

# Object Art and Artistic Jewellery [online]

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**Abstract:** The paper presents one of the options for substituting contact teaching of the subject titled the *Art Studio of Metal Works, Object Art and Jewellery*, which has been transferred to the online environment. Using software that has helped produce videos with instructional elements, it was possible, at least partially, to overcome the irreplaceability of contact teaching of the given subject, which is commonly based in the demonstration of techniques and work procedures while students work on their half-year artistic assignments. The paper analyses the processing of the videos and the available software tools, as well as the nature of the videos with instructional elements, which relate to technological procedures and working with tools. The conclusion of the paper points to the demands placed on the teacher and a brief confrontation of the classic lesson with the videos, that is, a direct demonstration of the techniques and procedures on one hand with the instructional videos on the other.

**Keywords:** object art, documentary, instructional video, artistic jewellery, distance teaching

## Introduction

The Art Studio of Metal Works, Object Art and Jewellery (hereinafter referred to as 'the Studio') is one of many subjects that are part of the education at the Department of Art Education, Faculty of Education, Palacký University Olomouc (CZ). Just as in other studios – printmaking art, computer graphics, sculpture, ceramics, textile art, drawing, painting, intermedia art, photography, also here students acquire both practical and theoretical foundations related to the concept of the Studio, which are consistent with the focus of the given study field and the profile of the graduate. The Art Studio of Metal Works, Object Art and Jewellery is, after all, a little different and specific, in that, in addition to object-making, it focuses also on artistic jewellery and its various overlaps. It is a rarity of the Department of Art Education in Olomouc that it has an art studio with such a specialisation, but it is also an evidence to the fact that the Department follows the concept of Bauhaus and its pedagogical and artistic legacy, which is evident from the long-term direction of this workplace.

Fig. 1 A view of the Art Studio of Metal Works, Object Art and Jewellery, in which there are 12 goldsmith's tables equipped with basic tools. Furthermore, the Studio has a place for soldering, drilling, as well as beating, surface treatment and machining of metal and plastic materials.

The concept of the Art Studio of Metal Works, Object Art and Jewellery, founded by the established Czech jeweller Pavel Herynek, has changed in relation to the personalities who led the Studio. At present, the Studio is focused on theoretical preparation and the history of jewellery and its contemporary contexts, not only in the field of applied art, but jewellery can also be seen as a manifestation of a society-wide events, atmosphere, trends, fashion, customs, etc. In theory, it focuses not only on material artefacts in the form of jewellery, but also on paintings, written period sources, sculptures and the like. Students gain a broader period overview, as well as interpretive competencies in the analysis of artefacts in the broadest contexts across history and disciplines with their interconnections, thus forming imaginary networks. At the practical level, students get acquainted with the basic work procedures – cutting, bending, soldering, polishing, matting, grinding, beating, engraving, and so on, for working with both metals and plastics, but also with a variety of other materials. Practical seminars thus look at jewellery as a carrier of content, meaning, ideas, and in the students' understanding, the result of the half-year efforts is an original statement in the form of a jewellery reacting to a variety of content. Their works are often on the border of design and free art. The result is not just a piece of jewellery, students often reach for a more intimate object, an installation that works with materiality, material alchemy, where the function disappears from it. The peculiarity of the Studio is precisely in the work with materiality, in which there are no boundaries, students are often forced to solve original technological procedures that they do not find available on the Internet or in manuals. This original result is preceded by a series of experiments in which the aspect of a process, a transformation over time, principles of growth and destruction are also examined. The pedagogical participation in students' original works also requires a considerable degree of innovation and experimentation, precisely because students come up with a variety of materials and their combinations and concepts that are not based on proven practices and work procedures. We could call the Studio a platform for alchemy, for exploring processes in nature, decomposition and growth of materials, exploring objects and their emotional deposits, a platform for analysing sociocultural relationships, relationships between objects themselves, and objects and people in their semantic connections. Like many other studios, also this Studio was forced to face the great challenge to transfer the practical lessons to the online environment. The biggest challenge was to provide the technological background, as the Studio has a variety of machines and tools, which are fully available to students and which in most cases are not common household equipment. At this point, there is a limit to practical teaching, which online teaching can only partially replace during a crisis such like this. Many students' works are directly dependent on studio work and pedagogical guidance, which has resulted in a partial adjustment of the educational content. We were faced with the challenge of how to educate in areas such as the processing of materials, soldering, cutting, grinding without pre-recorded instructional videos and how to process educational material so that it

remains permanent and usable in the future. We found ourselves 'empty-handed' before the challenge of developing educational material that would well describe the phenomena and procedures that were not documented in advance. The solution to this unique situation is described in the following text of the case study.

