

# The Creator Doctus Constellation

Exploring a  
new model for  
a doctorate in  
the arts

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# Preface

Jeroen Boomgaard<sup>1</sup>  
& John Butler<sup>2</sup>

- <sup>1</sup> Jeroen Boomgaard is Professor of Art and Public Space at Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam. Until 2019, he was Head of the Research Master Artistic Research at the University of Amsterdam. He has supervised a considerable number of PhDs in the humanities as well as in Artistic Research.
- <sup>2</sup> As the former Head of Birmingham School of Art and Associate Dean for Research, John Butler became an Emeritus Professor of Art at Birmingham City University. A former President of ELIA (2000-04) and coordinator of the European Thematic Networks for the Art projects artesnetEurope (2000-04) and inter}artes (2004-07). He was awarded Doctor Honoris Causa by the University of Art & Design Cluj-Napoca Romania & Plymouth University, and is currently the Chief Executive Officer EQ-Arts.

This book offers a new perspective on 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle (PhD-level) research by artists. It is the outcome of the Creator Doctus (CrD) project, a 3-year period of experimentation, debates, international meetings and workshops, made possible by an Erasmus+ grant. It started out from the idea to set up a 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle research trajectory specific to the arts that we would all agree on. We, that is Athens School of Fine Arts, Greece; l'École nationale supérieure d'arts de Paris-Cergy, France; Vilnius Academy of Arts, Lithuania; The Glasgow School of Art, United Kingdom; Merz Akademie, Germany; The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Schools of Visual Arts, Denmark; Gerrit Rietveld Academie, The Netherlands, and EQ-Arts International Quality Assurance Agency for the Arts, The Netherlands.

As a result, we are proud to offer you the outline of the Creator Doctus model for 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle research in the arts, a model that does justice to the specificity of the methods and outcomes of arts practice and that does not automatically rely on the given format of an academic PhD. Essential aspects of the arts such as creativity, intuition, improvisation and even experimentation do not fit easily in official research trajectories. While we acknowledge that accountability, methodological reliability, precision, and transparency of process are necessary, research in the arts also needs to keep a strong element of unexpectedness and surprise. Because it is only in so doing that this new model will be able to do justice to the exceptional ways of knowing, and of the resulting 'knowledge', that artistic research brings with it. But it is nevertheless essential that this new trajectory be recognised at the same level as a PhD, and to establish the basis for a new position for art<sup>3</sup> and artists in society.

Within the outlines of this model, you will find this book contains a wide variety of questions, views, examples, and proposals. Each of the participating partners not only has to deal with the question of what a qualitatively outstanding 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle research programme in the arts should look like, but must also, at the outset, comply with the national regulations and requirements of the system of higher education they are part of. The chapters of this book, each written by a partner, reflect the conditions they have to deal with and the ambitions they nourish within the given frame of obstacles and opportunities. This leads to widely diverging perspectives and positions, bumping against the outlines of the model. There is no agreement, for instance, on the title the new trajectory should award. While for some schools, the title of Creator Doctus is necessary because universities of applied sciences cannot offer a PhD trajectory (e.g. Rietveld), for others, it is an opportunity to take a new direction and to offer new possibilities in a large and generally too academic field of research (e.g. Glasgow). Other schools adhere to the title PhD because it means a recognition of the fact that they are part of the university system and conduct research at the same level (e.g. Athens, Paris). The differences even lead to diversity in the detail within the programmes. For example in some texts, researchers that are part of a 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle programme are referred to as 'students', in others they are called 'candidates', because being a student would imply being at the giving end of the money chain (fees), while a candidate may be receiving financial support or even a salary. In the essays within this book, the partners tackle the issues that are central to

3 Most of the examples and case studies in this book are from the fine arts. But when we write about 'arts' and 'artists' we mean all forms of arts and design.

any 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle research trajectory: selection of candidates, methodology, training, research environment, supervision, assessment of outcomes and dissemination.

A distinctive element within the CrD trajectory is the role of a collaborating societal partner, something that is not common in most academic PhD programmes, although in certain disciplines, such as for instance Museum Studies, there is a tendency to embed the research in existing institutional practices. Embedding the research within society is important, because it underlines the fact that artworks are not just talking to other artists, but also to a wider audience, and so does, or should, artistic research. At the same time, this partnering questions, or even challenges, the role traditionally allocated to artworks and artists. The research project breaks the structure that shields and at the same time limits the expressive power of the arts.

Our intention here is not to introduce the whole content of this book, explaining chapter by chapter what the issues are. Even here, we believe an element of surprise should remain, but let us just explain something about the structure. The introduction by Professor Bruce Brown, Member of the Board of EQ-Arts, takes you back in time, laying out the ways the discussion on artistic research has developed, zooming in on crucial aspects which the CrD model outlined in this book aims to tackle. The following chapters provide you with the views of the partners on various aspects, the way they deal with them and their ideas about improving them. Each of these chapters contains a case study in which an artist briefly presents the research they have conducted as part of that school's 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle programme, making the abstract notion of artistic research very concrete. In the annexes, you will find an overview of required 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle competences in the arts, a thematic analysis of a survey carried out by EQ-Arts on 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle programmes among art schools, mainly focussed on Europe, and two examples of 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle research programmes in the UK. This publication will be accompanied by a 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle Framework document written by EQ-Arts, to support institutions in establishing their own doctoral level study.

This collection of essays and case studies is the result of three years of collaborating, exchanging views, debating proposals, discovering similarities and signalling differences. In a process like this, there is a tendency to become myopic and stuck in a cycle of arguments. At a certain point you need an outside view, a breath of fresh air, to get a better grasp of what you are doing, to be able to see it in a wider European perspective. For this reason, we invited Florian Dombois, an artist and Professor at Zurich University of Arts but primarily a key figure in discussions about artistic research, to write an epilogue. His enthusiasm, we believe, confirms that this new trajectory really offers up new possibilities, possibilities that we are happy to share here with you.

# Introduction: The Creator Doctus Challenge

Bruce Brown<sup>1</sup>

- <sup>1</sup> Bruce Brown is Visiting Professor at the Royal College of Art and Goldsmiths College, London. Prior to this, he was Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research at the University of Brighton where he is Emeritus Professor. He recently chaired the Creative Arts panel for the Hong Kong Research Assessment Exercise 2020 and the Research Grants Panel [Arts] for Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia in Portugal. He chaired the Main Panels for arts and humanities in the UK Research Excellence Framework (REF2014) and the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE2008). He is a previous Board Member of the UK Council for Graduate Education (UKCGE) and recently chaired a review of arts Doctoral awards for the Estonian Quality Agency. He is an Editor of Design Issues Research Journal (MIT Press) and was a member of the Editorial Board for *The Routledge Companion to Research in the Arts*. He is an elected Fellow of Academia Europeae and the Royal Society of Arts.



# The project

Creator Doctus (CrD) was a three-year pilot project conceived at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie Amsterdam and co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union (2018-2021). The pilot's ambition was to seed the development of a 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle research degree within the *Bologna Process* that would be equivalent to a traditional Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) but based in a field generally known as 'artistic research'.<sup>2</sup> Beyond the period of this three-year pilot, it was anticipated that, within the national accreditation requirements of each country, Creator Doctus may be considered as a named doctoral award that could be adopted by independent specialist arts institutions.

One of the initiators of the Creator Doctus pilot, Jeroen Boomgaard, set out a challenging agenda for the pilot in asserting that 'The position that we at Gerrit Rietveld Academie have taken is that artistic research is not *about* art, but rather, art as research may contribute to our understanding of or coping with the world. This framing within a research context takes away the danger of tautological looping, in which the research remains a studio practice, revolving around artistic questions derived afterwards from the results.'<sup>3</sup>

In a first instance, Creator Doctus seeks to avoid the dangers of 'tautological looping' by reaching out to the experiences of people or communities beyond the academy. In its application for funding, Creator Doctus made clear that it would be 'a partnership between higher arts education institutions and employers that will mutually enhance their offers as well as social and economic impact.' This naturally brings with it a need to embrace trans-disciplinary skills that are empathetic to different, and often conflicting, world views and knowledge domains. Secondly, Creator Doctus places a high value on research methods intrinsic to artistic research – especially those methods that use non-text forms such as for example, images, sounds or spaces. On the basis of these two approaches, Creator Doctus tested the development of new forms of research scholarship that are appropriate to artistic research and, hence, question the form that a doctoral thesis in the arts may take beyond the traditional model.

This publication has been produced to mark the conclusion of the Creator Doctus pilot project. It sets out to record some of the contextual issues accompanying the project along with the backdrop from which it has emerged. Accordingly, this publication also includes seven reflective essays, authored by each of the partners in the Creator Doctus pilot. These chapters represent a range of approaches to doctoral research across several European countries – including Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Lithuania, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.<sup>4</sup> The essays also illustrate the plurality of conversations concerning practice research in the arts across the partner institutions along with their distinctive approaches to doctoral work.

An important legacy left by the pilot project will be to support the ongoing development of frameworks and good practices for the advancement of 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle

2 Creator Doctus aligns with the *European Standards and Guidelines* (ESG, 2015) and applies the *Tuning* discipline statements for the achievement of the required 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle learning outcomes (Tuning, 2012).

3 See Jeroen Boomgaard's chapter, *The Creator Doctus Initiative at Gerrit Rietveld Academie*, in this publication.

4 Along with the Rietveld Academie, academic partners in the Creator Doctus project are: Athens School of Fine Arts, Greece; l'Ecole nationale supérieure d'arts de Paris-Cergy, France; Vilnius Academy of Arts, Lithuania; The Glasgow School of Art, United Kingdom; Merz Akademie, Germany; The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Schools of Visual Arts, Denmark.

research degrees in the arts across the European Research Area (ERA) and, especially, the advancement of a specialist award having the title Creator Doctus. In this respect, a further partner in the project is EQ-Arts which is a sector-specific, not-for-profit Foundation that specialises in quality assurance and enhancement within the creative and performing arts and design sector. EQ-Arts has as priority to carry forward the lessons of Creator Doctus by further enhancing capacity and infrastructure for the development of 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle research degrees in the disciplines of artistic research.

## The backdrop

Possibly the first arts practitioner to have been awarded a conventional academic doctorate was Christopher Dresser (1834-1904) – he was an influential figure in the creative arts and design movement across Europe. Dresser received his doctorate from the University of Jena in 1859 – this being one of Germany’s oldest traditional universities. However, the work Dresser submitted for examination was not based on his creative practice but a text-based analysis of botanical structures in the traditional mode of discovery science.<sup>5</sup>

In the 160 years since Christopher Dresser presented his doctoral thesis for examination, the European sector, overall, has moved on to see growth in the number of arts-based research degrees – and, in the last fifteen years or so, the first practice research programmes have started to emerge. But, just as some things have moved on, so have others remained the same.

For example, this period of development saw a persistent resistance within some of the corridors of research governance to acknowledging forms of research scholarship other than those of discovery science. Though the criteria and methods of discovery science do parallel those of artistic research, sometimes overlapping and often collaborating, they do not substitute for some of the distinctive characteristics of research scholarship in the arts (as we will later discuss).<sup>6</sup>

Additionally, the majority of arts-based research degrees usually only gain accreditation when they are located within, or are associated with, the research infrastructure offered by an ancient university or its modern multidisciplinary equivalent (where the science model often still dominates) – but not, with some notable exceptions, in the specialist arts institutions where research infrastructures are often presupposed to be underdeveloped.

One consequence of these circumstances has been to create the impression of a *stained glass ceiling* that is suspended above research in the arts – this being a metaphor for the invisible barrier that may be preventing artistic research from rising above a particular level in the research hierarchy. Indeed, such a *stained glass ceiling*, should it exist, would also tend to colour the underpinning machineries of research governance.

5 The thesis that Christopher Dresser submitted for examination was comprised of the following three publications: *The Rudiments of Botany, Structured and Physiological, and, Unity in Variety, as Deduced from the Vegetable Kingdom* (both texts published in 1859); along with, a short paper on morphology titled *Contributions to Organographic Botany*.

6 Here, artistic research is also seen as distinct from those traditional forms of text-based scholarly rigour that underpin research in the humanities e.g. classics, history, linguistics, literature, philosophy, theology etc.

For example, the Frascati Manual,<sup>7</sup> which is a European standard for the collection of statistics about research and development, has an influence that goes beyond its primary purpose. Of this, Fernando Galindo-Rueda – who has some responsibility for the Manual – says ‘What gets measured gets counted, and what gets counted ends up shaping decisions. If a country wants to encourage research and development, governments end up “implicitly or explicitly” referring to the Frascati Manual.’ [THES, 2021, p.4].

In this respect, the most recent edition of the Frascati Manual advises that ‘artistic performance is normally excluded from R&D’ and ‘As a consequence, arts colleges and university arts departments cannot be assumed to perform R&D without additional supporting evidence.’ [OECD, 2015, para.2.67, p.59].

Additionally, the Frascati Manual goes on to say that ‘... design is not R&D and ... has to be kept distinct from R&D for any statistical purpose’ [OECD, 2015, p.64]. In this instance, and given the considerable public investment that some European countries have made in design research, this conclusion seems at odds with the now substantial body of evidence for the beneficial impacts of design research [Yee, J. White, H. Lennon, L., 2015].

The contribution that the Frascati Manual may have made to this perception of a *stained glass ceiling* has recently been underlined in an article titled *But is it research? Artists fight for official recognition*,<sup>8</sup> which takes up the cudgel that artistic research ‘still isn’t taken seriously as proper scholarship by some academics, governments and official bodies’ [THES, 2021].

Though barriers such as these are often presented as the result of external pressures or bureaucratic constraints, the same article also goes on to cite the Chief Executive of the European Association of Conservatoires as saying that ‘...at least half of artistic projects were “not well done” and in a collection of, say, 10 performances, there might be “eight projects that are fully bullshit”.’<sup>9</sup> ‘But,’ he continues, ‘the problem is that some sceptical art academics perceive all such performance-linked research as “bullshit”. In France, Germany and Italy, where sceptics often sit on funding panels, this has meant the field has been deprived of grants.’ Some general issues arise from these comments that may be worth further discussion.

Although the issues being addressed may have some localised relevance, they are not universally true. Indeed, the landscape for artistic research is quite varied between institutions and from one country to another. In some countries, systems for assessing artistic research have evolved along with the development of underpinning criteria that are specifically geared to these disciplines and their funding regimes. In the same week that *But is it Research?* was published, some 30 members of the art and design panel for the UK Research Excellence Framework<sup>10</sup> (all of whom are art and design specialists) prepared themselves to assess circa 6,500 research outputs and 250 impact case studies from

7 The Frascati Manual is published by the *Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)*. It classifies research in three categories: basic research; applied research; experimental development. The manual is used by many governments as a common language for science, technology and economic policy. Included in its range of disciplinary areas are ‘Humanities and the arts (History and archaeology; Languages and literature; Philosophy, ethics and religion; Arts [arts, history of arts, performing arts, music]; Other humanities).’ [OECD, 2015, p.59].

8 Available at <<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/it-research-artists-fight-official-recognition>> [last accessed, 30th June 2021].

9 Ibid.

10 *Research Excellence Framework 2021*. The sub-panel criteria and working methods for Unit of Assessment 32, Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory are available at <[https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1450/ref-2019\\_02-panel-criteria-and-working-methods.pdf](https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1450/ref-2019_02-panel-criteria-and-working-methods.pdf)> [last accessed, 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021].

across the arts and design disciplines. Similarly, just a few months before this, the Hong Kong Research Assessment Exercise 2020 completed its own assessments of artistic research. These and other examples of similar exercises underline the fact that in many cases, artistic research is considered to be ‘proper scholarship’ with lessons to be learnt from their development of appropriate criteria and methods. Perhaps one characteristic of research in the arts is, at times, a tendency to be creative in the re-invention of old models or arguments rather than to find radical innovations by learning not just from the failures, but also from the successes of other research. In this respect, and perhaps somewhat surprisingly, approaches to artistic research can at times be highly conservative.

Whereas the term ‘artistic research’ may be a handy umbrella label to cover research across these disciplines, in real terms, its usage is imprecise and often inconsistent. In Europe, especially, a silent boundary for ‘the arts’ is often drawn around the disciplines of fine art, music and theatre (the latter two in terms of composition and performance). For example, the President of the European League of the Institutes of the Arts (ELIA) underlines this when saying: ‘An artistic research performance be it of music, dance or painting is the “output”.’ [THES, 2021]. Oft repeated statements such as these from important professional associations will eventually be seen as the norm that finds its way into policy statements. It is not entirely surprising, therefore, that examples in the Frascati Manual focus on music [OECD, 2015, p.57 and p.74, para.104] and exclude design.

Mention of the term artistic research, in itself, is likely to stimulate a range of principled positions that, more often than not, will generate greater heat than light. For example, an alliance of European arts institutions<sup>11</sup> recently produced a document titled *The Vienna Declaration on Artistic Research* which set out to present ‘a clearer, better articulation of the concepts and impact of artistic research within the Frascati Manual’.<sup>12</sup> Shortly after its publication, the Open! Platform for Art, Culture and the Public Domain posted a response titled *What is Wrong with the Vienna Declaration on Artistic Research*.<sup>13</sup> This response asserts that ‘Written in a language that reads like its own parody, with its abundance of tacky logos reminiscent of spam messages, the *Vienna Declaration* doesn’t pretend any semblance to a manifesto written by artists in support of artistic research. It is of course (and, for its intended purpose, needs to be) a bureaucratic policy document; but beyond that, it is a constructed foundation myth and institutional power grab.’

Just as these arguments prioritise the work of artists and barely mention design, so do they tend to both confuse and polarise arts practice and artistic research. There are many examples to illustrate this debate but to cite just one, in *Composition is not Research*,<sup>14</sup> John Croft asserts that ‘the very idea that musical composition is a form of research is a category error: music is a domain of thought whose cognitive dimension lies in embodiment, revelation or presentation, but not in investigation

11 The signatories of the Vienna Declaration are: AAEE (*European Association for Architectural Education*); AEC (*The European Association of Conservatoires*); CAE (*Culture, Action, Europe*); CILECT (*The International Association of Film and Television Schools*); ELIA (*European League of Institutes of the Arts*); EQ-Arts (*Enhancing Quality in the Arts*); MusiQuE (*Music Quality Enhancement*); SAR (*Society for Artistic Research*).

12 See <<https://cultureactioneurope.org/news/vienna-declaration-on-artistic-research/>> [last accessed, 20th June 2021].

13 See, for example, *What Is Wrong with the Vienna Declaration on Artistic Research?* which can be retrieved at <https://www.onlineopen.org/what-is-wrong-with-the-vienna-declaration-on-artistic-research> and *The Vienna Declaration on Artistic Research* which can be retrieved at <https://cultureactioneurope.org/news/vienna-declaration-on-artistic-research/> [both, last accessed, 20th June 2021].

14 Available at <<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/tempo/article/composition-is-not-research/F6E324D4458C7E71D82941696302719A>> [last accessed, 24th July 2021].

and description'. Picking up Croft's challenge in *Composition Is Not A Jaffa Cake, Research Is Not A Biscuit*,<sup>15</sup> David Pocknee responds that 'Composition can be research, if we choose it to be, if we decide to lay aside the definitions handed down to us by large institutions and false prophets, whose papers act as a clarion call to stupidity, and to more vigorously question the historical, financial and aesthetic reasons for them. If artistic research should model itself on scientific research, then it should be modelled on the actual process of scientific discovery, not on the positivist or scientific idealizations of bureaucrats.'

These are just some examples of a debate that has taken place over the last three decades and through which the international community of artistic researchers has dissected various definitions for practice research in the arts. These exchanges have been helpful in seeking to both articulate a commonly accepted terminology and highlight the need for new forms of scholarship appropriate to the arts. Overall, though, they have produced some other side-effects.

Because such conversations are inward looking – peers talking to peers – they tend to produce an echo-chamber effect of increasing self-regulation that resists other world views. This is the opposite of reaching outwards to find inspiration in the sparks caused by collisions with other intellectual worlds. Furthermore, this preoccupation with terminological dissection has manoeuvred research activity in the field to a position of stasis that has become increasingly distanced from societal and environmental concerns. Amongst others, Geoffrey Crossick has noted this condition, saying 'meanwhile the world that there is stands still, which means it goes backwards, while they [artistic researchers] resolve that issue' [Geoffrey Crossick, as cited in, Bulley and Şahin, 2021, p.19].<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, a state of polarisation between arts practice and artistic research has served to widen and harden the boundaries between increasingly tribal knowledge silos at a time when the societal and environmental challenges that we face demand greater permeability and knowledge exchange – not just within the arts but across all knowledge domains that are rightly concerned with understanding natural phenomena as well as the human condition.

If there really is a *stained glass ceiling* that is preventing artistic research from rising above a particular level in the research hierarchy, then that glass ceiling may be as much a construct of the academic community's own efforts to articulate artistic research, as much as it is evidence for the unsympathetic resistance of an external bureaucracy based in the traditions of discovery science. So the Creator Doctus pilot project set out to look for ways to help unlock these debates in order to move the agenda forward.

## The approach

Although the term 'artistic research' has become a handy umbrella label to denote a rich and complex area of work, it can nonetheless be reductive and misleading if simply understood to represent the 'arts' in their most conservative sense (i.e. fine arts, music, theatre). The approach taken by Creator Doctus to artistic research, therefore, is that it is a broad community of scholars having a wide range of approaches and methodologies – not delimited or inward-facing but rich and complex in looking out

15 Available at <[http://davidpocknee.ricercata.org/writing/010\\_john-croft/croft-essay\\_airline\\_version\\_03.pdf](http://davidpocknee.ricercata.org/writing/010_john-croft/croft-essay_airline_version_03.pdf)> [last accessed, 24th July 2021].

16 Crossick was Chief Executive of the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council (2002-2005) and is the co-author of *Understanding the value of arts & culture* (Crossick and Kaszynska, 2016).

towards an 'understanding of, or coping with, the world'.<sup>17</sup> Here, the use of the term 'artistic research' refers to all of those disciplines within the creative and performing arts and design sector *as a whole*.<sup>18</sup>

Furthermore, the label 'artistic research' is not intended to denote an area of research that is antithetical to scientific research. Indeed there are many areas of overlap and commonality between the two – they may however give different emphasis to the processes of discovery and innovation. Discovery science often will use an analysis of data from past events to first hypothesise and then authenticate truths about the universe (e.g. the birth of a galaxy). Artistic research, however, will often interrogate the limitations of our current knowledge in order to create alternative futures and potential ways of 'coping' in the world (e.g. see *War and Medicine* [Cotterrell, D. 2014]). The first will seek to produce new knowledge, while the second will interrogate our current knowledge in order to determine its limitations. Both are valid but distinct approaches to ways in which we uncover new insights. In this respect, both scientific truths of the universe and the nature of the human condition are essential components of a vibrant research ecology in a healthy society.

Indeed, the intellectual challenge here is not to disavow the currently dominant approaches to research as evolved through discovery science, but to translate their underpinning principles into new forms of scholarship that are appropriate to the methods and aims of artistic research. And these new forms of scholarship must work to permanently conserve research insights and innovations so that they can be easily discovered, effectively shared and consulted by future generations of artistic scholars – this, in order to help refresh the pool of knowledge from which the intellectual climate of artistic research is constantly nourished.

Though the range of disciplines making up the artistic research community may share many features with traditional forms of scholarship in the life sciences, physical sciences, social sciences and humanities, there are some internal characteristics that are specific to the disciplines of artistic research – and this also has an impact on research degree supervision and assessment within the Creator Doctus project.

**Text and non-text:** A defining characteristic of artistic research is that it will largely be driven by non-text forms such as, for example, images, objects, symbols, spaces, systems, sounds, movements, environments or installations (and, in some instances, a convergence of such forms). The final output of the research programme, in the form of a thesis, may however be an appropriate blend of text and non-text forms.

For example, it was through the use of visual, spatial and sonic forms that the great cathedrals of Europe were built as archival repositories for belief systems that gave widely dispersed communities access to a collective sense of moral guidance and spiritual sustenance. But, in his novel *Notre Dame de Paris*, Victor Hugo rings a clear warning that this heroic period would be brought to an abrupt end with the invention of printing from movable type. In the following words, Hugo describes Notre Dame's

17 See Jeroen Boomgaard's chapter, *The Creator Doctus Initiative at Gerrit Rietveld Academie*, in this publication.

18 Disciplines within the creative and performing arts and design sector emphasise non-text modes of research enquiry and research outputs. These disciplines include, but are not limited to: painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography, graphics, fashion and textile design, illustration, crafts, product and automotive design, architecture and interior design, music composition and performance, theatre and dance etc.

Archdeacon looking down from his study onto the immense cathedral outlined against the sky 'The archdeacon gazed at the gigantic edifice for some time in silence, then extending his right hand, with a sigh, towards the printed book which lay open on the table, and his left towards Notre-Dame, and turning a sad glance from the book to the church,—“Alas,” he said, “this will kill that.”’

Then he added these mysterious words: ‘small things come at the end of great things; a tooth triumphs over a mass. The Nile rat kills the crocodile, the swordfish kills the whale, the book will kill the edifice.’

Later, in *The Art of Memory*, Frances Yates underlines this point saying: ‘The printed book will destroy the building... [making] such huge built-up memories, crowded with images, unnecessary. It will do away with a “thing” invested with an image and stored in [human] memory.’ [Yates, 1992, p.131].

Indeed, the inception of the first universities, around 500 years ago, converged with the invention of printing from movable type. This revolutionised the way that knowledge could be distributed and conserved and how we would begin to educate ourselves. In turn, this created an era of text-based scholarship and conservation at the expense of, say, visual, spatial or sonic evidence. Since then, these text-based forms of scholarship have been refined over centuries by university systems that embrace the life and physical sciences and the humanities. But, during this period, the continuous development of non-text forms happened outside the university system in the hands not of scholars, but of artisans based in Europe’s trades and crafts guilds.

As the disciplines of artistic research are relatively recent entrants to academic research (i.e. frameworks for research assessment, research funding and research degrees), they are situated within a research ecology that is heavily, if not almost exclusively, text-based. However, the development of new interactive digital technologies, alongside traditional print publishing, are opening up fresh possibilities for the archiving and discovery of new forms for the research theses into the twenty-second century [Bulley and Şahin, 2021, pp.42-43]. So an aspiration of the Creator Doctus programme is to help evolve new forms of scholarship for the production and conservation of a research thesis where the research enquiry may be driven by non-text forms and the research output will strike a reasoned balance of textual and non-text materials. Overall, this will help to grow and refresh the pool of knowledge underpinning artistic research.

Output and impact: Another characteristic of artistic research will often lie in the direction of travel between the outputs of the research and the impacts these outputs may have on the lives of people and communities – irrespective of whether such impacts are intended or not.<sup>19</sup> In some cases, the research will have been undertaken in response to a particular challenge but in other instances, it may try to understand a puzzling phenomenon with no application in mind. Indeed, the path between impact and research may be direct or diffuse – in the latter case, taking many years for the

19 There is now sufficient evidence to demonstrate the significant impacts of artistic research. For example, the results of the recent *Hong Kong Research Assessment Exercise 2020* confirmed that over 50% of such impacts in the creative and performing arts and design were ‘world leading’ and ‘internationally excellent’ (see <<https://www.ugc.edu.hk/doc/eng/ugc/rae/2020/result/rae2020results12.pdf>> [last accessed, 5th July 2021]). The *UK Research Excellence Framework 2014* also demonstrated the significant impacts of artistic research with a full set of Impact Case Studies being published (see, for example <<https://impact.ref.ac.uk/casestudies/Results.aspx?UoA=34>> [last accessed, 5th July 2021]).

research to have any impact at all. In the context of Creator Doctus, the expectation of impact could be to ask ‘what has changed because of the research?’ – and, that any such change has been in partnership with a societal partner outside of academia.

The traditional direction of travel between research and impact in, for example, the life sciences will move from ‘lab to life’. Here, an often complex and lengthy process will eventually transport the benefits of research into a clinical setting where it will hopefully have positive impacts on the health and well-being of humans. However, there are many examples in artistic research where this process travels in the opposite direction – from impacts to understandings – and with greater speed. Sometimes, the initial action will be through a practical intervention in some specific condition outside of academia (such as, for instance, a local community, health agency, classroom, cultural institution, zone of conflict or business enterprise). This will then be followed by a process of critical reflection and/or analysis in which the effects of that intervention on people are translated back into enhanced understandings and insights of, for example, the underlying principles that govern such a condition.

One example of such reverse-engineering may be seen in a case study by David Cotterrell titled *War and Medicine* [Corris, 2009, pages 20-21]. In this, Cotterrell demonstrates how contemporary art discourse has been used internationally to raise awareness in professional participants and the general public of the ethical and practical complexities of militarised healthcare [Cotterrell, 2014].

Cotterrell’s first step in this process was the production of artworks and artefacts through a direct immersion in the environments of militarised medicine, followed by the recording of human testimonies in response to these. This then led to a period of critical reflection on, and analysis of, the material so gathered, resulting in publications and performances that had significant impacts on legislation concerning the public use of images, on professional training and on public understanding. In such situations, the impact of the research often tends to precede its codification and articulation as research – unlike the traditional route which tends to move in the opposite direction from lab to life.

This case study may also help to illustrate some of the underlying characteristics of artistic research. Specifically, its reliance on forms of visual evidence. Also, that the impacts of knowledge interventions may precede their codification as research. But, more importantly, the fact that this type of research is often directly engaged with the experiences of citizens or with the needs of research users. Interestingly, in Cotterrell’s case, the trans-disciplinarity of his research was not based on a collaboration between academic knowledge domains, but on partnerships with research beneficiaries and with research users outside of academia.

Specialisation and trans-disciplinarity: A further characteristic of artistic research stems from the increasing engagement that researchers will have with people and communities outside of academia and with knowledge domains other than their own. Indeed, the social contract for research over the last decade or so has moved away from an earlier belief that greater specialisation is the key to successful research. Now, it is generally hoped that trans-disciplinary research will stimulate the kinds of radical innovations needed to solve some of the major problems facing society. Indeed, previous forms of incremental development, that have come out of discrete knowledge domains, now seem to have proven themselves insufficient in the face of the complex societal and environmental challenges.



Accordingly, trans-disciplinary approaches to knowledge production and innovation continue to grow in importance – they are now perceived as a fundamental skill set for the next generation of researchers, and ‘major research funding agencies are increasingly focused on strengthening interdisciplinary collaboration’ (Pedersen, 2016, p.1). In this respect, careful leadership and good research design are needed if these skills are to flourish. This will not happen by itself, and the Creator Doctus programme aims to offer enabling frameworks that will help to ensure that trans-disciplinary skill sets are developed and made sustainable. Indeed, one aspect of the contemporary research ecology that has become increasingly relevant is that of research design. As communications networks now serve to connect minds and knowledge pools across the planet, and as researchers look outwards to work with those communities or individuals who may be affected by their research, the concept of the ‘lone researcher’ in their solitary bubble is no longer the dominant *modus operandi*.

Research design: All good research programmes will be underpinned by an understanding and application of the principles of *research design*. And as the trans-disciplinary context of the research advances, so does the role of good research design gain in importance. In this respect, all of the partners in the Creator Doctus project are based in an institutional context where design is considered to be an important academic element in their *raison d’être*.

However, there is still much misunderstanding over the use of the term *design*. In common usage, it is simply understood to be a material discipline concerned with the mechanical production of artefacts (a handmaiden to industry) rather than a set of intellectual principles that underpin all disciplines and connect their respective knowledge domains.

For example, for design to make any sense, it is usually defined through a preceding adjective that describes its mode of production e.g. *graphic design, industrial design, car design, fashion design, textile design, furniture design, jewellery design, ceramic design, architectural design, landscape design, spatial design*, and so on. Accordingly, from the late 19th century onwards, the close association of design with industrial manufacture caused it to be perceived as a *plan to make an artefact*. Indeed, the underlying premise for the exclusion of design research in the Frascati Manual remains rooted in this outdated industrial model of mechanical fabrication and assembly – sitting within engineering or the built environment.

From the mid-21<sup>st</sup> century onwards, the principles of design have been expanded and applied to things that are intangible – the design of organisations, of systems, of economies, of identities, of biologies, or the processes of decision-making and research design – and become increasingly trans-disciplinary. For example, researchers in the Weatherhead School of Management will now proudly assert that ‘Great managers are also designers – of processes, projects, strategies and systems.’<sup>20</sup> In this respect, good design is central to the conduct of *any* research programme.

For example, where the design of a research programme incorporates issues that confront an organisation or a community (and not vice-versa), then appropriate methods and approaches in terms of, say, disciplinary focus or disciplinary spread

20 See <<https://weatherhead.case.edu/departments/design-and-innovation/>> [last accessed, June 2021].

may be central to the research design. In the case of Creator Doctus, where a societal partner is embedded in the research programme, this will at times mean knowing how approaches to the integration of knowledge can be designed across disciplinary domains.

Here, for example, the concept of *cognitive distance* is relevant to trans-disciplinary research design whereby the 'distance' between bodies of knowledge will vary (Molas-Gallart, J., Rafols, I., and Tang, P., 2014, p.5, para.3.2).<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, where the cognitive distance is between academics and societal partners, the consequent gap may be considerable and need to be negotiated. Intuitively, we might assume that economics and social studies are cognitively closer than sociology and chemistry or music and mathematics (although the latter may have greater overlap than might at first appear). Without an understanding of the cognitive distance between knowledge domains, the work of a research programme may get stuck in the impasse resulting from *cognitive dissonance*.<sup>22</sup> However, whether the cognitive distance between disciplines is large or small, the design of a process for knowledge integration can either be *holistic* or *layered*.

In the *holistic* approach, the aim is to produce new understandings from an integration of knowledge where it would otherwise have been classified separately within each of its discrete disciplines. In such instances, new forms of scholarly language and descriptors need to be created in order to codify the research outcomes – whether theoretical or practical – as they would be impossible to explain through the traditional descriptors of the individual disciplines. In a *layered* approach, understandings and insights are contributed by each of the participating disciplines, though these will retain the characteristic descriptors of their primary disciplines.

There is then the question of research partnerships, not between academic groups, but between research academics and their partners, say, in the social, cultural or economic spheres. Essentially, there are three different ways in which such partners can be involved in the research. Firstly, as a *collaborator* in the research design and so contributing to the outcomes. Secondly, as an *informant*, where user-centred feedback received from partners is incorporated back into the research but the partners are not involved in the research design. Thirdly, as a *receiver* where the partners will be on the receiving end of the outcomes of the research either through publication or through a more direct engagement with the research team.

Principles such as these, when they underpin a research design, will help to establish the intangible, intellectual, fabric that endows the research with authority and trust – so making it robust.

One of the pioneers of this approach to design as a set of intangible but underpinning principles was Herbert Simon. He was a social scientist with a primary interest in decision-making. Simon won major awards for his research including a Nobel Prize, and began to see that design was a fundamental element in those decision-making processes that would have some impact on society. In this context, Simon's often used

21 The map of cognitive distances included in this paper (Fig.1, p.5) extends to Social Studies but does not include any of the disciplines of artistic research.

22 The term 'cognitive dissonance' was used by Leon Festinger in his publication *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (1957). This suggests that individuals will experience discomfort when confronted with the seeming dissonance caused by different, if not conflicting, bodies of knowledge. Here, they may seek to reduce that dissonance either through avoidance of the information or by converting it into a form that is consonant with their own world view. For example, see <<https://www.apa.org/pubs/books/Cognitive-Dissonance-Intro-Sample.pdf>> [last accessed, 5th July 2021].

definition is that 'To design is to devise courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones.' [Simon, 1996, p.111].

In this definition, which represents a paradigm shift from the older industrial model of design as *a plan to make an artefact*, the link between design and its potential impacts on society and the environment is clearly signalled. Furthermore, this approach is intrinsically trans-disciplinary.

In this context, design is not a subject in itself but a framework for decision-making that gains meaning when it works as the binding agent between various disciplines and their stakeholders. When a number of expert disciplines collaborate with each other, they will each bring a deep knowledge base to the table. However, these deeply vertical knowledge silos will have limited experience of working with each other and with non-academic stakeholders – especially those who may benefit from the research – and they will have relatively impermeable walls. This leads to greater potential for *cognitive dissonance*.

It is here that research design as a horizontal decision-making agent helps to bind diverse disciplines and their stakeholders and to stimulate the knowledge flow between them. This is especially so when the research becomes increasingly outward looking, to other academic disciplines or societal partners. Here, the design of the research programme will be essential to creating *cognitive consonance* between the knowledge domains, thereby supporting its successful progress.

## The next steps

It is from this overall context that the Creator Doctus programme has been set on its distinctive path. However, a particular challenge to the realisation of this mission lies in the formal processes for accreditation of the research infrastructure within which a research degree may be conducted. Historically, it is the ancient and modern research universities that are considered to have the infrastructures needed to award research degrees and have been accredited to do so. After all, they have long traditions – stretching back over 500 years to the inception of the first universities – through which a clear perception of scholarly rigour in terms of text-based research for discovery science has become deeply embedded.

The relative maturity of the research infrastructure across the creative and performing arts and design sector within Europe varies considerably. Some of the independent art schools have been absorbed into Technical Colleges or Polytechnics and others have moved on to become faculties or departments within modern multi-disciplinary universities. Many others continue to stand alone as specialist institutions offering programmes in areas of the creative and performing arts and design. In many instances, it will be challenging for a specialist institution to build the critical mass needed for a robust research infrastructure. In this respect, they are often only able to gain recognition to supervise and award research degrees through their association with a traditional university whose research infrastructures have been formally accredited. In the majority, but not all, of such instances the research infrastructures for artistic research will either be under-developed or based on methods that have matured through the long traditions of discovery science.

In this context, the Creator Doctus project proposes a timely agenda for the development of 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle degrees that 'provide the possibility of research and a

degree at this level for artists – which is led by the expertise and supervision of an art school'.<sup>23</sup> In supporting this agenda EQ-Arts will help to foster collaboration between institutions so that good practices can be shared in the best interests of a maturing infrastructure that is appropriate to artistic research and, within which, 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle degrees in all disciplines of the creative and performing arts and design may be confidently embedded.

*Professor Bruce Brown, EQ-Arts Board.*

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23 See Jeroen Boomgaard's chapter, *The Creator Doctus Initiative at Gerrit Rietveld Academie*, in this publication.

# Gerrit Rietveld Academie

## The Creator Doctus Initiative at Gerrit Rietveld Academie

Jeroen Boomgaard<sup>1</sup>

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## Establishing a 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle

The founding of the Creator Doctus by Gerrit Rietveld Academie as a specific 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle trajectory for the arts on the level of a PhD, originates from the ambition to provide the possibility of research and a degree at this level for artists. The Dutch binary system of education, in which universities and universities of applied sciences are not regarded to be on an equal level, places the awarding of PhDs firmly in the hands of universities. As a result, an artist wishing to engage in high-level research to obtain a 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle degree has to be accepted by a university, and fulfil all the requirements it has set.

