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Helper, Guard or Mediator? Teachers' Space for Action in *The Cultural Rucksack*, a Norwegian National Program for Arts and Culture in Schools

Catharina Christophersen
Bergen University College, Norway

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Abstract

Arts encounters in schools are often portrayed as encounters between art/artists and children. However, in such encounters, teachers are most often involved. The study presented discusses teachers' experiences with and space for action within The Cultural Rucksack; a national program for arts and culture in Norwegian schools. Observations and qualitative interviews show, on one hand, that teachers are pleased that students and teachers are able to enjoy professional arts and culture at school. On the other hand, a series of dilemmas, challenges and tensions are evident in the teachers' statements and actions. The teachers statements about the programme are characterized by a positive attitude, still, the teachers state that they lack of influence over the programme. A perceived twosomeness between artists and students makes the teachers almost redundant as teachers. As a result, teachers have to position themselves in other ways to regain a place within the programme; as artists' helpers, students' guards, or as mediators between artists and students. The study presented is

part of a three-year national and interdisciplinary research project on The Cultural Rucksack that was commissioned by the Norwegian Ministry of Culture.

Introduction

It is audition time for roles in the annual 7th grade school opera. Around ten students, both girls and boys, are sitting under the window in the music room - nervous and excited at the same time. They have prepared a text to read and a song to sing. One by one, the students are called to the front of the room, where three instructors – an actor, a musician and a costume designer – are sitting behind a table, ready to observe and evaluate the students' performances. They tell the students to perform the texts and the songs in different ways and with different expressions: "Sing it like you are a mean person!", "Please read the text as if you were drunk". Some students are nervous; some are embarrassed; while others seem to flourish under the pressure. Students who are unprepared, who take too much time, who make excuses for themselves, or who argue with the instructors, are given feedback in a direct, but not crude manner: "I understand that you have caught a cold, and that you find it difficult to sing, but you cannot say that to the audience in two weeks, can you?" In the meantime, the students' class teacher, who is also a music teacher, sits in the back of the room with a blank expression. He has some papers on his knee that he keeps looking at. Sometimes he glances at the auditions, sometimes he looks at the sky outside the windows, he even leaves and re-enters the room several times during the auditions.

Arts encounters in schools are often portrayed as encounters between art/artists and children. However, as the above example shows, there are also teachers involved in these situations. What, then, are the teachers supposed to do during these encounters? What is expected from them? How are teachers perceived, and how do they perceive themselves and their space for action in such contexts?

Such questions form the basis for the study presented, which has been investigating teachers' work within The Cultural Rucksack program for arts and culture in Norwegian schools. In this article, I will present and discuss the teachers' experiences with this program and the teachers' perception of their space for action within the program. Observations and qualitative interviews show, on one hand, that teachers are pleased that students and teachers are able to enjoy professional arts and culture at school. On the other hand, a series of dilemmas, challenges and tensions are evident in the teachers' statements and actions. It is essential to examine these in order to undertake a fundamental discussion of the program and of arts and culture for children, The Cultural Rucksack, as an educational and cultural political project will be considered, as well as possible implications it has for arts education in schools.

About The Cultural Rucksack and the Study

The Cultural Rucksack (TCR) is a national program for arts and culture in Norwegian schools, the aim of which is to give all children access to professional artistic and cultural productions of high quality, to enhance experience of and understanding of culture in all its forms, and to make TCR (and therefore arts and culture) a natural part of everyday life in schools. A TCR production typically involves artists visiting schools, or students and teachers attending public events like concerts, exhibitions, and plays during school hours. The program is intended to support the learning goals of the curriculum, and it is supposed to supplement, not replace, arts education (KKD, 2007, p. 23).

The program is a collaboration between the Ministries of Culture and Education; it is financed by the Ministry of Culture, and implemented in the domain of the Ministry of Education. The foundation of the program was laid in the 1990s, when a series of culture policy reports on arts and culture for children were published in Norway. This led to various local arts and culture initiatives, which were eventually transformed into a national program. TCR was implemented for classes 1-10 in 2001, and for upper secondary schools in 2009, thereby encompassing all students age 6-19 in Norwegian schools. There have been several evaluations of the program. The 2006 evaluation was the most extensive and also the most controversial, pinpointing tensions between the sectors of education and culture, criticizing TCR productions for being too monological, and calling for more involvement of teachers in the program (Borgen & Brandt, 2006).

