


About Ethics of Documentary Video Art

‘Veljeni – My Brother’ as a Case Study

Riina Haapakallio



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ABSTRACT

Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulu
Tampere University of Applied Sciences
Programme of Media and Arts
Fine Art

RIINA HAAPAKALLIO

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The topic of the written part of my thesis is about ethics of documentary video art. The practical – artistic - part of my thesis is also based to this study, I worked on a documentary video art piece “Veljeni” and used the knowledge I gathered for this written part. I studied the boundaries and limits in video art, ethics and law in it. The main focus is on whether documentary film can be called video art and where does the line of appropriateness go when filming someone else’s personal life.

I have mostly used information I have gathered from books and internet sources, but also from my own experiences while working on my video. I have used my own perspective and interpretation to form the conclusions. I have also analyzed my work “Veljeni” and how results of my study show in it. I concluded that documentary can be an art form and that the legislation forms the artist boundaries but the ethicality needs to be weighted on moral and ethics of the author but also subjects of the art work.

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Key words: ethics, law, video, documentary, art

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	5
2	VIDEO.....	7
2.1	Video art	7
2.1.1	Definition of video art.....	7
2.1.2	Brief history of video art.....	8
2.2	Documentary film	8
2.2.1	Definition of documentary film	8
2.2.2	Brief history of documentary film.....	10
2.2.3	Differences of documentary film and video art film.....	11
3	VIDEO, LAW AND ETHICS	13
3.1	Video and ethics.....	13
3.1.1	Definition	13
3.1.2	Video art and ethics.....	13
3.2	Video art and law	14
3.3	Law and ethics	15
4	“VELJENI – MY BROTHER”	17
4.1	My inspiration.....	18
4.2	My documentary video art project.....	18
4.2.1	My vision	18
4.2.2	My work.....	19
4.2.3	Challenges.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.2.4	My outcome	23
5	CONCLUSIONS	Error! Bookmark not defined.
	REFERENCES.....	30

1 INTRODUCTION

Does art know the boundaries of rules and ethics? If we follow the rules of ethics in art, are we telling the story we want to tell or are we telling the truth? Who or what do we need to protect and how? In my thesis I make a research on video art, more specifically documentary film and its ethicality. My thesis includes written research and a video work made entirely by the author. Video work "Veljeni - My brother" is a follow up documentary and video art piece that tells three different short stories of my younger brothers and their everyday life. It is completely filmed and edited by me. Film was made during the years 2017 and 2018.

The theoretical part of this paper is based on theoretical sources on video art, documentary and ethics. What do these things mean in theory and practice and how do they fit together? I process, use and discuss the material I have collected through my own art work. I am using qualitative research as my main research method. My aim is to analyse my work "Veljeni - My brother" and ethics in it, from both artist's and family member's point of view. Being the sister and the author at the same time, brings in two different perspectives. I had the responsibility as a big sister but also as an artist.

Theoretical part is divided in five sections. First after the introduction, there is theoretical and historical part of documentary and video art, and a speculation about them being a same thing. After that we go deeper in law and ethics and how they are seen separately and together. The next part is about the practical part of my thesis, the inspiration of my work, my vision, my work process and what is the end result. After this follows conclusion that aims to answer the study questions I have asked in the very beginning of this introduction: "Does art know the boundaries of rules and ethics? If we follow the rules of ethics in art, are we telling the story we want to tell or are we telling the truth? Who or what do we need to protect and how?"

In my theoretical part I base my information in previous studies done on this field and in the articles and writings of the professionals in this field. There is also references to law texts and studies on ethics. The part about my own work is based on my own vision and perspective of my work and how I myself evaluate my art work. I also compare the outcomes with the knowledge in my theoretical part. There are some photos of my own

video work included and the installation setting in my written thesis to show parts of my work and show how my work was actually installed in gallery Himmelblau.