A set of educational materials in the form of videos with instructional materials were realised for students of the Department of Art Education in Olomouc. They are in different years of their studies and have chosen subjects that are normally realised in this Studio. The group of students consisted of those who were in their first year of bachelor's studies, as well as second and third years, and also students of master's studies, who decide themselves in which art studio they would like to specialise. Students in master's studies have the option to profile themselves and focus on the areas of art that they consider most important for their future development.

The key objective was to transfer the Studio work to the online environment in the most efficient way possible. Another objective was to transform the educational content into educational material in the form of videos with instructional elements – commonly such content is realised by way of contact teaching through explanations and practical demonstrations. The aim of the videos was to provide students with the necessary theory and to show them practical procedures whose visual data were not prepared in advance. The demonstration of procedures and techniques, as well as their context, represent the basis of the Studio work and the fundamental knowledge base for the half-year term assignment and the resulting artistic artefacts. On this basis, students can embark on experimentation, finding new ways for adjustment and application, new original methods and designs. They are instructed on how to work with tools, their functions, limits and also their risks. The personal goal was to create such educational material, which in the final version would not be intended only for this particular global situation, but would serve for the purposes of repetition, in various situations, for various needs, not only to ensure lessons in this half-year term. At the same time, these educational documentaries would be well disseminated and accessible within the educational process while available also to a wider audience.

### **1 Camtasia – a Program for Processing Videos with Instructional Elements**

The given situation, that is, the impossibility to teach face to face has forced us to look for various functional tools and programs in which we would be able to quickly navigate ourselves and work effectively without previous experience and extensive preparations. It was equally important to find materials that could be didactically modified and adapted to our needs, even in cases where we are not the original authors, but we borrow the material for this purpose. For me, this tool became the

Camtasia program (from TechSmith®), which I began to use to process videos – documentaries with instructional elements. The virtual world is full of various videos and visual materials that fall into different categories – disciplines, different areas, and serve various purposes other than educational. In the past, it was not unusual that students had come to the Studio with information they brought from the Internet. Many came up with requirements based on various videos, presented e.g. on YouTube, or the information they got from these videos. However, most of them lacked a didactic grasp, a pedagogical goal. As a result, the ideas about how the displayed things really work were quite distorted. From such videos, students will not find out about how much experience the given author has, how long it took them to learn such things, or about the tricks and craftsmanship touches that are not obvious from the videos. For me, this media world became the starting point and space for my comment. It was a type of an intervention that I processed in the form of videos with instructional aspects. In professional discussion, it often appears that learning from YouTube, for example, is a common phenomenon that is not unusual for the current population. However, it remains very important to monitor their didactic processing and the way they work with didactic content and purpose. However, that overrated virality is not the bearer of the message or the didactic goal. A good example that documents the absence of a didactic grasp are many of the videos that show the way a professional spins pottery on a potter's wheel. Students watch videos that fascinate us with the quality, dimensions and shape of the resulting artefacts, but these videos are only documentaries. They do not work with didactic content or educational purpose. Students thus gain a very distorted idea of how spinning on a potter's wheel works in reality. Their idea is so far removed from reality that in their subsequent practice, it leads many to frustration with their own work. What a professional does in videos in seconds, with ease, without difficulty, how to centre the lump, pull out the material and shape it into a resulting artefact, remains hidden from students in their initial attempts, they lack the key to achieving such a result and adequate practice. Such videos contain no commentaries, and students do not learn how to work with their fingers, the moisture of the material, the pressure on the material, and how to use their muscles and parts of the body and which ones. In conclusion, perhaps most importantly, almost always it is a professional who has been learning the craft for years and has extensive experience in this work. It is therefore unthinkable for students to believe that they will be able to achieve a comparable result at the first attempt. We encounter the same problems in practice, when working with different materials and technologies. As with the example described above, as well as many other involved in working in the Studio, it is apparent that the pedagogical intervention and commentary, which will introduce students to reality, real prices and real possibilities is utmost important. Nevertheless, similar videos can be used for education, in the case that we didactically grasp them and comment on them. This basic principle has become the alpha and omega of my processing of videos with instructional elements. To begin

