

A Lighthouse in the North

*Pikene på Broen and the role of contemporary art in
tourism development in Kirkenes*

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Abstract

Up until today, the arctic tourism industry has prioritized the development of nature-based activities. Cultural tourism has been promoted as well, but only little attention has been paid to the development of contemporary art attractions.

In April 2017, a case study centered around the company Pikene på Broen was conducted in Kirkenes. It was based on a qualitative methodological approach.

This thesis investigates the role and potential of contemporary art in Arctic tourism through the activities of the art-production company Pikene på Broen. The thesis also describes how employees at Pikene på Broen reflected on the nature of Pikene`s role in the tourism context in Kirkenes.

Keywords: Kirkenes, Pikene på Broen, contemporary art, artist-in-residency, BAR International, Barents Spektakel, place branding, local narrative, Arctic tourism.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

In Norway, the tourism sector occupies an important and special place in the economy of the country. Around the world, Norway is well known for its nature. The official web page, visit.norway, presents the country as a tourist destination, in which nature plays an important role. The web page says: «Norway is a country of outstanding natural beauty, with dramatic waterfalls, crystal clear fjords, majestic mountains, and spectacular glaciers. Enjoying nature and the outdoors is considered a national pastime, and this is reflected in our attitude towards the preservation and use of the wilderness» ('Sustainability - Official travel guide to Norway - visitnorway.com', n.d.). Relatedly, when it comes to presenting the main highlights of Norway, including Northern Norway, we can find information about: fiords, midnight sun, mountains, waterfalls, glaciers, Viking culture, skiing, hiking and cycling ('Places to go in Norway - Visit Norway', n.d.). Norwegian nature is the most attractive thing for tourists visiting the country, the beauty of natural landscape sceneries and the possibilities of doing outdoor activities are central elements in Norwegian tourism. As a consequence, the cultural sector does not assume a leading role, but it has great potential, especially in Northern Norway. Unfortunately, natural resources are not eternal and can easily be lost. Alternately, culture is more flexible and could become a rich sector for tourism. Especially, if we are talking about contemporary art.

To be more specific, for a long time, the Northern Norway tourism industry has been dominated by nature-based activities. Culture also makes up a considerable part of tourism in the area and includes museums, Sami indigenous culture, cultural institutions and different kinds of heritage. Contemporary art, however, has not been a focus in Northern cultural tourism. That being said, there is evidence of «art». For example, handicraft shops are found in Lofoten, which are one of the cultural attractions for visitors. Another example is festivals. While festivals are cultural, they are often about art, such as the Festspillene festival in Harstad or the Lofoten International Art Festival (LIAF). Such festivals or events serve as a catalyst for new knowledge and perspectives in the North, for example, the Arctic Arts Summit. In June 2017, this cultural event took place within the framework of the Festspillene festival in Harstad. It was the first summit and conference in which Arctic countries participated in order to highlight circumpolar arts and culture. The aim of the summit was to present, analyze and discuss the role of arts and cultures in the Arctic. In addition, one of the purposes of the Arctic Arts Summit was to strengthen the arts and culture in the north ('Arctic Arts Summit', 2017).

Another strong example of cultural attraction in Northern Norway is the previously mentioned Lofoten International Art Festival, LIAF. In 1991, the LIAF was first initiated as a local art exhibition with a broad range of expressions exhibiting a regional profile. The festival presents

outcomes by artists from different countries in a local and site-specific context and seeks to be an open, experimental place. It also serves as a meeting place for artists, audience and local inhabitants. One of the aims of the LIAF acknowledges the complexity of place and so the festival seeks to be a discursive, engaged and social platform for different positions in order to create dialogue between the local and global ('About – LIAF', n.d.).

As illustrated by previous examples, some of the visitors already visiting Northern Norway do so in relation to contemporary arts activities. Behind those events stand a lot of different meetings, and workshops with local and international artists, and curators. Situated further to the North than already noted in the previous examples is one more unique art institution – an art-company, Pikene på Broen, which hosts the Barents Spektakel international festival and the BAR International artist-in-residency program. The Pikene på Broen case is particularly interesting because of their extroverted characteristics, since it is this company that stands behind the production of the festival.

Given this background, the aim of the research reported in this Master`s thesis was to explore the role of contemporary art in arctic tourism. To make this study possible, I chose the art production company Pikene på Broen, which is located in Kirkenes, to be a case study for my Master`s thesis. I believe it is relevant to investigate Pikene på Broen as a case of contemporary art in Finnmark, Barents region and the Arctic.

1.1 Research question

My thesis aimed to investigate the role and potential of contemporary art in Arctic tourism through the activities of the art-production company Pikene på Broen. My research question was to explore what kind of role does the art-production company Pikene på Broen play in the tourism industry in Kirkenes, Sør-Varanger, Finnmark and Barents Region. The company`s activities should be better recognized and understood as should the potential for strengthening and increasing such arts related travels be investigated. For the Kirkenes, this study may also have a positive outcome, because Kirkenes, with its industrial past, needs to find new opportunities for income. Later, in this thesis, I will explain the definitions of tourism activity, and cultural tourists I used and applied in this research. Those definitions informed the empirical data gathering during the process of in depth semi-structured interviews.

For the interviews, seven informants were chosen. The informants were people of different ages and social status, who had an experience in working with the different art-projects of the art-

company Pikene på Broen. The interview guide covered several topics – the BAR International artist-in-residency program, the international art-festival Barents Spektakel, the media strategy of the art-company, Pikene på Broen, and their plans for future. Through descriptions of the artist-in-residency program in particular and the festival in general, I explore how the company perform the role of host and the invited artist - the role of guest, as well as tourist. Future plans of the art-production company help understand tourism business perspectives. This helps to understand the company's tourism involvements and the tourism-relatedness of their activities.

1.2 Pikene på Broen. Girls in Kirkenes.

My research focused on the culture organization, Pikene på Broen, which is located in Kirkenes, a small Norwegian town next to the Russian border. A description of the place, where the fieldwork took place now follows. The official statistical data base of Norway says, Kirkenes is a small border town with 3,564 of inhabitants ('My Page: StatBank Norway', n.d.). In 1993, when the Norwegian foreign minister initiated the Barents region, Kirkenes was chosen as the center and the Barents Secretariat of this new international and regional cooperation was located in the town. Subsequently, I believe it is important to consider Kirkenes in the context of trans-border studies. Prescott (1990) says, borders are areas that lie near to boundaries and «boundaries» are the actual lines of demarcation seen on maps. In his approach, he understood «borderlands» as transition zones through which boundaries cross. The concept of borderscape as an alternate way of thinking about the border area and bordering process - on the border, beyond the line, as a place, as a landscape through which the border runs and with the territorial contacts to the border (Paasi, 2013).

Viken, Granås, & Nyseth (2008) analyzed the transformation of Kirkenes, from an industrial town to a border town. The roots of the town lie in its establishment as a harbor for an iron-ore mining venture. This branch of the economy closed in 1990s. In the 2010s, the hegemonic narrative relating to Kirkenes associates with it being a town on the border and, at the same time, the center of the Barents Region. Viken et. al. (2008) go through more than 200 years of history of Kirkenes and its surrounding area. The three researchers concluded that the manifold transformations have led to a situation where Kirkenes has become "Russianized", although local actors struggle with how to handle this aspect of local development and the meaning of its place (Viken et al., 2008, pp. 30–32). Thus, to characterize Norwegian-Russian borderspace, we may perceive it as a combination of different elements united together by their meanings in the process of bordering process. That is why Barents region, with Kirkenes as the center, was intended not only as geopolitical project, but as economic and cross-cultural too (HøNneland, 1998; Tunander, 2008).

One of the institutions dealing with border issues is the Pikene på Broen (The Girls on the Bridge). The art-production company was established in 1996 as a project-based organization mostly operating on public funding. In 1996, there were by five girls: Bente Synnøve Andersen, Svea Andersen, Anne Mette Bjørgan, Inger Blix Kvammen and Solvor Vefsnmo. Nowadays, the company is run by an international team of six curators and professionals ('About Us', n.d.). The aim of their activities is to stimulate intercultural dialogues and to develop Kirkenes as a town. The company has run a lot arts-projects for approximately the last 20 years. As a main arena for their projects, the Pikene på Broen uses Kirkenes. The most well known event is the Kirkenes festival "Barents Spectacle". Another one is the international artist-in-residency program BAR. Part of their activity maybe considered as the promotion of Kirkenes as the power center of the Barents area (Viken et al., 2008).

Based on the rich history of the region, Schimanski (2015) agrees that Kirkenes has become an interesting place for researchers to conduct fieldwork and for artists and artist groups to participate in residencies or shows. With regard to the latter, many are invited by the cultural production and curator collective, Pikene på Broen. Mainly participation in the residencies and show is connected to the annual international arts festival Barents Spektakel (established in 2004) and the artist-in-residency program (Schimanski, 2015). The participation of artists, curators and scholars on the border comes at a time when research in border studies is experiencing a cultural turn. It is also at a time when art is experiencing a research turn, with artists incorporating politically informed field research into their projects (Schimanski & Wolfe, 2010). A background of social, economic, political and scientific negotiations points to a growing industry of border tourism in the Barents region. For example, Wråkberg uses examples of boat trips via the Pasvik river, and visitors at the Borderland Museum and coach trips to the Nikel, with "study visits" by groups of politicians, researchers and artists (Wråkberg, 2007). As a consequence of the «art visits», we need to consider the wide diversity of artistic production, such as performance, films, and photography.

1.3 The structure

The structure of this Master's thesis is now outlined. As expected, the introduction chapter is presented first. It introduces the research question, discusses the context of the town of Kirkenes, and describes the organization, Pikene på Broen.

The second chapter, the methods chapter, chronologically explains how the empirical materials was generated. I explain my background, choice of research method, development of topics, how

I selected informants for interviews and how I used the methodology, and main aspects of research ethics throughout the research process.

In order to make it easier to understand the collected empirical data, chapter three presents theory along with the analysis of text and empirical materials. At the end of each section, I sum up the most important highlights of my research.

In the fourth chapter, I present conclusions about the activities of the company, Pikene på Broen and provide suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2 Methods

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to a chronological description of my methodology. Chiefly, this methodological chapter will explain how the empirical research was designed and conducted within a framework of qualitative inquiry. I will also justify the choice of my research methodology. The main research question aimed to explore the role of the art company Pikene på Broen in the tourism industry in Kirkenes and Barents region. Subsequently, this research question facilitated understanding how employees at Pikene på Broen considered and reflected on the nature of Pikene's role in the tourist context in Kirkenes.

The methods chapter consists of several sections. In the first section, I focus on qualitative research and why this approach was best suited to my research. In the second section, the selection of informants is described. In the third section, I present the structure of my interview guide and the process of its creation. Lastly, the chapter outlines how my Master's thesis corresponded to research ethics principles.

2.2 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research methods facilitate the collection of deep, expanded information about a study's focus or subject. Such methods allow researchers to obtain diverse data, such as opinions, estimates, considerations, descriptions, associations, assumptions, rationales, ideas, suggestions, and arguments. In other words, it seeks to understand a given research problem or topic from the perspectives of the local population it involves (Mack & Woodsong, 2005). This method allowed me to analyze people's, and in this case Pikene employees', descriptions of their experiences and perceptions.

