**Nature Art in Pedagogy - article by Zsófia Lázár in Szentendre and Vidéke (2023. 06.)**

***Júlia Egervári, visual artist and Andrea Nánási, crisis counselling psychologist are working on an exciting long-term nature art project in our city. The first sessions took place this spring, in the framework of the Sustainability Week, and we asked them about it.***

Andrea Nánási first encountered the concept of nature art during her studies of environmental psychology, and soon found the work of István Erőss, who encountered this approach during his Eastern studies. Later, based on his research and experience, he built up the curriculum of the natural art specification at the Eszterházy Károly University in Eger. According to his concept, works of natural art strive to recreate harmony with nature and use materials, objects and sites found in nature. As such, they do not fit into mainstream art movements, as they cannot be exhibited in museums or galleries, and, by their very nature, are not really made to last. Nature art is also different from the land art we are more familiar with. While land art often creates monumental works and works with major interventions in the environment, nature art is more about subtlety," says Andrea. In nature art there is a democratic relationship, interdependence, mutual adaptation and, most importantly, humility towards nature.

Júlia Egervári graduated from the Eszterházy Károly University as a student of István Erőss, she is currently an assistant professor at the same university, while she is pursuing her PhD. Their first joint project with Andrea was an Erasmus+ project, which took place last spring in Szentendre with an international group of students and teachers from Petzelt. The main theme of the project - innovative methods in pedagogy - was chosen to be the natural arts. Julia is a teacher at the Dunakanyar Private School and her PhD research focuses on how to integrate nature arts into art pedagogy, which she regularly applies in her teaching practice. She has worked with almost all age groups, from very young to very old.

She found that the students in Petzelt were very open to working together, and the Danube bank proved to be an ideal location. "The exciting thing about this genre is that you can't really plan the works in advance, or even the process, you can only choose the location as a preparation. We work with what we can find - obviously without damaging the environment - and because every group is different, it's always interesting to see what that group can do in the chosen location. In such cases, I am usually mostly in the role of facilitator, not giving specific instructions, but rather offering them different options.

She says that although young people are somewhat disconnected from nature, and the virtual world of smart devices in general provides them with much more stimulation, they can be attuned to nature in minutes with the right environment and methods. In Andrea's view, young people are typically used to completing a task according to instructions, within a set timeframe and with results. This makes it difficult for them to cope in a situation where they are not bound by these constraints. As a psychologist, she sees the use of nature arts in pedagogy as a good opportunity for a mental health renewal. The tools are relatively easy to access - especially here in Szentendre, because wherever you go, sooner or later you find yourself in a natural environment.

We've talked about being alienated from nature," she says, "but I see it as alienated from the experience of creating. Creating in nature, however, gives us a completely different set of tools from the pencil or the brush, and one that allows us to express ourselves even if we would otherwise find it difficult. All the while, a sense of competence is developed and retained. The institutional form of environmental education is limited to the cognitive transfer of knowledge, and the other two components of environmental attitudes - whether emotional or action-oriented - remain very under-represented.

**Nature Art in Szentendre**

The main goal of Andrea Nánási is to introduce nature art to the teachers of Szentendre and to introduce the method to the schools of Szentendre. Already at the beginning of this year, she assembled a team of teachers and eco-enthusiasts. In the framework of the 2023 Sustainability Week, nature art demonstrations were held in two secondary schools, joined by Anna Varga, head of the Tutaj Workshop in Dunabogdány. The reception from the secondary schools was very open. The sessions took place with the participation of students from three secondary garmmar schools in Szentendre, at the Bükkös stream and on the Danube bank. After a short theoretical introduction, they created in small groups with the tools they found there, in a way that we only intervened in the order of nature in a subtle way, with a delicate touch, and just tried to emphasise a little the beauty that nature had already created," says Andrea.

The museum educators of the Ferenczy Museum Centre in Szentendre, Gabriella György and Tünde Sütő also joined the initiative. This summer, their children's museum camps for primary school children will include fine arts and archaeology as well as natural history. The museum will also host the city's day camps, and during the two weeks, there will also be nature art sessions.