland. The project pursued several goals: first, to support the tourism environment development of participating companies; second, to increase the use of environmental art in development of tourist services and high-quality nature tourism environments; and finally, to develop environmental art plans for the partner companies, which were Kakslauttanen in Saariselkä and Arctic Snow Hotel in Lehtojärvi and the Ranua Zoo, Hullu Poro Oy – Taivaanvalkeat in Köngäs Kittilä (YMA project plan 2014–2020). The artistic practice of this study was developed in collaboration with the tourism company Hullu Poro Oy, in Experience Village Tonttula. Further, I review the geographical features and business orientation on conceptual and practical levels related the place.

Experience Village Tonttula is an attractive, culture and nature-oriented tourism destination, offering various services, attractions and activities, based on stories, fantasy, culture and mythology of Finnish Lapland. Through the unique atmosphere of the place visitors can experience local culture and wild nature of Finnish Lapland. Tonttula offers services for groups as well as individuals, and suitable for all ages; there, one can find accommodation, mini golf, restaurant, souvenir shop, sauna, fireplace, and a hut for observing the northern lights. A walking path takes visitors to an adventure journey through Magical Forest to Hidden Huts. On the way the visitors can find wooden sculptures of mushrooms, forest animals and birds, and elves' little houses. Hidden Huts invites visitors to take a part in various activities: to bake Christmas cookies in the Gingerbread house, to participate in handicraft workshop in the Elves' School and discover secrets of herbal remedies in the Wise Elf's house. (pic. 1) The place offers activities all year around: elves can take the visitors to skiing trip in winter time, under the northern lights, and canoeing in Ounasjoki river in summer time, enjoying the midnight sun. Various programs are available during the winter season including reindeer, husky dog and snowmobile safaris,

creative activities with elves, meeting with Santa Claus, ice fishing, and ice swimming. In the Experience Village Tonttula, visitors can participate in adventure activities and experience the peaceful and mysterious atmosphere of Finnish Lapland (Experience Village Tonttula, 2018).


Pic. 1: Hidden Huts in Experience Village Tonttula. From left to right: Gingerbread House, Elves' School, Wise Elf's House. The pictures demonstrate the outside design and interior space, February and November 2017.

The name of the Experience Village Tonttula hints to the story of the place. *Tonttu* is a mythological creature from Finnish folklore, similar to elf or gnome in Western cultures. Tonttu became main character of the Experience Village Tonttula; elf puppets, little wooden huts and other attributes from mythical world compound the visual and conceptual frame of the place. The created settings and story live in a harmony with the natural surroundings, together composing mysterious atmosphere, where visitors dip into a magical fairy-tale. *Tonttu* as a character has played a significant role in generating the concept of the place and promotion in social media.

Experience Village Tonttula is located in Köngäs village, at the river bank of Ounasjoki, surrounded by fells. (pic. 2–3) The name Köngäs means rapids in Finnish. Shaping the landscape, Ounasjoki river has played a significant role in the livelihood of the area, providing great fishing conditions through generations. Nowadays, fishing is practiced by locals, however in smaller scale, comparable to old days. The natural surroundings of Köngäs village offer

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various possibilities for outdoor activities. The local community is involved in various cultural and sport events which are held annually (The villages of Kittilä, 2018).
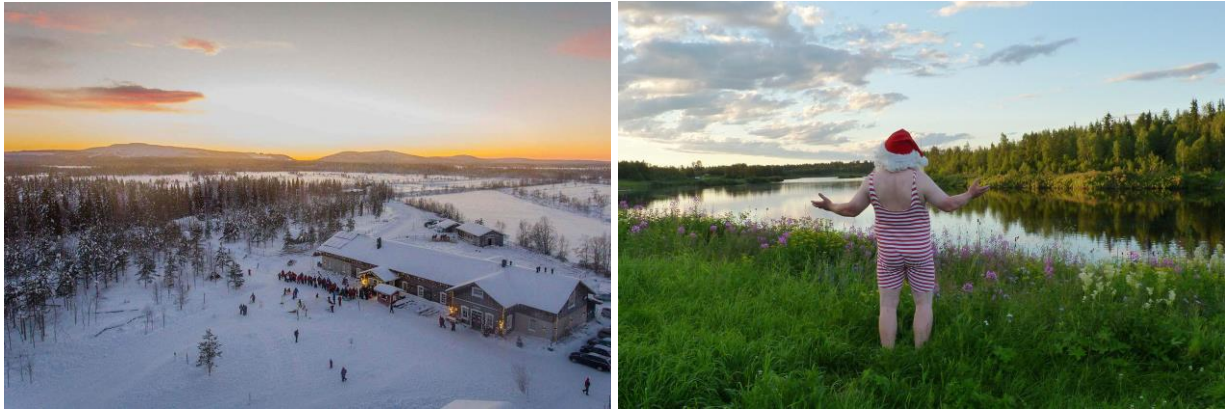
Pic. 2–3: View on Experience Village Tonttula and Ounasjoki (source: Experience Village Tonttula, 2018).

Kittilä is a growing and developing municipality; alongside with local culture and traditions which can be still observed and experienced in the villages, international atmosphere is a characteristic of the place created by tourism industry. Many factors have affected the rapid growth of tourism industry in last few decades: the airport in Kittilä, which facilitates easy and fast connections to other places in Finland and Europe; and unique northern cultural and natural environment, which respond to the increasing interest in nature and culture-based tourism around the world. The landscape is shaped by several fells, Ounasjoki river, hundreds of lakes and endless forests (Kittilä, 2018). The variety of seasons in Lapland offers to experience the north with its mysterious atmosphere, colours and light, Uuttu-Kalle et al. (1997) describe Lapland as a "land of opposites", where the days "can be blue and nights white as snow" (p. 4). Cultural and natural treasures of the area are reflected in Experience Village Tonttula, through the atmosphere and offered services and experiences.

The company Hullu Poro Oy, particularly in Experience Village Tonttula, has been actively involved in various art-based project in collaboration with the University of Lapland. Several environmental art workshops took place in Mettänväenmaa (Folk Forest, which is now called Magical Forest), with a focus on natural materials and cultural features of the place. Students created various artworks, made of pine cones, willow and wood (Environment, Community and Art, 2018).

In September 2016, a three days' workshop was organized for first year AAD Master's degree students (including myself). During the workshop students were given a task to explore local northern environment and create an artwork out of natural materials collected from the surroundings. During the stay in Experience Village Tonttula, students had a chance to experience traditional wooden sauna, taste Lappish cuisine and learn about local culture and traditions through stories, told by supervisors of the workshop, Timo Jokela, Christa Haataja and Elina Härkönen. We had a chance to meet the owner of the partner company Hullu Poro Oy, Päivikki Palosaari, who introduced to us the concept of the Experience Village Tonttula, the future vision and goals of the company. Plans and possibilities for collaboration were discussed around the table in Tonttula restaurant. Some of the participants, including myself chose to take a part in Tonttula project, which provided the practical framework for this study (see *Chapter 5*). Snow-sculpture workshop took place in November 2017, led by Timo Jokela and Antti Stöckell, a team of international students were asked to design and implement snow sculptures and relief in a snow tunnel, built in the area of Experience Village Tonttula, on the way from the main area to the Magical Forest. These environmental art projects demonstrate the motivation and interest of the partner company Hullu Poro Oy in long term collaboration with the Faculty of Art and Design in the University of Lapland, as well they provide an evidence of successful cooperation, beneficial for both sides.

2.2 Tourism development in Finnish Lapland

According to Lähteenmäki (2006), Finns and Saami, appeared in a written form for the first time in history in 98 CE by Tacitus, however the reference to Northern Finland came later in the end of ninth century, by King Alfred of England, based on the letter from a Norwegian landowner Ottar. Few centuries later, first visitors came to explore mythical north and local people, describing the place as "an exotic and strange land", "ugly and remote land of pagans and witches" (Lähteenmäki, 2006, pp. 10–14). Some of these features have built the present picture of Lapland, although in a new light. Visitors who come to Lapland are willing to experience the wilderness and exotics of the North. Together with the mythical stories, the landscape and the

weather conditions create a unique atmosphere and astonishing natural phenomena, such as midnight sun and aurora borealis, both charged with mysterious spirit.

Finnish Lapland region has a multicultural history. According to Lähteenmäki (2006), Saami who lived in the area practiced reindeer husbandry for centuries. The Finns and some of the Saami, who lived in the area between the coastal region and the north, based their livelihood on fishing and hunting. In the seventeenth century, high taxation and obligation for military service stated by Sweden, caused for many Finnish pioneers to move from the south and settle in Finnish Lapland (Lähteenmäki, 2006). As Talve and Sinisalo (1997) explain, the pioneer settlers practiced slash-and-burn farming, causing the local reindeer herders to move up north. The ways of reindeer breeding were adopted from local Saami people, by some Finnish farmers, which became essential part of their livelihood (Talve & Sinisalo, 1997). For few last centuries, Lapland has attracted tourists and researchers, interested in the cultural and historical heritage of Saami people. Nowadays, museums and tourism-oriented sites spread in Finnish Lapland provide an insight into spiritual and material culture of Saami people.

Historical background of tourism in Finnish Lapland

According to Neuvonen, Alatalo and Hicks (2012), foreign travellers, mainly educated Europeans, discovered Finnish Lapland as a tourist destination in the end of eighteenth century, followed later by Finns. They explain, that first foreign visitors came to Aavasaksa Fell, which was attractive by its excellent conditions for observing the midnight sun during midsummer. The celebration of Midsummer in Aavasaksa Fell became popular among Finnish tourists, after a hundred years. In addition, the landscape of Aavasaksa came into sight in Finnish landscape art, as well in many travel books and novels, written by foreigners. (Neuvonen, Alatalo & Hicks, 2012). Lähteenmäki (2006) cites from the book Northern Travel, written by Bayard Taylor (1858, p. 80), who visited in the area: "Nothing in Italy, nothing in the Tropics, equals the magnificence of the Polar skies" (p. 27). By contrast, nowadays the northern sky attracts tourists mainly in late autumn, winter and early spring, because of the aurora borealis phenomenon. The midnight sun is still attractive, however in limited scale. The ancient traditions of admiring sun and celebrating the midsummer echo from the previous centuries to nowadays in various cultural

events organized in the area. One of the oldest and best-known festivals in Finnish Lapland has been the Midnight Sun Film festival, held in Sodankylä every June, where the visitors can enjoy watching movies for several days, at day and night time, and experience the local nature and culture. Another known event, held in Kittilä every summer, is a Silence Festival, offering to experience art, culture and unique atmosphere of northern natural environment (Silence Festival, 2018).

Back to the 19th century, Lähteenmäki (2006) points out another 'shining' reason, beside the midnight sun. It was the gold, that attracted hundreds of visitors from other parts of Finland to the north. In the 1870s the first finds of gold appeared at the banks of legendary Ivalo river, what caused a gold rush, which has continued into the following century, and nowadays branded as an adventure for tourists. The "Crown Station", which was built in 1870 at Kultala to operate gold prospecting in Ivalo, nowadays opened for tourists to visit (Lähteenmäki, 2006). Nowadays, new tourism trends and interests replaced the gold fewer, however, there are few tourist destinations related to gold prospecting in Finnish Lapland, that are still operating and inviting visitors to learn gold prospecting and try their luck.

According to Neuvonen, Alatalo & Hicks (2012), after Finland became independent in 1917, the tourism in Finnish Lapland expanded to further up north. Building new roads through Lapland to the Arctic Ocean created a better travelling condition. Petsamo (Pechenga) area was united into an independent republic of Finland in 1920, attracted travellers interested in unique landscape by the Arctic ocean, fishing and Saami culture and lifestyle. With a government support, tourist facilities, such as hostels and bus routes from Ivalo to Petsamo were build due to increasing number of visitors to the area (Neuvonen, Alatalo & Hicks, 2012). After 1944, Finland was forced to concede the area of Petsamo to Soviet Union, what affected the economic, political, and social areas, including tourism.

Fells of Finnish Lapland has become a popular winter tourism attraction since 1930s, when the first pioneers of cross-country and slalom skiers came to explore the area, what increased the building of hostels and hotels, which offered good facilities for skiing or hiking activities. (Neuvonen, Alatalo & Hicks, 2012). Second World War caused a break in the development of

tourism in Lapland until 1960s (Lähteenmäki, 2006). Nowadays, some fells of Finnish Lapland are worldwide well-known destinations for winter sport, which attract tourists from all over the world.

During centuries Finnish Lapland has offered large variety of attractions for tourists all year around, mainly based on cultural and natural features. Summers have been popular for fishing, hiking and camping under the midnight sun. Winters have offered great conditions for various outdoor activities such as skiing, snowmobile driving, ice fishing, husky and reindeer safaris. Polar night, blue shadow light and northern lights attract tourists from all over the world to experience the magical atmosphere of northern winter. In addition, Lapland offers to experience eight seasons with their unique colours, weather conditions and atmosphere, however winter-oriented tourism has become the most popular, what created a situation of lack of employment during other seasons. Recently, the local companies have become aware of the need for summer tourism development.

Travelling trends in Finnish Lapland

"It was during the 19th century that the cultural and natural landscapes of Northern Finland became symbolic of Finnish tourism as a whole" (Neuvonen, Alatalo & Hicks, 2012, p. 24). Since then, Finnish Lapland has been represented visually with elements of natural landscape and local culture. Many historical and other factors have influenced the development of tourism during the 20th century. And the symbolic role of Finnish Lapland seems to be visible again. It is the unique northern nature, cleanest air in the world, eight seasons and local culture that attract thousands of tourists from all over the world. However, alongside with cultural and natural landscapes, new symbols have appeared on the map of tourism during last few decades to respond the increasing competition in tourism industry. In this chapter I will shortly introduce three of them: Santa Claus, northern lights and reindeer.

One of the most popular trends in Finnish Lapland has been introduced for the first time few decades ago – Christmas with its main character Santa Claus. The well recognizable figure is based on popular iconic picture of a kind, white-bearded person, dressed in red coat. Children

and adults from all over the world every year send him letters with wishes for Christmas, and some are dreaming to meet him personally. Many locals argue the authenticity of the concept and its connection to cultural heritage. The reason for that is the original story of *Joulupukki* – Finnish Christmas character, that literally means *Christmas goat*, and finds its origins from pagan traditions. However, the growth of Christmas oriented tourism brings economic value to Finland, particularly the northern part. In 2010, Rovaniemi has received a title of an official hometown of Santa Claus. Santa Claus village and Santa Park are two main places to meet Santa Claus, his assistance, little elves, the reindeer, which drive his sledge, and experience magical atmosphere of Christmas, which is kept there all year around. Both locations attract thousands of tourists every year, aiming to create memorable and joyful experiences of Christmas. During winter seasons Lapland is dressed up with its magical outfit, covered with white fluffy blanket, glowing with northern lights, which has become another significant travelling trend in Lapland destination.

In polar areas of the North mysterious colourful lights appear in the sky during the dark period of the year. The scientific name of this natural phenomenon, influenced by the sun and the solar wind, comes from Greek – aurora borealis, dawn of the North (Falck-Ytter & Lövgren, 1999). Indigenous people of the North being fascinated by the colourful lights composed myths and beliefs, which have drifted through generations to present days. Falck-Ytter & Lövgren (1999) summarized some traditional beliefs related to the origin of the northern lights in various cultures of the North. For Ottawa, Ontario and Canada's indigenous people the colorful dancing lights in the sky are reflections of the demigod Nanahboozho's flames, as an echo of the creation of the world. Indigenous people in Labrador and Greenland share similar tale relating the aurora borealis as a place where souls of dead people play football with a walrus skull, and the whistling crackling sound caused by the game represents the communication between the spirits and the people on the earth. In a contrast, the Chuvash tribe in Siberia connects the aurora appearance to birth (Falck-Ytter & Lövgren, 1999). Aurora borealis in Finnish 'revontulet', what literally means 'fox fire', according to the legend, the arctic fox swipes the snow with its tail, the sparks fly into the sky causing the northern lights. Alongside the magical visual appearance, unknown and mysterious features of aurora borealis attract thousands of tourists to travel over the seas thousands of kilometres. Whereas the prediction of northern lights seems to be almost

impossible, one needs a luck and clear sky to catch them, they can appear for few minutes or dance for several hours. Having powerful visual effect and emotional impact aurora borealis has become a great tourism trend in Finnish Lapland. Wide promotion caused a great wave of tourists, particularly from Asian countries. Local companies have developed new customer services related to northern lights, such as hotels with glass made roof, that makes possible to observe the northern lights from inside; special aurora hunting tours, including photography guiding and storytelling around fireplace. Even though no one can predict the exact time and promise the emergence of northern lights for sure, the number of aurora hunters have been constantly increasing for the last few years.

Inhabiting the area for centuries, reindeer became one of the most recognizable icons that represents and promotes Lapland to foreign markets in tourism industry. Wide range of products made of antlers and reindeer fur can be found in souvenirs shops; reindeer figure appears in many products and logos of local companies. The city of Rovaniemi, a capital of Lapland, was planned and designed by Finnish architect and designer Alvar Aalto. The shape of reindeer's head can be recognized from the city map, where the center sport stadium became an eye and the main roads leading north, west and south – the antlers (Visit Rovaniemi, 2018). In addition, sculptures and statues of reindeer can be found spread in the city. The icon of reindeer has been promoted for decades and became a strong visual component of landscape and culture in Finnish Lapland, making other cultural elements less visible and recognizable. Even though the amount of reindeer in Lapland almost similar to the number of inhabitants, about 200 000, I think, alongside with these trends, other unique features of local cultural and natural environments, should be lighted up more for foreigner's eyes.

3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Environmental art

In this chapter I refer to certain key concepts that I found relevant for the artistic practice in my study, such as environmental art, environment and landscape, and belonging to a place. A particular approach is needed in the discussion about environment, as Jokela (2008) argues, "description of the environment requires the same sensitivity as the description of art, because as well as the outward appearance of the landscape, it must depict the action and reaction that are connected to it and the meanings associated with them" (p. 6).

