

Review of Sepa Sama's Ph.D. : Notes on Walking. Dandelion has no field.
Date of birth 1977-06-09
Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław
The field of art, in the discipline of fine arts and art. Conservation of MFA

Summary

The Ph.D. of Sepa Sama consists of a printed book: *Notes of walking. Dandelion has no field* as the main artifact and withal three complimentary books: *Walking Vaskjala – Traveler letter*, *Dancing in the dark – portfolio*, and *Notes on Walking – Description and documentation*.

Notes of walking. Dandelion has no field

Sepa Sama explains how his work changed his idea of what he as an artist was doing: Instead of becoming a photographer, he became a walker. This insight gave him two strings to follow - walking and photographing what he saw. But along the way notes on walking were added into the process which became a lexicon consisting of words from A-Z, together with black and white photographs. In the lexicon, Sepa's own notes on walking are mixed with references on walking he has been inspired by.

The book concludes with four sections: Questions – questions related to walking or subjects affiliated, Walking Commands – playful rules on walking and related subject, Walkshops. – suggestions on walking practices, and Metaphors – on walking and related subjects.

The keywords for the Ph.D. work are 'notes on walking', 'documentation on foot', 'context of walking', 'walking commands and questions', 'walkshops', 'walking metaphors'.

Walking Vaskjala – Traveler letter is a book containing text and photographs with comments.

The book is a story covering personal experiences of diaspora, traveling, memories, and making stops along the way into places and people that Sepa Sama has met along the way.

Dancing in the dark – Portfolio shows the work, education and experience Sepa Sama has as an artist, and a scholar. It also shows how he contributes to a multidisciplinary in the fields of photography, architecture, and (visual) art.

Review of Sepa Sama's Ph.D. : *Notes on Walking. Dandelion has no field.*
Date of birth 1977-06-09
Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław
The field of art, in the discipline of fine arts and art. Conservation of MFA

Notes on Walking – Description and documentation.

This book is a combination of portfolio, the Ph.D. process, extracts from the Lexicon and descriptions of the methods used. It also has a part of a future exploration into metaphors and ends with Photos of walking.

Artistic work

Sepa Sama's Ph.D. , *Notes on Walking. Dandelion has no field* is intriguing work of notes on walking that together with photographs makes the form of a lexicon. The notes stream through the pages with some interruptions of photographs that give a pause in the rhythm. The words are both associative and actual observed situations or objects on foot. The composition of notes and photos becomes a music composition, especially when reading the notes out loud.

Sepa Sama explains that the book requires contemplation and that's where the book takes you. The notes on walking are like a witness of mundanity in public space, the stream of everyday life but with a presence of noticing the thing usually unnoticed. The photographs don't illustrate or emphasize, they are companions to the notes and give the reader a gentle break during the walk.

Sepa Sama shows that he masters photography, in the genre of documentary, as an artistic practice as well as expression. The lexicon shows how Sepa Sama has the artistic skill to place his photographing practice in another context and from there develop it with other art practices.

The mundanity that the photographs and notes depict demonstrate that Sepa Sama can make everyday life into an interesting story of what walking is, could be and how it becomes explorative.

The Ph.D. work combines playfulness, beauty, and ongoing life. Examples from notes are: Nail biting walk (pg 314), Publishing with foot (pg 380), Toenail fungus (pg 484), Tree lines (pg 496), Walkalator (pg 525), Mat-walking (pg 292).

The notes also reveal "how walking has changed our language" as Sepa puts it. When the stream of notes stops with a little longer section, for example on page 134, the reader gets a reminder that there is a person behind those notes and photographs which gives the feeling of being addressed.

Review by Dr Annika Olofsdotter Bergström
Blekinge Institute of Technology
aob@bth.se

Review of Sepa Sama's Ph.D. : Notes on Walking. Dandelion has no field.
Date of birth 1977-06-09
Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław
The field of art, in the discipline of fine arts and art. Conservation of MFA

In *Notes on walking - description and documentation*, Sepa Sama writes about walking as a place, as being at home. He motivates his choice of using notes instead of a long text stream on walking (fig 3.4).

He describes how walking shapes our language via our bodies and that writing is born out of walking which he has managed to materialize in his Ph.D. work.

