

Journal of School-Makers. Considering the educational camera as 'Caming'

Nancy Vansieleghem¹, Mattijs Driesen²

Abstract

In this contribution we consider the educational potential of the camera as a collective study practice against the background of today's proliferation of audio-visual media in education. Distinct from scholarship that investigates how the camera can be integrated in education to activate the student in terms of learning, and in terms of socialization or qualification, this contribution re-assesses the educational significance of cinematographic media through a radical affirmation of its potential to make school. To do so, we rely upon the TV-film *Diario di un Maestro* (Diary of a Schoolmaster) by the Italian filmmaker Vittorio De Seta (1971), and link it with the camera practice of the French filmmaker and pedagogue Fernand Deligny, who uses the camera as a practice that instead of working *for*, works *within* the (life) world. These concrete camera practices enable us, not only to reconsider what making school could mean, but also how the camera and its potentiality to make fiction can make school real.

Keywords: Caming, Making school, Fernand Deligny, Vittorio De Seta, Grammatization, Making film.

Revista de produtores escolares. Considerando a câmara fotográfica educativa como 'Caming'

Resumo

Nesta contribuição, consideramos o potencial educativo da câmara como uma prática de estudo colectivo no contexto da actual proliferação dos meios audiovisuais na educação. Diversamente do academismo que investiga como a câmara pode ser integrada na educação para activar o estudante em termos de

¹ LUCA School of Arts, Ghent, Belgium.

Email: nancy.vansieleghem@luca-arts.be | ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8805-5457>

² LUCA School of Arts, Ghent, Belgium.

Email: mattijs.driesen@kuleuven.be | ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0673-7359>

aprendizagem, e em termos de socialização ou qualificação, esta contribuição reavalia o significado educacional dos meios cinematográficos através de uma afirmação radical do seu potencial para fazer escola. Para tal, contamos com o *Diario di un Maestro* (Diário de um Professor) feito pelo cineasta italiano Vittorio De Seta (1971), e ligamo-lo à prática do cineasta e pedagogo francês Fernand Deligny, que utiliza a câmara como uma prática que, em vez de trabalhar *para*, trabalha *dentro* (da vida) no mundo. Estas práticas concretas da câmara permitem-nos, não só reconsiderar o que pode significar fazer a escola, mas também como a câmara e as suas potencialidades para produzir ficção podem tornar a escola real.

Palavras-chave: Camering, Fazer escola, Fernand Deligny, Vittorio De Seta, Gramatização, Fazer cinema.

Magazine des producteurs scolaires. Considérer la caméra éducative comme un "Camering"

Résumé

Dans cette contribution, nous considérons le potentiel pédagogique de la caméra comme pratique d'étude collective dans le contexte de la prolifération actuelle des médias audiovisuels dans l'éducation. Contrairement à l'académisme qui s'interroge sur la manière dont la caméra peut être intégrée à l'éducation pour activer l'élève en termes d'apprentissage, et en termes de socialisation ou de qualification, cette contribution réévalue la portée éducative du média film à travers une affirmation radicale de son potentiel à faire école. Pour cela, nous nous appuyons sur le *Diario di un Maestro* (Journal d'un Maître) réalisé par le cinéaste italien Vittorio De Seta (1971), et nous le relient à la pratique du cinéaste et pédagogue français Fernand Deligny, qui utilise la caméra comme une pratique pour laquelle, au lieu de travailler *pour*, elle travaille *dans* le (la vie) monde. Ces pratiques concrètes de la caméra nous permettent non seulement de reconsidérer ce que signifie faire l'école, mais aussi comment la caméra et son potentiel de production de fiction peuvent rendre l'école réelle.

Mots clés: Camérer, Faire école, Fernand Deligny, Vittorio De Seta, Gramatisation, Faire film.

We can see what 'camering' is, in the infinitive, and that it is all about avoiding the excess of intentions that believes in the dematerialised image of mankind that reproduces itself like crazy. The human, in the sense in which I understand it, does not exist, does not take place in the field of intentionality. (Deligny in Alvarez de Toledo, 2021, p. 81)³

Introduction

In this contribution we consider the educational potential of the camera as a collective study practice against the background of today's proliferation of audio-visual media in education. While the integration of film in the classroom has been limited for a long time, the advent of the digital screen made the film *in* and *as* education ubiquitous (De Koning et al., 2018). It has been argued that the integration of audio-visual media in education not only has an impact on the learners' active engagement in education, but that it also created a shift from the learner as being a passive consumer to an active co-producer of culture (Hodgson, 2010). In this regard, studies have pointed toward a so-called transmutation from a 'culture of the one' to a 'culture of the multiple' (Tisseron 2010). As a result, at different places, the question arises how education should relate itself to these contemporary changes. Especially within the field of cultural and media studies, it has been argued that a critical study of popular film and new screen culture in schools is pivotal in raising awareness about their manipulative power, and the identity issues which they raise (Giroux, 2011). Instead of advocating or criticizing the use of audio-visual media in education for its instrumental value on the one hand, or its manipulative character on the other, this paper will re-assess the educational significance of cinematographic media through a radical affirmation of its potential to make school.