According to Beardsley (1998), environmental art finds its roots in "earthworks" and "land art", which began to emerge in the late 1960s, mainly in Great Britain and United states, when some artists expressed their interest in working with and in the landscape, engaging it, instead of just depicting. He adds, being physically present, use natural materials form the site and consider specific features of the landscape were in the core of this new approach. This kind of artworks intended to "provide an inimitable experience of a certain place" (p. 7). The place is examined from various perspectives, and as Jokela (2010) states, the environment where the work is located becomes an inseparable element of an artwork, the site is included "into the material being of the art and its narrative content" (p. 9).

Beardsley (1998) argues, that some artists, through the work with the land, aimed to address social and ecological issues, and some sought for deeper understanding of human-nature relationship in a physical, conceptual and spiritual levels. He describes the dramatic change in the perception of nature, that began to appear during last several decades. "What was once assumed to be vast and inexhaustible has come to seem fragile and imperiled; what once thought to be independent from culture – an inviolate other – has now come to be recognized as a cultural creation." (p. 7) Human activities shape and influence the landscape in a small and big scale, humans constantly intervene into the environment around them, living traces, which unfortunately, in many cases are harmful.

Humanity's relationship to nature has been explored by environmental artist Chris Drury (2004), through his artistic activity in natural environment. He explains, that his search for the connection between nature and culture might be induced by the feeling of loss that exist in all modern societies. This feeling might find its origin in the shift from hunter-gatherer way of life to farming and settling down, followed by a development of strict control over culture and nature. Drury draws a parallel between nature and culture, "since we ourselves are part of nature, it comes as no surprise that culture follows the same pattern as nature", meaning the complex pattern of changes and formations (Drury & Syrad, 2004, p. 6). The energy of change and movement in nature has been explored by environmental artist Andy Goldsworthy. In his letter (1983) to John Beardsley he writes: "I have become aware of how nature is in a state of change, and that change is the key to understanding. I want my art to be sensitive and alert changes in materials, seasons and weather" (Beardsley, 1998, p. 206). Goldsworthy (1990) explains, through the interaction with a certain material, he focuses on the living processes within and around it, which continue after he leaves the place. In addition, he seeks to explore and understand through physical presence in the place, through direct communication with the material and the space around it.

Different approaches to artistic activities in natural environment described by Beardsley (1998), for some artists like Robert Morris and Andy Goldsworthy, the interaction with the landscape is followed by use of the materials found in the site; for some, like Richard long and Hamish Fulton the act of walking in the landscape lies in the basis of their artistic activity. No other marks, except the footprints are left in the landscape after Hamish Fulton, by the act of walking and photographing the landscapes, he passively protests the isolation between people and nature, happened as a result of urbanization and industrialization (Beardsley, 1998). Richard Long (1980) explains his act of walking: "A walk is just one more layer, a mark, laid upon the thousands of other layers of human and geographic history on the surface of the land." (Beardsley, 1998, p. 42). An act of walking has been examined and expressed by many artists and writers in the past till present days. Walking as an act of art with the focus on awareness and presence reflected in the article *Walking of water, living adventurously: Travelling laboratories for artistic thinking,* by Jaana Erkkilä-Hill (2018), while some artists leave visual marks in the landscape (monumental or delicate), some are barely intruded into the environment (Erkkilä-Hill,

2018). While walking we inevitably interact with the surroundings, it is a two-side communication, we absorb the surroundings, by breathing, observing, listening, smelling, touching, while the surroundings absorb us, what we breath out and the marks we leave.

But how to approach the environment, how to understand its complexity? Jokela (2013b) refers to Karjalainen's (1996) idea of perceiving environment as a "multidimensional concept", which included three levels: "objective, subjective and textual". Jokela describes his way of working in a landscape based on the interaction between those levels. The "objective" level refers to visual and physical elements of the environment; the "subjective" relates to the world of emotions and personal experience, this level is observed through senses; the textual level relates to meaning and cultural aspects of local communities and their relationship with the environment (p. 136). I think, this approach can be applied anywhere regardless time and geographical location. Thus, environmental art requires sensitivity and deep insight into a specific place or landscape with its multi layered structure and dynamic patterns. I believe, an environmental artist has the responsibility to consider the geographical, cultural, historical characteristics of the place, alongside with personal insight and experience based on physical and emotional presence. Jokela (2013a) suggests, that environmental art requires from the artist to function as a researcher, designer and innovator at the same time and investigate the place by immediate interaction with it.

Is there any difference of practicing artistic activities in natural environment in the north, south, west or east? With the perception of an environment as a "multidimensional concept", mentioned above, a particular approach should be developed according to the specific location. According to Jokela (2010), Northern Environmental Art stems from two main elements: traditional Western Land Art and Northern cultures, which are strongly bonded with nature. Close connection to nature in Northern cultures relates to physical – habitation and livelihood, and spiritual – beliefs and mythology (p. 8). From here, I can draw a parallel with Berleant (1996), who gives an example of deep connection between body and environment, which can be observed in the native North American peoples, they identify their bodies – 'flesh' and the natural world they inhabit, as a one unit (p. 12). Thus, to approach the northern environment requires in-depth study and understanding of the specific conditions' characteristic of a place.

Environment and Landscape

According to Berleant, (1996), "environment is more than simply our external surroundings" (p. 11). Environment exists in a constant transformation, caused by time, cycle of the year, natural phenomena and human intervention. Ingold (1993) compares the concept of environment to a living creature. This idea intertwines with my imagination of the environment as a living organism with complex identities, composed of many layers. Some layers are tangible and concrete that can be embraced through the senses or by involvement of bodily communication. Some layers are invisible and more abstract, related to spiritual and emotional experiences. Human beings are interwoven into their environments, taking part in a creating of the identity of the place, on social and personal levels.

Distinction between landscape and environment is not easy to define, both Berleant and Ingold try to describe it, however based on different perceptions. Ingold (1993) expresses his rejection to Yi-Fu Tuan's thoughts, that distinguish between environment and landscape – as an independent form of existence and as an output of human insight. In a contrast to this view, Ingold relate the concept of environment to the term of 'function', and the landscape to 'form'. "Like organism and environment, body and landscape are complementary terms: each implies the other, alternately as figure and ground" (p. 193). My perception of landscape and environment is similar to this of Berleant (1996), that argues, "landscape is a lived environment"; the concept of environment here is broader unit comprising many factors, however, a landscape is more specific, emphasizing 'the experience of an immediate location' (p. 12).

Sense of belonging

Sense of belonging should be considered while dealing with environmental art. According to Jokela (2010), "art in the landscape challenges us even today to think about ourselves – who we are, where do we belong, and what our place is in the cycle of the world" (p. 8). Thoughts such as "I am not local", "I do not belong here", have constantly occupied my mind during the studies. I was asking myself, how the sense of belonging to a certain place can be developed? Berleant (1996) argues, that "place is the particular landscape we inhabit. It is local and immediate, our

lived environment" (p. 109). Sense of belonging is personal, emotional, but also physical in a way, therefore can be developed through embodied experience and emotional connection.

Sense of belonging is a complicated and abstract concept, which relates to physical and emotional, personal and social aspects. Jokela (2010) states, that physical presence of an artist in the environment, enhances the experience, involving body and mind, directing the felt and experienced to the consciousness. While planning a place specific art, it is important to observe and feel the place from different angles, experience the place deeper, as Jokela (2013b) explains his approach: "I try to discover the landscape from within, using all the senses" (p. 135). Berleant (1996) adds, "experiencing environment, therefore, is not a matter of looking at an external landscape. In Fact, it is not just a matter of looking at all" (p. 12). To experience and understand the environment, one should smell the invisible, taste the unknown, sense the materials and textures, examine colours, light and shadows, listen carefully to the wind, lay down on the ground and breath the environment with the whole body. Varto and Lehtinen (2013) argue, "the relationship between nature and its creatures has a functional structure, and you can learn a lot from it just by hearing, tasting, smelling and touching" (p. 47). Essential details might be invisible to the eye but hidden deep in the local materials and stories of local people.

Since environments have a multi-layered structure and corresponding to a living organism, the approach should be framed with a consideration of those features. Environmental artist in both cases, having or lacking the sense of belonging, should approach his work with sensitivity and empathy to the place and community he is working with.

Similar projects in environmental art

Various environmental art projects have been operated around the world addressing different social, ecological, political and cultural issues. In this section, I would like to provide two examples of environmental art projects, related tourism: *"Norwegian scenic routes"* from Norway and *"Modern Nature"* from Scotland.

Long term innovative tourist route project was launched by the Norwegian Public Roads Administration (NPRA), Scenic Route Department was created to develop, maintain and market *Scenic Route,* alongside with external quality control by Quality, Architecture, and Art councils. More than fifty architects, landscape architects, designers and artists have been engaged in the project. Focusing on innovation and creativity, the designers were inspired by a long tradition in Norway for adapting buildings in difficult terrain. According to project website "the architecture should facilitate the experience of nature, while also appearing as an attraction in its own right. Artworks along the road are there to reinforce the character of the route and invoke other suggestive narratives." Blending nature, roads, architecture and art, the project attempts to build a new picture of Norway, thus induce road travellers to explore new routes in Norway. Eighteen road sections have been selected as Norwegian Scenic Routes, running through landscapes with unique natural scenery. "These roads run through landscapes with unique natural scenery, along the coast and fiords and over mountains and plains. Little architectural gems at the edge of the ocean, dramatic viewpoints and functional rest areas provide enjoyable nature experiences for road travellers who want more than just finding the fastest way from A to B" (Norwegian Scenic Routes, 2018).

This project is a great example of collaborative work between architects, designer, artists and government agency, oriented on creation of new tourism experiences. According to the project description, consideration of existing environments, tradition of building in extreme topography conditions, innovation, and creativity are in the core of the project. Each route has its unique historical, cultural, visual and textural features, the artworks built along the road aim to enhance the character of each in a different way (Norwegian scenic routes, 2018). Environmental artworks from this project are based on existing resources, combining new technologies and modern materials, with an emphasize the respect to natural environments. The artworks offer new experience services, encouraging people to stop in the landscape and experience the place in a different way, suggested by the artists and designers. However, the experience is completely personal, because we all perceive the world differently. Each artwork place oriented, linking the landscape with a person who observes it.

Scotland is famous for public artworks, which became a great attraction for both local and international visitors. One of the artworks described in the article "Being in Place: Environmental art and tourism in Scotland", by Coutts (2018), illustrates the connection between environmental art and tourism development. The artwork is situated in Kincardine forest in the north east of Scotland, part of a 'Tyrebagger sculpture trail', which composed of more than twenty environmental art installations (p. 91). The artwork is titled *Modern Nature,* it consists of six tall aluminium poles with solar panels, which produce the sound of capercaillie by the light that transforms into sound. The artwork was ordered by Forestry Commission of Scotland, and reviewed in the report *Connecting People, Art and Environment – best practice, inspiration and commissioning guidance for working with artists and communities in the natural environment (2009):*

> *"The sound of the male capercaillie, now extinct from the area, is used to draw attention to sound in the landscape, both natural (wind, birds, insects, water) and man-made (planes, cars, machinery). The capercaillie call makes a link with the past history of the area, drawing attention to the impact of people on the landscape. Light is trapped and transformed to power the hidden sound unit. Consequently, the frequency of the bird call is dependent on the amount of sunlight, thus the work constantly responds to natural change in the environment." (Ginkgo Projects, 2009, p. 5)*

The artwork relates to the sounds in the landscape, which reveals the present situation and echoes the past. It is place-specific and explores the history of the place, addressing environmental issues. Made of modern man-made materials, activated by natural resource (sunlight), the artwork connects people with forest, present with past. According to Coutts (2018), to experience artworks situated outside the urban space, one should be present in the location, what requires walking, hiking, or climbing to reach it (p. 91). Certainly, environmental artworks encourage people to move, to be active, by this contributing to the health and wellbeing. Moreover, *Modern Nature* is an example of environmental art, which aims to contribute to the cultural and nature-based tourism developments by creating new experience services.

3.2 Cultural and Creative tourism

Cultural tourism

Du Cros and McKercher (2015) argue the definition of cultural tourism examining several approaches based on various sources in tourism research. According to their study, cultural tourism finds its roots in ancient times, however the first recognition of it as a distinct category of tourism appeared in the late 1970s and early 1980s. They add, that there's a mistaken opinion among many, which place any travel under the roof of cultural tourism, based on the idea that every tourist experiences some cultural element, since the travel happens outside a familiar home environment. Moreover, it is challenging to provide an exact answer to the question what cultural tourism is "for there are almost as many variations of definitions as there are tourists." However, their study identifies two main elements which structure the definition of cultural tourism, that differ it from other forms of tourism: motivation and experience, recognizing "that the reason for travel, and thus experience sought by cultural tourists differ from those of other tourists" (Du Cros & McKercher, 2015, pp. 4–5). Richards (2011) emphasizes the action and directed motivation by saying, that: "Cultural tourism essentially involves visits to cultural attractions and events by culturally motivated people" (p. 23).

In cultural tourism a visit to a site or an attraction is followed by consumption of the cultural products, from the past, which relate to heritage, as well as contemporary culture (Richards, 2001). Du Cros and McKercher (2015) suggest marketing-oriented approach, defining cultural tourism as a form of tourism based on cultural heritage assets of the place, modifying them into products of consumption. Based on that definition four components structure cultural tourism: "tourism; use of cultural assets; consumption of experiences and products; the tourist" (p. 6). Heritage is a broad concept, nevertheless the definition made my ICOMOS (international council on monuments and sites) explains the concept with relevance for my study:

> *"Heritage is a broad concept and includes the natural as well as the cultural environment. It encompasses landscapes, historic places, sites and built environments, as*

well as bio-diversity, collections, past and continuing cultural practices, knowledge and
living experiences.'' (ICOMOS, 1999)

The ideas related tourists' motivation and sought experience, cultural heritage assets from the past and present, were considered and examined during the working process on the practical part of this study.

Creative Tourism

Appearance of creative approaches in cultural tourism opened new channels and opportunities. Richards (2001) states, that the growing competition in tourism industry has created a situation, where culture became a subject of distinction among tourist destinations, generating cultural development. Richards and Wilson (2007) examine the difference and connection between creative and cultural tourism, a growth of creative approaches in tourism industry and its impact. "Creativity could deliver wider benefits than a cultural strategy alone" (p.4). They conclude, while culture strongly linked to the past and relatively still, creativity uncovers the new possibilities and brings movement.

Richards and Raymond (2000) introduce the concept of creativity in tourism as a form of "tourism which offers visitors the opportunity to develop their creative potential through active participation in courses and learning experiences which are characteristic of the holiday destination where they are undertaken" (p. 18). This definition reflects the idea that both tourist and the destination can be involved in creativity. The tourist can satisfy his personal needs in creative involvement, alongside the tourist destination has the opportunity to involve local community, cultural and natural environments in creative activities. That what makes it different and unique from traditional tourism which offers quite similar and static experiences kept for years to all visitors (Richards & Wilson, 2007).

Richards and Wilson (2006 in 2007) offer three possible ways to apply the creativity in development of cultural tourism into creative tourism: 'creative spectacles' – relates to passive consumption by tourists; 'creative spaces' – refers to attractive and unique atmosphere; 'creative

tourism' – involves participatory interaction (p. 131). These three aspects relate to creation of experiences, which are essential in motivating and satisfying the customers' needs. Pine and Gilmore (1999) state, that experiences considered to be more valuable rather than products or services, having immaterial nature they create deep and lasting memories. They emphasize, that participation in creative activity lifts the experience to personal level, therefore enhances the value and meaning. While many tourisms companies sick for uniqueness to differ from others, creativity might be a great tool in creating authenticity.

Frochot and Batat (2013) examine authenticity as a multidimensional concept, which can be defined in several ways from various perspectives and disciplines. 'Ethical, natural, honest, simple, sustainable, beautiful, rooted, and human' – these are terms, that Boyle (2003) relates to authenticity. Based on Boyle's thoughts, Frochot and Batat argue, that "today's tourists are interested in connecting with consumption items and experiences that are real, pure and embedded within the destination" (pp. 132–133). In this case, authenticity is directly connected to local culture and community uncovering the tangible and intangible, unique qualities of the place. Therefore, authenticity is essential and valuable element in cultural and creative tourism.

Designing service experience

Du Cros and McKercher (2015) suggest keeping in mind, while designing a service experience for tourism, that most tourists are searching for ready entertainment, while only some are interested in deeper learning experiences. Tourists have limited time and budget (p. 8). How to make it successful, how to create high quality experience and satisfy the tourists' needs? Those questions should be asked while developing new services in tourism. Du Cros and McKercher (2015) suggest six features of successful cultural tourism attractions based on Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC 2004): "tell a story; make the asset come alive; make the experience participatory; focus on quality; make the experience relevant to the tourist; make it relevant to the tourist" (p. 209).

According to Du Cros and McKercher (2015), "Weaving a story around a place, a tangible asset, or an intangible asset instills that asset with some meaning, bringing it to life and making it

relevant" (p. 209). Moreover, they add, that tools and techniques should be carefully chosen to assist the whole experience of the place, to convey the message in the most enjoyable and satisfying way. Created experience should be unique and engaging, at the same time evoking respectful behaviour and understanding of the experienced cultural values. Pine and Gilmore (1999) distinct between two elements of experience: memory and enjoyment, the feeling experienced during an activity creates positive memories, therefore more important than the content. Their study interprets, that goods are tangible items, services offer a set of intangible activities, however experience can provide engaging, enjoyable and memorable events, creating interaction with the customer in a personal level. They conclude, experiences occur to bring new value to the happening. Each person is unique, therefore the way he feels and experiences is unique.

3.3 Arctic art and design

Since my study is a part of Arctic Art and Design master's program, I briefly summarize the main aims of the program and practice-based approach. Furthermore, I describe the concept of Arctic design, and key concepts of both approaches applied visual arts and service design, with relevance to theoretical and practical elements of my study.

Arctic Art and Design master's program has been developed as pilot between 2015–2018 at the University of Lapland. Two entities interested in supporting regional development provided financial backing for the program: the *European Union Social Fund* and the *Finnish Centre of Economic Development, Transport and the Environment* (Härkönen & Vuontisjärvi, 2018). The program was initiated and developed based on knowledge and experience gained during previous Applied Visual Art Master program, fulfilled between 2011–2014. Pursuing similar principles and aims, new program has developed further the idea of interaction between art and design, implementing tools from both applied visual arts and service design. "Service design in collaboration with applied visual art and art education opens up new opportunities for northern social and economic wellbeing (Miettinen, Laivamaa & Alhonsuo, 2014, p. 107).