Sepa also introduces some interesting concepts such as: the nomad (pg 30), explorer (pg 28), walking and windows (pg 33), nomad's museum (pg 82).

Sepa Sama shows that he can use the method of research wall (pg 73) in a productive and thorough process of collecting and organizing his work in a visual way. He is adding an element of collaboration when inviting colleagues to add things to his work by writing on his wall. He describes how he learned from that invitation, and the concept of guest comes to light.

Critical reflections:

Overall comment on the four books:

There is a problem in understanding how to read and understand two of the books:

Walking Vaskjala – Traveler letter It is difficult to understand if this book is complementary to the *Notes of walking - Dandelion has no field* or an extension. *Walking Vaskjala* has a more personal and intimate tone, it is about diaspora and traveling and is not in the form of a lexicon, which makes it a different work than the actual Ph.D.

Notes on walking- description and documentation is a combination of cv, Ph.D. , and description and documentation.

In *Notes on Walking- Dandelion has no Field* the notes from references could have been elaborated reflections to give a deeper sense of what these references have given the work of Sepa Sama. Why are these authors or artists important for the process of *Notes on walking*? How have the references in the lexicon moved Sepa Samas work, his walking and writing practice? For example see page 116, Copies (Moriyama, 2019). How did Moriyama explain copies and how has that reflection contributed to Sepa's own work?

Review by Dr Annika Olofsdotter Bergström
Blekinge Institute of Technology
aob@bth.se

Review of Sepa Sama's Ph.D. : Notes on Walking. Dandelion has no field.
Date of birth 1977-06-09
Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław
The field of art, in the discipline of fine arts and art. Conservation of MFA

There are more critical evaluative reflections to be developed from the references, which could have been in the conclusion part of the book.

The four parts of the conclusion: Questions, Walking commands, Walkshops and Metaphors are not strong in the sense that they don't contribute any specific to the lexicon, either they are repetitions of the notes or development of the Notes on walking (which also is mentioned by Sepa himself).

The lexicon's notes and photographs are strong enough to show the artistic quality of the Ph.D.

The subtitle of the Ph.D. : *Dandelion has no field* is not made fully present in relation to the work as a whole. How does the subtitle correlate to the main title *Notes on Walking*? In *Notes on walking- description and documentation*, Sepa explains "walking as a subject is hard to grasp as the title Dandelion has no Field tells". Still the title is a secret for the reader to guess. Why is this hard to grasp important in the research?

There is some lack of critical understanding of the concepts and ideas that Sepa introduce in his writing and also a lack of explicitly learnings. When referring to Sontag (fig 3.3) 'writing about camp as a way of looking at things', Sepa starts touching something which is not developed. Is walking his way at looking at things, or even life?

What is it that Sepa Sama is exploring through walking, photographing and writing? In *Notes on walking – description and documentation* a question is asked: "How do we know our environment?" (pg 23). Is this the question Sepa has explored in his walking, photographing and writing practice? If so, there should be more present in the text.

Methods

The methods could be more explained in how writing and photographing have helped Sepa to understand walking, and how walking as a method has made him understand the practice of photographing and writing. Archiving is a method mentioned but not elaborated even though it is one of the methods used for organizing a huge amount of photos and notes.

What artistic knowledge has been made along the process by using these specific methods?

What knowledge has Sepa made from the methods used in his research?

Review by Dr Annika Olofsdotter Bergström
Blekinge Institute of Technology
aob@bth.se

Review of Sepa Sama's Ph.D. : Notes on Walking. Dandelion has no field.
Date of birth 1977-06-09
Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław
The field of art, in the discipline of fine arts and art. Conservation of MFA

Previous artistic, didactic and organizational achievements

Sepa Sama shows through the portfolio his experience and knowledge of artistic, didactic and organizational achievements. He also shows that he has exposed his work in a variety of contexts together with different groups of people and done research into his subject. The portfolio also shows that he is a multidisciplinary artist that has the skill of combining different areas.

Based on reading and analyzing the research on walking in dialogue with photographs and notes as a public engagement, I recommend an academic Ph.D. title in the field of art, in the discipline of fine arts and art conservation be granted to Sepa Sama.

Karlshamn 2023-02-14


Annika O Bergström