Contrary to many other disciplines that are part of the universities of the applied sciences, the arts have no equivalent in the universities. When setting out on a PhD trajectory, artists do not encounter deep prior experience or even knowledge of research in their field. They have to master a discipline they have not been trained in, work with methods that are not familiar and present their results in formats foreign to their daily practices. In general, the main emphasis is placed on a written thesis, which, depending on the university, may vary in length and depth, but is still understood to meet the requirements of a standard dissertation. For some artists, this may be a reasonable procedure, but for many there is a negative effect. Although artistic practice is recognised by several universities in the Netherlands as relevant to the PhD research trajectory, emphasis on (the writing of) a standard thesis gives the artistic practice only a secondary importance. The amount of work that is required for such a thesis is already so high that it leaves little or no time for the artistic practice research. Moreover, the assessment of the final results also often concentrates on the written outcomes, and takes the artistic results for granted.<sup>2</sup> Because of this, the Gerrit Rietveld Academie felt the need to initiate a programme that, first and foremost, would prioritise artistic practice both as a method and as an outcome of research. Because the existing regulations do not allow this programme to be called a PhD programme, we devised a new title: Creator Doctus.<sup>3</sup> This trajectory offers the artist or designer a 3-year research paid position for 3 days per week.

In more European countries, hybrid formats for 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle research are starting to emerge. Although in most countries, the writing of a thesis is still required, some – such as Norway, Sweden and Belgium – have been experimenting with prioritising artistic practice as the outcome of a 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle trajectory.<sup>4</sup> But, as the contributions of the partners of the international CrD collaboration assembled in this book show, this is often still regarded and treated as an exception to the standard procedure. Although in most European countries, the distinction between universities and universities of applied science is fading, and thus a new title next to PhD, PD or Doctorate in the Arts may seem less urgent, we still feel the need to develop a trajectory that allows for the specificity of practice-based artistic research as a method and a discipline, with its own kinds of outcomes that can be assessed on their own merits. The CrD experiment creates new awareness of the specific

2 An exception to this is the programme offered by a collaboration between the Leiden University Academy of Creative and Performing Arts and the Royal Academy of Art (KABK) in The Hague. See <https://phdarts.eu/>

3 The title pays tribute to Rembrandt who was called Pictor Doctus in his time.

4 See <http://3rdcycleinthearts.eu/>

methodologies and results of artistic research, a crucial factor in establishing this kind of research as a recognised discipline. The urgency to further develop this specific hybrid is not only to emancipate it as a new research discipline, but also stems from a shift in the position of arts in society, with artists and designers taking on new roles.

The trajectory creates space for artists to produce a kind of research that can, for instance, bring archival information, theories, images, bodily experiences and imaginary constructions together in a way that a thesis would not be able to express. This is how Femke Herregraven, the present CrD candidate at Rietveld/Sandberg Research, describes her project:

How can the entanglement of languages, codes, materials, sounds, and predictive structures become a new protocol for “image” or art making? In a time when financial markets are trading in potential future catastrophes, this CrD-trajectory starts from a question of agency: what is left to be said about a future that is already mapped, calculated and financialised as a catastrophe? The CrD-trajectory “The Evacuated” investigates how the “catastrophe” can be overcome as an anxious monetised eventuality in the current “discourse of doom”, and instead be reactivated as a plot device to create a sudden turn in the dominant narratives of techno-capitalism and knowledge.

One of the central elements in Herregraven’s research is the phenomenon of the catastrophe bonds (‘catbonds’), stock market bonds that gamble on future catastrophes. Herregraven could limit herself to writing a thesis on the history and an analysis of the role of these bonds in capitalism, but it is the visual, physical and mental connection she makes with other material that gives the research its originality and impact. ‘[...] The core question of my research is: How can the catastrophe become an emancipatory moment in navigating our current biological, political and technological ecosystems?’<sup>5</sup>

The focus on artistic practice as method and result of the research of course leads to the question: in what way, and in what kind of terms, can the outcome of such a trajectory be assessed as research. How can we evaluate and discuss the results not only as original works of art, but also as a contribution to the way we understand the world? This shift of perspective, ambition and attention is necessary to be able to make a distinction between research as a separate form of practice, a ‘discipline’, and art practices in all their variety as we already know and understand them.

The position that we at Gerrit Rietveld Academie have taken is that artistic research is not *about* art, but rather, art as research may contribute to our understanding of or coping with the world. This framing within a research context takes away the danger of tautological looping, in which the research remains a studio practice, revolving around artistic questions derived afterwards from the results. To be called ‘research’, art needs to test its outcomes in relation to a context beyond the given confinements of the art world. This requirement is comparable to the way a PhD research not only answers its own questions but is required to

5 Femke Herregraven, *The Evacuated. CrD Trajectory proposal 2020-2022*, unpublished, January 2020.

relate research and outcomes to a pre-existing field of knowledge with discourses, issues, specific methods and matters of concern. The research and the results need confrontation in order to be convincing.<sup>6</sup>

## Situating in society

As stated, it is important to stress that the CrD-trajectory aims to establish a new position between academia and the art world: a position where the artist is not forced to jump through the burning hoops of academic discipline, but is also not allowed to remain sheltered within the traditional procedures of the art world. The ambition with artistic research is to create a new field, not only of research, but also of practices. A field that relates to existing academic practices, but at the same time establishes a new position for art and design in relation to society at large. This is not a new or isolated process. Over the past 25 years, social practices in the arts have resulted in new ways of working with communities to create new perspectives for participants, as well as new roles for artists and designers.

The UK is one of few countries where such social practices in the arts are part of 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle trajectories in artistic research. For instance, the AHRC (Arts and Humanities Research Council) has a special funding programme for Collaborative Doctoral Awards. Funded by this council, Christopher Wild has initiated a project called *Creative Futures: Re-imagining creative education and digital learning in Shetland through collaborative creative practice*. The description of its objectives is as follows:

In partnership with Shetland Arts, this collaborative doctoral project explores how youth participation in indigenous creative and cultural practices on Shetland can be sustained and increased. By bringing together young people, local craft makers, and creative practitioners the project seeks to reimagine the current context of creative education in distributed island communities. [...] In my practice my interests are rooted in the dynamic interplay of craft, arts, and design and technology to hybridise disciplines, create interactive experiences, and challenge established standards.<sup>7</sup>

Situating an art project as a research project in a community, in collaboration with a local organisation, enhances its chances for a longer lasting impact. It is the research aspect that provides the project with potential other than the empty clichés of 'offering another, alternative perspective', 'creating curiosity/surprise/amazement', or 'asking questions instead of giving answers'. Reframing these practices as research may help them to be recognised as potentially long-lasting contributions to societal change. This kind of research wants to make something happen and, in that way, outlasts its symbolic presence. It is an approach that, in more academic research practices, has become popular under the name 'Living Labs'. In these 'Living Labs', multiple disciplines collaborate to create

6 There is much discussion in the art world about the specificity of artistic research. See for instance the very rich book of interviews on this topic by Lucy Cotter: *Reclaiming Artistic Research*, (Berlin: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2019).

7 <https://gsaphdshowcase.net/christopher-wild/>



trans-disciplinary outcomes that are more adequate to handle complex ('wicked') problems. And similarly to these labs, embedded artistic research has the ambition to escape from the institutional isolation and to provide answers, although it may feel the need to reformulate the questions in the process.

To establish the connection to society, the CrD-trajectory has set the condition that a societal partner be involved. This partner can be any private or public organisation interested in supporting and facilitating research by an artist for a period of three years. However, this organisation does not only facilitate, but also provides a framework for research by opening up a field of interest, or poses a set of questions/problems for the artist to work with. This partner organisation is willing and expects the research to impact on its own output, but to classify it as a commission would be too limiting for the amount of space that the partner has to afford to the research artist. In their collaboration, there is always a risk that the partner-provided issues become too pertinent. A lesson learned from existing social practices is that it's difficult to avoid coming up with expected answers, instead of focusing on open-ended exploration. This might result in answers that could be too prescriptive, and final outcomes that mainly focus on social or practical work for the community or the institution. Commissioning institutions try to establish cohesion and consensus where dissent might be necessary.<sup>8</sup> In that sense, the collaboration with the partner is a great stimulus for the research, or even a condition, but it is also a challenge. The partner has its own agenda, its own expectations of the research and often specific ideas about the more traditional role of the artist and the function of art. To guarantee that this agenda does not dominate the research and that the researcher remains independent, the CrD candidate receives their salary from the academy. The partner only provides additional funding, possibly supplemented with funding from cultural grants, for the material execution and presentation of the research project.

In the first Rietveld CrD pilot, concluded in April 2020, artist Yael Davids worked in and with the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven.<sup>9</sup> After the Rietveld Academie and Van Abbemuseum had made an agreement on collaborating in this pilot, six artists were invited to submit their proposal based on a field of enquiry that the Van Abbemuseum provided. The main interest of the museum was how to reach new audiences or approach audiences in a way that is different from the standard educational programmes. Davids' collaboration with the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven started out, in line with one of the central issues in her research proposal, with setting up Feldenkrais exercises in the museum for primary school teachers from the city of Eindhoven. Due to a lack of response from this particular group, Davids shifted her attention to the staff of the museum itself. In weekly voluntarily Feldenkrais lessons, Davids made the employees of the museum look at the museum's collection from totally unaccustomed bodily positions, leading to completely new perceptions and observations. In the final presentation of the research, which consisted of an exhibition in the museum called 'A Daily Practice', next to a report describing the research process and a number of texts written by Davids as part of the research, the collaboration with the museum staff was presented in the form of a selection of works picked by the employees as their favourites.

8 See for the pitfalls of social practices: Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells. Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, Verso, London 2012.

9 See <https://vanabbemuseum.nl/programma/programma/yael-davids-1/>

Dauids' position as a researcher was very different from the traditional role an artist takes or is assigned in this context. Although she was working with a curator, the initial goal was not an exhibition, and the focus remained on the research. As a final presentation, Dauids co-curated an exhibition that contained some works of her own, in combination with works of the collection, based on the Feldenkrais experiences, but she completed the presentation with works from women artists she regarded as missing from the collection. Being involved with the museum over such a long time and in such an intensive way, Dauids was confronted time and time again with its institutional boundaries – be it regulations for handling the works or the hierarchies in place in the institution. Dauids' research practice not only tested the Feldenkrais method as a new way of involving the public with the collection, it also mirrored the museum to its staff in a way that surpassed the existing forms of institutional critique. The final outcome of the research was not only the exhibition and the texts, but also the articulation of a new professional position for artists in the context of a museum.

As the experience of Yael Dauids' research shows, it is exactly this confrontation between the situatedness of the research and the expectations of the societal partner that pushes the research into unknown territory. It is because the artist's role as researcher is *not* pre-defined in relation to the institution that the possibility is created for unforeseen outcomes and unexpected answers. The institution not only gives the artist a different role than the usual, but the artist also challenges the partner, through the research, to reflect on its framing, goals and procedures.

A comparable situation can be found in the research Femke Herregraven is doing in collaboration with Waag.<sup>10</sup> *Waag – technology and society* as the research institution is called, in its own words 'operates at the intersection of science, technology and the arts, focusing on technology as an instrument of social change, guided by the values of fairness, openness and inclusivity.'<sup>11</sup> In the collaboration between Waag and Femke Herregraven, one of the focal points is to reflect on the role of Artificial Intelligence. She writes:

[...] The first part of the research focuses on the development of an artificial intelligence named Elaine. The research, experiments and work in this cluster focus on the emergence of a counter voice in times of catastrophe. It focuses on the diving reflex, respiration, voice, bodies of water, whistling echoes, air and water as place of commons and communal survival. In this first cluster, the base should be developed for an AI with a rich oral and auditive spectrum that is trained by highly specific, marginal, non-communicative sound bites. [...] A diversity of sounds from respiration, voice, mumbling, humming, stuttering, speech deficiencies will be collected through different methods and used to train Elaine. She will develop her own voice and speech: one that emerges from bodily 'mistakes', one that is conscious but pre-language, pre-labelling, pre-naming. Speech data which would normally be considered erroneous for AI training models will be implemented throughout the three years that Elaine grows up.<sup>12</sup>

10 As stated above, Femke Herregraven is the present CrD candidate at Rietveld/Sandberg Research. Waag is the societal partner in her research.

11 <https://waag.org/en>

12 Femke Herregraven, *The Evacuated. CrD Trajectory proposal 2020-2022*, unpublished, January 2020.

Waag regards its role in the project as providing the knowledge and technology that can support the project. What the research itself can mean for Waag is less clear at this point in time. The organisation would like Herregraven's project to reach a wider audience as part of their programmatic reflection on the role of AI, the question of who is in control, and the consequences of the so-called algorithmic condition. The challenge for Herregraven will be to pursue her own path and prevent the research from becoming a Waag project in which certain outcomes and deliverables are expected. The challenge for Waag will be the confrontation with a project that fundamentally questions technological progress by incorporating failure and catastrophe as an emancipatory moment.

## Supervising the research and assessing the outcomes

Supervising and assessing are crucial issues in establishing a 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle trajectory, and other chapters in this manual deal with these aspects in a more extensive way. In this chapter, I briefly want to touch upon the role of the partner in the supervision. The partner engages in the research, contributes to the funding of the project and is involved in the supervision, appointing a second supervisor next to the supervisor on behalf of the academy. We are aware that such a construction may add to the danger of the research becoming too instrumental to the agenda of the partner, causing the researcher to lose their independence. By requiring the supervisor to be experienced in 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle supervision, and by regularly reporting to the board of research of the academy, the independence is guaranteed. We think that by making the partner supervisor jointly responsible for the quality of the research outcomes, the danger of instrumentalising can be prevented.

Sher Doruff, supervisor on behalf of Gerrit Rietveld Academie during the first pilot, coined the term 'immanent supervision' to indicate her participation as supervisor in Yael Davids' research. The term indicates an involvement in the research that goes beyond the more distanced 'objective' supervision that is conventional in PhD programmes. 'Immanent supervision' also asks for a commitment from the partner supervisor that is not adequately covered by the term 'commissioning'. In the case of Davids, this became clear as she involved her supervisors in the Feldenkreis training, and set up a separate reading group which included her supervisors and some external experts. In that sense, Davids organised her own training. At Rietveld, Davids also became a member of a post-grad study group in which she, together with other 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle candidates participating in PhD programmes in The Netherlands or abroad, discussed methods and results on a monthly basis. We are convinced that more than any formal courses in for instance academic writing or methodology, this form of exchange, of peer-learning, is crucial. Research is not only about experimenting, finding things out, setting things up: first and foremost, it requires the ability to communicate about the main issues of the research, the steps planned, setbacks encountered and in-between results attained.

As for the role and position of the partner in relation to assessing the outcomes, it is necessary to pay attention to the process of the research while it develops in the collaboration. To be able to evaluate artistic outcomes as research

results, it is necessary that the research process be transparent and constantly discussed. During the first pilot, it was clear from the beginning – to the candidate as well as to the supervisors – that level 8 criteria<sup>13</sup> would be applied to assess the quality of the research. The same set of criteria formed the guideline for the assessment committee that evaluated the research at the end. The CrD-trajectory requires the candidate to document the process and write a report, to make clear, among other things, which issues were (or became) central to the research and what steps were taken to reach certain outcomes, and how level 8 criteria were handled.

The regular reporting to and discussions with the supervisors helps the researcher decide which path they want to pursue. Essential to this, is the fact that a wished-for final outcome is not decided upon at an early stage. Not only in content – realising that in any cutting-edge research, the final outcome is not clear from the beginning – but also in form, which – as stated above – is such an important element of the outcomes in artistic research. As I noted before about Yael Davids' research, a final exhibition was not planned from the beginning. And though an exhibition can appear to be a standard result of an artist's research in a museum, it was the combination with the Feldenkrais lessons that shaped this into a completely different kind of event, making clear what the research was about without a need for literal explanation.

The collaboration with a societal partner is central to the CrD. In the first two pilot projects, the Academie started out by looking for a partner willing to travel this treacherous path together with us. In further developing the pilot, the Gerrit Rietveld Academie now plans to send out an open call for artists to apply together with societal partners. Institutions/organisations and artists have to find one another to develop a research project, although this is also a risk for both parties. A risk in the sense that while the research does have the intention to reach outcomes and conclusions that are of value for the partner, the exact nature of these outcomes must be kept open as long as possible: this is necessary to cutting-edge artistic research. That is what we learned from the first pilot: planning is crucial, but improvising is essential. The format of the programme, the criteria the research has to answer to, the relation with the partner, the funding, the interests of all parties involved have to be clear from the start. But we also learned that the research process itself should be allowed to question all this, and that you need supervisors willing and able to go along. We also learned that while it has to be clear what results are to be assessed by a committee in the end, at the same time, the process of the research should not be confined by working towards certain predetermined results. In the end, the first pilot of the CrD by Yael Davids revealed that to be able to assess this kind of research in an adequate way, level 8 criteria themselves have to be re-assessed and specified.

The main conclusion is that the outcomes far exceeded our expectations: it offered us new ideas about artistic research processes, convincing examples of non-written research outputs, valuable reflections on level 8 assessment criteria, a new model for setting up research that can be beneficial to a societal partner, and a final result that had a lasting impact on art as well as on research communities.

13 See on this topic, the chapter on '3rd Cycle Doctorate Level 8 Learning Outcomes/Competences in the Arts' in this publication.

And that provided us with proof that the CrD offers a very valuable model for a new form of artistic research on a 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle level, creating a new role for artists in and towards society.



# Twenty Birds Inside Her Chest\* (2021)

## Femke Herregraven<sup>1</sup>

*\*This new research and work that Herregraven developed as part of her CrD trajectory was commissioned by the 13th Gwangju Biennale (2021) curated by Defne Ayas and Natasha Ginwala.*

- <sup>1</sup> Femke Herregraven is a visual artist that investigates which material base, geographies, and value systems are carved out by financial technologies and infrastructures. Her work focuses on the effects of abstract value systems on historiography and individual lives. This research is the basis for the conception of new characters, stories, objects, sculptures, sound and mixed-media installations. Her current work focuses on the financialisation of the future as a 'catastrophe' and uses language, the voice, and the respiratory system to examine these monetised speculative catastrophes within our social, biological, and technological ecosystems. She taught at Artez Arnhem and the Gerrit Rietveld Academie and is an alumnus of the Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten in Amsterdam (2017–2018). In 2016, she collaborated with Dutch investigative journalists on the Panama Papers. In 2019, she was nominated for the Prix de Rome. She is part of On-Trade-Off (2018–2021): an artist-led project on the new energy mythology around lithium, and currently a Creator Doctus (practice-based PhD) candidate at Sandberg Instituut (2020–2023).

How can a new voice emerge from a catastrophic moment?

*Twenty Birds Inside Her Chest* (2021) by Femke Herregraven explores the aquatic voice and the watery commons as a site of resistance in times of planetary catastrophe to counter 'discourses of doom'. Following Elaine Morgan's controversial hypothesis that humans evolved from isolated, semi-aquatic primates and not the 'mighty male hunter', *Twenty Birds Inside Her Chest* interprets the bodily instincts of the haenyeo, female freedivers on Jeju Island, through a living sound archive of the sumbitori, the high-pitched whistle emitted by the haenyeo as they surface from deep water. Often described as both lilting and haunting, the sound is the result of the forceful expulsion of carbon dioxide from their lungs followed by a quick intake of fresh oxygen. In the artist's words, 'the sumbitori symbolises not only their adaptation to water but also the moment of moving between life and death, of overcoming the moment.' Herregraven's archive is intended to preserve the haenyeo's aquatic voice of communal survival and will be returned to the community following the exhibition.

Herregraven and composer BJ Nilsen collaborated with the haenyeo community for the recordings. The sumbitori sound compositions are presented through eight sculptures informed by the shape of the human larynx inside a circular installation reminiscent of the bulteok structure that the haenyeo use for shamanic rituals and community meetings. The aquatic choir will train an artificial intelligence named Elaine whose voice and speech is marked by trauma. Also on view are other objects inspired by the Dutch harpoon that surfaced on the Korean shoreline 450 years ago via an aquatic body, a pierced whale.

*Twenty Birds Inside Her Chest* amplifies the collective voice and allows us to experience the watery commons of Jeju, the home to matriarchal freediving communities who are known not only for their physical strength and endurance, but also their fight for social justice and political freedom. With fragility, resistance, and collectivity, these indigenous marine biologists hold immense experience and knowledge about natural systems, their disturbances and, potentially, our future.





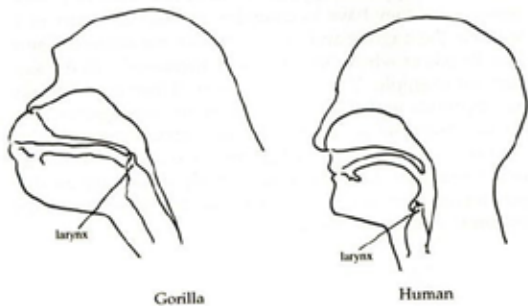
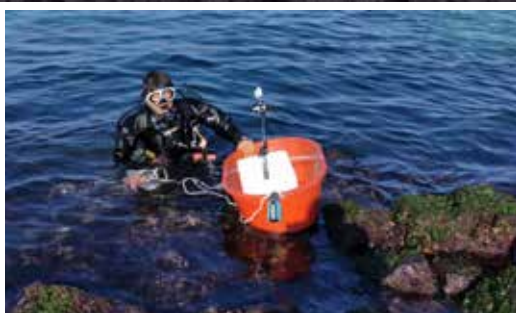


Image from *The Aquatic Ape Hypothesis* (1982) by Elaine Morgan

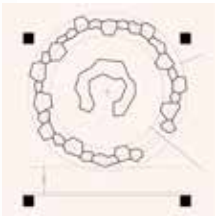
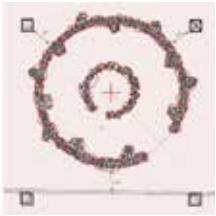
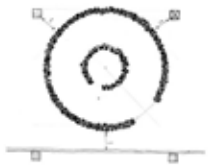
Digital design for speculative human larynx sculptures based on extrapolated evolutionary dynamics.

Work in progress of the larynx sculptures





Video footage from the diving and sound recording sessions with the haenyeo in Nov 2020, Jeju Island, South Korea.



The installation structure is inspired by the *bulteok*, the circle of stones that is traditionally the communal space of the haeyeo.

# The Glasgow School of Art

## A Guide to Learning and Teaching Practices for 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle Research

with Especial Consideration of Collaborative  
Arts Research and Engagement with Societal  
Partners

Henry Rogers<sup>1</sup> and Inês Bento-Coelho<sup>2</sup>

- <sup>1</sup> Henry Rogers is Professor of Contemporary Art and Queer Studies, MFA Programme Leader at The Glasgow School of Art. He is an interdisciplinary practitioner concerned with formality, mediation and mimesis in art with particular reference to queer theory and queer strategies in art practice. He has initiated projects addressing the impact of performance and performativity on art-based production. His research is concerned with: subjectivity, the performativity of art objects and marginal representations that challenge norms in visual culture; Queer Studies and its implications for art based practice; contemporary art with an emphasis on artists employing writing as a part of their practice; the relationship between making and writing within the context of doctoral artistic research. Within educational contexts, he made a significant contribution to learning and teaching, curriculum design, development and delivery with particular emphasis on research strategies in and through artistic practice thus enabling students to progress to doctoral research. He has supervised several PhD students (funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council in the UK), all of whom have successfully completed their studies.
- <sup>2</sup> Dr. Inês Bento-Coelho is a scholar, lecturer and interdisciplinary artist working across performance, installation, and movement practices. She is a Lecturer in the MA Fine Art programme at Falmouth University (UK) and a Postdoctoral Researcher at University College Cork (Ireland) where she is developing recommendations for the new Doctoral School in Film, Music and Theatre. She is also a Researcher at The Glasgow School of Art in the Erasmus+ projects 'Advancing Supervision for Artistic Research Doctorates' and 'Creator Doctus'. Bento-Coelho holds a practice-based PhD funded by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (The Glasgow School of Art, 2019). Her doctoral research explored the choreographic in installation art, focusing on space awareness and performativity within site responsive contexts. Her current research explores best practices in doctoral education in artistic research degrees, encompassing policies and protocols, supervision, peer-learning, and student wellbeing. She published Artistic Doctorate Resources (<http://www.artisticdoctorateresources.com>) with Jools Gilson (2021), a major open educational resource for PhD students, staff, and institutions involved in artistic research.

This chapter identifies several key considerations with regards to the development of 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle doctoral research. Following a discussion on research environments, distributed learning models, and learning and teaching strategies, with case studies and examples of doctoral partnerships, we propose the **2+2 Model** (Master + PhD): a **new learning and teaching model** which enables students to progress directly from postgraduate taught Master level study to PhD.

Artistic researchers develop practice-driven doctoral projects in a range of academic, professional, and socio-cultural contexts. We begin by exploring the importance of developing a **research culture** within an arts institutional setting, and the positive impact this has on **curriculum development**. We discuss the establishment of an institutional **infrastructure** that fosters links within local, national, and international cultural/societal situations in which artistic research can have a positive impact on audiences and communities (e.g. The Glasgow School of Art/Vilnius Academy of Arts). We then consider several distributed learning models in five distinct research environments – four national, and one global – and their distinct perspectives on learning and teaching: The Glasgow School of Art within the context of the Scottish Graduate School of Arts and Humanities (SGSAH, Scotland); Birmingham School of Art in the context of the Midlands<sub>3</sub>Cities Consortium (England) – precursor to the current Midlands<sub>4</sub>Cities Consortium; the Graduate School of Creative Arts and Media (GradCam, Dublin, Ireland); the Norwegian Artistic Research Programme (NARP) in Norway; and the internationally nomadic Transart Institute.

Learning and teaching approaches in 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle Artistic Research programmes are distinctive in several ways. We discuss how the doctoral journey must consider both the ‘pre-application’ and ‘post-doctoral’ stages; how research training programmes often focus on generic rather than specific training to cater for a wide range of research avenues and methodologies; how progress reviews provide a framework for evidencing critical self-reflexivity in foregrounding artistic practice as praxis; and how supervision requires distinct approaches to meet the specificities and needs of individual projects. Training for supervisors and external project partners is also addressed, as it is crucial to developing a research environment. The Triad Supervision Model, based on Sarah Tripp’s triad tutorial mode of engagement [2016], is an important feature of the 2+2 Model we propose, creating a bridge between supervisory practice and peer learning approaches. Fostering a strong **sense of community** and enhancing **peer-learning opportunities** within research contexts is also important. This contribution explores several recommendations on best practices in doctoral education based on the findings that emerge in the development of such educational situations.

Within the context of this discussion, we introduce the 2+2 Model and present two case studies of doctoral programmes embedded within distributed learning scenarios: The Glasgow School of Art and the Centre for Fine Art Research at Birmingham School of Art (see Annexes). The 2+2 Model builds on Master level study, to provide a route into PhD. At The Glasgow School of Art, the Master of Fine Art (MFA) programme is practice-driven and critically underpinned, and upon completing it, students are arguably at an equivalent level to 1<sup>st</sup> year PhD researchers. The innovative aspect of the 2+2 Model lies in the progression of a postgraduate taught programme (PGT) into doctoral study with a strong emphasis on practice – practice-driven or doctoral arts practice as research – opening new ways of

conceptualising doctoral education within the art school environment.

Relatedly, particularly within the framework of artistic research, ethical questions will undoubtedly arise, and we must be mindful of how deeply ethical our practices have become. Increasingly, the researcher's sense of **wellbeing** has become a crucial aspect of the PhD journey [see Pretorius, L., et al, 2019], and it is a central consideration of the Creator Doctus project. It is within this context that pedagogic discourse may be rethought. Indeed, whilst exploring the potential of developing new learning and teaching strategies in education, we will do well to heed Audre Lorde's acute observation that 'The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House' [2018], when challenging our own habitual whitewashing/exoticising of curricula. This highlights the real need to build a research environment that has inclusion as a strategic priority not only in research but also as central to each institution's regional, national, and international agendas. Agendas that should be less about exporting any given institution's world view and more about creating shared research-driven educational environments in which cultural exchange is central: in which encounters with *difference* – with different people, with different cultures – leads to a reimagining of institutions themselves. This is an opportunity for art schools to lead the way. This is about listening to everyone, being both receptive and responsive.

## Creating an artistic research environment

The development of a research culture within an institution should be regarded as central to its activities. It enables new thinking to emerge in relation to curricular development and fosters routes through which continuing professional development (CPD) can address the needs of graduates (alumni) as they progress in the professional world. In the first instance, it is important to reflect upon the strategic development plan and unique history of each institution to define shared goals (aims) and objectives over a set period of time. This often involves developing a short- to medium-term plan over a period of 3–5 years. The objectives then need to be addressed within the specific context of the school/departmental areas in which discipline-specific and interdisciplinary activities occur. Furthermore, in many research environments (e.g. in the UK), research is coupled with enterprise (Research and Enterprise) with the expectation that both generate meaningful societal and professional partnerships that have positive impact on communities.

The shared goals of an institution may include:

- Empowering staff to be active researchers
- Cultivating a positive, productive research culture
- Developing projects and proposals that succeed
- Producing high-quality outputs, and sharing them effectively
- Nurturing and growing the Postgraduate Research community
- Achieving high-impact outcomes
- Enabling students and graduates to prosper creatively and professionally.

It is important to identify these goals (aims) in relation to objectives, for whereas aims are generally considered to be aspirational, objectives are regarded as more achievable within a given timeframe.

Therefore, we might consider the above goals in relation to several potential objectives, such as:

*Empowering staff to be active researchers:*

- Those who demonstrate an ability and desire to produce high-quality research are supported to do so.
- Early Career Researchers are supported to become independent researchers.
- Experienced researchers are recruited to new academic posts.
- Experienced researchers develop into research leaders.
- Time is allocated to carry out research and supervision of doctoral students within the contract of employment.

*Cultivating a positive, productive research culture (with external professional partners):*

- Research and Enterprise goals and objectives are appropriately embedded in the School.
- Research themes reflect subject specialisms and the strategic fields in which the institution aims to be a recognised authority.
- Research groups and communities of practice are cultivated.
- Research achievements and culture are celebrated and shared internally.
- Access to training and Continuing Professional Development for researchers is enhanced.

*Developing projects and proposals that succeed:*

- Increased income from external research grants.
- Growth in value/proportion of income from funders.
- Collaborate with partners who add strategic value.
- Research is undertaken ethically and with integrity.

*Producing high-quality outputs and sharing them effectively:*

- Increase proportion of high-quality outputs as recognised by national excellence frameworks.
- Gain recognition as leaders in practice-based research.
- Increase quality of peer-reviewed academic publications.
- Research outputs are high-profile, accessible and discoverable.

*Nurturing and growing the Postgraduate Research community:*

- Expand the Postgraduate Research community.
- Centres and reputation attract new high-level research staff and doctoral students.
- Improve access to funding for doctoral researchers.
- Increase capacity for supervision.
- Develop innovative routes to doctoral study.

*Achieving high-impact outcomes (embracing the professional world):*

- Promote research to non-academic audiences effectively.
- Cultivate strategic relationships with 'research users' and collaborate to generate impact.
- Increase knowledge exchange activity and income.



*Enabling students and graduates to prosper creatively and professionally:*

- Support students and graduates to develop professional skills, attributes and mindsets – within and in addition to the curriculum.
- Enable students and graduates to generate ideas *and make them happen*.
- Develop an improved understanding of and support for post-graduation destinations.

### Setting milestones

Milestones should be set for each member of staff over the duration of the overarching institutional strategic plan and the internal school/departmental plan for each of the above objectives. Annual career reviews should determine the extent to which staff members have achieved or fulfilled their engagement with research, and identify any support required to reach their goals.

### Staff time

In relation to such overarching goals and objectives, it is important to consider the percentage of contracted staff time committed to research. For example, in many instances where the issue of research time is being addressed, 20% of staff time is dedicated to research activity. Arguably, this should be standard within all teaching staff contracts. Furthermore, where staff have major projects underway, it is advisable that there is a means by which researchers can request what we might call 'augmented' research leave (circa 40% of their contracted time) to enable the successful completion of the project. Another way of building and maintaining a strong research environment is to enable research-active staff to undertake sabbaticals, ideally on rotation. Within the context of research projects resulting from societal and/or professional partnerships, there may be scope for professional placements, secondments and 'knowledge transfer' activities, more specifically identified through Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs). Staff time may also be 'backfilled' by the institution where funded projects (e.g. research council funded projects) provide for the researcher to commit 100% of their time to the project across its duration.

### Research centres, research clusters and community partners

Research centres enable an institution (or schools/departments within an institution) to provide an overarching structure within which to express, explore, and respond to strategic matters. They are essential in the development of a coherent research environment in which research clusters can be mobilised to give shape to the activities of individual researchers who share similar concerns. For example, any given group of researchers may take on identifiable themes not only within specialist disciplinary areas but also between and across disciplines, where inter- and multi-disciplinarity allows for new ways of thinking to come to the fore. The Creator Doctus database *3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle in the arts* (<http://3rdcycleinthearts.eu>) (2021) gives a good sense of the research clusters in institutions across Europe, their research themes, and their prioritised areas of investigation.

# Examples of research clusters in institutions across Europe

Institution	Country	Research Clusters
AKBILD	Austria	Arts-based Research, Citizen Science/Participatory Research, Memory Studies, Post-colonialism, Transcultural Learning/Education
UFG	Austria	Cultural Sciences, Intermediality, Space Strategies
RCA	Belgium	Art Historical Research in Music & Performing Arts of the 20th and 21st Centuries, Creation Studies (Music & Performing Arts), Embodiment and the Body of the Artist, Performance Practice in Music & Performing Arts
BUT	Czech Republic	Advanced 3D Technologies, Game Studies, New Media Art, Performance, Photography, Visual Arts
UniArts	Finland	Contemporary Art and Image Research
PSL	France	Invention of Forms, New Ways of Publishing, Transmission and Memory, Visual Arts
ANRT/ENSAD	France	Digital humanities, Digital Typographies, Encoding, Transcription
EESI	France	Digital Production and Experimentation, Literature, Processes, Visual Arts
ESAM/ESADHaR	France	Architecture, Politics, Public Space, The City
ARTUN	Estonia	Contemporary Art, Design Practice research in Architecture and Urban Design, Design Research, Practice-based Research in Conservation & Cultural Heritage
IAR	Germany	Emotionology, Historic-Political Heritage, Neuroaesthetics, Sonification, Sustainability
HFBK	Germany	Cultural Sciences, Intermediality, Space Strategies
ASFA	Greece	Art & Psychoanalysis, Gender in Art, Performative Art Practices & Theory
GRA	The Netherlands	Artificial Intelligence, New Materials, The City
AHK	The Netherlands	Artistic Research, Research in Education, Urban Development
AC&PA	The Netherlands	Auditive Culture, Contemporary Music, Design, Early Music, Fine Art, Improvisation, Music, Sound Art, Theory of Artistic Research
ONAA	Norway	Art, Craft, Dance, Design, Fine Art, Opera, Theatre
NTNU	Norway	Architecture, Design Drama, Film Production, Fine Art, Music
GSA	Scotland	Architecture Urbanism & the Public Sphere, Contemporary Art & Curating, Design Innovation, Digital Visualisation, Education in Art Design & Architecture, Health & Well-being

Working with external partners is an essential aspect of developing a strong research environment. This may include, for example, working with other arts educational institutions, museums, art galleries and independent arts spaces, community-based organisations, local health services and city councils. Knowledge Transfer Partnerships are often key to the development of external partnerships largely identified through Schools of Design. However, there are exceptions to financial support via KTPs, for example: Birmingham School of Art’s work with the Queen Elizabeth and Birmingham Children’s Hospitals (Arts Council England funded projects); the Glasgow School of Art’s Design Innovation and Creative Engagement for Health & Care (Innovation School) and Design Innovation in the Creative Economy projects; and the Collaborative Doctoral Awards via the Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities in collaboration with Shetland Arts Development Agency. Such partnerships may also lead to the development of new programmes of study: e.g. *MA Innovation and Leadership in Museum Practice* (MAILMP) developed by Birmingham School of Art, and Birmingham Museums and Art Galleries (BMAG).

This innovative programme taught by academic and curatorial staff at the museum enabled students to work on live projects in one of 11 museums in the region.

Whilst fostering links within a diverse range of professional contexts, with regional, national and international partners, and with strong ties to funding providers (research councils), the enhancement of a research environment enables artistic researchers to move into the world of art and cultural production. For example, the MAILMP also led to an additional 6 weeks of study after the completion of the programme that resulted in students achieving Museums Accreditation. A well-structured research environment will facilitate the development of programmes of study (generally, but not exclusively at Master level) in which delivery is shared and engagement with external partners is an embedded part of the programme structure. It will also support continuing professional development both internally, with regards to staff development and career progression, and externally in the public domain, through internships, residencies, and work experience where possible.

There are numerous instances in which professional and societal partnerships have been long established, particularly where the focus is on community. The arts infrastructure in Glasgow, for example, emerged ostensibly from the initiatives of graduates from the School of Fine Art, and their grass roots, DIY approach that has maintained a vibrancy within the city. Organisations such as Tramway and the Centre for Contemporary Art (CCA) alongside numerous others – Modern Institute, Transmission Gallery, and the Gallery of Modern Art – and events such as the biannual Glasgow International are a significant part of the cultural fabric of the city. Alongside the School of Fine Art and major events, the expanded technical and fabrication resources in Glasgow have played a significant part in redefining the city's post-industrial identity. As a vibrant arts hub, CCA's programme includes cutting-edge exhibitions, film, music, literature, spoken word, festivals, Gaelic and performance. At the heart of all activities is the desire to work with artists, commission new projects and present them to the widest possible audience.

Another example is the work of Vilnius Academy of the Arts, its relationship to the arts community in Vilnius and beyond, and in particular, the development of the Nida Art Colony (NAC) and the Nida Doctoral School (NDS). The Nida Doctoral School was created by the Nida Art Colony of Vilnius Academy of Arts and Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture [NAC, 2014]. This international programme has been developed by four partners since 2018, as two other universities joined the doctoral school the previous year – University of the Arts Helsinki and the University of the Arts London [NAC, 2014]. The programme includes yearly week-long intensive courses and doctoral residencies (of 1- or 2-months' duration) which are integrated in the Nida Artist-in-Residence programme [NAC, 2014]. In the West Midlands (UK), Birmingham School of Art initiated numerous external partnerships. These resulted in the development of Eastside Projects (a major independent artists' organisation), and New Arts West Midlands (with five other universities in the region and BMAG), a partnership that has led to exhibitions, placements, and residencies. Within the context of the CrD project, we can highlight the impactful and thought-provoking first successful pilot with the artist Yael Davids, initiated by the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in collaboration with the Van Abbemuseum and supported by the Mondriaan Foundation.

# Distributed learning models

There are several distributed learning models in doctoral education that offer distinct perspectives and approaches to learning and teaching, adopt disparate training structures, and connect in various ways with societal and community partners. The first two examples presented – Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities (SGSAH) and Midlands4Cities Consortium (M4C) – are discussed in more detail in the Annex of this publication.

## The Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities

is a cross-institutional doctoral training partnership of 16 universities established in 2014 in Scotland [SGSAH, 2021]. As the first national graduate school in the world, its inter-institutional setup encourages the development of cross-institutional supervisory teams, offering PhD researchers more flexibility in developing doctoral projects and in accessing the resources and training needed. Cross-institutional supervision also enables staff and doctoral researchers to expand and tap into disciplinary areas of knowledge outside their immediate fields. Further, the graduate school has local, regional, and national support structures that expand the potential for doctoral scholars to engage with peers outside their institution through training, internships, residencies, and other events.