2 VIDEO

2.1 Video art

2.1.1 Definition of video art

So what is video art? As we can deduct from the term itself, video art is a form where the video acts as a medium of making art. Video art is said to be born in the USA around 1960s and term "video art" got its name from the rolls of film that were originally used for making films. Difference between video art and traditional film making is that when it comes to video art, the product itself does not necessarily have a dialog, plot or even a story behind it. The goal of video art is to use video as pen and paper, an artist's point of view, as creative as the artist desires. In the end the definition of video art is still blurry, since as technique develops and the availability of instruments improves, ways of video art evolve. (Tarkka, M. 1993 s. 7-12)

Being a young field of art, video art divides artists, theorists and its audience in different groups. There are those who do not see video art as a form of art at all and think that it's nothing more than a personal documentary, a short-lived tradition that is going to pass. American theorist of media arts and politics, Gene Youngblood writes in his essay "Developing instrument: video and cinematic practice", published in 1970, that the field of video art does not exist and that as said before, is just a transient phase inside the world of film and media. In Youngbloods opinion, art is not dependent on the medium that is used to make it and that so being, video cannot be art. (Youngblood, G. 1970)

One of the great influential artists in the field of video art, Nam June Paik thought that in the future artists will abandon pens and brushes and start to paint straight on picture tubes. Martha Rosler, media artist and critic, on the other hand describes video art as a revolutionary tool, that turned the artists heads into a constantly forming and interventionist self-portrait. Art had a need to find a way to secure the power of art over mass media that was reaching a significant position in the Western culture back in 1960s. (Rosler, M. 1985/86 s. 149-169)

So what are the goals of video art? Is there one solid answer to this? According to the intentional art concept, the role of the piece as an art work is determined by the artist's

intentions not by its method. The aesthetic concept of art, on the other hand, is based on the characteristics of the form of the work and according to an art-based art concept, art is art irrespective of the artist's intent. In the end, goals of video art are the goals of its maker. (Winner, E. 1982)

2.1.2 Brief history of video art

Experimental film and video art was born soon after the start of film making, in the beginning of year 1990. Movements like Cinéma Pur took in the new medium and instead of the story line of film, concentrated on changing and experimenting on the structure and shape of film. Dadaistic, surreal, cubistic and futuristic influences moved with artists to moving image. Some of the most known members of this movement were René Clair, Marcel Duchamp and Man Ray. (Kansallinen audiovisuaalinen instituutti, 2018)

From 1920s, especially after World War 2, artists used cheaper 16mm and 8 mm film and aimed to develop new ways to use film. For example Stan Brakhage, artist from the USA used film without camera and instead of filming on it, he scratched it. From year 1960s, film moved to performance art and in that way, actually the concept of video art was born. First artists who used video as their medium were Nam June Paik, Bruce Nauman and Joan Jonas. In Finland, video art got its start in 1980, when multiple different artist groups started using video as a way of capturing space- and environment art. By year 1990, video art had established its position in the Finnish art scene. (Kansallinen audiovisuaalinen instituutti, 2018)

2.2 Documentary film

2.2.1 Definition of documentary film

What is documentary film and more importantly what is its connection to our society? Can it be art? What is it aiming to? Education? Changing world? A documentary film is a portrayal of real life or nature. Still, in the end documentary film is always maker's interpretation of reality and is affected by their choices and perspective. Documentary film has a special relationship with reality since the nature of documentary depends on unspoken rules and unclear definitions. The mission of documentary is to reach out to the world and present audience a claim or allegation. In addition, the documentary film

has to use the ways of film and images to prove its point and trustworthiness. (Aaltonen, J. 2011 15-40)

Trough time, there has been discussion, different theories and views about documentary film and what the art form actually is. Is there room for creativity and artistic features in documentary film? Some film theorists, like Siegrfried Kracauer, believe that documentary is only verifying reality and so being - it is not art. In his book "Theory of Film", Kracauer says that the aesthetics of a film should base only on material, not form. That being said, the film should be about expressing reality, not the maker's creativity. On the other hand, Michael Renov, who has divided documentary film in four basic tendencies, says that the role of creativity and expression have been underestimated, even though they have been there right beside documentary film from the very start. (Aaltonen, J. 2006 s. 27-45) John Grierson, Scottish documentary maker and man who is said to originally introduce the word documentary film, identified it as "creative treatment of actuality". (Aaltonen, J. 2011 s.15-40)

The development of documentary film is strongly connected to the development of film, film theory, and social science from different eras and discussion about aesthetics. As film and film makers changed and developed their skillset, the way of making films also developed. To this day, there is a long list of different methods for making documentary film. Once again, these methods are divided in two, creative and key issue based groups. Methods like reportage, historical documentary and TV documentary are strict and factual than for example follow up documentary, description of the situation, personal documentary or profile documentary, which give a lot of room for expression and emotions. (Aaltonen, J. 2006 s. 27-45)

So what is the aim of documentary film? To capture reality and show it as a neutral piece of evidence of the reality around us? Yes and no, it depends on the target audience. Documentary can educate us about nature and other people, i.e everyday news or a nature documentary about polar bears. It can make one want to change the world, one's own habits or the way one sees other people. The aim of documentary film is to move something inside us and to make a statement.