The study presented in this article is one of several carried out in a three-year national research project (2010-2013) that was commissioned by the Norwegian Ministry of Culture, and executed by researchers from Uni Rokkan Centre and Bergen University College. The research project as whole has been inter-disciplinary, involving four senior researchers and eight master students from different fields, and including a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches, as well as topics. The researchers' mandate was to do independent, critical and empirical research on the TCR program, focusing on the TCR agents' perspectives, especially those of participants in the schools (Breivik & Christophersen, 2012).

The study is a qualitative interview study focusing on teachers. A total of seven individual interviews and one group interview were conducted, all of which were semi-structured. Five primary school teachers and four lower-secondary school teachers, from four different municipalities in two counties, were interviewed. The counties and municipalities were specified beforehand in the national research project. Within each municipality, schools and productions were randomly selected, the most important criteria being that it was possible to attend a TCR production at the school. The criteria for teachers sought to ensure even gender

distribution, a variety of subject backgrounds, and number of years of teaching experience. In addition, an even distribution between regular teachers and so-called "culture contacts1" was sought. All interviews were conducted at the schools, most of them following TCR productions, which the researcher attended along with teachers and students at the school.

"The Teachers Need to be More Positive!"

There are many examples of negative statements about teachers in the research material from other studies in the project. Producers, bureaucrats, politicians and artists have eagerly articulated opinions about teachers and their involvement in arts encounters for students. For instance, in a public debate meeting about TCR, a representative for a large culture organization declared that: "The teachers need to be more positive". At the same meeting, a leading local culture politician maintained that "the teachers need to do their jobs better", and a local culture bureaucrat stated that "teachers must cooperate better". No teachers were present at the meeting.

The researchers have heard tales about teachers who are uninvolved and who do not pay attention to what is happening at the performance; and of upper-secondary school teachers who do not even attend, sending their students to performances without showing up themselves. There were also some reports of poor behavior on the part of attending teachers at performances. For example, some teachers do not pay attention or disturb the performance by actively silencing the students or by talking on the phone or with other teachers, and some teachers are said to meddle too much. According to one of the artist's interviewed, "You just feel feeble if teachers are completely uninterested; when they enter the room, sit down, lean back and sleep. Then you really can't expect an enormous engagement from the students either". In a tenth anniversary TCR publication, several artists write that they do not feel welcome at schools when the schools have forgotten that they are coming, when the assembly room has not been rigged according to specifications, or when there is nobody there to welcome them with a smile and a cup of coffee (Norsk Kulturråd, 2011). Project data reveals that when teachers are mentioned, they are systematically mentioned in a negative way. Other TCR researchers have also pointed this out in their research: "From the interviews, it is our impression that the teachers are made responsible for 'all that goes wrong'" (Borgen & Brandt, 2008, p. 88). It seems to be a fair conclusion that teachers are not highly regarded by

[1] Each school has a so-called "culture contact". This is the TCR person, who communicates with the local TCR administration, and who provides the school and the teachers with information about TCR and TCR productions. This person is most often one of the teachers, but he/she could also be in the school administration.

other stakeholders in TCR, and that the main criticism of the teachers is of their lack of cooperation, involvement and enthusiasm.

However, when teachers are asked directly, they express a very positive attitude towards TCR. This is shown by previous research (Haugsevje & Haugsevje, 2002; Røyseng & Aslaksen, 2003; Lidèn, 2004; Borgen & Brandt, 2006), and corroborated by our research. Responses to our 2010 survey of principals and TCR contact teachers indicates that there is a virtually universal consensus (97%) regarding the importance of letting students meet professional arts in schools, a high degree of consensus that TCR is providing the students with good experiences (90%), and that it does not disrupt the school day (92%) (Rykkja & Homme, in press). This corresponds with statements from the qualitative interviews, in which teachers express an enthusiastic and positive attitude to the program. They consider that TCR makes an important contribution to students' professional, personal and social growth and development, and that it is a good source of inspiration and professional learning for themselves.

