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# Accelerating movement across the intentional arc - developing the strategic sensographer

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## **Abstract**

Our research question relates to those who need to be activists in strategic sensography as described in the call for papers. We call these activists “strategic sensographers”.

Our own definition of sensuous is characterised by a pseudo-formula, namely 5S+3D (5 senses plus 3 dimensions), which we contrast with the 2S+2D world which dominates the modern office and even university.

We take strategists to include both senior executives themselves and those who explicitly support them in the strategy process, whether in a line or staff role. Our model of the intuitive qualities required for strategists has in part been derived from the recruitment criteria of leading organisations, as well as from analyses of the qualities needed to support creativity and innovation (Lucas, Claxton and Spencer, 2012).

We examined the routes through which strategists are currently educated or shaped, and conclude as have others (Mintzberg, 2005), that their education is biased in favour of rational-logical thinking. It is in part the tension and interplay between the rational and the intuitive that contributes to sensography, a term that has in part spun off from “stratography” (Cummings and Angwin, 2011).

## **Scope and methodology**

In this paper we present two case studies drawn from educational practice with managers in Finland and the UK. The Finnish case is primarily concerned with organisational level innovation in pursuit of corporate strategies, the UK one with the personal journeys of individual strategists. Our focus is on pedagogical design that integrates practices from artistic practices, and which enrich the repertoire of learning methods for the strategic sensographer.

In the final section we draw on evidence of success or otherwise in the aim of developing strategic sensographers with reference to the methods under consideration. The evidence is culled from the outputs of the learners, their actual performances and artefacts, and from interviews. The concept of slowness was not an explicit initial aim of the programme, but when we reviewed the striking differences between the outputs of the students and, for example, equivalent MBA students, it struck us that the slowness, the cumulative steady consistent dripping of different approaches to the

same problem, was indeed a fundamental factor in promoting the learning outcomes sought by the learners.

Overall we have been concerned with developing innovative management education to develop strategic sensographers for and through change, drawing heavily on tools and processes which facilitate embodiment. Our approaches are far from unique. Nonetheless, we still feel that the two case studies jointly illustrate successful evolution of 5S+3D approaches to strategic sensography.

### ***Theoretical references***

In terms of areas of study, firstly we are concerned with innovative management education. Our focus is the nature of expertise and the intentional arc as defined by Merleau-Ponty (1962, p.136), which is “supposed to embody the interconnection of skillful action and perception” (Dreyfus, 1996).

Secondly, and informed also by the work of Merleau-Ponty (1962) and Dreyfus (1996), we have a specific interest in the role of embodiment in educational processes, defined both in terms of the role of artefacts in strategising, and in the physical role of embodiment.

We can trace the post-medieval evolution of embodiment in strategy particularly from the Marquis de Louvois as war minister of France, when in 1686 he commissioned scale model cities for military strategy (Fayard, 2012; Google Cultural Institute, 2013). Another milestone was the contribution of Brecht in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Sweden through his *Theatrum Oeconomico-Mechanicum*, and his use of models and samples of industrial objects (Liedman and Persson, 1992). Recent years have seen a wide variety of contemporary approaches (for example, Heracleous and Jacobs, 2011).

We worked on a series of projects which deployed transitional objects (Winnicott, 1987) as an explicit part of research and consultancy processes related to business strategy. Figure 1 shows a selection of six such artefacts, displayed in a recent workshop for Chief Information Officers.

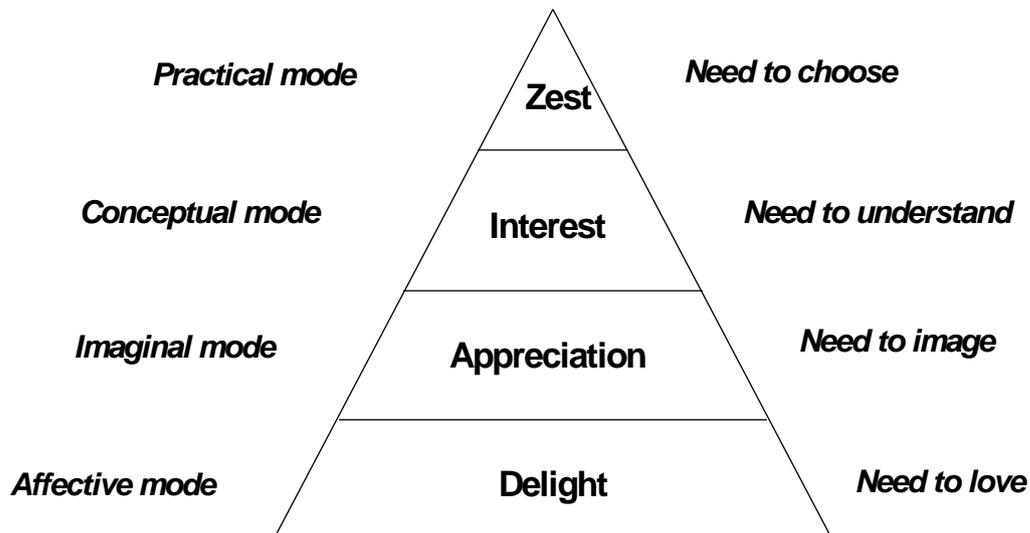
**Figure 1** Six transitional objects relating to business strategy