2.2.2 Brief history of documentary film

The history of document film is said to start from French Lumière brothers Louis and Auguste, who were among the first film makers in history. They also patented an improved cinematograph, an early motion picture film camera that allowed more than one person to view the film at the same time. Their early programs included many short clips that are nowadays considered to have documentary value.

Even though Louis and Auguste are seen as the first filmmakers in the world, documentary in its current form began from Robert Flaherty's film "Nanook of the North" in year 1922. John Grierson came up with the word documentary film after watching Flaherty's work, even though the film was staged for the sake of adding some drama into it. (Aaltonen, J. 2006, s. 27-45)

From this point documentary film kept developing and changing. In 1950s and 1960s the main aim of documentary films was to raise awareness of political and social issues in the USA. This movement was called "Direct Cinema". During this time, smaller lighter film cameras using smaller film stock were developed. This allowed the camera to be held on the shoulder and to film in a more spontaneous manner. At the same time, in France, "Cinema Verite" was invented. Cinema Verite is a style of documentary filmmaking and it is said to be invented by Jean Rouch, French filmmaker and anthropologist. Cinema Verite combines improvisation with the use of the camera to unveil truth or highlight subjects hidden behind crude reality. (Aaltonen, J. 2011, s.15-40) (Crow, J. 2013, New Yourk Times)

Alongside documentary film, another type of film was developed. "Mockumentary" was created to fool the audience into thinking that the film was fact based when it wasn't. The objective of Mockumentary was to point out how people should not put too much fait on filmed documentary, since so much could be faked in front of the camera. (Aaltonen, J. 2011. s.15-40) As technology and society develop, grow and change, so does documentary film and its ways. Idea of documentary has evolved from absolute truth towards staged reality.

2.2.3 Differences of documentary film and video art film

So is there a difference between these two? Can documentary film be an art form without breaking its definition or rules? Can video art be documentary? As pointed out before, there are many different opinions about this matter and the answer is not simple.

The task of art is to provide a viewer with something new, an interpretation of our reality and a perspective of the world around us. It raises questions, new and old, and these often arise as a result of self-study and reflection of the artist, as if the artist were a personal therapist. The mission and purpose is to send messages to the audience, to stir up feelings and thoughts. Art does not always mean creativity. An endearing result may not hide concealed motives or symbols. Before we can answer the question whether documentary art is art, we should be able to question what art really is? Art is an ever evolving and changing sector where definitions and sub-areas expand and evolve. Each person has formed their own image and perception of art, and hence our conceptions and definitions are all different from each other. The Finnish graphic artist Pekka Hannula defines art as a multifaceted term. Art is free, art is truth, art is sacred and art is a belief. Art is all that the artist will sign, which is to determine the artist himself? (Pekka Hannula, 2018)

As mentioned above, the art of video art is still young. It uses the familiar tools of film and is able to show us a reality of the reality, but at the same time also the customized truth. As a film, video art also evolves in the course of technology and draws new resources. It's creativity is not confined only to image, but also to the sound world, storytelling and narrative and peoples personal performances. All of these are the means to communicate the message to the viewers of the canvas. The documentary film uses same means. Technically speaking, it is at least parallel with video art. This leads us to the encounter of content, message and form. As for the documentary, the content is a crucial part and it is decided by the director and the script writer how to introduce the content. The goal is to bring out the truth, the reality as it is and to capture it on film.

Does the documentary leave room for creativity and art, and if yes, how much? One of the most significant differences between video art and documentary film is probably the control and editing and how they are used during video creation process. Even if the end

result is the same, and the public's perception of the content and message of the video is the same, it is the way how to go to the finish line, which is the most crucial part of this question.