During this research project, the researchers have observed teachers who lean back and more or less ignore students' behavior during the performances, as well as teachers who are so eager to discipline the students that they actually disturb the artists' performances. Such an apparent lack of situational discretion can, of course, be provoking, and may be perceived as a lack of respect for the artist at work. On the other hand, one may question some artists' basis for making assumptions about schools and teachers. Most TCR productions are so-called 'hit and run' productions; that is, short performances in a gymnasium, concert hall, theater etc. The artists' comments about teachers are in many cases based on 35-40 minutes encounters, and that leaves little room for taking into account what has happened before the performance, what will happen after it, or the total school context within which the performance takes place. One could therefore argue that the artists' comments about teachers seem to be based on singular events that are taken out of context. These comments may also demonstrate a certain lack of knowledge and respect for the complexity of the teaching profession and school life.

The description of the teacher during the audition for the 7th grade opera exemplifies a situation that can be interpreted in different ways. If the observations of the teacher had been limited to the audition, the impression of the teacher could be that he was uninterested and made little effort to get involved. However, several days of observation revealed a very competent music teacher who had been told by the music instructor not to interfere in the musical processes, but who nevertheless subtly facilitated the event to hinder the visiting musician's lack of experience with school children from becoming a real problem. When asked about this, the teacher said, "I offered to help him in the music room, but he said he didn't need it. But I help him anyway; I have to".

This demonstrates that actions and things that happen can be interpreted in various ways, depending on the circumstances. The different understandings of TCR may be equally correct and reasonable, which derives from hermeneutic principles for interpretation and understanding; there is no way of seeing something from nowhere in particular. There are always different interpretations of every text or situation, and these interpretations are guided by the interpreter's viewpoint and previous experiences (Kjørup, 1996). It may be inevitable that artists and teachers, not to mention researchers, interpret situations differently. In the following, I will present the teachers' descriptions and statements about TCR, thereby showing in more detail how teachers view the program, and its importance and impact. This presentation is a condensation of the interviews, and contains translated quotations from the interviews.

Teachers' Descriptions of The Cultural Rucksack

In their interviews, the teachers expressed their concern about the students' learning, and were very positive to TCR productions that supported general learning goals or the direct learning of the arts. In addition, the teachers stressed that the curricular potential and focus on achievement should not overshadow other educational dimensions. Encounters with arts and culture could support an integrated development in which, to quote the lower-secondary teacher, "students grow as human beings" into "citizens who understand the culture they live in, and who knows where they are coming from".

Acknowledging the importance of listening and contemplating, the teachers still emphasized active participation in which students create their own art or scenic productions that can be displayed or performed, in school or in the local community, for family and friends. Such things were said to produce a sense of ownership, belonging and pride. Teachers stressed that, in order for the arts encounters to have growth potential, the art and the artists had to communicate with students. The teachers did not, however, confuse communication with easily digestible art. Art could challenge the students, but however challenging, it was still important that the artists communicated well with the students, and that they presented their art in ways that were perceived as relevant for students. There should be reciprocity in the arts encounters, according to the teachers: not only should art be made accessible to students, but students must also open up for arts experiences. The teachers therefore emphasized the need to learn good audience behavior. Learning the arts, according to the teachers, requires patience and respect for what is different and unfamiliar: "It is to sit still, listen, watch and let curiosity be provoked, thinking that 'this was really strange, but could it actually be a good thing' ", one teacher stated.

The teachers were very positive to TCR on behalf of the school and teachers. They experienced the arts productions as something out of the ordinary. The sense of the extraordinary could be connected to excursions, or to activities that were otherwise difficult due to the expense or to the requirement for specific artistic expertise. TCR was also considered to make an important contribution to ordinary school activities when productions were connected to the curriculum. However, contrary to the objectives in the mandatory guidelines, TCR productions may go beyond their intended support function. Several teachers reported that productions were used to cover topics in the curriculum in which teachers are less proficient, thereby replacing rather than supporting the school program.

Last, but not least, teachers reported that they were very inspired by working with artists in the classroom. While teachers' competency is broad and covers many fields, artists are highly specialized in a specific field. Collaboration was therefore mentioned as a possibility to learn about the artist's field of knowledge, thereby expanding the teachers' own competency: "It is supplementary training", one teacher said, "you get to see somebody who is very skilled working with your students. That is great!".