It is interesting that in Lampel's (2001) study of artefacts in innovation processes, he explicitly touches on the need in certain types of innovation to divert attention away from imperfect and incomplete products, to create an emotional quality to the product presentations, as exemplified by the management examples of Whitney, Edison and Jobs.

**Figure 2** Heron's model of personhood applied to Basic Active Emotions

### Heron's Up-hierarchy of Basic Active Emotions



**Source:** J. Heron (1992) *Feeling and Personhood: Psychology in another key*. London and Newbury Park, CA: Sage, p.122.

Thirdly our definition of embodiment in learning also extends to concepts of personhood which recognise the function of the human body and feeling in personal experience, learning and change – embodiment in a felt, physical sense, as defined also by Merleau-Ponty (1962). In this we have also been influenced by Heron's hierarchies of personhood, for example his Up-hierarchy of Basic Active Emotions (1992, p.122, see **Figure 2**). Heron describes each element in the up-hierarchy in these terms:

- Delight** This is the foundational level of Heron's model, and relates to each of the others:  
 "Appreciation is a delight that springs from the love of aesthetic form; interest a delight that springs from the love of knowledge; zest a delight that springs from the love of action." (Heron, 1992, p. 123)
- Appreciation** This level encompasses both our spiritual and our artistic capacities:  
 "The emotions of a fulfilled imaginal sensibility are of a range and subtlety that outstrip the power of language to symbolize them. Hence they are conveyed by the non-discursive symbolism of drawing, painting, sculpture, music and dance." (Heron, 1992, pp. 122–3)

<b>Interest</b>	“When the need to understand is realized, we experience interest, extending into curiosity and fascination, the passion for truth, excitement in intellectual discovery, pleasure in the clear communication of ideas.” (Heron, 1992, p. 123)
<b>Zest</b>	Heron uses the word “zest” to encompass “the emotions involved in the fulfilment of free choice and effective action”, which he identifies as including “relish, gusto, exhilaration, achievement and work satisfaction” (Heron, 1992, p. 123).

### **The concept of aesthetic distancing**

Both of the cases below draw upon the interpretation of intuition, for which the concept of aesthetic distancing is a useful analytical tool. Aesthetics come from Greek *aisthētikos*, from *aisthēta* “perceptible things”, from *aisthēsthai* “perceive”<sup>1</sup>, and are concerned with knowledge that is created from our sensory experiences (Taylor and Hansen, 2005). The concept of aesthetic distance has its roots in philosophy of Brechtian epic theatre (Brecht, 1964), Boalian theatre (1995) and Dewey’s (1958, p.2) identification of art as experience: “... the actual work of art is what the product does with and in experience”.

Dewey, Brecht and Boal broke the illusion of glorified art and brought it to a real-life level connecting mind and body. Brecht broke the illusion of theatre with what he called *Verfremdungseffekt*, in other words “alienation effect”. The alienation effect means “to watch from a distance, without involving oneself, as one who observes, thinks and draws his or her own conclusions” (Boal, 1979/2008, p. xix). Via aesthetic distancing Brecht made theatre more transparent and required aesthetic awareness of how theatre is made, how actors assume a role, and what theatre is for (Mutnick, 2006). The reflexive effort in a context of aesthetic distance is the core of the action – that is, when an actor and an audience step outside fiction to comment on what takes place on stage and what the relationship is between fiction shown on stage and facts lived in one’s own life (Schechner, 2002, p. 28).

When reflecting via aesthetic distance we are exploring past, now and possible future by using sensography forms; by seeing, hearing, touching. Aesthetic distancing helps us give some kind of a form (image, gesture, sound, word) to what we have experienced and to what we are trying to find out from our experience: we are simultaneously experiencing and reflecting experiences. Through this we propose alternative actions and sometimes we are surprised ourselves, too: where did it come from? An understanding of the “surprise” that can be triggered from practice enables “a more sophisticated understanding of reflection-in-action” (Yanow & Tsoukas, 2009, p.4). Aesthetic experience is based on the perspective that all experience is perception, and this resonates with what Taylor and Hansen’s (2005) idea that aesthetic experience and sensual perception goes beyond rational and analytic apprehension. In this paper aesthetics are linked to sensuous thinking, to the different ways in which we create knowledge, including through our senses and experiences.

### ***Pedagogical case studies***

In this next section we review two pedagogical approaches to developing the strategic sensographer, presenting brief case studies, each with an *Analysis* related to the theory outlined above.