In the end we can come to a conclusion that documentary film can most certainly be a piece of video art. To be a proper documentary piece, the film needs to meet some of the documentaries qualities, like reaching for as neutral and fact based end result as possible, telling a true story of the subject. Documentary does also have room for creativity, and the maker's vision. Capturing the beauty and ugliness of our world and life are touching moments and in a way there is art in all the things people do. Truth is not constant and we all see and feel it very differently, but documenting facts and showing it to people, sharing information is what develops us and moves us forward. Is that not what art is supposed to do?

3 VIDEO, LAW AND ETHICS

3.1 Video and ethics

3.1.1 Definition

So what is ethics? According to encyclopedia, ethics is study of manners, chastity and moral philosophy. Ethics are also seen as a field of research on how to act, what is right and what is wrong, what good life is and what are the ethical values and their nature. Western ethics are also seen as a field of philosophical studies. The very basic questions of ethics are how we should live? How we should treat other people and the world around us? What defines, if our actions are right or wrong? And what is the actual meaning of right and wrong? And on top of this all, what are the ethical rules we should choose to follow?

3.1.2 Video art and ethics

The ethics of art focus on ethical value issues around the art. Although art is a multifaceted and complex part of our culture, its ethics is by no means yet a well-structured research field. To both art and ethics, both are subject to different demands and expectations. The task of art is to consider the world around us and raise issues but it does not always provide answers. Frequently, discussions of values often circulate around the morally contrived works and authors. What is the reflection of art, for example, in education, quality of life or promotion of values? The key issues in ethics in art always include pragmatic problems and major principle considerations and perspectives. It also includes the difference between individual and community thinking. (Filosofia.fi, 2014)

Where the ethics of art passes an emotional and thoughtful area, it is also partly a legislative aspect of art, for example plagiarism, copyrights, other human rights, animal rights and so on. What about the censorship of art rights? Where does the limit and the role of freedom of expression pass through art? Is it therefore the task of art to try the boundaries of ethics? Issues of this topic are often expanding outside the art field. (Filosofia.fi, 2014)

In western culture, art has been connected strongly with the term "autonomic". Art is seen as something that has its own laws. This has led to a conclusion that art should be judged only based on its own premises. Because of this, art ethics has divided in to two groups, autonomic and moral perspective. Autonomic perspective states that art should be appreciated in an aesthetic or ultimately exclusive art-specific criterion. Art for art's sake. Moral perspective on the other hand view art as something that should be judged based on moral. This states that art also has moralistic values in it. (Filosofia.fi, 2014)

When considering the responsibility of the artist and the public, the artist is often morally at a disadvantage towards the audience. In the end, the responsibility of the art work is always on the artist himself and, of course, on owner of the location the piece is presented at. It is difficult to predict what kind of reaction and reflection the work has taking into account the public's full freedom and right to criticize and the possibly heterogeneous structure of the public. But it can be expected that some ethically charged art will offend or irritate some. The artist must be ready to participate in the discussion on the work of his own. (Filosofia.fi, 2014)

3.2 Video art and law

The word "law" means statute, given by concerned authority that obligates people and society. Law is formed by precepts. A precept is a commandment, instruction, or order intended as an authoritative rule of action. (Niemivuo, M. 2012. s. 173–179) As other aspects of life, also film has legislation to follow. This is for the safety of both the subject and the author of the film.

Criminal law says that one does not need permission to film or photograph in public areas, such as roads, forests, shops and other open areas where people are free to move and spent time. Right to film on public areas is based on law of freedom of speech. Permission is needed when filming happens in someone's home, vacation home, hotel room and dressing room etc. The main point of this legislation is to ensure that no-one's privacy is violated. It is also important to remember that when filming people, the person in front of the camera should be willing to be filmed and knows the purposes and goals of the filming.

Filming and publishing the end result are two different things. In journalism, publishing a photo or a video, rules base on good journalist customs and journalistic guidelines that say that the name of the person in the image or video must be mentioned. If there is more than five people in the work, and none of them is in a main role, names are not "needed". The guidelines also tell to respect human rights. Things about a person's private life can be published only with the individual's consent and if the person is under-aged, with theirs and their legal guardians consent. (Journalistiliitto.fi 1.5.2018)

3.3 Law and ethics

As law is something that is created to guide us and set boundaries to our society, and ethics and moral something that we can often measure only subjectively, they cannot be considered as one and the same thing. Though legislations are based on something that can be described as the basis of ethics and moral, it does not go as deep. One thing that law does not have, is understanding for human factor.

