

## Filmmakers' Archive

### Salomé Lamas

#### Introduction

The other day I run into the publication of a project that took place in Porto in 1977 called *Pedagogy of the Streets*.

"...Elvira Leite's project developed, the streets became an active meeting point to discuss ideas, plan activities, and learn new skills. Largo da Pena Ventosa was turned into a workshop where children of all ages interacted to give life to a plan that reflected their personal interests. Although the project dates back to the beginning of Leite's professional career, it is already characterized by what would later become her theory and practice, in one word, her pedagogy. This was nurtured by her sensitivity and intelligence, and firmly rooted in research and education resulting in the development of her own method of teaching. It is a minimally prescriptive pedagogy which welcomes the unpredictable and aims at realizing individual and collective projects."  
<https://www.pierrotlefou.pt/01-Pedagogy-of-the-Streets>

I'll tell you something else. Isabel Lamas was a grandmother, but she was also an educator that passed away on my sixteenth anniversary.

Besides having dedicated her life to elementary schooling across Portugal. She created syllabus and programs for the Portuguese Ministry of Education, published elementary school manuals with different editors, taught at Instituto Piaget, published children's books, wrote lyrics for children musicals and other numerous records. Growing around her was incredible because she let me be part of it. During the week she often took me to her classes. We would go shopping for children's books that she needed to get a sense of what was being published at the time. On the weekends she wrote endlessly on the kitchen table. And I would sit by her side illustrating stories, school exercises and lyrics. Only later I realized that some of the houses that we visited were from families with children with behavioural or cognitive problems that she supported.

Another particularity was that Isabel Lamas insisted that special children should be educated together with regular children in the official education system disregarding the instructions of the Ministry of Education. She advocated for inclusiveness promoting that children become more tolerate adults.

Lisbon, Portuguese life, Isabel Lamas, a primary school teacher in Lisbon's Encarnação neighbourhood who uses unorthodox methods in teaching.  
<https://arquivos.rtp.pt/conteudos/vida-portuguesa-professora-primaria/>

Description: Shots of the interview with Isabel Lamas, pupils tear pages out of study books; general shots of the classroom; journalist Ana Paula Cabral; close-ups of uninhibited child talks about sexology describing mother breastfeeding; children with problems adapting to teaching reveal extraordinary progress with this teaching method; close-ups of child's face.

Approaches to knowledge in education possibly benefit from a network sensibility that foregrounds the negotiated processes through which the material becomes entangled with the social to bring forth actions, subjectivities and ideas. Socio-material approaches to education share analytical perspectives in the sense that they refuse to separate the human dimensions of educational practices from their material dimensions, and rather focus on the relational composition of these practices. These approaches afford a criticality that open necessary entry points for rethinking learning processes and educational institutions.

Theory and practice walk side by side. Before the creative visual arts have been regarded as contributors to knowledge, not as problem solvers, not to take too seriously. But the idea that the creative arts can be more than creative production constituting intellectual inquiry and contributing to new understanding and insight is a step that questions what gets valued as knowledge. Over the last couple of decades, a new trend has emerged in research in the creative visual arts, one that includes practice and performance as depictions of and vehicles for research.

Practices of knowing are specific material engagements that participate in (re)configuring the world. The move from matters of fact to matters of concern allows for “speaking nearby”, a method to engage with the practice of the student, that allows to enter into a dialogue with the student. Whose work is being thought of, produced, and exhibited just like mine. Speaking nearby as a method for tutoring. Inherent to this practice of speaking nearby is a critique of the authority of knowledge in most educational institutions.

To open new perspectives of education mixing methodologies from different disciplines as well as a simultaneous commitment to both critique and care, embrace another notion of objectivity which offers an exceptionally rich resource for bridging current methodological divides.

Practitioners should dedicate time to education or some kind of knowledge dissemination. Educator duties are not to be taken lightly. Educators that teach in practice and that think through ideas in the process of producing work achieve better results. Classes where reflection runs in parallel and is addressed in critical sessions promote a forum for debate and strengthen the sense of community.

Educational institutions can act as protected environments for practice-based research. Multidisciplinary and collaboration across departments should be instigated. Privileged resources should be available to students.

A sense of community should be encouraged among educators and students. Along with diversity, enquiry and shared experience. Educators and students should be fluent in working both on a theoretical and a on a material level.

Educators and students should find a common ground to work both individually and collectively to advance media practice, art, and the public humanities.

Educators should provide a driving force to activate students' lives and of all the school community in general.

Methodologies that are focused on having the students acquiring knowledge by promoting individualized learning processes achieve better results.

Educators shouldn't provide advice in opposition to granting access and discussion.

Experimental methodologies with pedagogies that prioritize the students' projects and their research interests and where the educational environment acts simultaneously as a comfortable and a hostile laboratory achieve better results.

The learning process must be structured not only to confront the student with different methodologies and approaches but also to aim at the development of multiple problem-solving strategies. The skills acquired become stronger and much more meaningful to the student. This method focuses on the student, promoting a personalized education. The laboratory practice methodology and heuristic research process stimulate student's autonomy and ability to map their place in the world.

Meeting a generous educator can open the student's horizons and have an impact in his/her path.

Teaching must be rewarding to the educator. It must be stimulating when the students are motivated and when educational environment provides it.

If the student fails in acquiring tools or doesn't show interest for the activities the educator should be blamed. The educator must be active within the educational environment and to participate in the pedagogical discussion.