In order to address the research question regarding the role of the art company, Pikene på Broen, in the tourism industry in Kirkenes and Barents region, I used qualitative research methods. According to Barbour (2008), qualitative methods allow us to focus on the context of people's daily life, where the nature of the empirical material/data collected rests on the researcher's competence and the informant's knowledge (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In my case, my "focus on the context of people's daily life" meant that a qualitative methodology allowed me to concentrate on the everyday routine business of the company. A qualitative methodology enabled me to gather descriptions of the «cooking process/the kitchen» of the two biggest and main projects, which Pikene på Broen runs during the year – the BAR the residency program and the

art festival Barents Spektakel. It also enabled me to gain insights regarding what the company has to do with Kirkenes, specifically, its location on a border with Russia. I think the work of Pikene på Broen is a very important dimension of Kirkenes and Sør-Varanger. Also important is Kirkenes industrial past and how it influences the daily life of locals and the tourist industry. As I mentioned before, the competence as well as the background and professional experience of informants influenced the nature of the source of empirical materials in this study. Moreover, such competence would help to gather in-depth descriptions of the activities of the art-company Pikene på Broen. Chiefly, my aim was to contribute knowledge that can give us a better understanding of the relationship between contemporary art and tourism in the North.

I made a decision to collect empirical materials via semi-structured interviews because these interviews combine the benefits of open-ended questions (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991). Berg & Lune (2012) characterized this type of interview as a way that involves the implementation of a number of predetermined questions and special topics. In my research, my interview guide consisted of a detailed sequence of carefully crafted questions. Kvale & Brinkmann, (2009) describe the script for this type of interview as a guide, which consists of outlining topics to be covered with suggested questions. Unlike a standardized interview, in my project the questions were more "open-ended". They were supposed to prevent unambiguous answers and provide a means to obtain more information. Further, this way of interviewing allowed me to deviate from the script and gain extra information from my respondents. According to Hannam & Knox (2005), semi-structured interviews allow us to construct knowledge while interviewers and informants negotiate meanings and understandings. To use an unstructured interview, which assumes even a greater amount of freedom to collect information and process it, may take longer. In the course of my research, I did experience this happening and I will return to how this happened in the analysis chapter. Subsequently, this occurrence justified my initial choice of semi-standardized interviews. This type of interview best fitted my research. First of all, it met the expectations of the workers in Pikene på Broen, their way of thinking and presenting their stories. For the people, who ran the art projects and interacted with artists, I deemed that they would be uncomfortable in participating in a standardized form of interview. They need "space" to talk and express themselves but not too much - informants need "borders" too. Thus, for my research, semi-structured interviews provided both optimum conditions and helped the best. Of course, I, as the interviewer felt freer during the interview process too. Further, this type of empirical material collection was the most comfortable for me as a researcher. During fieldwork, I was living in Finnmark and so had easy access and plenty of opportunities to conduct semi-structured interviews.

I would like to mention to the reader that I was familiar with most of the people I interviewed due to my previous engagements with Pikene. My first interaction took place in Kirkenes in 2016 when I assisted as a volunteer during Barents Spektakel. At that time, I was allowed to stay after the festival to help to take down scenery and equipment. Without the festival fuss, the atmosphere was quieter, and I had the chance to talk to employees and some of the artists. This experience helped me to understand better the working processes of the festival. The same experience happened in 2017. Additionally, I also knew some of the employees in the art world from that time because they had visited or lived in Arkhangelsk to participate in the residency program in Arkhangelsk. As a guide, I had assisted some of the artists who had participated in the artist-in residency program in my hometown (Arkhangelsk), and when I had helped to set up the exhibitions.

2.3 The informants

Another important stage of my research was to determine whom to choose as respondents. This section will explain how potential respondents were located and selected. Initially, I considered interviewing workers from the company and people “outside” of the Pikene på Broen, for example, employees at Sør-Varanger municipality, hotels or other institutions. But, after analyzing the touristic context of Kirkenes, I figured out that there were not that many direct connections between them and Pikene på Broen. And, it may have been too early for such interviews. Further, after reconsidering the purpose of the research topic, I decided to focus only on Pikene på Broen activities. In my opinion, it was more relevant to know how they perceive and interact with the tourism industry in Kirkenes and the surrounding region than the other way around. One more argument for it was the fact that I had met all the respondents before, even those who had quit working at Pikene på Broen by April 2017.

A sociological survey can be conducted using random or pre-selected sampling criteria relevant to a study. My study provided for the spontaneous interviewing of respondents based on the following sampling criteria: different sex, age, social status and educational level. This criteria covered the entire set of my respondents, specifically, members of the organization. Selective social questioning enabled the selection of participants in accordance with the subject of the study - a reduced copy of the general population (Converse, 2009). Interviewing the workers from the company helped me to see and understand (from inside) how the organization interacts with the other institutions in Kirkenes and how it works within a touristic context.

During the fieldwork in April 2017, seven people were interviewed. At that time, the whole company consisted of seven employees. Two of the employees were on vacation when the interviews were conducted. A further two persons from the company had just quit. Their

experiences were considered relevant for my research. Why, because although Pikene på Broen is an art-company, it is also a project company. Depending on how many projects as well as project size, the company may turnover employees. Subsequently, I decided to include the two who had quit on my list of informants. These two, I am glad to say agreed to my request to participate in my research project.

According to Jennings (2005), it is important to establish rapport with respondents before interviewing them because trust and respect are necessary to produce reliable data. So, that stage was already passed successfully. Second, I contacted my future informants myself. I sent letters to potential informants via social networks and email. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the interviews through the information letter. The information letter consisted of a description of my study background, the Master's program and the purpose of my research. In addition, information was provided about the interview procedure. Most of the interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes. Some were shorter and some longer, depending on how much each informant had to tell. All of the informants were eager to participate in an interview and nobody cancelled any appointment. Finally, to make our meeting as comfortable as possible, I decided to conduct the interviews in the office of the company in Kirkenes. Even though the respondents and I had met before and I was not a new person to them, I decided to arrange one pre-meeting before the actual interviews in order to establish contact and trust. On my first day in Kirkenes, I came by the office just to say "hi" and to make sure that all our agreements still stood. Of course, I informed them by email that I would show up at the office. I used Skype to talk with respondents, who were not in Kirkenes at that time.

As the interviewer, I decided to record the interviews by recorder instead of writing down the answers because the former lessens interference with the interview process (Jennings, 2005, p. 111). It also permitted the interview to be less formal and enabled me to observe participant's behavior and emotions. In addition, transcripts of interviews contain a lot of information that might have been lost during interviews or not have been interpreted in the right way had I relied on handwriting responses.

2.4 Interview guide

The process of designing the interview guide took about one month. In preparation for it, I decided to follow Pikene på Broen in all media sources. I started by following the company on its official webpage, Facebook and Instagram. I collected all available information about the history of the company. I translated all the annual reports of the company. I tried to figure out how the festival

Barents Spektakel had developed, what was the beginning of the BAR residency program, who had been running the company, what patterns did visitor numbers demonstrate amongst other things. In other words, any information was important and helped me to build up a picture of company activity. As a guideline during the “following process”, the research question: “what role the art company Pikene på Broen plays in the tourism industry”, helped to determine relevant information and screen out irrelevant information.

Questions were designed thematically and dynamically. That means that firstly, the questions clearly defined and related to the specific research topic. Questions were created in an easy to understand manner. Second, the questions were supposed to keep the flow of conversation going in a positive way and generate positive interaction with respondents. To ensure that the conversation was not going to stop, I decided to prepare probing questions. Probing questions helped in situations in which I did not fully understand a response, when answers were vague or ambiguous or when more specific or in-depth information was required.

The topics and themes were created step-by-step and in the end formed an introduction and several main sections. The interview guide consisted of three topics - the residency program BAR, the cross-border festival Barents Spektakel, and the future of the Pikene på Broen. The residency program and Barents Spektakel were included because these were two of the main projects of the company. All around the North region, Pikene på Broen is well known for them. These two projects contributed the most because of their contemporary arts activities and the incoming mobility into the Kirkenes and the Barents region. The third topic about the future perfectly united both of them and served to generate perspectives about how the projects may change the company.

The interview guide that I constructed consisted of four main parts: 1. Who are you as a worker at the Pikene på Broen? 2. BAR and art tourism. 3. Barents Spektakel and art tourism. 4. The future. The first set of questions was dedicated to personal information and warm-up questions to encourage the respondents to be more open and relaxed. Based on these questions, the company had workers from different countries – Norway, Australia, Russia and Germany. Because Pikene på Broen is very international, the main language of communication chosen was English, however, with some respondents Russian was used. All of the participants had one and more degree in art or communication and had experience of working in international communities. Only one respondent had experience of working in the tourism industry in the past. All of employees had experiences of working with curating art-projects, which the company runs during the year.

The second and third set of questions investigated the connection between the BAR residency program, the festival Barents Spektakel and tourism activity. The idea was to “suppress” and avoid

the word “tourism” from the respondents for as long as possible. Of course, they knew about my educational background as a Master student from the tourism program, but still, I tried to not make tourism a focus of our conversations. In my opinion, doing this helped respondents speak and describe more freely their work. My task was to gather information concerning what they did and how they actually ran the company, what lead them, what guided them, when did workers have to pick a theme or how did they determine which artist should be invited for a coming festival. I was afraid that the term “tourism” might have put them in a framework that was specific to that topic or influence their answers. Again, I wanted them to talk about their activities, not about tourism.

The questions covered financial aspects, the media strategies of events, accommodation, cooperating partners and procedures for calculating visitors. Sometimes, I asked questions to which I already knew the answer. What was important was to let people talk, explain and give their own opinions. Talking about the Barents Spektakel and the BAR program with respondents, step-by-step we came to the question: “Do you think BAR activities\Barents Spektakel is tourism?”. That question concluded the second and third topics and helped to summarize all the information, which was given during the conversation. In a way, I deemed it as the most important and culminating question of all the questions. Further, the term tourism, which I held until the end, “pushed” the informants to think or determine “are we doing tourism?”. In a paradoxical way, the last question became the beginning for more talk and discussions.

The last set, the fourth set, asked respondents to describe the future of Pikene på Broen. If workers could see themselves as part of the team. As before, the question about tourism was kept until the last moment. “Do you think tourism will become part of the activity of Pikene på Broen?” This question was connected with where Pikene på Broen may be going and what is next?

I transcribed all the interviews carefully and in detail myself. This was a way for me to get to know my empirical material better. When I transcribed the interviews, I started to make my first notes on what dimensions could be found in the material. After that, I carefully read and re-read the material while identifying more dimensions in the material as well as clarified what the dimensions were about. I would like to mention that in the first part of the analysis process, I stuck to the topics in my interview guide as dimensions. Later, after reading and re-reading the material, I interpreted the data across those topics. As a consequence, I ended up with the structure of the analysis that I have presented in the analysis chapter. The interviews were decoded, quoted and interpreted into frameworks of context and research topic. That information was produced in Russian language and then translated into English.

2.5 Ethics

In framework of this research project, the personal information of the interview participants was not registered directly or indirectly; neither photos nor video files were used in order to collect personal data. The data is absolutely protected from unauthorized access from outside. Data gathered in the research process has been registered and stored on paper and recorder. All the conversations that were recorded on the recorder were deleted immediately after generating hard-copy on the computer. In addition, my laptop is and was password protected. People, who are not involved in the process, do not have any access to the collected data. In addition, all information is stored on devices without internet or public access. This provides extra protection from unauthorized usage. No other person worked on the research project or had access to the collected data; only the researcher and the Master thesis supervisors had such access. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste (NSD). The Data Protection Official for Research has registered the notification form as project number 54024.

In my research as in any research, it was important to inform the interviewees about the topic and taping of the interview. I emphasized that I was interested in their personal opinions, points of views and motivations, and asked if it was permissible to record conversations. All respondents were given an information letter, which provided full information about the research and the contacts of the interviewer/student and student's institution. That information letter is attached to this thesis. Written notes were kept and the interviews were transcribed or edited as soon as possible after the interview. Of course, during the interview, the interviewer followed ethical protocols. Some further points about ethics are now noted.