If there is law, is ethics needed? Law is binding, commonly accepted and given in writing that gives us boundaries, what can I do and what can't I do, while ethics and moral are based on persons emotional side, cultural background and upbringing. Following law can still act against our ethics. Immanuel Kant's ethical theory represents obedience ethics. According to Kant, the moral value of the act is neither the total benefit nor the happiness, but the motivation of the act. An ethically good act has been made to the obligation of universal moral law, and the unwanted consequences that may be caused by the act do not affect its ethics. The Universal Moral Law formulates a practical reason. An unethically working person, according to Kant, acts irrationally. So if our acts of moral are based on ones feelings, it can't be compared to law that is the same for everyone. (Filosofia.fi 2007)

But why should legitimate or ethical rules be respected? Most people follow the law, either because they also keep the code of law set ethically valid. For example, the intentional killing of an innocent individual contrary to his own will or purely for fear of sanction. These two aspects are also based on the many differences between law and morality. Laws are more specific in nature, generally written norms, which are bound in time. For example, we can decide that from the beginning of the next year, buying sexu-

al services is legally prohibited. But this does not follow any moral state of action, in other words, it can be morally right and wrong now and in the future. It would be absurd to claim that the moral status of a matter would change with a certain date.

Where people can comply with legal norms about the fear of punishment, the nature of ethical behavior belongs to, or at least should be, that we want to act ethically right. If we accept this assumption, ethically legitimate activities can not only be based on the rules and prohibitions imposed by the authorities, but genuine ethics requires discussion and reflection, analysis of our values and goals, as well as a concrete discussion of how best to reach commonly sought-after issues. Particularly in healthcare, this means that the debate must continue to live, as our knowledge grows and technologies change.

An essential ethical philosophy is the kind of society we want to live in. Do we, for example, consider scientific research as a valuable thing that should be limited only when it is justified to assume direct or indirect serious damage to the results of the research or when the study would harm the subjects? Or do we want to live in a society in which new and potentially human well-being can be denied if it violates the moral or religious feelings of some people? These are questions that need to be addressed at the level of society as an entity.

What does this mean in the field of art? It is legitimate to describe in a public place, for example, a mass repetition in which more than five people are unidentifiable, but is it ethically correct? (Lääkäriin etiikka, 2018) This is something that will show the artist's ethics and therefore it is a matter that needs to be carefully weighted.

4 “VELJENI – MY BROTHER”

4.1 My inspiration

When I started my studies at the Tampere University of Applied Sciences, I was not fond of video art. I did not understand it as a medium and I most certainly could not see what it could offer me as an artist. How wrong I was in the end. There is a saying “I don’t believe it before I see it” and I think that video art itself makes fun of this old saying. There is so much we see but don’t understand and many things that we do not see and think we understand.

It is hard to say where I got my inspiration but there have been many great artists that have inspired and led me to this subject and to these questions. While I was studying my first year in TAMK, we had a field trip to Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art and there I saw an exhibition by Alfredo Jaar, Chilean-born artist, architect, and filmmaker who lives in New York City. To me the themes of this exhibition were about human beings, their responsibilities, moral and what are the limits of behaviour. Jaar is often described as a political artist, but he himself does not like the term. Still he feels everyone engages with the world: "Because we act in the world, so everything we do represents a conception of the world. In that sense we are all political." Without this engagement in the world, it is not art, but merely decoration. Even though our themes are different from each other, I think that Jaar’s art affected my way of seeing and thinking, but most of all, experiencing art. We all have limits, our own sense of moral and sense of law. This is something that we both study and research, though on different levels. (Alfredo Jaar: Images are Not Innocent, 2016, video interview)

While working on my project, I have also studied Sally Mann’s works and methods. Mann is an American born photographer, who is probably most known for her large scale black and white photos of her own children. Her most known collection "Immediate Family", published in 1992 was a book consisting 65 black and white photos of her three children who were all under 10 years old. Most of the photos were taken on the family's remote summer cabin next to a river, where the children played and swam nude. Many typical childhood themes were shown, like dressing up, skinny dipping and playing board games, but the book also showed themes such as insecurity, loneliness,

injury and death. The collection awoke a lot of conversation about child pornography and of contrived fiction with constructed tableaux.