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<sup>1</sup> According to Oxford Dictionary.

We first review the example of Work Story, an application of process drama to strategy development and implementation in executive education (McKenzie, 2001), drawing particularly on Finnish-based experiences in a variety of organisational contexts, and including a specific form of drama-based approach that deploys masks as a special type of artefact.

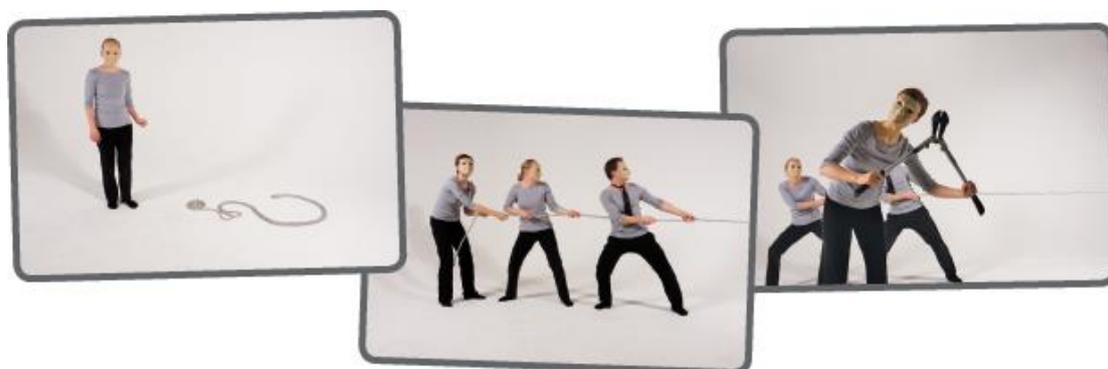
Our second case focuses on an innovative Masters in Innovation, Creativity and Leadership (MICL), launched in 2010, with its first set of graduates in 2013. This degree programme set out to take an unconventional approach to the education of strategists. We particularly review components of the programme which most strongly explore embodiment, and relate the findings of the case to the theoretical models outlined above.

### Case 1: Work Story

In this section we review an application of theatre to strategy development and implementation in executive education (McKenzie, 2001) in the Work Story method which utilises Theatrical Images (TI). The fourth author of this paper developed a dramaturgical storytelling technique, Work Story, which allowed individuals from the same professional group – executive board members, managers, leaders, and employees from various units – to gather together and begin to reflect and share their experiences with the help of TI. The approach combined insights from Boal's (1995) Image Theatre with those of a professional theatre instructor.

The approach was informed by the principle that theatrical scenes provide both individuals and groups with an opportunity to create temporary distance between experiences within an organisation and the emotions and relations generated through experiences. Individuals can project their interpretations into the scenes as a way of articulating how emotions from our past experiences in organisations linger in the present – shaping our ability or willingness to act differently. Theatrical scenes are powerful not in themselves but in relation to the associations and judgements that they represent and evoke (Pässilä and Vince, 2012).

**Figure 3** Examples of TI<sup>2</sup> scenes



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<sup>2</sup> Anne Pässilä created and produced over 500 TI with a graphic designer, photographer and three actors. Each image, or sequence of images, has been constructed on the basis of five elements of drama: act, scene, agent, agency, purpose (Burke, 1969), as well as from other influences and resources – including Boal's (1995) theatre practices of Image Theatre, mask theatre (based on the Brechtian alienation effect; Brecht, 1964) and the statues technique of improvisation theatre (Johnstone, 1996).

The scenes were used to capture the ineffable, the hard-to-put-into-words, and to pay attention to novel experiences. This resonates with Weber’s study of non-verbal inquiry methods (2008, pp. 44-45). Mask theatre – whether as practice or interpretation – can also be seen as a form of arts-based initiatives (Abi). Schiuma’s (2010) study explains how Abi is used in a business context. In this paper interest is focused on exploring and developing pedagogical paths for employee-oriented and sensuous strategies which invite organisational actors to interpret when and how intuition and rationality are emerging. This type of Abi involves all organisational actors in strategy development. For example, at the grass-root level employees experience why and how strategy can be integrated in their everyday work.

As a research method, Research Based Theatre (RBT) is an inquiry process in which various actors (employees and managers of an organisation, researchers and artists) gain collective and personal knowledge by sharing their experiences. Storytelling with the help of images is one approach that uses participatory visual methods within qualitative research (Vince and Warren, forthcoming; Weber, 2008). Such methods are particularly useful in research projects that seek to evoke and articulate embodied knowledge.