[www.sgsah.ac.uk](http://www.sgsah.ac.uk)

## The Midlands4Cities Consortium (M4C)

comprises eight universities from across the Midlands in England [Midlands4Cities, 2021]. It offers doctoral studentships, training, supervision across institutions, and transdisciplinary doctoral projects in collaboration with external partner organisations. Students can apply for the *open doctoral award*, in which they set up a cross-institutional supervisory team, or the *collaborative doctoral award*, in which they join a project set up by an M4C university with an external partner [Midlands4Cities, 2021]. The consortium has links to leading cultural organisations nationally and internationally and offers an extensive range of training opportunities through the Midlands Art Programme (MAP).

[www.midlands4cities.ac.uk](http://www.midlands4cities.ac.uk)

## The Graduate School of Creative Arts & Media (GradCAM)

is a collaborative initiative based at the Technological University Dublin (TUD) [GradCAM, 2021]. It began in 2008 to administer TUD's 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle provision. It aims to be 'Ireland's centre for doctoral research education across design, visual and performing arts, media practice and their associated critical, historical and theoretical discourses' through the establishment of the Research Centre in Creative Arts [European Artistic Research Network, 2021]. The doctoral school operates as a space for interdisciplinary exchange and research support, which they call 'fourth level' education [GradCAM, 2021]. Research students are aligned to a department or research centre which allows for a dynamic interdisciplinary programme to be fostered between a range of research environments and collaborating institutions [GradCAM, 2021]. Its doctoral provision is module-based, and students have primary and secondary supervisors with scope for additional supervisory or mentoring support where necessary. The doctoral education programme includes training,

masterclasses, events, collaborative projects, research seminars, and international events with European doctoral programmes [GradCAM, 2021]. The graduate school is also involved in several international projects. It is the lead partner in Step-change for Higher Arts Research and Education (SHARE), and the European Artistic Research Network (EARN). GradCAM founded the Digital Studies Network based at the Institute of Research and Innovation (Centre Pompidou, France), with a local research hub that focuses on critical examination of technologies and cultural production. It is also an academic partner in Real Smart Cities, a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action that aims to investigate the radical changes of technology in the context of the city through a transdisciplinary approach [Real Smart Cities, 2021].  
[www.gradcam.ie](http://www.gradcam.ie)

### The Norwegian Artistic Research Programme (NARP)

is part of Diku, the Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education, which funds artistic research in Norway [Diku, 2021]. It brings together several institutions in Norway, including: UiT The Arctic University of Norway (Tromsø); Norwegian Academy of Music (NMH) (Oslo); Oslo National Academy of Arts (Oslo); Faculty of Fine Art, Music and Design (KMD), University of Bergen (Bergen) and Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) (Trondheim). NARP builds on the work of the Norwegian Research Fellowship Programme in Artistic Research, facilitating the understanding and acceptance of artistic research within higher education since 1995 [Diku, 2021]. The programme provides interdisciplinary research training in a wide number of subjects [Creator Doctus, 2021] and considers artistic practice as central to the activities of the researcher, who is required to reflect upon the processes, methods and contexts of their work, which must be clearly presented in an exposition of their praxis. The NARP research school (20 ECTS) is compulsory for Norway's Artistic Research PhD programmes [Creator Doctus, 2021]. The programme is delivered via seminars and national conferences with project presentations. Research training includes methods and methodologies in the arts; ethical good practice; the development of a literature review; and the drafting and redrafting of research questions. In addition, NARP works in cooperation with the Nordic Journal for Artistic Research and the Summer Academy for Artistic Research [Diku, 2021], which enables PhD researchers to participate in research activities at national and international level. NARP is also a member of the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC), the Society for Artistic Research (SAR), and ELIA [Creator Doctus, 2021].

[diku.no/en/programmes/norwegian-artistic-research-programme](http://diku.no/en/programmes/norwegian-artistic-research-programme)

### Transart Institute

is a 'fluid, responsive and nomadic' independent organisation founded and operated by artists since 2004 [Transart Institute, 2021]. It offers programmes of study at Master and doctoral level study, currently validated by Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) in the UK. Described as the first global low-residency practice-based PhD, it is aimed at individuals 'whose practice embodies or essentially drives their research' [Transart Institute, 2021]. The structure emphasises international exchange and enables doctoral candidates to live and work in their home countries without relocating full time to a host institution. This allows candidates with lifelong learning aspirations to immerse themselves in their research field within

a supportive online environment. Doctoral researchers work with a minimum of two advisors (one from LJMU and one or two from Transart), and complete tailored research training through the LJMU Doctoral Academy eDoc resources [Transart Institute, 2021]. Transart's doctoral programme includes monthly meetings (translocal intensives) and annual enrichment 'intensives' (residencies) to provide continuing support for each student. The learning experience emphasises mandatory residencies (that Transart describes as 'intensives') in which doctoral researchers focuses solely on their projects and group discussion in workshops, research cafes and collaborative shared experiences [Transart Institute, 2021]. Research training workshops are hosted at the intensives, and thematic seminars take place within the context of a plethora of learning and teaching strategies such as independent study, supervision, and peer presentations, augmented by writing retreats and cultural excursions.

[www.transartinstitute.org](http://www.transartinstitute.org)

## Learning and teaching approaches in artistic doctorates

Learning and teaching approaches employed in institutions across Europe are consistent with the local culture of the activities and appropriate to the learning experience. These approaches are long-standing and build on those that are familiar at other levels of engagement – undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate (PG) – across disciplinary areas, including: independent study; lectures; staff- and student-led research seminars; the opportunity to enhance practical, research and presentation skills; and the opportunity to work collaboratively, undertake internships, placements, work-based learning and study visits.

However, learning and teaching in 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle Artistic Research programmes is distinctive in three ways. Firstly, we have what we might call 'first contact', the pre-acceptance stage in which potential candidates are preparing an initial project proposal and identifying where the expertise lies. Secondly, it introduces the concept of supervision (solo and co-supervision) as a relationship that must be sustained over a significant period of time (from 3 to 7 years). And thirdly, it introduces researchers to a shared research training programme that is a core institutional requirement.

### The doctoral journey

The **pre-doctoral stage** is as important as the doctoral programme and the post-doctoral potential of any such programme of study. Often, prospective researchers develop a proposal, research potential supervisors, and contact a few institutions before submitting a formal application. Good communication at this stage is crucial, not only in establishing potential supervisory fit and interest in the proposal, but also in affording the student a glimpse into the ways of working of the institution, which may impact upon their consequent decision should a place of study be offered. Admissions to doctoral programmes function in distinct ways in different research environments: in some institutions, candidates submit their application centrally and core research staff and/or coordinators discuss the proposal with staff they feel may be a good supervisory fit for the project. In other scenarios, primary supervisors may only accept candidates they have prior knowledge of

or whom they have worked with before, say, at Master level study, where rapport has already been established. This latter point is an important consideration, for the duration of the PhD demands that both candidate and supervisor recognise the intimate nature of the supervisory relationship and the need for trust on both sides. Furthermore, there is an ethical responsibility for the institution to promote progression from Master level study into doctoral study for those who have already deeply invested in, and contributed to, the institution through prior study. In some instances, potential candidates have informally joined established weekly research seminar groups as a way of putting themselves, the research environment and their potential supervisors to the test. This preparation stage is a significant part of the process: if the candidate intends to apply for funding from a research council – e.g. the Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK) or the Norwegian Artistic Research Programme (Norway) – then the proposal is likely to have been redrafted several times to more clearly define its key concerns. The proposal itself is also important, as it demonstrates the candidate's capabilities by highlighting the extent to which they clearly and succinctly articulate their project in writing.

The **first year** of doctoral study is often a period of re-orientation, of bonding within the year group, and of creating a peer network of support. As noted above, in most institutions, new researchers are expected to follow a research training programme that introduces them to a range of methodologies and approaches, and to the importance of adhering to ethical good practice. Training programmes are designed to instil good practice and the shared experience of them enables informal peer learning scenarios and personal support networks to develop.

The **second year** is a critical period in which most of the work will be done. It is also often viewed by many researchers and supervisors as the most difficult year, for the enormity of the task looms large. Many researchers feel there is a significant mountain to climb, particularly when there is an expectation to develop both creative making and writing practices in tandem. In this year, researchers often need additional support, particularly with regard to wellbeing and peer learning. Often, the lack of clarity in the research progress allied with imposter syndrome becomes a challenge for students. In this context, the enhanced sense of community that peer learning situations foster helps to counteract feelings of isolation and provides students with a frame to support each other [Rogers, H., & Bento-Coelho, I., 2021]. Strategies such as mindfulness are helpful and can be integrated into student support contexts (see Rogers & Bento-Coelho, 2021 for a discussion on this).

The **third year**, building on the previous year, is crucial in that both researcher and supervisors must begin by thinking about what is required by the end of the year. It is important to map out the proposed timeline for completion, in reverse, thinking about the tasks to be set and the deadlines to be adhered to. This is a very intensive part of the research, the point at which the whole project must be articulated and brought together. The first draft should be submitted by the end of the first 6 months.

Whilst the duration of doctoral study varies across Europe, in those countries where the expectation is that the study period should not exceed 3 years full time

(or 7 years part time), the research often requires more time, and a 4th year is thus necessary to complete the doctoral submission. In such instances, primarily evident in the UK, there are often two options: a *supported* or *unsupported extension*, which afford the researcher an additional 6 months to 1 year to submit their project for assessment. This normal practice is embedded into research council and funding bodies' policies for completing funded doctorates.

**Postdoctoral** and early career research is an essential part of any research environment: it allows not only for the revitalisation of research centres and clusters, but also for the enhancement of curricula, bringing new and fresh ideas into the delivery of programmes at all levels of study. In some institutions, researchers may also undertake a formal *Postgraduate Certificate in Education* during their PhD or become Graduate Teaching Assistants. In both scenarios, researchers can contribute to teaching at UG and PGT levels, enabling them to strengthen their employment prospects.

### Research training programme

The content of research training programmes is often broadly scoped due to the array of disciplinary fields they cover. Therefore, content tends to be generic and overarching, dealing with key aspects of research: literature review, methods and methodologies in art and design, drafting research questions, ethics and ethical good practice in the arts, and fieldwork. The contribution in this publication *Survey Analysis: European Practices in Artistic Research Doctorates*, which analyses several institutions' approaches to doctoral education, reveals that in some art institutions (e.g. Glasgow) research training is less formally organised than in others (e.g. in Scandinavia, Vienna and Paris-Cergy). Where more formal approaches are taken, researchers may achieve a formal qualification in the first year of doctoral studies, e.g. *Postgraduate Certificate in Methods and Methodologies*.

As discussed above, in many institutions, doctoral students undertake a *Postgraduate Certificate in Education* (gratis) as part of their educational experience. This is particularly important for those who wish to pursue an academic career, as such qualifications are increasingly becoming a requirement for new employees to either have or undertake once in post. Whilst doctorates in the arts do not normally have teaching embedded in their programmes, teaching scholarship and practice is becoming more and more necessary for researchers who plan to gain employment in an academic setting. Additionally, and importantly, doctoral researchers who undertake this additional qualification must engage in teaching either at undergraduate or postgraduate level, which in turn enriches the experience of students within the institution whilst enhancing the research environment's impact on curricula.

### Monitoring and progress review

A mechanism to monitor the researcher's progress through their doctorate is the annual review. The artistic researcher must demonstrate that they can actually conduct research – and have the appetite to do so – e.g. by undertaking a literature review (circa 5,000 words), writing a research methods paper (circa 5,000 words) and redrafting the initial proposal to be more closely aligned to their project's concerns. Conventionally, within academia, it is through the completion



of these tasks (or similar ones) that the artistic researcher (indeed any researcher) demonstrates that there are new insights to be gained by undertaking this extensive period of study, engagement, and critical reflection. Once these tasks are completed, the researcher is normally required to attend a progress review panel meeting (or assessment, normally at the end of the 1st year) in which they discuss their work to date and potential new insights.

However, within the context of the Creator Doctus in which artistic 'practice' is understood to be 'praxis' itself, or in which 'praxis' strategically inhabits 'practice', and as such is dependent on a high level of criticality in the material production of the artwork, such requirements may vary depending on the project. Critical self-reflexivity is central to foregrounding artistic practice as praxis. The artistic researcher must have a coherent grasp of what it means not only to situate the 'work of art' as an epistemic object, but also to understand how the artwork functions within the context of the project: the researcher must be able to evidence their thought process (both in material and written forms) over the duration of the research project. The Creator Doctus as a doctoral award is heavily influenced by auto-ethnographic and emergent methods/approaches to artistic journeying and the presentation of results through exposition. Rather than focusing on *word counts*, the Creator Doctus focuses on the *words that count*: what is essential (at its most extreme, the re-conceptualisation of the Haiku, perhaps). The Creator Doctus focuses on a reparative gesture, a more compassionate doctoral experience in which the artistic researcher *walks with* their interlocutors (artistic/societal/professional) towards new insights and a shared experience. This is facilitated by the relationship with the external (non-academic, societal) partner, which opens a more cooperative approach to doctoral education where the researcher navigates the process and experience in *dialogue with* their partner. The researcher thus develops an approach to and understanding of academic practice (research within an institution) in close engagement with external non-specialists (research in the world).

In most institutions, the yearly progression panel consists of an external Chairperson, perhaps the Head of Doctoral Studies, and an experienced supervisor from within the specialist field under discussion. The researcher's primary supervisor may attend to take notes and to advise the researcher on how to move forward once the panel has made its decision. The researcher may be granted approval to progress, or be advised to withdraw their candidacy. In either case, the panel will agree on their response and on conditions or recommendations to be made. In addition to this process, the Creator Doctus will require a report on the development of the project from the perspective of the societal and/or professional partner (where there is one), and/or the community being engaged with. Another important monitoring tool is the written summary records of supervisory meetings. Over the duration of doctoral study, it is important to track in formal records the discussions, tasks, and milestones set. It is generally good practice to require the researcher (the student) to write up the supervision meeting report in the first instance: this reveals the difference between what was said and what the researcher heard or took from it. In turn, it also allows the supervisor to clarify any misunderstandings. The supervisory record also functions as a mechanism by which supervisors can alert the researcher, research coordinator (if there is one) and Head of Doctoral Studies should problems emerge that need to be attended

to. In addition, it enables the supervisory team to determine if additional support is needed from student support services and student welfare.

### Supervision

Most European institutions specify that there must be two supervisors assigned to each project, with some indicating more [Creator Doctus, 2021]. A significant proportion (including e.g. BRNO, EESI/Poitiers) stipulate that there ought to be one supervisor for practice and one for theory, and some include external 'professionals'. The Creator Doctus database also revealed that with some exceptions, such as Gothenburg and Dublin, training for supervisors is largely *ad hoc*.

### *Co-supervision*

Whilst not always possible for several logistical reasons, the preferred option should be for co-supervision. There are three reasons for this: i) it stops an ego-driven supervisor forcing their own agenda or perspective upon the student, ii) it means that all parties are aware of other points of view being brought to bear through discussion in supervision meetings, and iii) it offers the doctoral researcher an immediate point of support should one supervisor become unavailable (due to leave, moving institutions, or relationship breakdown). However, as discussed in more detail in the literature review for the Erasmus + Partnership project: *Advancing Supervision for Artistic Research Doctorates*, co-supervision also brings challenges [Rogers, H., & Bento-Coelho, I., 2021]. Some supervisors, particularly from industry or history/theory backgrounds, may have distinct views on the possibilities and value that artistic research brings, and tensions may arise from a lack of common ground to approach the development of the project [Bento-Coelho, I., and Gilson, J., 2021].

### *The rhythm of supervision*

Institutions deal with supervision in slightly different ways. Designated hours range from 35 to 70 per year, depending on whether the supervisor in question is the primary, second or tertiary supervisor, and on whether the student is full time or part time [Creator Doctus, 2021]. Normally, the time allocation for primary supervisors will be double that of second supervisors. In some instances, if there is a third supervisor or an external advisor, there may be a specific time allocation put in place. For example, in support of a full-time candidate, the primary supervisor may be notionally required to provide 70 hours of supervision, the second supervisor 35 hours, and the third in the region of 17.5 hours per year. With regards to part-time candidates this would be halved, i.e. 35 hours (primary), 17.5 hours (second) and 8.75 hours (third) per year. Circa 25% of the allocated time should be committed to administration; contact time should consist of both direct time (supervision meetings) and indirect time (reading, review and feedback).

Having said that, it is worth noting that supervision is a dynamic activity that requires distinct strategies at different times [Duxbury, L., 2012; Hamilton, J., and Carson, S., 2015a; Rogers, H., & Bento-Coelho, I., 2021]. Lesley Duxbury [2012], in reflecting on her supervisory practice in *Opening the Door: Portals to Good Supervision of Creative Practice-led Research*, notes that supervision strategies may be distinct according to the project strands (making or writing): the relationship can shift from a peer dialogue in the artist studio to a didactic approach when discussing writing. Simultaneously, whilst the expected supervisory hours noted above put a particular ex-

pectation upon supervisory teams, the experience from the student's perspective is slightly distinct given the different demands made of them as they move through three years of doctoral study. Duxbury [2012] outlines the rhythm of supervision as more intense at the start and at the end of the degree, when students need support with defining their research and with writing. The second year is often less structured as candidates are concerned with developing their practice [2012].

This echoes our experience of doctoral learning and teaching. The first year is perhaps the most prescriptive as students must complete a research training programme. This may require more regular meetings and close contact with the student in order to enable them to successfully complete the literature review, research methods paper and the redraft of their initial proposal whilst simultaneously demonstrating the extent to which their practice/praxis has developed. Once completed, and progression into the second year has been granted, the rhythm of contact time may well change, sometimes at the behest of the student themselves. They may want more time between supervisory meetings in order to develop work and advance their writing. It should also be noted that for many students, this second year of doctoral study is often the year where self-doubt occurs, which can lead to the pace of work reducing and the levels of anxiety increasing. In such cases, more regular contact may be helpful to enable students to feel they are progressing, even if slowly. The third year is by far the most pressurised year of study, for many students incorrectly believe they have a full year to complete their projects and write up their findings. In fact, they more accurately have six months to complete the first full draft of their practical and written submission. Indeed, it is normal practice to request that a student refrain from making practical work in this period in order to marshal their outputs coherently for a mock examination. Many students request an extension at this stage to complete and submit their doctoral work.

### *Training for supervisors*

Supervisor training manifests differently in various institutional settings, ranging from formal to informal training. One form of informal training is peer learning (learning on the job), in which an experienced supervisor mentors their colleagues who are new to the supervisory role. Formal training could concern undertaking a structured qualification, say, a *Postgraduate Certificate in Supervision* (60 credits) that can be further enhanced towards the completion of a full Masters in Education. Current research suggests that supervisory capacity develops best in knowledge-sharing situations with peers, and that many new supervisors draw from their networks and mentors for advice more than from supervisory training courses [Hamilton, J., and Carson, S., 2015a and 2015b].

Informal training for supervisors may begin with a series of staff training/induction events – often two to three days over a period of weeks – that introduces new supervisors not only to the requirements of this level of study, but also to a range of scenarios they may encounter. For example: how to identify the potential in an initial research proposal and aid the candidate in its development, how to support a student when they hit an impasse in their work, or how to deal with difficulties in the supervisor–student relationship. Whilst co-supervision is generally understood to be good practice, it is essential when a less experienced supervisor is being mentored in the role, and advisable in all supervisory scenarios in which less experienced supervisors are engaged.

The formal *Postgraduate Certificate in Supervision* is usually devised as a professional development programme for staff in institutions with responsibility for Higher Degree Supervision. Fundamentally, it must address the principles and practices of supervising students at doctoral level, and the intention must be to enable staff to develop their knowledge and skills of supervisory practice specifically within the creative disciplines. In many cases, it facilitates an individual programme of continuous professional development around the concept of the *critically reflective practitioner* [Schön, D. A., 1991], and encourages engagement with the principles of student-centred learning in this context. Such programmes of study support 'student supervisors' to develop a distinctive approach to their educational research whilst reflecting upon their own supervisory practice.

A supervisory training programme may be structured to explore the following:

- The pedagogical underpinnings of research supervision,
- The research degree lifecycle and the application of this knowledge to the management of a PhD project,
- The context and the governance frameworks of the higher degree, including European and International perspectives,
- Supervisor/researcher development.

There is often an assumption that staff do not need to *learn how to supervise*, as the widespread lack of supervisory training in a third of the institutions who responded to a CrD survey shows (see *Survey Analysis: European Practices in Artistic Research Doctorates* in this publication). Nonetheless, engaging in supervision brings to the fore a number of challenges. A clear initial understanding of the supervisory process, role, and responsibilities places the new supervisor in a position from which to develop a strong supervisory practice and from which to effectively support their doctoral researchers. Existing studies recommend combining peer learning with formal supervisory training: encouraging dialogical/mentoring supervisory peer relationships in parallel with training programmes in order to develop supervisory expertise [Hamilton, J., and Carson, S., 2015b].

#### *Training for societal and professional partners*

Mentoring is an essential part of the experience for all new supervisors: academic, societal, and professional. A clear induction for societal and professional partners in which all aspects of the experience are explored is essential. Whilst there may be exceptions, it is anticipated that societal and professional partners will be expected to engage as part of the supervisory team (as a second or third supervisor), which requires formal and informal training. What perhaps appears to be common sense to academics may not easily be so for partners, particularly in understanding the demands of study at this level of engagement with regards to 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle intended learning outcomes and assessment. It is important that induction sessions to support supervisors are accompanied by a supplement to the standard research programme regulations (often called Research Degree Guide, PhD Regulations, or PhD Handbook) that specifically addresses societal and professional partners, thus appraising them of 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle education practices. For example, the difference between, say, 'outcomes' and 'outputs' – what one is looking *for* (outcome) in what one is looking *at* (output) – the difference between 'formative appraisal' and 'summative assess-

ment', as well as the criteria by which judgements are made. It is advisable to ensure that annual refresher training days are provided over the duration of the project.

*Triad supervision – an innovative approach in doctoral supervision*

The perceived power relation between supervisor and PhD researcher (as reiterated in a 2020 survey of artistic research students at GSA) has led to a reconsideration of supervision and supervisory relations in this context and to the innovative approach explored by Sarah Tripp. In her article, *Reflections on the Evolving Triad Tutorial in a Postgraduate Art Studio* [2016],<sup>3</sup> she discusses the evolution of the *triad tutorial*, a hybrid form that emerged from the reconsideration of the traditional studio tutorial format commonly adhered to in art schools and her engagement with psychotherapeutic training methods, especially that of 'active listening' [Rogers, C. R., & Farson, R. E., 1957]. The model originates in counsellor training due to the need to annotate sessions for later discussion [Tripp, S., 2016]. Tripp adapted it for art education, with the intention to rethink the prevalent 1960s tutorial format (focused on a conversational approach to a student's practice in relation to contemporary art) to establish a more productive experience in which 'links are drawn between critical self-reflection, reciprocity and the sustainability of artistic practice' [2016, p.1].

As Tripp observes, the triad model consists of three individuals 'occupying three different roles: the Speaker, the Listener and the Observer' [2016, p.3]. The aim is to enable questions or issues to be raised by the Speaker, with the expectation that the Listener will 'actively listen' to what has been said, whilst the Observer silently observes and takes notes [Tripp, S., 2016]. Tripp explains that the method

permits the participants to experience different roles and, perhaps most importantly, the role of silent Observer provides insight and a record of what has occurred between the Speaker and the Listener. Silent observation also creates a particular mode of attention not immersed 'in the moment' of active listening or speaking [2016, p.3].

One of the most important aspects of this model is with regards to time commitment, and to training oneself to enhance one's concentration within time frames. In Tripp's early explorations, the sessions were strictly time bound, beginning with short 10 minutes which then increased to 30–35 minutes. As she comments,

After, for example 10 minutes of active listening, the Listener and Speaker would turn to the silent Observer who provided feedback on what they had observed. Following feedback, the participants rotated positions changing roles: the Speaker became the Observer, the Listener became the Speaker and the Observer became the Listener. In each triad session we rotated roles three times permitting everyone the experience of all three perspectives [2016, p.3].

This is important: it is about self-discipline, reciprocity, and maintaining one's concentration; and in adopting the various roles, it is about affording trust to each

3 The article can be accessed here: <http://radar.gsa.ac.uk/5073/1/Triad%20Tutorials%20Postgraduate.pdf>

other within the duration of the session. This model is also of significant benefit when exploring ways of enhancing peer learning, as peer learning becomes included as one aspect of supervision. Incorporating the triad supervision in doctoral education would afford researchers space and time to observe, reflect, and critically respond to their peers' challenges and modes of doing, expanding their perspectives and approaches to research endeavours.

### Peer learning

The literature shows a gap when it comes to discussions on peer learning in doctoral contexts [Flores-Scott, E. M., & Nerad, M., 2012; Stracke, E., 2010], particularly noted in artistic research doctorates [Batty, C., 2016]. Peer learning has been widely defined as 'a two-way, reciprocal learning activity' [Boud, D., 2001], one which 'involves participants learning from and with each other' both formally and informally [Boud, D., 1999, p.6]. Peer learning can be addressed in three specific areas. Firstly, between supervisors within the context of the supervisory team in which expertise and experience from diverse knowledge bases is being brought together in support of the PhD project. Secondly, peer learning between PhD researchers themselves, either within the same year group or cohort, or across year groups and cohorts. This can take place both formally (as in designated mentoring) and informally in the context of a shared studio space. Thirdly, between supervisors and doctoral researchers. However, it should be acknowledged that whilst in some instances, supervisors may feel that they are literally learning from a doctoral researcher whose work has, shall we say, surpassed their own, when asked, the PhD scholar does not consider this as a peer learning scenario. As argued by David Boud and Alison Lee [2005] and as discussed in the literature review on peer learning for the Erasmus + Partnership project: *Advancing Supervision for Artistic Research Doctorates (ASARD)* [Rogers, H., & Bento-Coelho, I., 2021], the hierarchical nature of the supervisor–researcher relationship influences doctoral candidates' perception of their supervisors *not* as peers, due to the student–teacher dynamic in doctoral supervision [Boud, D. & Lee, A., 2005].

This raises the question of how one 'becomes a peer'. It also attests to a rite of passage into the artistic research doctorate and its community. Learning takes place across multiple relationships over various interactions over time with supervisors, post docs, other students and researchers [Flores-Scott, E. M., & Nerad, M., 2012]. 'Becoming a peer' is not a singular act but an ongoing process, where a student learns to be a researcher by expanding their 'conceptual resources', through 'reciprocal' and 'horizontal' peer learning interactions with various academic communities [Boud, D., and Lee, A., 2005, p.514]. Boud further discusses how peer learning supports students in developing a number of skills by working collaboratively, engaging in reflection, critique and articulating their thoughts, and by taking responsibility for their learning journey as well as learning how to learn [Boud, D., 1999].

The ASARD paper analyses peer learning within an art school environment in detail and outlines how the most effective forms of support involve formal and informal peer learning approaches [Rogers, H., & Bento-Coelho, I., 2021]. Peer learning may take shape through formal scenarios such as peer groups and through peer mentoring programmes where a student in 2nd or 3rd year supports an entry-level one to navigate the doctoral journey [Flores-Scott, E. M., & Nerad, M., 2012]. Informal peer mentoring scenarios include regular conversations in the studio space, for instance. The studio 'plays a relevant and often overlooked role in fostering

regular peer learning situations, and supports an important aspect of the doctoral education community' [Rogers, H., & Bento-Coelho, I., 2021]. This can be expanded in the context of this chapter to encompass distributed/distance learning situations in which PhD researchers work within their own localities and studios through blended learning digital platforms and modes of online engagement augmented by either intensive summer and/or winter school provision to enrich the overall experience. Peer learning complements doctoral supervision and should be an integral part of doctoral education [Rogers, H., & Bento-Coelho, I., 2021].

The relationship between peer learning and student wellbeing is one which deserves further attention [Rogers, H., & Bento-Coelho, I., 2021]. Peer learning has a positive impact on student psychological wellbeing [Hanson, J. M., et al., 2016]. The importance of fostering wellbeing in academia from the doctoral level onwards to encourage good work-life balance amongst staff has been documented: ultimately, it will influence the quality of education across all levels of study [Schmidt, M., & Hansson, E., 2018; Stubb, J., et al, 2011]. Within the context of the current mental health crisis – further exacerbated by the challenges brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic – innovative approaches to student wellbeing need to be taken into consideration within the context of doctoral education by the higher education sector [Evans, T., et al, 2018]. Graduate students are much more exposed to mental health illnesses in comparison to the general population [Evans, T., et al, 2018], and current studies show the value of approaches such as mindfulness in positively supporting doctoral education in the studio environment context [Andrahennadi, K. C., 2019] and in fostering a healthy work-life balance [Mindful Nation UK, 2015].

### Assessment

As noted in the CrD database *3rd Cycle in the arts* [2021], there are varied conventions and practices with regards to the preparation for assessment and the assessment of doctoral level submissions. In many countries (e.g. the Netherlands, Denmark, Greece, Lithuania and France) the assessment process consists of both an academic and a public defence. The assessment panel includes two to eight members and a mix of practitioners and theoreticians/historians internal or external to the professoriate. In some cases, external examiners must be international. In the UK, the composition of the assessment panel is normally between two and three members, one external expert in the field of study, one internal (not necessarily an expert), and one from a professional background where appropriate. Normally, the candidate has input into the composition of the assessment panel. Different strategies are employed in different countries: for example in the UK, although not mandatory, the candidate may request the presence of the primary supervisor, who observes and takes notes but does not participate in the examination process; in the Netherlands, the supervisor may speak on behalf of the doctoral scholar.

In the context of the CrD, it is anticipated that after approval by the supervisors, the final research outcome is presented to a committee for a *viva* assessment. This involves the student (*ex-officio*), the lead and community supervisors (*ex-officio*), representatives of the academy, and invited external expert(s) (*ex-officio*). The academy will decide the composition of the *viva* (the *ex-officio* members should be present), and whether the public is included. The thesis comprises 'critical praxis': the enfolding of critically creative artworks and a potentially diverse range of critically creative written submissions.

Exposition is part of a research environment. Students present their concepts, processes, artefacts and/or performances to peers, exposing different artistic intentions and focuses. Each researcher must therefore present their project – in a form that suits the artistic practice of the researcher – with rigour and consistency, whether that takes the form of an exposition or of a presentation. The encounter with the artistic artefact or performance is key in the critical review of the aesthetic, epistemological, ethical, political or social dimensions contained in or revealed by the work. This critical review requires peers who have the skills and competence to scrutinise the research results that often combine different exposition forms within agreed and defined 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle assessment criteria.

## Conclusion

In this guide of learning and teaching practices for 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle research, we have outlined a number of protocols and approaches in doctoral education. The creation and development of a research environment with relevant research centres and in dialogue with community partners is a key feature of the research context in which doctoral education takes place. The distributed learning models discussed above offer insights into distinct ways to connect doctoral researchers with communities, staff, and peers in other universities and professional organisations, and into creating networks for propitious knowledge exchange. We then briefly contextualised the doctoral journey in relation to supervisory practices, and discussed training for students and staff. We presented an innovative approach to doctoral supervision – the Triad model – which has the potential to introduce peer learning approaches into supervisory practice. Peer learning and student wellbeing are important facets of the degree which are often not fully integrated into the doctoral education programme, and which we see as key to the doctoral study experience [Rogers, H., & Bento-Coelho, I., 2021].

In *Two Distributed Learning Models in Doctoral Education* (see Annexes), we introduce the 2+2 Model and present two case studies of doctoral programmes embedded within distributed learning scenarios. The 2+2 Model builds on Master level study, providing a route into the PhD. At Glasgow School of Art, the MFA programme is practice-driven and critically underpinned; each individual student's research determines the processes and modes of working. Some of the graduates in the programme have a strong research impetus to their studio approach, and in Stage 1 of the first year, all students undertake a *Research Methods and Methodologies in Practice* core course that enables them to prepare for the *Theorising Studio Practice* core course that straddles Stages 2 and 3. This is a process through which a research question and a proposal are crystallised. By the end of the MFA, students are at an equivalent level to 1st year PhD researchers. Thus, where appropriate, the 2+2 Model may enable MFA students to transfer to a PhD at the end of their master's programme. Here, in the Creator Doctus programme we put forward, practice is foregrounded and emphasised, and approaches to knowledge production are centred upon practice.



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# Angle of Vision (2020)

## Saoirse Higgins<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Saoirse Higgins is an artist and designer from Dublin, Ireland, based on Papa Westray, Orkney Isles. She is interested in revealing some of the connections between our vision of the world we live in, our expectations for the future and the technology we use to help us with this. She explores the contested spaces of the Anthropocene – human-machine, human-nature and is particularly interested in islands and sea. Her work is process-driven and she often collaborates with local experts and communities.

Saoirse has shown work at the Thessaloniki Biennale; Science Gallery, Dublin; Montreal Film and Media Festival; Transmediale, Berlin; Siggraph, New Orleans; Exit Art and Location One gallery, New York. She has held residencies at SIM, Iceland; Swatch Peace Art Hotel, Shanghai; e-Mobilart Lab, Disonancias in Spain; Location1 Gallery in New York; and the Banff Centre for the Arts. She is also co-founder of the ØY island festival exploring islands, art and culture.

The following pages are an excerpt from an interactive PDF catalogue that documents the PhD reflective practice developed over a three-year time span of research in Orkney for ‘Survival Tools of the Anthropocene’.

The catalogue of practice was intended as a continuation of the work coming from the written thesis, submitted in March 2020. It references three key reflective viewpoints from the research – local, relational and long viewpoints – within three exhibitions held on three consecutive days at The Kelp Store Arts and Heritage Centre on Papay during the island lockdown in April 2020.

The exhibitions and catalogue present an audio-visual interface with these viewpoints, illuminating the reflective aspects of the research and emphasising the island-situated context.

These pages incorporate text, still images, and images linked to audio-visual material on YouTube (indicated by the QR codes near to them).

<https://radar.gsa.ac.uk/7517/>



## EXHIBITION 1

### Objects

Fluorescent Arrows pointing North, South, East, West.

Peripatetic measuring stick made from 1970's USSR bakelite Wind anemometer, tide stick + measuring wheel – resting on Papay tidal rock

Bird's eye hat-gopro, recycled plastic bottle, bamboo cane, tape, birsay farmer's (local farmer shop in orkney) hard hat.

### Projection screen

Measuring and monitoring the island 2016-2019

HD video + 360 Time lapse films, various durations – 3min-12hours,

Compass points looking North, South, East and West from the outermost edges of the Papay shore.

### Audio

The day of the Haar (fog)

Papay field recording, August, 2017

Recorded at the lowest point of the island – at sea level.

During the haar, the island reverts back to its natural timescale, our sense of time and direction lost in the fog.

### Hanging from the balcony

Anthropocene Flag – digitally printed cotton drill flag.

50 x 50 cm 2016

referencing the international flag system – ‘man over board’





*Measuring and monitoring the island 2016-2019, projected HD video + 360 Time lapse films*



## EXHIBITION 1

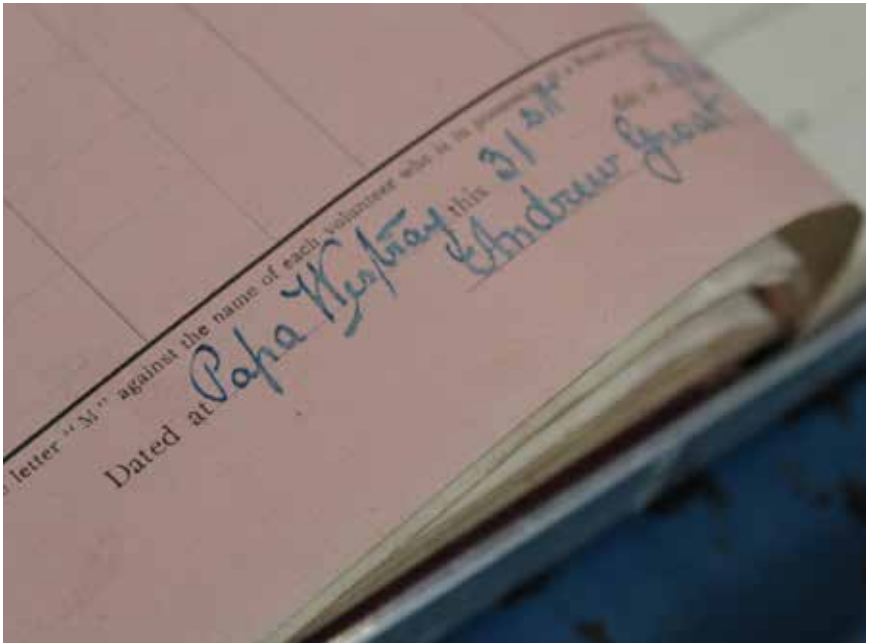
Local viewpoint: researcher + island 12th April

The local viewpoint is the researcher's perspective within the island ecology itself. It is the act of being on an island bounded on all sides by the sea. Listening in, measuring along and looking out...





*Papay ken folk project – 'ken' is to know, timelapse digital video, 3:56, September 2016 + 2019 Duration: 8 hours*



*Papay Coast guard book. Signed by the late Andrew Groat – coastguard 31st September, 1944*



## EXHIBITION 2

### Relational viewpoint: researcher + islanders 13th April

The relational viewpoint is the view between researcher, islander and the physical island. It is a look at the historical and contemporary actions by islanders to care for their own environment using skills passed on through generations while looking to the future.



*Distant views of the land... 360+HD audiovisual film. 10:30mins, 2019*



### EXHIBITION 3

Long view: island + islanders + external world 14th April

The long view is the view from the island to the external world and how this interacts together...

articulating and connecting...meshwork lines of communication...

# Vilnius Academy of Arts

## Once I Was An Artist, Now I Am A Supervisor:

Notes On Admitting And Supervising In 3<sup>rd</sup>  
(CrD) Cycle Programmes In The Arts

Vytautas Michelkevičius<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vytautas Michelkevičius, Dr. Artist-researcher-curator-professor-supervisor. After publishing his first monograph on artistic research in 2016 ('Meninio tyrimo suvesti. Žinojimo kontūrais', VDA press; English edition 'Mapping Artist Research. Towards Diagrammatic Knowing', VDA Press 2018), Vytautas Michelkevičius started to supervise doctoral students. He has been working with 6 candidates and one (Arnas Anskaitis) has already successfully defended his PhD thesis, in June 2021. Since 2019, he has been the Head of the Doctoral Programme in Arts at Vilnius Academy of Arts.

This is a collection of partly fictional stories, however based on real facts, experiences and conversations with various researchers, artists, academics and supervisors.

This format was chosen in order to release some tensions and to create some freedom to speak about latent but important and pertinent issues in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle programmes in the arts and their relation to the art world and administrative bodies of education and research. Hopefully, it will be useful both to existing and starting up doctoral programmes for artists and other related practitioners. The multi-layered structure of the essay represents the complexity of the challenges we face. If you start to feel that the essay has gaps or is unfinished, you are right – it is as fragmented as the practice and theory of doctoral education in 2021 in Europe.