In their studies on school, Jan Masschelein and Maarten Simons (2013, 2019) make an explicit distinction between learning and studying. Whereas learning implies a kind of predestination – either referring to a so-called natural development of someone or related to social demands – and is expressed in competences to be pursued, they refer with studying to the possibility of breaking with this position. To clarify their argument, they refer to a proposition that was already inherent in the meaning of the ancient Greek word *scholè*, which they use to clarify their concept of

3 Original in French: 'On voit ce qu'il en est de camérer, à l'infinitif, et ce qu'il s'agit d'esquiver, le surcroît d'intention qui est de croire à l'image dématérialisée de l'homme qui se reproduit à tire-larigot. L'humain, dans le sens ou je l'entends, n'existe pas, n'a pas lieu dans le champ de l'intentionnalité'.

studying. In this sense, they do not speak of the school as the institution that divides learning into a familiar organization of courses and years of study. Rather, they refer to the school as that exceptional *arrangement* that makes 'free time'. It is the time that is set free to relate to the world and that implies the possibility of renewing the world. As a unique arrangement of bringing together bodies and souls around a subject matter, the school as *scholè* suspends and interrupts the functional logic of the self-reproducing society as it is, creating circumstances to put the world at a distance, so that 'a public' could relate themselves to it and establish new relations with it (Masschelein & Simons, 2013). Schooling, therefore, according to the authors, has to do with distancing external expectations and dependencies that society imposes on the individual, and is about creating conditions in which the world can be an object of study independent of societal meanings projected onto it. In fact, it is about the (aesthetical) arranging of conditions and technologies that set things free, interrupting the correspondence between the expectations of society and the capacities of individuals. Interrupting that agreement, then, is the point of schooling according to Masschelein and Simons (2019).

Building upon these studies, we will not defend the camera as a more efficient learning tool than old school technologies. Instead, we want to explore the 'scholastic' potentiality of (the use) of the camera. Hence, distinct from scholarship that investigates how the camera can be integrated in education to activate the student in terms of learning, and in terms of socialization or qualification, this contribution investigates the camera as a practice that makes the world actively present (see also Decoster & Vansieleghem, 2014). This way, this paper emphasizes the scholastic potential of the camera practice as a practice that discloses the world, so that newcomers can begin anew with it (Arendt, 1961; Vlieghe & Zamojski, 2019). Through an analysis of two concrete camera practices, it also wants to contribute to the question of what studying as a practice of world renewal means.

For this we will rely upon the TV-film *Diario di un Maestro* (Diary of a Schoolmaster) made by the Italian filmmaker Vittorio De Seta in 1971 in a suburban school in Rome, and link it with the camera practice of the French filmmaker and pedagogue Fernand Deligny, who did not use the camera merely to produce knowledge, but as a practice that calls into being a space where something in the world can become present while we are in its presence (cf. Deligny in Alvarez de Toledo, 2007). We start with an analysis of De Seta's film. For us, De Seta's TV series is interesting to reconsider not in the first place because the series presents us a 'nouvelle école', but because it made – through the camera – a 'nouvelle école' real. 'The fundamental idea', writes De Seta, 'was not to make a film, instead we just made a school and we

filmed it' (De Seta in Rossin, 2019, p. 17, our translation)⁴. Therefore, our reflection will not start from an analysis of the narrative shown in the film. We approach the analysis from 'within', i.e. through the lens of image making itself. Meaning that we link the camera and all the inherent (cinematographic) operations of making film with the inherent operations of making school. This will enable us to reconsider the camera practice as a world-disclosing gathering that gives shape to forces that not only enable the acquisition of skills and knowledge, but also gives something in the world the ability to make us think (Masschelein, 2011). In order to elaborate on this, in a second stage we refer to the work of Deligny and more in particular his notion of 'camérer' or 'camering'. Although Deligny refrained himself completely from institutional frameworks, throughout his life he continuously searched for conditions and instruments that put preconceived expectations and perceptions at a distance. This way, his counter-interpretation of filming will prove fruitful for reconceptualising the camera in terms of a cinematographic practice that creates circumstances of being exposed to the world together.

Making school through film

Diario di un Maestro (1974) starts with De Seta's discovery of the publication *Un anno a Pietralata* in 1968 by Abino Bernardini, one of the pioneers of experiential education in Italy, alongside Fiorenzo Alfieri, Bruno Ciari, don Lorenzo Milani and Mario Lodi. In *Un anno a Pietralata*, Bernardini recounts his struggling experience as a third-grade teacher of an all-male class in a failing school of a neglected neighborhood of the Roman urban periphery. While he denounces the desperate conditions in which suburban schools operate, he highlights the degree to which the caring activism of a motivated teacher can transform an underperforming classroom into a dynamic community where all students (regardless of their background) may become motivated learners. Inspired by Bernardini, De Seta formulated the proposal of turning this memoir into a TV movie for the public broadcaster RAI – the main radio and television network operating in Italy. He started working with public television without any pedagogical or political considerations. At that moment, he didn't know anything about the school, its problems, or the names of militants of school reform. This ignorance, however, as Frederico Rossin (2019) writes, did not prevent De Seta from applying to this new project. 'Seeing cinema as a path of knowledge

4 Original in French: 'L'idée fondamentale a été de ne pas faire de film; en réalité, nous avons fait une école et nous l'avons filmée'.

and allowing himself to be guided by curiosity about human existence and of placing himself in a position of permanent experimentation', was his way of filming from the start (Rossin, 2019, p. 15, our translation)⁵. In addition, he envisaged television – even if he shared Rossellini's formal and ethical concerns – not as an obstacle, but as an economic tool that guaranteed him the time to do the necessary research. Hence, for De Seta, working for television did not prevent him from doing right to cinematographic principles: 'what he discovered was a world, that of the new school, and this discovery led him to revise his idea of the cinema by opting for a new method of working, by analogy' (Ibid. p. 16, our translation)⁶.