This Master's research project does not provide directly identifiable personal information concerning the research participants, such as names, social security number, phone or email addresses. All information that was collected has been treated confidentially: people are not identified in the final dissertation / publication. All of the data material was recorded anonymously and all recordings were deleted at the end of the project on the 1st of November 2017. Further, regarding ethics, the respondents were granted anonymity and confidentiality. All names were replaced by numbers (#1, # 2 and so on). Only I, the researcher, knew the names and contact details of research participants. The data collected included background information that may indirectly identify respondents. In particular, the data identifies the name of the art-company. As a result, the informants are not directly identifiable. Thus, the research that informs this Master's thesis does not provide full anonymity due to the small number of the respondents.

The researcher did not apply for dispensation to access the annual reports of the company, since this information is and was published on the official webpage of the Pikene på Broen.

From 20 April, 2017, data were analyzed, categorized, and classified. Then, the data were published in this Master's thesis within the Analysis chapter.

Chapter 3 Analysis

3.1 Introduction

My research sought to examine two of the main activities of the art-production company Pikene på Broen - the BAR International artist-in-residency program and the Barents Spektakel festival. A related question for my research was whether those activities constituted tourism or not. Subsequently, from time to time parts of my interviews related to tourism. Discussion about their activities provided opportunities for participants to consider if some of the things they did were touristically relevant or not, even if I did not ask the question «is this tourism». In this chapter, I present the analysis of my collected empirical material/data. Interviews were conducted specifically to find out how the art-company Pikene på Broen is related to tourism and then, to determine what role the art company Pikene på Broen plays in the tourism industry in Kirkenes and Barents region.

For the analysis of my research, I addressed theoretical sources to describe phenomena such as tourism, working tourists, cultural tourism, cultural tourists, different classifications of cultural tourists as well as connections between producing art and place branding processes. To discuss the activities of Pikene på Broen in frameworks of tourism, and business/work mobility, I drew on the scholars: Nickerson (1996), Uriely (2001), Uriely & Reichel (2002) and Davidson (2003). Their research assisted in defining the term tourist as well as providing a lens to perceive the BAR International artists-in-residency program as a possible touristic activity. To determine functions of the art-company within tourism theory, I drew on Leiper (1979) and his studies about marketing specialists.

In my research, classifications given by Stebbins (1996) and Silberberg (1995) played an important role. Stebbins introduced the concept of tourism as serious leisure. Based on this concept, Stebbins identified two types of cultural tourists. Silberberg presented classifications about cultural tourists too, but he based it on the concept of cultural motivations of travelers. The choice of classification was determined by my empirical data, which were collected during my fieldwork. The company Pikene på Broen represents a very unique cultural institution with diverse ways of cooperating with partners and visitors under the BAR program. This is why I think it is necessary to consider several classifications to be able to understand how the program functions and who is involved in it.

A number of theoretical frameworks are presented and explained along the way in this analysis chapter. In this chapter, I describe the different activities of the company Pikene på Broen. From my perspective, the empirical materials needed to be discussed with regard to different theoretical

frameworks. For this reason, I chose to step-by-step introduce the collected data in one bundle with theory. I believe, it allows the reader to get a better understanding of the empirical data/material.

Based on the data, the analysis chapter includes four themes. The first one is about the «life circle» of the BAR International artist-in-residency program. I describe how this artist-in-residency program functions: how the selection process for residency happens; what is the main goal of the BAR program, and ect. I discuss if there is similarity between the activity of the artist-in-residency program and tourism activity. The second theme focuses on how the company cooperates with artists under the BAR International artist-in-residency program. Then, I raise a question as to whether the artists can be described as tourists or not. The third theme is devoted to the process the art-company, Pikene på Broen, uses for its media strategies and works with the concept of place. In this study, place is the town of Kirkenes and the surrounding area. The last theme considers the future of the company, challenges the company faces, and new prospects. In all theme discussions, I analyze the artist-in-residency program BAR within a touristic context. Simultaneously, information about the Barents Spektakel festival and tourism that surrounds the festival in itself is also presented in this chapter. I included the Barents Spektakel festival to point out how the art program BAR is deeply rooted within other activities of the art-company, Pikene på Broen.

3.2 Travellers and hosts of the annual life cycle of Pikene på Broen

The art-in-residency program, BAR, makes the Kirkenes and Barents region a meeting platform in the Arctic area. But for whom? For local residents, scientists and people drawn from a cultural sphere. This statement is supported by the annual reports of the art-company, Pikene på Broen. Every year, since 2008, under the residency program - BAR International, Pikene på Broen has hosted from 14 to 60 Norwegian and international artists, who have visited Kirkenes and the Barents region. Additionally, the company attracts other people (journalists, staff and so on) within different projects as well as to the Barents Spektakel festival. The art-company describes the residency program in the following way:

«The program contributes artistic research of the Barents region and is aimed at new art-production and creating new stories about the town Kirkenes and arctic area. BAR International program is mobile and residencies may take place in different towns and locations within the Barents Region depending on a project needs. Residencies may be individual or workshop-based, aimed at collaborative multidisciplinary productions that

may eventually be shown at the Barents Spektakel festival or other events arranged by Pikene på Broen» («BAR International (A.i.R)», n. d.)

Based on descriptions from the annual reports of the art-company Pikene på Broen, the company attracts into Kirkenes and the surrounding area about 14,000 different groups of visitors, every year («Arsrapport-2011», 2011). These people come to visit a place with the main events provided by the company: the BAR artist-in-residency program, the Barents Spektakel festival or any other projects. According to this information, Pikene på Broen may be considered as a very powerful tool to attract visitors to the town and the Barents region. Such information made me think about the activities of Pikene på Broen as tourism and then I came to wonder if the company recognized this too.

From this overview, there is the thread of an idea of “involving and attracting” people to the Kirkenes/Barents region. I believe the activity of the company, Pikene på Broen, represents a hard and multilevel way of how tourism may be perceived. The company, Pikene på Broen, is a representation of this. This is particularly evident when we look at the company as a host, and artists as guests. These two components, host and guests, constitute tourism. In the following considerations, I will explain this with examples. During the discussion about basic and daily life things of BAR program, the reader will achieve a picture of the artist-in-residency program.

As I mentioned before, the Barents Spektakel festival and the BAR International artist-in-residency program are two of the main activities of the art-company, Pikene på Broen. The festival and the residency program are strongly connected with each other during the year and are part of the «life circle» of the company. How does the program work? The art-company, Pikene på Broen, is based on public funding. A description of the BAR program states:

«The program is supported by BarentsKult, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finnmark, Troms and Nordland counties and the Sør-Varanger municipality» («BAR International (A.i.R)», n. d.).

Respondents confirm that the company covers all costs of the program:

«Of course we have fundings; we are not doing any volunteering. We use volunteers during festival, but when it comes to business we are professionals, we pay. » (Respondent #6)

When all financial issues are decided, the first step is to set up the main theme for the coming festival. Then, the art-company team searches for relevant artist/projects, which would fit the Barents Spektakel festival. Those artists will be invited to the BAR International artist-in-residency program. Respondent #4 describes:

«It depends. Mostly, the coming festival is a focus and we are trying to find the artists who can be relevant for it. » (Respondent #4)

The second step is to start the process of searching and recruiting suitable artists. The process of collecting data showed that the company does not have an open call for it. The workers need to use all their networks and stay up-to-date about what is going on in the cultural sphere. It means that the employees have to check official web-pages of contemporary art biennales or triennales, spread the word and so on.

Interviewer: "When do you start the recruiting process for the BAR program?"

Respondent: "Always. Sometimes in advance. Sometimes during the working process in spring." (Respondent #5)

Respondent #1 describes this stage as:

«The company doesn't accept any applications for the BAR program. First of all, we set up the topic for the coming Barents Spektakel and then we are thinking of inviting artists (both, Norwegians and Russians) for the residency. We can invite artists outside of the Barents region, but then we need other financial support for it because the company doesn't have their own budget for it. » (Respondent #1)

Respondent #2 talks about how much the network connection is important:

«So, we invite artists for the residency. It a lot to do with networks, of course, and with the topic of the coming Barents Spektakel. In addition, we do receive a lot of emails and if they are relevant for our project, then we take them. But, mostly, it is networks. You need to keep your eyes open and see what is going on. » (Respondent #2)

The response of Respondent #7 leads to the same point:

«Let's say, we are searching for artists who are working with the same topic (as we have for the festival). We do not have an open call, so, we invite them ourselves. » (Respondent #7)

The company is aware of having an open call for all artists. Firstly, it may seem a bit strange and unprofessional, but during the conversation, one respondent gave an explanation of why the company does not have such an application procedure. Respondent #5 explains:

«We spend a lot of time in researching and updating within the art sphere to know which artists are relevant for us. Previously, we had a lot of applications from people who wanted

came here to see midnight sun and so on, but we didn't have time for all those things, that's why we decided to invite artists by ourselves.» (Respondent #5)

According to the opinion of respondent #5, the company has always been searching for suitable artists for the residency so this process runs in a non-stop mode. Here the reader can see again the point about having highly motivated professionals within the residency program, and, afterwards, for the festival. After the employees get in touch with artists, the curating project and the residency program begins. The respondent refers to the «midnight sun», and that this is an icon in North Norwegian tourism, from which they explicitly dissociate themselves. By that, I can only assume that the company does not want to be associated with tourism.

Artists come to Kirkenes or other towns/places in the Barents Region to work and explore the region. During this process, curators stay close to the artists; and the employees offer support in any situation. From start to finish, this is hard work for both sides – artists and curators. . All respondents said that the residency program is very unstructured. The company does not have a schedule for the artists who are to come. Staff and artists plan the agenda together before a visit and the agenda always reflects the artist's needs. This planning addresses concerns such as the time of staying, routes and the agenda. To exemplify these words, we can look to the texts of the respondents. Respondent #1 says:

«All the times, it depends on the project, but usually it's from a couple of days/weeks to months. There is no maximum length of stay within the residency program. » (Respondent #1)

To this, Respondent #4 adds:

«That really depends on the artist, but usually from one week to a couple of them. What I really like is that artists have the chance to come back to Kirkenes several times. That's very important because this region is very unique, since it is located between two counties, in Arctic. First, you just meet this area, then you should think about it and then you can come back and actually create something, as an artist. For example, now, one Australian-Belgium filmmaker will come back three or four times to finish his project because he needs to see all seasons. » (Respondent #4)

These previous examples demonstrate that by the artists and curators creating the agenda for the project together; they produce a unique art product, which meet the needs of all sides. Respondent #2 adds:

«That is basically always different and very dependent on the artists. If they come here with a certain project, we adapt the residency for that project. We try to find out what artists need for it (what places they need to visit, whom to meet, resources and so on). We can give to them an «intro», but again, it is very dependent on what they want. We have something we're usually taking them to, a lot of people want to see the mine, and the Barents Secretariat (for people outside of Barents Region). So, it's never a set schedule, it's always very personal.» (Respondent #2)

As we can see, based on the opinions presented above, the main characteristic of the BAR residency is mobility and flexibility. Mobility means they (the artists and employees) are ready to travel to any place in Barents Region. Flexibility is about being ready to change and correct the agenda. One of the details that makes the BAR a unique residency is that artists may be taken to any place in the region. For example, Respondent #3 describes:

«Oh, it really depends. Usually we take them to the places where they would like to go. It may be Vardø or Karasjok. Like, I can say, Russians artists want to explore Northern Norway and Norwegians want go to Russia. But, yes, for sure, we start from Kirkenes, artists get to know the area here. » (Respondent #3)

Respondent #6 continues with a description of the BAR art-residency program nowadays:

«Ah, yes, and this residency doesn't have to happen in Kirkenes necessarily. Pikene på Broen is based in Kirkenes but the residency can be in Karasjok, Rybachiy or Nickel or wherever in the Barents region the artist's interests' lies. And artists can stay in a flat, hotel, tent, you know, whatever they want. » (Respondent #6)

In the above, Respondent #6 refers to a flat. Respondent #1 specifies that the company rents it especially for the BAR artist-in-residency program:

«Pikene på Broen rents two flats in Kirkenes. If the residency takes place in another place then the company provides accommodation there too. » (Respondent#1)