Nota bene: If you want a recent example of how to try to solve the below-mentioned issues, you might read a related essay by a recent Doctor of Arts Arnas Anskaitis, or browse through his thesis 'The knowledge that an artist has at their disposal: Seven trace-maps',<sup>2</sup> which is both an exhibition and a research paper in a single publication.

## Selection of the candidates as a kind of role-play game

Every candidate, with all of their application material, is placed on a scale with the art(ist) on one side, and the scholar(ship) on the other. All the committee members usually have an opinion of the candidate's artistic practice; some committee members with (academic) research background have an opinion of the candidate's ability to write and communicate (academic) research. Still, only a few have a full understanding of both the artistic and research competences and their hybridity: as a result, very basic flaws and stereotypes of artistic research are encountered again and again.

### Questions that might arise during interviews:

Where is the epistemic dimension of your artistic practice?

Your research looks great, but are you going to produce any artistic work?

Are you sure that you are going to do qualitative and/or quantitative research?

What is the philosophical research that is mentioned in your proposal?

Etc.

<sup>2</sup> Despite the fact that it was written in Lithuanian, you can read quite extensive summary and browse through the images which are integral part of the dissertation. You can access it here: <https://vb.vda.lt/permalink/f/1h7m64/ELABAEtD92676220>

During admittance procedures, repeating stereotypes of what research is and trying to meet its lexicon sometimes places the candidate in a strange situation. When are we going to stop separating (as well as stigmatising) this art practice from art research, and art research from art practice?

*Committee member (CM): We appreciate your thick portfolio, but at the same time we have a few questions. How are you going to write a 40,000-word thesis with only poems?*

*Artist (A): I am speaking in the language of art.*

*CM: We too, but at this moment we are using phonetical and discursive language to better understand each other.*

*A: I understand the present situation, but your academy aims to be open to various modes of story-telling and non-normative academic language practices. You have mentioned it in your call for proposals.*

*CM: Yes, that's true but still we are governed by regulations about what research is and unfortunately, everybody who enters the programme should follow them too. We want a candidate whose practice has made, and is going to make, an impact and contribution to the field.*

*A: But I have presented my work in world-renowned museums, biennales and curated contexts, while you sit here with your portfolios probably based mostly on shows in modest academy galleries and exhibitions in jazz concerts and libraries.*

*CM: That's why we have invited you for the interview, but your work has to have an impact in the research context too.*

*A: My work has been reviewed by a 'Frieze' columnist.*

*CM: But we do not consider art press to be a research context.*

*A: Why not?*

*CM: It is not peer-reviewed.*

*A: Are you sure? There is an editorial board that made decisions to invite the columnist, and the columnist has made many decisions to select my show out of thousands and to write about it.*

*CM: But we operate under other circumstances.*

*A: Can we find a balance between art, research and academic context and start a collaboration that is beneficial to all of us?*

*CM: We need to think and consult all the stakeholders...*

## PROPOSAL

You should try to look at the candidate as a single, unified agent producing knowing (and knowledge) and related matters. For example: expanding or testing known limits of a specific discipline, combining several disciplines or practices into a new hybrid or making a change in a cultural or epistemological practice.

But is it possible to look at the proposal as an integral projection into the future? What is going to happen in 4 years? I know it is a challenging endeavour, but collective speculation about the future might help us imagine it better.

However, most admission committees still ask that two separate things be provided: a portfolio and a research proposal which is somehow mostly written in words (95%), and sometimes complemented with 1-2 graphs, models or diagrams. When can we expect to have an opportunity to submit an integral or hybrid artistic research proposal in all the doctoral programmes in the arts? In 5, 10 or 20 years? Going even further, I would like to ask: when will artists be eligible to submit a proposal consisting entirely of their practice, and committees will know how to read (detect) its epistemological potential? We need to take into account that acceptance procedures need time to mature and it will not happen very fast. Unfortunately, some programmes still copy the procedures from the humanities or other non-practice-based fields of research. On the other hand, new cultures regarding procedures are coming into play and are being adapted to the artists' language.

## Doctoral programme image vs. Their (candidates') expectations

Every application procedure has two sides: the image that is seen from the outside, and the reality that can be experienced only from the inside. The following expectations or stereotypes have been perceived in various doctoral programmes from both sides: by insiders and outsiders.

THE PHD PROGRAMME MIGHT OFFER	HOW THE CANDIDATE MIGHT BE SEEING IT
Research and Artistic Community	Recognition and fame with a Dr. degree
Grant to do (artistic) research	Money to realise my project
3 <sup>rd</sup> Cycle study programme	Long-term residency programme
Supervisors	Great time with great artists (professors)
Feedback & Community Exchange	Great time with great fellows (other students)
International mobility and access to various communities	Great trips to great places and meeting new people
Wide international (academic) network	Erasmus and conferences travel
Technical as well as academic support	Easy access to a studio, equipment, material, skills and people
Developing artistic & research communication skills	More academic teaching opportunities

## Types of candidates for the doctoral programmes: research-friendly practice vs. research-ignorant practice

As in every admission procedure, over the years, you can identify certain trends in the types of applicants. Figuring out in advance to which one you might be assigned during the acceptance procedure or interview, might help you to avoid the stereotypes:

- Young promising MA graduate vs. experienced and established artist
- Artist who pretends to be a researcher
- Researcher who pretends/wants to be an artist
- Epistemological idealist
- Artist submitting their art project as a research project, as if it were an application for the arts or culture council, without any research component or orientation
- Artist as a secret agent aiming to explode the (academic) system from the inside
- Artist intending to compile and write a monograph on their œuvre

## Challenge in the selection committee

- Artists spectate and speculate
- Researchers read and judge the research proposal/plan
- But who is trying to see the research plan and portfolio as an integral proposal?

The background of the selection committee determines the starting points for the discussion. At the same time, specific backgrounds bias this discussion.

**THE ACADEMY NEEDS PEOPLE FROM THE FIELD OF PRACTICE TO STAY UP-TO-DATE AND TO GAIN NEW KNOWLEDGE**  
Field(s) of practice(s) need(s) the academy to obtain infrastructure, resources, support, recognition, power...

Do we want to accept successful (career) artists, or artists who have time to do research?

Can we accept artists who have better careers than we have, sitting comfortably in academies or overloaded with paperwork with no time for our own practice?

These and similar questions pop up in the minds of selection committees and

there are no definite answers to them. Everything depends on the culture and politics in a particular doctoral school. But is a star-researcher similar to a star-architect or start-up?

### PROPOSAL

Diversifying and balancing the committee might facilitate selection of the appropriate candidates. You should try to invite experienced artists (professors), experienced (senior) researchers from various scholarly and scientific practices, hybrid background members or artists-researchers (doctors of arts), guests – experienced practitioners from the field (curators, critics, societal partners, etc.) Guidelines both for candidates and selection committees would in any case be of great use.

## SUPERVISING

Oversupervising

Undersupervising

Multisupervising

Hypervising

Undervising

Übervising

How does an artist supervise the writing part and how does a researcher supervise artistic practice?

To start with, 'supervisor' might not be the best concept to describe a healthy/productive relationship between the candidate and professor, because of the semantics of the word. Despite coming from the Medieval Latin verb 'supervidēre' which means 'to oversee', in the contemporary educational context it has become very loaded with connotations of hierarchies and power structures. A person in the supervisor role should be more welcoming and closer to the candidate's needs and point of view. In the end, do we want to academise artistic practice, or do we want to invite practising artists to contribute to knowledge and innovations both in practising and teaching art?

### Research coach, facilitator, peer, fellow, guide, care-taker...

Curator might be one of the options because if we look at the etymology – it has a very positive history. From Medieval Latin 'curatus' – 'one responsible for the care (of souls)' – from Latin 'curatus', past participle of 'curare': 'to take care of', or 'to have spiritual charge of'.<sup>3</sup>

3 <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/curate>



With the contemporary use of the word 'curate', we also have the connotation of the curator in the contemporary art world, with all of its advantages and shortcomings. But if we look at the 4-5 years of artistic and research practice as a collection of art works and writings (which is often the case), the curator can be seen as a necessary external voice to help to organise it into a final exhibition-thesis-publication.

Academic guidance competences are also needed to solve the question of how to present artistic practice as research, analyse it, systematise it and prepare for defence. Maybe academic advisor would be a better title than supervisor?

### PROPOSAL

- Academic advisor with no supervising responsibilities
- Academic (critical) friend instead of supervisor
- Academic supervisor together with supervisor from the field/practice
- Research advisor together with writing advisor
- Curator instead of supervisor
- Facilitator (technical-academic assistance)
- Knowledge extractor/excavator
- Critical spectator
- Critical reader
- Thinking-head or critical-head vs. practicing body (Where is practising mind?)

## Dictionary/Lexicon of Key Terms in *failed & fruitful* doctoral practice and theory (still in development)

*Polydisciplinamory* – an artist-researcher's usual practice: trying to bring together disciplines and practices and make sense (and love) out of them (among them) to produce new experiences, knowledge, theories and practices. Polydisciplinamory is a concept coined by Natalie Loveless in her book 'How to Make Art at the End of the World: A Manifesto for Research-Creation' (2019).

*Fake knowledge* – an attempt to imitate the production of (new) knowledge in your art work and/or practice at any price. It sometimes results in mediocre art with spi(k)(c)es of artistic research.

*Fake methodology* – trying to imitate any kind of research methodology without understanding what it really is.

*Mimi(cking)-humanities* – a failed attempt to write as if you are an (art) historian or speaking from their position, including analysis of your own and fellow artists' works with no reason or motivation, i.e. trying to do the art historian's work in order to reach the minimum amount of required words.

*Pseudo-philosophy* – a similarly failed attempt to mix an explosive cocktail of philosophers who never would sit at the same table or go to the same party.

*Mimi(cking)-social sciences* – doing qualitative and quantitative pseudo-research with no proper skills or background in them with the aim of resembling social sciences, i.e. mimicking them.

*Wordiarrhea* – spitting out words in order to reach the minimum amount of required words in the thesis.



# ADVICE FOR ARTISTS, CURATORS, WRITERS AND OTHER PRACTICE-BASED CREATIVE DOERS AND THINKERS ENROLLED IN 3<sup>rd</sup> (CrD) CYCLE EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

- Read a lot and find a suitable epistemological position for yourself – do not reinvent the wheel, especially in defining if and how you create knowledge; find your own worldview and relate it to other existing ones;
- Consult other researchers and supervisors from any discipline which has a track record (experience) of academic research;
- Contextualise your practice in relation to other practices in art and other related fields; When you understand what surrounds your practice, you can much more easily demonstrate your contribution to the field or identify which boundaries of knowledge (in a certain field) you challenge;
- Collect, document, archive, reflect and disseminate/communicate your practice;
- Experiment with communication of your results and find a way to reach both research and practice(s) communities, as well as the general public;
- Nurture the relationship with your peers, including supervisors;
- Before or during writing, do not forget to ask yourself these questions: What is the audience of this text? Who needs it? and Who is going to read it, besides the academy (defence committee and your fellow researchers and supervisors)?
- Think of a text as a proof of your articulation skills, next to (aligned to) your artistic practice. Not only writing but also speaking is a virtue in artistic research;
- Do not try to think of writing as residue / leftover / tail

/ procrastination. Instead, find your own way of speaking, of writing and of telling stories about your (artistic) research direction and outcomes;

- Explore and try out different contexts to present your practice and research outside the usual 'art bubble': symposia, seminars, public events, conferences, research clusters;
- Do not confront the requirement to graduate from a 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle programme ('to produce new knowledge' or 'to contribute to the field') too directly. If you, with your practice and/or research, make a change in any field or influence any cultural phenomenon, you might have already been successful with your thesis.

### **P.S. Why artists should approach 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle studies and come back to the academies:**

Community, care, exchange, reflection, development, recognition, communication, mediation, <...>, trying out new ways of making art or making new sense of your practice and portfolio, trying out new materials and technologies, contributing to the development of new epistemologies and methodologies of research, making new professional connections with scientists and researchers from other fields.

# Some Thoughts About 'Writing' as a Radically Insufficient Yet Necessary Condition for the Doctoral Art Project

## Arnas Anskaitis<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Arnas Anskaitis is a Vilnius-based artist and researcher. He is interested in reading as an artistic practice, and in the visual, spatial, and temporal nature of text as an inscription. In his practice and research, Anskaitis tries to draw attention to the physical and mental experiences of reading and writing 'in space', a physical dimension that both mind and body can grasp and perceive. Anskaitis engages with a variety of media, including installation, performance, moving image, and photography. He is a lecturer in the Photography and Media Art department, Vilnius Academy of Arts.

This essay will summarise some of the writing-related issues I came across during the four years of my doctoral studies in Fine Art at the Vilnius Academy of Arts (VAA), where I completed a project titled 'The Knowledge that an Artist Has at Their Disposal: Seven Trace-Maps' ('Žinojimas, kurį menininkas turi savo žinioje: septyni žymėlapiai'). I will reflect both on a general model of the Lithuanian doctoral studies in arts, and on how the specific academic requirements themselves took part in the formation of my doctoral project. I will conclude the summary with the overview of 'Spaces and Surfaces' [2019] – my artistic contribution to the collective monograph *Atlas of Diagrammatic Imagination: Maps in Research, Art and Education* [2019]. This experimental work is an attempt to reflect on my artistic practice via the very same diagrams and image atlases that I use in my work, rather than via the written text alone. One might call this approach towards research presentation a 'material articulation.'

The purpose of all doctoral studies is to articulate relevant questions or problems and to contribute with some new knowledge to the chosen field of inquiry. However, what kind of new knowledge do we have in mind when we talk about research in arts, given that we are still inertly pursuing an old dream of modernity – to discover or invent something *new*? Academic publications and conferences abound with endless discussions about *what* and *how* does artistic research produce things. And most of the time, this 'new knowledge' is referred to as something that cannot be stated in propositional statements, as if we were all looking for something else entirely.

Let us consider a traditional distinction between the theoretical (*epistēmē*) and practical (*technē*) spheres of knowledge. Analytical philosophy has re-dubbed this opposition in terms of the difference between 'knowing that' and 'knowing how.' Where does artistic research come in? We often associate research conducted by artists with the possibilities of tacit and embodied knowledge. According to Henk Borgdorff, 'artistic research – as embedded in artistic and academic contexts – is the articulation of the unreflective, non-conceptual content enclosed in aesthetic experiences, enacted in creative practices, and embodied in artistic products' [Borgdorff, 2012, p.168]. The turn toward practice that has recently occurred in contemporary theory draws attention to practices *in* which and *through* which knowledge is *constituted*, and not simply found. Yet we are still wondering: how do we make this tacit knowledge talk? How are we supposed to disembodify it from artistic practice?

Since I am carrying out my doctoral work in a specific institutional context – namely, the VAA Doctoral Programme in Fine Arts – I would like to use the very *model* of doctoral studies as a preliminary starting point, thereby focusing on how this model *models* the doctoral student who, in turn, has to *model* their dissertation project. As Jean Baudrillard [1983, p.31] once put it, 'models come first'. Therefore, the institution chose a particular model that provided me with some actual parameters to further develop my doctoral work. But to what extent is it able to respond to new knowledge (or that 'something else') that the artistic research is so likely to generate? How flexible and plastic do both a doctoral student and a doctoral model have to be in regard to each other?

In Lithuania, the institutional framework of artistic research is laid down in *Regulations for Doctoral Studies in Art* [2017]. The fairly common two-part doctoral model is embedded in many European art academies and is mandatory. It is com-

prised of two equal and integral parts: 'artistic-creative' and 'academic research.' The *Regulations* describe it thus: 'An *art project* is a totality of works, developed during a doctoral programme and submitted for public defence, comprising two equivalent parts: an artistic-creative part and a research part.' Because of this fundamental divide, I have two supervisors who come from different backgrounds – an internationally recognised artist and an experienced academic researcher with a PhD – to observe and assess their respective 'parts' in what is otherwise an integral 'art project'. The current institutional model leaves the 'artistic-creative part' open and undefined, with the exception of a compulsory public presentation. The 'research part' is expected to be done in *writing*, with an overall word count of 30,000 to 40,000 words. What could these word counts possibly imply for an artist-researcher? Are these the parameters of the length, width or depth of the text? It is somewhat peculiar that the number of words is regulated, while the physical dimensions of the artwork are not. After all, we might as well imagine an equivalent requirement to hold an exhibition in a space that measures, for instance, 30,000 to 40,000 square metres; one would definitely need a few good hours to walk around such an exposition space. Incidentally, this is roughly the same amount of time one needs to read through the required block of text. Of course, if one gives in to the temptation to read only the introduction and conclusions, the reading time will be reduced to only minutes. But is this how an 'art project' is supposed to be experienced?

This formal division of a doctoral work into the 'artistic-creative' and 'research' parts is not without its own problems, because it inadvertently reproduces the inherited divisions between practice and theory, form and content, idea and matter, etc. Besides, this could lead to some rather undesirable consequences during the defence stage of an integral 'art project'. Quite paradoxically, if any part of the project is missing or happens to be indiscernible, the artistic-academic community might either throw the entire project overboard and regard only its artistic side (for what it's worth), or alternatively consider the project as some *other* – non-artistic – kind of research. One does not want such misunderstandings to occur during any public defence of an academic degree. Usually, it is the art jurors themselves who divide themselves into two, sometimes simply incompatible, camps: some tend to highlight the 'artistic-creative part', while others care more about the 'research part'. How are we to find a shared ground and give due credit to both parts of the art project?

Although this preliminary division of an art project poses various kinds of problems, our doctoral programme still cannot envision both artistic research and art project without their respective written supplements ('words') because it refuses to accept artworks as a sufficient outcome of the doctoral work. As it stands, an artist requires a 'double alibi' (presented both as an *art object* and a *written text*) for their artistic research to enter legally into academia – an environment generally supposed to be concerned with the pursuit of knowledge. However, as I see it, the typically required not-so-inconsequential amount of 'written supplement' brings the artistic research closer to the experience of writing a thesis in the humanities, where all the appropriate eloquence and breadth is supposed to demonstrate the *articulateness* of the research. In humanities, research usually develops discursively – namely, through language and written text. The academic requirements for a doctoral 'art project' seem to indicate that artist-researchers are expected to

present something in addition to 'mere' drawings, objects, photographs, diagrams, maps, no matter how advanced they are. The number of words required by the institution seems to suggest the requirement for a body of writing in the form of an accompanying narrative, written in either linear or non-linear fashion, about the knowledge produced by the research. An institution therefore provides an artist-researcher with a space to expose and a stage to express – to transcribe – their 'inner voice' as an intimate speech of self-comprehension. However, as we all know, there is always more than one voice echoing in any written text.

Perhaps the written component is an absolute necessity for any type or field of research, including artistic research. Nevertheless, I believe that the 'research part' of the doctoral work (in this case, an integral 'art project') could be articulated not only through conventional written texts ('words'), but also via what might be called 'material articulations'. Inherently polysemic, the artworks themselves could become the elements *through* which and *in* which research would take place. I will try to open this up by briefly turning to the so-called epistemological framework of 'experimental systems' developed by the historian of experimental life sciences Hans-Jörg Rheinberger. He defines an 'experimental system' as 'a basic unit of experimental activity combining local, technical, instrumental, institutional, social, and epistemic aspects' [Rheinberger, 1997, p.238]. It is also a space of signification. Although I have never worked in a laboratory alongside scientists, the 'experimental situation' that Rheinberger describes appears to be similar to what occurs in the messy studios of many artist-researchers.

I assume a doctoral 'art project' is supposed to imply *experimentation*. But what is this 'experimentation' in the context of artistic research that is supposed to contribute not only with new experiences but also with newly generated knowledge? Perhaps we could – somewhat unexpectedly – compare the practice-based artistic research with the *in vitro* protein biosynthesis. In his study on 'experimental systems', Rheinberger refers to the emerging objects of research as 'epistemic things' [1997, p.28]. In the context of biochemistry and molecular biology, it is the material entities or processes such as physical structures, chemical reactions, or biological functions that constitute the objects of inquiry. Meanwhile, Borgdorff finds an equivalent situation in the field of arts: 'Similarly, within artistic practices, artworks are the hybrid objects, situations, or events – the epistemic things – that constitute the driving force in artistic research' [2012, p.193]. The so-called 'epistemic things' therefore *embody* what one does *not yet* know. Somewhat paradoxically, they already give answers to the questions that researchers have not yet been able to formulate.

I find it interesting that, for Rheinberger, these 'epistemic things' *exist* and operate as inscriptions: 'These are all material signs, entities of signification. The arrangement of these graphemes composes the experimental writing' [Rheinberger, 1997, p.111]. Here we have a contemporary science historian with an explicitly Derridean approach who likens the process of writing to practical experiments on the biochemical laboratory workbenches. Usually, the notion of 'grapheme' refers to the smallest semantic unit of a written text, but here Rheinberger extends it to include any kind of experimentally produced material signifiers. When seen from this perspective, different artistic practices themselves might as well be regarded as generalised forms of writing. In this sense, when experimenting with limited sets of materials and unique epistemic practices, an artist-researcher is *always* in



the process of *writing* and *modelling* their 'art project'. Rheinberger argues that 'to bring alternative spaces of representation into existence is what scientific activity is about' [1997, p.113]. By the same token, the doctoral 'art project' could be regarded as a way of producing material articulations, while the publication itself, as a 'machine' for reading them.

This approach is evident in *Atlas of Diagrammatic Imagination: Maps in Research, Art and Education*.<sup>2</sup> The collective monograph expands on the various practices of diagramming and mapping. According to the editors, the choice of the book cover colour was purely intuitive, although, to my eyes, the green is an obvious trope of 'ecology,' and the various diagrams in the *Atlas* may be interpreted as schematised 'ecosystems of imagination'. This is particularly relevant because we usually represent ecosystems as diagrams. Each additional element that enters an ecosystem disrupts its balance; the same goes for diagrams.

'Spaces and surfaces' [2019] is a bilingual, ten-page fold-out measuring 264 x 34 cm. In it, I aimed to create links between photography and cartography (Figs. 1, 2–7). In my contribution to the *Atlas*, I argue that both photographic and cartographic methods of representation should be understood as 'snapshots' of time and space. Both of them employ 'virtual lines' that frame, link, and direct the stories that they tell. However, the processes of navigating, reading, and looking through this ten-page fold are far from being straightforward. The short, epigrammatic descriptions of five of my previous artistic projects – *One Square Meter of Gallery Space* (2009), *Simple Words* (2012), *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (2013), *The Traveller* (2015), *Workspace* (2017) – are arranged along the curved paths that resemble a topographic map with its typical contour lines. The texts in the layouts can be read starting from either the outer or the inner lines, thus generating two potentially different readings. Some of the keywords are highlighted and outlined as if they were reference points or landmarks. The fine lines making up a regular grid of location coordinates is yet another hint at the diagrammatic representation. Photographic documentation and other visual material are arranged on one side of the sheet of paper, with their mirrored captions on the other. The paper is thin, even diaphanous – one can put it against the light and read all the brief explanations that accompany the images. One can also interpret the heterogeneous elements of the fold-out as the aforementioned 'graphemes' (in an expanded sense). I wanted to create a situation where the hierarchy between the text and image is overturned. In this case, looking at the images is easier than reading. Here, I have tried to play with the cultural conventions of maps, to 'transpose' the stories into their diagrammatic representations, and to create five different diagrams or, more precisely, 'diagrammatic ecologies.'

In my doctoral art project, each of the individual artworks is introduced and exposed via both textual and visual fragments. How can those fragments be read and made sense of? This certainly requires some additional effort from the reader and/or viewer, which can be either rewarding or frustrating.

Interestingly, the English word 'noise' derives from the Latin word *nausea* ('sea-sickness'), which in turn can be traced back to the Greek *naus* ('ship'). The root of the word 'noise' etymologically relates to nausea and seasickness. Reading this

2 Edited by Lina Michelkevičė & Vytautas Michelkevičius, designed by Laura Grigaliūnaitė, and published by the Vilnius Academy of Arts Press, 2019.

material could be like sailing through a severe storm. Indeed, the fold-out project 'Spaces and Surfaces' may appear nauseous to its reader-viewer who needs to engage with the work by turning the pages circularly, looking against the light, and facing all kinds of other orientation-related difficulties. Here, I found it important to disrupt the normative reading process – the unusual form of the text immediately negates the text, but at the same time it comes as a material necessity that allows the work to generate productive differences and different readings.

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Figure 1. Editors Vytautas Michelkevičius and Lina Michelkevičė holding the collective monograph *Atlas of Diagrammatic Imagination: Maps in Research, Art and Education* (2019). Photo: Arnas Anskaitis.



Figure 2. Fragment of 'Spaces and Surfaces'. Photo: Arnas Anskaitis.



Figure 2. Fragment of 'Spaces and Surfaces'. Photo: Arnas Anskaitis.



Figure 3. Fragment of 'Spaces and Surfaces'. Photo: Arnas Anskaitis.

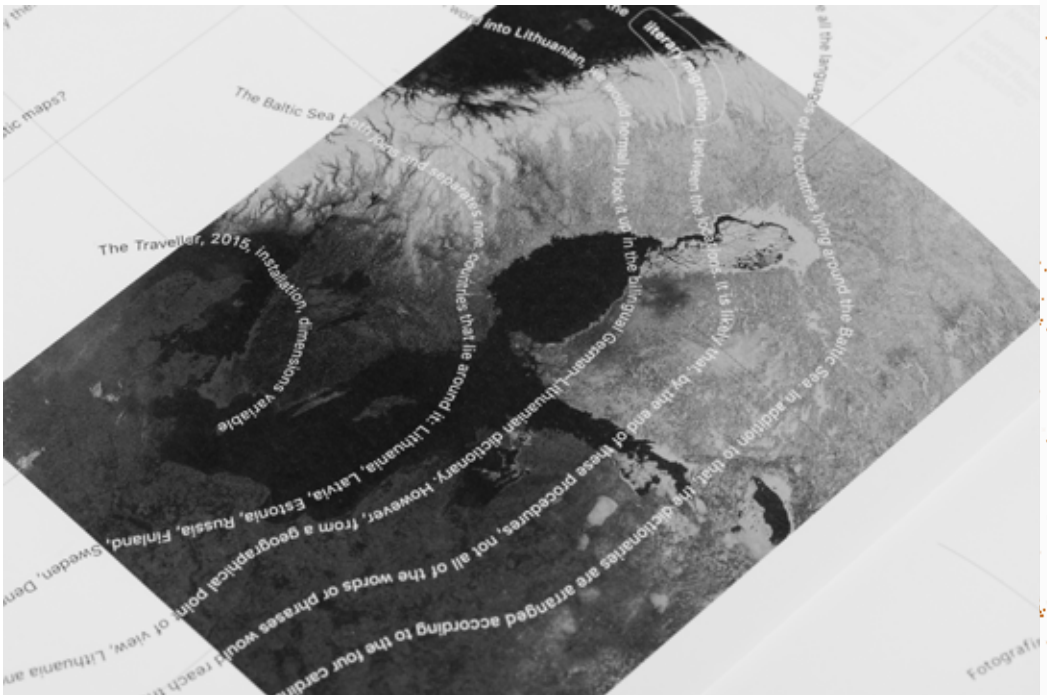


Figure 4. Fragment of 'Spaces and Surfaces'. Photo: Arnas Anskaitis.



Figure 5. Fragment of 'Spaces and Surfaces'. Photo: Arnas Anskaitis.

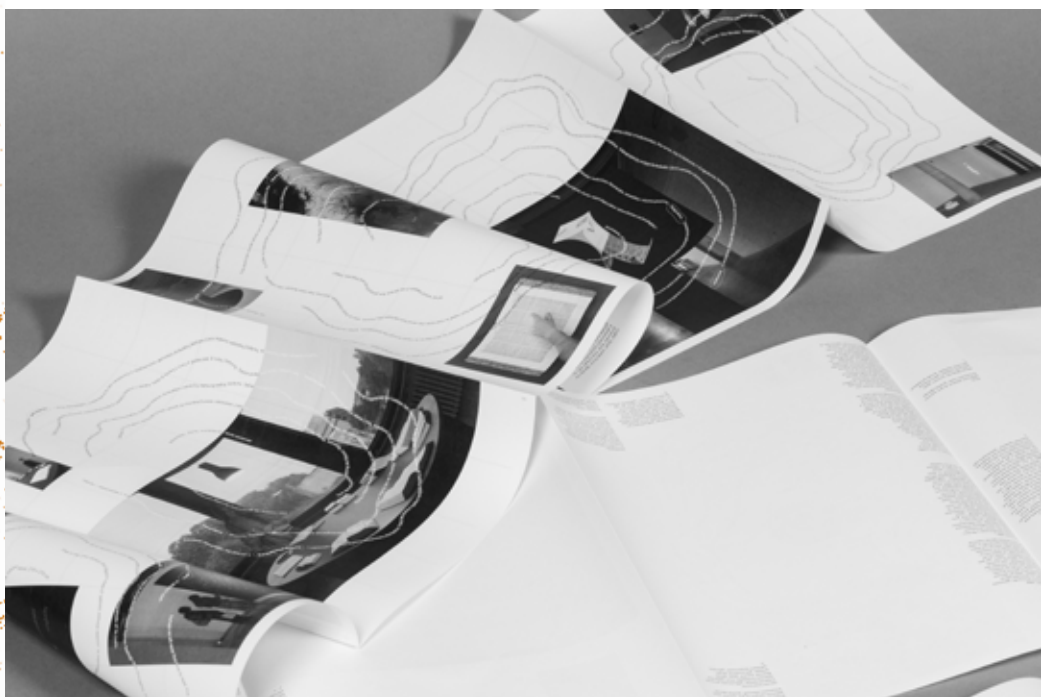


Figure 6. Fragment of 'Spaces and Surfaces'. Photo: Arnas Anskaitis.

# Athens School of Fine Arts Facilitating an Epistemology of Urgency;

a Concept for Motivating Trans-disciplinary  
Practice-based Research in the Arts

Georgios Papadopoulos<sup>1</sup> & Zafos Xagoraris<sup>2</sup>  
Introduction

1 Writer and Administrator of the Creator Doctus for the Athens School of Fine Arts. Georgios Papadopoulos holds a Master of Science from the London School of Economics and a PhD from the Erasmus University in Rotterdam. His research is gravitating around money and its socioeconomic functions. He has presented his work in various venues including the Acropolis Museum in Athens, the 1st World Congress of the Hedonist International in Brandenburg, the ICA in London, and in the Judson Church in New York. He has also published two books and a few articles in English, German, Greek and Spanish. He is responsible for the management of the Creator Doctus project and facilitates the PhD Seminar at the Athens School of Fine Arts, while he is invited to participate in 2021-2022 inter(national) artistic research residency programme OnassisAir in Athens.

2 Artist & Professor at the Department of Visual Arts in the Athens School of Fine Arts. Zafos Xagoraris holds a Master of Science in Visual Studies from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and a PhD from the National Technical University of Athens on the topic of the construction of miracles by Hero of Alexandria. He has participated in various international shows such as the 58th Venice Biennale, documenta14 in Kassel, and the 27th Biennial de São Paulo. Moreover, he was one of the curators of the Greek Pavilion at the 9th Venice Biennale of Architecture and the 2nd Athens Biennale, Heaven. He is a Professor at the Athens School of Fine Arts, supervising three doctoral students and being a member of various other PhD supervising committees.

Research is emerging as an increasingly popular descriptor of the trans-disciplinary character of art practices. The aim of this contribution is to describe how research is integrated in the curriculum of the Department of Visual Arts in the Athens School of Fine Arts (ASFA), with a specific emphasis on the PhD level/3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle education.

The motivation behind this exercise is to communicate our vision and our methods so as to inspire other institutions to become involved in practice-based research, developing their own programmes to enrich what we consider to be an indispensable element of academic art education. At the same time, we would like to invite feedback and criticism on our methods and structures.

The cornerstone of our research is our commitment to the constitution of new areas for research by connecting scientific disciplines both in the sciences and the humanities in unexpected but fruitful trajectories, with artistic practice acting as the catalyst of integration of different concepts, methods and modes of representation that are used to address new and urgent questions of research. We also aim to address the potential challenges of incommensurability that might hinder cross-disciplinary communication. It is important here to draw a demarcating line between artistic practice – both as pure practice and practice led-research – and practice-based research conducted by artists adopting epistemological tools from other disciplines with the intent to produce (new) knowledge. Trans-disciplinarity lies at the core of this process and it will be one of the main themes, so we will try to illustrate how trans-disciplinarity is materialised in the structures and the processes that support academic research in our faculty.

## The institutional context and the regulatory framework

ASFA is divided in two Departments – Visual Arts and History and Theory of Art – both of which have their own, independent, PhD programmes, recognised by the Greek Ministry of Education. The Department of Visual Arts, which is the older of the two, has a long-standing tradition in PhD research. Its PhD programme has recently been restructured in response to the Bologna process, adopting the best practices in the field of art education. The participation in the Creator Doctus research trajectory has supported the re-development of our PhD programme, by offering a forum for discussion with other Art Academies in Europe and providing access to a pool of resources.

There are two defining elements for the PhD programme in the Department of Visual Arts, one epistemic – trans-disciplinarity supported by practice-based research – and one educational – a unique combination of cohort-based and studio-centered models of learning. The epistemic relevance of trans-disciplinarity, combined with the focus on practice-based research, will be examined in detail in the remainder of the text, while in this section we will focus more on the structural aspects of the PhD programme. The Studio lies at the core of both education and research in the Department of Visual Arts, representing an agile and focused structure, where the students enjoy the facilities and the intellectual environment to develop their own individual practice, as well as a very intimate relation with the faculty. The operation of the various studios – which also provide an array of different points of view on questions of artistic practice and research – reflects the



pluralism in contemporary art education provided by the Department, as well as the freedom of choice students enjoy at the ASFA in accordance with the principle of student-centered learning. Simultaneously, the polycentric structure of the studio-based model privileges individual relations between professors and students in all three cycles of education in the school.

Along with the research and education in the different ASFA studios that support PhDs, the Department of Visual Arts offers a seminar structure where candidates from all the studios are encouraged to participate and present their projects to their peers, to the Department, as well as to invited faculty and artists from outside the academy. The idea is to complement individual relations between supervisors and students with an integrated research environment that operates in parallel to the studio structure. The monthly PhD seminar functions as a reduced but condensed version of the Graduate School model that can support the intellectual development of our candidates, offering them a space where they can test their ideas and rehearse their theoretical arguments in a familiar but challenging setting. Complementary to our PhD seminar, the Department of Visual Arts has launched a lecture series on practice-based research often hosted in collaboration with our societal partners, where artists are invited to present the research dimension in their practice. The lecture series is open to the public, but directed to our PhD students, who are also consulted in the selection of the speakers. The dual system that combines the advantages of the graduate school and the studio models not only fits with the overall structure and the educational tradition of our institution, but it also offers the combined advantages of both systems and facilitates the intellectual development of our PhD students. To wit, our commitment to trans-disciplinarity also finds its expression in our model of PhD education.

Table 1: Main elements of the PhD of the Department of Visual Arts

An emphasis on the development of the research capabilities of the individual PhD student in relation to their artistic practice.
The systematic presentation of the different stages of research in the University and the integration of the candidates in all the academic activities of ASFA supported by cohort-based pedagogies exclusively organised for 3 <sup>rd</sup> Cycle education.
A Thesis that is equivalent in length and scientific standard to that for the PhD in the Humanities, and with the same requirements for originality.
Trans-disciplinarity and practice-based research as the constitutive elements for the new field of inquiry: this is the defining research principle that distinguishes the programme from other PhD programmes offered in Art Theory, Art History, and the Humanities.
The exposition of the contribution of artistic practice in support of the research and of the production of knowledge, integrated in a special part of the Thesis – the Appendix.
Equivalence of the PhD offered by the Department of Visual Arts with the Doctorates of the other Greek Universities.

The last part of this section addresses two interrelated issues: that of the admission of our students and that of the assessment of their PhD. These two instances of formal evaluation of our candidates determine their entry into our programme as well as their graduation from it.

The formal requirement for admission to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle of studies at the Department of Visual Arts of ASFA is the same as for all Universities in Greece and it is decided by the legislation enacted by the Ministry of Education. The minimum formal requirement for our students is the successful completion of the 2<sup>nd</sup>

Cycle. Upon the successful completion of their study in ASFA, all our students are awarded a diploma that is equivalent to a Master, so in principle all our graduates are immediately eligible to do a PhD at the Department of Visual Arts. Still, we encourage our candidates to wait some time before they apply, to develop their artistic practice. In the selection process of the different applications, the Department gives priority to artists or candidates that have accumulated research experience coming also from fields related to the arts, and who include in their practice research instruments or media integrated to an artistic research practice – for example, data collection research methods, fieldwork, coding and programming tools, interviews, recordings, supported by the relevant documentation and theoretical explanation. The PhD proposal is important, and here we examine how trans-disciplinarity inspires both the methodology and the framing of the research questions. The aim is to ensure that the project fits in the overall research of our faculty, and also to make sure that our teaching staff is available, able, and willing to take up the applicant. The selection process is decided by an interview, where candidates are invited to present their proposal and to discuss their capabilities to bring it to fruition.

Table 2: Main admission criteria in the PhD programme

A successful completion of the 2nd Cycle/Master in the Arts or in a related discipline in the humanities. Applicants with a more diverse background that includes education in Science combined with a degree in Arts or Humanities are also considered.
A proven record of research via publications or exhibitions on related subjects.
A written proposal of up to 1,000 words, which should develop the main research questions and the methodology of the PhD project.
An entry examination in the form of the interview where the candidate presents their proposal in front of the admissions committee.
A methodology or a topic that manifests the trans-disciplinary direction of the research project.
The demonstration of the usefulness of practice-based research as part of the methodology.
If the proposed research project is capable of being studied to the depth required to obtain a PhD.
The availability and willingness of a faculty member to act as the main supervisor of the Thesis.

The final act in the PhD project is of course the defence of the Thesis in front of the committee, which is convened by the Department after the recommendation of the main supervisor of each candidate and the two additional supervising members. The committee comprises seven members appointed by the faculty, in communication with the supervisors. The candidate can liaise with their supervisors regarding the appointment of the committee, but it is up to the faculty to decide who to appoint. The examination of the PhD Thesis takes place forty-five days after the committee is appointed, when the candidate is called to present their project in an oral examination. Any artworks, either of the candidate or of other artists, are presented on the same occasion and not in a separate exhibition/exposition. The candidate is then assessed by the committee for the originality of their contribution, the force of their argumentation, and the ability to present well-written and suitably documented research. Although the examination process is thorough, only under very extraordinary circumstances – plagiarism or other kinds of fraud – would a candidate fail at this stage. It is common practice that the candidate is not invited to the defence if their research is not sufficient for the award of the PhD title.

Representatives of societal partners can in principle be included both in the supervisory team and in the defence committee, as long as their past experience ensures that they have capacities that are equivalent to that of the minimum academic requirements for participating in a PhD examination committee (according to Greek law, this is described as a researcher in a recognised Greek or foreign institute) and their expertise falls in the area of interest of the PhD project. It is usually the candidate or in some cases the main supervisor that invites them to participate in the project, but their participation should be approved by the department. After their inclusion in the project, their role and function is the same as that of the other members of the supervisory or examining bodies.