Based on Poikela (2003) thoughts, Jokela emphasizes two-sided interactive nature between theoretical and practical knowledge, developed independently and supported by each other (Jokela, 2013a). The Arctic Art and Design master's program combines theoretical and practice-based learning, which pursue few key aims. First, prepare the professionals to apply gained skills and knowledge in real world, being able to meet challenging circumstances of northern environments, as well as other areas with extreme conditions in regional and international levels. Second, contribute to regional development from cultural, economic and social perspectives. Third, demonstrate innovative methods of working, based on collaboration between artists (designers) and local enterprises, thus motivate and encourage companies to work in alternative ways rather traditional. (Jokela, 2013a; Jokela & Coutts, 2018) According to Härkönen and Vuontisjärvi (2018), the principle of AAD – "to promote intercultural competence and cultural sustainability in the Arctic" (p. 87).

Arctic Design

The idea of Arctic design is rooted in the backbone of the program. Jokela and Tahkokallio (2015) discuss the evolving process of the Arctic design concept which was argued in public for the first time in 2010, to support the emerged discussions about the north relating political, economic and environmental issues. The comprehension and acceptance of the concept faced some suspicion which caused by limited perception connected to aesthetics of the north (p. 120). Since 2010, the concept has been advanced and aroused interest among artists and designers working in the arctic area. Beaule and De Coninck (2018) suggest taking the ideas developed in Finland into consideration, and to expand the discussions and cooperation initiated by Arctic design concept beyond the arctic circle.

According to Miettinen, Laivamaa and Alhonsuo (2014), arctic design aims to encourage new forms of collaborative work, thus create opportunities for artistic employment in various fields: entrepreneurship, consultancy, design and art. In addition, arctic design provides particular knowledge and skills, which can be useful in dealing with complex problems emerging due to the extreme conditions of an area, in Arctic and beyond. According to Jokela and Tahkokallio (2015), arctic design intends practices directed to contribution to the well-being and

competitiveness in the north. In arctic design the fields of art, science and design merge in order to tackle problems intrinsic to the northern environments.

Based on the described above and my personal understanding, that derived from being a student of the Arctic Art and Design Master programme, I can conclude the following, arctic design functions for Arctic and with Arctic, meaning local environments, communities and economy. Cultural and environmental sensitivity followed by carefulness are required to approach theoretical and practical activities related Arctic design, due to the vulnerability of the region from various perspectives. Unique features of northern environments and cultures should be deeply observed, learned and experienced, in order to conduct any kind of intervention processes in a correct and appropriate way.

Applied Visual Arts (AVA)

According to Coutts (2013) applied visual arts is an artistic practice charged with collaborative and interactive activities, in a contrast with the traditional methods of individual artistic practice in a studio. In other words, applied visual arts encourage social and environmental engagement, focusing on the process rather than output. Jokela (2013a) argues, "the artist's goal is not so much to create a work of art, but to bring art into people's lives and everyday life" (p. 13). Thus, AVA can be seen as a useful art, and the term 'applied' in this case indicates something practical and appropriate to a particular situation, drawing a parallel with the field of design (Coutts, 2013). Similarly to design, where the focus from the products moves towards users as it noted in co-design and service design, in the field of art individual practice extends into communities and environments, "through modes of reciprocal empathy" (Gablik, 1995, p. 82).

A switch from selling an artwork to the artistic expertise created challenges, which require from the artists to gain new practices and knowledge (Jokela, 2013a). This leads to the question of the essential skills applied visual artists need to possess and develop. To identify these, one should examine the fact that applied visual artists have various roles and might function as facilitators and communicators in various art projects. Coutts (2013) emphasizes, "excellent communication, interpersonal, motivational and organizational skills to facilitate effective art projects" (p. 25).

Due to the dynamic nature of applied visual arts practice, professionals should master their skills considering particular situation, time and place. Jokela (2013a) refers to the idea of future perspective of knowledge and skills gained during practice-based projects, suggested by Bransford and Schwards (1999), changing working life and diversified contemporary art create challenges, therefore future professionals should develop the ability to tackle with these situations (p. 20).

Creating with people and for people, with environment and for environment, applied visual arts embrace ethical and ecological aspects, placing cultural and environmental sensitivity in the core of working process. Huhmarniemi (2013) points out the importance of sustainable development in the context of AVA: "Ecological sustainability determines the choice of materials and production methods, whereas cultural resistance determines cultural sensitivity" (p. 46). Applied visual arts intend intervention, therefore artists have environmental and social responsibilities.

In her article *Applied Visual Arts as contemporary art*, Huhmarniemi (2013) describes various possible spheres of operations for the field (AVA) related social and financial needs, emphasizing the utilization of art in society, and its contribution to the well-being. To support her ideas, Huhmarniemi refers to Pentecost (2009), who claims that traditional artistic methods of expression limit the possibilities to influence, in comparison to public artistic activities, which enable interaction between disciplines and connect art with science (p. 49). According to Gablik (1995), self-oriented approach in modern world gained a romantic mood, artists are coping their own feelings and struggles in solitude through self-expression. Criticism towards the individualist approach can be heard among many creators now and then. Timeless words were said once by French writer, Albert Camus, who argued that the artist must reflect the reality of his or her time: "Contrary to the current presumption, if there is any man who has no right to solitude, it is the artist. Art cannot be a monologue" (Brainpickings Journal, 2018). I absolutely agree with Camus reflections on the solitude of the artists, and their responsibility to connect with the reality. Thus, applying artistic activities in everyday life can function as a facilitator for innovation, changes, and well-being.

A parallel can be drawn between the AVA approach and the way of seeing art in ancient times. According to Shiner (2001), the focus on independence, self-expression and originality is absent in the ancient view of 'artist' as it is pointed in modernism, in a contrast, artistic activities were interwoven with in social, political, religious and practical contexts. "The Greek and Roman artisan/artist had to combine an intellectual grasp of principles with practical understanding, skill and grace". In ancient world, defining an activity "an art" was followed by a high level of appreciation in a similar way as defining something "a science" is in present days (p. 22).

Jokela (2013a) examines applied visual arts from educational perspective, comparing traditional visual art (fine art) education to new multidisciplinary approach. In a contrast to the first, which represents personal expression and universality, the second is based on "communities and socio-cultural environments", requires "commitment to time and place" and encourages cooperation (pp. 12–13). Gablik (1995) argues the phenomenon of individualism in art in modern world, and the shift of many artists from the autonomous creation to dialogical and collaborative practices. She explains, that stepping beyond the studio, which separates the artist from his external world, turns the point of view at art from 'visual style' with its limitations to socially oriented.

According to Jokela (2013a), the starting point of AVA is a dialogue with its environment. Working in a built environment or nature, artists should find a way to interact with the place in order to reveal its cultural, social and symbolic characteristics to reflect on those in the artistic activity. He adds, that a working method of place-specific art provides a useful tool for this kind of work, which requires from the artist to communicate with specific location, and its different environmental actors. Moreover, place-specific applied art can be applied in various spheres of life – social and cultural, contributing to the development of creative tourism and adventure environments, as well as to the well-being of the region (p. 15). Jokela's study describes various kinds of dialogues, that occur during place-specific art activity. First, there is a physical and spiritual dialogue between the artist and the place on a personal level; second, the dialogue with the unseen – memories, experiences, tradition and history; and finally, a dialogue with the involved actors. Those dialogues create various challenges, for instance developing common visual and verbal language between the involved actors (Jokela, 2013a).

According to Härkönen and Vuontisjärvi (2018), applied visual arts aims to answer the demands for regional expertise in creative industries, integrating new knowledge in arts, project-based and research-based practices with the development of tourism, adventure industry and the social sector. They emphasize, that socially engaged, and place-based approaches provide essential useful tools in community and environmental art, in other words, these approaches are directed to build interactive dialogues with the location (people and place) based on its values, needs, and perspectives.

Service Design

The development of service design studies and the Service Innovation Corner (SINCO) at the University of Lapland started during the 1990s. According to Härkönen and Vuontisjärvi (2018), similarities might be found between applied visual arts and service design, both aim to connect the areas of cultural, social and human interaction. Moreover, a parallel can be drawn between Service design processes and the AVA place-specific working approaches, which serves to provide deeper authentic insight into the multidimensions of the learning subject (place or community) from historical, cultural and social contexts. Thus, both fields, applied visual arts and service design are interrelated in the context of the AAD programme, seeking to create a supportive and beneficial dialogue.

In this chapter, I aim to clarify aims and processes of service design, and its relevance to my study. I decided to begin with the definition of the field based on various experts. Buchanan (2001) agues the role of definition in the field of design, providing two views: on the one hand, the fact that there is no fixed single definition of design strengthens the field giving a space for dynamic progress; on the other hand, definitions have an important strategic role in further inquiry, directing researchers on their path (p. 8). As an evolving approach service design have been defined by professionals from several perspectives, highlighting the following: tools and methods used from various disciplines; the intention to innovate and improve; the deep understanding of the services and customers' needs; human centered and empathic mindset.

I would like to mention some of the definitions, which in my opinion cover the broad term and clarify its aims. Moritz (2005, p. 6) claims that

"service design helps to innovate (create new) or improve (existing) services to make them more useful, usable, desirable for clients and efficient as well as effective for organizations. It is a new holistic, multi-disciplinary, integrative field".

According to Miettinen and Valtonen (2013), service design is a multidisciplinary approach, that have been evolved and formed in both practice and academic discourses. Being developed in communication with several disciplines, service design as a practice offers various tools and methods in creation and innovation processes, which allow concretizing and insight into the situation from both holistic and detailed points of view (Miettinen & Valtonen, 2013). Having a multidisciplinary basis and striving to innovate and improve, service design requires a particular mindset, which is rooted in design thinking (Miller, 2015). Design thinking and service design use similar tools and methods, I would like to mention some of them.

According to Brown (2008) design thinking attitude characterized by following features: empathy, integrative thinking, optimism, experimentation and collaboration. These characteristics relate to the intention of design thinking to combine separate things, focus on human being, involve participants in the creating process, and conduct iterative process through prototyping, testing and experimentations. I would like to describe deeper two main principles of design thinking: cyclic process and human-centered approach, which are reflected in service design processes.

Brown (2008) uses a metaphorical way to describe the cyclic structure of design thinking process opposed to linear – "a system of spaces rather than a predefined series of orderly steps" (p. 88). He describes three stages of iterative process: first, "inspiration", which focuses on identifying a problem or opportunity; second, "ideation", which relates to prototyping and testing of the ideas; and finally, "implementation", when the ideas refined and implemented in the real world. Design thinking process is reflected in the four steps of Service Design iterative process, described by Stickdorn (2011a): exploration, creation, reflection, implementation. Exploration relates to

discovering and deep understanding of the situation, environment, users and context. Creation and reflection are the most iterative stages, where visualization, prototyping, testing and retesting of the ideas happens. Moreover, this phase is for exploring mistakes and learn from these as earlier as possible. Implementation is the final step where realization, developing and training the concept happen in the real environment. The iteration happens during the whole process and within each stage, within each activity (p. 122–135).

One of the principles of design thinking is a focus on human being, meaning deep understanding of user's behaviour and needs, therefore design thinking can suggest creative alternative solutions and ideas in cultural and socioeconomic situations (Brown, 2008). This principal echoes in the user-centered approach of service design, which requires to experience the services through customer's eyes, and aims to create a common language between all stakeholders (Stickdorn, Lawrence, Hormess & Schneider, 2018).

Brown (2008) refers to Pink's idea (2005), that the overflow of products has fulfilled people's material needs, increasing the importance of aesthetic and emotional values as well as personal search for meaning. Brown (2008) believes that the demand for complex meaningful experiences that satisfy people on emotional level, will increase in future. These experiences differ from simple products by their multiple composition of products, services, spaces, and information (Brown, 2008). Design thinking, being human-centered, creative and practical provides valuable tools for developing and designing these experiences, responding to constant demand for innovation and rapidly changing needs of societies in cultural, social, ecological and economical levels. Stickdorn et al., (2018) emphasize the relevance and visibility of service design, which is located in the intersection of design thinking and customer experience.

As mentioned above, one of the most repetitive stages in service design processes are creation, reflection, where experimentation happens, and concept suggestions are tested and reflected (or evaluated) to be developed and improved. There are various methods used in conducting these tests, such as visualization, prototyping, role-playing, hands on workshops and more, that aim to make the experiences tangible. With a reference to Lockwood (2010), Miettinen et al. (2012) highlight the role of these methods of tangible experimentations in gaining a usable feedback,

moreover, prototyping opens possibilities for a dialogue. According to Brown (2008), prototypes do not aim to finalize the concept, therefore should be done quickly in a simple and inexpensive way. He emphasizes the goals of prototyping: to identify the strengths and weaknesses, explore potential solutions and generate further development.

Services are immaterial in their nature; therefore, prototyping services requires particular approach. Miettinen According to Kelley and Littman (2001), one of the design thinking principles is "try thinking verbs not nouns". Therefore, action is required to realize this principle in practice. SINCO (Service innovative corner) is a prototyping laboratory concept, located at the University of Lapland, Finland. The laboratory is equipped with set of tools and environment to assist quick and easy prototyping of a services and situations. The facilities include multi-colour spotlights, two projection screens, speakers, scene computer, equipment for ideation and documentation, interactive whiteboards, which enable illustrate the idea and imitate the surroundings for the prototypes service. Miettinen et al. (2012) and Rontti et al. (2013) describe the fundamentals of SINCO, which are: testing the ideas through action, creation a dynamic atmosphere, and encouraging co-creation methods of service design, involving potential customers. According to their description, SINCO provides a valuable tool in service design processes enabling deeper understanding of customer situation holistically, by creating multi-sensual space to experience abstract concepts, that can be hard to convey through traditional methods of visual representations. They conclude, that both working fundamentals and physical resources of the SINCO laboratory provide a method to concretize the design thinking in practice.

Service design as an approach has been applied in the Arctic art and design master's degree program alongside the applied visual arts, as mentioned previously. Aiming to develop multidisciplinary approach, methods from both fields are applied during the project-based studies. According to Härkönen and Vuontisjärvi (2018), both disciplines strive to develop collaborative and participatory approaches, where skills of facilitation and empathy are essential.

4. METHODS

All kind of research intends to produce a valid evidence to support a claim to new knowledge, which can take the objective form on new discovery or creation, or subjective personal form of the insight into the subject (McNiff, Lomax & Whitehead, 2003, p.9–10). The awareness of researchers regarding various techniques and strategies to conduct research is important. I sympathize with the analogy made by Christopher Crouch and Jane Pearce (2012), that research is a journey with a sense of purpose – where you want to go, and methodology can be seen as a map for this journey – meaning how to get there (p. 53). In other words, methodology means a pattern of elements considered and applied to conduct a particular study. Methodology composed of three correlated elements, clearly described by Crouch and Pearce (2012): our research position; lens through which we see the subject of the study; and the methods (pp. 53–54). While methodology can be understood as a theoretical setting of particular methods, methods are the strategies and tools applied when conducting research. Usually, the position of the researcher is reflected in the choice of the methods (Crouch & Pearce, 2012, p. 63). This chapter aims to reveal the purpose of my research journey and justify the chosen methodology which formed my journey, from data gathering across analysis to the final outcomes.

4.1 Research aims and questions

As mentioned before, this paper seeks to demonstrate the potential of artistic practice in the development of experience services in tourism industry. As well, illustrate the connection between the practical and theoretical practices, with a focus on the process. This study is an attempt to compose artistic practice and research together. The study has social and personal aims. In a personal level, the focus has been placed on the improvement of my own learning and expertise in collaboration with others. On a social level, my attempt was directed towards the deep learning of the situation and development of specific practice. Through the working process, I aimed to identify which tools from both AVA and SD can assist in carrying out the research alongside the practical work. Thus, the research questions are:

1. How environmental art as a tool can assist in collaboration between art and design field and tourism industry in Finnish Lapland?

2. How working methods from both applied visual arts and service design can be applied in the processes of art-based practices?

4.2 Methodology

To conduct my study, I used art-based action research approach, which I have found appropriate to fulfil my intention to gain learning through artistic practice. In order to understand the body of this approach it is important to consider the following: qualitative, art-based, and action research approaches, which I will describe further.

In order to distinguish and understand the way art-based research practices suggest different methods in creating a knowledge, it is important to get a brief insight into the basics of qualitative approach. Qualitative research characterized by inductive approaches to knowledge gaining, with a focus on the collection and analysis of qualitative data, and inclines toward achieving understanding in a deep level, not broad (Leavy, 2015, p. 8; Crouch & Pearce, 2012, pp. 68–69). Leavy (2015) highlights the similarities observed between artistic practice and the practice of qualitative research, "both can be viewed as *crafts* (...) both are holistic and dynamic, involving reflections, description, problem formulation and solving, and the ability to identify and explain intuition and creativity in the research process" (p. 17). The methods in qualitative research can vary, there are some of them: interviews, field notes, and observations. In my study, I've found the last two relevant and effective, what I will describe further.

Art-based action research

Jokela, Hiltunen and Härkönen (2015) in their article describe the background for the development of art-based action research (ABAR) method. A strategy towards the creative interaction between art and science, particularly in research areas related Arctic and the north, emerged at the University of Lapland, that describes itself as a science and art university. This daring step led to the collaborative work in the development of the method, which aimed to

create an interaction between artistic activities and research. Developed by a small group of artists, educators and researchers, and applied in art education and applied visual arts master's and doctoral thesis at the University of Lapland, the method takes into consideration the unique features and circumstances of the northern environments (p. 434).

As mentioned previously, project-based approach lies in the core of master's programme in Arctic art and design. Practice orientation requires an active participation and interaction of the students and teachers with local environments and communities. In its nature this approach is context-related, place-oriented, dialogical and participatory. Artistic and design practices integrated into the surrounding world during the studies are followed by practical and theoretical research. Conducting a research in this case might derive from a combination of artistic research and action research and inspired by both.