The Finnish RBT case involves dialogue-construction in four organisations in Finland between 2008 and 2010. Altogether 13 interventions were organised with 151 participants from the case organisations (2–6 interventions per organisation). Each intervention was facilitated by an artist and a researcher, and 2–3 researchers collected data via participatory observation. The project collected 36 hours of videotapes and a 250 page fieldwork diary. The first case company operated in the forest industry sector and the other three case organisations in the public health care sector. All of them faced structural changes during the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. All four case organisations were familiar with contemporary innovation discourse and highlighted the value of openness and the importance of innovation in their official speeches and strategies. However, there was another reality on the practical level: on a micro-level, the managers and employees were not fully familiar with how to organise learning related to practice-based innovation (Pässilä et al., 2013). Table 1 illustrates the research settings.

**Table 1** Work Story research settings

<b>Cases</b>	<b>Case 1 Factory</b>	<b>Case 2 Care Unit</b>	<b>Case 3 Public corp.</b>	<b>Case 4 Public corp.</b>
<b>Field</b>	Multinational forest industry	Public sector health care unit	Public health centre	Public health care unit
<b>Practical unstructured situation</b>	Customers are dissatisfied with a product and complain	Teenagers’ no-show for dental care	The emergency duty of re-organisation	Problems in taking care of mentally disabled patients
<b>Focus of Work Stories</b>	<i>How did we come to the situation in which the customer is not happy?</i>	<i>What happens before, during and after a dental care operation?</i>	<i>What will happen during reorganising our unit’s practices?</i>	<i>How to share experiences between different work units and professionals?</i>

<b>Findings from dialogues</b>	Employees generated ideas on how to cooperate	Employees and managers negotiated how to organise a customer-friendly practice	Employees and managers generated ideas on how to organise their practice	Employees and managers generated ideas on how to solve problems related to the culture of their own organisation
<b>Work Story sessions</b>	6 storytelling sessions for employees from different work units	1 storytelling session for employees	2 storytelling sessions for employees from different work units	4 storytelling sessions for employees from different work units
<b>Participating employees</b>	Operators Sales managers Sales assistants Designers	Dentists Nurses Assistants	Nurses Doctors Collaborators	Nurses Doctors Assistants Managers
<b>Amount of participants</b>	70 employees 4 researchers + 1 applied theatre instructor	36 employees 3 researchers + 1 applied theatre instructor	25 employees 3 researchers + 1 applied theatre instructor	20 employees 3 researchers + 1 applied theatre instructor
<b>Documentation</b>	4 hr videotape + researchers' notes + 14 Work Stories	5 hr videotape + researchers' notes + 5 Work Stories	3 hr videotape + researchers' notes + 4 Work Stories	24 hr videotape + researchers' notes + 6 Work Stories
<b>Time frame</b>	Spring 2008	Spring 2009	Autumn 2009	Spring 2010

The dialogue in **Table 3** further illustrates the Work Story approach, and provides an example of how it can deepen the participants' insights into and understanding of their own work context.

**Table 3** Example of dialogue in a Work Story scene

*Joanna: The character in this picture is someone from the marketing department.*  
*Lisa: Yes, she has just received feedback from a customer.*  
*Joanna: Not positive feedback.*  
*(Laughter)*  
*Eva: No! Definitely not!*  
*Lisa: This is just so typical!*  
*Elisabeth: This depicts her feelings just after the phone call. You can see how she is.*  
*Joanna: Lying face down.*  
*Lisa: Again she is being treated like rubbish.*  
*Elisabeth: Everyone is pointing at her.*  
*Eva: Look, she has such a heavy burden.*  
*Joanna: The character in this picture is someone from the marketing department.*  
*Lisa: Yes, she has just received feedback from a customer.*  
*Joanna: Not positive feedback.*  
*(Laughter)*  
*Eva: No! Definitely not!*

*Lisa: This is just so typical!*  
*Elisabeth: This depicts her feelings just after the phone call. You can see how she is.*  
*Joanna: Lying face down.*  
*Lisa: Again she is being treated like rubbish.*  
*Elisabeth: Everyone is pointing at her.*  
*Eva: Look, she has such a heavy burden.*  
*Lisa: Like she was the guilty one.*  
*Joanna: Why do they always blame us?*  
*Elisabeth: Even when we are just middlemen.*  
*Joanna: ...and trying our best.*  
*Eva: But look, there she is at home and lying face down; can't get to sleep.*  
*Lisa: She thinks that nobody cares or values her work.*  
*Joanna: Even though she has done her work excellently.*  
*Elisabeth: But how has she done wrong then?*  
*Eva: Here she asks, "Why does this happen?"*

The study outlined here also defined “Six steps of dialogue” involved in this drama-informed process, as outlined in **Table 4**.