Table 3: Evaluation Criteria for the Thesis

Demonstrate a systematic and extensive knowledge of the subject, formulating hypotheses and presenting a line of argumentation by which to develop and test these hypotheses.
Constitute new trans-disciplinary fields of inquiry.
Manifest the contribution of artistic practice in the establishment of the research outcomes.
Present and defend research outcomes that manifest the originality of the PhD project and how it contributes to the growth of knowledge in the relevant fields.
Be defended during a public examination in front of the examining committee, where the candidate must:
I Explain the structure of the Thesis.
II Demonstrate the depth of knowledge on the topic of the Thesis.
III Explain and justify the use of the research methods and techniques, including the contribution of artistic practice.
IV Defend the originality of the Thesis.
V Clarify any points of ambiguity within the Thesis raised by the committee.

## Defining trans-disciplinarity

The driving force behind the integration of methodologies that cuts across disciplinary boundaries is the awakening to the complexity of nature and society and the desire to explore problems and questions that can no longer be analysed by a single discipline or by a simple combination of more than one disciplines (multi-disciplinarity), and does not just fall in the cracks between disciplinary demarcating lines (inter-disciplinarity).

The urgency of natural and societal challenges that we face, calls for the integration of methodologies and paradigms and the emergence of a post-normal science that thrives on complexity, nonlinearity, heterogeneity, and trans-disciplinarity, versus the traditional hierarchical, homogeneous, and discipline-based traditions of positivistic methodologies. Moreover, the ability of artists to engage in unexpected and productive ways with technological apparatuses – observational, computational, representational – enables them to envision solutions that can pollinate scientific research with fruitful new hypotheses. Investigating the process of constitution of unexplored fields of inquiry by artistic research can bridge the gap between theory and practice, between innovation and cannon, between established scientific practices and their artistic appropriation. According to the PhD regulation of the Department of Visual Arts in ASFA, it is trans-disciplinarity that defines what practice-based research in the arts denotes for our programme. The focal point of our research is the practices of inquiry in the arts that define new trans-disciplinary fields of research in the intersections of art, technology, and science. Our engagement with trans-disciplinarity is both theoretical and practical,

participating in the international debates about the nature and scope of artistic research, contributing to best practices and developing our own projects.

Trans-disciplinarity is the cornerstone for the conceptualisation of our programme, a programme that strives for the constitution of new fields of inquiry across disciplines, methodologies, and subjects. Simply put, trans-disciplinarity is a methodology that cuts across disciplinary lines, across entire research fields – bringing the fields together in a new way, recreating a research paradigm anew. Nevertheless, trans-disciplinarity does not entail the lack of methodological depth, but rather requires a particular kind of rigor, one that combines a range of specific disciplinary epistemologies with the ability to bring these into a new equilibrium. The new epistemic balance can potentially feed back and transform the disciplines involved. Institutionally speaking, practice-based research in the arts is perhaps the necessary catalyst that combines new questions and the new epistemic attitude that these questions are calling for. Trans-disciplinarity as it is deployed in our teaching and research practices is linked to all these possibilities of cross-pollination, extending across and beyond theoretical fields, institutions, and their given practices, challenging established structures and methodologies through the linkage of heterogeneous elements. More importantly, trans-disciplinarity is a methodological attitude that connects separate spaces by intersecting them with the aim to create new fields of inquiry.

Paradoxically, while the interrelations between art, technology, and science are growing, the theorisation of inter- or trans-disciplinarity in art practices continues to be more associated with humanities scholarship than with artistic practice. The term artistic research refers to the research dimension that the work of art itself has, regardless of field or direction, as well as to the artistic processes themselves that allow us to understand and subsequently improve our knowledge through and about artistic practice. Still, what defines artistic research remains contested, since most accounts tend to offer a very general and inclusive appraisal of the epistemic merit of artists' involvement with research both inside and (especially) outside the University. The aim of our PhD programme at the Department of Visual Arts in ASFA is to draw the demarcating lines between artistic research and artistic practice, thinking about possible epistemic criteria to appraise the contributions of artists in the production of new knowledge and the ability of artistic research to define and explore new fields, crossing the limits that define traditional disciplines, and effectively connecting them.

## Supporting an epistemology of urgency

According to one of the most influential historians of science, Thomas Kuhn, scientific progress depends on 'normal science' [Kuhn, T., 1962]; on scientific research that is focused on small and tractable problems, guided by clear and generally accepted methodological imperatives. The ever-increasing scientific specialisation, combined with methodological conformism to the received knowledge of the paradigm, enhances productivity, division of scientific labour and accelerates the growth of knowledge. Still, the specialisation that is the precondition for the growth of knowledge can become an obstacle when a paradigm is faced with challenges that cannot be addressed by its methodological arsenal. Scientific progress

is not linear but rather characterised by periods of both intense growth and relative stability, during which scientific paradigms become progressively barren and lose their ability to provide answers to the most pressing of questions. Commitment to the scientific orthodoxy inspires conservatism that can lead to stagnation and even crisis, when research cannot address the urgent social issues.

Academic research is characterised by a purposeful indifference to social problems – expressed in the distinction between positive and normative analysis – a systematic investigation that aims at the growth of knowledge in its own right. Artistic practice aspires to always be relevant and contemporary, striving for a committed, social practice. The involved attitude that is often present in the arts, allows artists to recognise the impasse of established scientific paradigms and inspires them to take up both the aesthetic and epistemic challenges in their attempts to break the stalemate of normal, in the Kuhnian sense, academic research.

Artistic practice can inspire the necessary epistemological curiosity that can address urgent contemporary challenges, encouraging new connections between disciplines, paradigms, and researchers. Realising the limitations of normal science, artists often try to invent a multitude of apparatuses as an act of decoding science by actualising and materialising its concepts, followed by a re-coding through performance, poetry, fiction, and visual art. In our programme, we encourage such gestures to create the possibility of an epistemology of urgency, employing art-based research as a catalyst that could productively overcome the limits of normal science, especially in times of scientific and social crisis. The coexistence of results from different fields of research increases the ability of art to intervene in the world around it, exhibiting a species of soft and sensitive power. For the same reasons, the trans-disciplinary character of a research project is ensured by the simultaneous presence of elements from different disciplines – visual art, architecture, dance, or theatre – while different epistemic communities with distinct aesthetic, political or educational attitudes contribute to its methodological coherence. If the purpose of our PhD programme is to highlight, isolate and clarify the ways in which art converses with science, its core could be the examples in which scientific research becomes the constitutive element of artistic practice.

The progressive diffusion of disciplinary boundaries within academia and the rise of interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary research programmes testify to a ‘unity of reason in the diversity of its voices’ [Habermas, J., 1992, p. 192] and provides the grounds to defend a more inclusive methodological model that will open the space of exchange in academic research and can be hospitable to a wide variety of research approaches, programmes and methodologies. Simultaneously, we should aim for a shared vocabulary to converse effectively about change – that is, to treat change not as a mere curiosity or exception, but to acknowledge its centrality in socio-economic life. The main challenge is how different disciplines with distinct methodologies and conceptual systems can communicate with one another and even produce a unified system to produce new knowledge. Going back to Kuhn, this is the problem of incommensurability, the obstacle of translating a discourse to the semantic framework of the other. Artistic practice can overcome this challenge, by embracing the impossibility of translation and finding productive ways of employing one of the most fruitful elements of incommensurability, its uncanniness. When we combine unexpected methodologies or forms together with familiar ones, we are surprised, because we perceive our environment in a different way. More concretely,

the introduction of interviews, lectures, or diagrams challenges the overall context of artistic research, forcing us to explore a new and unfamiliar reality, redefining the relationships between different fields, and controlling their points of contact. In a similar fashion, transpositions to different contexts both conceptually and physically offer similar opportunities to capitalise on the productive capacity of a trans-disciplinary uncanniness. For example, the traditional spaces for presenting a work of art – outdoor areas in the urban fabric, on-site workshops and websites – form alternative contexts where the results of trans-disciplinary collaboration can be exhibited. One can identify different and often contradictory reasons why these spaces (transversal domains) should be used. The emergence of such epistemic practices as part of an artistic process can re-shape the paradigm in the visual arts, looking back to the age-old relationship between the visual arts and technology, and anticipating the future role that art is going to play in scientific and technological research.

## Practice-based research as the foundation of trans-disciplinarity

This section aims to clarify the term practice-based research, with a specific reference to the arts, anticipating and clearing the ground for the analysis of the constitution of a trans-disciplinary epistemological attitude in the constitution of new fields of inquiry. Our definition of practice-based research will draw the demarcating line that separates this type of research from practice-led research and from theoretical research, providing the foundation for the theoretical basis of our PhD model.

We will start by drawing a clear distinction between practice-based research and practice-led research. It has been argued that all original artistic endeavours involve an element of research that enables the artists to creatively engage with their medium(s) and indeed, many artists would argue that they are regularly involved in 'research' as a necessary part of their everyday practice. Obviously, the engagement in pure (artistic) practice allows insights that contribute to the mastery of a specific artistic medium, its history and its social significance, leading to the production of new knowledge about this medium. Such research could be defined as 'practice-led research that is concerned with the nature of practice and leads to new knowledge that has operational significance for that practice' [Candy, L., 2006, p.3]. The pursuit of such knowledge in a systematic manner and its exposition in a fashion that could benefit other practitioners in the same field of practice is legitimate and it can obviously be integrated in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle of research and education in the arts, but it is not the focus of our PhD programme at the Department of Visual Arts in ASFA. At the same time, theoretical and historical study or analysis of artistic production that does not engage actively with the actual practice that leads to artistic creation, does not fall in the subject matter of our programme but is rather pursued by our colleagues in the Department of History and Theory of Art.

We are concentrating on artistic practices that employ research methods from other disciplines in the humanities and the sciences, adapting them and integrating them with the aim of an original investigation undertaken to gain new knowledge. Creative appropriation suggests a certain degree of liberty both in the choice and

the use of such methods, liberty that is not allowed in the disciplinary research programmes as they are pursued in 'normal' science. The artistic practice in the context of our PhD is both epistemic and aesthetic, and the artworks that could be integrated in the research and included in the Thesis should also have an epistemic quality to them. The conception of artworks as epistemic things [Rheinberger, H., 1997] resonates very much with our own understanding of the contribution of art in the research process. In our PhD programme, originality and the contribution to knowledge are facilitated through the creative appropriation of scientific media and methods or even with the invention of new media and methods.

## Two approaches to practice-based research in the arts

Some of the older and most prominent examples of artistic research date back to the 1960s, when contemporary art started integrating scientific material or tropes from scientific research and education (such as on-site recordings, experimental design, or interviews) from the fields of anthropology, mathematics, history, in specific artistic endeavours. These gestures were motivated by a genuine interest in furthering knowledge, concurrently challenging the normativities of established scientific paradigms. Appropriation presupposes a degree of methodological liberty, which is not usually permitted in academic research. The deficit in methodological discipline is compensated by the unexpected inferences that can be achieved through the re-contextualisation of already existing methodological schemata in a broader network of ideas and practices. As a result, a more transversal attitude towards knowledge production was developed, encouraging the emergence of critical imaginaries both for the institution of research and for society. A representative case of this kind of appropriating artistic research project in our Department is that pursued by our PhD student Theodoros Yannakis. The aim of his research is to construct and investigate the figure of a speculative craftsman, 'a four-dimensional artistic subject who acts and works in the intersection between the digital and physical space, as a configuration of cyber and bio-political relations and tensions that emerge between the natural, digital and technical objects and the artistic subject'.<sup>3</sup> The speculative craftsman is used as an epistemic construct for reflection on the process of artistic creation, employing a prism of theories analysing cyber-culture coming from Speculative Realism and Cosmo-technics.

A more contemporary version of artistic research starts from practice that evolves by combining different forms of inquiry, artistic and conceptual, propositional and non-propositional, historical and poetic, academic and liberal. One might say it is research-infused practice, that is, research that permeates and inspires practice on all levels. Such an epistemological perspective of uniqueness and otherness demands a further methodological contemplation; a positive understanding of practice-based research in the arts, reasoning in and through art, within academia. Indeed, different from established forms of research, the methodological path of artistic research and its implied production of knowledge cannot easily be defined. The potency of personal expression is manifested in the various

3 *The Speculative Craftsman*. Ongoing project by Giannakis, Theodoros.  
Web: <http://speculativecraftsman.com/> Visited 14.09.2021

forms of art-based research or in the epistemic character of an artwork that uncovers the perceptual or psychological mechanisms in the process of creation. The PhD project by our student Yota Ioannidou, entitled *Research-based art as Docudramaturgy*, develops a research practice that brings together the concepts of 'document' and 'dramaturgy' as sources of affection in her own performative work.<sup>4</sup> This conjunction develops a concept and explores a method within the field of visual and performing arts, which also provides the background for the investigation of embodied and enacted forms of knowledge and understanding; forms of knowing and understanding that cannot easily be translated into or transmitted by language alone. The idea of non-conceptual, non-propositional knowledge – as we can call it here – has been a subject of philosophical thought since ancient Greece, starting famously with Aristotle's distinction between theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge. 'During the history of philosophy, we encounter the idea of non-conceptual knowledge in art under different names: from Baumgarten's "sensory knowledge" via Kant's "aesthetic idea", Adorno's "epistemic character", Ryle's distinction between "knowing that" and "knowing how", the constitutive role of tacit and personal knowledge in Polanyi, and finally to Merleau Ponty's focus on bodily knowledge, who suggested that the artist is the one who sees what others leave unnoticed.' [Borgdorff, H., 2007, p.6].

## Writing and practice-based research in the arts

Writing is the fundamental technology for the production, representation, and preservation of knowledge. Education and research at all levels and in all disciplines rely on writing as a tool and a practice that develops thinking, enables communication, and also allows the accumulation and the preservation of knowledge. Especially in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle of academic education, writing is at the centre of the research pursued, with the Thesis being the main if not the single document that testifies to the accomplishment of the candidate.

In the field of the arts, there is a lot of debate about the role of the Thesis and the importance that is afforded to academic writing as the medium for articulating and communicating artistic research. Academic writing in the arts raises the challenge of hegemonising other media of expression at the same time as it enforces the scientific normativities of positivism upon the arts. Still, it is important to realise the potential that 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle education has for artists in their effort to produce and control the discourse about their practice, emancipating themselves from what has become an excessive control by theoreticians, curators, and critics. We believe that even though the danger of subjugation of artistic research by the sciences may be real in the early stages of institutionalisation of practice-based research, artists will be able to produce their own discourse, emancipating themselves from curators, historians and critics, if they are provided with the academic training necessary to develop their abilities to write and talk about their practice. The PhD degree is the appropriate educational context for perfecting these abilities, so necessary both for teaching and the professional development of every artist.

On the epistemological plane, we feel that writing is an indispensable tool for

4 The project is presented at the end of this text.



research. Doing research or even thinking without writing and language is near impossible. Furthermore, the epistemic particularity of practice-based research in the arts is defined by the possibility of combining linguistic with non-linguistic modes of research, analysis, and representation. Critically oriented practice-based research can offer a new impetus to the study of society and nature, appropriating existing discourses, representing them through new media and inscribing them with new meaning(s), infecting the conditions of their social representation. In their efforts to account for the unrepresented elements of reality through aesthetic interventions, the arts are not constrained by the limits of theory and language. Artistic interventions can thus enhance our understanding of reality, and create ruptures in the layer of meaning that is superimposed on the world. Still, for the challenges to the mainstream interpretations of reality to be articulated, a return to language is necessary – de-territorialisation leads eventually to a new re-territorialisation – and the aesthetic of the new interpretations of reality must be explained in a way that is able to carry new knowledge beyond the confines of the rupture.

The PhD programme of the Department of Visual Arts follows the humanities model which comes with the requirement of a long, written Thesis of 70,000 words minimum, with full references and footnotes. A substantial amendment to this model is the introduction of an appendix, which contains the artistic (textual or visual) material that is produced or employed during the research. The appendix is defined as a section at the end of a dissertation that contains the research media and the research outcomes generated by practice-based research. It may contain images, diagrams, data, code, and other kinds of experimental or expanded writing that support the argumentation in the Thesis and represents how the practice of the candidate supports their analysis. According to our regulation for the Thesis, the appendix creates a space where both linguistic and non-linguistic elements of practice-based artistic research can be integrated, presented, and valorised as an integral part during the examination of the Thesis. Until now, there are no specific guidelines in the regulation of the programme on how the appendix is examined or its relative importance in comparison to the larger written part. Since we have had only one PhD defence since the restructuring of the PhD programme in 2015, there is also limited experience on how the committee actually evaluates the contribution of the appendix in the overall examination process. Still, the material in the appendix remains central to the candidate's presentation and to the discussion following the defence.

The existence of the appendix is not unique to practice-based research PhDs in the arts. What is unique is the design, size, and function of the appendix in our programme as a space where the exposition of practice-based research, combined with other instruments of investigation, converses with the narrative developed in the Thesis. The specific format of the appendix is dictated by the necessity to constitute a space for exposition of the epistemic function of artistic practice that is not constrained by the normativities of academic writing. 'Exposition' is the key concept in describing the way practice-based research is presented in the Thesis, a format that goes beyond simple documentation. Our programme brings together reflective and methodological approaches to the exposition from a variety of artistic disciplines including fine art, performance and design, which it links to questions of publication and dissemination. The appendix articulates a

novel relationship to knowledge, where the context in which knowledge emerges and the form in which it is communicated manifest the connection between artistic practice, empirical investigation, and theoretical analysis.

Our model integrates the design principles of the exposition of artistic research in the format of the Thesis, capitalising on the best practices in the non-propositional modes of communication that are currently gaining momentum not only in the arts but also in other academic fields, whether these modes are the presentation of practice-based artistic research, its visualisation, diagrammatic modelling, or data production capacities, all of which add extra layers of meaning to the Thesis. The aim is to create a workable model of interaction between the body of the Thesis and the appendix for 'the exposition of practice as research highlighting the role of the latter in the production of new knowledge' [Schwab, M., & Borgdorff, H., 2014]. The constitution of a space for artistic practice in the design of the written Thesis presupposes the resolution of more general questions of documentation, such as how a particular practice or work of art can be documented in such a way as to highlight its epistemic relevance. The institution of the appendix in the PhD Thesis as a site of artistic exposition of research media needs to depart from the cannon of a simple display of artworks akin to an art catalogue or book, and to strive towards a representation that can communicate the knowledge claims that are made in, by or through the interaction of artistic practice with theoretical analysis in the main body of the Thesis.

Along with the constitution of a space for the exposition of practice-based research in the appendix, it is necessary to extend the definition of academic writing to accommodate artistic modes of exposition into what could be described as 'enhanced publications' – media-rich and potentially interactive texts that engage with the articulation of meaning beyond the limits of academic writing. We will continue to investigate how different modes of writing – creative, experimental, literary, poetic, technological – could be incorporated to enhance the presence and the impact of trans-disciplinary practice-based research in the arts. The aim is to come up with extended forms of Thesis-writing that can represent the aesthetic and creative features of the media and the methodologies developed in our programme. Simultaneously, we must keep in mind the formal requirements that are in place and work towards ensuring that the academic standards for the originality, the reproducibility and the communicability of the research are safeguarded.

Since the emergence of practice-based research in the arts, the linguistic communication of its outcome, both inside and outside the University, has been one of its most contentious issues. Knowledge production by artists has both utilised and questioned the received forms of scientific writing; even the requirement to include any explanatory text in artistic research has been resisted as a contestation to the arts' own aesthetic and epistemological autonomy. In celebrating this autonomy, practice-based research in the arts appropriates forms of academic writing by disputing, disrupting, and experimenting with their institutionalised forms, at the same time as it strives to create more appropriate ways of articulation.

One of our future goals in developing our PhD programme is to investigate best practices of incorporating expanded writing in practice-based research, acknowledging agency in the forms, the tools, and the media through which it happens. We want to experiment with how writing can disrupt academic discourse and disciplinary

boundaries, to invent new ways of accommodating experimental forms of writing in artistic research in our structures of research and education. This step could further boost the impact of practice-based research in the arts, enhancing it even further in our PhD programme.

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# Docudramaturgy

## Yota Ioannidou<sup>1</sup>

- <sup>1</sup> Yota Ioannidou, Artist and PhD Student at the Athens School of Fine Arts. Yota Ioannidou is an artist working in Athens. Ioannidou graduated with a BA from the Athens School of Fine Arts, a MFA from the Dutch Art Institute and is currently a PhD researcher in the Athens School of Fine Arts. In her projects she creates and revises archives, following a process of research (visits in archives and *in situ* research), collection (texts, images, data, maps, films) recordings, involving various types of artistic outcomes. The formulation of the research material combines storytelling and formation of reading and performing groups on the research subject. So far, her projects have looked into issues related to social struggles and movements with a strong focus on the idea of the local and translocal (i.e. most of her projects refer to social struggles from the current Greek history related to examples that we find in other places as well as in other times). Her work has been presented in *When the Present is History*, Museum of Contemporary art – Thessaloniki (2021) and Depo, Istanbul (2019); *I'll open the door straight, dead straight into the fire*, State of Concept, Athens and Gallery Nova, Zagreb (2019); *The trials of Justice*, La Colonie, Paris (2019); *A case of perpetual no*, State of Concept, Athens (2018); 'The kids want communism' – *Notes on division*, MOBY Bat Yam, Israel (2017); *No need for references*, WUK, Vienna, (2015), 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Athens Biennale a.o.

# Introduction

Docudramaturgy is a term I developed to describe and explore my artistic practice, bringing together the concepts of 'document' and 'dramaturgy'. It is essential to analyse this conjunction in order to explore docudramaturgy simultaneously as a concept, methodology and research tool within my artistic field, that of visual and performing arts. The three main theoretical concepts that I employ in my exploratory questions and research trajectory are those of 'document', 'performativity' and 'dramaturgy'. The aim is to analyse the performative and dramaturgical aspects emerging during the formation of the document itself, which means during its categorisation as such in the institutional environment, or in the historical, political, and cultural context, where emphasis is given to the ideological classification of certain institutional settings and state authorities. In artistic practices that are based on documents, this means exploring the ways that documents are employed in 'artistic outcomes' as performances, events, and installation formats (I use the term artistic outcome and not artworks, to point to trans-disciplinary approaches that connect research trajectories with artworks). To illustrate my research, I will describe two case studies from my PhD, namely two parts of my project *A case of perpetual no*, entitled 'Evidence 1' and the performance 'Act1'. In it, I introduce the distinction between hard and soft documents, which I use simultaneously as a theoretical categorisation, a research trajectory and a dramaturgical device within my research and artistic practice.

## A project of docudramaturgy; 'A case of perpetual no' (2018-ongoing)

*A case of perpetual no* has been in development since 2018 by re-enacting a trial from recent Greek history that took place in May 1949, during the Greek civil war. This was the trial of the journalist Grigoris Staktopoulos for the assassination of American CBS journalist George Polk in 1948. The project *A case of perpetual no* was initially presented in two parts: a preliminary performance named *Act 1 – A case of perpetual no*, and an exhibition, both presented at the State of Concept in Athens, curated by Iliana Fokianaki. *A case of perpetual no* aims at illustrating and activating my practice in docudramaturgy; it is an on- and off-stage tool of emancipation, reflection, and a potential act; it is an individual method developed in co-operative modes. The reason I chose to investigate the Polk-Staktopoulos case comes from the fact that it represents the impossibility of tracing the real event or murderer. Instead, it reveals how political maneuvers are made by different entities, how many different narratives take place simultaneously, and how different hierarchies exercise violence through forms of language and the use of official documents.

My motivation in developing the project is to highlight and investigate a case that began in 1948 and appeared to conclude in 1949 with the conviction of Polk's presumed assassin. Yet investigations continued right up until 2013, with the court decision of 1949 being reaffirmed – a strange outcome, in my opinion, given the amount of research done since then and the evidence published after the initial verdict. Why does a case well past its expiry date still feed the discourse around injustice in Greece? Does it remain relevant to the current social and political

climate in Greece? By reviewing and re-questioning this case, the project aims to question contemporary Greek society in terms of democracy, freedom of speech, and justice. Therefore, I decided not only to revisit the Polk-Staktopoulos case, but to reinstate a case in which among other inequalities, there still lingers a discourse about freedom of speech and injustice.

## Act 1: A case of perpetual no and Evidence 1: An historical account

*Evidence 1* is an installation of prints derived from the graphological analysis conducted by Demetrios Thomas and Georgios Chalkias in 1979, on the envelope received by the third Police Station of Thessaloniki in 1948. An introductory performance of *Act 1: A case of perpetual no* includes the details of the Staktopoulos case and states that on 8th May 1948, George Polk disappeared from the city of Thessaloniki and his corpse was found by a fisherman on May 16th. On 11th May, the third police station of Thessaloniki received an envelope that contained Polk's identity card and a promotional calendar for Pan American. The envelope, which was without a stamp, didn't include any details of the sender and had only one hand-written line: "To the 3<sup>rd</sup> police station – Hereby". This envelope was the unique piece of evidence on which the whole investigation was based, and on which the argument for Staktopoulos' guilt was built. The police visited Anna Staktopoulou and asked her to write a letter. Two graphologists employed by the police examined the letters from the envelope and her letter. The conclusion was that Anna Staktopoulou was the sender of the envelope. Grigoris Staktopoulos and his mother Anna were put on trial and convicted in 1949. Grigoris Staktopoulos was given a life sentence for accomplice in manslaughter, while Anna Staktopoulou was acquitted. Staktopoulos was released in 1960, after eleven years in jail, due to a reduction in his sentence.

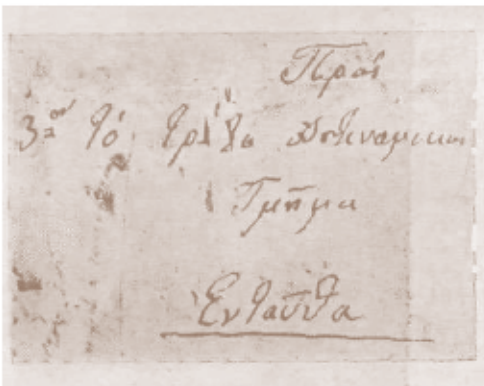


Image 1: The envelope

After two decades, on 7 March 1966, the newspaper *Macedonian Time* published a shocking front-page news story: on the day of Polk's murder, the docker Efthimios (Thymios) Bamias saw a wallet floating on the Thessaloniki waterfront near the Trianon Center, a short distance from the White Tower. When he opened it, he saw an ID and other papers in English. Bamias wanted to send the papers to the Third Police Station but was illiterate, so took them to a grocery store owned by Savvas Karamichalis who wrote the address.

As Karamichalis had died, his relatives presented examples of his writing, which showed that the graphic character on the envelope belonged to him. In 1977, Staktopoulos asked the Supreme Court to overturn his conviction, but his appeal was dismissed. In 1979, two independent graphologists conducted a new

graphological analysis on the envelope and concluded that the original sender was Savvas Karamichalis, proving Staktopoulos' innocence. At this point, it is important to note that this analysis was conducted several years after the fall of the Greek Junta (1967-1974) – and this is no coincidence. Staktopoulos died in 1998 without being vindicated. Three appeals were filed by his wife in 1999, 2002 and 2006, each of which presented new evidence that supported the defendant's case. Athanasios Kafiris, attorney-at-law in the appeal lodged in 2002, supported the request for a retrial of the Staktopoulos trial based on the evidence I mentioned above among many others, but his submission was not accepted. Furthermore, a last appeal by Kafiris lodged in 2013 was also not accepted.

## Some notes on the issue of the 'document' and docudramaturgy

An important historical account of the document was developed by Suzanne Briet (1894–1989). Well known as 'Madame documentation', Briet was born in Paris and was one of the first three women appointed as a professional librarian at the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris. According to her definition, a document is: 'any concrete or symbolic indexical sign (indice), preserved or recorded toward the ends of representing, of reconstituting, or of proving a physical or intellectual phenomenon.'<sup>2</sup> In 1951, Briet published her manifesto 'What is Documentation?' (*Qu'est-ce que la documentation?*) as a 48-page pamphlet. To analyse the nature and the conceptual differences of the document, she used the following 'antelope example':

Let us admire the documentary fertility of a simple ordinary fact: for example, an antelope of a new kind has been encountered in Africa by an explorer who has succeeded in capturing an individual that is then brought back to Europe for our Botanical Garden (Jardin des Plantes). A press release makes the event known by a newspaper, by radio, and by newsreels. The discovery becomes the topic of an announcement at the Academy of Sciences. A professor of the Museum discusses it in his courses. The living animal is placed in a cage and cataloged (zoological garden). Once it is dead, it will be stuffed and preserved (in the Museum). It is loaned to an Exposition. It is played on a soundtrack at the cinema. Its voice is recorded on a disk. The first monograph serves to establish part of a treatise with plates, then a special encyclopedia (zoological), then a general encyclopedia. The works are cataloged in a library, after having been announced at publication. The documents are copied (drawings, watercolors, paintings, statues, photos, films, microfilms), then selected, analyzed, described, translated (documentary productions). The documents that relate to this event are the object of a scientific classifying (fauna) and of an ideologic (*idéologique*) classifying (classification). Their ultimate conservation and utilization are determined by some general techniques and by methods that apply to all documents – methods that are studied in national associations and at international Congresses.

2 Suzanne Briet, *What is Documentation? English Translation of the Classic French Text* (MD: Scarecrow Press, 2006), p.10.



Δευτέρα Αποβροχίας Δεκαοκτώ.

Αποβροχίαν Τημέρα Αποβροχίας

Απόδεδεσάμενος

Παρακαλώ ν' υπογράψωμεν Χρημ. Των Στακτοπούλου

Παρά τω Αποβροχίαν Τημέρα Αποβροχίας

Εις τὰς ἐπιπέδους ἀποβροχίας, νῦν τῶ

Μεσορροχίαν Τῶντος, ἐν τῶν ἐπιπέδων ἀποβροχίας

11 ἀποβροχίαν Τημέρα Αποβροχίας ἐπὶ τῶν

1. 16 ὡς. ὡς. 187 δ.μ. μαρτίου

2. ἰσοπέδους τῶν ἀποβροχίαν ὑποβροχίαν Δεκαοκτώ

3. ἔγγραφο τῶν ἀποβροχίαν ἔγγραφο ἀποβροχίαν

4. ἀποβροχίαν ἀποβροχίαν καὶ ἀποβροχίαν. τῶν ἐπιπέδων

Δεκαοκτώ. ἀποβροχίαν

5. ἔγγραφο εἰς ἔγγραφο ἔγγραφο ἐπὶ τῶν ἔγγραφο

6. 4 ἀποβροχίαν ἔγγραφο τῶν ἀποβροχίαν

7. 4 ἀποβροχίαν ἀποβροχίαν Δεκαοκτώ ἀποβροχίαν

8. 6 ἀποβροχίαν ἀποβροχίαν ἀποβροχίαν ἔγγραφο

Δεκαοκτώ ἀποβροχίαν.

Image 2: The letter of Anna Staktopoulou

1952. 16-9 βριση γινιταν  
 βουρκοις Ξυχοις  
 και κερδισω ο Στανιγος

1953 Αγου 29 Πικα 14κ  
 222 Αγου 20 22 14κ

1954 Αγου 131 Βροα 17κ

1953 Αγου 16 Σαοαυε /  
 7. Αγου 4 Αθαρ

1953 Αγου 21 Πικα  
 Αγου 5 Αγου 6 Αγου

1953 Αγου 10  
 Αγου 7 Βροα  
 + Αγου 4 Αγου

Image 3: A list written by Savvas Karamichalis

The cataloged antelope is an initial document, and the other documents are secondary or derived.<sup>3</sup>

In order to explore Docudramaturgy and my central research question 'How does a document act?', I introduce the distinction between hard and soft documents. The 'hard documents' are those that act as primary records according to Briet, and 'soft documents' are those that are correlated, based on and referred to the hard documents within specific contexts and investigations. Soft are not secondary documents; they are initial records but because their use in the specific contexts is temporary, they are perceived as soft. The relation, the context, the conditions – in between the production of the soft document related to the hard – create the locus where my research methodology explores, interprets and defines the performative power of the document as well as its dramaturgical aspects. This locus is related to private and public institutions, state authorities, mass media, and judicial systems, among other power structures.

The emphasis on the performative power of the document derives from Geoffrey Yeo, an information science theorist, who proposes a theoretical connection between documents and performativity based on the Speech Act theory of John L. Austin and John Searle, which states that 'Records testify to the power of the performative; they are implicated in actions and events and in the deontology that underpins much of human society.'<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, Graham Harman in his book *Immaterialism: Objects and Social Theory* mentions that 'This passage is typical of recent trends in assigning two, and only two, functions to objects: (a) objects "mediate relations," with the implication that what they mediate are relations between humans; (b) objects have "agency," meaning that they are important when they are involved in some sort of action.'<sup>5</sup> The above approach on objects enables me to draw an analogy with the function of documents through the following paraphrase of Harman's statement: documents mediate relations between humans (that sounds conventional) but documents also have agency, which means that they are involved in some sort of action. Following this statement, a path for research emerges in the investigation of the actions that these documents are involved in, exploring what kind of actions are taking place as an artistic outcome in the form of performance, events, discussions.

## On new methodological paths and artistic outcomes

In *Evidence 1*, I perceive 'the envelope' as a hard document. The letter of Anna Staktopoulou (Image 2, 1948) and the list of Karamichalis (Image 3, 1979) are considered as soft. Soft documents are questionable, vulnerable, and according to different occasions and contexts are interpreted, misinterpreted, and manipulated by individuals, institutions, state authorities and power structures. After my visit in historical archives, reading books and articles concerning the case and my inter-

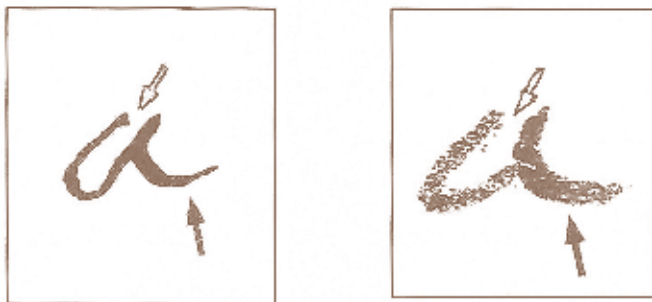
3 Ibid, pp.10-11.

4 From 'Representing the Act: Records and Speech Act Theory' by Geoffrey Yeo, 2010, *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, Vol. 31, No. 2, pp.95-117.

5 Graham Harman, *Immaterialism, Objects and Social Theory* (London: Polity Press, 2016), p.18.

view with Athanasios Kafiris (attorney in law), it emerged that the letter of Anna Staktopoulos was created by the police authorities, to be used as evidence in the Staktopoulos trial during the Greek civil war. There was extreme pressure from the United States government on the Greek government to find Polk's murderer. The authorities immediately tried to incriminate the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), unofficially distributing information to direct the newspapers to report on this angle. Furthermore, President Truman demanded that a culprit be found, threatening to cut financial aid to Greece. Consequently, this letter, a soft document, is a construct and a result of different authorities acting in 1949 and revoked by the letter of Karamichalis, which was used by the graphologists to prove the innocence of Staktopoulos. The fact that even during the 2013 appeals, the judicial system didn't regard the Karamichalis letter and the new graphological analysis as a proof of Staktopoulos' innocence, reveals a locus of further research on the subject and converts the list of Karamichalis into a hard document.

With respect to Docudramaturgy, hard and soft documents are both regarded as dramaturgical devices. By dramaturgical devices, I mean that I employ and contemplate documents as live entities during the research and the emerging artistic outcomes. Artistic outcomes in various formulations such as in the *A case of perpetual no* performance, props, printed letters, an installation, filmed interviews and archival material. Furthermore, in an old dramaturgical *modus operandi*, the dramaturge would choose an old play and change the necessary parts of the text in order to communicate it properly to the audience. With respect to docudramaturgy, the dramaturgical aspect concerns the 'hard document', which substitutes a play, and the correlation to 'soft documents' acts as the script of the artistic outcome. As a result, I totally removed the analysis of the graphologists and I presented solely the letters: vowels and consonants. Hard and soft documents are turned into fragments, in a performative gesture – an element to erase any former interpretations (by the police, the lawyers, the audience, the press). Following a process of de-contextualisation of the original document – removing the graphological analysis, obscuring an official text and revealing only the shape of the letters – is an act of denuding the evidence of its initial context and adding new performative aspects.



*Image 4: Evidence 1, excerpt from the installation of prints, courtesy of the artist*

Merz Akademie

# Designing a New PhD Curriculum;

Research in Design, Art and Media at the  
Merz Akademie, Stuttgart

David Quigley<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> David Quigley studied at the UC Santa Cruz, Salzburg University, Vienna University, the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and the École des hautes études en sciences sociales in Paris. He wrote *Carl Einstein: A Defense of the Real* and is currently Professor of cultural theory and Director of the Master Programme at the Merz Akademie, Stuttgart.

The following text both describes a future PhD programme at the Merz Akademie in Stuttgart and is part of an ongoing discussion about artistic research and 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle degrees in the arts in general.

The PhD programme at the Merz Akademie in Stuttgart takes the long history of the intrinsic relationship between the humanities, visual arts, experimental film, literature, and political activism as its starting point. Over the past century, these disciplines have often shared a mutual intellectual space, influencing each other while working through common formal aesthetic, philosophical, and political questions and issues. Today's art world has increasingly become a place where these different but interrelated practices meet.

In explicit reference to examples of historical paradigms of interaction between disciplines, PhD research projects at the Merz Akademie should attempt to cover new ground – taking risks that might lead to new undiscovered or underrepresented territories (in both a literal and metaphorical sense). The institution provides a space for PhD candidates interested in pursuing projects that challenge or go beyond the norms and expectations of academic and artistic practice: Rather than making the claim that we hope to be both academics and artists, we take the polemic goal of pursuing NEITHER specifically academic research NOR artistic practice, in the hope of finding new constellations of both.

*The programme in a nutshell:*

Students from a humanities, film, art, and design background are encouraged to apply. Applicants should be interested in working with different media as writers, curators, artists, filmmakers, and designers active in contemporary art and cultural institutions. The programme follows a transdisciplinary approach, but also encourages different levels of specialisation, with students and professors working both in diverse groups and in more specific fields.

All PhD candidates must find a non-academic partner institution in cooperation with which at least part of their project will be realised. The programme has been influenced by the philosophy of John Dewey, whose work stressed the fundamental continuity of experience and art, with distinctions between different institutionally defined forms of practice permanently open to renegotiation. While we ultimately accept (and in fact work with) the differences between art and other human activities, and likewise between the fine arts and the applied arts, the differences are to be seen as a question of degree and not of kind. First on this theoretical level, but then of course on a practical level, working with a non-academic partner is a way of situating our work within a broader social context, which is both a way of introducing art and design thinking into other areas, and at the same time a way of resituating and reassessing our own research.

The PhD is offered together with partner institutions in different European countries where the student must attend at least one year of classes. Arguably one of the most important goals of education policies in the European Union should be to take exchange between countries more seriously – through integrating it into the very core of the curriculum. This obviously will pose added challenges for students, teachers, and administrators, but the benefits on all levels (for students, staff, society at large) far outweigh the drawbacks. Classes are taught in the *lingua franca* English. Final projects can be submitted in German, English and/or French.