The ambition De Seta envisioned was to shoot his film in a real classroom, where real pupils could interact spontaneously with an actor who plays the role of an experiential educator. Rather than faithfully adapting Bernardini's narrative and translating it in a structured script, De Seta wanted to adapt its spirit. 'Bernardini effectively lived the experience he recounted. My film should go in the same direction. And I feel that there is only one way to make this possible: to 'live' and film from life a genuine pedagogical experience', he wrote in his notebook entry (De Seta in Fiumara 2019, p. 305). In line with the ideas of reform pedagogy, he wanted to improvise. 'In the same way that we abolish textbooks, we abolish the script' (De Seta in Rossin, 2019, p. 17, our translation)⁷. Hence, his fundamental choice of just making a school and filming it, started from an ambition to do right to the principles of the reform pedagogy itself. Accordingly, his aim was to find a school near Pietralata in which children from the neighborhood would play themselves. Actor Bruno Cirino was asked to play the role of the maestro and to facilitate the pupil's learning process by having them analyze situations and problems that they could easily relate to the underprivileged world in which they struggled to live. He opted for a flexible outline, rather than a conventional screenplay, cautiously organized around guided discussions of a few reflective topics that might arise during the filming, such as criminality, religion, war and sex-education. Inspired by Célestin Freinet, the idea was that the role of the educator would be that of 'listener'. The teacher needed to be seen, no longer as the transmitter of artificially segmented knowledge and disciplines, but as the provider of a beneficial cooperation between the children (Ibid. p. 19).

5 Original in French: 'd'envisager le cinéma comme un parcours de connaissance, de se laisser guider par la curiosité pour l'existence humaine et de se placer dans une position d'expérimentation permanente.

6 Original in French: 'ce qu'il découvrit en revanche, c'est un monde, celui de l'école nouvelle, et cette découverte le conduisit à revoir l'idée qu'il se faisait du cinéma en optant pour une méthode de travail, par analogie'.

7 Original in French: 'De la même manière qu'on abolit les manuels scolaires, on abolit le scénario'.

Up to this point, we easily understand De Seta's film as a pedagogical film that brought to life the pedagogical principles of the members of the *Movimento di Cooperazione Educativa*. Regarding our contemporary challenges, the film then can be read as a reminder of a plea for a radically different way of teaching, which starts from the learner as active co-producer of knowledge, rather than as passive consumer. This reading of the film ties in closely with contemporary scholarship that considers the camera as a valuable tool to redirect the gaze from the teacher to the student (Jarldorn, 2019), to put learning instead of teaching at the center of the learning process. This analysis of the content, however, would not do justice to the potential of the camera to make fiction and how this can be of significance for reconsidering the role of the camera in education as a scholastic tool. It would not seriously engage with the 'aesthetic' potential of the camera. When De Seta is speaking about making school, he is speaking firstly as a filmmaker, not as a pedagogue. And, as the Dutch documentarian Johan van der Keuken states: 'the work of a filmmaker is exclusively aimed at forms. He is not looking for answers to real problems but looking for solutions to represent the multiplicity of reality' (2001, p. 20). 'Filmmaking', so Keuken continues, 'is a beam of light on a screen. And what is transmitted in that bombardment of light on a screen is always fiction' (van der Keuken in Daney & Fargier, 1978, p. 62). Hence, the filmmaker is someone who brings in another expressive regime that interrupts with a functional logic. In this sense, it might be interesting to explore De Seta's 'school making' as an aesthetic gesture that reconfigures the relation between the thinkable and the visible. After all, his intention of *not making a film about the school, but of making a school and to film it*, reveals his strong affiliation to the aesthetic tradition of the Italian neorealist movement. In contrast to representative cinema, which derived its model from a kind of ideal to capture everything in the world, neo-realist filmmakers such as Vittorio De Sica and Roberto Rossellini introduced a new form of filmmaking whose realism had nothing to do with reproducing the facts corresponding to reality, but with establishing an equal relationship between the visible and the sayable. The point is not to create real characters and situations, it is not about the question 'is it real?', but 'how is it real?' and 'what kind of reality is at play here?' (cf. Debuysse, 2016, p. 272). It could be understood as a specific way of dealing with images in which ordinary life is brought to life and set in motion. In a similar vein, De Seta did not want to make a film, but made the adventure of school-making real through filming it. Once the set started, he instructed both the director of photography and the operator of sound to move freely around the set, for which they used a handheld camera and a shotgun microphone. The main idea was not to stage school-time, but to film and to capture moments in which something happened.