4.2 My documentary video art project

4.2.1 My vision

When I started work on my thesis art work, my aim was to create something that would highlight the simple joys of life, its beauty and things that we so very often take for granted. This led to an idea about a documentary video piece, done without a manuscript or a big film crew. Just me, my subjects and camera. As the topic I chose my little brothers, Matias 20-years-old, Markus 15-years-old and Mikael 14-years-old.

Since two out of three from my little brothers were under-aged and I had a personal relationship with them, questions about what I can and want to show to the audience rose up. At the same time I was working on a documentary film so how much could I edit and direct my work, until it would stop being a documentary and turn into a video piece? Has this been done before and how? Where does the line go, if it even exists? I wanted to show the real personalities and problems, but at the same time I wanted them to feel good about performing in front of the camera. There are laws and universal rules of ethics, but we all also have our own rules when it comes to revealing ourselves to other people.





4.2.2 My work

As the idea grew in my mind, doubts and fears about its effects also grew. First of all I would have to ask my brothers and my parents, if they were willing to start this project with me and if they were willing to let me film in our family home. I had to be very open about my ideas and goals, if I wanted to finish my work and to publicly present it.

I wanted to combine documentary film and video art, and to do that I really had to understand what is documentary and does it work together with art. Is it possible for me to film my brothers without guiding the way my work is going too much and without edit-

ing some of the story's main points without failing my goal of making a documentary? I had to figure out my role as an artist, as an editor and also as a sister, since I was not going to be the only one who was going to face the aftermath if there was going to be consequences.

My second step was to go to the library and in the internet to find some facts about the legislation and what does it say about filming a minor, or about filming anybody in that matter. I also researched actual articles and books about making a documentary, history of documentary, what types of documentaries there is, what kind of methods have been used for making documentary films and also to study the technical side of making a video. I also started to get familiar with the software that I would have to use for editing and creating my video art piece.



I did not work with a script when it comes to making the documentary and my aim was a follow up documentary. There was only me, my camera and my subjects. I followed my brothers about a year and filmed them as the time went by. As we all might know, males under 16 years old do not have a very comprehensive understanding on life, what it has been or what it will be. This got me thinking more and more about my responsibility as an artist. And even if the law was on my side, my sense of moral and ethics warned me. But if I choose what to show for the sake of how my subject will seem to my audience, can I still call my work a documentary film? If documentary is trying to

capture truth and reality in front of our eyes, am I doing it or am I just choosing to show “my own reality”?

While working, we often sat down to watch what I had filmed. To keep my subjects interested in the project and to get their acceptance to my material, I had to work very openly with my video and tell them very honestly where I was going with the film. With different subjects I also had to work differently, to capture their real and unique moments with the camera /on video. The parents of my subjects, my parents, had told me that they do not wish to be a big part of this work, but they want to know what is happening and what am I going to show to other people on the opening night of our degree show.

As I worked alone, responsibility of editing the video was all mine. I had to go through all the material I had gathered during my project and decide what to show and what to cut off. As I already knew my brothers and what kind of personalities they have, I found it important to make sure that I show the real side of them and something complete, not only clips from their best or worst days.

As my work proceeded, I had to edit more and more of the video. I had already decided that I will install my work in a home-like space, that I would have to build and create myself to the gallery where the work was going to be shown. By this I wanted the viewer and my audience to feel the normal, everyday life impression and to highlight my theme. My video was projected to a fridge door, in front of a small kitchen table set so that the audience could watch it the way that old home movies were used to be presented. The way my work was installed was a very big part of my work, and it was also a way to bring documentary film and art closer to together.



4.2.3 Challenges

My biggest challenges while making this project were filming my under-aged brothers, doing that inside the guidelines of Finnish law and learning what I can and cannot show. As mentioned before, the problems were not only legal, but also ethical. Since my subjects were all in this film voluntarily, and I wanted to keep it that way, I had to make sure that none of their own limits were pushed too hard or stepped over. This brings us to the question on what is documentary and is my work a documentary, if I knowingly and purposely edited some of the scenes and dialogs to influence the way my brothers are shown on this video? Also, clearly even without manuscript, my work had a theme that I followed while editing,

One of my challenges was also finding the right moments to show and right things to talk about while my interviews. I wanted to have real reactions, real stories and feelings on the video, so some of my sessions turned out to last two to three hours. As my aim was to work on the video from follow up point of view, I didn't want to guide the interviews too much. As an author and a sister I wanted to talk to my subjects the way I would talk to my brothers. In time, I managed to do that, but first I had to get my subjects comfortable in front of the camera.