## Preliminary notes for a curriculum

This diagram and the following explanatory notes are an initial attempt at situating our programme within a historical and theoretical field of interaction between art, design, film, literature, and the humanities. The directions given are intended as a general map, as points of departure or inspiration for future work and research. While attempts at painting a broad historical picture often fall short, reminding us more of what is missing than what we have found, we hope that it can nonetheless situate our programme and our understanding of artistic research within a specific intellectual and aesthetic context. May the many faults and lacunae be an invitation to devise new historical traditions upon which we can base our future projects!

### Art schools and the institutional theory

The institutional theory of art, as first discussed by Arthur Danto in his essay from 1964 'The Art World', further developed in his book *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace* [1981] and Georgie Dickie's *Art and the Aesthetic: An Institutional Analysis* [1974], poses the question 'what is art?' based on the problem of how we recognise or distinguish art from other objects. Here, such examples as Duchamp's *Fountain* and Warhol's *Brillo Boxes* are often mentioned – things that in other more 'worldly' contexts are not deemed to be art. According to the institutional theory, objects – no matter what they actually are – gain the status of being a work of art through their recognition as such within the institution of art.

Decisions made within these institutions could be understood as subjective and potentially arbitrary (and often, of course, they are). But it is not that simple. Danto underlines that the institution is meaning-based, and working within it requires gaining knowledge and expertise as to the nature of art: 'To see something as art requires something the eye cannot descry – an atmosphere of artistic theory, a knowledge of the history of art: an artworld.'<sup>2</sup> But strangely enough, and what is important for our curriculum, the classical institutional theory almost completely neglects to think about HOW this knowledge or these skills are gained, how this 'atmosphere of artistic theory' comes into being, let alone what the many aspects of the complicated process of 'becoming' art could signify beyond the walls of institutions of art.

The first problem that is relevant for our discussion is that for the institutional theory of art, the primary institutions are the gallery and the museum. There is almost no mention of other institutions: Artist collectives and spaces, artist magazines, and especially art schools or art education are hardly considered at all. This is relevant because, I would argue, the institutional theory proper is not alone in being guilty of this: On the whole, we tend to neglect the numerous different institutions involved with art, including the vibrant culture of independent artist spaces, magazines and the groups that form in and between such spaces – with the culture surrounding art schools playing a particularly important role.

The second problem is that at the same time, we tend to forget the roles these many different institutions, together with the official art venues and galleries, play in areas outside of the art world proper: Political activism, exploring alternate

2 From 'The Artworld', by Arthur Danto, 1964, *The Journal of Philosophy*, Volume 61 No. 19, p.580.








forms of living as well as a host of different experimental practices in music, film, dance, literature and research in the humanities that do not fit into traditional film, dance, music schools or traditional universities – all of these take place and are supported by the network of institutions of the 'artworld' which in fact encompass and support a broad range of activities.

We would propose an institutional theory of art that would begin with art schools, how they occupy a unique position in this network of people and institutions, in particular how art schools create a space between the 'life-world' and the artworld and academia. Unlike in museums and galleries, the status of artworks (or art practice) is much less clear in art schools, much more debatable. And precisely providing an institutional place for this uncertainty would be central to its significance as an institution. Art schools leave unanswered the question of what art is.

Here, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle would play a crucial role, serving as a liminal phase between studies and professional practice, between research and art and between different educational institutions and societal partners, where experimentation with uncertain outcomes becomes the object of practice, where 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle candidates are not merely training for a future in the arts, but rather where their work itself becomes the objective. Art schools should be taken more seriously as institutions of experimentation and research in themselves – in many ways similar to universities – in that they are not merely providing professional education for future artists but rather they are supporting a wide variety of practice and research that may or may not be art, where having an institutional space to pose these open questions becomes the guiding principle for its function in society.

#### Artists' magazines as paradigmatic institutions

In designing our curriculum, we have tried to begin with explicit reference to history – with artists' magazines serving as an important example of how different forms of practice can become co-productive. Artistic research grows out of communities of practice that often have met on the printed page, in photographic documentation, in woodcut, offset and Xerox print. We begin with the example of artist magazines as an 'alternative space for art',<sup>3</sup> as they have brought together a constellation of practices that cannot be reduced to a single medium or discipline. As institutions, as media of communication and as works in their own right, artists' magazines are the space where a large part of artistic research has been developed, presented and disseminated.

Our historical trajectory begins with the German Expressionist art magazines *Der Sturm* and *Die Aktion* and the corresponding institutions these magazines supported that included local galleries in Berlin, publishing houses, as well as the international organisation of exhibitions (esp. *Der Sturm*). In many ways, these magazines could be seen as the forerunners of many contemporary art institutions, combining philosophy, social theory, literature, and visual arts in the same institutional space.

In this tradition (with the Surrealist magazines playing a central role), the following magazines, journals and books could all be used to understand the many forms this kind of mutual research and work has taken and continues to take in the present. In their different constellations, the work completed in these magazines and

3 Gwen Allen, *Artists' Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art*. (Cambridge (USA): MIT Press, 2011).

the various networks around them can be used as a blueprint for our curriculum and perhaps inspire future projects:

Der Sturm (1910-1932); Die Aktion (1911-1932); De Stijl (1917-1932); L'Esprit Nouveau (1920- 1925); Merz (1923-1932); LEF (1923-1925); Novy LEF (1927-1929); La Révolution Surréaliste (1924- 1929); Documents: doctrines, archéologie, beaux-arts, ethnographie (1929-1930); Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution (1930-1933); Minotaure (1933-1939); Acéphale (1936-1939); Bauhausbücher (1925-1930); Film Culture (1955-1999); Internationale Situationniste (1958-1969); Artforum (1962- ); Archigram (1961-1964); Aspen (1965-1971); BIT International (1968-1972); Interfunktionen (1968- 1975); Art-Language (1969-1985); Radical Software (1970-1974); Avalanche (1970-1976); File (1972- 1989); Art-Rite (1973-1978); Semiotext(e) (1974- 1984); Heresies (1977-1993); October (1976- ); Third Text (1987- ); Texte zur Kunst (1990- ); Afterall (1998- )

### Poetic institutions

The museum, art gallery, art magazine, and artist collective... these institutions provide a place to create, discuss and work together. They also, ideally, provide a source of livelihood. Stressing two different etymological origins of the 'poetic', we would propose a different approach to thinking about institutions, one related on the one hand to *poesis* as a particular sensibility with respect to language and form, and on the other hand *poesis* understood as making, creating, and construction.<sup>4</sup>

The poetic institution is always a work-in-progress. It lives as an immediate practice of creating and discussing about works, but also coordinating and consolidating collective activity, acquiring funding, etc. Art education, in any case, should encourage an awareness of this aspect of our work: the need to gather the forces of others around us, to create collectives or institutions based on a common poetic sense, while staying attuned to the need for basic organisational support.

### The experimental humanities

Why do we read Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, Warburg, Gramsci, Adorno, Saussure, Lacan, Levi-Strauss, Barthes, Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, Rancière, Kristeva, Mouffe, Butler, Spivak, etc. at art school? Why does a working knowledge of these (and other similar) authors represent for many practicing artists today not merely a passing interest – but rather a central and constitutive aspect of their practice?

We argue that throughout the 20th century, different versions of a 'hermeneutics of suspicion' (Paul Ricœur)<sup>5</sup> became an intrinsic part of artistic practice itself. As a starting point to consider this complex history, we would propose looking at the relationship between hermeneutics and aesthetics on the level of a common pursuit of an understanding of our relationship to 'representation'. As Foucault

4 Two historic examples of what I would understand as the ideal of 'poetic institutions' are the work of Jonas Mekas and George Maciunas. Both artists worked to create their own poetic works and understanding of the world, while working to create institutions that enabled a shared practice – including paying attention to mundane questions of funding, housing, organisation of exhibitions, etc.

5 See the chapter 'L'interprétation comme exercice de soupçon' in: Paul Ricœur, *De l'interprétation: Essai sur Freud* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1965).

stated in a discussion in 1964, 'Marx, Nietzsche and Freud have confronted us with a new possibility of interpretation, they have founded a new possibility for hermeneutics.' Hermeneutic traditions based on the works of Marx-Nietzsche-Freud present not only a new approach to knowledge, but also 'techniques of interpretation that concerned ourselves'.<sup>6</sup> These new possibilities of interpretation, this new kind of hermeneutics of suspicion, stands at the beginning of a new appreciation of our relationship to representation – 'representation' here understood as the difficult-to-delineate common ground of consciousness, images, and representative political order.

Throughout the 20th century, numerous experimental interpretative practices were translated into different forms of interrogation of representation – where exploring the self, social reality, our relationship to other persons and objects has continued to take place in a yet-to-be-defined space between reading, experience and the production and viewing of images and works of art.

In particular, it is important to note the presence in our sketch of Ngūgĩ wa Thiong'o's book *Decolonising the Mind* [1986]. With our work in the comparatively comfortable confines of Western Europe, it is important to include the question of representation with respect not only to political and intellectual conflicts within a North American and European context, but also to open up our research and our study programme to anti-imperialist and anti-hegemonic and/or marginalised positions. Of the many faults in our diagrammatic description of our programme, our own 'colonised minds' are the most challenging to overcome.

#### The dangers of a new humanism

As both the specificity and, paradoxically, the breadth of the above list of magazines and the length of the potentially relevant philosophers indicates, it would be important to understand what the challenges and even limits of our approach might be. One of the concrete difficulties facing art educators today is where to begin with this extensive history of the interplay of art, literature, film, and theory. How does one negotiate this terrain without having either to overly simplify or, at the other extreme, to essentially transform artists into historians and theoreticians...? Not only what past artists and philosophers should students know and study, but also what methods of using this information should we teach? Is there not a risk here of creating a new kind of historicist-based normative humanism... with students no longer quoting Cicero, Ovid, or Goethe but rather Adorno, Foucault, and Derrida... however critical the original intentions might be? It might be important to emphasise that any potential academic excesses could or even should be turned against themselves... lonely, nostalgic, drunk, deranged, or charged with political rage, these hermeneutic and historical considerations could explode into the present in other forms of research and artistic practice that are yet unknown... (breaking or unravelling the hermeneutic circle...)

6 'The first volume of *Capital*, texts like *The Birth of Tragedy* and *The Genealogy of Morals*, and *The Interpretation of Dreams*, put us back into the presence of interpretive techniques. And the shock effect, the kind of wound caused in Western thought by these works, probably comes from what they reconstituted before our eyes, something, moreover, that Marx himself called "hieroglyphs." This has put us into an uncomfortable position, since these techniques of interpretation concern us ourselves, since we, the interpreters, have begun to interpret ourselves by these techniques. With these techniques of interpretation, in turn, we must interrogate those interpreters who were Freud, Nietzsche, and Marx, so that we are perpetually sent back in a perpetual play of mirrors.' Michel Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Freud, Marx', in: *Essential Works 1954-1984*, Vol. 2 (New York: The New Press, 1998), 272.

### Teaching and learning as performing arts: How might the history of experimental art in the 20th century be used to rethink education?

Throughout the century, the 'experimental' in art and design often implied re-searching, celebrating, rethinking and sometimes questioning the fundamental structures or 'grammars' of art. One of the important tendencies of art in the 20th century was to explore and play with the *a priori* 'conditions of the possibility' of its creation and experience. This entailed both looking at the basic building blocks of the formal languages and media of expression, and at the same time exploring the fundamental cognitive, aesthetic, social and political parameters for our experience of art. In painting, for example, this implied such methodologies as reducing more complex forms to cubes, squares, lines, or exploring the nature of the canvas, its shape, its flatness, the properties of colour, of pigments, but also in less formalist terms, the significance of the institution within which it was shown, etc.; In music this meant exploring new systems of tonality and new ideas of rhythm; In poetry experiments with aleatorics, with stream of consciousness writing, etc.; In performance art, polemically, poetically, politically... emphasising the simple presence of the human body at the heart of our experience of art; In design, exploring the most economical principles of communication, etc.

Many artists throughout the 20th century, for example John Cage, Allan Kaprow, Robert Filliou, George Maciunas, Yvonne Rainer, Trisha Brown, Simone Forti and Joan Jonas, explored different ways of expanding our awareness of the basic choreography of everyday life. These artists worked on developing a broad understanding of art practice based on an examination of human interactions within specific, often absurd or contingent temporary institutional or ritual circumstances.

We propose that this rich history of experimental art could be drawn upon to explore different perspectives on education and communication, redefining and playing with the 'conditions for the possibility' of communication and learning.

### Rethinking the traditional university: Bringing the humanities from the scriptorium to expanded cinema

While our programme is situated within an art and design school, it might also be conceived within a traditional university setting – but this is not an attempt to translate academic norms to the art context, but rather to introduce artistic and design-based strategies and media into the context of the humanities. How might we rethink humanities research in the digital, multi-media and networked contemporary world? What role could art, design, film, and media play within the traditional university? In addition to the changes in our relationship to knowledge brought about in the digital age by the ubiquity and accessibility of vast archives, the ever-increasing capacity to search effectively through enormous quantities of data as well as our global interconnectedness, etc., digital technology has also played an important role in making it easier to produce and to disseminate older forms of expression that – while now effectively digital – belong to analogue traditions with histories reaching back well before the 1990s. While an enormous part of the revolution in humanities research involves new quantitative computational capacities and new systems of networking expanded largely over the past 30 years, the accessibility and comparative ease of use and dissemination of audio recording, graphic design, photography, and especially video represents an equally significant qualitative change in our way of communicating with others and expe-

riencing the world. While it is perhaps too simplistic, the dichotomy between the quantitative and qualitative transformation in the humanities could cautiously be referred to as 'digital humanities 2.0' as it has been in the manifesto-like *Digital Humanities* by the group of scholars and designers Anne Burdick, Johanna Drucker, Peter Lunenfeld, Todd Presner and Jeffrey Schnapp published in 2012.

Digital media in any case have changed learning culture dramatically and this new situation poses a unique chance: It is precisely in opposition to a largely user-oriented, top-down, corporate model of communication, that one could stress the importance of the design, production, and crafting of knowledge in the new digital contexts that dominate our world. Here, art, design, and film schools and programmes could play an important role in connecting research and experimentation conducted in universities to museums, libraries, research centers and the general public sphere of the internet.

With the pervasiveness of digital media in our society, knowledge is continually reshaping and resituating itself and even dissolving into the very structures of society as a whole. Here, one might argue, the world itself could be transformed into a learning machine. With Gene Youngblood's seminal work *Expanded Cinema* from 1970 in mind, one could design an 'intermedia' education that could be understood as an intervention in the vast noosphere or collective consciousness – a moment of intervention (and affirmation), a modest experiment in the immediate-utopian project of our own existence.

## Conclusion: general reflections on the further development of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle in the arts

*Are we being good ancestors?* – Jonas Salk<sup>7</sup>

First mentioned in his acceptance speech for the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding in 1977, this question must be posed nowadays with the greatest urgency with respect to the sustainability of our current way of living.<sup>8</sup> But it applies to all forms of long-term thinking and should stand at the beginning of any far-reaching educational reform. With the introduction of 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle programmes in the arts, we too must ask ourselves: are we being good ancestors?

### Balancing the struggle for equivalence with the need for differentiation

The most clear-cut argument in favour of the introduction of a 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle degree in the arts follows the inherent logic of the reform process in European higher education: if there is to be a system of equivalent degrees based on the three-tiered structure of the Bachelor, Master and 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle or PhD, then every field of study including the arts must be conceived within this structure. Not implementing a 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle in the arts would have systemic implications in terms of funding, the

- 7 First mentioned in his acceptance speech for the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding in 1977, this question is often posed nowadays with respect to the sustainability of our current way of living. As a challenge, it applies to all forms of long-term thinking and must stand at the beginning of any far-reaching educational reform. See: Jonas Salk, 'Are We Being Good Ancestors?' in: *World Affairs: The Journal of International Issues*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (December 1992): 16-18.
- 8 John Hausdoerffer, Brooke Parry Hecht, Melissa K. Nelson, and Katherine Kassouf Cummings, *What Kind of Ancestor Do You Want to Be?* (Chicago: Chicago Univ. Press, 2021).

accepted length of study programmes, etc. The lack of a 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle degree simply would mean allocating less time and fewer societal resources to the study of the arts.

On an international level, there is a similar structural-deterministic argument already at play, where countries without 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle degrees are at a disadvantage with respect to the amount and length of institutional support and the level of qualifications attainable in other countries.<sup>9</sup> Throughout the European Higher Education Area, there remains a wide variation in the definition and in the implementation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle in the arts, which has led to a pronounced imbalance between national education systems, with disparities between countries fundamentally contradicting the core goals of the Bologna reform process of creating a 'comparable, compatible and coherent system for European higher education'.<sup>10</sup>

Finally, and equally important, on the level of different art practices, we are also confronted with a potentially harmful disequilibrium and administrative intervention in the development of the arts. In particular, there is a very real danger that humanities-based, hermeneutic interdisciplinary art practice and research will become structurally overly favoured – especially if the touchstone for 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle degrees becomes some version of a traditional PhD thesis in the humanities. Although our programme is especially conceived along the lines of such research (requiring the submission of an academic paper as part of the artistic project), we would argue that this model should not become the basis for all future PhDs or 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle degrees. Instead, much like in other disciplines, 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle degrees in the arts should be conceived according to the needs of their specific programme, openly stating their particular emphasis in the programme (i.e. offering a PhD in Painting, PhD in Violin, PhD in Dance, or, in the case of inter- or trans-disciplinary programmes, PhDs in Art and Philosophy, Art and Art History, etc.).

For this reason, we would like to end with a cautionary note. Establishing underlying academic institutional structures based only on humanities-based research could lead to an imbalance between equally viable forms of inquiry and art practice. With the academic thesis as the *sine qua non*, we might end up with future generations of grant-writing interdisciplinary super artist-academics... but, without adequate caution, we might be overly intervening in the future diversity of art – I would argue much to its detriment.

9 Currently, Scandinavian-educated or British-educated artists with PhDs are now competing for the same jobs in Europe as German, Italian, Spanish artists who, due to the peculiarities of their own education systems, either do not have any, or do not have as many opportunities for PhDs or other 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle equivalents. While qualifications for academic jobs are more complicated in the arts (where in some cases non-academic qualifications can be equally or even more important), it cannot be denied that the current international situation is no longer tenable.

10 *The Bologna process: setting up the European higher education area.* <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=LEGISSUM:c11088>





# Beacons: Maritime Markers

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## SEEZEICHEN/BAKEN

Day beacons [Baken] are nautical signs [Seezeichen] that were once built to provide navigators with orientation in places that did not have any natural points of reference.

Some day beacons still exist today. Each beacon has its own unique architecture and this structure itself was drawn out on the nautical charts. They are often made of wood, between 2 and 30 metres high and anchored to the ground near the water.

Today, day beacons are rarely used as points of reference in maritime navigation.

## RETTUNGSBAKE

Rescue beacons [Rettungsbaken] are structures that have been built as refuges in the ocean. They either float in the water for shipwrecked mariners, or they are built in tidal areas such as the Wadden Sea as a refuge for mudflat hikers surprised by the rising tides or by thunderstorms.

On nautical charts, rescue beacons are marked with either 'ref' for 'refuge for shipwrecked mariners' or in German 'Z-S' for 'Zufluchtsstelle für Schiffbrüchige'

## PROJECT

The project proposes building beacons based on these traditional structures. Not on bodies of water, but rather in the city.

Today, we can orientate ourselves easily with the aid of new technologies, but we still always have to find places or things that serve as reference points.

This project looks to play with this somewhat antiquated form of navigation and orientation. We do not need beacons to find our way through the world nowadays, but, I would claim, if a large wooden structure with a strange symbol were constructed in the middle of a city, we might orientate ourselves differently.

I am planning to build several day beacons and rescue beacons in different sizes, shapes, materials and colours.

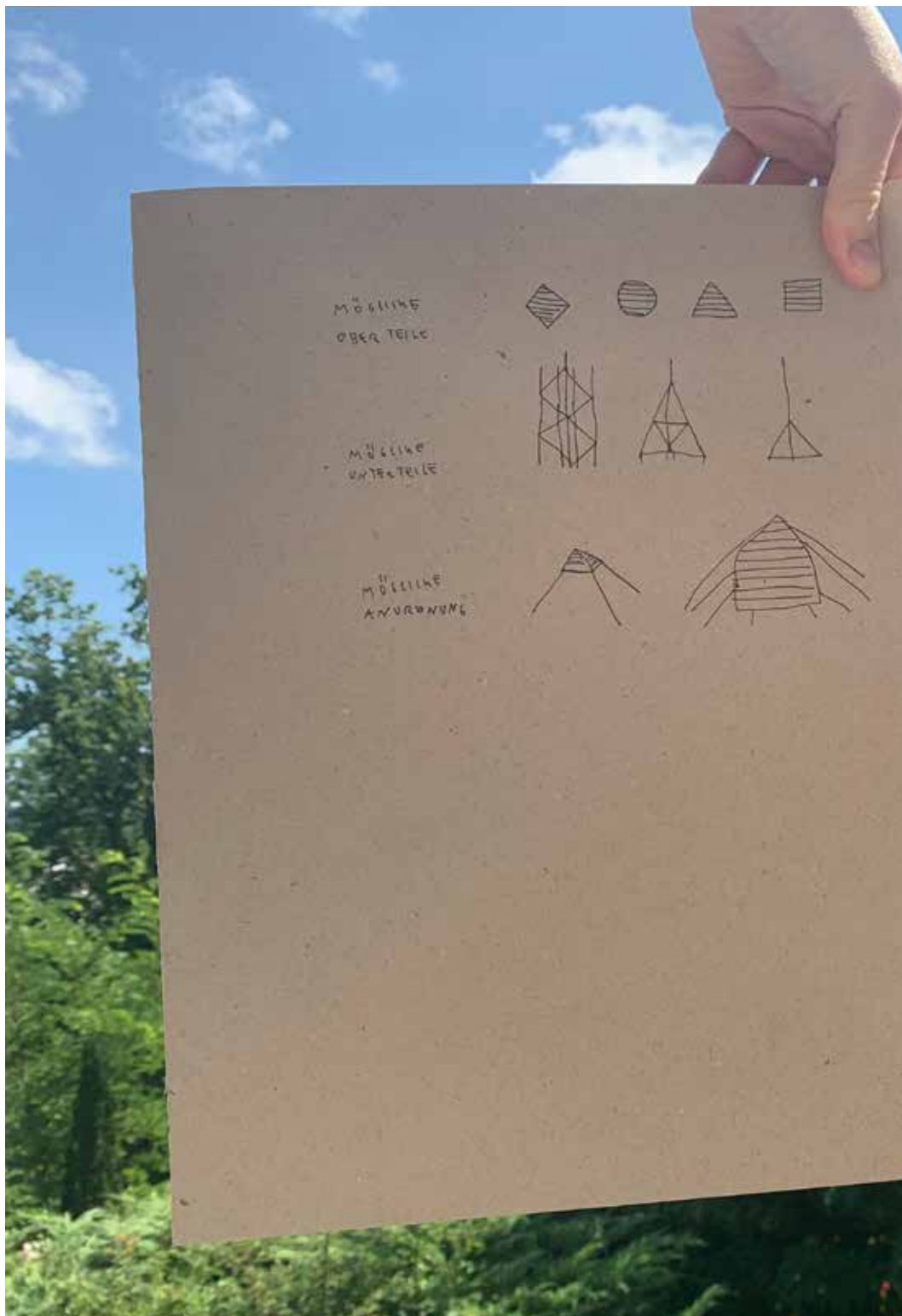
The next step in the project involves conceptualising rescue beacons that would be set up in public space and would serve as points of orientation in the city while at the same time creating a new space.

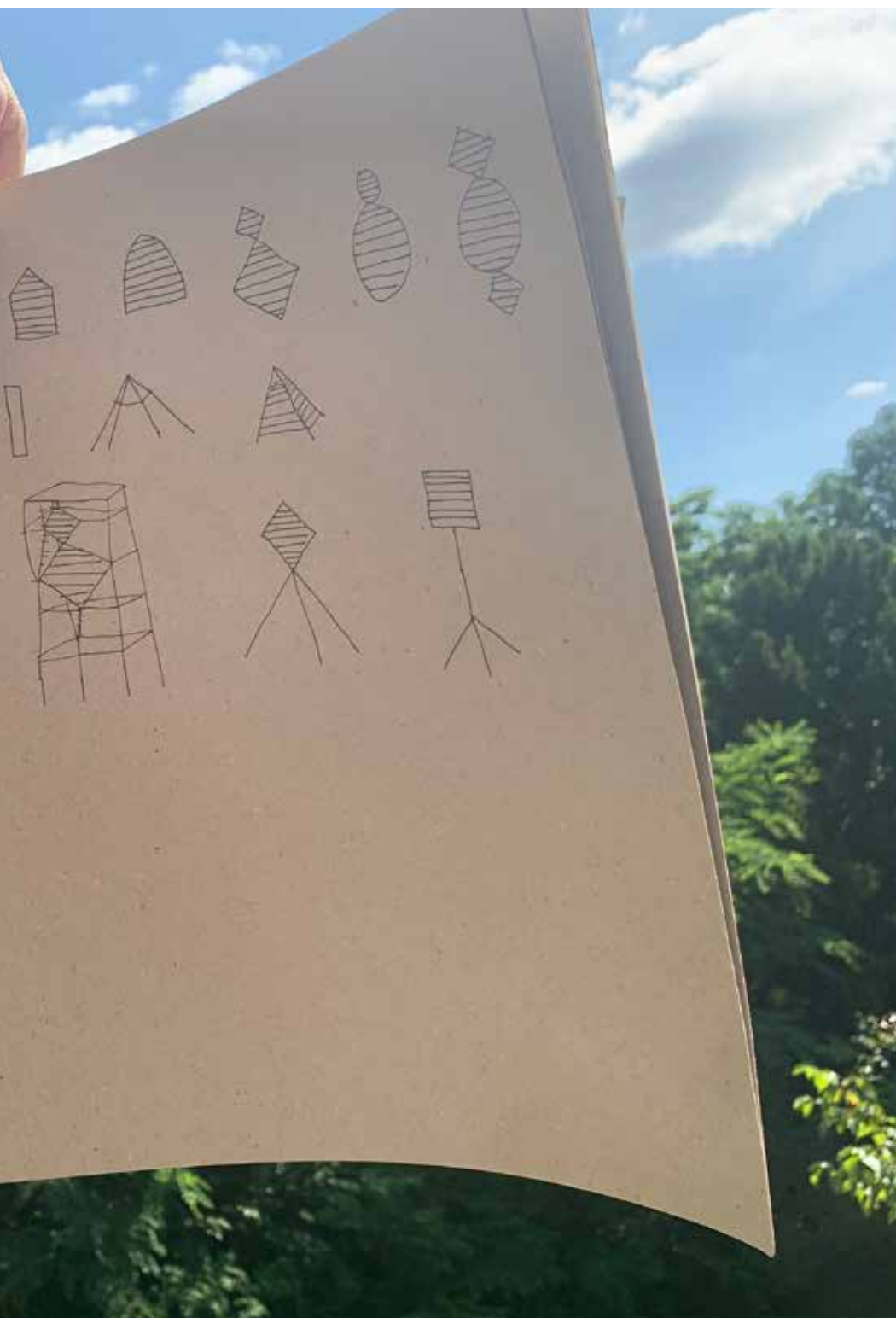
The theoretical and historical context of the project presupposes an interest in the history of navigation, visual communication, general semiotics, and architectural sea marks, but the *Baken* could also be situated within reflections on city planning, art in public space, architecture, and sculpture.

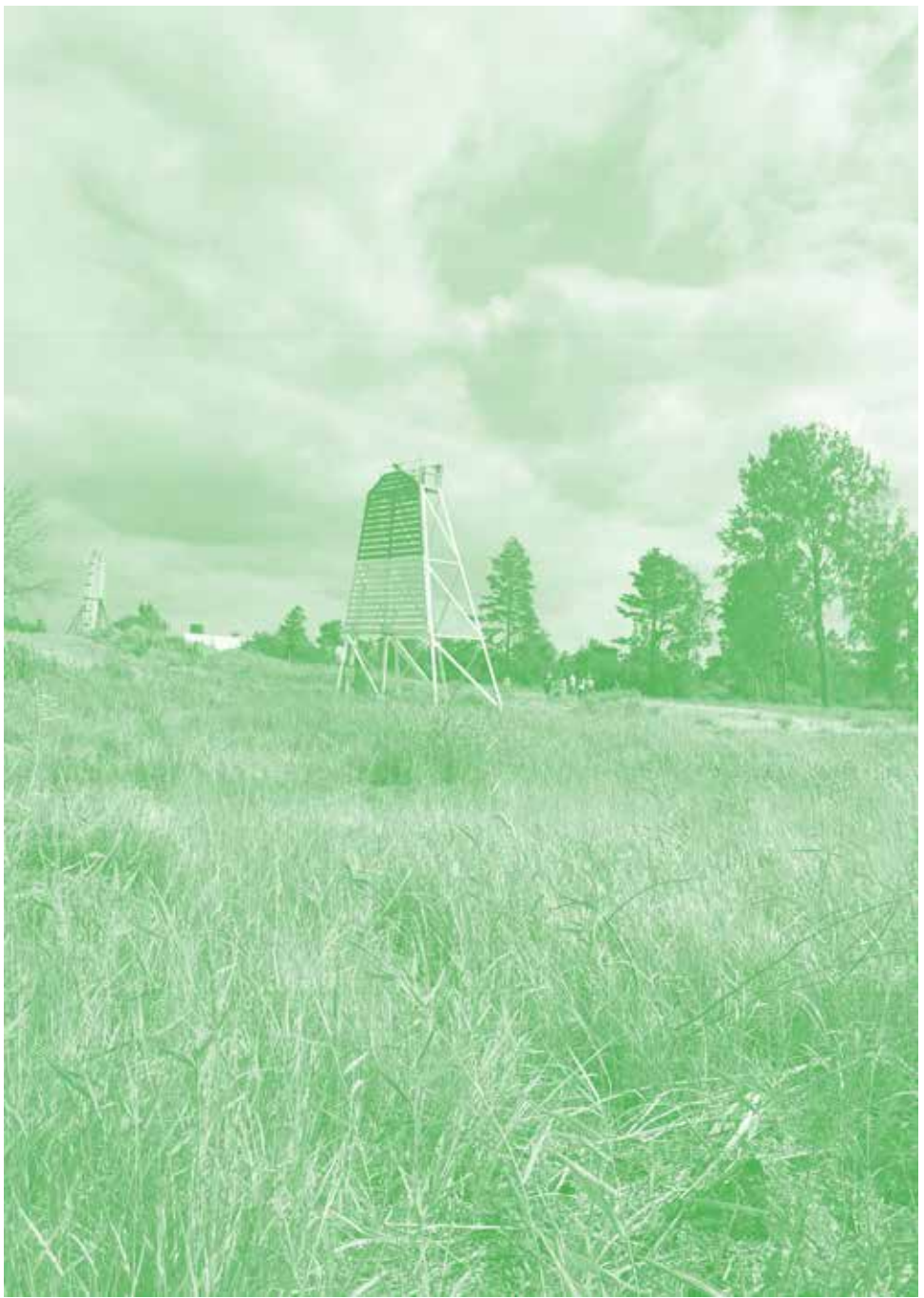
Between these many possible discursive zones, the objects themselves should maintain their potential for open interpretation. They are signs that signify something but also celebrate their arbitrariness – physical, material things tied down to a specific place, but nonetheless floating (pardon the pun) in a sea of signifiers.



The figures on this and the next page show a beacon in Cuxhaven, Germany, a rescue beacon in Neuwerk, Germany, and a sketch for the construction of possible upper and lower parts and their arrangement. All images are copyright of the author.

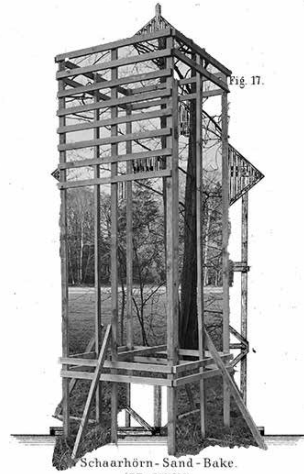








III. Theil, 2. Abschnitt. Abbildungen.  
Maasstab 1:200.



The figures on this and the next page show a photograph of a beacon in Freest, on the Baltic Sea, Germany, as well as images and a collage of a self-made beacon. All images are copyright of the author.





# The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts

## Steering the Ship, Embracing Risk:

Supervision Across Disciplines – Experiences  
and Future Paths

Maibritt Borgen<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Maibritt Borgen is Associate Professor and Head of the Laboratory for Arts Research at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts (hereafter RDAFA). She holds a PhD in art history from Yale University and an MA in Modern Culture from the University of Copenhagen. She is an alumnus of the Whitney Independent Study Programme and a former fellow at Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

# Introduction

In this chapter, I outline the structure of supervision in our current involvement in 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle artistic research and end by proposals for future development of the supervisory process.

I take as my starting point a case study – Jane Jin Kaisen’s (JJK) 2020 PhD project *Community of Parting*.<sup>2</sup> Kaisen’s project, which will be described at length in the case study presented at the end of this text, braids artistic research and theory to embrace questions of borders and translation, always insisting on the ability for artistic research to know *otherwise*. Kaisen’s project has – in many ways – pushed and challenged the commonly understood relation between the discursive and the practice-led aspects of an artistic research PhD which has been the norm in Denmark, more specifically the situation that the knowledge disseminated through a written dissertation *about* a practice gains priority over the knowledge communicated *through* the practice. This primacy of text over work can be an unwanted and unforeseen consequence of a structure where artistic research is assessed within academic frameworks.<sup>3</sup>

In contrast, Kaisen’s PhD work stressed the primacy of the artwork as the site where knowledge, research and inquiry took place. The various other articulations of the PhD project – exhibition, publication, dissertation – retranslated and re-mediated the aesthetic and theoretical propositions brought forth in the work. The writing was a discursive reframing of – or appendix to – that knowledge. Looking closer at how supervision has helped support *Communities of Parting*, I argue, shows the current potential of our supervisory structure and a path towards future developments.

Our dialogue with CrD partners and the exchange of experiences have been greatly inspiring in our efforts to develop our engagement with 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle research.

## History and organisation of 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle practice-based arts research at the RDAFA

The Laboratory for Arts Research has anchored practice-based PhD art research since 2015. 6 PhD candidates have concluded their dissertation work during this period, and 6 are currently active.

JJK was one of the first PhD candidates to be employed at the RDAFA. Kaisen’s PhD was structured as a collaboration between RDAFA as the official employer, and the University of Copenhagen as the degree-granting institution. It was funded entirely by a private foundation: the Novo Nordisk Foundation’s Mads Øvlisen PhD Scholarships for Practice-Based Research. This model (where employment, funding and degree-granting is divided between three institutions) is shared by all candidates currently undertaking 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle artistic research here, with different universities serving as collaboration partners. We currently have no public funding

2 Jane Jin Kaisen is currently Professor at the RDAFA.

3 As stated in Stabourlos, ‘Non-artist supervisors, mainly with an academic background, tend to focus on text instead of the artistic work. As a result, they remain unacquainted with the research project as a whole.’ [p.1]

for 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle artistic research at the Academy.

In the current administrative organisation of the practice-based PhD, the university has complete responsibility for the final assessment of the PhD project, as well as main responsibility for supervision. There is no legal framework stating criteria for practice-based 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle research in Denmark, thus artistic research is assessed along the same quality criteria as academic research, making Denmark an exception to the 'Nordic model' of Sweden and Norway, for example.<sup>4</sup> Sometimes, the final product put forth for evaluation is labelled a dissertation, and sometimes not. In the public announcement of JJK's PhD defence, for example, the word 'dissertation' was not mentioned.

Upon completion, the PhD project is assessed by a university-appointed committee consisting of three members. One of the three must be international and two of the three must be external members. The main supervisor and the PhD candidate propose the three members of the assessment committee, which must then be approved by the university administration. Supervisors cannot serve on the assessment committee. The Academy has no official role or capacity within this final assessment of the PhD.

As part of the degree, the PhD candidate teaches in both institutions, with 75% of the hours being awarded to the RDAFA and this is formalised in an official collaboration agreement between the two institutions.

## Supervision: current structure

Already at the stage of applying for the PhD, the candidate requests a designated supervisor from the university. This request is approved by the administration if the faculty member has time available. If not, another supervisor is appointed. Most often, a recurring group of university professors supervises the practice-based PhD candidates. This regularity has proven to be of clear benefit. It means that supervisors have – over time – developed experiences with artistic research PhDs, relationships with and curiosity within the field, along with experience of how to mediate between a practice-based research methodology and the standards of an academic institution.

While the main supervisors are all academics employed by the university, the candidate can choose secondary supervisors such as artists, academics, curators, or practitioners in various fields. The main supervisor is allocated time for supervision through their contract, while secondary supervisors are given a small honorarium. Some choose secondary supervisors for transdisciplinary purposes, someone with expertise in a scientific field or methodology that the project employs. We are currently exploring how we might add a secondary supervisor appointed through the Academy as a standard procedure. Administratively, the hours will either be split, or a secondary supervisor fee will be paid, resulting in either a division or an expansion of the resources for supervision.

4 James Elkins calls it 'The Nordic Model' in his article 'Six Cultures of the PhD' in M. Wilson and S. van Ruiten (eds.), *SHARE: Handbook for Artistic Research Education*, (Amsterdam: ELIA, 2013), pp.10-15.

## Supervision: potential challenges

As JJK describes in the case study, rigorous artistic thinking can be furthered through supervision with supervisors from a variety of backgrounds, which can help advance candidates' ambitions about making impact in fields outside art. For her, supervision from different fields (a team of two supervisors from art history and literature, respectively) helped the project to define its own terms by mellowing expectations and anxieties (around writing 'lucidly' or 'academically') that might primarily stem from one's own expectations. Supervisors thus have the crucial potential to open up the 'knowing otherwise', to keep boundaries between disciplines porous, and to help candidates develop and employ their methodology. Supervisors further help navigate the framework of academia, bolstering the candidate's confidence that the final goal (doctorate) can be reached through the chosen research path.

However, if one pillar of supervision is arguably to create confidence around academic requirements and regulations, what could be gained if such bureaucratic structures were more fluid, less closed? In her exhibition catalogue, JJK's dissertation project contained multiple ongoing conversations through various interviews conducted with important interlocutors over the years, voices that were neither supervision nor reflection, but instead a commitment to dialogue, collaboration and collective thinking. A future structure for supervision could unfold this dialogue mode into a formal framework for supervision. Might we develop flexible sewing-pattern models, rather than ready-to-wear standards for the PhD projects?

If there is a challenge, it is the current structural framework where all the authority to ultimately assess the PhD is given to the university. While there might be great willingness, on the part of universities, for openness and collaboration, and priority given to truly nurture artistic research, openness, and flexibility, this is not formalised in the structure around supervision. The monitoring of progress of study happens through progress reports written by the PhD candidate and signed by the supervisor, all taking place within the university framework.<sup>5</sup> There is a latent risk that progress in research ends up feeling equivalent to progress in writing. This can happen unintentionally, due to the lack of a formal framework for assessing the artistic output.

At the same time, the Academy only has informal tools for evaluating supervisors. Of course, a lot of information is exchanged informally, and advice passed on, about good supervisors. However, we lack a formal framework for collaboration around supervision and for quality assessment of supervisors between the Academy and the University.