There were some inconsistencies in the teachers' interview statements. For instance, the teachers' answers revealed a difference between theory and practice when asked about the preparation and supplementary work required for TCR productions. On the one hand, the teachers emphasized the importance of such work in order to help the students understand unfamiliar arts expressions, to learn correct audience behavior, and to an overall learning and development; aspects that are also emphasized in the mandatory guidelines for TCR (KKD, 2007). On the other hand, when talking about their own part of the work, the teachers' replies indicated that they might not be quite as thorough in their preparations and supplementary work as their statements in general imply. For instance, a primary school teacher said that he had prepared students for the performance "a little bit this week. I had prepared them a little for what was coming. I showed them the picture, and we looked through the songs they were singing" (italics added). Several others make similar reservations regarding the degree of preparation. These statements could indicate that the teachers were not preparing the students well enough, or at all; alternatively, the statements can be understood as a statement of general uncertainty as to whether they had done a good enough job.

There were also differences with regard to how different topics were discussed. The teachers gave exhaustive answers when asked about students, the students' relationship to arts, and how the students experienced different arts productions at the school. However, when asked more directly and specifically about TCR, for instance how the program works and if they can suggest any improvement measures, their answers tended to become shorter and vaguer. One answered that he thought "it was a difficult question" and that he "did not know that

organization very well" and another said that she "did not know". These statements may indicate insecurity. They may also indicate a lack of knowledge about how the program actually works. The teachers in this study reported a general lack of influence over the program and the selection of arts productions, which is consistent with previous research findings (Borgen & Brandt, 2006; Vibe, Evensen, & Hovdhaugen, 2009). One could therefore imagine that the teachers' lack of insight and ownership may affect their actions and give the appearance of indifference.

The differences and inconsistencies described above raise questions regarding the space for action the teachers have within TCR. Framing this discussion, I will draw upon our findings in the overarching research project (Breivik & Christophersen, in press), and explore some common perceptions of TCR that may impact the teachers' experienced space for action.

Common perceptions of TCR

Debates on TCR are generally characterized by a strong rhetoric of enthusiasm, and with a frequent use of superlatives: It is "fantastic", "great", " a gift", "magic", "fun", "incredible" and so on. Following this enthusiasm, there is a tendency on all levels to under-communicate or even deny objections, tension and conflicts within the program (Breivik & Christophersen, 2012). At the same time, it is very common to describe TCR productions as warm, intimate and happy encounters between artists and students (Aslaksen, 2003). A dyadic relation between artists and students may leave little room for teachers. As pointed out by Digranes (2009), reports on TCR in media tend to describe art as free and groundbreaking, while school and teachers are portrayed in terms of force, hindrance and restraint. Our research shows that this tendency to mention art positively and school negatively is not limited to the media; it seems to be a very common way of describing TCR within the system as well.

On the one hand, TCR is described positively as free from friction; on the other hand, teachers are quite harshly criticized from artists. This gives a rather paradoxical impression. Given the fact that two traditionally distinct sectors are supposed to collaborate on a joint political project, it is reasonable to assume that there may actually be a considerable amount of tension on different levels in the program. The active denial of tension and conflicts between the field of culture and the field of education could be hindering a more interesting debate on how tensions could emerge, and how tensions may influence the program and the participants. For instance, it seems likely that the enthusiasm that surrounds TCR, together with the lack of debate, could be an obstacle for a critical review of the program and its epistemological foundations. Thus, one may also interpret the teachers' overwhelmingly positive statements about TCR as expressions of political correctness. Adding the perceived dyadic relationship between artists and students to this picture, it creates a rather trivialized perception of both arts and education that may influence the space for action for both artists and teachers.

Enthusiastic portrayals of arts encounters between children and artists as almost entirely meaningful and magic are questionable. First, linking arts to only positive emotions overlooks art's inherent potential to create or recognize other emotions like anger, surprise, or even disgust (Varkøy, 2003). Second, arts encounters are not always necessarily meaningful; they can also be trivial and insignificant. Aasen's (2011) fieldwork among third and fourth graders indicates that in many cases the students experienced the arts encounters of TCR as boring and irrelevant. A philosophical explanation of "boredom" is lack of meaning (Svendsen, 1999). Some arts encounters can therefore be labeled as simply meaningless. Third, the celebration and elevation of TCR encounters as something festive and extraordinary may contribute to a separation of arts and daily life. For instance, Bjørnsen (2011) claims that the art practices of TCR are mainly governed by adult middle-class taste, and therefore quite far from children's preferences and daily lives.