Jokela (2017) highlights similar principles artistic research and action research share, one of them is the intention to transform and develop practices. In the way as action research, ABAR connected to social sciences, and generates activities with communities and organizations. Jokela, Hiltunen and Härkönen (2015) explain that the methodological framework for the art-based research started to shape "about incorporating action research methods into artistic activities" (p. 439). Practical approaches from action research methodology were applied alongside with the creative aspects of art, it is the artistic production that differs art-based action research from other forms of action research (Jokela, Huhmarniemi & Hiltunen, 2018). "To emphasize the meaning of art, the method was named 'art-based action research'. The method of the research is an action research and the method of action is art" (Jokela, 2017, p. 59). According to Jokela (2008), intuition, experience and tacit knowledge are partly indicating the artistic work. I believe, that experimentations and intuitive approach might lead to unexpected outcomes, thus, it is important to clarify, that when artistic activity is involved in a research the purpose, questions and methods are not completely defined in the beginning and can be revealed as the research progresses (Jokela, Huhmarniemi & Hiltunen, 2018).

According to Jokela (2017), the definition of this methodological approach is in process of modification and change within each study, since it is not complete method. Based on the

NACER (Northern Art, community and environment research), Huhmarniemi (2016, pp. 44–45) defined artistic action research, providing an insight into its main aims, processes, and target groups:

"Art-based action research is a research-based approach that aims to develop methods and approaches for artist-researcher or artist-teacher, and to seek solutions for problems and future visions identified in environments and communities. Art-based action research starts from research questions that are relevant to visual art education, to applied visual art, or from the viewpoint of the target environments and communities. The research proceeds in cycles that include planning, theoretical background work, artistic work or similar interventions, reflective analysis, conceptualization, and specification of objectives. The research process and its results are documented. The data for the process of analysis includes completed artistic production, and observations and documents from activities and experiences. The research is published for the scientific community, the art world, and the general public. The research is evaluated, in part, on the basis of functionality" (Jokela, Huhmarniemi & Hiltunen, 2018, p. 53).

Jokela, Hiltunen & Härkönen (2015) claim, the working strategies of contemporary art with an emphasis on dialogue, interaction, context and processes, provided a basis for the development of the art-based action research. Generally, this approach is strongly connected to the environments and to communities, while environmental, cultural, historical, economic and social patterns are taken into account, and open and critical communication with the surroundings are essential (p. 435). The active, participatory dialogue with the real world (communities, environments, organizations) is highlighted, aiming to create a change, influence, find new approaches and solutions. In this case, a parallel can be drawn between the ABAR, design research, and service design processes (Jokela, 2017). Moreover, a cyclic approach applied in art-based action research, originate from action research, where the cyclic process "based on planned interventions, which aims to solve practical problems and to develop functional theory" (Heikkinen, Konttinen & Häkkinen, 2006 in Jokela, Huhmarniemi & Hiltunen, 2018).

As mentioned earlier, art-based action research approach aims to create an interaction between artistic activities and research, practice and theory, therefore the artistic part is evaluated alongside the theoretical. The position of artistic production in the evaluation is emphasized by Jokela, Huhmarniemi and Hiltunen, (2018): "Together with the text of the research, they demonstrate how effective, successful, and empowering the art process has been." The nature of art-based action research is reflected in my study, practice and theory went side by side, supporting each other.

Art-based research

According to Leavy (2015) art and science correlate in their attempt to progress human insight and clarify aspects of human state. Despite the fact, that in history art and science were profoundly connected, the artificial division between these two disciplines has evolved during history and can be observed nowadays. Shiner (2001) in his book "The invention of art" relates to this topic, by saying that "In the older art system, the idea of art [...] went hand in hand with the institutions that joined together what we separate as arts, crafts, and sciences" (p. 6). He provided an example of two Renaissance artists, Leon Battista Alberti and Leonardo da Vinci, whose artistic activity was significantly intertwined with science. Recently, the situation of the division between art and science has been investigated, and Leavy (2015) reviews on the emergence of art-based research as a new alternative paradigm in transdisciplinary research, highlighting its historical context, development, terminology and methods.

> *"Art-based research practices are a set of methodological tools used by researchers across the disciplines during all phases of social research, including data generation, analysis, interpretation, and representation. These emerging tools adapt the tenets of the creative arts in order to address social research questions in holistic and engaged ways in which theory and practice are intertwined"* (Leavy, 2015, p. 4).

Leavy (2015) suggests three related subjects which contributed to the movement towards art-based practices: art and learning, creative arts therapies and the intrinsic analogy between artistic

and qualitative research practices. Keeping in mind the relevance to my study, first, I would like to focus on the potential of art in learning processes, and second, to get a brief insight into qualitative research.

According to Leavy (2015), philosophy and science support an idea that the arts can profoundly originate learning, which intuitively recognized by many people. She explains, referring to Yorks & Kasl (2006), the potential of art in approaching and teaching various subject matters have been noticed by other fields. Penetrating through the emotional level and causing us to perceive things in a different way, arts can be notable engaging (Leavy, 2015). Arts have a power to evoke, provoke and capture attention and be effective in communicating various issues, moreover the aesthetic values of arts are powerful. The following statement by Leavy (2015, p. 21) supports the relevance and appropriateness of the art-based research in my study, which attempt to be accessible to wide range of audiences, and seeks new ways of exploring and representing things:

> *"Art based research offers ways to tap into what would be otherwise inaccessible, make connections and interconnections that are otherwise out of reach, ask and answer new research questions, explore old research questions in new ways, and represent research differently, often more effectively, with respect to reaching broad audiences and nonacademic stakeholders".*

Leavy (2015) claims, art-based research is process oriented, where theory and practice are interrelated, thus the connection between different stages of the research project can be clearly observed. The process is dynamic in its nature.

Action research

In its nature, action research (AR) tend to be conducted within an action, what creates dynamics and emphasizes the role of the researcher in individual level. According to Denscombe (2010, p. 122),

"Action research is normally associated with hands-on research, small-scale research projects...Action research, from the start was involved with practical issues – the kind of issues and problems, concerns and needs, that arose as a routine part of activity 'in the real world."

McNiff, Lomax and Whitehead (2003), explicitly explain how action research differs from other kinds of research providing examples. Based on this material, I would like to mention some of the qualities of action research approach, which I found relevant to my practice. First, action research is *practitioner-based* and takes place inside the situation, where the researcher tends to influence on the happening. Second, it is a process that focuses on individuals' learning in correlation with others, thus having personal and social aims, meaning improvement of own learning and practice, and the situation itself. It is important to demonstrate the process of gaining knowledge and understanding and how these have supported the development of the practice within the situation. Third, in addition to observation and description of the situation, taking action is essential in the inquiry process, with a potential to influence. And finally, in action research, the practitioners become aware of their values, which provide a basis for the action itself (pp. 12–16). As stated by Crouch and Pearce (2012), the potential of the researcher to operate the process enables to progress the practice in directions that better reflect their values.

Action research "emphasizes the idea of knowledge generation as creative practice that evolves through dialogue" (McNiff, Lomax & Whitehead, 2003, p. 17). The action itself creates a dialogue with the surroundings, it is an act of intervention, therefore should be conducted with particular sensitiveness taking into consideration ethical principles.

My position as a researcher, artist and myself as a person

The working process displays my role in the study as a researcher, an artist (designer), and myself as a person. The role of the researcher felt new and challenging for me. The journey of conducting a creative and systematic investigation into the subject weaved with an artistic activity has been interesting and inspiring. By asking question, collecting and analysing materials, I hoped to reveal new information and get deeper insight into the study subject. I was

encouraged by Patricia Leavy's advice to researchers: "it is a learning process and we all improve with practice" (Leavy, 2015, p. 31). The role as an artist felt more natural for me, due to my previous educational background and practice-based experiences, the tacit knowledge and artistic intuition were essential during the design process. However, new cultural and environmental landscapes, collaborative work with another field (tourism) required development of new skills, knowledge and particular approach. Moreover, the combination of methods from both applied visual arts and service design contributed to formation of multidisciplinary approach, essential in conducting an artistic practice in this context. Leavy (2015) suggests, that the artist's abilities can provide a broader palette of various explorative and communication tools to serve the research. On a personal level my attitude to the study formed based on my personal history, cultural background, values, perspectives, and interests. Facing language and cultural challenges, I was fascinated, inspired and motivated by the given task and aims. During the process, in each role, I experienced ups and downs, successes and fails, confidence and uncertainty. However, I tried to follow Leavy's suggestion, "be fully present and engaged in the process" (Leavy, 2015, p. 31). The boundaries between the roles sometimes blurred, each position (researcher, artist, and myself as a person) is reflected in my study. I strived to explore the situation through various existed and created filters to better understanding.

4.3 Data collecting methods

According to Denscombe (2010), the data shaped of words, text, and images are preferable for qualitative research, in order to gain a depth understanding of the researched subject. As mentioned above, qualitative approach seeks "depth not breadth" of understanding, in opposite to quantitative approach, which based on collection of numerical data, analysed in statistical dimensions (Crouch & Pearce, 2012). The reliance of the type of data, based on words, text, and images, faced critical arguments towards accuracy and objectiveness of analysis, which depends on individual interpretation of the researcher rather than some universal principles. (Denscombe, 2010). However, I believe, there is nothing universal, especially when dealing with specific place and community. According to Denscombe (2010), the criticism highlights the limitation of comparing and evaluating the findings, on the other hand this creates possibility of *relativism* and adds values to the findings that can stand on their "own merit" (p. 134).

The methods used in art-based research vary depending on the aims. Jokela, Huhmarniemi and Hiltunen, (2018) write that the data might be gathered by observation, photo documentation, interviews, and feedback discussions. Keeping a diary in both visual and written forms was fundamental in my study, in order to collect a set of data, which follows the chronological order. The written material includes notes made by me during several visits to the location of the practical work (Experience Village Tonttula) based on my observations, and summary of each meeting with the group members, as well as personal thoughts during the design process. The visual materials contain of following:

- Photographic documentations of the development process collected during visits to the place and team meetings.
- Images collected from various sources related local culture, nature and traditions.
- Sketches and scale-models of the ideas

Several methods were used to analyse the collected data. First, keeping a diary, helped to follow chronological order during the process and organize the data when the practical work was completed. Based on the diary, I visualized the project journey map, in order to illustrate the outline of the working process and timeline, with a focus on important points, actions and progress. By demonstrating the holistic view with key elements, visualized summary of the project journey helps to examine and reflect on the working process. Some of the collected data, such as notes from the feedback sessions and visual material collected from the location, have been used as a supportive material for conducting place-based research and during designing process. For this purpose, the data has been sorted by themes, visual mind maps were composed to create visual character of the researched place and gain deeper understanding of the location in a holistic way, as well to identify significant elements, which provided a foundation for the artwork. Visual material was essential in the development of the whole project, in a practical and theoretical levels.

5. DESIGNING TEN TOWERS – WEAVING TEN STORIES

5.1 Project task and participants

The task of the project was to develop environmental art plans for two constructions: a tunnel and a bridge; both intended to be built in the Experience Village Tonttula to create new high-quality attractive environments which correspond to the conception of the place and natural surroundings. The tunnel meant to tell a story about the life of *Maahinen* – forest creatures living underground. The bridge aimed to create an experience walking path, leading the visitors from the second floor of the restaurant Tonttula to the Magical Forest, then through the *Maahinen* tunnel to the most secret place of elves, the Hidden Huts. The structure and size of the bridge were already planned in 2013, however the idea wasn't developed further. We received first draft plans for the bridge construction, with measurements and visualization of first ideas for few towers. According to the plans the bridge included ten towers that can be accessed from two levels: the upper level, where the towers are connected with walking path, and from the ground, where some of the towers can function as storage rooms or spaces for various activities. Our task was to develop a concept for each tower, considering both levels and the walking path. We received a map which illustrated the top view of the whole Experience Village Tonttula with the location of planned constructions. (pic. 4) In the basis of the task were two principles, set by the partner company:

- The developed concepts should reflect and correspond to the idea of the place in both, aesthetical and conceptual levels;
- The environmental art plans should strive to create new cultural and commercial values to the area and the company.

Pic. 4: A map of Experience Village Tonttula.

Participants

The team formed to work on the Tonttula project, consisted of students from Arctic Art and Design Master's programme, including myself, Master's Degree students from art education, an artist from Artists' Association of Lapland, and supervisors from the Art and Design Department in the University of Lapland. The project partner tourism company Hullu Poro Oy was represented by the owner Päivikki Palosaari, who was involved in the design process. The following stakeholder's map illustrates the participants involved in Tonttula project. (pic. 5) Educational and professional background of the participants were varied: art education, environmental art, industrial design, engineering, painting, ceramic art, and scenery design. The majority of the participants were with Finnish cultural background coming from different parts of Finland, only few from Lapland. Two students with international backgrounds were Maiko Ikeuchi from Japan, and myself with Russian and Israeli cultural backgrounds. Thus, Northern environment was unknown from many of us, and required deep learning and development of particular sensitivity and awareness. Multicultural and multidisciplinary background of the participants created a dynamic atmosphere, challenges, and opportunities for developments of creative approaches and ways of communication.
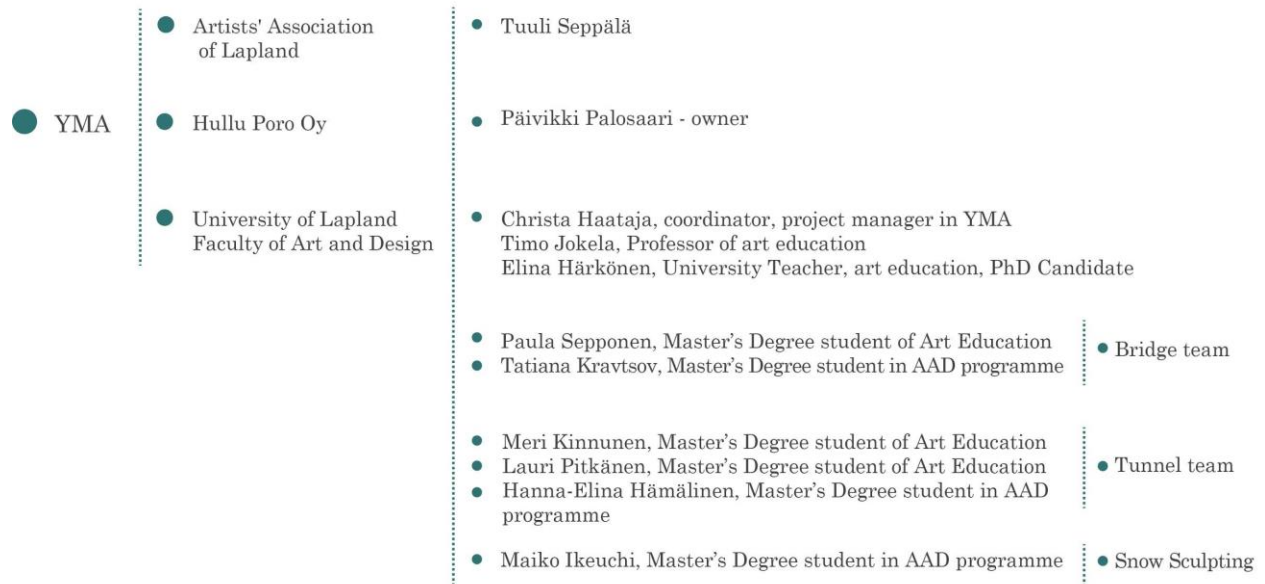
Pic. 5: Stakeholder's map of Tonttula project.

As demonstrated in the stakeholder's map, Tonttula project team worked as one unit and in small groups, with a focus on three themes: tunnel, bridge and snow sculpting. The working process was carried out in a way, that individual work operated side by side with group sessions and visits to the location. The team meetings were organized once in two–three weeks to brainstorm ideas, discuss the process, analyse the visual materials and related literature, and plan next steps. A collaborative nature of work and a combination of theoretical and practice-based learning brought dynamics to the process.

5.2 Working process

To get a general understanding of the working process flow, I visualized 'project journey map', which demonstrates the chronological evolvement of the project, main actions and steps taken during the process. (pic. 6) Looking back on the working process, I can highlight three main periods: first, introduction of the project; second, place-based research; third, sketching and modelling; and finally, finalizing of ideas and reporting. Further, I provide a detailed description of each period, which was followed by visits to the location, meetings, and individual work.
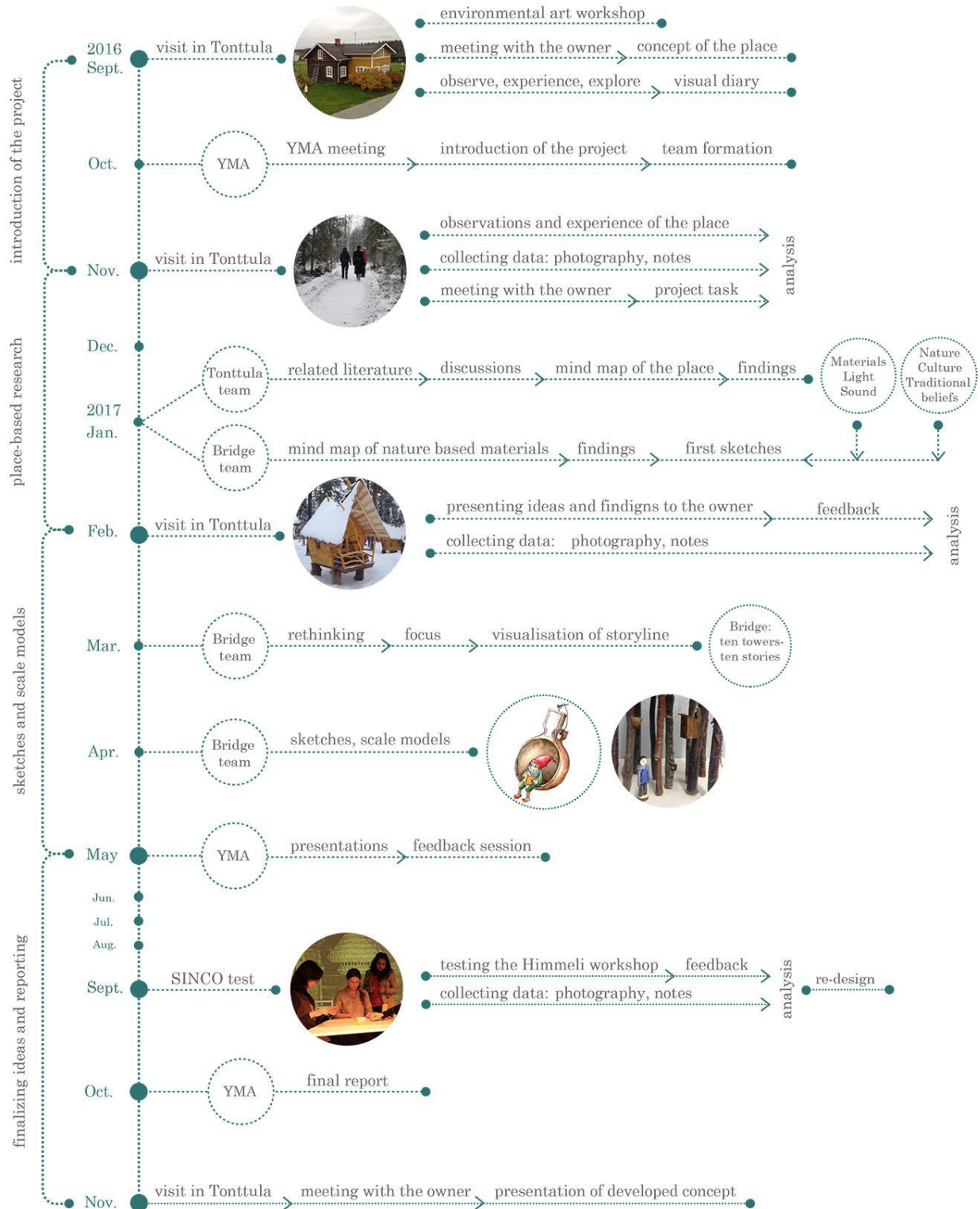
Pic. 6: Project journey map.