**Table 4** Six steps of dialogue

Step 1 Generation of themes	Orientation to Theatrical Images <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>via reflecting on still images illustrated by artist and researcher</li> </ul>
Step 2 Inquiry and reminiscence	Individual story; recalling one’s experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>in writing</li> <li>4 pictures and one “free” story</li> <li>(partial) sharing with others</li> </ul>
Step 3 Narration and sharing	Collective story; a mixture of the group members’ experiences, composed into a story <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>in homogeneous, small groups</li> <li>organising 3–8 pictures into a description of events which lead to problems</li> </ul>
Step 4 Sharing and exploring	Oral presentations and collective analysis of group stories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pointing out the turning points of the stories</li> <li>identifying alternative chains of events</li> </ul>
Step 5 Exploring and reflecting	Reflective discussion and reflective questioning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>outlining the wider context, the “big picture”; how the acts of the participants and changes in practices impact on others and vice versa</li> </ul>

Step 6 Exploring, generating and analysing	Working out what needs to be done differently <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• making social structures visible</li> <li>• mapping alternative practices</li> </ul>
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• practical ideas for what needs to be done, how to renew one's work, and how to deepen co-operation with colleagues</li> <li>• shared awareness about how one's actions create and transmit social situations</li> </ul>

## Analysis

Cunliffe (2002) defines managers as reflective practitioners, and also points out the challenge of creating reflexivity within organisations. Pässilä et al. (forthcoming) have extended Cunliffe's idea of reflexive practices into the field of applied drama. As researchers and drama practitioners, we link the concept of aesthetic distancing to the discussion of Taylor and Hansen (2005) who begin define different target areas of aesthetics in organisation and into a discussion of organising reflection (Vince, 2004) and reflexivity (Cunliffe, 2002).

This case serves to illustrate the concept of aesthetic distancing in the sense of embodied and cognitive engagement in which the participants use their senses, bodies and dramatic experiences to reflect on their social reality of work, working both with others with the support of both reflective and imaginative processes. In this study, we concluded that this should be defined as “sensuous thinking”, and that it is triggered via various theatrical techniques. For example, metaphors create aesthetic distance and allow the participants to deal with sensitive issues related to their organisational contexts (see also MacGilchrist, 2010 for a thorough review of the function of metaphor in creative thinking).

We also conclude that imagination and/or aesthetic thinking means that imagination – in the sense of deepening one's own understanding of reality in an organisation – is useful in learning that focuses on organisational knowledge creation, where people together try to make sense of complexity and the relations around them in order to understand what needs to be done in complex, chaotic situations. Sensuous thinking allows imagination to fuel the type of learning that can inform organisational knowledge creation and strategy development.

These type of situations are contextual and situational: people may use some logical–rational ways of dealing with them, but a more appropriate emphasis would be on interpretations and emerging multiple views – opportunity identification – rather than logical problem-solving only. Imagination as a part of sensuous thinking allows people to think through as-is situations into as-if situations. It is a complementary effect to thinking which, for example, through process drama allows organisational actors to explore various possibilities in complex situations.

The research which informs this case suggests that the “rational” is itself a mask which potentially hampers the development of human potential. In order to enable human potential – which we see as an essential element of embodiment – there is a need to bridge rational and intuitive thinking (Dreyfus, 1996). Both dimensions are needed in order to be able to allow a novel, emerging knowing.

## **Case 2: The MICL case: Embodiment in executive masters creativity education**

This section outlines the educational aims, process, assessment and outcomes of two aspects of a Masters in Innovation, Creativity and Leadership (MICL) programme which are relevant to the concept of sensuous sensography as outlined in this paper.

The programme is an interdisciplinary offering of eight 15-credit modules plus a 60-credit dissertation. The modules are drawn from: a business school (two), a school of interactive design (two), a school of arts (two), a law school (one) and a school of social sciences (one). The marketing, pricing and recruitment requirements of the programme define it as a programme for post-experience professionals who wish to enhance their personal and professional practices and skills related to innovation, creativity and leadership rather than gain purely functional skills. This is in contrast, for example, to an MSc in Interactive Design, an MSc in International Business or a professional development masters related to a specific professional practice or discipline. To encourage an accurate assessment of their engagement with the learning activities described below, we should stress that only a minority of the students join the programme with previous performance or artistic experience, though some to date have worked in design roles or in functional roles such as marketing within a creative industry context.

The teaching is informed by the disciplines and teaching styles that prevail in each of the module leaders' home schools, but the module owners collaborated actively over a period of more than two years to build a cross-disciplinary team, and to design consistent delivery structures and assessment criteria. The experience of teaching the modules continues to evolve, and is proving a fruitful source of insight into success criteria in interdisciplinary education and cross-discipline collaboration at masters level. The nature of the programme as interdisciplinary education has impacted considerably on the practice of the module leaders as well as the content of many modules over the three years of programme delivery to date, in particular to focus more on the generic application of research and knowledge in some of the component disciplines.