The question of whether arts experiences are connected to inherent qualities in art works and artistic expression, or whether art is subject to material, social and historical conditions, is part of a fundamental philosophical debate about art's nature, which I will not go into here. However, it is a clear objective for TCR to make arts and culture an integrated part of school life, which in turn is a major part of children's daily lives. According to the philosopher and the educator Dewey, it is essential to recover the continuity between art and daily life, so that art can be experienced as relevant, and as an enrichment of human life. Elevating art to the position of something special that is reserved for particular arenas and certain situations will make art into a "beauty parlor of civilization" (Dewey, 1934, p. 344); that is, a replacement for lack of meaning and joy in real life. Enjoying art, therefore, implies that one has to leave one's daily, dull life, and enter the school gymnasium or other arenas for performance and exhibition, and later to return to one's ordinary life. Following Dewey's arguments, TCR productions may function as an indirect comment to the quality (or lack thereof) in children's daily lives and in school life.

These common perceptions of TCR also indicate an apparent separation of experience and learning, which develops into an assumption that artists will handle the experiences, while teachers will deal with learning; the former is exciting and groundbreaking, while the latter is boring and suppressive (Digranes, 2009). In this way, TCR is reduced to an opposition between art and school, aesthetics and pedagogy, the extraordinary and ordinary, and festivity and routine; a situation in which the arts apparently do not contribute to learning and in which learning is without any element of experience. The artist's responsibility can thus be to provide good experiences for the students, while teachers may be supposed to facilitate the encounters between artists and children, and outside of TCR, to deal with the more "serious" learning processes. In the following, I will discuss how such perceptions may contribute to defining a space for action for the teachers.

The Teacher as Helper and Guard

> *The lower secondary school students were sitting quite still on the floor in the gymnasium during the nu jazz concert. They did not disturb and they politely applauded in all the right places. The students were apparently paying attention to the concert, but there was still much going on between the rows of students on the floor. The concert functioned, therefore, as a coulisse for the students' own play. They had sat down in groups with others that looked like themselves: well-groomed girls wearing makeup, boys with short hair dressed in sportswear, and a group of emos - both boys and girls. The young people were gently pushing and shoving each other, checking out other boys and girls, fixing their hair, whispering to each other – all in a very discrete way. Most of the teachers had placed themselves by the back wall of the room, quite far from the students. One of the teachers was sitting in the very front of the room to one side of the musicians, facing the students. She could hardly see the musicians at all, but had a perfect overview over the students, and she was ready to intervene if necessary. Now and then teachers went up to a group of students, ordering some of the girls to sit up straight, and telling a boy take off his cap.*

This example describes a typical TCR performance: The communication is mostly between students and artists, while the teachers stay in the background and off-center. If TCR productions first and foremost are supposed to create warm and intimate encounters between students and artists, there is not much room for the teachers. Even if there are local variations as to how much influence schools and teachers have on the programming and selection of productions, the interviewed teachers in this study reported having little or no influence in such matters. The teachers' statements regarding how they could contribute to such arts encounters and what they actually do in the TCR situation, indicate two possible roles, or subject positions (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999; Edley, 2001): Depending on the situation, the teachers can either function as the artist's helpers or as the students' guards.

In workshop-like situations where students are closely collaborating with the artist, the teachers let the artist take charge of the situation and contribute with an extra pair of hands. According to one teacher, "Often, they need some help, the teacher then helps out, it is like being an assistant". Before performances, teachers assist the artists by preparing the students in accordance to instructions from the artists or the producers: They rehearse songs, read poems or stories, study certain paintings, and so on. During performances, however, the teachers become guards, as the example above illustrates. This is also noted by Bresler, Wasser & Hertzog (1997), who, in a study of a dramatic school performance, describe teachers as guardians of children's manners. Likewise, the teachers in the presented TCR study, make sure that pupils behave properly and in accordance with traditional codes of conduct for audiences, thereby showing politeness and respect. Another teacher confirmed this, stating that "During concerts, there is not much we can do, we are just watchdogs".