Accordingly, the scenes carry a certain documentary aesthetic. The teacher goes on walks with the schoolboys to find out more about their surroundings and their living situation. The students present themselves and the camera documents the material conditions of their surroundings and homes. In concrete terms, this meant that a lot of filming took place, and that the film is realized in the editing phase, and not in the writing of the screenplay. What is peculiar, however, is not so much the duration of the whole set-up, but that this whole aesthetic configuration constituted in itself a study practice, in the sense that it fosters a situation that makes the students attentive to what is (re-)presented. In this respect, you could say that both the camera and the teacher are driven by Cesare Zavattini's famous description of neorealist cinema: 'The cinema's overwhelming desire to see, to analyze, its hunger for reality, is an act of concrete homage towards other people, toward what is happening and existing in the world' (Zavattini, 1953, p. 64). Not the teacher made the students attentive to the subject matter, but the whole aesthetic configuration. It was the camera, the boom, the crew – all the operations to capture every gesture – that brought the students, the teacher and the subject matter together in a way that transformed the classroom into a dynamic milieu that sets adventures into motion and grants them an educational dimension. There is no fixed point, no intention to have an overview of the whole scene, the camera is there, between the tables, always following an action closely and constantly attentive to what is happening. In that respect, the camera and the whole cinematographic configuration in De Seta's film can be understood as a configuration that enacts a relationship between the student and the world, in that it calls into being an engaged and thinking audience. The whole configuration creates a *mise-en-scène* that generates a sense of constant freedom. Not an infinite and private freedom of doing what you want, but a definite and shared freedom of a moment in which the world is being formed by a collective study. The teacher as well as the pupils are acting and improvising: both searching for the next step. In this tension, between improvisation and acting, a collaborative gathering of people and things becomes all too real. As one of the boys told: 'that was true school for us', 'we completely forgot the camera' (De Seta in Rossin, 2019, p. 311). De Seta's understanding of making school doesn't approach the school simply in a neorealist manner – in terms of a desire to see, to analyze and to hunger for reality –, rather it expands upon neorealism, creating its own cinematic time and space.

Hence, not the pedagogical script, but De Seta's camera practice rendered it possible to transform the classroom into a collective study practice. Perhaps you could say that the *mise-en-scène*, in a certain way, made things speak. The camera's silent gaze installed a space in which things demanded to be looked at, a space in

which one perceived things in a new way. As such, things derived their power not primarily from the intentions of the teacher or the director, but from the aesthetic configuration that is installed. The *mise-en-scène* disclosed the things that are being talked about and made them available to everyone's gaze. At the end of the film, the students are studying history. The camera slowly documents both the historical pictures and the drawings of the students; as if it invites the students to go along with it, to see and think about what is presented.

In other words, *Diario di un Maestro* is not a film about a school, but a film that brings into existence a particular configuration or scene that constitutes attention and interest for what is presented. We could say that *Diario di un Maestro* operates as an invitation to think of the camera as a practice that makes school real in a way that it creates circumstances of collective exposure and study (cf. Masschelein, 2011).

Camera as a tool and a verb

In order to elaborate on this reconceptualization of the educational potential of the camera as a 'scholastic' practice, it is interesting to look at the figure of Fernand Deligny, and more in particular the way he reconceptualized filming as 'camérer' (to camera or camering). A French neologism that he introduced in 1977. In its infinitive form he reconsidered the camera as a practice and a particular way of looking and emphasized the activity rather than the final object.

To film seems to me to be a strange verb. When it comes to writing a book, one does not say to book. And to paint is not to *tableauter*. It is obvious that, as far as film is concerned, the finished product prevails and becomes a verb. [...] Since it is about the use of an instrument called a camera, why not say: to camera? (Deligny in Alvarez de Toledo, 2021, p. 17)⁸

Although Deligny does not use the camera within a classroom environment, from 1955 onwards the camera as a pedagogical tool and a verb formed a crucial element in Deligny's work. His use of the camera as camering enables us to further reconsider the potential of the camera as an aesthetic tool and a verb that evokes a world-disclosing practice and collective study.

⁸ Original in French: 'Filmer me semble être un drôle de verbe. Lorsqu'il s'agit d'écrire un livre, on ne dit pas livrer. Et peindre ne se dit pas *tableauter*. Ou' se voit que, pour ce qui concerne le cinéma, le produit fini l'emporte et devient verbe. [...] Puisqu'il s'agit de l'usage d'un instrument dénommé caméra, pourquoi ne pas dire: *camérer* ?'

Throughout his life, the French writer, pedagogue and filmmaker engaged himself in educational initiatives with so-called 'psychotic' and 'maladjusted' children, and between 1967 and 1991 he elaborated an experiential living space with autistic children with a severe form of mutism at a farm in the Cévennes, outside institutional and therapeutic frameworks (Alvarez de Toledo 2007). His life's work consisted of refusing to handover so-called 'abnormal' individuals to the language of psychology that declared them – at that time – immutable and incurable. His argument was that language prevented the non-speaking subject from being seen. For Deligny, characteristic for our relation to language is its reflective nature. What we expect from other people are these words that mirror a common understanding of what is meaningful and understandable and thus hides other possibilities from view. Therefore, for Deligny what should be transformed is not the incurable child, but the way of relating to it, and the language used by the educator to approach the situation (Alvarez de Toledo 2007). 'In our practice', Deligny wrote 'what is the object? This or that child, the "psychotic" subject? Certainly not. The real object which should be transformed is us' (Deligny in Alvarez de Toledo 2007, p. 24, our translation)⁹. Hence, avoiding that reflection, and imagining other possibilities of looking and perceiving was what Deligny saw as the heart of his camera practice. Faced with the radical impossibility of understanding the autistic child, Deligny looked for ways to bring himself out of language and to live in the presence of the other.

