

TITLE

Activating empathy through the act of drawing

NAME

Louise De Brabander, Thierry Lagrange, Jo Van Den Berghe

AFFILIATION

KU Leuven, Department of Architecture, Sint-Lucas Campus

EMAIL ADDRESS

louise.debrabander@kuleuven.be, thierry.lagrange@kuleuven.be, johan.vandenberghe@kuleuven.be

KEYWORDS

the act of drawing, moment of embodiment, empathy, fragility

ABSTRACT

We propose to present a set of drawings as an artefact. Through these drawings, we propose the act of drawing as a moment of embodiment and a tool to further enhance empathy in observations of phenomena related to architectural design which are difficult to understand otherwise. This research aims to develop ways of understanding fragility in architecture through initiating an (empathic) drawing process. We aim to critically assess and reflect on three series of drawings, their interrelation and how making those drawings contributes to understanding fragility through empathy.

We will discuss these three series of drawings: Firstly, we will discuss a selection of drawings out of the first author's drawing archive, consisting of drawings made as a child, a youngster, an architectural student and an architectural researcher. To obtain insight in the author's way of drawing and hence observing, the author's drawing archive has been observed. The observation has indicated that drawings made two decades ago are interlinked with drawings made over the past five years.

Secondly, we will bring to the fore a series of sketches of a Belgian dune landscape made on site. We will elaborate on how these sketches are an initiator for current drawing cycles by serving as *memo drawings*.

To conclude, we will elaborate on a drawing series that comprises layered drawings that gradually decode and unravel spatial observations. Together with the sketches they are further enhancing empathy and provide a first stepping-stone to develop an understanding of fragility by becoming that which is not understood (Robinson, 2015; Vico, 1725).

References

-Robinson, S. (2015). Boundaries of Skin: John Dewey, Didier Anzieu and Architectural Possibility. In *Architecture and Empathy* (pp. 42–63). Finland: Tapio Wirkkala-Rut Bryk Foundation.

-Vico, G. (1725). *Scienza Nuova: Principi di Scienza Nuova d'intorno alla Comune Natura delle Nazioni*.

This thesis will explore how adult fiction invites empathy in the reader and lets the reader experience and learn through reading. I will look at how adult fiction narrated through the child's perspective invites the reader to an empathetic reflection. By using *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini and *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, I will identify how narrative techniques are used in order to promote empathy. Children view and experience the world in various ways. Looking through the lens of a child can be both intimidating and enriching. As I am going to be an English teacher, I would say that both me and my students benefit from confronting unknown situations through novels narrated by children. Empathy is an act of imagining or "entering" the world of another person. As such, it requires conscious attention during dialogue and interaction. Empathy is a mode of attending to the other. Feedback and feed-forward loops link on-going empathy and dyspathy processes with longer term changes in "empathic understanding" of the Other. For his part, Bloom defines empathy as "the act of coming to experience the world as you think someone else does." This type of empathy was explored by philosophers of the Scottish Enlightenment. Bloom writes "Such empathic feelings could then motivate you to act." We go through a mental process that is typically called "choice," where we think about the consequences of our actions. There is nothing magical about this. The neural basis of mental life is fully compatible with the existence of conscious deliberation and rational thought "with neural systems that analyze different options, construct logical chains of argument, reason through examples and analogies, and respond to the anticipated consequences of actions. Scrutinizing spatial potential behind the representation through perspective drawing. Activating empathy through the act of drawing. Dwelling, the conversation pieces. Verbiest. Epicurus Garden. Between Drawing and Sculpture. Reflexive Practice." In the fieldguide *Between Natural And Artificial* students looked at the continuum between natural and artificial through the lens of landscape photography, landscape architecture and land art, artistic disciplines particularly attuned to these topics. By precisely collecting of references, identifying parameters and principles at work in those references through making diagrams, they identified a continuum between the two notions, mapping the references out linearly from more natural to more artificial. been through the copyediting, typesetting, pagination and proofreading process which may lead to differences between this version and the Version of Record. Please cite this article as "Drawing from the cumulative body of research on empathy, we then critically review the organizational literature on empathy. (1983-2018), identifying critical issues in empathy research and offering recommendations." Thus, although the act of perspective taking can result in cognitive empathy, it is not synonymous with cognitive empathy. Moreover, perspective taking is not.