Several methods were applied to conduct the working process. First, the process was systematically documented in both visual and written forms. I kept a visual diary to collect the data, which included photographs, sketches and notes. This method helped me to follow, analyse and evaluate the progress of the project and its results. Second, our team strived to apply the method based on iteration process, which goes in a cycle: focus, research, action, and evaluation. (pic. 7) After completing one cycle, the process can be repeated until the satisfactory results will be achieved. This method is similar to the iterative process in design thinking and service design. (Brown, 2008; Stickdorn, 2011a). During the project, we succeeded to complete two cycles, which I explain further. Third method applied during the working process can be illustrated as a sand clock, where the starting point is brainstorming, while wide range of ideas are suggested, and next step is to narrow the ideas, with a focus and deep research on them. (pic. 8) Both methods of iteration cycle and sand clock were discussed and illustrated during the team meetings.
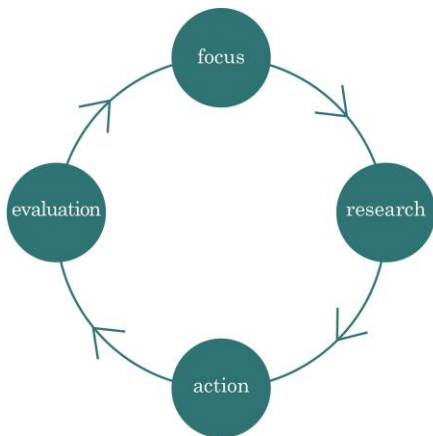
Pic. 7: Iteration process
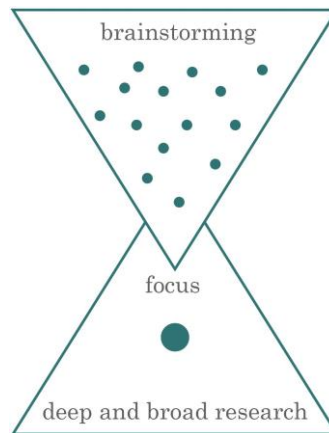
Pic. 8: Sand clock method

As mentioned above, the project task was to develop a plan for environmental artworks in Experience Village Tonttula. As emphasized by Jokela (2013a), this type of artistic work in built or nature environment requires an interaction with the environment, in order to reveal its cultural, social and symbolic characteristics to reflect on those in the artistic activity. In order to gain deep and authentic insight into the place, a place-based research was carried out, followed by

exploration of both related literature and the location itself. (Härkönen & Vuontisjärvi, 2018, p. 93) Several visits to the location were organized during the project to pursue following aims:

- to explore and experience the environment in personal level, by physical presence, in order to get deeper insight into the concept and atmosphere of the place;
- to collect data for the research: visual and written;
- to meet with the owner of the place, discuss the progress on the project, get feedback and plan next steps of the development.

Further, I describe the process in chronological order, which was summarized and illustrated in the 'project journey map' (pic. 6)

September 2016. First insight into the magical world of Experience Village Tonttula and Magical Forest.

In September 2016, three days environmental art workshop was organized for first year AAD Master's degree students, as mentioned above in *Chapter 2.1*. During the workshop days, Timo Jokela, introduced to us the historical and cultural background of Kittilä area, which is his place of origin. He took us to a walking tour around the Experience Village Tonttula, through the Magical Forest. There, he showed us environmental artworks made of wood and willow, from previous workshops organized for students, mentioned above in *section 2*. There, he shared stories from local folklore and from his own experience of living in the area and being strongly connected to northern nature. (pic. 9–10) The artworks we saw and the stories we heard provided valuable information and inspiration for the Tonttula project.

Pic. 9−10: Timo Jokela and AAD students in the Magical Forest of Tonttula, September 2016.

Majority of the AAD Master's degree students have international background, including me. Almost all of us arrived in Finland (particularly to Rovaniemi) just few weeks before the beginning of studies. Everything in the surroundings was new for us: colours, textures, smells, tastes, sounds, therefore the sensations were extremely sharp. For the workshop task we were asked to explore the surroundings and collect materials from nature to make an artwork, similarly to Goldsworthy's (1990) approach of exploring and understanding the place, trough physical presence, through direct communication with the material and the space around it. Lack of knowledge in local language, nature and culture created a situation in which the exploration and experience of the environment were mainly intuitive and sense-based. Jokela (2013b) suggests unfolding the landscape from the inside using all the senses. Exploration of the natural landscape was followed by the experience of cultural landscape of the place, we tried wooden sauna and local cuisine, what strongly enhanced the whole experience, and contributed to deeper insight into the local traditions.

During the workshop, we had a meeting with the owner – Päivikki Palosaari. She introduced to us the concept of the place and her vision regarding future developments. We received a map of the place with planned buildings, drawings of hidden huts, and first draft sketches for the bridge idea from 2013, that hasn't been developed further. In addition, she introduced to us the main entertaining character in Tonttula, Yellow Elf, who showed us some secret places in the Tonttula restaurant, and took us to the Hidden Huts, which were under construction.

This environmental art workshop was the starting point of my journey in Tonttula project. First, I tried to experience the environment with all my senses, I tried to see, touch and smell, to understand and feel the place through my physical and emotional presence. Second, I collected valuable data during the trip, which included photographs and notes, based on my observations. Collected data and personal experience of the surroundings were valuable for future analysis and understanding of the place and its unique features. In my diary, I wrote the first impression about the place after a walk in the Magical Forest:

> *"The trees slightly got red and yellow colours of autumn season, which in Finnish language called 'ruska'. The air was fresh, clear, and cold. The wind mysteriously whispered through the woods. It felt like something tried to communicate with us in a silent, delicate way, through time and space. I was embraced by the gloomy forest."*
>
> (notes from September 2016)

In October 2016, Tonttula group was formed (see above, pic. 5). During the first meeting, the background and goals of YMA (environmental art for tourism) project were discussed and next visit to Tonttula was planned to November 2016 to begin place-based research and meet the owner of the place.

November 2016. Tonttula is covered by first snow. Place-based research.

One day trip to Tonttula aimed to answer two main purposes: first, introduce the place to the team members, who haven't visited there yet, second, collect data for the place-based research, and finally, together with the owner frame the project plan and clarify the project task. During the visit we had a meeting with the owner, and a guided tour around the place, through the Magical Forest to Hidden Hunts. (pic. 11) During the meeting, the owner provided revealed essential details related the concept of the place and future visions. She introduced the project task, which included development of concepts for two artworks: tunnel and bridge; together we discussed the frame of project plan and timetable.

Pic. 11: From left to write: walking tour to the Hidden Huts; meeting with the owner in Tonttula restaurant; team members in the yard of the restaurant, November 2016.

We walked through the forest to visit in Hidden Huts, which were still under construction, aiming to be ready for the following Christmas season. The manager of the place guided us through each of three Hidden Huts: Gingerbread House, Elves' School and Wise Elf's House. She introduced the concept of each Hut, and together we discussed the decorative elements, textures and materials, which were chosen to convey the message and reflect the mysterious atmosphere of the entire place considering specific features of the local cultural and natural environments.

In comparison to the previous visit in September, the place looked different. The summer-autumn colourful palette changed to gravy and white, with shades of blue. It was snowing and calm. The place was covered with thin layer of snow, the river looked grey and started to get first icy patches. Everything seemed to be one step before the winter slumber. Both Drury and Syrad (2004), and Goldsworthy (1983) relate to the complex patterns of change and formation observed in nature, Goldsworthy emphasizes the importance of being aware of the change and perceives it as a key to understanding. (Drury & Syrad, 2004, p. 6; Beardsley, 1998, p. 206) With a change, the perception of the Tonttula surroundings gained a new level: textures, scents, sounds, colours, everything looked and felt differently.

During the visit I collected valuable data to my visual diary: notes, summarizing the meeting and guided tour; and photographs of the surroundings with a focus on details, textures and materials. The main points I can highlight from this visit were:

- the awareness of change in nature;

- deeper insight into the concept of the place;

- understanding of the goals of the project;

- collected data in a form of notes and photographs.

January 2017. Mind maps and first sketches.

The first cycle of iteration process mentioned earlier (pic. 7) started after the visit in Tonttula in November 2016. The focus was placed on the historical, geographical and cultural features of the location. The place-based researched combined exploration of both related literature and collected data, the research was held partly individually. Some of the literature related folklore and traditional handicrafts were available only in Finnish language, therefore the collaborative teamwork between international and Finnish team members were essential at this point. The next step of the iteration cycle meant action. In January 2017 our Tonttula team met to analyse the finding of the place-based research and collected data. (pic. 12)

Pic. 12: Tonttula team meeting, January 2017.

We created a visual mind map, which highlighted few elements we found relevant for further development: materials, light, sound. (pic. 13) After this meeting, we continued to work in smaller groups, oriented by the theme: tunnel, bridge, snow sculpting. Due to the importance of material choice in environmental artworks, our bridge team decided to focus on the element of materials and textures. Thus, based on to place-oriented research findings, we created a visual mind map, which aim to illustrated both: the variety of natural materials, observed in the environment of Tonttula; and traditional Finnish handicrafts which are made of natural materials, such as willow, straw, reed, birch bark, roots, and reindeer antlers. (Pic. 14)

Pic. 13: Mind map of Tonttula, January 2017.   Pic. 14: Mind map of natural materials, January 2017.

Based on the mind map findings, we developed and visualized out first ideas for the bridge towers, with a careful consideration of the choice of material and production techniques, keeping in mind the ecological sustainability, emphasized by Huhmarniemi (2013), as a core aspect of sustainable development in the context of applied visual arts (p. 46). The last step of the iterative process – evaluation was planned to be completed during the next visit in Tonttula, which I explain further.

February 2017. Deep snow. Presentation of the first ideas and sketches, evaluation, completing one cycle.

The main goals of this visit to Tonttula was to present our first insights and ideas to the owner, get feedback and collect more data. We kept to the tradition of walking in the Magical Forest, we visited in the new built Hidden Huts, and Kota for observing the Northern lights. (pic. 15) Even though both visits (in November and February) were one day trip, walking in the forest and the surroundings was essential for our experience of the place. Bodily experience in extremely important in the artistic activity which involves the environment, walking with awareness and

presence "...creates a personal engagement with the environment and feeds imagination" (Erkilä-Hill, 2018, p. 135).

Pic. 15: From left to write: meeting with the owner in Tonttula restaurant; group tour to the Kota with kick sledges; walk in the Magical Forest, February 2017.

The meeting between Tonttula team and the owner took place in the restaurant Tonttula. We were excited to present first ideas to our customer and get a feedback. The discussion was held mainly in Finnish language, translated to me and Maiko Ikeuchi, we were the only international participants in the team. We presented the findings based on the result of place-based research, which were reflected in visual mind maps. Our bridge team introduced wide range of sketches for the bridge towers and story of each. The owner carefully examined the sketches, expressing curiosity and excitement. We spread all the visual material on the table and together discussed the findings and first concepts. Despite the language barrier, the dialogue with the owner went in a fluent and natural way. Through visualisation we could communicate our ideas in clear and efficient way. "Visualization is seen as a form of language and as a form of creative dialogue of interactive artistic activity" (Jokela, Hiltunen & Härkönen, 2015, p. 435). Being involved in all design decisions made in the company, the owner made an impression of a person with creative approach and good intuition. She pointed at the ideas for towers that seemed for her to fit the environment and conception of the place. However, some of the ideas weren't chosen, even though in my opinion they had a potential for further development. I think one reason for that was too abstract visualization of the ideas, which didn't convey the message. This situation demonstrated the importance of simple, clear and concrete visualization, which is essential in communicating ideas.

During the visit we discovered the place in a new way. The surroundings looked magical, covered by fluffy snow and decorated with Christmas lights. This time we weren't the only visitors there, the restaurant was full of tourists from all over the world and happy elves were wandering around. We visited the new build Hidden Huts, they looked cosy and magical, we paid attention to small details and decorative elements, which were essential for creating the magical atmosphere of Christmas and fairy-tale. The whole place looked lively and festive. The visit to Hidden Hut was extremely important and valuable for all team members, to get deeper insight into the visual and aesthetic language of the place.

The main points I can highlight from this visit were:
- the awareness of change in nature and discovering the place in a new way;
- deeper insight into the concept of the place;
- inspiration and guidelines for development of the bridge and tunnel concepts;
- collected data in a form of notes and photographs;
- completing one cycle of designing process.

March–May 2017. Sketching and modelling.

During March, April and May 2017, we began a new cycle of iteration process. With a focus on several ideas, we conducted a deeper research on each of them, making sketches and scale models. (Pic. 16) This action also demonstrates the sand clock shaped approach, explained earlier in this chapter (pic. 8) Having a wide range of ideas, we selected ten, created a storyline, which connects the towers together, and focused on each story, conducting wider and deeper research. Based on visual inspiration, theoretical background and personal experiences, the stories began to form and emerge in detailed sketches and scale models.
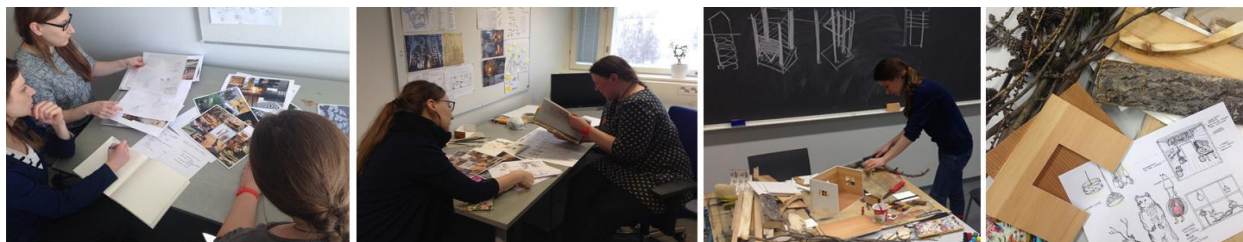
Pic. 16: Bridge team meeting: Paula Sepponen, Tuuli Seppälä, and myself, March-May 2017. Pictures made by Hanna-Elina Hämäläinen.

May 2017. Finalizing the ideas, presenting the results.

The next visit to Tonttula and meeting with the owner was planned to be held in May 2017, however due to some practical issues and circumstances, the meeting was cancelled. Instead, a meeting for all YMA participants was organized in the end of May to present the results of each project. My task was to introduce the storyline of the bridge with ten towers, and particularly four towers, developed further with detailed sketches and scale models. Since some of the towers stayed in the early stage of development, the concept of the whole bridge wasn't finalized, for instance, the walking path which connected the towers wasn't developed. In addition, I was interested to test the idea of the Himmeli tower in prototyping laboratory SINCO involving participants, in order to get deeper understanding through action, get feedback and reveal possibilities for future development of the idea.

September 2017. SINCO test

As mentioned in *section 3.3*, the Faculty of Art and Design at the University of Lapland developed Service Design Innovation Corner (SINCO), functions as a prototyping laboratory, where ideas, services and situations can be tested through actions, using interactive and dynamic environment equipped by various facilities. Having this opportunity, together with other team members we decided to test some of the ideas and services developed for the Tonttula project. By testing the ideas with participants, we aimed to reveal potential problems and possibilities for improvement and further development. We aimed to collect valuable data for further analysis.

Together with Hanna-Elina Hämäläinen we used, two screen projectors, lighting and sound system to imitate the atmosphere experienced during the offered services, we invited first year master's students from the Arctic Art and Design programme to take a part in our experimental workshop. Using scale model, and prototypes of some elements, Hanna-Elina Hämäläinen tested the idea of 'Maahinen Tunnel'. While my intention was to introduce the general idea of bridge concept, and test two services offered for the Tonttula visitors in the Sauna and Himmeli Towers. (see *Section 5.5*) Using lighting system, two-screen projections with sketches, and scale models, I introduced the storyline of the bridge for the participants. They were asked to act as tourists

visiting in Experience Village Tonttula, which I introduced as well. While I was telling the story of each tower, the participants were asked to imagine how they walk through each tower. When the participants became familiar with the environment and dived into the atmosphere, I introduced to them an idea of a product, which can be purchased in the Sauna tower – a little cotton bag with dry birch leaves, which can recreate the scent of Finnish sauna by dipping it in hot water. The second test aimed to imitate the Himmeli workshop, which was developed as a service in the Himmeli tower. During the workshop visitors can learn to create a basic shape of himmeli made of straw and purchase a set of materials with instructions to continue the himmeli decoration after the trip at home. I asked two international students to take a part in the experiment, while I acted as a Himmeli craftsman, and the students as a tourist. (Pic. 17) After the SINCO test, I asked the participants to give a feedback on the experienced, which I reported in my visual diary.