It was the mute autistic child itself that drove Deligny to see in the camera practice a way of going against the direction of the word in order to come in the presence of the other, the autistic person. He pointed at the same difference between us, 'the human-that-we-are', and the autistic person as between images and language. He argued that we are doing things with an intention or an end: we do all kinds of things for a particular purpose, an autistic person does nothing in particular. (S)he acts without intention or end. It is a simple act without an end. It is the 'agir', which differs from 'faire' and refers to an intransitive verb or a form of acting that goes against doing that always implies an intention. In this sense, it refers to a set of inter-actions that connect with non-human elements rather than humanistic ones. In this way, Deligny argued that the actions of the autistic person are no manifestations of a lack or of a particular aim. The actions are not subject to any learning or project. The act of appropriating and intending for a purpose or an end is absent for the autistic person. Deligny described the autistic person therefore as a being that is *spatial* much more than intentional (Miguel, 2020, p. 192). This is what Deligny considered to be the

⁹ Original in French: 'Dans notre pratique, quel est l'objet? Tel ou tel enfant, sujet "psychotique"? Certes pas. L'objet réel qu'il s'agit de transformer, c'est nous'.

case with the image and how it is distinct to language. An image is not preconceived, an image comes into being. It is an operation that takes place in the here and now, without intentions. It does not exist as an object, but must be made visible – through the camera, as a trace. Through the camera a spatial movement is traced, so Deligny argues (Deligny in Alvarez de Toledo, 2007, p. 1775). The camera traces spatial movements, but does not hold, or understands them. This is what Deligny considered a fantastic aspect of the camera. The image develops and appears freely on the screen. In this sense, for Deligny, it is not a question of representing the singular, or the (a)typical of the autistic person with the camera, but presenting a view – a look: ‘un mise en vue’ (Deligny, 1955, p. 9). Hence, Deligny’s camera practices did not aim at representation, but experiences that do not allow any kind of self-reflective representations. Rather than representing, the images evoke.

Therefore, for Deligny an image that appears can never be seen at first sight. It is necessary to see an image several times to see it once. Seeing is always seeing again, Deligny argues. Hence, for Deligny, camering is not filming. It is a ‘revoir pour voir’, re-viewing in order to view (see Comolli, 2006), a revisiting in order to see something that presents itself through the lens of the camera. Camering is therefore the act of re-viewing or re-watching; for that which is seen through the eyes of the viewer is something that is re-viewed. The camera uncovers the world in the sense that it discovers and discloses the possibility of seeing the world as that which is being seen. It makes us, in other words, see our memories independently of ourselves, opening the ability to watch again. From the point of view of the action performed by the eye, camering is then in fact the opposite of filming. The camera separates a world that is ultimately filmable from a world that is understandable, this way it introduces a distance towards what is perceived as visible and understandable: it creates circumstances to suspend (temporality) existing logics and apparatuses in order to look once more, affected by the things, the gestures, the forms that appear on the screen.

Hence, for Deligny the camera appears as a device that does not so much replace language as that it makes it possible to silence language, to exhaust it in order to get closer (indirectly and through distancing) to the autistic child (cf. also Stidworthy, 2020). This way, he saw in it a practice that could enable him, and his colleagues, to live *in the presence* of the autistic child.

By making a distinction between filming and camering, Deligny allows us to reverse the role of the camera and see it as a fictionalizing instrument that is not only capable of transforming movements in a landscape into abstract forms, but also of returning these abstractions to the landscape from which they were extrac-

ted, thereby establishing other and new connections between the visible and the thinkable. This way, for Deligny, camering is 'documentaire pur jus' (Deligny, 1990, p. 51; Alvarez de Toledo 2007, p. 1775). It is so pure that it makes fiction. Fiction because people have never experienced anything like this before. However, it makes fiction without fabricating the imaginary. The camera makes it possible to present the sea, the child and the world in a way that the viewer doesn't really recognize it as the sea, the child or the world. The viewer does not recognize it because until then (s)he has experienced the sea only as an object of knowledge. Through passing the film in a black box a 'human being can have an eye that is an oyster to the extent that the image on the screen offers to see "something" real that we can say to ourselves: "But is it the sea or what?"' (Deligny in Alvarez de Toledo, 2021, p. 39, our translation)¹⁰. The camera, in other words, makes people feel 'there', where the camera is. 'It makes "real" the event that took place, right here, in this region' (Ibid., p. 67, our translation)¹¹. As if, with the camera, the cameraman allows the sea to show itself to an observer. Through the camera, you could say, the sea is made real, and becomes water. In other words, Deligny's camera practice externalizes the world: it gives voice to something 'qui ne se voit pas'.