This case study, which draws on the initial findings of an ongoing larger-scale research study, focuses on these two aspects of the programme which involve the explicit deployment of embodiment in the development of strategic sensographers: first, *dérive* activities based on the work of Debord (1958) which form part of the programme's induction, and which are revisited in one of its final modules entitled Creativity and the Creative Industries; and secondly, arts-based activities and facilitation which inform the students' two assignments in the Creativity and the Creative Industries module.

### **Induction: The *dérive***

This activity is based on the work of Guy Debord, a situationist and activist whose thinking contributed to the protest events in Paris in 1968. He developed the *dérive* as a practice to fully experience human contexts, especially urban settings. The MICL's introduction to the activity that forms part of the programme's induction includes this definition of the *dérive*:

“The *dérive*: learning by walking about in a group, observing, noticing and conversing” (Masters in Innovation, Creativity and Leadership, 2012)

The briefing also includes this quotation from Debord’s work:

“One of the basic situationist practices is the *dérive* [literally: ‘drifting’], a technique of rapid passage through varied ambiances. *Dérives* involve playful–constructive behavior and awareness of psychogeographical effects, and are thus quite different from the classic notions of journey or stroll.” (Debord, 1958)

Armed with historical maps of London which assign an area of the city to each group, the students are invited to spend up to two hours in a specific small zone of inner London, and to identify and report back on examples of innovation, creativity and leadership in practice. They are briefed to feed back their findings orally or by using a visualiser to show images or objects (which can include telephones or cameras and any captured images), with no use of presentational software such as Powerpoint. A reflective group report is also submitted in writing at a later date.

The briefing for the activity (which is not assessed) seeks to position the *dérive* within current research in creative and “slow” thinking, introducing the practices of noticing and building awareness. The sources cited include Neugarten (2003, 2006), Baumard (1994) and Stilgoe (1998). The context section of the induction activity briefing draws these general conclusions about the purpose of this kind of learning:

- “There is an urgent need in the professions to promote curiosity and more reflective approaches
- Technology has not provided more time to create and critically reflect.
- Walking enables students (and faculty) to make time and space for visually-oriented reflection
- The *dérive* is one way to model creativity and critical reflection through a form of learner centred, informal, critical learning.” (Masters in Innovation, Creativity and Leadership, 2012)

The briefing for the activity itself, which includes a variety of advice relating to team working, the importance of slowness in observation, and the need to document observations and reflections systematically, concludes:

- “Don’t get arrested
- Do plan, converse, argue, record
- Depth much more important than breadth...
- Generate insights for the other groups
- Take risks in presentation” (Masters in Innovation, Creativity and Leadership, 2012)

The groups’ presentations based on this *dérive* activity, which has run for three successive years, have taken a variety of forms. Different small groups of three or four students have developed and performed mini-plays, presented imaginative or analytical narratives around a series of photographs or drawings, and identified both context-specific and interpersonal insights which surprised them.

In one case a group discovered an abandoned child's "Creativity Desk" which they appropriated and brought back as the centrepiece of their presentation. This is perhaps an extreme example of the physical embodiment of the abstract concept of creativity. Other findings highlighted in the groups' presentations include: noticing design features in pavements and on buildings; seeing working spaces from unexpected angles, and questioning their effects on the workers; becoming aware of the design aspects of housing developments within the city, and issues of community; seeing the multiplicity of messages in traffic signs and public transport initiatives, and questioning the inherent design processes as well as broader social, environmental and governmental implications; and questioning the historical and current function of a structure within a cemetery.

Almost all of the groups reported initial uncertainties or tensions with one another or with the brief, followed by a "letting go" process beyond that resistance. They also commonly reported becoming increasingly aware of the processes within the group, eg of how they agreed working definitions of the concepts of innovation, creativity and leadership; of the stages of exploration and refinement they experienced in formulating their conclusions – which, they reported, often came together during social, relaxed time when the group "took a break" from the task itself; and of how the different group members contributed to developing the presentations within a short period of time.

This activity has an obvious induction function in terms of the allowing the students to become more familiar with one another and with the faculty. Beyond this, their feedback confirms its contribution to the establishment of a culture of open, participative, explorative learning for the programme as a whole by encouraging engagement with learning activities which might initially appear unpromising, uncomfortable or even potentially risky.

### **The Creativity and the Creative Industries module**

This module, one of two in the programme informed by arts practices, has to date been delivered twice as one of the final modules of the MICL. Though based in the School of Arts and involving specialist Arts faculty in its delivery, the design of the module drew upon the structure and assessment of successful experiential modules offered at Bachelors and Masters level within the Business School. Like one of the first modules of the programme, Creative Writing, it calls upon the students to explore their own creative processes within given creative frameworks. In this module, the specified creative frameworks are performance (as a group assignment) and the development and display of a creative artefact with a supporting reflective portfolio and report (as an individual assignment).