To help develop larger support for and understanding of the challenges observed by PhD candidates, we have initiated annual group meetings with all current university supervisors and administrators to bring together experiences, address challenges and explore future developments. This dialogue is an important first step to develop models where the artistic practice is supported by the supervision, rather than the supervision focusing on the practice-as-dissertation. The Academy is beginning a range of initiatives to foster community between the

<sup>5</sup> Candidates file what are called 'progress reports' three times throughout their PhD process. These are signed by supervisors but not shared with the Academy.

PhD candidates.<sup>6</sup> While supervisors introduce PhD candidates to their relevant research communities and thus provide potential for the transdisciplinary dialogue outlined in the case study, it is also important to foster a community around the artistic production.

## Supervision: paths forward

For the RDAFA, supervision should both support and develop as many facets of the PhD project as possible, and provide a necessary sounding board through which the complexities of the project can be unfolded. While it is contingent with – and sensible within – the current structure to have a main supervisor from the university who is responsible for the PhD project ultimately fulfilling university requirements, there is great potential in developing a structure for supervision that might also specifically assess the artistic qualities and outputs of the project, and thus further develop the fruitful collaboration put forth in the JJK case study. Shared supervision would allow for a firmer development of the artistic qualities both within the project, and towards the final goal of obtaining the degree.

We want to foster an environment that takes into consideration the distinct aspects of supervision in a practice-based research PhD, where supervision involves taking an already established (artistic) practice and bringing it into dialogue with a perhaps different field (research). This creates a set of needs in terms of input, where the supervisor doesn't so much provide feedback 'from above' but rather thinks along or alongside the candidate, challenging when necessary and remaining curious. Supervision should foreground feedback (or feed-forward) on artistic work as the prime expression (which can be text-based or employ research methodologies), not on text as reflection around artistic practice.

## Summary

Our current involvement in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle is the result of a very recent development. Over recent years, practice-led arts research in Denmark has grown in scale and the Academy has been at the forefront of this development. Now, we want to focus on developing new collaborations and frameworks that address the challenges we meet along the way – challenges shared by other institutions. We explore how to set up frameworks for supervision that nourish and acknowledge the artistic qualities in each project, and how to develop legal and administrative frameworks that respect the long history of artistic research often consciously placing itself

6 Here, we build on what in the report *The Art of Feedback* is called a structure for a possible 'Roadmap towards meaningful exchange on artistic work' (p.12): 1) Establishing constructive foundations, 2) Establishing open communication between supervisor(s) and PhD candidate, 3) Giving and receiving artistic feedback and 4) Building community: the doctoral research environment.

in opposition to, or not identifying with, scientific research.<sup>7</sup> In short, how do we create a support structure that is as open and inclusive as possible, that builds on solidarity, community and nurturing, and that insists on the possibility for artistic research to be speculative, reparative, and to know *otherwise*, to paraphrase JJK.<sup>8</sup>

We want to construct a programme that encompasses a variety of artistic practices. We want to take art seriously *as research*,<sup>9</sup> and to use research and the knowledge and techniques from a variety of disciplines as artistic material. Our current aim is to develop a structure where supervision can take the form of a collective conversation between supervisors, invited dialogue partners, and the PhD candidate, and where there is time and facilities to address artistic outputs in a variety of forms. This is especially important early in the research process, and would supplement our current structure of individual advisor meetings and progress reports. This would deepen the rigour with which concepts, methodologies, and methods are developed through artistic research, and foster interdisciplinary dialogue from within artistic practice.

For the foreseeable future, we will be working within the 3-way split structure between an employing institution (the Academy), a degree-awarding institution (the university) and a funding body. This gives generous support to the individual research projects, and importantly, funnels most of the funding directly to artists and research. It grows a catalogue of projects, not infrastructure. At the Academy, we are interested in exploring how we might develop a different kind of structure from within this framework, and while we have not at this time succeeded in raising funding for a CrD pilot programme, the thinking that has gone into how we might create other forms of institutional collaborations has been highly productive.

We want to take as points for development the models for support structures for artistic research put forth in the recent *Vienna Declaration on Artistic Research*. This publication states that ‘funding channels should include support for the continuous development of the research infrastructure, e.g. supervisory training, project-based individual research outputs, quality assessment processes and the creation of permanent repositories where research can be made more discoverable and accessible in the public domain’.<sup>10</sup> But when developing, we want to keep artistic thinking as our primary concern, and to establish administrative frameworks that nurture, support, and respect this thinking.

Hopefully, in the future, we can develop a research infrastructure that includes supervisory training in the forms I have proposed: project-based individual research outputs that imply the ability to create and publish a variety of materials as part of doctoral study. Any ‘permanent repositories where research can be made

7 For a few historic and current contributions to the unresolved debate of art’s relation to research, and artistic research to research and art, see for example Cramer and Tierpsma [2021], and Jorn [1958]. Theorist and curator Chuz calls artistic research ‘an active reconsideration of certain representations of knowledge in the context of art. By asking “What is the reverse of the known?” the form of inquiry that takes place in art amounts to an intuitive grasp of a philosophical and political problematic that defines not only what culture is but what it may be in the future.’ To Martinez, aligning artistic research with conventional research ‘entertains a paradox: the possibility of a non-deliberate system or discipline at the core of the deliberate ones. “Research” here does not name the embodiment of any particular form of academic training, but the gesture of placing the “maybe” at the core of the real.’ [Martinez (2012), p. 46].

8 For a deeper discussion of artistic research as reparative practice, see Katrine Dirckinck-Holmfeld [2015].

9 Lucy Cotter, *Reclaiming Artistic Research*, (Berlin: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2019).

10 *The Vienna Declaration on Artistic Research* (2020). [https://cultureactioneurope.org/files/2020/06/Vienna-Declaration-on-AR\\_corrected-version\\_24-June-20-1.pdf](https://cultureactioneurope.org/files/2020/06/Vienna-Declaration-on-AR_corrected-version_24-June-20-1.pdf)

more discoverable and accessible in the public domain' should be understood as the variety of sites where different publics can access the artistic outputs. Therefore, alongside supervision, we would like to work consciously with the publication (made-public) of the outputs of the projects, how and where they are shown and the various publics they meet. To this end, we are focusing consciously on the final PhD product being assessed as one having a variety of formats. It is a package that includes text, but doesn't give it primacy. We need to make alliances with experimental research in a variety of fields within academia and art; grow alternate formats of publishing, writing, curating, researching; develop new understandings of methods, concepts and formats for artistic research.

In the future, we wish to develop a structure that as much as possible, removes the anxiety around 'fitting into' academia. We do not wish for a written reflection to disappear from the project altogether, as writing is a medium through which artists and researchers can meet across disciplines, but we want to eliminate text as a framework that legitimises artistic practice. We wish to support the ambitions of PhD candidates who want to explore writing as the demarcation of space for slow research and attention to methodology that, as JJK points out, has a different temporality than project-based art economy. All institutional structures we develop should support these developments. Equally, we wish to retain and develop the ways in which practice-led arts research has always opened up often-overlooked narratives and histories precisely at the site of representation, to embrace complexity, diversity and openness through the dialogues around supervision.

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# Crossing Borders and Staying with the Trouble:

## Interview with Jane Jin Kaisen JKK<sup>1</sup>

January 4, 2021

by Maibritt Borgen (MB)

<sup>1</sup> Jane Jin Kaisen is a visual artist and Professor at the School of Media Arts at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts. She holds a PhD in artistic research from the University of Copenhagen. Kaisen represented Korea at the 58th Venice Biennale in 2019 and was awarded 'Exhibition of the Year 2020' by AICA – International Association of Art Critics, Denmark, for her exhibition *Community of Parting* at Kunsthall Charlottenborg. She has participated in the Biennales of Liverpool, Gwangju, Anren, Jeju, among others. Other recent exhibitions include *Community of Parting* at Art Sonje Center; *Of Specters or Returns*, Gallery damdam; *Frequencies of Tradition*, Times Museum, Guangzhou; *A Mechanism Capable of Changing Itself*, Forum Expanded, the 68th Berlin International Film Festival; *2 or 3 Tigers*, Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Germany; *Asian Diva: The Muse and the Monster*, Buk Seoul Museum of Art; *Art Spectrum 2016*, the Leeum Samsung Museum of Art; and *Interrupted Survey: Fractured Modern Mythologies*, Asia Culture Center.

*MB: Describe your PhD process. How did the project materialise initially? (How) did it change along the way?*

JJK: I started out with an idea for a different project, which was somewhat similar in that it had translation as a focus point but was much more oriented towards trying to formulate a translational aesthetics. Thematically, it was engaged with the globalisation of art and it was more art historical. I had an idea of an art project that was transnational and centred on transnational surrogate mothership among other things.

However, in May 2015, nine months into my PhD research, I participated in an international women's delegation to North Korea. After many negotiations, we obtained permission to cross the demilitarised zone (DMZ) that divides North and South Korea and constitutes one of the world's most heavily fortified borders. The experience elicited a fundamental reconsideration of my PhD research and further marked a turning point in my artistic practice. Prior to this experience, I had already been invested in legacies of the Korean War, but this experience prompted a more sustained engagement with borders. I saw the necessity of not merely approaching these questions and theorising them from afar, but immersing myself in situations where the violent and traumatic effects of borders have tangible effects while simultaneously challenging my own presumptions. It also involved a more nuanced consideration of how the durational impasse of Korea's division continues to reverberate in and beyond Korea, while it tends to be interlocked in preconceived biases and regimes of translation.

This was really where the artistic investigation began and the process of braiding artistic research and theory, adjusting theory around artistic research, around artistic practice, and around artistic investigation. My participation in this border crossing delegation came to shape both my methodology and my theoretical considerations. As well, it impacted the research environments, the academic and artistic contexts I ended up participating in as part of my PhD research, and the geopolitical coordinates for my project. Crossing the border is where the work became practice-led or practice-informed and I believe that staying open towards the insights gained from practice and involvement in extra-academic activities also enhanced the depth and scope of the project and its reach.

I didn't conceptualise the central artwork *Community of Parting* prior to my PhD research. Rather, it developed during the research process and only after I had made several other artworks, experiments, and exhibition projects that didn't end up being part of the dissertation. I exceeded the time frame of three years but I think the project would have been very different and a lot less interesting or rigorous if I had submitted the project within the allotted time frame. In that case, I think I would have had to choose between either doing a primarily academic thesis or a primarily artistic thesis, but the synthesis of the two would have been difficult while retaining the artistic and theoretical rigour and experimentation.

*MB: Describe the formats or elements of your PhD*

JJK: The artwork *Community of Parting* is central to my articulation of the PhD project, while the exhibition and the publication retranslate and remediate its aesthetic and theoretical propositions, thereby engaging reader, audience, and material in different ways. These constant retranslations become a cyclically evolving endeavour – a non-linear, multi-layered, multi-faceted, dialogical, and collectively

informed interweaving — to embrace questions of borders and translation that reverberate throughout the PhD. The writing offers some entry points and considerations around process, and provides some further clarifications, but the artwork, the exhibition, and the publication are together the main body of the dissertation.

*MB: In your summary, you state that you consider ‘form and content to be inseparable within artistic research and my art projects that form the core of this PhD are at once aesthetic and discursive interventions, propositions for other ways of seeing and knowing’. How did you develop the research methodologies in your PhD?*

JJK: I wanted to tease out a methodology for the artistic works themselves based on my practice. Something where I would be able to articulate, define and (self)-reflect on the how and why of my practice. Primarily, I work in film, but it had to be able to expand to other components as well. I wanted it to contribute to artistic research but also have an impact within other discursive fields: experimental film, border studies, post- and de-colonial theory, transnational feminist theory, to name but a few. I follow the Korean shamanic myth of Bari from a feminist perspective and employ the myth as a threshold approach in regard to borders, translation and aesthetic mediation. My work is articulated at the intersection of different filmic genres and discursive fields and for me, a great potential of artistic research lies in its capacity to operate at the threshold of different forms of knowledge.

*MB: What did the project as an artistic research PhD allow you to formulate that you wouldn’t have been able to otherwise?*

JJK: A PhD project has a different temporality than most exhibition projects and it challenged me to be self-reflexive about my approach and how to convey my practice and research to others across different modes of communication. Art can be elusive, but there is a rigour to a PhD project where you have to stay with the trouble and not just move on. The institutional frameworks offer possibilities as well: access to other institutions that are harder as an individual artist to gain access to, and it was enriching to be affiliated with various international research networks and institutions.

*MB: Your PhD is supported by a collaboration between two institutions: the University (theoretical and academic) and the art academy (site for artistic practice). Does this partnership manifest in the structure or format of the dissertation?*

JJK: As such, the institutional collaboration suited my project, or you can say that I benefitted from being part of both an artistic environment and an academic environment. However, the realisation of my artistic work and main inquiries took place outside of both these institutions since the geopolitical scope of my project was primarily elsewhere. There is a larger question about whether one model fits all, or whether we should allow the project to define the terms and the collaborators. For me, it was liberating to let the project define the terms.

*MB: What lessons did you learn during your PhD project that you wish the 2021 Jane could have told yourself about in 2016?*

JJK: I spent so long not only writing, but also thinking about how to conceptualise the writing. I would have told my former self to stop stressing about writing. My

supervisor told me to stop writing the introduction, to get into the material first and write the introduction last. He had a kind of academic foresight that I didn't have, and for me it was impossible not to think of the writing as an artistic medium rather than just as a means of communication. I had a lot of ambitions about the writing, that it should live up to the same kind of aesthetic criteria that I pursue in film for example. At the same time, writing is not my artistic medium. Perhaps this is why the written dissertation can feel agonising for artists. At least for me, I had a lot of stylistic concerns about the writing; I wanted it not only to convey my ideas but also stylistically to embody my ideas.

My 2020 self would have allowed my former self to become immersed in the artistic work and let it guide me instead of writing synchronously with the work, even if some of the writing was published. Maybe we need to dismantle some myths about academic writing or consider whether the theoretical proposition can actually be engrained within an artwork itself and take other material forms, for example as a film, which in my case is also a narrative medium.

*MB: How has supervision shaped the project in relation to all the other encounters with artists and scholars you frame through your project?*

JJK: My main supervisor was from the University of Copenhagen and is a Professor of art history. He was very supportive of my artistic research and encouraged me to follow my artistic inquiries. He also served as someone who made sure the requirements were fulfilled and kept me on track. I also chose to have a co-supervisor with an equal number of hours who is an academic coming from literature but who has been involved in a lot of trans-disciplinary projects and who is very encouraging of artistic research. In addition, I had many informal dialogues with artist colleagues throughout as well as with historians, anthropologists, activists, etc. This constellation worked out well.

*MB: Was there a key situation in which the supervision changed the course of the project in one direction or the other?*

JJK: No. Initially, I was very concerned about fulfilling the formal criteria and requirements for a PhD within the university system, which felt very foreign to me. My supervisors were both very encouraging and helped me ensure that the institutional structure did not impede on the artistic process. The shared structure between the Academy and the University can create stress and uncertainty about what is expected. They helped me take charge and define what I needed and what was conducive to my project, and that was very useful.

*MB: What did you gain from the official framework of PhD courses et cetera that you had to do for ECTS credits? What should/could replace this in a CrD model?*

JJK: I did most of my coursework outside of my two institutions because it was more relevant to the scope of my project. I earned a lot of ECTS by presenting at conferences, both conferences that were relevant to my project and conferences focused on artistic research. In my perspective, it is important to have some elasticity in the CrD model where exhibition activities and artist talks are formally acknowledged on equal terms with presentations within academic conference settings. It is also helpful that CrD doesn't require that you fulfil PhD courses primarily within the host institution, but rather formally acknowledges and encour-

ages you to follow the trajectory of the project, even if it means exceeding the institutional frameworks.

*MB: Now you are a professor and could be a potential supervisor for future PhDs. What structures would you put in place for such a project? What would your recommendations be?*

JJK: At first, I got a bit irritated about the academic expectation of a 'methodology' and the term might be inaccurate when it comes to artistic research. At the same time, finding and articulating one's methodology or approach as an artist-researcher is very interesting in terms of developing how insights into artistic knowledge can be conveyed and shared. It can also contribute to a deeper understanding of one's own artistic practice. The question of methodology is different for artists because there is no prescriptive method. Rather, one has to invent one's own methodology. It is related to the unique approach within an artistic practice and how that practice compels an idiosyncratic way of doing research. Such an understanding of practice releases a great potential for alternative forms of knowledge to emerge. This is something I think deserves more attention and I would be curious about supervising, encouraging and being part of articulating a common language for this, while proceeding from the notion that each artistic research project is unique and therefore should not be confined.















# École nationale supérieure d'arts de Paris-Cergy Reflections about Dissemination, Artistic Practice and Professional Know-How

**Annabela Tournon Zubieta<sup>1</sup>**

**Preface of Corinne Diserens<sup>2</sup>**

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## Preface

A public higher school of art falling under the oversight of the French Ministry of Culture, the *École nationale supérieure d'arts de Paris-Cergy* (ENSAPC) trains artists and creatives at the international level. ENSAPC's resolutely cross-disciplinary offerings span a wide range of fields, linking the visual arts, writing, live performance, sound, film, and theory. In cooperation with partners in France and abroad, the school invites artistic experimentation, invention, and study, encouraging students to play a major role in shaping their own course of study. It is a locus of lively contention and fruitful exchange, a space in which ideas, imagination, knowledge, and experience collide and coalesce in complementary ways.

Openness to the world, intercultural dialogue, and international cooperation are integral parts of ENSAPC's institutional policy. Each year, the school welcomes students, instructors, practicing artists, and scholars from all over the world. It also organises numerous joint projects and cooperative ventures in France and abroad.

ENSAPC offers a three-year undergraduate programme leading to the *Diplôme National d'Arts* (DNA), equivalent to the Bachelor, and a two-year Master's-level programme culminating in the *Diplôme National Supérieur d'Expression Plastique* (DNSEP). Teaching activities – courses, research and creation workshops, research plans, studios, seminars, and travel – are enriched by the hard work of research and by modes of thinking and acting that stem from students' individual artistic practice. Through the Graduate School of Humanities, Creation, and Heritage, the school also offers a practice-led doctorate delivered in partnership with the following institutions: CY Cergy Paris University (humanities and social sciences), the National School of Architecture of Versailles, the National School of Landscape Architecture of Versailles, and the Institut National du Patrimoine. This highly internationalised doctoral programme is open to artists, architects, landscape architects, restorers, conservators, and authors, among others.

ENSAPC's Art Research Laboratory (LaRA) is an internal structure that brings together the school's research faculty, guest scholars, and doctoral candidates. Housing a variety of rich research projects under way at ENSAPC, the laboratory is a space for epistemological reflection, interweaving the theory and practice of artistic research. Recognised as a research unit by the French Ministry of Culture, LaRA receives support from the French government and is affiliated with the CY Cergy Paris University Graduate School of Humanities, Creation, and Heritage.

ENSAPC is betting on our collective capacity to chart paths of fruitful experimentation, combined with modes of transmission, production, research, presentation, and reception – consistent with the dynamics of pedagogical, artistic, and community collaboration.



*Sometimes making  
something leads to  
nothing  
Algunas veces el hacer  
algo nos lleva a nada  
Às vezes fazer alguma  
coisa não leva à nada  
Francis Aljys*

*Francis Aljys, Paradox of Praxis 1 (Sometimes Making Something Leads to Nothing), 1997. Videostill © Francis Aljys*

## I. Disseminating results

The idea of a manual is the idea of a toolbox, with tools made available for use by artists, artist-researchers, researchers, students, thesis directors, experts, and the interested public. Is 'disseminating results' a good tool?

### The question of results

Without revisiting the question of the usefulness of art and the question of results as such, I would nevertheless like to recall some well-known milestones. Since the avant-gardes and neo-avant-gardes, art has maintained a critical relationship with progressive ideologies (failure makes for very good works and can no doubt lead to artistic research as well); likewise, since the 19th century, the field of art has developed in symmetrical opposition to that of the so-called positive or natural sciences, and it is only in contemporary times, after the post-1989 upheavals viewed through the prism of postmodernity, that this opposition has been eroded.

As philosophers and historians of science Peter Gallison and Lorraine Daston emphasised in their fascinating study *Objectivity*, the history of objectivity traces a portrait, as if in a mirror, of the history of artistic subjectivity which invites us to see the figure of the artist-researcher today as the meeting of two previously opposed 'personas' and ethos:

The divided scientific self, actively willing its own passivity, was only one of the possible selves within the field created by the distinction between objectivity and subjectivity. Its polar opposite, equally stereotyped and normalized, was the artistic self, as militantly subjective as the scientific self was objective. For an artist to 'copy nature' slavishly was to forsake not only the imagination but also the individuality that Charles Baudelaire and other antirealist critics believed was essential to great art. Subjective art invited, even demanded, the externalized exercise of the will, actively molding matter and form to fit the artist's conception. [...] Both artistic and scientific personas spawned distinct heroic myths, albeit complementary ones. The heroic artist was authentic, recreating the

world in the image of an assertive and indelible self. The heroic scientist was disciplined, discovering the world through work.<sup>3</sup>

The question of results, or of effects, has never actually been completely alien to art. Francis Alÿs' performance and video in Mexico City in 1997, *Sometimes making something leads to nothing*, reminds us through references to Fluxus performances, that the more an object dissolves (disseminates, or in this case melts) in the social, the more effective it is: the more results it produces. Even if, from another perspective, it is lost or disappears.

*Paradox of the avant-gardes*: the more socially useful art is, the more invisible it is as art. Thus, the art of the avant-gardes is not alien to the idea of 'results', it's just that the results are gathered in a sphere other than art, that is, in the social or political sphere.

Now the question remains, are the 'effects' of art gathered in the social sphere strictly speaking 'results'?

Is the result a small pool of ice or is it, as the final images of children looking at the camera and laughing suggest, a temporary dissipation of form in favour of an ironic moment of collective sharing?

Why 'results', and not consequences, effects, impressions?

Must we redefine the emotions and thoughts that art elicits in us through the prism of the notion of results, in other words, as an aggregate of exploitable elements?

**Definition of *Result***: – a consequence, effect, or outcome of something – an item of information obtained by experiment or some other scientific method; a quantity or formula obtained by calculation.<sup>4</sup>

There are, no doubt, as many definitions of results as there are of artistic research and of art in general.

No need to dwell on this question any longer, as we can clearly see that considering art through the lens of a (neoliberal) culture of results leads to a questionable approach. To separate on the one hand, the cognitive, sensitive, and emotional effect that art has on us, from its effects in the social sphere on the other, creates a division. For art is neither a cause only nor solely a conscious activity.

### The question of dissemination

The term 'disseminating' appears twice in *The Vienna Declaration on Artistic Research*.<sup>5</sup> It is used in a strongly politically and ideologically charged way.

The two mentions appear in the following statements: 'This environment requires funding for: [...] ensuring appropriate physical and virtual infrastructures as well as archiving and *disseminating means*', and further on, 'Today there is a rapidly growing number of doctoral/PhD programmes all across Europe dedicated to AR [...] and a large quantity of scholarly publications globally *disseminating AR*' (emphasis added).

3 Peter Gallison and Lorraine Daston, *Objectivity*, (Brooklyn, NY (USA): Zone Books, 2007), p. 246.

4 Translation from a French dictionary, *Le Robert*.

5 *The Vienna Declaration on Artistic Research* (2020). [https://cultureactioneurope.org/files/2020/06/Vienna-Declaration-on-AR\\_corrected-version\\_24-June-20-1.pdf](https://cultureactioneurope.org/files/2020/06/Vienna-Declaration-on-AR_corrected-version_24-June-20-1.pdf)

These citations imply that the movement or phenomenon in question is versatile. The means must be gathered to structure and promote artistic research. But at the same time, artistic research is itself disseminated via a large number of academic publications. According to this perspective, dissemination is everywhere: artistic research is a vehicle that links different spheres.

Dissemination therefore implies tools and means. Are these means external to artistic research? Or are they assumed to be part of artistic research, as means participating in the research itself, means including artistic means, which can be diverted, put to unexpected uses?

Many contemporary artworks integrate or give thought to their own dissemination. A work of art is by definition a 'form of address',<sup>6</sup> addressing an audience or a viewer.

To think of the dissemination of results as separate from the production of the results themselves is to create a tension against the artwork itself.

The Vienna Declaration reveals the tendency, from an institutional standpoint, for artistic research to lose its autonomy since it is seen as a vehicle for something else – for instance, for social equality and health, as is plainly stated in the same declaration. While it is true that the autonomy of the work of art is partial, and that it has evident and multiple links with the world outside of art, this precarious autonomy is nonetheless the foundation on which the responsibility of the artist-researcher is based, and it guarantees the ethical import of his or her work.

Lastly, the biological metaphor of dissemination as a natural process of dispersal has to be questioned. It has the immediate effect of naturalising a phenomenon that requires tools and means, and which, therefore, is not natural, because we know it can be controlled and developed.

More than 30 years of research in subaltern and postcolonial studies<sup>7</sup> has revolutionised our ways of doing science and recounting history.<sup>8</sup> We now know that things do not simply come about naturally, and they do not disseminate because the wind is blowing in the right direction. In *La Colonisation du savoir*, Samir Boumedienne traces the history of the appropriation of indigenous American knowledge by Europeans since the conquest of the Americas.<sup>9</sup> What could have been seen as a natural dissemination of knowledge and of American plant species went hand in hand with prohibiting the uses of plants, expropriating species, appropriating and confiscating certain practices.

So do we really want to disseminate our results to the rest of the world? What is worth the effort to disseminate in artistic research?

Wouldn't it be better to reintegrate the subject, the entity, the collectivity that

6 The question of art as a specific activity in the social environment firstly concerns the address of the work of art: public or audience, undetermined subject or community. Mallarmé's position in his dispute with Leon Tolstoy (*What is Art?*, 1898) and the Christian universalism advocated by the latter, lets us see artistic activity in its double relationship to democratic institutions and the transformations of the work and how it is addressed to 'whomever' (*'A qui veut,' anybody and not everybody*). See Jean-François Chevrier, *L'action restreinte. L'art moderne selon Mallarmé*, (Paris: Hazan, 2005).

7 We are using the term 'postcolonial' in the sense developed by Stuart Hall in his article 'When was "the post-colonial"? Thinking at the limit,' in *The Postcolonial Question* (1996), that is to say, not as a historical regime that came after the colonial period but as an historical condition in which the colonial is prolonged in other forms.

8 Jack Goody, *The Theft of History*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

9 Samir Boumedienne, *La Colonisation du savoir. Une histoire des plantes médicinales du 'nouveau monde' (1492-1750)* (Vaulx-en-Velin: Éditions des Mondes à faire, 2016).

we are addressing? In which case the dissemination would be understood as a sharing.

Wouldn't it be better to speak in terms of 'sharing processes and forms' rather than 'disseminating results'?

## II. Devising a digital editorial platform for artistic research

Needless to say, if art researchers are to be legitimate producers and disseminators of their work within the framework of broadened research, they must also be generators of new apparatuses.

With intelligence and humour, artist-researchers have appropriated the colloquium or conference format (and we could examine in this context the strong increase in conference performances as a process of appropriation of an academic format by artists) as well as the 'peer-reviewed paper'. But I would like to focus attention now not so much on these examples of appropriation and *détournement* (which we could consider integrating into our manual), as on a concrete reflection on the creation of new tools.

[Artistic Research] incorporates many aspects and features that are not, or not solely, text-based, such as artefacts, movements and sounds. Researchers need a variety of presentation platforms that combine these aspects and features in relevant forms and thus deviate from or expand the standard format of journal articles and/or research repositories/archives.

in *The Vienna Declaration on Artistic Research*, June 2020.<sup>10</sup>

Starting from my observation above that the form of dissemination affects artistic research itself, it is essential to think about the specific means of dissemination in art.

In this perspective, ENSAPC, in collaboration with two other higher art academies (Ecole supérieure d'arts et médias de Caen/Cherbourg along with Villa Arson-Centre national d'art contemporain), together with designers engaged in the creation of free, modular tools, has begun to develop the digital editorial platform for artistic research PLARA – *Plateforme éditoriale numérique de recherche en arts*.

This platform is meant to be both a tool shaped by artist-researchers and a tool for the dissemination of their research. A first phase of development within the art schools to produce a 'pilot platform' has been entrusted to a team of doctoral students in art, teacher-artists, and Heads of research from the three institutions.

It aspires to address artist-researchers in France and abroad, as well as art professors and students, given that in many art schools, research drives the educational curriculum from undergraduate studies up.

It is expected to be a tool particularly aimed at presenting research to a broader community of researchers, and to be positioned as a high-level research platform in the arts, capable of interesting researchers from other fields. Recognising the

<sup>10</sup> *The Vienna Declaration on Artistic Research (2020)*. [https://cultureactioneurope.org/files/2020/06/Vienna-Declaration-on-AR\\_corrected-version\\_24-June-20-1.pdf](https://cultureactioneurope.org/files/2020/06/Vienna-Declaration-on-AR_corrected-version_24-June-20-1.pdf)



many interactions between artists and the broader research world, it will promote research according to specific modalities related to the artistic contents of works. Without reproducing the selection protocols for artists used in peer-reviewed scientific journals, etc., it will reflect on the objective methods and criteria for selection and will ensure the quality of submissions, by proposing independent editorial teams. In fact, as this platform will be tooled to accommodate various forms and media (sound, audiovisual, text, 3D, modeling, etc.), the editorial work will be carried out (by these teams outside the schools) as much on the level of content interconnections, as on the level of the contents of each project, which will not be fixed, but will embrace developing processes and transformations.

Once the platform has been set up and the pilot issue produced, the editorial board will be open to guest editors. The platform will select the artistic research to be hosted with the participation of two guest editors: artist-researchers, curators, critics, activists, journalists, writers. These guest editors, invited for one or two years, will play a leading role in the editorial direction of this tool. On the strength of their thematic and artistic experience, of their engagement in current events, they will guide the selection of the disseminated artistic research.

Using all available resources and technical possibilities, the platform will also have an original and flexible periodicity. The idea is not to conform to the periodic constraints of dailies, weeklies, monthlies, etc., but to start from the artistic research itself to devise an appropriate rhythm of updates, revisions, and new projects, taking full advantage of digital technology to propose an editorial space which most closely approximates the research presented and is driven by the research itself. In this way, research in the form of a film could be disseminated at different stages of its development, just as a visual essay could be published daily, then re-published and edited in the end. An essay could be posted for each photograph, then disseminated in its final form as an annotated slideshow or web platform, etc.

In this sense, it is really a matter of sharing processes and forms: sharing in the sense of free, accessible distribution on the internet; but also, sharing to the extent that the idea is to show research in progress and the provisional forms it adopts, which the platform could choose to keep as an archive.

The platform will also be a work in progress in and of itself. The whole point, after the initial phase of development of the pilot issue by an editorial board from within the participating schools, is to ensure that relevant research will not be rejected simply because the platform is not technically capable of hosting it. Instead, such proposals would act as an incentive to constantly re-engage a reflection on the tool, and ultimately lead to remodeling and revising the platform itself. The platform is therefore meant to evolve jointly with the commitment of its editorial management, in close interaction with research work in art.

Lastly, we should mention the internal dissemination that this platform would spawn, and the different public formats that it would operate in parallel with its own activities: editorial boards, meetings open to the public, exhibitions, etc.

### III. Dissemination, results, sharing processes and forms, and articulation of the manual

Since we are working in the framework of a manual, that is, a textual tool, I propose in conclusion to articulate together some of the themes covered in this chapter, so as to weave relationships between them, instead of reflecting on them in an isolated way by category, and thereby strive toward making our manual function by densifying the intertext.

As we have seen, whatever the critical stances that a reflection on the question of dissemination and results may elicit, these terms open up many interconnected questions, if only because they generate a slew of terms and vocabularies, which are only amplified by the diversity of the languages we use in this Creator Doctus consortium.

As we have said, the question of dissemination cannot be divorced from a reflection on the global circulation of knowledge, and how, from Europe, we would like not to impose, but to share and exchange around the artistic research that we conduct. Consequently, I would urge us, in the perspective of Dipesh Chakrabarty's idea of 'provincialising Europe' or of feminist epistemologists working on situated knowledge, such as Sandra Harding and Donna Haraway, to examine the extent to which our institutional, social, economic, and environmental context contributes to producing our frames of reference.

Isolated due to the pandemic since March 2020, artists and researchers in Europe no doubt have a specific perspective to bring to the question of disseminating research in such a context, though it is surely not a matter of reducing everything or thinking of everything based on the unusual constraints with which we have been living these past two years.

A recent text by Florian Cramer,<sup>11</sup> which David Quigley of Merz Akademie shared with the members of the consortium via email, offers a critical discussion of the Vienna Declaration on Artistic Research, and denounces the neoliberal-technocratic vocabulary it uses – worlds apart from the language of manifestos and other texts written by artists. Cramer cites a list of keywords used for naming departments of a future academy proposed by Siegfried Zielinski, as demonstrating the possibility of alternative visions.

#### Faculties for an academy of the 21st century

- Dignity
- Hospitality
- Unconditioned dialogue
- Unusual activities
- Paleofuturism
- Phataphysik
- *Cultura experimentalis*
- Chaos pilots – Kairos-poets
- Critical engineering
- Non-censurable systems

11 See: <https://www.onlineopen.org/what-is-wrong-with-the-vienna-declaration-on-artistic-research>. Last accessed, 5th February 2021.

- Knowledge of the winds / Navigations
- Scale / Skalierung
- Sustainability
- Projections
- Variantology

Couldn't we conceive of this manual (or the exhibition that we will be organising in parallel) as this 'academy' and our key words as the faculties, departments, and subdivisions, or the rooms to visit, or the exhibition labels?

The question of 'disseminating results' prompts the question of the tools for this dissemination: are these tools part of the work or not? Should all dissemination be part of the work, called for by the work, or should it be conceived in close collaboration with technicians, publishers, etc.?

The question of dissemination also raises the question of the transposition of artistic research. How is artistic research transposed?

This question reveals the limits of thinking that confines itself to tools and techniques. Approaching dissemination from the standpoint of translation – which may allow us to think on a more 'macro' scale, from very close up – lets us tackle questions, if not of grammar, at least of address.

The question of the language in which we want to speak and disseminate artistic research – Florian Cramer's question – is not only a social question: Do we want to speak of artistic research in neoliberal newspeak or in the language of artists? It is also a cultural question: Is artistic research comprehensible in all places and at all times? Should it be?

From this standpoint, the question of dissemination must go beyond a reflection on the tools and platforms. Are we seeking to popularise artistic research? If so, in what forms? What common language exists to do so across Europe and beyond? What common language exists within the art world and beyond? Must we speak of 'results' to talk about the effects and reception of artistic research? What can thinking about translation bring to all this? Thinking about translation, about transposition, but also about the impossibility of translating everything? What would be the untranslatable aspects of a policy of 'disseminating' artistic research?

## IV. Relations between artistic practice and connected disciplines and professional know-how

For the past ten years or so, we have been engaged in a movement of rematerialising art, which involves both participating in a long history of thought on techniques and know-how, on the one hand, and on the other, politicising this relationship and thinking of it in light of our present.

Many important theorists on technique, such as Gilbert Simondon and André Leroi-Gourhan, as well as contemporary anthropologists, such as Tim Ingold, who place the question of 'doing' at the centre of their reflections and theoretical formulations, are being read with great enthusiasm by artists and researchers in art.

The readings proposed by postcolonial studies<sup>12</sup> have also contributed to dismantling the hierarchy of certain relationships within the visual arts, such as the relationship between art and craft, bringing to light the way in which aesthetic judgments are informed by a judgment that is rooted in cultural differences. Even though Western artistic modernity is inseparable from a theoretical approach to the object and its use, to technique and its social promises, just as the historical avant-gardes proposed to redefine art from the perspective of work,<sup>13</sup> exoticism and the idea of the 'fine arts' in all its avatars have nonetheless continued to distort and minimise certain works originating outside Europe, as well as certain types of artistic productions that assert their use value, and have relegated these to the category of craftsmanship.

Ours is also a time of critical reflection on positions and gestures fundamental to contemporary art, some of which come from conceptual art. Prevailing narratives have viewed conceptual art as a phase of relegation of the materiality of artworks in favor of the idea or concept, but all over the world, from the time of its emergence in the 1960s, conceptual practices were developed that emphasised the use of the body, embedment in the social, and the materiality of forms.<sup>14</sup> Today, after more than twenty years of 'rereadings' and debate, we have a great many studies demonstrating the links between conceptual practices (including those perceived as the most 'dematerialised') and a material culture rich in situated knowledge, technical know-how, and ideas of practice.<sup>15</sup>

In parallel to these dynamics in the field of art, in disciplines centered on technique and know-how – especially in anthropology – crafts and vernacular practices are being approached afresh, from transversal and non-essentialising perspectives. The theoretical pretension reserved for humanist disciplines has been decentralised, making it possible to valorise the theoretical knowledge produced by know-how, oral cultures, and technical gestures.



*Pour une thèse vivante. Vers son geste* (2011-2018) Claudia Triozzi (film still 19)

- 12 We are using the term 'postcolonial' in the sense developed by Stuart Hall in his article 'When was "the post-colonial"? Thinking at the limit', in *The Postcolonial Question* (1996), that is to say, not as an historical regime subsequent to the colonial period, but as an historical condition in which the colonial is prolonged in other forms.
- 13 In particular with the experience of the Bauhaus and its dialogue on the global level, be it in Asia or Latin America.
- 14 See the exhibition catalogue, Jane Farver (ed.), *Global Conceptualism. Points of Origin, 1950-1980s*. New York, Queens Museum of Art, 1999.
- 15 See *Seth Siegelaub: Beyond Conceptual Art*, by L. Coelwijn and S. Martinetti (ed.) (Cologne/ Amsterdam: Buchhandlung Walther König, 2016).

As many contemporary artists have shown, with humour and wit, it can no longer be considered insignificant to have one's pieces produced by craftspeople who remain in the shadow of the artist's name. Collaborative practices and processes are being engaged that call on and give pride of place to various types of expertise and knowledge. The political significance of professional know-how, recovering a rich history in modern times, is interlinked with academic knowledge. That creative processes also involve the creation of tools and even of materials now goes without saying. In this way, artists such as Jennifer Caubet are engaging in processes with manufacturing centers, such as CIRVA (International Glass and Visual Arts Research Centre), where technology is seen as the site of possibilities. It is the relationship between the tool and the form that is important; put otherwise, in artistic research, the form always exceeds the tool, just as the tool always exceeds the form.<sup>16</sup> Indeed, artistic research deploys gestures, practices, tools, collaborations, which, far from being relegated to mere steps in the execution of an artistic project, are part and parcel of the research itself. In the course of a process, these constantly change status, from object to subject and *vice versa* – a theoretical text becomes a tool, and a tool becomes a 'theoretical object',<sup>17</sup> etc. Constellations and provisional relationships, because they are experimental and heuristic, are what define a research project.

While these general principles are widely accepted by artists and art researchers, they are not as yet always integrated into the so-called scientific or cultural public policies that support such work, just as the very structure of the schools and institutions that offer PhDs in art can still be out of step with these new dynamics of creation and collaboration.