with, however, let's return to the description of the tool used – the Camtasia program. Camtasia is paid software for video processing and editing (it is likely that there are various and publicly available equivalents of this program with a free license). Its user interface is very intuitive, and I was able to work with it without having any previous experience with video editing. This program has several benefits, which I employed in particular works. One of them is the ability to upload videos from your own computer screen. It is compatible with the popular program for processing presentations – Power Point, which makes it possible to upload images directly from the presentation. You get working material in the form of a still or moving image with which you continue to work. You can use the entire screen or any viewport that you set in the program. You can record directly from your webcam, insert several layers of audio, music, and edit both visual and audio recordings with a variety of tools. Of course, it is possible to insert various comments, animations, your own media image, etc. I used this program to process the lessons in the form of videos, as well as to edit the instructional videos that were part of them.

Fig. 2 A print screen of the Camtasia environment. In the upper left corner, you can find tools for inserting various media content, text, animations and transitions, etc. In the middle at the top of the image, there is a window for playing the emerging document. The lower part consists of a timeline with different levels of layers into which you can insert various media imports – you need to specify the length of playback, the length of display, and also the layer in which they will be displayed.

Camtasia has helped me use things from my previous considerations about how many different materials – drawings, paintings, texts, technical tools, photography, visualisations, etc. we can find on the Internet that relate to my area of interest and research. As a teacher, I discover these materials gradually, sometimes I see something in a film or other document that is not primarily focused on object artmaking and artistic jewellery. The diversity of such records well illustrates the complex image of the researched and presented subject matter. At the same time, it is an image that I try to lead students to within these subjects. The Camtasia program therefore made it possible for me to use all these images for educational purposes. And specifically, so that I could e.g. create a recording from various parts of other videos, in which the subject I needed to present to the students was shown only for a moment. So, what tools did I use in Camtasia?

### **1.1 Working with Word**

A word, as a basic building block in lectures or descriptions of technological processes, was used in the software in the form of written texts, descriptions, commentaries; or in the form of a spoken word. At work, I used a combination of these methods, which I edited in various ways. The program

offered various options for editing the voice recording, removing background noise, as well as adjusting the volume in various parts of the processed document. In the form of a written word, it offered transitions, various text manipulations, enlargement, reduction in size, the possibility of determining the length of the display, and, of course, the classic adjustment in the form of font size, font type, etc. I copied the words into the program in a simple way – by importing it and determining its position on the timeline of the created document. I could also determine in which layer of the document this imported word would be located.

### **1.2 Working with Sound**

When working with sound, the program allowed the insertion of various pieces of music or sounds, the volume level of which I set in the context of other media content. In this way, I was able to insert authentic period music into the documentary, which, for example, was related to what I was just showing to the students, what I was just talking about, what they had just seen in the form of a moving or static image. The sound filled in empty spaces – transitions, in these places I could set its volume level higher, and in the sequences of the spoken word, it played the role of an ambient background.

### **1.3 Working with a Static Image**

As I indicated, the program allowed the insertion of various types of documents, or their print screens. In the processed videos, I combined a moving and static image together with spoken and written text. Imported static images were in the form of photos from our own database, from already processed PowerPoint presentations (thanks to the mentioned compatibility with this program), in the form of print screens – technical drawings, photos from various websites, online publications, PDF files, etc.

Fig. 3 The demonstration of importing a still image – a photo and setting the time of its display.

Fig. 4 A sample print screen – a diagram of making a form from a freely available document, which did not have to be downloaded to a computer, but through the program it was possible to make a record and a cut-out segment of the issue I was interested in. In the whole document containing dozens of pages, I could focus only on the places I was interested in and create a record from them in the form of import into my own database created in the software.