The module specification includes this statement of aims:

"This module will provide an opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills gained in the other modules in a series of experiential workshops, to develop performance-based assessment, and to explore the ways in which innovation, creativity and leadership apply to a number of creative industries." (Masters in Innovation, Creativity and Leadership, 2012)

This is the specification's overview statement of the module content:

“The module will review the programme themes through teaching and an assessment framework which support a series of experiential workshops with individual and group activities, aiming to introduce working practices of innovation, creativity and leadership within creative processes and creative industries; to apply the theoretical knowledge and skills developed in other modules; and to support individual students to deepen their understanding and the application of their learning through developing performance-based assessments rooted in creative practices, by gathering evidence of their learning gains and reflecting upon them in a personal portfolio.” (Masters in Innovation, Creativity and Leadership, 2012)

Much of the creative group and individual work was expected to take place outside of class time, with tutorial support from the module leader.

The delivery of the module has to date included visits to creative institutions including major museums and performance spaces, with presentations and discussions with associated professionals; and music, scriptwriting, comedy and art workshops with expert practitioners. For example, the first classes of the 2012 and 2013 MICL deliveries were convened at a London museum, and revisited the *dérive* activity by inviting the students to spend an hour in silence, on their own, exploring the museum and starting their personal portfolios with sketches or notes, or by taking photographs. In the comedy workshop, the students were introduced to a series of improvisation practices which inform the performances of professional comedians. The conclusion of the music workshop, which was designed and led by an ensemble of skilled professional musicians, were communal performances of programmatic musical works composed by Biber (in 2012) and Telemann (in 2013). Another visitor-led session invited the students to explore biofeedback techniques that are applied in leadership development and coaching to encourage individuals and executive groups to become more aware of the impact of their internal states and health on creativity and innovation, and the benefits of breathing and other practices which allow these states to be better managed, both individually and communally.

This module has been led to date by a faculty member whose own previous research has explored the Heron model of personhood introduced above (Heron, 1992, p. 122), and who became a higher education teacher after executive-level experience in a creative industry. Her teaching is informed by a commitment to active, reflective and transferable learning related to individual students’ personal experience and goals. As module leader, she has defined her role as to contextualise the workshop experiences by providing theoretical insights relating to learning theory, reflective practices and the interdisciplinary literature related to the creative industries; and to facilitate the groups and individuals in the development of their assessed performances and personal artefacts plus associated reflective submissions.

The assessed coursework elements in this module are:

Group: a creative live performance of 5–10 minutes (40% of the module credit), timed after the completion of roughly two-thirds of the module

Individual: an assignment with three elements (60% in total of the module credit), as the final teaching event of the module and, in 2013, of the programme:

- An artistic artefact, presented in a final show
- Supporting display documentation to demonstrate the intended audience and function of the artefact
- A personal portfolio and summary reflective report which evidences development in understanding and skill relating to the themes of both the module and the programme, with reference to theory.

In 2013, the notified marking criteria for all of the assessment elements cited Besemer's (1998) "Creative Product Analysis Matrix", with its distinction between "Novelty", "Resolution" and "Elaboration and synthesis". The marking scheme allowed credit for evidence of active exploration of the chosen media, for the effectiveness and originality of the presentation format, and for "Refinement and persuasiveness of progressive personal reflection which integrates perspectives from theory" (Masters in Innovation, Creativity and Leadership, 2012).

**Figure 4** Examples of MICL Artefacts and Portfolios (2012)

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The students' responses to these assignments have been of a high calibre, as confirmed in the moderation process and the External Examiner' review. The group performances responded to the brief in a variety of formats including drama, improvisation, comedy, mixed media, and crafted scripts which in some cases integrated music and dance. The integration of themes related to the MICL programme as a whole has been impressive though frequently comic and playful, and has demonstrated a strong sense of mastery and application of the students' learning. Consistent with the themes of this paper, in every performance to date the students have participated equally in the performances as well as the planning stages, in many cases operating well beyond their personal expectations and professed comfort zones, as confirmed by the honest and evidenced reflective content of their individual portfolios.

The artefact shows have similarly produced work of a high calibre, in most cases beyond the general standards of masters students within the Business School completing artistic assignments of similar intent, as confirmed by the co-marker. Many demanded the acquisition of new skills in the use of materials and electronics, and almost all moved beyond technology into an artistic framework, defined as a representational, integrative piece. "Considered", "deeply felt" and "rich" were adjectives we have applied to the marking of the two complete cohorts to date, whose artefacts were presented in a range of media including paint, metal and wooden sculptures, plaster of Paris, paper, and electronic submissions. In one case the artefact was based around spicy food, a rare example of the deployment of the sense of taste in strategic sensography.

The supporting presentational materials were often consistent with display in an art gallery. In other cases, the stated presentational context was an organisational or university entry area or atrium, while others aimed to support the application of the artefact to a training or leadership development setting.

The personal portfolios have also in many cases represented deep intrapersonal reflection which demonstrated considerable learning gains through the module and the programme as a whole, as well as evidencing the students' artistic explorations as specified in the assignment briefings.