This quote and the following one shows that the BAR artist-in-residency covers a huge area of the Arctic region. It may bring much potential for future projects. The potential may be described in a different way. The geographical and cultural diversity of the Barents region could inspire many new topics for residency and festival. There are so many undiscovered places for artists, where a residency could take place. In addition, employees recognize this themselves, particularly, the need for discovering new topics instead of using the same ones. For example, Respondent #2 problematizes:

«Many people are interested in mining. For me, as a curator now it is not so exiting to go to mining again and again. For many artists, we give the same sources. In a way, it may affect the project. » (Respondent #2)

We are reaching the point now of how the company interacts with the visitors after they arrive in Kirkenes. First, a short introduction to the town and Barents region is provided. It includes familiarization walks. These «introductions» help the guests gain insight into the historical background of the town and surrounding area. Of course, there is the question of where to go and what to show. From a quote from Respondent #1, the reader can see that the company decides this with the guests. Respondent #1 tells about some basic places, which Pikene på Broen shows to visitors:

«Yes, if artists ask Pikene på Broen, then the company can make «showing around tours». We go to the main places in Kirkenes if the artist doesn't ask about some special places. We start at the office of Pikene på Broen, then go to the AMFI, the Seamen's house, the tab. We walk along the fjord side, and past the malls where Russians like to go shopping. We go to the peninsula, the cemetery, the sports arena built in a rock, the bomb shelter, the memorial of the Soviet soldier, the Barents Secretariat, the Fretex, the library, and by the ordinary houses, which were built after the World War II and the mine. Once, we had an artist, who wanted to spend two weeks in a forest by herself, so, we made that happen for her. » (Respondent #1)

Since all those routes are very individual, there is no constant guided tour or route. Consequently, Pikene på Broen cannot be compared with an ordinary tour operator, who provides standard tours for guests and visitors. It is possible to say that the company Pikene på Broen is very unpredictable in activity and future projects. Of course, this is meant in a positive way. At the moment, tours are strongly connected to who the guests of the Pikene på Broen are. The company is never involved with ordinary tourists who book tours. The artists-in-residency are people who experience the area in a deep and productive way. On one hand, they are never an ordinary tourist who books a tour. They are people who experience the area in a deep and productive way. They do not book a tour. But, then, somehow, they do, it is just an extraordinary tour in the sense that it is adapted to individual requirements and expectations. One way that they are definitely not ordinary tourists is that they cannot attend the program if they are not invited. To be invited is not about paying enough money but of having artistic relevance and quality.

When it comes to the question «What is the main goal of the program? », the answers associate with the idea of a meeting place. Respondent #5 says:

« In a way, there are two. First one it is as a meeting place for different artists. »
(Respondent #5)

Respondent #6 explains it in the following way:

« It is an art production process deeply rooted within a local, regional context and at the same time, it is about global changing. » (Respondent#6)

Respondent #5 proffers the same idea, but in broader way. The respondent said this program is a meeting point for different groups of people:

« Artists have busy days from morning until evening and we try to give them as much as we can. And we have contact with what we call «local experts», people who have certain skills in different fields, with whom they may be interested to talk. » (Respondent #5)

One of the main questions, which I asked the respondents was: «Do you think the BAR International artist-in-residency program is tourism? ». This question brought very different and blurry answers. It brought many informants into a negotiation of what it means to be a tourist. Some informants agreed with this idea; others were against it. Several aspects arose when respondents tried to answer the question if they could call the BAR as tourism and artists as tourists. Respondents barely can call this activity as tourism, but then, they had difficulty with defining the term or just said that it was not real tourism. Or they would not call it as tourism at all:

«I believe that it is one of the interests of the artist, but he can't separate it from the working process, from his responsibility. I would say it is «critical tourism», because he (the artist) can't relax, he is all the time observing the place. From the perspective of Pikene på Broen if we are talking about the economic side – no, it is not tourism; the company does not earn any money from it. But if we are talking about the process, then, yes, we can say that, it is one of the sides of our functions. » (Respondent #1)

Respondent #3 adds:

«I don't think it is tourism. Another thing – they do not pay to us, we pay to them. »
(Respondent #3)

Those opinions mean that one of the lenses to look at tourism through is a financial one. Respondents were not defining the activity of the company as a tourism business because the activity was not based on financial transactions between the company and invited artists. Another respondent categorically said no:

«No, because artists who come here, they come to work. Of course, they can go to some places as tourists do, but they are here to work, to make research, to create. Their staying here it is not holidays at all. From outside it may look like tourism but it is not. I would never call it that. » (Respondent #2)

Why cannot the artist-in residency program be named as tourism then? Respondent #2 makes the point, that the activity of the residency program cannot be called tourism. One of the respondent 2's arguments was because visitors come to the place for work, not for leisure time or vacation. The opinion of Respondent #2 that the residency program is not tourism is supported by the definition of the term «tourism» provided by Nickerson (1996). Nickerson (1996) claimed tourism and tourism activity as the action and activities of people making trips to one place or places outside their home communities for any purpose except daily commuting to and from work. She specifies that the journey may happen for any purpose except daily commuting to and from work. Respondent #2 perceives the BAR International program as serious business, not leisure travel. This means that during the residency program artists are involved in routine working processes, which have nothing to do with tourism. Further, the respondent focused on the moment of being a resident of the BAR International program, and did not put forward the idea of being on the road. In addition, the opinion of Respondent #4 sounds similar. This respondent emphasized the business side of the program - on the working process:

«Personally, always I have been trying to avoid it. We organize the residency program rather than a tourist tour. If there is no difference, then why should the state invest money in Pikene på Broen? And this is a challenge for the company because the residency program should not look like a touristic package.» (Respondent #4)

Unlike Nickerson (1996), other researchers discuss the concept of tourism from other perspectives. Under the umbrella term tourism, they put different actions. McIntosh & Gupta (1980) noted that the term «tourism» can be described as the science, art and business of attracting and transporting visitors, accommodating them and graciously catering to their needs and wants. In my opinion, this definition describes the BAR International artist-in-residency program in the most correct way. In a most relevant way, it tells how the company curates art projects and performs the role of host. With regard to science, this may be perceived as how the staff from Pikene på Broen conducts research about what is going on in art sphere, and follows changes and news in Kirkenes society. Employees think about which art-project may be most relevant and applicable for the Barents region, and the town of Kirkenes. They also consider how the projects may reflect the changes occurring in the town as well as help to improve and develop Kirkenes. The art and business aspects relate to the idea of how to promote the residency program BAR and Barents Spektakel

festival. They also relate to how to attract artists and visitors to participate in projects and events as well as how to present the Barents region. With regard to transportation and accommodation elements: the team of Pikene på Broen helps the artist with these logistical processes. They explain how get to Kirkenes or to another place in the Barents Region where residency can take place. Northern Norway is not the easiest place to get into and travel around. In this case, assistance with transportation is extremely necessary for visitors. To express why this activity may be defined as a tourism activity, respondents used different aspects of the definition of the tourism concept. For example, respondents mentioned economic, cultural and other sides of this business work. Some of the respondents said– yes, it is tourism because all hotels and flights are fully booked. Regarding this point, informants were referring to the festival week. Respondent #3 pointed out:

«Yes, it is. It brings artists together in this place, then other visitors, institutions, a lot of different people. Hotels are fully booked, flights are expensive. So, yes, that’s definitely tourism. » (Respondent#3)

The artist-in-residency program it is not only about bringing people to some places where events can take place. The art-company Pikene på Broen connects people from the town and different places from the Sør-Varanger municipality, the Barents region and other countries outside of the Barents region.

Now, we are coming to another, more specific question – what kind of tourism is it? In connection with the main sphere of activity of the company, Pikene på Broen, I decided to look at this using the term “cultural tourism”. What is cultural tourism? In the research literature, there is wide diversity in the definitions of this term. For example, Silberberg expressed the definition of cultural tourism as: «visits by persons from outside the host community motivated wholly or in part by interest in the historical, artistic, and scientific or lifestyle/heritage offerings of a community, region, group or institution » (Silberberg, 1995, p. 361). He said the central idea; a key-element for cultural tourism is the idea of motivation. Then, he specified that the motivation concentrated on culture. Within the BAR International artist-in-residency program, Silberberg’s definition of cultural tourism has deep meaning. In addition, there is a similarity between his determination of cultural tourism and what motivates cultural tourists with what motivates people to participate in the BAR program. Artists travel to the Barents region because they are motivated to learn and explore the area. The art-company, Pikene på Broen, has the motivation and desire to present the region, to share the local narrative. Both parties are motivated to work together as well as investigate and create new stories, art-products. In the framework of this approach, yes, definitely, the activity of the BAR artist-in-residency program is tourism. In the framework of his research, Silberberg (1995) applied key elements of motivation to the different constituent parts of tourism

activity: cultural tourism products, markets, destinations and successful tourism partnerships. In the following sections of this chapter, I will come back to his material.

In the beginning of this section, I presented statistics from the annual reports of the art-company, Pikene på Broen, and raised the question: whether the activity of this art-company is a tourism activity. My conclusion is that the BAR program has some touristic qualities to it. Every year, the company team attracts up to 60 artists into the BAR International artist-in-residency. Altogether, within other events, projects and the Barents Spektakel festival, the art-company, Pikene på Broen, involves around 14,000 different groups of visitors to the Kirkenes and Barents region («Arssrapport-2011», 2011). Based on interview data, I had the chance to illustrate how the company, Pikene på Broen, makes the artist-in-residency program happen. From perspective of Silberberg (1995) and Nickerson (1996), and their definitions about what is a tourism activity, I had the chance to analyze the activity of art-residency program from a touristic perspective. By virtue of the interview data and theory of cultural tourism, I can declare that Pikene på Broen is a powerful tool in attracting visitors to the Kirkenes and Barents region. In addition, within tourism theory, I would like to define the activity of Pikene på Broen as cultural tourism.

3.3 Artists on the move.

In first theme-focused section, I examined the structure of the BAR International program and how the art-company, Pikene på Broen, operates the residency program. I discussed this within the frameworks of tourism activity. In this second theme-focused section, I will concentrate more on the discussion about participants of the art-residency as tourists. This decision was made due to empirical material/data collection. Respondents several times pointed out what it means to be a tourist, who is a tourist and if there is a connection between being an artist-in-residency and being a tourist.

Before discussing this topic, first I consider what the term «tourist» means. A definition of the term «tourist» has been provided by Smith (1988), when he addressed the World Tourism Organization (WTO). He defined: a « "tourist": [as] any person residing within a country, irrespective of nationality, travelling to a place within this country other than his [sic] usual place of residency for a period of not less than 24 hours or one night for a purpose other, than the exercise of a remunerated activity in the place visited. The motives for such travel may be (1) leisure (recreation, holidays, health, studies, religion, sports); (2) business, family, mission, meeting (1981:89)» (Smith, 1988, p. 180). Subsequently, this definition may characterize artists as tourists. Norwegian and Russian artists travel from home to Kirkenes; they stay in the town more than 24

hours. Participation in the BAR International program is not a duty journey, they are not employed by the company, Pikene på Broen. It is a bit more complicated to specify the main motives for travel because there are probably several of them. Additionally, this particular study does not include investigations of the experiences or perceptions of the artists that participate in the program. It is proposed that artists come to Kirkenes to explore the region, and/or to learn about its history. In this case, we can place artists-in residency in the first category mentioned by Smith (1988). Certainly, artists in Kirkenes meet the curators, local experts and other artists. Thus, we can say the artists fit Smith's second category. Based on Smith's definition, we can classify artists as tourists. The definitions of tourism and tourists in the research literature fit the visitor-host relationship that Pikene på Broen practices. Nevertheless, Pikene på Broen staff do not consider mobile artists as tourists or themselves in the role of curators as part of tourism. What moderates this impression is of course that some informants, in their negotiations, are willing to consider the mobile artist somehow as a tourist.