### **1.4 Working with a Moving Image**

Finally, I'd like to reflect on working with a moving image, which allowed me an interesting entry. Thanks to the possibility to record the screen – its whole or a cut-out, and the possibility to create a

video from the displayed material on the monitor, I was able to didactically grasp parts of other – already existing videos and documentaries. In this way, I also obtained material with instructional elements, showing technological procedures, work procedures and created a database that did not exist before. When working on the video, it was done in a way that I could talk about the pope's ring and at the same time draw visual resources – moving and static images from documents that were not primarily about the Pope's jewellery. But the pope was depicted in more detail in them (Fig. 5). Excerpts from various domestic and foreign news, various YouTube videos, where I used only specific parts free from secondary scenes, have become such a source for me. Among the many other strategies that shared similar principles, I'd like to mention an excerpt from a video documentary about Egypt, from which I shot a short video of the part of the documentary that showed how artisans work – what tools and procedures they use. Other examples include an excerpt from videos from the 1960s (Fig. 6), which documented social atmosphere. I used sequences from private videos of people working with certain technologies (Fig. 7), sequences from videos promoting a company and corporate technologies, sequences from video documents about personalities in which the jewellery was only briefly displayed, as well as recordings from openings, sequences from videos of various museums or visitors to these institutions. It was even possible to use the potential of social networks – Facebook and Instagram, which are saturated with material suitable for didactic grasp and processing for educational purposes.

Fig. 5 A print screen from recording a video from a documentary about the pope where we can see a close-up on his hand and ring.

Fig. 6 The demonstration of making a video from a cut-out of a computer monitor on which a video about the artist Valie Export is being played. On the right side you can see a panel with options to start the video and start recording, as well as tools for selecting the size of the recording section or the entire monitor.

Fig. 7 The demonstration of recording from an existing freely accessible YouTube video. From the whole video, I used only the part which I could use to describe the explained phenomena. The entire length of the video documented the process of making a mould. For my needs, I only used the moments of making a wooden fence.

## **2 Lecturer – Screen-writer – Director**

I have documented that it is relatively easy to acquire a large number of different materials, which then has to be didactically transformed, commented on, put into a certain storyline so that the video is not a heap of data, images and scenes, but also serves the viewer – a student for educational purpose. At this point, I realised that as a lecturer, I was taking on the role of a screenwriter and

director. Under normal circumstances, as a lecturer and the head of the Studio, I was not used to think much about the dynamics of the lecture, the narration, the storyline, the alternation of visual stimuli, the individual sequences and the way they were ordered. My role as a lecturer and the head of the Studio, a teacher who shows students what is done and how, what is processed and how, has changed to the one who handles the production of the video documentary and focuses on how this documentary will be perceived by the audience, in my case, by students. I focused on how the individual moving images, still images and other components of the video are interrelated. As a lecturer – a screenwriter – a director, I started working with the image format, image frame, and image plan. I began to be interested in what happens on the record, such as the individual shapes and forms arranged on the screen of the video. At the same time, however, thanks to the tools offered by the given software, I started to notice the distance of the shot – how much I show from the whole, the kind of a cut-out I choose, and what I focus on. Thanks to the possibility of using the software tool of a screen cut-out, I was able to use the view of a detail, on all sorts of scales. Working with cutting and assembly tools offer great possibilities, too. The program also offers pre-set transitions and effects. In this environment, I could use various types of cutting and editing tools and work with the rhythm, which, as one of the most important means of expression of the video, had a great impact on the atmosphere and the narrative of the video (Fig. 8). Sound, as another component when working with video, was a combination of speech and music. It was not just a random combination, but a deliberate consideration of the relationship between image and sound. And now I would like address briefly the issue of a narrative. My pedagogical ambition was to create lectures with instructional elements so as to keep the viewer's attention high and thus engaged, without the need or desire to skip through the video. The video documentaries were to offer an intense experience that is far from monotonous frontal instruction, but still filled with expert information and the related context. The narrative and plot therefore reflected thoughtfully on the dynamics of the event, combining elements of the plot, questions and subsequent answers and disentangling the threads.