Pic. 17: SINCO test of Himmeli workshop. Pictures made by Elina Härkönen and Tuuli Seppälä.

The main points I can highlight from the SINCO test:

- feedbacks from the participants provided valuable information for further analysis and development of the projects;
- possibility of a new design cycle (the implementation wasn't possible due to the timetable frame);
- revealing the potential and importance of prototyping in SINCO in earlier stages of the concept development.

November 2017. **Meeting with the owner in Tonttula and presentation of ideas.**

Snow sculpture workshop for students of Faculty of Art and Design took place in Experience Village Tonttula, as mentioned earlier in *section 2.1*. During the workshop, together with Timo Jokela and Maiko Ikeuchi, we had a meeting with the owner to discuss the concept for snow sculpture workshop developed by Maiko, and the bridge concept, developed by the bridge team. I introduced the developed idea for the bridge: the storyline, which connected the ten towers, and the four towers: himmeli, forest, carving, and sauna; with detailed design of the story and visual elements, supported by sketches and photographs of scale models. The discussion held mainly in Finnish language, translated to me and Maiko Ikeuchi by Timo Jokela. During the session, the owner expressed an excitement and interest in the ideas I presented, she asked question regarding the materials and methods of production and mentioned that she has ready objects to decorate the interior of the towers, for instance weaving loom for the Ryijy tower.

After the session, I felt that the bridge idea requires additional cycle of rethinking and redesigning. In addition, a lack of concrete concepts with detailed sketches for other towers made a barrier in the discussion of the story line, and perception of the bridge as a complete artwork. Personally, I felt a great passion to continue the project, develop the ideas further and participate in the realization of the bridge in real life. After analysing the meeting, I concluded the following:

- An assumption that if this meeting would happen earlier as planned in May, we would have a chance to complete one cycle of designing process and improve the ideas.
- The constructive, positive feedback enhanced my enthusiasm for the project and interest to continue the development of the concept if I would have a chance.
- The importance of previous meetings, which caused smooth and easy communication.

5.3 Experience Village Tonttula – nature, culture and traditional beliefs

Based on findings from place-based research we conducted together with the Tonttula team, we defined three main elements that form the concept of Experience Village Tonttula: nature,

culture, and traditional beliefs. These findings reflect on Jokela's (2013) approach of working in the landscape, which characterised by interaction between three levels: "objective, subjective, and textual" (p. 136). The 'objective' is represented through visual data collected during several visits to the location, the 'subjective' is reflected in personal understanding, which was gained through physical presence, exploration and observation of the place through senses, and finally, the 'textual', which relates to cultural aspects, is combined of related literature and notes made during sessions. Nature, culture and traditional beliefs, correlating together, provided a strong basis for the development of the bridge concept, and were reflected in each tower in a different way. Below, I explain each element, supported by visual materials collected by me during several visits to the location.

Nature

Nature has a multi-layered structure, deeper observation reveals textures, colours, smells, sounds, tastes. Finnish culture has developed a strong bond with nature, originated from spiritual source: folklore stories and believes; and physical: the experience of living close to nature. Suhonen (1987) points out in the phenomenon of summerhouse life in Finland, and the inner call for "return to the land and search for roots", for the reason, that the majority of the society had lived rural life until the latest 60's (p. 12). The constant interaction with the natural environment through generations has left a strong mark in Finnish culture. According to Varpio and Claydon (1999), many Finnish poets and writers, in older and modern Finnish literature, pursue the theme of nature and landscape in their creation, the national anthem reflects this significant feature of Finnish identity. They say, that this closeness and unique sense for nature became "a constant and basic quality" in Finnish nation (p. 19). Sensitive attitude and respect to nature seem to be inherent elements of Finnish society. For many Finnish people, nature plays a significant role in everyday life. Fishing, hunting, berry and mushroom picking are ordinary activities, especially for those who live in Finnish Lapland. An interesting fact, described by Haarmann (2016), tells about the existence of 'every man's right' – *jokamiehen oikeus* in Finnish – which is considered as a common knowledge, however not written in a formal form. According to this principle, everybody has the right to free movement in the natural environment, it includes gathering wild berries, mushrooms and flowers. Haarmaan (2016) explains, that this common knowledge

represents "the symbol of the sense of people sharing the bonds with nature and enjoying its benefits" (p. 91).

One of the unique characteristics of the northern environment is a dramatic change of seasons, what causes a strong visual contrast: each season has its own colours, light and atmosphere. Local people say that Lapland is a land of eight seasons instead of commonly known four. The four main seasons are supplemented by four intermediate. The following summary of the seasons are based on the information provided on Rovaniemi (2018) and Lapland (2018) online resources, which are oriented on international market. The cycle of year starts with so called frosty winter – *pakkastalvi* in Finnish, the frosty days are still dark and northern lights are dancing in the sky. The first rays of the sun bring warmth and light, making the snow shining, the spring arrives, *hankikantokevät* – literally crusty snow spring. While the nights are still dark and cold, the days are full of light. As the amount of light rises, the snow and ice start melting, waking up the nature form a deep-frozen sleep. It is a transitional phase from winter to summer. The following period is called *keskiyön aurinko* – midnight sun, this time of the year the nature compliments the lack of sun during the winter, with twenty-four hours of sunlight, which causes extremely quick growth of summer green cover, everything breathes a new life, warmed by the long-awaited sun. Even though the nature might surprise with snow and below zero temperatures. *Sadonkorjuu* - harvest season starts in a late summer, time for berry and mushroom picking. With the fresh autumn air comes *ruska* – colourful time of the year, hunting season starts, people and nature prepare for upcoming winter. Colourful days are slowly getting darker and colder, *ensilumi season* brings – first snow, it is a sign for the nature to prepare for deep sleep and for people to bring out the Christmas lights. *Joulukaamos* – Christmas polar night season starts and brings long lightless days. (Rovaniemi, 2018; Lapland, 2018)

The geographical location of the Elves Hideaway provides a great opportunity to experience the unique nature of Finnish Lapland in its fullness. Having a chance to visit the place during three different seasons, I tried to capture the atmosphere with my camera. (pic.18–19)

Pic. 18: View to the river Ounasjoki (September – harvesting season, November – first snow, February – frosty winter)

Pic. 19: Photographs taken from the natural environment in Tonttula in different seasons.

Insight into the unique northern nature revealed variety of elements, which inspired me and directed in the design process. While composing the stories for towers, we wanted to emphasize some of them, which we found particularly unique and significant for the place: natural materials, light and colours in different seasons, shapes and textures, spiritual and physical connection of Finnish people to the nature.

Culture

Referring to Raymond Williams (1976, 1983, p. 90), Anna Green (2008) discusses the origins and meanings of the word 'culture' in English language, pointing out the dualistic approach, which relates to 'idealist' and 'materialist' positions, in other words 'symbolic' and 'material'

creation. She explains, that the core idea of 'idealist' position refers to cultural activities connected mental world, that find its expression in 'language, styles of art, and intellectual work'. In contrast, the focus of 'materialist' position comes to social and economic context. By quoting Raymond Williams, she summarises three principal meanings of culture, formed by the end of twentieth century: "a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development; a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period, a group, or humanity in general [and] … the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity" (Green, 2008, p. 2). Culture is one of the main components of conceptual structure in the experience village Tonttula Elves Hideaway. 'Symbolic' and 'material' correlate with each other, some of the aspects from both viewpoints can be observed and experienced in the place.

In previous chapter, I emphasized strong connection of Finnish people to nature, which pointing out a significant feature of Finnish identity and culture, relating to both spiritual and physical worlds. As Drury and Syrad (2004) state, nature and culture are interrelated (p. 6). People in Finnish Lapland have adapted to live in a harmony with nature, shaping their activities according to annual cycle. The way of living has been formed through generations based on natural resources, what find its evidence in everyday activities, leisure, local cuisine, and traditional handicrafts.

Lappish cuisine is rich of products from the nature: reindeer meat, various forest animals and bird's meat, fish from rivers and lakes, berries and mushrooms, various plants and herbs, such as dandelion and nettle. Lapland is rich with natural supplies, the knowledge of fishing, hunting and gathering was essential in past to survive in harsh northern conditions. Nowadays, many Finnish people, particularly in the North, continue the tradition of fishing, hunting and gathering. For some people it is a way of spending leisure time, but for some it is an essential part of their everyday reality, which connects them to their traditions, ancestors and nature.

Traditional ways of working with natural materials have been developed and passed through generations. In the past, possessing and developing those skills were necessary in order to survive and create appropriate living environment. Forest has been the main source of natural material: wood, bark and root fibres were widely used in handicrafts, mainly for creating useful

objects, such as working tools, furniture, toys and kitchen supplies. Reindeer have provided another important source of material for handicrafts: skin, bones, antlers and fur have been used in creating functional and decorative objects.

In Tonttula Elves Hideaway the buildings are made of wood, harmonising with natural environment and reminding of the strong bonds with the forest. Facades and interiors of the wooden buildings decorated with handicraft objects made of natural materials, such as birch bark, straw, carved wood, reindeer antlers and fur, demonstrating everyday life habits and unique features of local culture. Local culture communicates with the visitors through materials, textures, sounds, colours and smells, creating unique atmosphere and memorable experiences. (pic. 20)
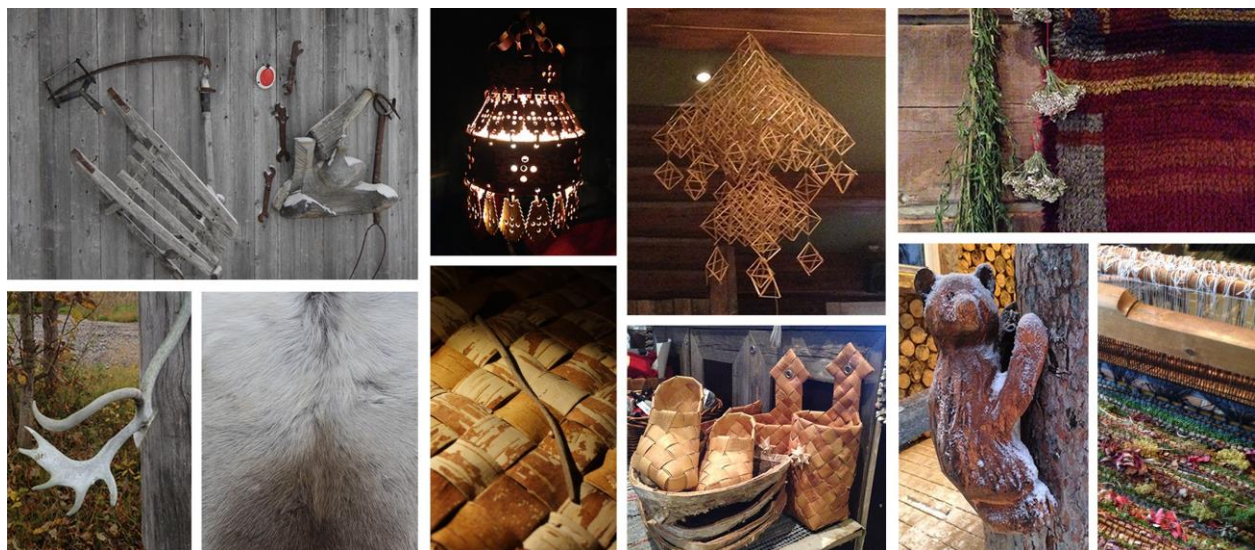
Pic. 20: Elements of handicrafts and natural materials from the environment in Tonttula.

Understanding of the cultural features of the local landscape provided essential information for the development of the bridge concept. The main findings we wanted to reflect in the stories of towers were: first, traditional methods of working with natural materials, such as carving, weaving, and straw craft making; and second, local livelihood, such as fishing, hunting, gathering, and reindeer herding.

Traditional beliefs

Traditional beliefs relate to the 'symbolic' production of culture. Molarius (1993) states, that historical and geographical factors have had an impact on emerging and developing of Finnish culture, language and spiritual traditions. Thus, there are differences between the south and north, east and west. According to Virtanen (1993), going back to the time when the majority of population lived in villages, typical traditions of singing and storytelling were passed on from generation to generation, in rural areas some ancient beliefs were kept until quite recently. Her study clarifies, that significant part of the spiritual heritage is based on ancient beliefs, which are originated from fears and imagination, and strongly connected with nature and fantasy creatures, which are inhabiting the indoor and outdoor environments. It was believed that the home and sauna spirits could warn people of coming threat, by contrast the water and wood sprites behave in more unforeseeable way, luring and misleading people (Virtanen, 1993, p. 28).

In the core of the concept of Experience Village Tonttula is the world of mythical creatures – elves, *tonttu* in Finnish. Elf puppets, little wooden huts and other attributes from mythical world compound the visual and conceptual frame of the place. (pic. 21) The created world of mythical creatures coexists in a harmony with the natural surroundings, together composing mysterious atmosphere, where visitors dip into a magical fairy-tale. "Step into a fairy-tale – gateway into the secret world of ancient beliefs" (Experience Village Tonttula, 2018). The element of traditional beliefs became an essential in the development of the stories for bridge towers, it provided a connection with the existing environments in both visual and conceptual levels.

Pic. 21: Elements from the environment related Elves and mythical creatures.

5.4 Ten Towers

As mentioned above, the bridge team members were Tuuli Seppälä, Paula Sepponen and myself, together, we worked on the development of the bridge concept. We approached the task from two directions: as an environmental artwork and as a new experience service for tourists. From the direction of an environmental artwork, the specific features of the location were deeply considered; nature, culture and traditional beliefs were in the core on the concepts. The artwork aimed to communicate with the existing environment in visual and conceptual levels and become a part of it. We tried to reflect the cultural and natural features of the place in each tower and bring the environment into the artwork as an inseparable element, as mentioned by Jokela (2010). From the direction of new experience service for tourists, we tried to consider the ideas regarding cultural tourism, mentioned by Du Cros (2014, p. 209), that suggest to 'tell a story' and 'focus on quality', while Frochot and Batat (2013, pp. 132–133) emphasize the interest of today's tourists in experiences, which are 'real, pure and embedded within the destination'. The idea of telling a story seemed to be a great way to convey the message and create authentic experiences. "Story is a basic principle of minds. Most of our experience, our knowledge, and thinking is organized as stories" (Turner, 1996, p. 5). Thus, we decided to create a storyline, composed of ten stories related local culture, nature and traditional beliefs, trying to connect past with present.

Below, I provide general overview of the concept for each tower, explaining briefly the theoretical background, connection to local culture and nature, and design decisions. Ten towers are: Sun, Himmeli, Reindeer, Fisherman, Forest, Carving, Paju, Ryijy, Sauna, and Gate Keeper tower, connecting the bridge with the magical forest. (pic. 22)
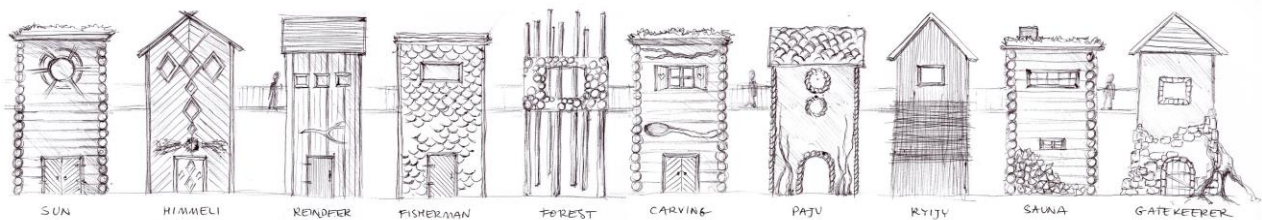

Pic. 22: Sketch of ten towers.

Pic. 23: Spring sun, Rovaniemi, 2017.

Sun Tower is the first tower of the bridge, which tells a story about the sun as a symbol in Northern mythology and as a source of light, which creates unique atmosphere and extreme conditions in the North. Lapland is a land of drastic changes in temperatures, colours and the amount of sunlight, which creates a seasonal contrast. (pic. 23) *Kaamos* is a Finnish word for polar night, when the sun doesn't rise above the horizon for a period of time, depends on the location, the more North the location from the Arctic circle is, the longer the period of polar night lasts. In the opposite, the summer days are long and bright, and the sun stays below the horizon for more than twenty-four hours. Sun dictates the cyclic life of the year, which is unique to the Arctic areas. Being a spiritual inspiration, sun appears as a symbol of power in many cultures, particularly in northern cultures. According to Olaus Magnus, which wrote a book in 1555 about Lapland, people living in the North have a belief in superstitions: "They worship the sun, which shines on them the whole summer, offering sacrifices of thanksgiving to it because it has brought light to their darkness and warmth to replace the bitter frost" (Lähteenmäki, 2006, p. 13–14).
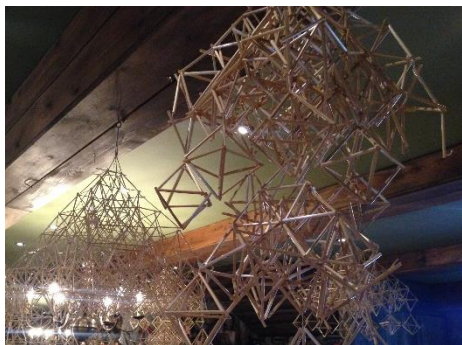
Pic. 24: Himmeli, Tonttula, September 2017.

Himmeli Tower represents an old traditional Finnish decoration for Christmas holiday, made of straw – Himmeli, which name comes from Swedish and German – *himmel*, meaning heaven. Its colour is bright yellow and reminds sunlight, which is essential for growing the basic material used for making Himmeli – rye. Being prepared for Christmas, the decoration was hanged above the dining table and staying there until the midsummer. (pic. 24) Himmeli tower has two functions: tell a story about himmeli and provide learning experience for the visitors, by giving an option of participating in the workshop, where the visitors can learn to make the basic shape of himmeli and buy a set of materials to continue making the decoration at home. The story of this tower I explain further in *Chapter 5.5*.