When I described the «life circle» of the art-residency program of BAR International, I mentioned the selection process for art-residency. Respondents said that they look for artists who are motivated to learn, and to work. The Pikene på Broen approach tries to consider the personal needs of artists, opportunities for the company, local experts and unconventional areas for study. One of the respondents said this was not an accidental way of working with an artist. It is a hard working process for both sides – the artists and the Pikene på Broen team. Respondent #4 commented:

«Artists are coming here to work, not just to observe great landscape. Then, the company and artists will present the result of the project to... to whom? To visitors, but mostly to the local community. » (Respondent #4)

From the quote above, we can conclude, there is strong connection between the working process as well as observation and discovering something new, just as general tourists do. In other words, artists are on a business trip and they combine it with leisure time. Uriely (2001) in his research mentioned the interaction between work and tourism with respect to travelers who engage in occasional and non-routine work during their trip. Uriely & Reichel (2000) defined the "working tourist" as all types of travelers who engage in moments, which unite work together with tourist-oriented activities. Based on this opinion, I can go further with defining the visitors under the BAR program. It is possible to name them as working tourists. This is because the artists come to Kirkenes with the purpose of working on an art project. They focus on the project whilst they are simultaneously involved in the showing around tour in Kirkenes and any other road trips. Artists participate in tourist-oriented activities because this is one of the lenses through which they are

introduced to the town, and the Barents region. Regarding this point, I acknowledge the importance of combining work with tourist-oriented practices.

Davidson (2003) says the defining element in business trips or event tourism is the dominance of extrinsic motivators used to explain travel. Specifically, it is necessary to do business, to advance one's career, or because it is required by one's job. On the other hand, business events and pleasure travel are mixed. Not once but many times did the respondents point strongly to a connection between the working process and time spent in the residency program framework. The company's approach (working process-wise together with artists) has a rich history and mirrors experiences of many others art-residencies. That being said, Respondent #4 points out that some residencies present an outdated approach to working with artists:

«There is still some programs in the world, which provide accommodation to artists, where they can spend a couple of weeks or months, doing their work by themselves or just having a rest. It is, like, the artist sits there «inside the box» and no one deals with them. So, then, you can call it residency for the artists. But, this is an approach to the art or to the concept of the "artist", I do not know, drawn from the early twentieth or the nineteenth century. And the good point about BAR is that we are interacting with artists, working together; this is the modern way of curating residency nowadays. » (Respondent #4)

In this quote, we can see the company worker comparing the BAR International program to other contemporary artist-in-residency programs. Definitely, the comparison supports the uniqueness of the BAR program, at least for the Barents region. Pikene på Broen does not keep artists «inside the box». As discussed previously, instead the art-company organizes meetings with local experts, other artists and scientists. The company also introduces artists to many different places in the surrounding area of Kirkenes within the Barents Region. Pikene på Broen keeps the «box» open for «air». Without local integration, it is impossible to produce the kind of art in which Pikene på Broen is interested. This is art that relates to or engages with the Barents Region. Additionally, the words of Respondent #4 demonstrate that Pikene på Broen tries to progress, improve and uncover new methods of working and cooperating with artists. With regard to this, it is important for both sides to be involved and motivated in the working process. If that happens, the result is a quality art production. Respondent #7 reiterates the emphasis on a quality-focused approach to working with artistic people, which is different to other similar institutions:

«We are not just giving them studio and a short introduction, we go a bit more deeper than that. We use the network in the Barents Region to provide experiences. » (Respondent#7)

«...We go a bit more deeper...», once again a respondent underscores the moment/process of the learning of visitors and local integration in the residency program BAR. According to Leiper (1979), we may, carefully, compare employees with marketing specialists. Leiper explains: «Marketing specialists are also located in transit points and destinations, in the form of local tour operators, guides, interpreters, tourist information bureaux and the like» (Leiper, 1979, p. 400). The quotation describes some of the functions of the company, Pikene på Broen. The employees provide information about place, logistics, organize meetings and events, and provide tours around Kirkenes and the surrounding area. The company provides any other support necessary for new visitors under the artist-in-residency program. Respondent #7 further describes the working process of the artist-in-residency program:

«As I said before the company, Pikene på Brown doesn't have an open call, so, the company chooses an artist or a project. Then, together we work on the process - where to go and whom to meet within the project. Of course, making connections and arranging meetings for specific times requires some understanding of logistics – it is indispensable since, scientific people in Kirkenes society travel a lot. We need to synchronize diaries for them to meet. » (Respondent #7)

Of course, we cannot categorize this art-company as a tour operator or guiding company. But we see likenesses of Pikene på Broen with such institutions (tour operator, guiding companies). As an outcome, Pikene på Broen is a unique art-production company, which provides a «dream host service» for their cooperating partners. Respondent #7 described the activity of the Pikene på Broen as an institution, which welcomes artists, performs the role of host, and introduces them to the place and area. This leads to one of the points of tourism – to travel and learn, be inspired from seeing art, society, places and so on. All together, it is all about how Pikene på Broen helps to perform a «dream touristic experience» for its visitors. Moreover, the company performs this for both categories of tourist – artists and visitors (during the festival), and for local residents too.

Employees from Pikene på Broen are ready to provide assistance to all artists' needs, and to meet challenges as well as help artists to make their ideas come true. This open-minded and flexible way of curating projects provides a unique experience of exploring the Barents region, in a slightly different way than which typical tourists may experience. General tourists may experience husky trips, catching a king-crab, and a northern light safari. Artists under the residency program are introduced to local problems, and history. They are challenged to bring something new to the place, not just to take from the place like typical tourists. Moreover, the latter point is very important, because, for an artist it is essential to be inspired by the work process, to feel that they are involved. People travel across the borders of countries and regions because they have specific goals for

travel. Consequently, I can call such people travelers and tourists. Does this then mean that artists coming to participate in the art-residency program are tourists too? They do travel away from home, stay somewhere, for example, hotels or even tents. But, we have to keep in mind that it always depends on how people perceive themselves.

In the frameworks of cultural tourism studies, to describe the phenomena of cultural tourism Stebbins (1996) applies the concept of serious leisure. He perceives a cultural tourist as a hobbyist. Hobbyists are people who have a profound interest in a topic and who exhibit a certain level of skill. Stebbins determines two types of cultural tourists. In my research framework, I was interested in the second category of tourists. The two types are now described. The first type is the generalized cultural tourist, who makes a hobby of visiting a variety of different places. This category of tourist obtains a broad, basic knowledge of different cultures. The second type is the "specialized cultural tourist". This type does not visit many different places. The specialized cultural tourist focuses on one or small numbers of geographical sites or cultural entities. Specialized cultural tourists prefer to visit a particular city or country. They want to search, to have a deep cultural understanding of that particular place. That is why they travel to different cities, countries and regions in search of a specific kind of art, history or other cultural institutions. In my research, based on the theory of Stebbins, I purport that the group of artists, who come to the Barents Region as part of the BAR International artists-in-residency program represents the second type of cultural tourist. I can call them specialized cultural tourists. The reason for this is because they exhibit high motivation to travel for cultural tourism reasons and as a group have specialized knowledge. Based on what the artists-in-residency program is about, it is very important for artists to be motivated and have specific background upon which to learn. This perspective is illustrated by Respondent #5. The respondent discusses the situation when it comes to being an artist and a traveler at the same time:

«Of course you can call everything whatever you like. I also have been a tourist as an artist. I did go many times to different places as an artist and I had to prepare things by myself: find some local experts with whom to connect and try to get them to help facilitate the program for me. So, when I go there, it would be an effective time for me. Nevertheless, at the same time I am a tourist. I go around and see a lot of the area for the first time...»
(Respondent #5)

This quote brings us back to the point of cooperation, and a meeting place. The idea of meeting people was and is a constant thread through the BAR residency program. By meeting with "locals", the art company supports the motivation of creative people to learn about the town (Kirkenes) and the Barents region. Now, the reader can see, it is not only about meeting other artists from different

places, it is about getting to know the local society. This appears to be a very important component of the BAR program, which, for some reasons is not mentioned in the official description of the residency program. But, this is not only about the visitor and the host, there is a «third party» involved in the meetings, and that is the place itself, and without it, there is no BAR or Pikene på Broen. Place carries with it, for example, its history, its politics, its society, its culture, its natural landscape, its natural resources. Place may be a concern for most residency programs, but it is somehow particular to the BAR program, wherein the artists who participate have to commit to place, they have to explore place and relate their artistic work to it. Then, at the Barents Spektakel festival, all this is shown to the guests there, and they add layers of meaning to the place from year to year. The artists and guests enrich the place, in a way. It is an artistic branding of place, which has run for many years now. That again relates to tourism in Kirkenes because by their work, Pikene på Broen attracts incoming visitors to the town.

As Respondent #5 said:

“I am a tourist, but I am learning a lot of things. And you have different kinds of tourists. Some people want go to the beach. And you have some who want to learn about history. So, tourists can be seen as existing within positive and negative fields, as I see it.”
(Respondent #5)

By using this "but" the respondent, opposes the two concepts of being a tourist and learning new things at the same time. Nevertheless, the person uses it in one sentence. In this way, the respondent admits to the chance of being an artist and a tourist at the same time. Further, the same respondent says:

“They (artists) get the introduction period, then go back home and they may not return here again, if they are not interested. Then, we have others, who really would like to get deeper into material and they do more research. Then you have made this kind of tourism into something more. That is something that I find very interesting working with Pikene på Broen. And also when I am artist by myself.” (Respondent #5)

In the quote, we see there is an antithesis between the two types of tourists and that the respondent prefers the second type of the tourists. Accordingly, we see with whom the respondent's preference is given. Particularly, when there is the process of selecting artists for the coming residency. The company, Pikene på Broen, tries to filter out the frivolous contingent of people, who have as their main goal just to experience the touristic attractions in the region. As one of the respondents quoted earlier said, Pikene på Broen have had some experiences with artists coming there «to see the midnight sun and so on», so they had to adjust their recruitment processes and invite artists more

carefully. Again, the idea arises that the company is interested in motivated researchers, who are ready to work, explore the area, and for whom tourist attractions do not stand in first place. Returning to Stebbins' (1996) classification, from my perspective, the company Pikene på Broen overtly seeks the second type of tourists: the specialized cultural tourist with knowledge and high cultural motivation to investigate 'place'.

When it comes to discussions about motivation and what can motivate cultural tourists to travel, I refer to Silberberg (1995) once again. In categorizing cultural tourists, he used the concept of motivation to generate criteria. His first category of tourists consists of people who are «greatly motivated» by culture. These would include the people who travel to a city specifically because of its theatre opportunities, museums and cultural festivals. The second category of tourists consists of those who are motivated «in part» by culture. These would involve persons who travel to a city because of both the cultural opportunities and to visit friends or relatives. The third category involves people for whom culture is an «adjunct» to another main motivation. That is, the main motivation for choosing to visit the city might be non-cultural but while there, visitors will plan to include cultural opportunities. The fourth category or group consists of the «accidental cultural tourist». These tourists are constituted of people travelling to the city who do not intend to go to a cultural attraction or event but find, for example, that the friends or relatives they have visited take them along or that the cultural opportunity is close to their hotel. The last and fifth group represents tourists who would not attend a cultural attraction or event under any circumstances (Silberberg, 1995, p. 363). Within this classification, artists under the BAR program, can be assigned to the first type as tourists who are greatly motivated» by culture. This statement is clearly demonstrated by the selection process used by Pikene på Broen to identify artists for the BAR artist-in-residency program. The company accepts only those artists who have an interest and motivation to learn about the Arctic as well as art-projects relevant to the Barents region.