To camera is to see/show that which cannot be seen. To see that which cannot be seen assumes that what may appear in the images is appealing. (Ibid., p. 35, our translation)¹²

This means that Deligny did not use the camera to get to know the autistic person better, in order to detect his or her shortcomings and thus draw appropriate trajectories. Unlike François Truffaut, who at the time was filming *L'Enfant Sauvage*, in which a French doctor observes the 'wild child' of Aveyron in an attempt to educate it and teach it to think, for Deligny it is not about teaching the other how to think, but about filming 'ce qui ne se voit pas'. As he writes, "It is a matter of learning to see what does not concern us, by which I mean what does not interest, at first sight, neither 'I' nor 'he'" (Deligny in Alvarez de Toledo, 2007, p. 849)¹³. More especially, the images Deligny's camera practice produced, disclosed a realm in which something like a 'mute body' becomes into existence, and is made real. The presence of the camera

10 Original in French: 'Qu'un être humain puisse avoir un œil qui soit huitre au point que l'image, sur l'écran, propose à voir "quelque chose" de réel dont ON peut se dire: "Mais c'est la mer ou quoi?"'

11 Original in French: 'Rendre "réels" des moments, des événements qui ont eu lieu, ici même, dans cette région'.

12 Original in French: 'Camérer c'est voir/montrer ce qui ne se voit pas. Voir ce qui ne se voit pas suppose que ce qui peut apparaître dans les images a de l'attrait'.

13 Original in French: 'Il s'agit d'apprendre à voir ce qui ne nous regarde pas, je veux dire ce qui n'intéresse pas, à première vue, ni 'je', ni 'il'.

moved the viewer from the stage of language to the stage of the unnamed. It turned text into pre-text, or in the words of Deligny, into what he called 'wandering lines', i.e. lines detached from any comprehension, open and free for a destination to come (*lignes d'errances*). Or as Imogen Stidworthy writes about Deligny's camera practice, it is as 'the images become bodies' – 'hitting the stain of the mirror' (Stidworthy, 2020, p. 51). Hence, camering is a practice and an attempt to pause one's own way of thinking and acting and thus to create a space – an asylum – where the other can emerge and bring things to light that we, 'the human-beings-that-we-are', cannot perceive.

This is to say, that only by ignoring as much the affective attractions and the attractions of language, 'the nothing' or that which does not concern or interest us at first sight can appear.

It concerns an alternative way of looking. Its aim is not to represent the observed, but to participate with it in the same generative movement. It is an unfiltered recording of images as traces of what is becoming. 'It is a question of wandering with the camera; and it is by looking at the images that small discoveries can be made' (Deligny in Alvarez de Toledo, 2021, p. 81, our translation)¹⁴. The act of wandering and incessant filming incorporates the fortuitous, the non-intentional, and, through this, the possibility of discovering, finding or inventing different connections. It is an attitude or an ethos to maintain and to work upon incessantly (cf. Miguel 2020, p. 195). *Le Moindre Geste* (1971), a film by Jean-Pierre Daniel, Fernand Deligny and Josée Manenti¹⁵, beautifully illustrates this. More than the life of autistic persons, as Comolli writes:

[T]he film presents an essential complicity occurring between two bodies: the body being filmed (the autistic child Yves) and the body filming with a 16 mm camera (Josée Manenti the cameraman). There is Yves' body that does not allow itself to be enclosed by the cinematographic frame: it is always on the verge of leaving and of escaping it. At the same time, the body filming does not allow itself to be exhausted by Yves' interminable game of repetition. The unlimited patience of the cameraman to record and reproduce all these repetitions, gives the images the vertigo less of a representation than an 'impression' (Comolli, 2006).

14 Translated from French: 'Il s'agit d'errer de la caméra; et c'est en regardant les images engrangées que peuvent surgir des menues trouvailles'.

15 After *Le Moindre Geste* (1971), Deligny worked on three more films: *Ce gamin, là* (1976) and *Fernand Deligny. À propos d'un film à faire* (1989), both directed by Renaud Victor, and *Project N* (1979), directed by Alain Cazuc. Numerous (unpublished) video recordings were made by his daughter Caroline Deligny and Josette Saleil in the living network in the Cévennes.

‘The director expected everything, except to have to film that people were not there, in the images he would take of the places where they lived’ (Deligny in Alvarez de Toledo, 2021, p. 81)¹⁶. At the same time, it is important to stress that what happened is much more than just recording spatial movements with the camera. The film *Le Moindre Geste* shows that making a film is not only deciding upon which images are put together, but also finding the right voice. It consists, so to speak, of verifying that making a film is all about doing right to what the images reveal, and not what we want them to reveal.

It is a question of wandering from the camera; and it is by looking at the images gathered that small discoveries can emerge

In this regard it is very telling to see how *Le Moindre Geste* compiles images of life in the Cévennes without sound being recorded with a soundtrack that is made during the evenings using only a tape recorder. Hence what we get to see, is not a representation of a situation, but an evocation. It is a movement of life itself.

Combining Yves’ recorded speech as an overflowing stream of free associations, imitations and quotations (speeches of power, reciting the schoolmaster, the president De Gaulle) with the organic, the body and the stones, evokes the spectator to distance him or herself from the gangue of language experiencing the world no longer as an object of knowledge, but in terms of a thing, tangible, knottable and unknottable, breakable, repairable and manipulable (cf. Comolli, 2006).