During my editing work, I had to cut off some of my most favorite scenes. Those scenes were mostly something that had very strong and clear feelings in them, but in the end they were not something that the video or the theme could not survive without. At the end of my filming, I had more than 40 hours of video material from different places I went with my family and my brothers. Out of this I decided to use mostly home centered material, or material in which we visited places that had a significant meaning in the story. This brought up another problem. Even if I was allowed to film in public places, and even if I had my brothers' permission to film them and follow them, what about the people around us?

In one of the scenes we visit the hospital with my brother Matias. Even though hospitals are considered a public place as long as you film in the lobby and areas open to everybody, it is a sensitive place to use as a filming location. I myself also felt very uncomfortable with going there with my camera, therefore I ended up filming only film with my smartphone. There is something about not wanting to exploit other people's weak moments, and this is how I felt while filming in hospital. Even though I did not break any laws, my moral stepped on my way. Originally I had planned to film more in the hospital and show more details about my brother's medical issue but in the end I could not do it. There was no reasonable explanation for this in the end, except that it just felt wrong.

It is hard to list here all my challenges. This whole project was a challenge for me in the end. It is never easy to convey one's thoughts and feelings into something concrete and hope that other people will think and see the same things. I also wanted to meet my own standards and expectations with this work, with a documentary art video. Still, making a working process and successful piece of art was the biggest challenge.

4.2.4 My outcome

The end result turned out to be quite pleasing and as the artist, I think I met my goal with connecting documentary film and art. Not only with the contents of the video itself, but also in the way of installing my work. My theme was life right now and this moment, but in the end, I think that my piece worked on many different levels. There are many ways to look at the subject and contents, and everybody see them from their own perspective, depending on your age, family status and own experiences.

One of my goals was to connect documentary and art in the practical part of my thesis and I do feel like I have accomplished that. I also wanted to gain better understanding on documentary and how to use it in video art. Also, I wanted to understand and study my subjects and their thoughts, feelings and everyday life and I think I succeeded in that.







5 Conclusion

So in the end, we are still battling the question whether documentary film and art can be one and the same? Does art know the boundaries of rules and ethics? And if we follow the rules of ethics in art, are we telling the story we want to tell or are we telling the truth? Who or what do we need to protect and how?

What comes to the first question, I think that it has been clearly pointed out in this text that documentary film can be art, when video art on the other hand is clearly not always documentary. One of the conclusions is also, that one of the main feature that make a documentary, are not only the beginning and the ending but also the path that you have to walk to get from point A to point B. This brings us to the question about rules of art and video and the boundaries that we are obliged to respect while working. I think that an artist or a filmmaker cannot base all his work on law and legal texts. Even though law is there to protect us from each other and most of all from ourselves, it misses the human element and ability to consider one's feelings and different perspectives. Life does not happen in theory, it happens in practice and that is what makes ethics important. Even though art's mission is to try to change the world and affect people around us, it should not be done on the expense of other people.

This brings us to a question about the truth in documentary and how we are telling the story through the lens of camera? How can we tell the real story if we are forbidden to show the good and the bad actions of people the way they are in real life? I believe in the power of openness and that this kind of work is not only a journey for the artist him- or herself, but also a journey and a way of self development for the subject of the documentary as well. In the end there is not only one absolute truth, truth is what every person makes of it themselves. That is why one should never be set for only one possible outcome or conclusion when working with people. Art is research, learning experience, journey to realization and self-development.

Still, all family members involved in a project like this should be able to make their own decisions about what they want to go through and how much of themselves or their private matters they want to show to the rest of the world. Their point of view should be respected and noted that the fact that pressuring and encouraging are two separate things. The matter of understanding and realizing where one's actions can lead people is

Important. For example, can children, sick people and mentally challenged people make decisions about these matters themselves? Can even their legal guardians make that decision, since it is not a decision about their own life. This is a question where a simple answer cannot be found, and it should be decided when the situation is at hand by the people involved in it and ethics and law all need to be considered when coming up with the answer.



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