Reindeer Tower introduces the most recognisable iconic animal of Lapland – reindeer, revealing its spiritual values and importance for local cultures. Reindeer herding has been a significant feature of Sami livelihood for centuries, and many families have adopted to nomadic style of live, based on annual cycle of reindeer migration. Reindeer herding area in Finland begins north of Oulu and spreads to the whole area of Lapland region. According to Lähteenmäki (2006), reindeer was an integrated element of spiritual and physical world for inhabitants of Lapland. He

Pic. 25: Reindeer antlers, Tonttula, September 2016.

explains, that reindeer provided symbolic meaning in shamanism and materials for building ritual attributes: reindeer appears on shaman drums; drum hummers used by shamans to make a ritual rhythm during magical dance, was made of reindeer antlers. Reindeer skin and antlers have been used for making clothes, shoes, mittens and other useful objects to protect from cold during long winters. In addition to domestic use, reindeer products including meat, have been produced and sold in trade markets for hundreds of years (Lähteenmäki, 2006). Nowadays, reindeer has became one of the most recognizable icons that represents and promotes Lapland to foreign markets in tourism industry. Thus, the story of the tower aims to highlight the historical background and symbolic meanings of reindeer for local cultures, at the same time reflect the existing environment of Tonttula. (pic. 25)

Fisherman Tower represents the important natural resource of the area – Ounasjoki river, which has provided great conditions for fishing. (pic. 26) Build of wood shingle – *päreet* in Finnish, in different shades of blue, reminding fish scales. The shape of the door and window imitates the backbone of the perch fish, natural light comes through it, creating a unique atmosphere. The interior includes various fishing tools from the past, telling about traditional fishing

Pic. 26: Ounasjoki river, Tonttula, November 2016.

techniques used by local fishermen through generations.

Pic. 27: Summer forest, Levi, July 2017.

Forest tower. From one natural treasury, the path leads to another significant feature of the local landscape – forest. (pic. 27) This tower tells a story about spiritual and physical values of the forest in Finnish culture. The tower is made of pine wood and looks like a piece of forest in the middle of bridge. According to Pallasmaa (1987), being a source of raw material for building and making objects for everyday use, forest has been a source of spirituality. The stories related forest creatures were passed through generations, in order to educate respectful and modest way of communication with the forest.

Pic. 28: Elk spoon made of pine wood, found in Kittilä, Neolithic period, Stone age. (source: Finna search services).

Carving tower. From the forest the path takes the visitors to the next tower, which represents carving as a form of traditional woodworking in Finland. The tower is constructed as a traditional log building, the facade is decorated with carved wooden spoon, reminding of the archaeological artefact – elk spoon, found in Kittilä. (pic. 28) The upper level of the tower represents raw materials, tools and wooden products; through the glass floor-window visitors can see the downstairs space, which is used as a craftsman studio. It's a sacred place, where the tools are dancing in craftsman's hands and the wood acquires new shape, texture and function. Customers can visit the studio, converse with the craftsman and experience the atmosphere during the creation process.

Pic. 29: Ryijy, Tonttula, November 2017.

Ryijy Tower. The storyline connects the traditional woodworking to the next tower, which represents traditional craft of weaving rugs – *ryijy* in Finnish. (pic. 29) Aav (1991) explains the origins of the *ryijy*, which goes back to old times, when it functioned as a warm covering material. According to her, considered to be loaned from Scandinavian cultures, the craft of weaving rugs in Finland

dates back to the 14th–15th century. She adds, the word *ryijy* has a connection to Swedish "rya", having roots in the ancient Scandinavian "ry" or "ru", meaning rough and shaggy. During the 20th century the interest in this ancient weaving tradition in Finland has grown among many artists, who succeeded to keep this original technique alive and bring it to central position in Finnish textile art (Aav, 1991, p. 5). Ritva Puotila, Finnish textile artist, expresses her thoughts relating ryijy: "I won't even try to explain the mystique of the ryijy [...] deep and warm and centuries old, it conveys something of the feel of past generations" (Aav, 1991, p. 36). In Tonttula, ryijy rugs decorate the walls in the restaurant, hotel, and Hidden Huts, complementing the unique atmosphere.

Pic. 30: Willow sculpture, Tonttula, September 2016.

Willow Tower. The idea for willow tower originated from the material mind map we created during the early stages of working process. Willow is widely used in environmental art, such artworks can be found in Magical Forest in Tonttula, made by students during previous workshops. (pic, 30) In Finland, willow is used in traditional handicrafts for creating decorative and useful objects. The tower reveals the secrets of the traditional handicrafts, showing the journey of the material from the nature to the craftsman, how it is growing, collected and prepared for work. The windows and doors frames in the tower are made of willow, willow balls and other objects decorates the interior of the tower.

Pic. 31: Traditional wooden sauna, Finnish Lapland, April 2018.

Sauna tower. Sauna is a significant element of Finnish cultural identity. (pic. 31) In old times sauna had functioned as a place for washing, giving a birth, healing the sick, washing the dead, and forming traditional beliefs. Downstairs level of the tower is built as a traditional wooden sauna, with all the attributes required for a proper experience. The upper level has more informative function,

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providing visitors historical and cultural facts regarding sauna traditions in Finland.

Pic. 32: Stone fireplace in Tonttula restaurant, February 2017.

Gatekeeper tower is the last one in the bridge storyline, functions as a home for a gatekeeper elf. Metal, stones and tree roots are the main materials used in the construction of the tower, connecting the story to the earth. The inspiration for the material mind map, which included stones, widely used in the decoration of the interior spaces in Tonttula. (pic. 32) The lower part of the tower is made of stones, giving the impression of coming out of a rock. Tree roots penetrate the stone walls. Huge amount of locks and keys are hanged inside the gatekeeper house. The tower gives a little hint for the following adventures waiting the visitors on their way through gloomy forest to hidden huts.

The tower stories aim to communicate with the cultural and natural environments of the place and reflect on the unique features of the northern nature, Finnish culture and traditions, and particularly the atmosphere and concept of Experience Village Tonttula. The developed artwork responds to the core principles of applied visual arts, mentioned by Coutts (2013), first, being practical and appropriate to a particular situation and context, and second, encouraging social and environmental engagement. The tower stories aim to connect past with present, bringing the cultural heritage assets of the place alive, which Du Cros and McKercher (2015) define as one of the components that structure cultural tourism. We aimed to create authentic and memorable experiences, and by including elements of creativity, participatory and learning, we aimed to follow the principles of creative tourism (see Richards & Raymond, 2000). Considering the fact, that Experience Village Tonttula offers attractions for visitors from all over the world, the services were designed in way, that can be suitable for anyone, regardless age and cultural background. While the whole bridge construction strives to become a part of the existing environment on both visual and conceptual levels, little stories create dynamics, and give a little hint into the local cultural heritage.

5.5 Four out of ten.

When the concept for the bridge storyline has been composed and partly visualised, we divided the tasks. Each member of the group has taken a responsibility to develop the concept of few towers. My task included four towers: Forest, Carving, Sauna and Himmeli. In this chapter, I provide detailed information regarding the design decisions I made, based on place-based research method, related literature, visual inspiration, notes and photographs from the researched place, supported by my personal artistic intuition and tacit knowledge. I explain the concept and purpose of each tower, and the message I tried to convey through tangible and intangible elements. I visualised the facade of each tower, and some elements from the interior. This chapter provides an evidence for the artistic practice of my study, as a result of working process carried out between the theoretical and practice-based learning. As well, the suggested concept for the artwork responds to the task determined in the beginning of the project.

Himmeli Tower

Himmeli Tower represents traditional Finnish decoration made of straw, *olki* in Finnish language. The name *himmeli* comes from Swedish and German word *himmel*, meaning sky or heaven. In old times, himmeli was hung above the dining table, it was believed that large himmeli insure larger harvest for next year. My first meeting with Himmeli happened in Tonttula, in September 2016, I liked its geometrical structure and colour. The unfamiliar object induced my interest and curiosity relating the origin and history of Himmeli, as well I wanted to try this craft by myself. The owner of the place mentioned, that tourists from Asia have a huge interest in Himmeli, and many of them are interested to buy the materials for making Himmeli in their home country. I kept this information in mind while developing the ideas for Himmeli tower.

The Himmeli Tower made of wooden planks, the windows follow the rhombus shape of himmeli. The facade is designed with geometrical lines and decorated with straw. (Pic. 33) The upper space represents the history of Himmeli, the raw material and various objects that can be made of straw; the downstairs space is used as a workshop, where visitors can learn making the

basic shape of Himmeli and purchase a set of materials with instructions to make the decoration later at home. (Pic. 34) There are two important design elements in the workshop space: first, a wall picture of cereal plants field, which connects the final object to its origins taken in nature and symbolizes the harvest; second, the raw material, which smells and feels nicely, creating a possibility for tangible experience. In addition, little elves are there to help to the craftsman. (Pic. 35) The workshop creates possibility to involve craftsman from local community, who will take care of the workshop space and the activity itself. This responds to the aim of applied visual arts practices to engage community and environment, as mentioned by Coutts (2013).
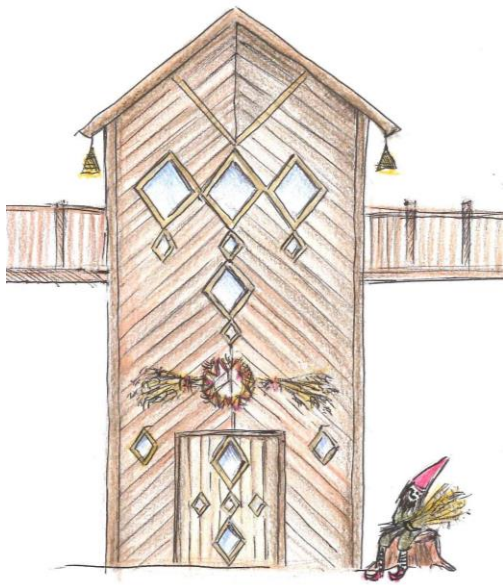
Pic. 33: Sketch of Himmeli Tower.
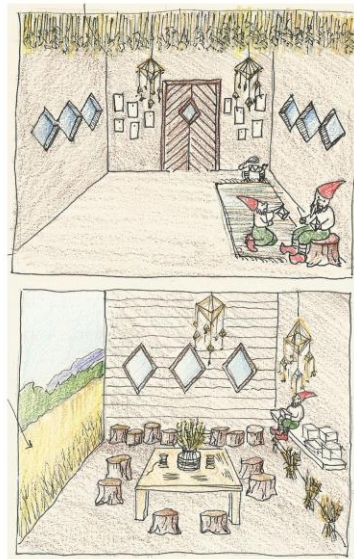
Pic. 34: Sketch of upper and downstairs levels.

Pic. 35: A sketch of little elves doing Himmeli decoration for Christmas.

The elements of creativity and learning are emphasized by Richards and Raymond (2000), as characteristics of creative tourism, where creativity opens up new opportunities and movement. Participation makes the experience more valuable, enjoyable and memorable, as mentioned by Pine and Gilmore (1999), while Du Cros and McKercher (2015) highlight the participatory element as one of the features for successful cultural tourism attraction. A possibility to observe the traditional crafts in action creates deeper layers of connection between the visitors and the culture they experience. As stated by Pine and Gilmore (1999), feelings create positive memories, participatory experience involves emotions and different senses: sight, touch, and smell. The visitors can take home the piece they created in a small box as a souvenir, as well they can buy a set of materials with instructions for making himmeli at home. This tangible element relates to the 'Post-service period', which happens after the customers return home. "Physical evidence or artefacts such as souvenirs...can trigger the memory of positive service moments and this, through emotional association, continue to enhance customer' perceptions of the service they have received" (Stickdorn, 2011b, p. 42). In addition to pictures and memories, a little souvenir, which they made by themselves will recall the experienced.

Through the story of Himmeli Tower I strived to achieve the following:
- to bring the old tradition alive
- to reflect the existing environment by the use of nature-based material and connection to the story of Christmas
- to create high-quality authentic experience and make it participatory
- to involve craftsman from local community

Forest Tower

The idea for forest tower came to my mind during our second visit in Tonttula in November 2016. While walking in the forest to find the Hidden Huts, we discussed the strong bond that connects Finnish people to forest. I was thinking, that this significant feature of Finnish culture should be uncovered through the bridge storyline. The spiritual and physical values of the forest should be emphasized and displayed.

According to Pallasmaa (1987), in old days forest was an integrated part of Finn's everyday life, it was a place to hunt and prepare the land for farming and building a house. Being a source of raw material for building and making everyday objects of use, the forest was also a source of imagination and spirituality, inhabited by mythical creatures (Pallasmaa, 1987). People, through generations were telling stories about forest creatures, educating the next generation to behave in respectful and modest way in the forest. Sometimes the purpose of the stories was to scary and protect the person, to teach safety and basic behaviour in the forest in different situations. Pallasmaa (1987) explains, "The forest was a sub-conscious sector of Finnish mind, in which feelings of both safety and peace, and fear and danger lay" (p. 16).

In my notes from the first visit to Tonttula Elves Hideaway, in September 2016, I wrote down a story, told by Timo Jokela. "One day he was in the forest and planned to cut out a tree, and with the first movement of the axe into the tree, one of the brunches fell on his head. Later, his father told him, that it happened because he didn't ask the permission from the forest creatures "maahinen" in Finnish, who take care of the forest. To ask a permission, one should knock on the trunk of the tree. This action has a practical aim as well and can indicate if there are dry brunches that can fall. This and many other stories were educating generation after generation for a careful and respectful attitude toward the forest, and some basic precautions. People should be modest and take from the forest only what they need and give back respect and care. A Finnish saying explain this in a simple way, that the woods give back what they get from you."

The original idea was to use birch trees. However, they can't be preserved in a good condition for a long time, therefore pine trees were chosen due to their durability. The tower is made of pine wood and looks like a piece of forest in the middle of bridge, grown through the little cabin. (pic. 36–37) There, one can hear sounds of wilderness: bird singing, crackling of an old tree, and someone's footsteps on soft moss. While wandering between the trees, visitors can find bird houses, forest elves hiding behind the trees, little illustrated books which demonstrate various goods and materials the forest offers to people: berries, mushrooms, plants, and herbs; woods for building and carving, bark and roots for handcrafts.
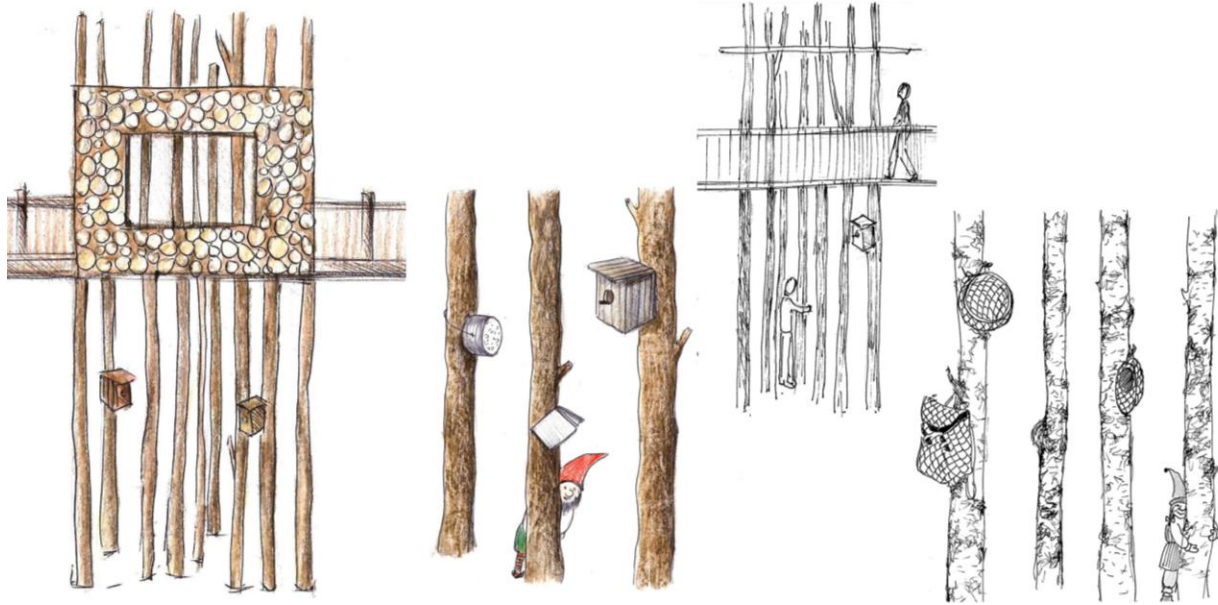
Pic. 36: Sketches and model of the tower.

Pic. 37: Scale models of Forest Tower.

Through the story of Forest Tower, I strived to achieve the following:

- to create a dialogue with the natural environment and the Magical Forest of Tonttula
- to reveal the spiritual and physical values of the forest in Finnish culture
- to create high-quality authentic experience with learning elements
- to create a visual element which differs from other towers
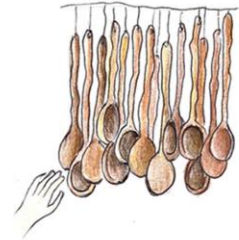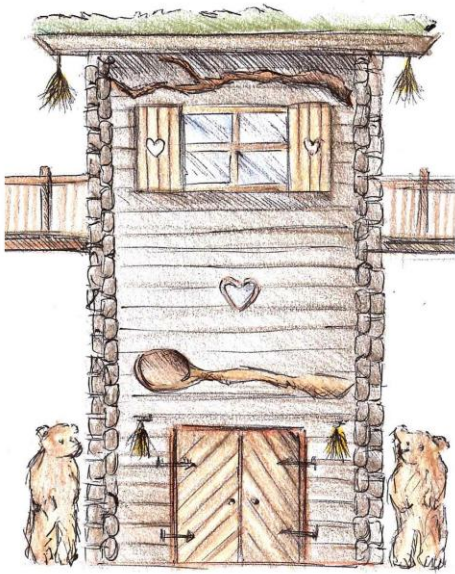
Carving Tower

During the first visit to Tonttula Elves Hideaway, in September 2016, I noticed and documented some carved sculptures and elements in the surroundings. During the workshop, one of our

supervisors was carving a little sculpture, she mentioned, that every time she is in woods, she takes a knife and a piece of wood, or branch and carves. The seen gave me a hint to further research relating woodworking traditions in Finland. According to Vieru (2000), "the Finns are a people of the axe, carved with the axe: woodcutters, clearers of the forest, carpenters and handyman" (p. 40). Finns seem to be born with the skill of wood work, inherited from generation to generation. The tower represents traditional woodworking – carving and tells a story about wood as a significant material in Finnish life, which is emphasized by Pallasmaa (1987), "the whole of life was wood: buildings and means of transport, tools and traps, furniture and children's toys. Naturally, then, skill at handling wood was one test of man's estate" (p. 16).