Making a film for Deligny therefore involves the incessant turning back to the matter at hand, composing and re-composing the images, to lead it to a perceptual discovery. It results in a transformation of the flow of the film into something discrete, meaning also that it becomes a thing of manipulation. This way, we want to suggest that the camera practice of Deligny, with its inherent ‘fictionalities’, is a form of *grammatisation*, to use the words of Bernard Stiegler. As explained by Catherine Adams (2018),

Grammatisation (Stiegler, 2010) is the process whereby bits of the ongoing flux and flow of everyday life – from speech and bodily gestures to space and time – are separated out, given a discrete name or gramme (Greek for ‘letter’, ‘written mark’), then resituated in a finite system and thereby made available for (re)use (cited by Vlieghe & Zamojski, 2019, p. 138).

¹⁶ Original in French: ‘Le réalisateur s’attendait à tout, sauf à devoir filmer que des gens n’y étaient pas, dans les images qu’il prendrait des lieux-milieus où ils vivaient auparavant’.

In other words, the camera practice of Deligny shows us another mode of using the camera which allows us to put a thing at a distance, so as to study its not immediately meaningful and useful elements. At the same time, experiencing the possibility to play with it and to establish new relations with it. Besides creating circumstances of being exposed to the world together, Deligny's camera practice pointed at the potentiality of the camera to grammatize the world. In the sense that it implies an externalization of the world that is not to be understood as a form of representing the world, but as presentations through which the world becomes something to look at, to react upon and to relate to. This is probably the school pedagogical force of Deligny's camera practice: the double movement of collective exposure and grammatisation, which comes from the coupling of sensory awareness and substantial flows in a world of materials.

Camering as a study practice

We started this paper with a distinction between learning and studying, and the question of how to think of the camera in and as education through a school pedagogical approach. To understand what we mean by school pedagogical approach we referred to Jan Masschelein and Maarten Simons, who are explicitly calling for a re-invention of the school in terms of providing 'free time' and to gather people around a common 'thing' (Masschelein & Simons, 2019, p. 23). Through an analysis of two concrete camera practices, we tried to respond to this call by indicating how these practices enable us, not only to reconsider what making school could mean, but also how the camera and its potentiality to make fiction can make school real. Since it is argued that images are the second skin of the new generation, the integration of the camera as an efficient learning tool is highly recommended (cf. Delgado, 2015). Our argument is, however, that although cameras are omnipresent in the lifeworld of youngsters, more than acting as tools that 'grammatise' the life world – and hence transform that world in a stage of re-watching –, the scholarship that defends the integration of the camera in education operates mainly in function of the discursive forces that constitute that world. In other words, using the camera in function of a better connection with the world of the youngsters, means that it becomes more difficult to focus on what is happening and what unfolds outside predefined connections between words and images, i.e. between what there is to see and what we want to see. Rather than thinking with the camera, you could say that current discourses on camera practices often prevent the new generation from looking at what the camera can reveal. We cannot elaborate on this here, but what we tried to make clear with

the analysis of De Seta's film practice and Deligny's notion of camering, is that in order for the camera to contribute to the creation of a condition in which we silence ourselves and pay attention to what the other and the (new) world have to say, it is not a matter of directing the camera to ourselves, and in function of our expectations but of using it to get ourselves out of the picture. Therefore, first with De Seta and then with Deligny, we have tried to establish another use of the camera. A scholastic one, you could say. Instead of working for, we introduced a camera practice that works *within* the (life) world: as an organ that functions at the heart of the living of which it is an element, and which produces an image not of this living environment, but through this living environment (cf. Deligny in Alvarez de Toledo, 2008). This way, we tried to develop a way of thinking about the integration of the camera *in* and *as* education in a way that it creates circumstances in which the (life)world is put at a distance, however, at the same time brought within reach. A camera practice that creates circumstances that stage forces, differences and gestures in a way that makes these forces present and real: i.e. an object of collective exposure and study. By thinking of the camera as a tool and a verb that does not primarily report on the world but offers openings to establish new relations between the visible, sayable and imaginary, we tried to argue for a camera practice that evokes study. This is a use of the camera that contributes to an educational practice that does not anticipate predefined meanings or effects, but that provokes the desire to come in the presence of a world that is not fixed but always unfolding.

In contrast to other educational studies, this paper is not a plea for putting the camera in the hands of the new generation, but allowing the new generation in the hands of the camera as a tool that functions on its own. That is recording images as traces of what is unfolding. This paper is an invitation and support to use the camera as a study practice that enables to shut the eye, and to counteract the instantaneous conversion of the gaze to oneself. Making it possible that something external to ourselves, and our lifeworld, can appear, and one can become part of it. In other words, thinking about the camera as a scholastic practice does not mean using the camera as a tool that responds to the learner's expectations, but that interrupts the expectations, evoking an experience of collective adventure.

To be clear, we are not saying that the camera can replace the school if we use the camera in a school-like way. That is not the point of this contribution. When we talk about the camera as making school, it presupposes a scholastic practice. That is, a scholastic form or a *mise-en-scene* of embodied gatherings of people and things that give shape to forces that not only enable learning in the sense of acquiring knowledge and skills, but that also 'sustain collective thinking by staging an expe-

rimental disclosing encounter with something from the world that is endowed with the power to make us think' (Masschelein, 2021, p.102). The camera is then not so much a tool that replaces what happens in the school, but a tool and a practice that can support that what is 'school-like' in the school, rather than taking the school-like out of the school (cf. Masschelein & Simons, 2019). This is what we see with De Seta, but also with Deligny. However, Deligny's camera practice does not take place in the school, but in the Cévennes, he established a particular site that complicated our social, emotional, cognitive and sensory relations towards the autistic person. An arrangement or form that embodies the effort and discipline needed to allow one to participate in the world, at the same time to resist the forces that are put upon us as if they are natural.