The students' overall feedback on the module has also been strongly positive, citing only the scale and nature of the effort involved in the coursework, especially to refine and plan the form and execution of their artefacts. The 2013 delivery was therefore adjusted to be delivered over 11 weeks rather than in the intensive five-day workshop format of the 2012 delivery.

## **Analysis**

This case suggests that the outcomes of the MICL's *dérive* activities invite further research into the design of HE teaching to promote embodied learning combined with reflection (Bolton, 2010). The levels of active participation and achievement within the MICL group performances also suggest that these activities deliver outcomes in terms of risk taking, collaboration and deep-level processing of themes and core content which support the 5S+3D learning outcomes required to develop a strategic sensographer.

The MICL artefact show and its associated presentational and reflective elements throw light on the other face of embodiment in learning design by requiring the

students to develop and present a piece of art and then to reflect on the process and on their learning gains. The students' feedback suggests that this aspect of the module delivers the most challenging assignment and the deepest learning in the programme as a whole. The most profound of the artefacts and reflective portfolios were deeply felt and personal as well as representational.

Both the performance and the artefact assessments can be related to Merleau-Ponty's (1962) theory of the establishment of the intentional arc, as outlined by Dreyfus (1996). In both cases, the learning challenges called upon the students to engage as "Stage 1: Novice" in both a motor skill and a series of intellectual skills. Most moved successfully through the stages of "Stage 2: Advanced beginner", "Stage 3: Competence", and "Stage 4: Proficient", though there was no expectation on them of expert performance as performers or artists at the highest defined level of embodiment, "Stage 5: Expertise".

The development of the students' artefacts confirmed the explanatory potential of Heron's model of personhood (e.g. 1994, p.123): though these were often not fully crafted pieces of work, the artefacts which most impressed as art conveyed deeply felt engagement with the theme (accessing Heron's "Affective mode") which was both visualised (his "Imaginal" mode) and convincingly situated within a given setting (his "Conceptual" mode) – and many of the students' journeys to achieve their artefacts (the "Active" mode) were evidenced in convincing detail in their associated reflective portfolios. This initial study suggests that further research into arts-based educational projects with mature professional students could inform further innovations for advanced university teaching and learning in management and professional education.

## ***Conclusions***

We conclude that strategic sensographers need to be developed through methods which are themselves dominantly sensuous, and which, in contrast to the MBA-dominated approach to the education of strategists as a "fast" approach, promotes "slow" approaches. In our experience, the traditional business school is so strongly dominated by rational interests and disciplines that it may become increasingly necessary and indeed highly desirable for strategic sensography to involve authentic collaboration across apparently unrelated parts of the university.

From the cases outlined above, we concluded that such collaborations can evolve a specialised route to management education rather than by waiting for rationally based programmes such as the MBA to change by themselves. Strategic sensography is so different from rational strategising that it involves disruption for the individuals most directly involved – including teachers as well as learners, though the initial focus of the research presented here is primarily on pedagogical design and the student experience. This disruption can be a powerful catalyst for learning, but calls for processes which promote slow and deep learning rather than fast and shallow learning (Claxton, 1997; MacGilchrist, 2010). To achieve this, we also advocate the integration of reflective practices (Bolton, 2010) to support such slow approaches to learning, as an essential tool in the promote the development of lasting intrapersonal insights.

Pässilä et al. (2012) raise the legitimate question of whether Work Story and TI (and, by extension, the pedagogical approaches adopted in the MICL) can be used as an inquiry method for organisational actors who have no interest in looking behind the rational mask. Undoubtedly there are organisational actors who are more keen on

traditional learning programmes than art-based and sensographic initiatives. Drama-based approaches in the two cases reviewed in this paper promote the proposition that the participants have the power to change existing practices in their organisations – not only to suggest ideas. If the organisational actors – managers or employees – lack that power, the drama-based approach will be “tamed”, and merely maintain situations rather than providing transformative steps to change.

To relate these conclusions to traditional management education: both interpretative and logical–rational processes are needed, but the challenge is to develop an awareness of when management (and especially MBA) students are using interpretative or logical–rational thinking. The study by Lester and Piore (2004) confirms that managers tend to self-evaluate themselves as logical–rational thinkers even when they are using interpretation, because they are not doing so consciously. Vince et al.'s (2008) study also suggests that managers' decisions are often based on emotions, intuitions and tacit knowing.

We conclude that these examples offer potentially fruitful pedagogical approaches which allow the students to develop their awareness and their mastery of their own interpretative and creative responses. Rather than simply relying on reproducing formulae, they can find imaginative approaches that are appropriate for them as strategists, and/or most appropriate to the environment under consideration. The embodied experiences also build both their awareness and their confidence in improvisation, including the introduction of an approach unexpectedly in “mid flight”.

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