

Lets start with a quote:

"We all have our own ways of expressing ourselves. When you work creatively you develop, you acquire more skills, you gain better selfconfidence and you express yourself more. One day all people will participate in many kinds of creative activities. One will understand that it's not a privilege for the few but a necessity for all."

From a handout, 1947 in San Francisco. *Adelyne Cross Eriksson*.

From where did she get her ideas and what are the contents of "Living workshop?"

I suppose you have all heard of the BAUHAUS.

It was a radical movement and school in Germany in the 20^s that combined crafts and fine arts.

A new way of teaching.

Bauhaus introduced a new pedagogy that since then has inspired almost every school for architects.

The students started with a course that aimed to open their minds and take away their preconceived opinions about art and their means of expression. Focus was on experiments and your own practical work. It was a complete breach with the traditional way where respect for predecessors and beautiful drawings was most important.

The main ideas were formulated in:

- Stimulating the student's self-confidence.
- Find new paths beyond the conventional.
- Make room for one's experience.

Bauhaus and their school was closed down in the 30's by the Nazis and the ideas spread worldwide. *The Institute of Design in Chicago* took it up in 1939. *Adelyn Cross Eriksson* was a student there and in the 50^s she brought the ideas to Sweden. She started to develop her method, and in Sweden we named it "*Levande verkstad*" or

"Living workshop".

By its democratic ways of working, Living Workshop is touched by amateurism and accessibility; it's a method that differs from other schools. This is a paradox; Living Workshop has its foundation based on deep solid thoughts.

When you start working with art you start a process. You begin with something that inspires you, f.ex. a poem, a painting, a dialogue or a dance. You continue writing, building or dramatizing. One thing inspires the next. You can work individually or in groups.

Our experience is that this method is very liberating for anyone. You don't have to be an artist to make a painting or a poem. You are never left alone. You always get something to go on working with.

There are a lot of people who agree with these ideas today.

- *The National Agency for Education in Sweden.*

Have started to urge and encourage Swedish schools to work more creatively.

- *Matti Bergström, professor of physiology at the university of Helsinki here in Finland. Also a member of the World Academy of Art and Science. Brain researcher.*

He has found out that humans need both chaos and order to live a full life and to build a better world, even save the planet with creative solutions. When children start school we just encourage the order-part and children soon stop to be creative.

We have tried this method in our school both with children and teenagers and with adults among our colleagues. We find it well worth doing.

The best way of understanding this method is learning by doing. Right now we will start a creative process and take a few steps together!!