In other words, it is about exploring how camera practices, which are ubiquitous in our current living world, can be used in such a way that they create forms that do not predetermine and define our encounters with the world, but rather bring them into being. This is tracing with the camera one's movement with the trajectories of things in the world, as to support *watching what is going on*. As Tim Ingold writes, 'not just to live in the world, but to be alive to it' (Ingold, 2018, p.152).

References

- Alvarez de Toledo, S. (2007). *Fernand Deligny. Oeuvres*. L'Arachnéen.
- Alvarez de Toledo, S. (2021). *Camérer. A propos d'images. Fernand Deligny*. L'Arachnéen
- Arendt, H. (1961). *Between past and future: Eight exercises in political thought*. The Viking Press.
- Comolli, J. L. (2006). Un cinéma hors de lui. *Multitude*, 1(24), 203-207. <https://doi.org/10.3917/mult.024.0203>
- Daney, S., & Fargier, J. -P. (1978). Entretien avec Johan van der Keuken. *Cahiers Du Cinéma*, 218, 62-67.
- De Koning, B., Hoogerheide, V., & Boucheix, J. M. (2018). Developments and trends in learning with instructional video. *Computers and Human Behavior*, 12(89), 395-398.
- Debuysse, S. (2016). *Figures of dissent. Cinema of politics/Politics of Cinema*. AraMer & Mer.
- Decoster, P.J. and Vansieleghe, N. (2014). Cinema education as an exercise in 'thinking through not-thinking'. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 46(7), 792 - 804.
- Deligny, F. (1955). La Caméra outil pédagogique, *Vers L'éducation nouvelle*, 97, 8-11.
- Deligny, F. (1990). Ce qui se ne voit pas. *Cahiers Du Cinéma*, 428, 50-51.
- Fiumara, F. (2019). A light in the Classroom: Vittorio De Seta's *Diario di un maestro* and the Bringing of Experiential Education into Italian Living Rooms. *MLN*, 134,303-317.
- Giroux, H. A. (2011). *Breaking into the movie. Public Pedagogy and the politics of film*. SAGE publications.

- Hodgson, J. (2010). Reculturalizations: 'small screen' culture, pedagogy, & YouTube. *Enculturation*. <http://enculturation.net/reculturalizations>
- Ingold, I. (2018). Learning following making. In H. Sachs, K. H. Meng, S. Richter & R. Heberling (Eds.), *Navigating. A publication for a place without a historical center, created continuously anew in meetings and events that occur in empowered spaces, simultaneously* (pp. 145-160). Onomatopée.
- Jarldorn, M. (2019). *Photovoice. Handbook for social workers*. Palgrave.
- Masschelein, J. (2011). Experimentum Scholae: The World Once More... But Not (Yet) Finished. *Studies in Philosophy of Education*, 30(5), 529-535.
- Masschelein, J. (2021). Werken in het duister ensceneren. De publieke ontwerpstudio als universitas studii. Staging work in the dark. The public design studio as universitas studii. In L. De Brabandere, J. Degeeter, P. Eckeloo, L. Meulemans, M. Royackers & D. Oosterwyck (Eds.), *Onto 05. Architectuur op het spoor/On to architecture* (pp. 100-109). Uitgeverij UPA.
- Masschelein, J., & Simons, M. (2013). *In defence of the school. A public issue*. Education, Culture and Society Publisher.
- Masschelein, J., & Simons, M. (2019). Bringing more 'school' into our educational institutions. Reclaiming school as pedagogic form. In A. Bikner-Ahsbals & M. Peters (Eds.), *Unterrichtsentwicklung macht Schule Forschung und Innovation im Fachunterricht* (pp. 11-30). Springer Verlag.
- Miguel, M. (2020). Towards a New Thinking on Humanism in Fernand Deligny's Network. In D. Sharma & F. Tygstrup. *Structures of Feeling. Affectivity and the Study of Culture* (pp. 187-196). De Gruyter.
- Rossin, F. (2019). *Journal d'un maître d'école*. L'Arachnéen.
- Stidworthy, I. (2020). *Voicing on the borders of language*. (Doctoral dissertation, Lund University). Retrieved from <https://portal.research.lu.se/en/publications/voicing-on-the-borders-of-language>
- Tisseron, S. (2010). *Cultures du livre et des écrans. La cohabitation indispensable*. Le Carnet PSY, 144.
- Van der Keuken, J., (2001). *Bewogen beelden*. Uitgeverij De Geus.
- Vlieghe, J., & Zamojski, P. (2019). *Towards an ontology of teaching. Thing-centred Pedagogy, Affirmation and Love for the World*. Springer.
- Zavattini, C. (1953). Some Ideas on the Cinema, *Sight and Sound*, 23(2), 64-69.

Filmography

- Daniel, J.-P., Deligny, F., & Manenti, J. (Directors) (1971). *Le Moindre Geste*. SLON.
- De Seta, V. (1973). *Diario di un Maestro*. RAI Radiotelevisione Italiana, Bavaria Film, Miro Cinematografica.