The whole tower is made of wood, the use of single material enhances its presence, "wood is an inherently living material. It has its own message to put across. It has its own inscrutable language" (Sarajas-Korte, 1987, p. 11). The carving tower provides a multi-layered experience, the visitors can touch and smell the wood, feel the texture and warmth of the material. The facade is decorated with large carved wooden spoon, recalling the archaeological artefact – elk spoon, found in Kittilä. The upper space represents different types of raw material: aspen, birch, pine; variety of tools for woodworking, which are beautiful in their function and simplicity; traditional wooden furniture, toys and kitchen items, such as wooden cup – kuksa, bowls and spoons. 'Kuksa' is a traditional wooden cup carved of gnarl – 'pahka' in Finnish, a knotty protuberance on a tree, which is usually very hard and dense wood. One of the elements in the tower is a birch tree with gnarl, and various wooden cups. (pic. 38) The ceiling is decorated with hundreds of wooden spoons, which create a unique atmosphere, feeling of work, and a sound when slightly moved. There are craftsman's helpers, little elves hiding everywhere: in wooden cups and between the spoons. Through the glass floor-window visitors can see the downstairs space, which is used as a craftsman studio. It's a sacred place, where the tools are dancing in craftsman's hands and the wood acquires new shape, texture and function. Customers can visit the studio, have a conversation with the craftsman and experience the atmosphere during the creation process. Similarly, to Himmeli Tower, the workshop space in the Carving Tower creates a possibility of hiring a local craftsman. These and other elements are partly demonstrated in sketches and scale models, done during the designing process. (Pic. 39–40)

Pic. 38: 'Pahka' –gnarl of a birch tree from Tonttula forest, sketch of elf in 'kuksa' – wooden cup.

Pic. 39: Sketches of the Carving Tower, the upper and downstairs levels, details.

Pic. 40: Scale model of the Carving Tower.

Through the story of Carving Tower, I tried to achieve the following:
- to bring the traditional technique alive;
- to create a dialogue with existing natural and built environment, by use of nature-based materials, wooden sculptures, and elves;
- to create high-quality authentic experience with learning elements;
- to involve local craftsman

Sauna tower

The idea to include sauna into the bridge storyline originated from the fact, that sauna is a significant element of Finnish cultural identity. According to Haarmann (2016), the culture of sauna is mentioned in the national epic *Kalevala*, however the origin of the tradition is hidden in mystery. He adds, that in old times sauna had functioned as a place for washing, giving a birth, healing the sick, washing the dead, and forming traditional beliefs (p.97). Eronen and Hicks (2007) describes his childhood memories of living in small wooden house and having a sauna ritual every Wednesday and Saturday. They write, that the majority of Finnish population in the 1960s and 1970s still lived in conditions without running water, therefore sauna was the only place for proper washing. In addition, the warmth of sauna fills the body and mind with 'psychological well-being', therefore promotes positive mental and physical feeling (pp. 10–11).

For the first time in my life I experienced traditional Finnish sauna in Tonttula – Elves Hideaway, during the workshop trip in September 2016. Usually, the impression of first

experience is powerful and memorable. In my mind I keep the memories of the smell of birch leaves, and burned woods, the sound of water thrown on the hot stones, the extremely hot air, darkness, freezing air outside, and stories about sauna traditions told by our teachers. The feeling after sauna was a combination of mental and physical relaxation, the body and mind both felt clean and light, probably the special atmosphere, warmth, and primitiveness of the ritual caused these feelings. I agree with Eronen and Hicks (2007) statement, that sauna is a place "…where everything is peaceful and safe, like a dark, cozy nest in midst of the harsh northern winter" (p. 56). Personal experience was essential to get deeper understanding of the tradition.

The tower is built as a traditional log building with tiny windows, small heavy door, wooden stove and place to storage the woods. The upper level has an informative function, providing visitors historical and cultural facts regarding sauna traditions in Finland. The space is decorated with all elements and objects needed for traditional sauna ritual: wooden benches, a stove with stones, containers with hot and cold water, fragrant silver birch brooms, bucket and ladle, small towels, and sauna elves, who keeps care of the sauna. Pictures on the walls demonstrate various types of sauna and the tradition of dipping in the lake or river all year around. By this probably to encourage the visitors to dare to have sauna and ice swimming if it's winter. Only some tourists have a chance to experience the traditional sauna during their stay in Finland, therefore the tower aims to tell a story with multi sensuous experience to give a hint to the mysterious sauna atmosphere. Scent of birch brooms, law lights, warmth from the stones, sound of steam and whispering elves. Puppets of sauna elves are busy with sauna ritual, bringing water with buckets from the river and enjoying the hot steam. (pic. 41) Visitors can take pictures with these lovely creatures. During the designing process 'Post-service period' has been thought out, similarly to the Himmeli tower. Visitors can purchase a little cotton bag with dry birch leaves and recreate the scent of Finnish sauna at home by dipping the leaves in hot water. This tiny tangible object functions to recall and enhance the customer experience (Stickdorn, 2011b, p. 42).

Pic. 41: Sketches of sauna elves.

The first idea for the downstairs level was to use this space in a practical way, as a storage room. However, the owner suggested a daring idea to build a small sauna, that can be booked in advance by visitors. We agreed to keep this idea as an option, and in a case of realization of the project in future, check it from the safety point of view.

The designing process included sketching and modelling, to demonstrate the outside and interior design of the tower. (pic. 42)

Pic. 42: Sketches and scale model of the Sauna Tower.

Through the story of Sauna Tower, I tried to achieve the following:

- to highlight the importance of sauna in Finnish culture;
- to create a dialogue with existing natural and built environment, by use of traditional log building, figures of sauna elves;
- to create multi-sensuous authentic experience with learning elements;
- to create a surprising element – little sauna downstairs.

The journey into the process of creation of the four towers gave me an opportunity for deeper research into the cultural and natural assets of the place. The constant communication with the northern environment through physical presence, related literature, and drawings gave me a feeling of my own authentic understanding and some kind of connection to the place. Each tower is a little story, which gently takes the visitors into a world of local nature, culture and traditions. Each story tries to bring alive the unseen and maybe the disappearing, like many handicrafts and folklore traditions.

6. CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

During the study, I faced virous challenges and obstacles, which caused frustration in the beginning of the project, however, opened up opportunities for learning while being outside of my comfort zone. Everything was new and unfamiliar to me, the landscape, the language, and working methods. Language barrier caused challenges, but also revealed opportunities for creativity and self-learning. I felt, that the lack of knowledge in Finnish language caused some difficulties during the working process. First, a large part of theoretical material related local culture, traditional handicrafts, and folklore were available mainly in Finnish, the literature in English was limited and sometimes lacking specific information needed for the research. Thus, many nuances and details might remain uncovered and unexplained, due to the specificity of the language. However, this situation encouraged communication with Finnish speaking team members, and increased the value of visual material collected from the location and books, which required to find a creative way to work with gathered data, involving intuition and tacit knowledge. Second, the meetings with the owner were held partly in Finnish, even though translated by team members or supervisors, I felt that some information might be missed, and I couldn't fluently join the conversation. However, inevitably, I learnt many Finnish words, related the art and design field, particularly the developed artwork: nature, weather, natural materials, and mythical creatures from Finnish folklore. Expanded vocabulary helped me to understand the general context of the conversations which were held in Finnish, causing me a positive feeling and satisfaction. In addition, the language barrier generated new ways of nonverbal communication between the stakeholders, paying attention to body language and use of visual language were essential during the working process.

As mentioned previously, two of the Tonttula team members have multicultural background, Maiko Ikeuchi from Japan, and myself having Russian and Israeli cultural background. This fact caused an obstacle in deep understanding of the specificity of the Arctic area from cultural, environmental and social points of view. Being newcomers in Finnish Lapland, we (me and Maiko) jumped into unknown, inspiring art-research adventure. The local natural environment slightly reminded me my home town in southwest Siberia, where the winters are white, long and cold, and the summers are green and bright, however, these two environments can't be

comparable in this situation, since environmental art focuses on specific features of a certain place. In the beginning of the research, the lack of sense of belonging created a distance between me and the researched location. Nevertheless, direct communication with the environment and the materials, my attempt to experience and discover the surroundings using all senses, created a connection between me and the place in physical and emotional levels, which I respect and appreciate. My approach to the environment was based on the working processes, which I observed in the work of some environmental artists (see Jokela, 2013b; Goldsworthy (1190). In addition, I believe, newcomers have a fresh glance on the things, that become obvious and invisible to locals' eyes. Having international background, me and Maiko could observe and examine the researched situation from the outsider's point of view, which had two advantages: first, through observations and experience of the place, we could identify elements different from these identified by Finnish team members; second, we could examine the situation from the tourist point of view. However, professional expertise in tourism field would help us to understand the situation deeper.

The timetable of the project was maintained according to the planned implementation of the artwork, which was in the responsibility of the company. On one hand, the situation motivated us to work intensively, on the other hand the schedule felt a bit tight, and we felt the need for additional time, to complete the design cycles and improve the ideas. However, as mentioned in *Chapter 5*, during the process on the final stages of the project we were informed, that the realization of the artwork was delayed due to some practical circumstances related building permissions. Therefore, the meeting with the owner, planned to be held in May, was cancelled. Causing a confusion and disappointment, it opened up an opportunity to continue the development of the concepts. I was able to implement service design method of prototyping the idea with participants in SINCO laboratory, which was described earlier, what gave me a new perspective on the concept, deeper insight into the situation and valuable data. The delay of the realization plans influenced the way the artistic work can be evaluated. At this point, the artistic outcome is a developed concept for environmental artwork, which can be evaluated as a suggestion for future realization.

As explained in *Chapter 5.1* Tonttula team worked in three groups with a focus on particular subject: tunnel, bridge and snow sculpting. Using place-based method we conducted a research related the location, during the working process we had regular meetings to share ideas and analyse the collected data. Each team worked individually on its project, developing the ideas based on the place-based research findings. The bridge team included three participants, an artist Tuuli Seppälä with the back ground in scenography, a student of art education Paula Sepponen and myself with the background in industrial design, ceramic art and museum education. The multidisciplinary background of each team member facilitated to interesting dynamics and creative approaches. Looking back, it seems, that the scale of bridge project required more participants, in order to be completed. During the working process we faced a lack of working hands and minds. Together with Tuuli and Paula, we were able to create and visualize the storyline of the bridge, however, we weren't able to complete the design of all ten towers. The teamwork and the faced challenges demonstrate the importance of "interpersonal, motivational and organizational skills", which should be developed in order to facilitate applied visual art projects (Coutts, 2013). These skills are essential in projects, which involve various stakeholders, and combine individual and collaborative ways of working.

Concluding the challenges and opportunities which were faced during the project, I can observe, that language barrier and international background provided a fruitful platform for creative and innovative ideas, as well it contributed to the dynamic atmosphere during the working process. Knowledge and experiences were shared and exchanged, new ways of communication were developed, and visualization of ideas and processes became essential. This situation reflects the idea explained by Härkönen and Vuontisjärvi (2018), that intercultural competence and ability to conduct a dialogue between people with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds becomes important in promoting cultural sustainability, which is in the core of arctic art and design approach (p. 96). In the context of environmental art, with a focus on a specific place, the strategies and approaches applied during the project were general and could be implemented in other places in the world.

Recommendations

The outcomes of the study demonstrate the potential of environmental art to function as a tool for successful collaboration between artists and tourism enterprise, which can be beneficial for both. Place-based approach was practiced in combination with prototyping method from service design, this way of working demonstrates the potential of multidisciplinary approach, which responds to the demand for new creative and innovative methods in tourism development, due to the growing competition. With a focus on the development of cultural and creative tourism in Finnish Lapland, this approach can be applied regardless geographical location. As it has been observed in theoretical background of the study, environmental art intends to be present, to reflect the situation, and "provide an inimitable experience of a certain place" (Beardsley, 1998, p.7). These qualities were taken into consideration during the designing process, the suggested concept for an environmental artwork (the bridge with ten towers) aims to communicate the visible and invisible, the past and present, the unique cultural and natural assets of the place. It aims to create a dialogue between the present and past, with the gaze for future. Each tower story was carefully thought aiming to create authentic and high-quality experience, and by involving the elements of creativity lift the experience to a personal level. This study demonstrates the power of environmental art to support collaboration, to create new approaches in the development of creative, culture and nature-oriented tourisms, and contribute to the well-being of the area. As it has been observed, the process of environmental art practice requires deep and wide research of the place, dialogue with the environment, and action. This study aims to inspire artists researchers to deepen into the topic and explore the possibilities of environmental art projects in the area of tourism. To improve and achieve better results, I would recommend considering the following, while conducting similar art-based practices:

1. The scale of the project should be evaluated in realistic proportions and working team should be formed accordingly in order to embrace all levels of the process and fulfil the task.
2. To keep the multicultural and multidisciplinary nature of the team, in order to induce intercultural competence, support cultural sustainability, and develop creative and innovative approaches. Multicultural and multidisciplinary collaborations are needed for future to fulfil the demands of rapidly developing world.

2. To provide additional expertise in tourism field, which is required to understand the specificity of the field. Current trends, growing competition and customer needs should be deeply examined.

3. Implement tools and working methods from both applied visual arts and service design, what was demonstrated in this study as a successful approach. Since both disciplines are oriented towards people and environments, working methods from both can assist in achieving the aim.

4. Involve potential users, staff and owner of the company in the process of creation. In the context of applied visual arts, this aims to reflect the collaborative and interactive nature of this artistic practice, which aims to encourage social and environmental engagement, in a contrast with individual artistic work in the studio (Coutts, 2013). From the service design point of view, this approach supports co-creation principle.

5. Environmental art demonstrates the artist's duty to reflect the current situation, what requires from the artist to be fully present, with a "commitment to time and place" (Jokela, 2013a, pp. 12–13). Therefore, it is important to be present and explore the location of the research as much time as possible.

7. CONCLUSION

This study observes environmental art as an artistic practice, which intends to be present, respond to a specific situation, with reference for past and gaze for future. To conclude the research journey, I would like to highlight the results from two directions: of what has been done, and how it has been done.

1. The result of artistic practice is the developed proposal for environmental art work, which can be implemented on the site and function as a new experience environment for tourists. This component is evidencing the success of collaborative work between artists and tourism enterprise and demonstrating the potential of environmental art in the development of new authentic services, based on cultural and natural assets of the place. Environmental art is a mark left in the landscape by the artist. The developed concept for an environmental artwork is oriented to leave a mark which has economic and cultural values, with a focus on sustainable development.

2. The process of creation, that has been described and analysed, shows how the situation has been approached and planned and the concept has been developed. The working process also demonstrates the dynamics between the theory and practice, as well combination of working methods from applied visual arts and service design. I consider the choice of art-based action research approach as an appropriate for this kind of study. The methods I used to collect the data were useful and efficient, and responded my intentions and aims. Multicultural nature of the team and multidisciplinary approach, caused dynamics during the process, generating great conditions for productivity, creativity and innovation.

The results of this study can be considered as meaningful and beneficial in both personal and broad levels, which I explain below:

1. In a personal level, the results are reflected in gained knowledge, experience and skills in the field, among them intercultural competence and an ability to work in the multidisciplinary team, which I see the most relevant for the current situation of a rapid change in the world. I feel, that this study is a new beginning of my journey in the world of art and design, particularly in the

field of environmental art, followed by a new component – research. Facing challenges, relating language barrier and new cultural environment, I learned to adapt myself to the situation and find alternative ways of communication and expression. This study has uncovered new levels of my personality, particularly the one that belongs to the artistic side. Seeing a great potential in community and environmental art, my intuition calls me to work with people and for people, with environment and for environment. The whole working process of this study wouldn't happen without commitment. As mentioned above, environmental art requires a dialogue with the place, where the artwork is planned to be, therefore physical and emotional presence are essential. I feel, that during the study an emotional connection occurred between me and the northern environment, which I perceive as my own sense of belonging to the place.

2. For the partner company, Hullu Poro Oy, the implementation of the developed plan for environmental art work can bring cultural and economic values, as well contribute to the growth of outdoor tourism all year around, which is observed to be considered in Finnish Lapland. Successful results support prospect collaboration.

3. For YMA – environmental art for tourism project, the results are beneficial for the successful fulfilment of the assigned goals, particularly: environmental art has been used as tool in development of tourist services and high-quality nature tourism environments, and environmental art plan was suggested to the partner company.

4. For applied visual art world, it provides first, an example of an approach and methods to conduct practice-based learning alongside theoretical, which can be applied and improved in similar projects; second, an evidence for successful collaborative projects, where an artist can apply his or her expertise and ensure possible source of income; and finally, it might encourage artists for further practice and research in the area.

5. For the North, the practical results of the study can inspire other local tourism-oriented companies to find alternative ways based on collaboration with artists and designers in order to improve existing or create new culture and nature-based experience services, which can be oriented on all seasons, and not only winter. With the focus on the northern cultural and natural landscape, this study supports the idea that the use of environmental art should be increased worldwide.

Ideas for further research

This study hopes to encourage other artists researchers to deepen into the discussion relating the potential of environmental art in the development of tourism and adventure industry, particularly in the north, and reveal new possibilities for northern cultural, social and economic well-being. This study aims to call for much wider and broader research, which could be directed towards following subjects: tools and working methods in the creation processes in similar artistic practices; co-creation, meaning involvement of all stakeholders (including the company workers and potential customers) in the creation process; intercultural and interdisciplinary approaches; challenges of the rapid changes in the North and the Arctic; cultural and environmental sustainability. I deeply believe, that a research conducted side by side with artistic practice can reveal new perspectives and approaches and bring essential knowledge to the field.

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