In first theme-focused section of this chapter, I described the daily life of the BAR International artists-in-residency program. I concluded that we could perceive this activity as a touristic-orientated activity. This second theme-focused section aimed to determine if we could identify BAR program artists as tourists. Based on definitions and classifications provided by Davidson (2003), Silberberg (1995), Smith (1988), and Stebbins (1996), I came to the following conclusion. We can describe artists involved in the BAR program as cultural tourists or specialized cultural tourists or working tourists. This is because they have specific knowledge and high cultural motivations as well as travel for business reasons with regard to the different BAR International projects. There is a large selection of definitions for artists, despite this the BAR residency program is very flexible to meet their varying needs.

3.4 Pikene på Broen - place and media in work

Cultural products such as movies, literature, cultural events have a major part to play in determining a place image. Silberberg, (1995) stated that: «by cultural tourism products we refer to institutions, lifestyle/heritage opportunities and events. These cultural products may be linked. It is therefore possible and even likely to have cultural institutions which are located in heritage/themed district or downtown that become the local point for community festivals and special events.» (Silberberg, 1995, p. 362). Further, he noted that: «the better the cultural products the greater the likelihood that residents will spend money within the region, province or country. Even more important is the ability of cultural products to attract or increase the length of stay of long-haul tourists because they bring in new money. » (Silberberg, 1995, p. 362). In my paper, the art-company, Pikene på Broen, is considered as institution, which produces or assists in producing such cultural goods. There are many different types of goods produced, such as, postcards, concerts, documentaries. All of them are united under the umbrella of the two main activities of the Pikene på Broen: the BAR International art residency program and the Barents Spektakel festival. In one of the interviews, Respondent #5 noted that one of the main tasks of Pikene på Broen was art production and how to generate art. Respondent #5 stated:

« In a way, there are two.... And another one is to facilitate, to make it possible to do new art production for this area. » (Respondent #5)

Those art products represent the result of hard, long-term cooperative work between the curators of Pikene på Brown and the artists. For example, I refer to the «Border Musical». The film was created for the festival «Ticking Barents» that took place as part of Barents Spektakel 2013. The musical tells a simple story of how a man from Finnmark met a woman from Kola. She abandons her past and moves with her son to her new husband. Through joys and challenges of their mixed marriage, we get a glimpse into today's Russian-Norwegian borderland across cultural and social norms and values. We also see how behaviors and worldviews are influenced by culturally laden relations between individuals, families and society. The film aimed to present the Russian-Norwegian borderland using cultural and social norms and values («Border Musical», n. d.).

Another example is "The World's Smallest Hotel". In 2005, Pikene på Broen invited Finnish architect, Sami Rintala, to develop a project in Kirkenes. Contained by a low budget, he built the World's Smallest Hotel with 2 rooms and a lobby that faced the sea in the town center. In total, the hotel was just 27 square meters of enclosed space. After a period of time, the Hotel became a recognizable brand of Kirkenes both nationally and internationally. To close the project, Pikene på Broen burnt the Hotel down and returned the site to its original state during the Barents

Spektakel 2012 festival. Through the act of burning the hotel, the company wanted to illuminate the Hotel's history – the story of relations between a site-specific art installation, place branding, local identity, and local planning policies. The company invited an artist Dza, a leading Russian beat-maker and producer to play an electronic soundscape specially composed for the burning event («The World's Smallest Hotel», n. d.).

Two of the main characteristics of that project were that the smallest hotel was inspired by Arctic resources, and local stories of the Barents Region. It was inspired by the North, and produced in the Northern area. Definitely, those and many other art products are the best and most relevant representations of the local region. The unique aspects of the projects are that they represent not just the town Kirkenes or Sør-Varanger society, but cross-border space in the Barents Regional framework. The company, Pikene på Broen, keeps a connection with everything that is going on in the North and the world too. Workers have to stay update about news all the time and this is reflected in their activities. Here it is necessary to reiterate a point about place. As I said before, Pikene på Broen projects are inspired by the North, and produced in the North. Subsequently, it represents the North/Kirkenes/Barents region to the rest of the world. This representation is promoted via several channels. One of them is local sources/materials, which are used for production. This is how they also represent the place/region locally/regionally. The “audience” is both inhabitants and “the world out there”. The Pikene på Broen staff focus on how inhabitants see or understand their place and on how the outside world sees the area.

How else does the art company, Pikene på Broen, tell the world about those art-products, what kind of media strategy is used. Here place branding is relevant. Pike (2005) says with branding other goods and services, a place name by itself is not sufficient differentiation. For many destinations, a slogan is a necessary public articulation of a destination's brand positioning strategy. In Pike's opinion, different places and locations are becoming increasingly substitutable and difficult to differentiate, and a slogan provides the link between the aspired brand identity and the actual brand image held in the market. For example, all topics/slogans of the Barents Spektakel festival represents what was happening in the Arctic region for more than the last ten years.

Interviewer: “Do you have a media strategy? What is the media strategy for Barents Spektakel?”

Respondent #6: «The best media strategy is to make an event, which is interesting for both public and media. First, we base the event on what is going on in the Barents region, the Arctic up here and then, we get a topic for the festival, logo and so on. The media strategy follows the theme, which we have chosen for the festival. And then we take it through

artistic reflection so that it feels like a festival, it is kind of a circle. So, you see all the topics of the Barents Festival (reads headers from the festival's newspapers): 2017 - The Industrial Boomerang; 2016- Rethinking Location; 2015 - Arctic Take Away and so on» (Respondent #6)

As presented above, the topic of each year has a strong connection with what happened and is currently happening in the North/Arctic. On the official web page of the company, an explanation of each festival topic is provided. For instance, the last topic for the Barents Spektakel festival 2017 was «The Industrial Boomerang». On the official web page, there was this description:

«... In the shadows of the northern neo-industrial boom comes further militarization and securitization of the Arctic. The trans-Arctic sea routes, coastal infrastructure projects, and land-based industries require heightened security for governments thinking strategically and investors thinking financially. Is the re-industrialization of Barents in line with re-globalization of the world? » («Home», n. d.)

As just demonstrated, the media strategy strongly connects different contemporary aspects and may reflect other elements too. For example, it is about to involve journalists to further elucidate the events of the festival. This is important because it links to the point regarding who will come to know about the event. The journalists' information addresses audiences who want to know about the Barents Spektakel as well as to draw future potential visitors and participants. Respondent #3 explained:

“We have many journalists from different magazines and newspapers. Media abroad represented by publications in newspapers from Barents region (Finnish, Russians, Swedish magazines). But let's say mostly information about the event is presented in Norway and Russia.” (Respondent#3)

This quote indicates that the Barents Spektakel, BS, is a meeting area not only for artists, volunteers, business people but also for media audiences too. This is further reflected in a comment made by Respondent #1:

“Information about BS is presented in local/Norwegians newspapers, webpages. Media abroad is represented by publications in newspapers from the Barents region (Finnish, Russians, Swedish). Every year we invite international journalists, who make short movies for the «video magazine» of the Barents Spektakel.” (Respondent #1)

Respondent #7 provided examples about what media tools were used the company. Mostly, it was and is internet sources like Facebook and Instagram. This means that the company works with audiences who are familiar with new technologies. Respondent #7 commented:

«Hmm, yes, I mean, the media strategy changes from project to project. Digital media is very important for us too. Mainly we use Instagram and Facebook. And mostly the information is presented in Norway. Most traffic comes from Norway, then 45% from Russia, it is from the Barents Region and outside of it.» (Respondent #7)

One of the outcomes of what the company, Pikene på Broen, has done is to map Kirkenes not only on the Norwegian map but internationally too. For many years now, they have been operating like an engine, continuously pumping out stories and telling the world about Kirkenes and the Barents Region as well as trying to influence inhabitants' understanding of place. Based on data presented in the annual reports of the company, in 2012, Pikene på Broen hosted about 85 international journalists and 13,500 visitors during the Barents Spektakel («Arsraport-2012», 2012, p. 3). These are very impressive numbers for a local art-company consisting about eight workers. I suggest, because of their work, the town of Kirkenes and the Barents Region has become a destination place to visit for different groups of people. Pikene på Broen has put the area on the map. Additionally, the Pikene på Broen team have done that through contemporary art production where the artistic product itself represents place and adds new layers of meaning to the place. The information presented above, has described which groups of visitors attend the festival. Primarily so far, we have considered the international community, now it is time to consider the local community. The employees of Pikene på Broen are acutely aware of the local community. I asked Respondent #2 a question about the festival.

Interviewer: «Do you know who the visitors are? »

Respondent#2: «Mostly it is locals, but not young people. We are not popular among them, but we are working on it. Visitors are artists and other institutions, sponsors, travelers. »
(Respondent #2)

The first peoples to be singled out were the local inhabitants. Respondent #2 considers the involvement of youth as problematic. They are missing, although the company is trying to work on changing that. With respect to youth, Respondent #5 reflected on a past situation with the youth group and thereby adds to Respondent #2's perspective:

«Previously it was so hard to get youth here, schools, but now the situation is much better and sometimes we even have to say no to them, because we don't have the capacity.»
(Respondent #5)

By mentioning the term «capacity», Respondent #5 problematizes that Pikene på Broen does not have enough space to accommodate their projects/events and spectators. This circumstance will be discussed in more detail in next section.

According to the official annual reports of the company, every year, the festival has attendances of up to 14,000. Respondent #1 described how the company counted such numbers:

«First of all, we count the attendance, not every person. We know how many people can be accommodated in one place, for example, 3,000 people may be at the city center. Then, we know how many tickets were sold. That is the way that we calculate attendance. All workers are responsible for the counting process. » (Respondent #1)

It is important to note that the fourteen thousand people consists of people who bought tickets, volunteers, staff involved in projects, accredited journalists and artists.

In 2014, Pikene på Broen did not organize a festival. Some respondents were reluctant to mention this. So why was this still so important for the company? The non-occurrence of the festival in 2014 generated different consequences for the company, the habitants and the visitors. The Barents Spektakel has been organized since 2004 and it has always been a yearly event. It was missed in 2014 because of financial issues and a desire to understand the meaning of the festival for Pikene på Broen and the local community («Arsrapport-2014», 2014). Respondent #5 intimated that this event was first of all for the local society:

«We had a discussion if we should keep the event as annual or have it as biannual festival. But then, since people are planning things from festival to festival, we decided to keep it every year. » (Respondent#5)

Interestingly, Respondent #6 provides another reason as to why the company missed the festival:

«As well, we wanted to teach people that the Barents Spektakel should not be taken for granted. Pikene doesn't have enough money? No problem, they will manage it. Pikene has problems? Its okay, they will make it. And, of course, one of the lessons for us was – we want to have it every year. » (Respondent #6)

The company decided to keep the festival as an annual event to strengthen the community's bones. But it has not always been like this. The respondents remember a time when the inhabitants did not really paid attention to the Barents Spektakel. Respondent #5 commented:

«I remember when I took a taxi, here, at one of the first festivals. Many of the taxi drivers didn't know that the festival was happening. Even in the middle of the festival, locals didn't know what was happening in the town. But, now, taxi drivers say it is the best week during the year, when it brings earnings to many. » (Respondent #5)

Respondent #5 continued to recount how the festival had been growing:

«What can we say about it? We can say that more and more locals are involved. Since I have been here all the time, I know that from the beginning it was hard to get local people to be interested in very narrow art-events. So, we tried to make the festival a bit wider so we had concerts in the evening, which were kind of a meeting place. We were doing it in a different way, because we have Norwegian and Russian bands, this enables Norwegians and Russians to come and meet informally. As well, we invite a sport clubs to make a competition during the festival. So, over time, it has become a very large meeting place. The situation has changed completely when it comes to local engagements.» (Respondent#5)

The preceding quotes lead to consideration of what tourism is. A description of it is proffered by Leiper (1979). He described tourism as a whole range of individuals, businesses, organizations and places, which combine in some way to deliver a travel experience. He emphasized that the concept of tourism is multidimensional, and a multifaceted activity, which touches many lives and many different economic activities. This perspective was demonstrated in the previous quote regarding taxi drivers and hotels. For the latter two, the festival week is the best chance to earn good money. Thereby indicating how much the activity of Pikene på Broen is visible to the locals and local institutions during one week in February. In other words, it suggests that all institutions in town are involved in some form of cooperation with Pikene på Broen during the Barents Spektakel. Subsequently, the company is important for local society life in Kirkenes as is the function of the company well demonstrated in Respondent #5's quote.