The twosomeness linking artists and students basically makes the teachers redundant as teachers. This study found that the teachers cope with this redundancy by positioning themselves in other ways, in this case like helpers or guards. Still, these new positions may not be clear and unambiguous regarding how teachers are expected to behave. In a study of classroom teachers visiting Performing Arts Centers with their students, Bresler (2010) notes that teachers could experience conflicting roles as both being an outsider/visitor and also a insider/leader for the students, sub-hosting the event (p. 135). This contrast is apparent also in TCR contexts. It seems to be a rather common view among the interviewed artists and producers in our research "that they (the teachers should) participate, that they are audience" in the same way as the students. The teachers are, however, not an ordinary audience. They are at work, and they are responsible for the children. A primary school teacher maintained that, "This is certainly not free time, because organizing students and controlling them without anyone noticing it, is in many ways easier in the classroom when you are doing the teaching yourself". As her statement demonstrates, the codes of conduct that apply in schools may be in conflict with the traditional expectations of an audience. When students misbehave, according to one or the other set of rules, teachers must decide, on the spur of the moment, whether to intervene or not, and also in what way. The teacher cited above manages to balance the two sets of rules or conventions by playing the role of guard in such a way as to comply the perceived expectations of her as an ordinary member of the audience. All teachers may not be able to uphold this subtle balance, and some may maintain quiet and order among students in a more boisterous way, or not at all. Our interviews with artists revealed that they perceived both teachers' controlling behavior and teachers' lack of control very negatively. According to Aasen (2011), some TCR productions resemble school, meaning that artists assume a quite traditional role as the teacher. However, our interviews with artists indicate that they are only willing to adopt some aspects of teacher behavior, those related to the communication of the arts and art artifacts. The active disciplining of the children seems to be left to the teacher. The teachers are then, seemingly, met with contradictory expectations: They are supposed to be there, but they should not be noticed.

The Teacher as Mediator

Observations of TCR productions and the teachers' interview statements also show an alternative understanding of the teachers; not as helpers or guards, but as mediators in arts encounters. Highlighting the growth potential in arts encounters, teachers convey a broad notion of education that unites experience and learning, thereby demonstrating a Bildung perspective. Growth and development as a human being is a main purpose of the process of Bildung, which implies an individual growth process within a community and a society (Gustavsson, 2009; Markussen, 2011). The teachers insist that art, by stimulating curiosity, creativity and reflection, can provide experience and insight that may help the young to pose

and reflect on some of life's biggest questions, such as what does it means to be a human being, a fellow human being, a citizen, even a citizen of the world?

However, according to the teachers, the realization of arts' educational potential depends on two things: first, it requires work over a long period, perhaps many years and second, it requires the ability to communicate with students to make sure that the art, even though complex and challenging, is presented in ways that make it accessible and relevant for them. In this way, the teachers position themselves as somewhere in-between the artists and the students, "kind of like a connection between artist and children", as one teacher says.
The notion of the teacher as a mediator between artist and students requires some reflection2. According to Pálsson, "The issue of 'mediation' or 'translation' logically suggests some degree of misunderstanding; if people fully understand each other, there is no need for translation" (Pálsson, 1993, p. 29). So, what could the problems or the misunderstandings be in regard to TCR? In a panel debate on arts for children, an artist stated that, "Arts encounters for children are an encounter between differences". There is no reason to interpret such differences between artists and students as something fundamentally problematic. On the contrary, teachers report that the TCR encounters between the artists and the students seem to be mostly enriching for both parties. However, an example from the previously mentioned opera project in 7th grade may shed further light on the question of differences and misunderstandings. Below is a brief description of the work in the composition group that were working with the musician to create and perform the music for the opera:

> *The musician struck a friendly chord with the students, and the mood in the music room was good. The musician had high expectations of the students, and it was impressive to see how much better they played after only a couple of days of rehearsals. However, it became clear that the musician treated the students as he would have treated any other musicians, both with regard to his expectations to them and his way of talking to them. He said things like "Remember the accentuated notes in the middle part!", which the students could not understand at all. Several times, the teacher had to intervene and translate the musicians instructions to something that the students could understand, either by explaining with other words, or practically showing the students what the musician could have meant, for instance by singing it for them.*

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[2] The notion of "mediation" also touches upon a larger debate concerning arts, school, school art, children's understanding of arts and an alleged pedagogization of arts in schools (Aslaksen, 2003; Bresler, 2003; Juncker, 2003), which I will not address here.