Fig. 8 A print screen of a completed video. At the bottom of the image we can see several levels in which the imports are located – sounds, spoken word, still and moving images. The narrative of the plot and the dynamics of the video can also be deduced from them.

And what is the form of a documentary processed in this way? We can find inspiration in common documents, which are processed by a whole team of professionals with extensive training. In the given video, I used various materials and resources available for free that help describe the selected issue, that work with the story, combining the written text with the spoken word, and using screens

from videos, books, available diagrams, technical drawings. It also uses pauses in the spoken word for a louder sound input, as well as various contexts and stimuli that relate to the issue. It is a self-contained video that can be exported to a variety of commonly played formats. It works consciously with narration and dynamics, transitions, combinations of static and moving images. The documentary contains instructional elements with comments as a replacement for a real example of the technological process.

### **3 Conclusion**

Videos with instructional elements fulfilled their purpose and were evaluated very positively by the users. I also received a very positive response from people who are interested in the area and were not my students. Videos were a good substitute for contact teaching, but at the same time they were accessible to all students at times most suitable to them. Targeted evaluation remained a weak point of this study, due to the fact that the videos were not primarily made for the purpose of their examination and verification but served to quickly and effectively resolve the situation.

However, this leads to the possibility of targeted evaluation and tools for obtaining it in the future, thanks to the fact that the resulting educational material will be used repeatedly. The results and quality of the half-term works reflected on the irreplaceability of contact teaching in the Art Studio of Metal Works, Object Art and Jewellery, as well as the irreplaceability of special tools, instruments and technological background. Since this situation is new to us at the moment, I do not dare to evaluate students' performance and everything that affected it. Students also faced the challenge of meeting the requirements of every educator, and it can be said that the inconsistency and inhomogeneity in the use of online tools for education has led students to encounter more programs and to orient themselves in their different, user-friendly environments. Created videos with instructional elements have become popular among students during distance teaching. They were accessible to students at any time, so we were not reliant on a video conference meetings on the Internet. We were not dependent on having the technical equipment for group video calls in a specific time, to have sufficient support for the quality of Internet transmission. Videos recorded in this way were accessible, replayable, even with the possibility to become viral. In my case, the videos reached a wider audience than just my students. The videos are of benefit to both my colleagues and students from various related fields, or those interested in this type of art. I think that the videos constructed in this way have considerable potential, which I will try to summarize in the following lines. In common practice, I do not have time or the tools to deal with scenes of few seconds from videos longer than an hour just to document a phenomenon. In practice, this would mean having a number of videos, of which I would be interested in only some parts, having other records, books, online documents, photographs, which would lead to unimaginable logistics during the lesson. The

loss of time by searching and navigating oneself through individual files would be noticeable and the lesson would be constantly disrupted by searching. By processing a lesson as a video using the given software, these resources have become an invaluable educational material for me. At the same time, it also provided me with a platform for processing the presented issues in one continuous, consistent unit. However, producing a video places considerable demands on the teacher. In a traditional lesson or demonstration, a teacher can react very flexibly to their viewers, choosing dynamics that keeps their attention on. If a teacher sees a drop in attention, they can react immediately answering any questions arising from the situation. In a video of this nature, there is no room for interaction with the viewer during the viewing. If the resulting video is to be viable and functional, without further comments and input from the teacher, the emphasis must be placed on how to work with information and how to communicate it in the best way. It must maintain the viewer's attention, ask questions and give answers, work with several storylines, use appropriate narrative and dynamics, combine adequate tools. The result is to engage students deeper in the issue and to look at the observed issues in the broadest contexts. At the same time, the created videos remain editable, which allows one to add additional comments, to expand the issue. The video has remained alive and can be improved, edited or changed at any time. Thanks to my experience with processing videos, I began to look at the endless world of the Internet as an inexhaustible source of educational material, which, however, is not primarily intended for this purpose and which is waiting to be transformed by us and commented on.

The paper is one of the outcomes of the research project, ref. no. IGA\_PdF\_2020\_031 titled *Global Narratives in Art Education and Museum and Gallery Education*, funded by the Faculty of Education, Palacký University Olomouc, the Czech Republic.

The paper and its more coherent passages have not been published and have not been submitted for publication in another journal, proceeding or monograph.

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