There is similarity between the festival and the residency program BAR. In both, the function is to make a meeting point not only for the artist, but for inhabitants too. Respondent #5 continues to explain:

«The festival has been growing and at the opening show we have more people, than on 17 of May here in Kirkenes. I have seen many families coming to the center to see the opening show. So, you can see that there is local engagement and on the other hand, on the first days we filled up all the hotels, all the private rooms in town too. And we know that there is a lot of young people coming home with friends, like they do in summer. But they have started to come home also for Barents Spektakel. You can see that there is an identity building up regarding the festival for young people here, which makes them come home, and also attracts all the people and the locals because we fill up the hotels.» (Respondent #5)

Respondent #5's quote introduces a different concept - motives that influence the selection of a destination. Crompton, (1979) identified seven motives, of which Respondent #5's quote mentions at least two. The first motive relates to enhancement of kinship relationships and the second refers to cultural motives. According to the words of Respondent #5, people are coming back home during the festival, because they would like to spend time together with family members. Of course, this leads to the point that a greater exchange between and connection with each other is likely to occur than in the normal routine situation in which family members live in different places/locations. The festival works as a uniting tool for local families. Another motive is a cultural one. As Respondent #5 noted, young people return to Kirkenes during summer vacations. The situation has changed because the town now hosts the Barents Spektakel. Nowadays, young people are planning their vacations in their hometown according to the schedule of the cultural event, the Barents Spektakel. This may be explained by novelty and educational factors, since the festival is still sufficiently young too (as is the young generation). Moreover, young people find attractive new destinations, sights, and experiences. Respondent #5 concluded:

«The Barents Spektakel and the conference «Barents Days» are a good combination, because many people from the conference would not come to Kirkenes if it was not part of their work, and then they stay some extra days because of the festival.» (Respondent #5)

Once again, the continuous thread regarding a meeting place for different categories of people runs through the words of Respondent #5 point. Driving my research was the main question: «What kind of role does the art-company Pikene på Broen play in the tourism industry in Kirkenes? ». During the process of collecting and analyzing my empirical material/data, I held the research question strongly in my mind. To this point in the analysis, it appears that the activity of the company, Pikene på Broen, is also related to tourism. Even though tourism is not the main aim of any of their activities, they share an interest with tourism businesses by putting Kirkenes and the Barents Region on the map and promoting it as an interesting place to visit. Additionally, they aim

at making people feel this is a place to belong through enhancement of place identity. This point was discussed in the previous section, where I specified this activity as cultural tourism.

To conclude this section, in which I have discussed how the art-company works with its media strategy with regard to the context of place (the town Kirkenes and area around), I have one more idea. Metaphorically, Pikene på Broen is like a powerful loom behind which the team of Pikene på Broen stands. By facilitating the art-residency program BAR and the international festival Barents Spektakel, they weave a local narrative. The local narrative about Kirkenes, a story of a mining town somewhere up in the North and the area that surrounds Kirkenes. Importantly, the team is creating a contemporary local narrative by using an old one. There are many different threads being used in the loom. One is the meeting place thread, others are the media strategy, the place itself, the local community and the visiting artists. These threads provide substantial support to the fabric/narrative being woven. The resultant fabric is a contemporary local narrative, a contemporary northern art product. For example, Kirkenes is no longer an old and forgotten northern mining town. Pikene på Broen have been responsible for mapping Kirkenes as an important international business and cultural meeting place for the Arctic region. Additionally, new art products have a huge potential to attract new visitors to the Kirkenes and Barents region. New and different groups of visitors, in turn, can bring new threads to the weaving process. In a way, it is a cyclic process of creating local narratives, where the loom is working all the time.

3.5 Enhancement and future of Pikene på Broen

This is the last section of the analysis chapter. The first theme-focused section was about exploring possible touristic features of the travelling artist and the artist host in the BAR program. The second theme-focused section of the analysis considered the weaving of place narratives and processes of place branding in which Pikene på Broen is involved and the relatedness of such destination branding. All those different components were discussed through the consideration of two main activities of the company – the BAR art-residency program and the international Barents Spektakel festival. Pikene på Broen demonstrated huge flexibility in relation to different ways of hosting artists during projects, and interacting with Norwegian and international cooperation partners, involving local experts in projects, working with the younger generation and many other aspects. Quite hard work, but such flexibility and assistance provides a unique experience for all sides involve. Moreover, it is very important, because, for those kinds of people it is essential to get inspiration from the business with which they engage. Now, in this last section, I will focus on some challenges the company has to address as well as the future of the company. All this

aspects are discussed in the context of the research question, which asks what role does Pikene på Broen play in tourism in Kirkenes today.

In spite of the fact that the BAR residency has so many advantages, there are some aspects, which could be improved. I asked all respondents the question «What are the weaknesses of the program?». Some respondents said the program does not have any weaknesses at all. Other workers mentioned certain difficulties. For example, Respondent #3 said:

«For us, it might become a bit boring because we have done it so many times, I mean these showing around tours. » (Respondent #3)

Respondent #2 noted:

«I see the challenges, since Pikene på Broen is working with cross-border cooperation and, of course, there is a lot of artists working here with the same topics. Like many people interested in mining, for example. For me, as a curator now it is not so exiting going to mining again. And to a lot of artists, we give the same resources in a way and then it may affect the project. I think that is a weakness. » (Respondent #2)

Previously, I mentioned that the residency program covers huge areas of the Barents Region with many undiscovered and uncovered issues, topics and problems. The two opinions of Respondents #2 and #3 highlight the challenges of continuously using the same topic and resources. Curators can become tired of working with the same material but not the artists. It is an important issue for the company because all of their work is based on creativity and innovation oneself. There is a chance that workers could come up with new topics for the artists or the workers could provoke the artists to generate new topics. Respondent #6 offers another side to the program:

«So, since it is a research in action (in a way), of course, every residency can be improved and, suddenly, a lot of things may do not work, we never know. I can't name the weakness, because the process is very flexible, however as long as all of the needs are met, it is good.» (Respondent #6)

Once again, we see that the process of working with the residency is very flexible and sometimes it is hard to predict. I believe that by saying: « as long as all of the needs are met, it is good. », Respondent #6 means not only the artist's needs but curators too. As I said before, employees of the Pikene på Broen are an extremely important element for the process to work. They need to stay fresh and inspired.

During the interviews, respondents were asked to draw a picture of how Pikene på Broen might look in a few years. Would they still be working there or would other people assume the positions,

and so on. Interestingly, no-one said that there is a clear future of the company. Everyone pointed to the fact that it very much depends on the financing side and person-power.

In the second theme-focused section of the analysis, I briefly mentioned a moment in the interview where an informant talked about a lack of “capacity” while explaining Pikene på Broen’s struggle to interact with young people in Kirkenes. This problem of capacity refers to the fact that the art company for a long time has lacked premises to accommodate their projects and events and into which the company could invite visitors. In Kirkenes, on September 22, 2017, the official opening of Terminal B, the new home and showroom of the company, Pikene på Broen, took place.

One of my tasks as a researcher is to follow the art-company in social networks too. Workers had been very actively writing posts on Facebook and Instagram about the then upcoming opening of the new office of the company as well as mapping Terminal B on the map of Kirkenes. The new showroom location is well placed, the address is St. Dr Wessels, gate 14. That means Terminal B is located in city center of Kirkenes, there is no chance to miss it if you are passing by the center. The best way to illustrate it is to show an image from the official Instagram account of Pikene på Broen:



(Figure 1 - Instagram Pikene på Broen, n. d.)

As can be seen in the picture, an artist is busy with the unpacking process. The new location is a large office with huge windows, three floors and large spaces. The new showroom contains space for exhibitions, public lectures, a hall for the demonstration of video art and a room for storing materials. It is an extremely good location when it comes to tourists. All guests arriving by Hurtigruten will pass by it. Being more visible for such a company is very important. Now, they

have the opportunity to be open for local inhabitants too, to be easier to find when it comes to the point of attending exhibitions and other events. For visitors, this is an important point.

Since empirical material/data were collected in April 2017, I can present what respondents expected from Terminal B. The workers hoped that the new office of the company, «terminal B/showroom», would be an attractive place for the tourists because it is located in the city center. The location enhances the opportunity to interact more openly with inhabitants all year around. The old office, in a little, red house, was hidden and uninviting and small. Respondent #3 positively said that tourism will become a part of the activity of Pikene på Broen:

« Yes, I think so. We going to have this show room and it will fit perfectly for tourists as a place with exhibitions. » (Respondent #3)

During the interviews, almost everyone mentioned that the company was trying to achieve cooperation with Hurtigruten, but had not been successful. As an explanation, they mentioned the fact that tourists from the cruise ship were not very interested in the festival agenda and preferred a more classic tourist package, like a dog sledding activity and a bus tour to the Russian border. Another point was mentioned by Respondent #3:

«We spread around our materials in the airport and to Hurtigruten, but that's it. We tried to get cooperation with them during the festival, but it's so hard to leave one boat here for one night (for the opening show) or send an extra cruise ship especially because of the festival. So, after discussions we never got back to the company. » (Respondent #3)

From my perspective, the aspect problematized here is logistics. It seems like it is not that easy to combine the schedule of cruise liners with the Barents Spektakel festival. I believe it is a loss for Pikene på Broen, the company Hurtigruten and for potential visitors. Other respondents see huge potential from this cooperation between the art-company and the company, Hurtigruten. For example, Respondent #4 said:

«Especially for those people who want not just to ride by dog sledding, but to see the cultural life. In this case – it is a very powerful lighthouse in the North. I see huge potential from cooperation with Hurtigruten because in February this travel company doesn't have full bookings of its ships, so, the Barents Festival may be a great solution for both sides. » (Respondent #4)

At the same time, other workers do not think that tourism activity will become a part of the Pikene på Broen, but, they want to try again to get cooperation with the cruise company Hurtigruten. Respondent #6 stated:

«... we need to work harder to be visible in the city space. Because we are very visible during the festival, but we want and need more. That's why we have this new place, terminal B, where we can be more present for locals and visitors. It is just 2 minutes from here, but it's a huge deal. Our task is to have this balance – be locally visible and at the same time to be internationally active. » (Respondent #6)

Consequently, Terminal B has the potential function to make Pikene på Broen more visible as well as to be an easy to reach destination. I strongly feel that the new showroom/Terminal B will bring new inspiration to the team of Pikene på Broen.

While the workers were unable to very clearly describe the future of the company, Pikene på Broen, the web page of the art-company can be considered. Recently, news about one of the projects under the residency program BAR has been published. In the news, the project was described as a long-term undertaking with journeys through the Arctic over 5-year intervals. The project is being jointly run by the photographer and filmmaker Victor Frankovsky and Pikene på Broen. An important element of the project is its topic. The description says that the project is to explore the industrial identity of the Barents Region and “play on the theme of tourism and media representation of the Arctic”. Since Pikene på Broen supports such a long-term collaboration; it suggests that Pikene på Broen is interested in visual representation of the region and tourism development. Further, the company would not support a long-term project if workers were not sure about the future of their business.

To conclude this last theme-focused section, I would like to summarize that for me the future of Pikene på Broen seems to be woven in bright colors. While respondents did not give a clear picture of how they see the art-company in few years; it should not be perceived as a negative result in my research. The respondents identified challenges, talked about issues with which they were struggling. This is a positive sign because it means they are in a working mood. Several times, I mentioned that they were and are creative people too, so, I did not expect to hear about a strict five-year plan.