As this example shows, there are some challenges here: The artist is an adult, the students are children; the artist is at work, the student's participation is mandatory. These two parties do not come together accidentally – the encounter is arranged for them. In this encounter, which is expected to contribute to growth, development and insight, their focus is a form of artistic expression in which one party is supposed to be an expert, and the other the learner or experiencer. Connected to the attributed roles as an adult art expert and a younger art novice, there is also a distinction between a highly specialized abstract language, and a concrete, lay language (Borgen, 2001; Kvile, 2011). This is very apparent in the example above, where the musician used abstract and specific professional terms, and the teacher translated these to everyday words for the students, thereby closing the gap between the students and the musical expression that was created by the musician's expert language. As Hannerz (1993) writes:

> … if I feel reasonably sure that I satisfactorily understand someone else, I may be equally convinced that I will have to intervene to help that someone understand somebody else again, whose perspective and characteristic forms of expression I am somewhat familiar with. (p. 51)

Several worlds, realities and languages meet when artists and students come together, and teachers are familiar with all of them. Teachers know their students and what levels of understanding, skills and attention to expect from them and teachers feel more than qualified to advise artists in these matters. On the other hand, teachers have some competency in the arts. While not as competent as the artist, they are presumably more competent than the children. In that way, the teachers convincingly position themselves as possible mediators by connecting the artist and the children while the artist is there, by smoothing out differences and making communication flow, by making sure the artistic work is relevant to the students and to the school, and by ensuring good working conditions for the artist. Teachers may also keep the connection between the children and the arts open when there are no artists present, thereby maintaining continuity with the arts and supporting further growth.

Concluding Remarks

As we have seen, debates on TCR and schools seem to be characterized by stereotypes, and to a large degree claim that teachers are negative, unenthusiastic and uncooperative. Our research corroborates what has been stated in others reports, namely that teachers are actually very positive to TCR. However, our research implies that teachers may not experience the same degree of ownership as the artists since they have little influence on the program. The view that TCR is a dyadic encounter between students and artists/art is prevalent, leaving little room for the teacher. Our research shows that this makes teachers more or less redundant as teachers, and that teachers must position themselves in other ways to regain a place within

TCR. Bresler (2010) states the significance of "reaching out to teachers, nurturing their roles of framing these experiences [for children] and becoming part of the insider audience" (p. 135).

TCR is intended to be a collaborative effort between the fields of culture and education, and there have traditionally been close connections between education and cultural policy in Norway with teachers also functioning as cultural workers. However, the teachers' feeling of redundancy in the program indicates a new situation. According to Borgen (2011a; 2011b), there has been a gradual development away from the partnership spirit that characterized the program in the early phase. The new mandatory guidelines (KKD, 2007) state a clear division of both labor and responsibilities between the fields of school and culture: The latter is responsible for defining and deciding the TCR content, while the first is to facilitate the implementation by means of planning, preparation and follow-up work. This implies a turn from a model of "professional presentation of arts and culture" to a model of "presentation of professional arts and culture" (Borgen, 2011a).

While the cultural political objectives of TCR are quite obvious, the educational implications of the program are less clear. The arts are under pressure in Norwegian education: Reports show that teachers are not well educated in the arts (Lagerstrøm, 2007), and that the arts have suffered a significant reduction in percentage of school hours (Espeland, Allern, Carlsen, & Kalsnes, 2011). At the same time, several government funded arts-in-education initiatives are being introduced in schools. However, as seen in TCR, the concept of "collaboration" between the fields of culture and school implies schools facilitating arts encounters between students and other actors – in other words opening the doors for cultural initiatives, giving external specialists access to children during school hours:

> The Cultural Rucksack has become an example of how artists and art organisations have succeeded in erecting an image of themselves as indispensable to arts teaching and learning, and of the increasing mistrust of schools and local initiatives and practices. (Borgen, 2011b, p. 381)

TCR is intended to supplement and strengthen the schools' arts education. It remains to be seen whether this will actually be the result, or whether TCR instead represents the first step in an outsourcing of arts education.

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About the Author

Catharina Christophersen, PhD, is Associate Professor in music education at Bergen University College, Faculty of Education, Center for Arts, Culture and Communication. Her current research involves interdisciplinary studies of culture, art and arts education.