In first and second theme-focused sections, I drew a picture about the company, Pikene på Broen and described how this company performs the BAR International artists-in-residency program. I discussed how this art-production company functions in the context of cultural tourism. What does this company do? It does a lot. Two of the main activities are the BAR residency program and the international Barents Spektakel festival, which during the year attracted up to 14,000 different visitors from different groups to the Kirkenes area. In the second theme-focused section, I considered the topics of artists-in-residency being a tourist and an artist at the same time. In third

theme-focused section, I discussed how the company works with local narratives to produce art products. I compared Pikene på Broen with a powerful loom, which uses different threads to create a contemporary local narrative for the town of Kirkenes. There are so many of those threads and it is difficult to describe them all. In the third section of the analysis chapter, I also presented how the art-company uses its media strategy and how the company works with the concept of place. The fourth theme-focused section demonstrated a new thread in the loom – Terminal B. The new office space has different tasks and functions. Some of them are to make Pikene på Broen visible in the map of the town Kirkenes for the locals and visitors, to host new artists under the art-residency BAR, to exhibit northern art, and, even to make the city center more alive again.

Chapter 4 Conclusion

The topic of my research was the role of contemporary art in Arctic tourism. As a way of exploring this topic, I decided to investigate the activity of the art-company Pikene på Broen, which is located in Kirkenes. Specifically, I decided to pursue the research question through the perspective of those working at Pikene på Broen. All my research processes were guided by the question: what kind of role does the art-production company Pikene på Broen play in the tourism industry in Kirkenes? As a result of my research, I would like to say that contemporary art could play a role in supporting and promoting tourism activities in Kirkenes. Tourism opens up a potential space for further development of the art-production industry in Kirkenes and Northern Norway. Some examples of how this might occur relate to extending accommodation and transportation services. These are extremely important, when it comes to hosting large art events like Barents Spektakel in Kirkenes, the Festpillene festival in Harstad as well as the International Art Festival (LIAF) in Lofoten. Given the context of my research, the tourism industry and the art sphere have the potential to significantly work together as “one band”.

The fieldwork research trip connected with my research took place in Kirkenes, in April 2017. In the course of qualitative in-depth individual interviews, rich empirical data materials were gathered. In order to conduct my interviews, literature associated with cultural tourism was reviewed. To operationalize the concept cultural tourism and cultural tourists, five topics for the interview guide were formulated. These topics consisted of warm-up questions, the BAR International artist-in-residency program, the international festival - Barents Spektakel, the media strategy and the future of the art-company, Pikene på Broen. The analysis chapter processed empirical data associated with these four themes. Those themes were about the life circle of the BAR International artist-in-residency program; artists as tourists; the media strategy and place branding; and the future of the company. After introducing the BAR program, I narrowed down the concept of tourism. To do this, I drew on the writings of the scholars: Nickerson (1996), McIntosh & Gupta (1980), and Silberberg (1995). Discussions in the extant literature showed that scientists could have different opinions about what is tourism and what it is not. Nickerson (1996) argued tourism is a trip for any purpose except daily commuting to and from work. On the other hand, McIntosh & Gupta (1980) recognized business trips as tourism activity. Alternately, Silberberg (1995) described the term tourism as a visit by a person from outside the host community, and who is motivated wholly or in part by an interest in, for example, historical, artistic, scientific and/or heritage experiences. Silberberg’s approach (1995) within the theoretical frameworks of research by McIntosh & Gupta (1980) helped to consider the phenomenon of artist-in-residency program within tourism research frameworks. To determine the characteristic of

tourists, I addressed classifications given by Stebbins (1996) and Silberberg (1995). Stebbins (1996) categorized a tourist with regard to a profound interest in a topic and exhibition of a certain level of skill. Based on this categorization, he defined two groups of tourists: generalized cultural tourists and specialized cultural tourists. Silberberg (1995) based his typology on criteria such as motivation. He defined five different groups of cultural tourists. In doing so, Silberberg (1995) ranked tourists from those who were greatly motivated by culture to make a visit to those who would not attend a cultural attraction or event under any circumstances. Bearing the former in mind, the embodiment of cultural tourism characteristics by employees of the company, Pikene på Broen, were studied for the research that informed this Master`s thesis.

From the beginning of my research, certain findings of the study process were predictable while others were not so evident. Considering the research question, employees who took part in my research possessed a competence about contemporary art, and, had experience of working with artists under the BAR International artist-in-residency program. Based on my research project, I would argue that contemporary art plays an important role in Arctic tourism. Further, the art-company, Pikene på Broen, should be recognized as a powerful tool in the tourism industry in Kirkenes. This company produces quality art products and attracts tourists to the Barents region. The art-organization does this in three ways. First, by continuously bringing artists to the area. The Pikene på Broen has hosted from 14 to 60 Norwegian and international artists, who have visited Kirkenes and Barents region. This is orchestrated through the residency program – the BAR International. Second, by bringing visitors to festivals. The international art event Barents Spektakel attracts around 14,000 different groups of visitors to Kirkenes and the surrounding area. These visitors consist of locals and non-local visitors. The third way is by weaving place narratives through the local art-production process as well as place branding.

Based on the analysis of my empirical data, I can summarize that respondents did not recognize the artist-in-residency program as tourism activities. Respondents acknowledged that there were some similarities with tourism or that it may look like tourism from the outside. However, it could not be named as pure tourism. Most of them opined that there was no similarity between the art-company and a touristic agency. Artists under the BAR program are invited to undertake a residency and they do not pay for accommodation. Further, respondents pointed out they had never thought about their activity as tourism. As noted previously, respondents repeatedly said that Pikene på Broen does not engage in tourism because the company does not earn any money from its visitors. That being said, the company as an institution attracts income to the tourism industry of Kirkenes and the Barents Region. While the company Pikene på Broen does not sell any tourist services or products by itself, as an organization, it provides conditions and an environment for

other touristic institutions, such as hotels, restaurants, museums and so on. This point was very clearly illustrated in the words of the respondents, when discussing festivals. What is more, respondents were ready to identify artists as tourists, but ones who came to the place to learn and investigate. Respondents also mentioned that it was possible to be an artist and a tourist at the same time. All respondents recognized connections between art-projects and local place. Some of them intimated that their events aimed to unite the local community. Others pointed out the interrelatedness between topics of the festival and current events in the Arctic region. Such perspectives find support in the work of Silberberg (1995). Specifically, he argued that the better the cultural products the greater the likelihood that residents will spend money within the region. Accordingly, the art projects could be linked to attracting or increasing the length of stay of long-haul tourists who bring in new money.

The theme, the role of contemporary art in tourism, offers a fruitful field for further research. It is possible the factors that influence a cultural tourism outlook. In this regard, new and different criteria could be applied to a target group. Firstly, concerning limitations of the present research, artists and people from the local tourism industry could be interviewed to find out how they perceive the activity of the art-company *Pikene på Broen*. Secondly, the cruise company *Hurtigruten* could be studied with regard to the possible future cooperation with *Pikene på Broen*. What is more, it would be interesting to study different artist-in-residency programs across the Barents region to achieve a better picture about the travelling mobility of people involved in contemporary art projects. The geographical range of the Norwegian artist-in-residency programs is wide ranging from Nordland to Svalbard. The most northern cultural institution, *Artica Svalbard*, was founded by the Norwegian Ministry of Culture, Fritt Ord (the Freedom of Expression Foundation) and SpareBank1 (Nord-Norge's Cultural Business Development Foundation) on the 8th of November 2016 ('*Artica Svalbard*', n.d.). Looking at this establishment, I can see that the Arctic region has become a focus and cultural experts have to travel far to the North to explore the area. The company, *Pikene på Broen*, offers potential support for such a new institution as *Artica Svalbard*. The story and experience of the company, *Pikene på Broen*, demonstrates it is possible to work with contemporary art far above the Arctic Circle. Subsequently, not only can the Arctic region be a nature destination for tourists; it can be an art destination too.

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APPENDIX: I. Interview Guide

1. Topic	Who are you a worker at the Pikene på Broen?
Question	1.1 Where are you from?
	1.2 Where did you work previously?
Probing question	What is your educational background?
	1.3 Do you have full time position at the company?
	1.5 What are your main tasks at the Pikene på Broen?
Probing question	What do they include?
2. Topic	BAR and art tourism
Question	2.1 In a few words, what is BAR about?
Probing question	According to you, what is the main goal of programm?
	2.2 How long can artists stay in Kirkenes during the BAR?
Probing question	Could you say what is the longest period and the shortest one?
	2.3 Usually, where do artists stay in Kirkenes?
Probing question	Does Pikene på Broen provide any accommodation for artists or do they have to arrange it by themselves?
	2.4 Who covers the travelling and staying expenses?
Probing question	If there is any funding for it, could you named it?
	2.5 What is the schedule/activity for the artists during the BAR?
Probing question	Does Pikene på Broen provide any «showing around tours» for the artists or anything else?
	2.6 What are the weaknesses of the programme?
	2.7 How do Pikene på Broen recruit artists to the BAR?
Probing question	What do you do for it? How does the company use social media (Facebook, Instagram)?
Probing question	Do you send printed material to the artists and galleries?
Probing question	What do you use as touristic tools (text, pictures)?
	2.8 Do you think BAR activity is tourism?
Probing question	How do you think is BAR makes Kirkenes as an art destination?
3. Topic	Barents Spektakel and art tourism
Question	3.1 Do you have media strategy? What is the media strategy for Barents Spektakel?
Probing question	How much information about the festival is presented in the media in Norway and abroad?
	3.2 Does the company have a cooperation with the touristic information center during the year and the Barents Spektakel?
Probing question	Do you send any promo materials about the events to the office?
	3.3 In annual reports you mentioned 12 500 – 13 000 visitors during the festival and conference. How did you count visitors?
Probing question	Do you know who are they?

Probing question	Who is response for counting process?
	Why do you need to count them?
	3.4 In annual reports, you mentioned the list of cooperating partners. Who are your main partners?
Probing question	How does Pikene på Broen cooperate with them?
	3.5 Can/Would you say that Pikene på Broen are well recognized in the Kirkenes society?
	3.6 Do you think Barents Spektakel is tourism?
4. Topic	The future
	4.1 Where do you see the company Pikene på Broen in 5 years?
Probing question	Will you see yourself as a part of the team?
	4.2 Do you think tourism will became to be part of the activity of Pikene på Broen?
Probing question	What challenges do you see for this?

APPENDIX: II. The information Letter

The role of contemporary art in growing arctic tourism.

I am currently enrolled in a master program in master in tourism studies at UiT, the Arctic University of Norway, campus Alta. In my master thesis project, I want to create a better understanding of the relationship between contemporary art and tourism in the North. The purpose of the research is to determine what role the art company Pikene på Broen plays in the tourism industry in Kirkenes and Barents region.

Arctic tourism has been dominated by nature-based activities over time. Culture also makes up a considerable part of tourism in the area and includes museums, the Sami indigenous culture and heritage of different kinds. Little attention has been paid to contemporary art as part of this picture. A certain of visitors already come to Kirkenes and the Barents region in relation to contemporary arts activities. This mobility should be better recognized and understood and the potential for strengthening and increasing such arts related travels should be explored. For the town, this study may also have a positive value, because Kirkenes, with its industrial past, must find new opportunities for income. Altogether, it is relevant to investigate Pikene på Broen as a case of contemporary art in Finnmark, Barents region and the Arctic.

The interviews will last approximately 60 minutes. Some will be shorter and some longer, depending on how much each informant has to tell. All information that appears will be treated confidentially: people are not going to be identified in the final dissertation / publication. All of the data material will be made anonymous and all recordings will be deleted at the end of the project 2017-09-01.

Participation in the survey is voluntary and anyone who has been interviewed can at any time decide to withdraw their assignment without any justification.

The project is reported to the Privacy Association for Research, the Norwegian Social Science Data Services.

Sincerely yours,
Nina Dronova
Master student

Brynhild Granås
Associate professor

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