### *Pour une thèse vivante (For a living thesis)*

To address in a more concrete way the question of these new linkages, not only between art, techniques or crafts and vernacular knowledge, but also with academic knowledge, I propose to briefly present a project by artist and choreographer Claudia Triozzi, a teacher at ENSAPC, currently working on her doctoral thesis at EHESS in Paris (École des hautes études en sciences sociales).<sup>18</sup>

Between 2011 and 2018, Claudia Triozzi developed a project-manifesto in six episodes titled *Pour une thèse vivante (For a Living Thesis)*. This project came in the wake of the Bologna agreements (1998-2010), which set out to 'harmonise' the European higher education system, integrating art schools into the system. As a teacher in national academies of art for more than ten years, Claudia is particularly cognisant of these issues, and the question of pedagogy runs through her art work.

*Pour une thèse vivante* is a manifesto insofar as it makes no formal concessions of any kind. The project is situated in the zones of tension between art and research,

16 See Jennifer Caubet, *Un atelier à soi* (Paris/Marseille: Éditions Empire/CIRVA, 2019).

17 See in particular Louis Marin, 'Le "texte" passé comme objet théorique contemporain,' *Opacité de la peinture*, Usher, *Textes passés et théorie contemporaine*, 1991.

18 There is no thesis in art as such at EHESS, but it has been possible for many years to take a film or an object as the subject of a thesis in the anthropology of the image, as a complement to a manuscript. Even so, because of its unique history and the open and transdisciplinary character of researchers who aspire to teach 'research through research', EHESS continues to be a site of theoretical experimentation, which can also, on occasion, become a site for artistic experimentation.

in ways that propose creative linkages and shift expectations. It also shows how artistic research, far from cumulating the double requirement of the worlds of art and of research, is something else altogether: just as the sum of the parts does not make the whole, artistic research calls for new formats, new ways of writing, quoting, performing, making art. With great virtuosity and cunning, this project-manifesto maintains highly heterogeneous universes, languages, and fields, which, during the performance, are chained together and in sequence before the eyes of an audience that is always invited to take part in an exchange.

In a stimulating polysemy, this project places at its centre the question of work: at once the work of art, but also the work of workers, craftspeople, and intellectual work. And the question of knowledge and know-how and how these are embodied in bodies, in gestures, in words. Each episode features several people from different worlds: actors, butchers, knot makers, psychoanalysts, restorers, historians, singers, and composers participate together in a polyphonic show. It is this thesis 'in action' that is the focus here.

I would like to pause here for a moment, because one cannot discuss this project without quoting Claudia herself, inasmuch as the work demands of all discourse (including and especially if it is about the work) that it makes something happen 'in action'. The work is a powerful device for putting to the test any critical discourse that ventures to speak *about* it: the 'living thesis', because it is both its own acting out and the laboratory of its critical tooling, refers all critique back to what it can do, and authorises the critic to speak about it only on the condition that such critique is the result of a lived experience of the critical programme the work has set for itself. Something has to take place in the thesis itself, independently of its later uses and ulterior valorisation. This is a way of approaching the issues involved in speaking about this work, and of discussing the interest for us of the question of resistance that doctorates in art have to exercise toward and against academic doctorates, along with their mandatory exercise: the thesis. Indeed, these questions unfold on different levels in art schools, for example on the Master's level where, since the Bologna agreements, students are required to write a 'thesis'. Many teachers, researchers, and artists would like to redefine this thesis in light of Adorno's conception of the essay as described in 'The Essay as Form'.<sup>19</sup> Unlike academic dissertations, the essay is a text that recreates an experience of subjective thinking, a path travelled, beyond the logical soundness of its arguments. It speaks of what inspires it, and stops when it feels it has nothing more to say, not when it has completely exhausted the subject.

As already noted, Claudia Triozzi's work is also an important work on *écriture artiste* (meaning critical writing that does not renounce its artistic character and intentions). Each word that the artist places in this project is addressed to the public while at the same time remaining available to the action of the performance, becoming in this way one of its characters. And so the work invites us to keep the doctorate but to throw the thesis out with the bath water: in other words, to keep the excellence and ambition of the doctoral exercise, but to profoundly redefine the exercise of the thesis, that is, the written exercise whose language must abide by academic standards.

19 'The Essay as Form', by Theodor W. Adorno, 1991, *Notes to Literature*, Volume 1. New York: Columbia University Press.

Now let's turn to Claudia's words:<sup>20</sup>

[...] In *Pour une thèse vivante*, I've tried to establish a bond that grows ever stronger between writing, research, and practice. Going beyond the binary oppositions writing/artistic creation, research/representation, the living thesis points to the difficulties that artists can come up against in finding a clear position in this exchange. The "*thèse vivante*" is therefore a long-term project, called to take diverse forms on stage and to be programmed not only in public and private performance venues but also in university contexts and in art schools.

The art of "doing" (*faire*) and of "knowing how to do" (or "know how," *savoir-faire*) is transmitted by doing and speaking. The word "art" in the Middle Ages means "know-how" and at the same time "knowing how to speak about it." So it's a matter of trying to write the history of what is reputedly difficult to historicize because gestural and oral transmission does not strictly speaking leave written traces. The history then can only be made in a relationship constructed between its gestural and spoken present and the erudition of those that built knowledge of the past from these gestures, their ancestry, their permanence, on the stage questioned together with their actuality, effective actuality, the gesture, but also reflective actuality, what we can teach ourselves in the present about this transmitted history of gestures.

This new moment in the thesis is meant to echo a double reflection. First of all as content, as research material in the sense of a return to a practice of transmission as well as an exploration of already existing methodologies. Then, as pedagogy in itself, a subjective proposal which, by presenting a new mode of "creating connections" rather than an example to be followed, would open the way to others. The thesis as manifesto, tasked with reflecting a certain reserve towards the possibility of "transmitting knowledge" in the field of artistic creation. Rather than teaching, it would be a matter of observing while keeping the critical distance proper to observation. Thus, the living thesis is transmitted not as a methodology, but as an opening to other resources of doing and thinking, the possibility of arriving at another form of writing when writing itself is in difficulty.

Without attempting to explore all the avenues that this work proposes, I would like to pull on a few threads. One of the important points that these citations raise has to do with not turning the thesis into a supplement to the work. The thesis is not the theoretical place meant to deliver interpretative keys to an artistic work, or the place for retrospective reflection, in the manner of the memoirs of political figures written after the battle. It is not the interpretation of an artistic work considered as anterior. Claudia invites us, on the contrary, to think that the time of action and the time of thought are entangled in the thesis. These times are embodied in turn by the professions and the people she invites on stage. The work is not an acephalous body, neither is the thesis a postponed commentary. The thesis is the site of artistic experience and of thought itself.

20 The citations are taken from "*Pour une thèse vivante !*" *Politique de la recherche scientifique et artistique : une expérimentation épistémologique et historique*, September 2020. Working document, unpublished manuscript, by Claudia Triozzi.

The linkages Claudia proposes in *Pour une thèse vivante* (which, along the way, took on the subheading *Vers son geste*, or 'Towards its gesture'), not only connects art and craft, but also intellectual work. In other words, she goes beyond the dividing lines imposed by a long genealogy of art and social worlds, which sets thinking on one side, and doing on the other. Here doing can be thinking, just as thinking is an activity that can make itself visible, through gestures, in bodies, in ways of speaking and bringing together. Similarly, she goes beyond the expected problematics of the autonomy of art, found in debates on the importance or not, the need or not, of words or discourse for a work. *Pour une thèse vivante* is at the same time an act of speaking, a subtitle, and the work itself. She also shows that words, if they are 'in action', by no means exhaust the meaning of a work, any more than they defuse its critical potential. According to Claudia Triozzi, a living thesis does not close any debate, nor does it accumulate knowledge that is displayed without consequences. All knowledge in art must remain agile, and criticism must remain a dynamic of creation and production, without necessarily doing the literature review (known as *'état de l'art'* in French) required in university studies.

Understood in this way, PhDs in art should not be considered as the ultimate avatar of doctoral studies in response to the massification in higher education, but as an historical opportunity to reinvigorate the critical potential of the doctoral exercise, and its *thesis*, in order to take the risk of other possible forms. Claudia Triozzi: 'My historical operation shares the audacity [...] of bringing something back to the present that would make it possible to revive, in the strong sense of the term of restoring to life, another conception of humanity, as a sign of our times and not as an authority.' In the same way, the thesis in art could be thought of as the operation (or the *'coup de théâtre'*) consisting in bringing the living, the actual, gesture, action, emotion, the body, experience, the unexpected, language in the process of searching for itself, 'writing, itself in difficulty', in bringing all this back into the research itself.

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In linking different forms of knowledge, artistic research raises not only practical questions, but also questions of status. Artists claim the right to the doctoral level because their research is just as legitimate as research practiced in other fields. In a way, if we follow this logic, the excellence targeted by the PhD level could be achieved through any activity, provided it is carried out in this sustained alliance of speech, critical reflection, creation of relationships with other fields of knowledge, and production of forms, gestures, and situations. Following Claudia Triozzi's example, one could imagine a thesis in butchery or in knot making.

That said, the creation of artistic research as a field can in turn have unexpected effects on artistic practices. And that is the whole point: the possibility of doing a PhD in art must remain a possibility, and not become the mandatory criterion for an artist in search of recognition. Artistic research must be able to take place in faculties other than art. Artists, we hope, will be able to continue doing archaeology, like César Paternosto, or to become specialists in philosophy, like Adrian Piper. Likewise, the possibility must remain open for artists to legitimise their work without ever approaching the university, from near or far. It is even our responsibility, as researchers, experts, directors of institutions, to make sure this is the case.



# The Fold<sup>1</sup>

## Akram Zaatari<sup>2</sup>

- <sup>1</sup> Mark Wasiuta and Akram Zaatari, *Rifat Chadirji: Building Index* (Beirut: The Arab Image Foundation & KaPh Books, 2018).
- <sup>2</sup> Akram Zaatari is an artist who works with photography film and video. He has produced more than 50 films and videos that share an interest in writing histories of banalities, often taking the form of excavations. Zaatari has played a critical role in developing the formal, intellectual, and institutional infrastructure of Beirut's contemporary art scene. As a co-founder of the Arab Image Foundation, he has made invaluable and uncompromising contributions to the wider discourse on preservation and archival practice. He represented Lebanon in the Venice Biennale of 2013 and was part of Documenta in 2012. He is author of a dozen books including 'Earth of Endless Secrets' and 'Time Capsule, Kassel'. Zaatari is currently a PHD candidate at the *Graduate School of Humanities, Creation and Heritage PSGS HCH, Investissement d'Avenir ANR-17-EURE-0021*.

The fold is the pleat formed by turning or bending a part of a material such as fabric, paper or even sedimentary rock or soil. The fold is, at once, the form the material takes after such an event, and also, the trace that is left on the material, the crease that marks the location of turning or pressing.

Inherent in folding is that material turns, hence occupies or engages with the space around it. Folding is a basic step in creating a three-dimensional form. A ribbon becomes a flower. A sheet of paper becomes a box. The fold turns material in such a way as to cover parts with other parts, changing its original form.

When the fold is accidental or natural, as with ageing matter or in geological shifts, or in reaction to climatic conditions, the material undergoes a permanent deformation, the end form of which is unpredictable. But when a fold is intentional, it reorganises material to create a new form, increase or reduce volume, confine or rearrange space to create storage or organise access, for example.

When intentional, the fold is a creative action involving pre-scripted steps and sometimes requiring a considerable level of precision, like folding a sheet of paper into an origami, or several sheets to make a book.

The fold is a form of narration.

Folding is a selective process. It sacrifices parts for a purpose. It conceals some parts and highlights others, like folding clothes to store them on a shelf or fit them into a container of specific dimensions. It is like folding a sheet of paper into an airplane, so that it can travel through the air. The fold is a kind of edit, made for a purpose.

Folding is the simplest way to enclose space, to conceive of space within folds. The line of the fold is an edge. It both demarcates and structures space. Folding is the simplest way to form a structure.

Unfolding is undoing, deconstructing, dismantling, turning material back into its original form. The creases in an unfolded material contain its history and, in a way, save it from amnesia. The history of material inscribes itself in the form of creases. When unfolded, material would testify that history has already inscribed itself onto it, through the fold. 'To unfold' is not the opposite of 'to fold', but an extension of it, essential in identifying its morphology and structure. Deleuze writes:

The unfold: certainly not the opposite of the fold, nor its effacement, but the continuation or the extension of its act, the condition of its manifestation. When the fold ceases to be represented and becomes a 'method', an operation, an act, the unfold becomes the result of the act which is expressed in precisely that way.<sup>3</sup>

The fold or pleat, as the result of a fold and unfold, is the memory of material.

Within archival practice, the fold's primary function is to contain and provide efficient access, when needed. The 'folder' is a container of disparate folded items brought together for a reason, like a tag they may share, a size, a time period. The 'folder' is a by-product of an archival practice, which is, in itself, a branch of library science. A folder has both a structural function in a larger archive, and a narrative one as a binder of contents. It organises items within its folds thematically, alphabetically or temporally, for example. But a folder also preserves the separate

3 From 'The Fold', by G. Deleuze and J. Strauss, 1991, *Yale French Studies*, no. 80, p.243.

identity of each item within it and preserves the possibility of reorganising items over and over within the same folder, or migrating them to different folders to follow a different order.

A catalogue enumerates items and arranges them following a system of classification. The catalogue organises items such that they may function best within a specific practice. A sales catalogue, for example, provides a community of buyers with details of all items offered for sale so they can select an item to buy. Within a professional creative practice such as design, a catalogue is an index of previous works, like a portfolio of all works produced by an author, a company, a designer or artist. It features samples of their work and gives an insight into their characteristics. It displays the work's qualities and demonstrates its potential.

## The Photograph

Every photograph is an exposure of a view of something or somewhere. Just as folding confines space, a photograph captures it and folds it into a flat image, offsetting parts of a scene against others, covering parts entirely with others. Every photograph hides parts of a scene to reveal others. Every photograph reproduces in miniature what is much bigger in life, and brings somewhere an image of somewhere else, somewhere distant and out of sight. The impact of a fold in a photographed space is permanent, in the sense that hidden or obscured parts in a picture are irretrievable. What a photograph missed that was present at the time of exposure – due to the camera's point of view or exposure or any limitation in the technology used – will remain irretrievable in the future.

In the folds within a photograph lies a history; lie many histories. A single photograph is not enough to seize the totality of a situation or a space, for example. Architects take multiple photographs to document a space, a construction, a building site. They record different elevations, angles, interiors, and details. Each photograph represents an aspect of a space, a facet of a place or building. The more photographs produced, the more details recorded. The more diverse the angles from which photographs are taken, the better three-dimensional space is described, as in photogrammetry. The ultimate documentation aims to leave no room for the fold, as in seamless 360° interactive photographs.

The fold in a photograph is a detail that triggers a process while reading or interpreting it. Through it, a narrative – different from that of the photograph itself – unfolds. It is a feature through which the initial construction of a photograph – its making – is undone. It bears the history of a photograph, its memory, and that may allow its unfolding. If the purpose of a picture is to narrate or describe space, it is fair to say that the folds in it may tell the story of the maker's practice, for example, or the limitations of the medium used.

## The Contact Sheet

A contact sheet is an entire numbered image sequence that lists visually all the photographs taken by the photographer on a given roll of film. A contact sheet is to a single photograph, what a folder is to an item within it.

A contact sheet is indifferent to the quality of each photograph. It displays the entire sequence, including those shots that might have failed or which the photographer doubted and repeated. It is a log sheet (made with icons) that serves only the photographer and, presumably, is not made to be exhibited. It is meant to be a reference for the maker within a practice. It serves as a basis for evaluating work and making a selection.

The fold in time is the representation of time shortened, as in literature, illustration, comics, and, typically, in film. The fold in time is the ellipsis. It manifests itself in what is referred to as the jump-cut. The fold within a narrative is what the viewer perceives as the jump in time that acknowledges the existence of a time that is hidden. When perceived through the timeframe of the film, the ellipsis hints at missing narratives outside the film time. In a film, the cut is language, as is the fold. A photographic contact sheet enfolds time between frames; looking at a contact sheet allows the viewer to identify the time lapses between frames. It is possible to identify a photographer's effort to seize additional information in a certain scene, take a better picture, change position, or reframe, etc. A photographer's work is not restricted to the time of the click, otherwise the life of a great photographer at work, as William Klein cynically underlined, would add up to no more than a few hours at most, given that each photograph takes 1/125 of a second to expose. Photography, as a practice, takes place in-between frames, in hidden time, either before or after a photograph is taken. The work of the photographer, therefore, is hidden in the contact sheet, as the work of the archivist hides in the folds of every catalogue.

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In November 2018, the National Insurance Corporation (NIC) building, which prominent Iraqi architect Rifat Chadirji built in Mosul in 1966, was demolished by the Iraqi authorities. That distinguished modern landmark was occupied by ISIS between 2014 and 2016 and was often used for the execution of young men accused of homosexuality; those were thrown off the roof. In October 2016, an international coalition started an offensive to push ISIS out of Mosul. Upon its liberation in July 2017, the NIC building was already largely damaged. The destruction of the NIC building triggered questions such as: do we keep it a ruin, as a monument for those who were killed there, or do we destroy it completely, thus close a dark chapter in Mosul's recent history?

The darkness that expressed itself in Iraq under ISIS surpasses Art, Architecture and their histories. Although the basics of building come from a need for shelter, Architecture, especially in the case of public buildings, often becomes emblematic of values beyond basics. They could speak of sovereignty, power, conquest and state prosperity. For a building that carries in its folds a nuanced reflection on modernity, on building technology and regional traits, to be turned into a monument to death and terror, testifies to the unsound underpinnings of modernity as experienced in Iraq, but also in Syria, Lebanon and many other places in the Middle East. Chadirji's life and practice reflect a truly hysterical world. From an accelerated building career during which he built more than a hundred significant projects across Iraq, the Middle East and the Gulf region, to prison with a life sentence before he was even fifty, to his miraculous release less than two years later.

Consequently, Chadirji stopped building, left Iraq and dedicated himself to theory until he died in 2020 in London from COVID-related complications.

In March 2012, Rifat Chadirji deposited his photographic archive at the Arab Image Foundation, hoping to digitise it and gradually annotate it. The archive was transported from a Lebanese customs depot directly to Chadirji's villa in Halat, north of Beirut. When the archivist of the AIF arrived at the location, the material was in some disorder, but three parts could still be distinguished.<sup>4</sup> The first was the photographic work of Kamel Chadirji, Rifat's father, a significant figure in Iraq's political and social history. The second was the photographic documentation of Rifat's architecture projects, including sheets dedicated to each one of them. Although the sheets were mixed up, they were carefully numbered and marked-up. They looked as if they had been made to produce a *catalogue raisonné* of Rifat's architecture. The third part of that archive consisted of Rifat's own photographic work, consisting of prints organised thematically in albums depicting various aspects of life in Iraq. For him, they are like reflections on a changing place and people going through major urban and societal shifts.<sup>5</sup>

Chadirji's architecture sheets are the most intriguing. They were produced at the peripheries of three overlapping practices not far removed from folding: architecture, photography, and library science. They consist of white A4 sheets, on which small photographic prints documenting Chadirji's architecture were carefully pasted and numbered. From time to time, they include photographic reproductions of drawings or models, but in most cases, they present photographs of built projects in Iraq and other Arab states.<sup>6</sup>

When they arrived at the AIF, the sheets had already been in gelatin sleeves, often paired with the negatives that contain the images. Several sheets are dedicated to each project, totaling just under 300. Some of them appear to have been produced with more care than others, which suggests that different persons with different levels of care might have done the job. Some annotations are scrawled but have been typed out or rewritten neatly at the top of the sheet. Notes written in Arabic in a sketchy manner, such as clients' names, for example, are also re-transcribed properly in English at the top of the sheets. It looks as if Chadirji has been through them and identified projects, pointed out mistakes, and returned the sheets to an assistant. There is an interesting staggering of times in those documents. It is obvious that the production across the three practices – architecture, photography and cataloguing – did not happen in parallel. Some projects were documented while under way, others only once completed and sometimes much later, when time permitted. Chadirji himself documented his projects whenever he had the time. When asked about when and where the catalogue was produced, Chadirji confirmed<sup>7</sup> that it had been produced in London in the 1990s, more than ten years after he left Iraq and stopped building.

The desire to catalogue Chadirji's work, or the making of his building index, was triggered by the sudden and violent interruption of a practice. In 1979, in what might look like a Kafkaesque plot, Chadirji was jailed in Abu Ghraib prison near

4 Based on a conversation with Ralph Nashawaty, former AIF archivist.

5 Many of those reflections were recorded in an audio interview with Chadirji, made by Ralph Nashawati (AIF) for archiving purposes in March and August 2012.

6 This publication includes the sheets that list projects in the Gulf region, mainly in Iraq, and in Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, and Kuwait.

7 The question was addressed to Chadirji through his wife Balqis, who confirmed it to the author.

Baghdad and sentenced for life. He was less than fifty years old and at the height of his career. There was no clear accusation against him, except damaging Iraq's interests by not applying to a tender launched by the government. The whole plot had been administered by a low security officer as pretext to break Chadirji's pride. As crazy as his imprisonment sounds, so was his release. In 1982, a few years after Saddam Hussein arrived to power following Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr, Baghdad was to host the summit of non-aligned countries. The president asked his advisers to meet the best architects in Iraq in order to launch his project to 'Rebuild Baghdad'. He was apparently told that one of them was 'out', and the other was 'in'. When Saddam asked for explanation, he was told that Mohamed Makiya had left Iraq and established himself in London, and that Rifat Chadirji was in prison. Saddam apparently said: 'Bring the first back and release the second.'<sup>8</sup>

On the sleeves that house Chadirji's architecture sheets, many circular colour tags point at specific areas. They sometimes point at specific frames. Do they flag those selected to be enlarged, as is typical with contact sheets? Do they depict a selection for a publication, or a second reproduction for a client, or maybe hint at other transactions? This is partly how a catalogue is used within a practice.

The circumstances in which Chadirji packed his belongings – including the archive of his photographic negatives – left Baghdad, and gradually closed his office in the 1980s, dedicating himself, from then on, to theory, writing, teaching, and cataloguing his former architectural practice, must have changed something in his photographs. From then on, they served as a catalogue of a discontinued practice and illustrated his writing. Chadirji was to fold and unfold his architectural practice, contrary to expanding it (or maybe that too has expanded the practice in a different direction!). Those same circumstances must have had an impact on his built projects across the Gulf region as well. As opposed to celebrating, promoting, an architect's practice, they would from then on testify to its sudden halt. Rather than celebrating the Iraqi modernity they were born into, they testify to its abortion or sickness, and announce themselves as its ruins. For the outsider, aware that these architecture sheets were produced in exile after the permanent suspension of a practice, these tags can only point at a desire that hides in the fold. And because some of the sheets might have been misplaced from their sleeves before reaching the AIF in Beirut and might have occupied other sleeves with tags intended to refer to other photographs on other sheets, sometimes these colour tags point at a blank space and sometimes fall halfway between pictures. Most often, they point at obviously good pictures with a red, green, or yellow tag. But when the sleeve clearly does not belong to the sheet it enfolds, the tags on it reflect a desire that has been lost in the fold.

In December 2016, Rifat Chadirji terminated the deposit contract with the AIF and donated his entire archive to the Agha Khan Documentation Center at MIT. In January 2017, the last volume of sheets, folders, and photo albums left the AIF for his home in London, and from there to the United States. The publication 'Rifat Chadirji: Building Index'<sup>9</sup> offers a snapshot of Chadirji's architecture catalogue, the sheets' inventory during their short stay at the Arab Image Foundation in

8 Rifat Chadirji and Balqis Charara, *Jidar Bayn Dhulmatain* (A Wall Between One Darkness and Another), (Beirut: Dar al-Saqi, 2003).

9 Mark Wasiuta and Akram Zaatar, *Rifat Chadirji: Building Index* (Beirut: The Arab Image Foundation & KaPh Books, 2018).

Beirut. While working on re-assembling Chadirji's building index, the process of reproducing these sheets triggered significant questions with regards to digital reproduction, namely, the colour tags on transparent sleeves.

Technical reproduction would tend *not* to consider the tags on the sleeves for two reasons. The first is because the tags are not part of the original documents, but are like annotations marked on the envelopes that contained documents. The second is because, even if sheets were to be reproduced inside transparent sleeves – like documents in their containers, like a picture in its frame – in this case, the cheap sleeves that envelop the sheets would detract from the sharpness of their content. But is it not possible to reproduce the sheets without the sleeves and place the colour tags digitally on the reproductions of the sheets? Such an attempt to digitally reconstruct the effect of tags on sheets would mean to create documents that do not exist. And to engage with such an attempt would be to re-invent new documents in the process of their reproduction.

But from the perspective of the fold as the memory of material, to reproduce the sheets without tags – as if certain parts did not attract an architect's attention more than others, as if certain photographs did not reproduce more than others, as if the catalogue served a continuing building practice, and as if Chadirji had not left Iraq and quit that practice two years after his release from prison in 1982 – is to deny their history and possibly contradict the reason(s) behind their making. To reproduce the sheets bare, dis-considering the fact that they have been in the custody of a foundation that witnessed the first works of members like Walid Raad and Yto Barrada, and that published the writings of Jalal Toufic, notably on the fate of Saddam Hussein upon the destruction of tons of Iraqi currency carrying his portrait after the US invasion of Iraq<sup>10</sup> – is to dis-consider the theoretical and visual contexts that laid the ground for an appreciation of an aesthetic of labour in the archive, and subsequently the celebration of this collection at the AIF and its later exhibition by Mark Wasuiuta at Columbia University's GSAPP in 2016.

Throughout the AIF's history, the appreciation of photography gradually evolved away from the appreciation of single images for their composition or for the people depicted in them, to the appreciation of photographic ensembles like albums or index books and more recently to their morphology as composite material and the stories of their custodians and how they reached the AIF. Therefore, when Chadirji's architecture sheets were deposited at the AIF in 2012, multiple desires – apart from Chadirji's own – had already inscribed themselves onto them, namely artist members and staff of the Foundation. Had that collection of sheets been offered to the AIF in 1997, it would not have attracted anyone's interest. But, between 1997 and 2012, the spectrum of interests that defined what the AIF was looking for widened. 'Mapping Sitting'<sup>11</sup> drew the artist community's attention to the importance of acquiring larger bodies of work by single photographers, as opposed to sampling their work with a few examples.

At the same time, Walid Raad's Atlas Group, which was conceived a few years after the creation of the AIF and which ran parallel to it, often reflected on photography from a completely different perspective, highlighting its belonging to a

10 See the chapter 'Saving Face', by J. Toufic in *Review of Photographic Memory*, (Beirut: The Arab Image Foundation, 2004) pp.6-14.

11 'Mapping Sitting', a body of work by Walid Raad and Akram Zaatari, produced by the Arab Image Foundation in 2002.

wider record-keeping practice that produced its own visual language. Raad often used scribbles, colour tags and drawings on photographic productions that were given earlier dates. So, when the AIF community encountered, for the first time, Chadirji's sheets, it saw in them an aesthetic language and a richness they had become trained to appreciate through Raad's work. The sheets carried features similar to some Atlas Group productions, although they preceded them and were not intended at all as Art. It is this staggering of visibility among disciplines of visual production, this interplay and confusion of tenses, that accompanied different practices such as the AIF's or the Atlas Group's and possibly other archives or libraries that involve the production of photography as a tool for indexing and processing, chronicling and archiving. In those temporal folds and those leaks among disciplines, lies the visual and cultural significance of Chadirji's unfinished building index.

From within an understanding of documents that considers the 'affect' as a transformative action, to reconstitute tags digitally while reproducing the sheets in a book is to embrace their transformation. To depart from standard reproduction conventions is to seek a larger historical precision, even at the risk of inventing new documents, at the risk of pointing at Chadirji's built projects as ghosts of a practice, and at the risk of turning the regional Arab modernity, celebrated in every picture on every sheet, into the postwar ruin it has turned into following the many military dictatorships that governed Iraq, and the US-led invasion of 2003.



NATIONAL INSURANCE

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11 a



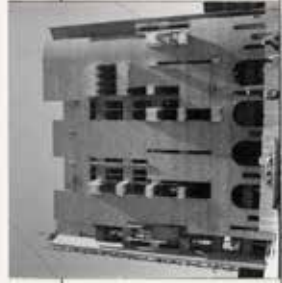
12 a



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Akram Abdulwahab Agha. National Insurance Company building in Mosul. 2018  
courtesy of the photographer



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Excerpt from Rifat Chadirji Building Index: Sheet IRQ/812/158: Yasoub Rafiq House, 1965. Courtesy of AKDC, AIF, Wasiuta, Zaatar



# Epilogue

# Who, How, for Whom?

Or: What are we doing here?

Florian Dombois<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Florian Dombois is an artist who has focused on time, labilities, wind and tectonic activity. He is professor at the Zurich University of the Arts, Switzerland, supervising a dozen PhD projects in a variety of cooperations. – <http://floriandombois.net>

For decades now, the debate about artistic research has been burning, producing particularly great heat with PhDs in art schools, and with it the question of whether artists should do PhDs and what they need to do so. Art schools have developed various approaches to how they relate artistic practice to the sciences, which have been awarding the PhD title for 800 years. In the process, these discussions reflect a tug-of-war between the sciences and the arts, which plays out differently depending on the players.

But – as the Creator Doctus project shows us, there is also a completely different way of thinking about the PhD at an art academy. You could simply put down the rope, loosen your arms and concentrate on your own questions. What exactly would we as artists want, if we were to design a 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle in the arts for ourselves? What might it look like, if we made ourselves mentally independent from the customary academic standards?

And we can put the subjunctive aside, because the Creator Doctus already has a past, a present and a future: (i) The CrD was invented in 2013 as a title at the Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam and refers to an experiment whose first public defence was completed in 2020. (ii) In the present, Creator Doctus also denotes an EU research project in which numerous partners are taking this locally invented title across Europe and aligning it with their PhD experiences. (iii) And finally, Creator Doctus contains a fundamental utopia that many art universities are looking at from the outside. I am one such observer from a Swiss art school and I am happy to share in this hope here.

## Let's start wishing:

### Who should be examined and awarded the Creator Doctus?

Here we agree: the Creator Doctus is a curriculum and a title for artists, i.e. in particular for our graduates from the artistic Bachelor's and Master's programmes, for whom it holds out the prospect of a third phase of their development. Whether this 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle can and should follow directly on from the MA programme is a matter for debate. But it is clear that the candidates must have an artistic practice.

### How do you do Creator Doctus research?

From the answer to the first question, one also arrives at the second answer, because artistic practice is taken seriously as a competence in the CrD. It must be possible, using artistic methods and articulations, to demonstrate the expertise gained in the PhD and to submit it for defence. By artistic methods and articulations I mean all media, including language, as something does not become art only by being painted with oil on canvas! On the contrary, 20<sup>th</sup> century artists from all disciplines have shown us that art can articulate itself in any medium, and therefore, also in language.

This point is very important to me here because it denotes a danger: In many discussions with academics, art is described as 'the other' and from this, it is implicitly or explicitly deduced that art is non-verbal and thus inaccessible or too ambivalent. A written part is thus required, which is automatically seen as the 'theoretical' part and contrasted to the art, which is which is then seen as the 'practical' part. And this is where a mental confusion begins, and again a tug-of-war, because in my opinion the attributions are already wrong. We have to separate

the question of connectivity and assessability from the question of media and the question of epistemology. Because regardless of whether we believe that knowledge can be embodied in media other than language, and regardless of whether we want to separate our knowledge into theory and practice, with our second wish we have only demanded this: that artists should express themselves in *Creator Doctus* in the forms that are proper to them.

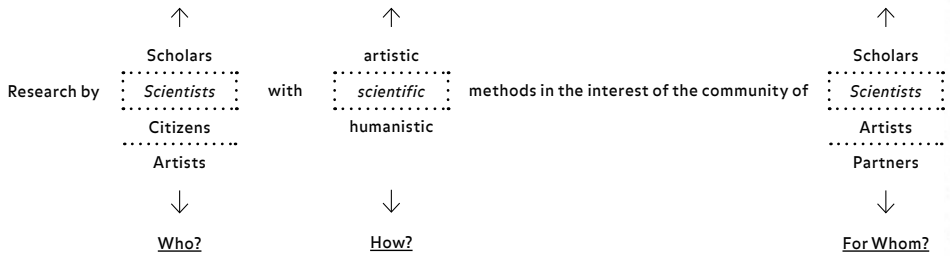
For whom is the research interesting?

With the third question the decisive turn happens, which leads us out of the threatening labyrinth of the second question. The *Creator Doctus* does not concern only the university, but also involves an external practice partner who, as a non-academic institution, evaluates the candidate's defence on an equal footing. This leaves the rope of the well-known tug-of-war between the arts and the sciences still lying on the ground: the questions of theory and practice, or of epistemology and mediality, are simply unaddressed. Instead, other questions come to the fore: who actually wants to continue working with the results of the artistic PhD? For whom must the connectivity of the research be guaranteed? And what form does the research need to take to ensure that this counterpart is satisfied?

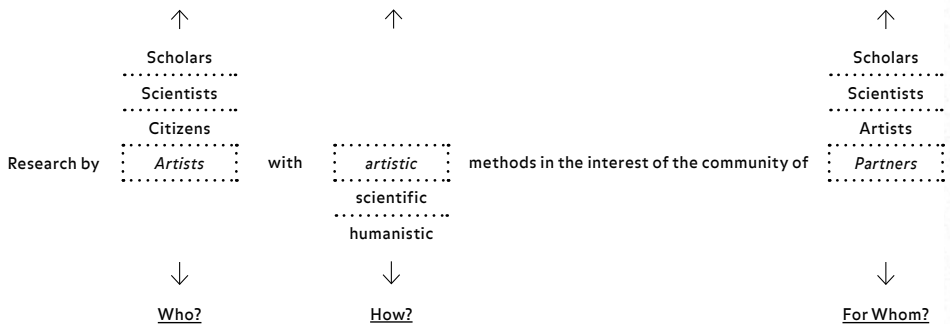
I allow myself to call this liaison 'pragmatic'. Thanks to this pragmatism, we can forget about the overflowing library written by philosophers and cultural studies scholars who have speculated extensively about artistic research, especially in the last 15 years, and we can begin to work. And to make this new situation clear to us once again, I want to share some simplifying graphics here. The first graph refers to the most widely known classification scheme, which Christopher Frayling proposed in 1993 (left side), and which in my opinion also needs its mirror image (right side):

Research into Art	Art into Research
Research through Art	Art through Research
Research for Art	Art for Research

There has been much discussion about Frayling and his concrete formulation (should it be 'into' or better 'on' or 'in'? See a.o. Dombois 2013 & 2009), but fundamentally, I think, not too much has changed in the last ten years in the relationship between art and science. The term 'research', which is central to the overview, has not yet, in my view, broken free from the sciences, and we almost always find one of these six variants mirrored in current artistic PhDs. For example, we find artists who use scientific methods in their PhDs to try to investigate their art, and others who use artistic methods to reflect the sciences, etc. But the model of the scientific PhD remains dominant and I would like to present the traditional PhD model in this way:



If we look at the options in this graphic, we see that the Creator Doctus turns all three screws: it takes over the artists as researchers, accepts their methods and aligns their work with a social partner. If we adjust the graph accordingly, the following picture emerges:



With its pragmatic approach, the Creator Doctus frees itself from the academic specifications so successfully that we can take a fresh look at the PhD curriculum: We can pay attention to the artistic quality of candidates when they enter the programme (1. Selection Process of Candidates) and trust them artistically to design their approach (2. Exposé writing, Planning of a PhD). During the PhD period (3. Supervision, 4. Training of PhD candidates), we involve the external partner, who has an important role especially at the end (5. Assessment, 6. Dissemination of Results). And the fundamental questions on Methodologies (7.), Ethical Questions (8.) and New Learning and Teaching Practices (9.) offer opportunities for art universities to profile their CrD programme across all nine aspects.

*Finally, I would like to take the liberty to make a comment on my own behalf:*

The Creator Doctus approach brings a ray of hope to the current discussion, because it helps us to orient research away from exclusively the natural sciences and humanities as the final recipients, and in so doing, to also move away from their universal claim to define the concept of knowledge. Don't misunderstand me: CrD is like the sciences in terms of methodological and professional rigor, but it is scrutinised by peers from the fields of art and society. Thus, by definition, CrD does not create 'scientific' results – and this does not mean that professional scrutiny is



foregone. On the contrary, it is about a search for sharing and challenging among peers beyond the established scientific standards.

The CrD makes us see the enormous influence the orientation of research towards a clientele has. I take the liberty of comparing this orientation to a colonial power relation: as long as all research must be formulated in French, for example, and negotiated in Paris, it remains subject to the dogma of the defining authority of an Académie française. It is not enough that the representatives of the Académie show themselves to be open to the 'other' if they nevertheless insist on their central power. A real openness only arises when even the language and the grammar can be questioned.

I see another important effect of the reorientation of artistic research on society in the fact that it stimulates further alternatives. E.g. personally, I think that artists should, and should be able to, pursue a kind of research in which they also see themselves as the recipients. Because I think there needs to be a kind of artistic research in the interests of the arts, research that is done by artists for artists, in the same way that mathematicians do research that is directed at other mathematicians. This kind of research is needed to develop the arts themselves, and is also needed to balance the relationship between the sciences and the arts, so that both can meet on an equal footing.

Since 2018, I have been attempting to do this with a group of PhD candidates, in particular with the writer and author Julia Weber and the visual artist Michael Günzburger,<sup>2</sup> in which we are primarily exploring the formats of sharing among artists – starting with the initial exposé, through the formats of our meetings, to the formulation of the 'thesis' at the end. What does it mean to leave problem-centred thinking out (cf. Dombois 2019), and what takes its place? How does perception change when one thinks of the sciences as a special case of the arts, rather than the other way around, or as their counterpart (cf. Dombois 2018)? How far does one get with the claim of conducting research by focusing on the three qualities of 1) 'sharable', 2) 'challengeable' and 3) 'supporting the field'?

These experiments take place under the regulations of the Kunstuniversität Linz, where the PhDs will be submitted from the end of 2022. This construction is due to the fact that no Swiss art university has the right to award doctorates: the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK) compensates for this through international cooperation, a.o. with Linz. The University of the Arts in Bern, for example, has been going the other way for a good 10 years and runs its doctoral programme in cooperation with the University of Bern as the awarding institution (similar to many art universities in Belgium or the Netherlands). Comparing the two, I think we can see quite clearly how the power relations of the ultimately deciding authorities have a far-reaching impact on even the details of each individual PhD.

There is also a Transdisciplinary Artistic PhD Programme at ZHdK, where we are negotiating our approach with our colleagues Marcel Bleuler, Karmen Franinovic, Anton Rey and Germán Toro Pérez, as well as Laura von Niederhäusern from art, design, theatre/film and music, funded by the organisation swissuniversities. An exciting experiment is also underway with my doctoral student Mirjam Steiner: as an art historian, she is doing a doctorate in art history and is attempting to write one chapter in her academic dissertation that explicitly addresses artists as peers.

2 <https://www.zhdk.ch/en/research/fspt/phd-7252>

This can be seen as a reversal of the way artistic research is done today, because it is about doing science in the interest of the arts and not the other way around. We will see what consequences this has, must have.

The Creator Doctus project and its international resonance show the urgency of a form of PhD appropriate to the arts. The project helps us all to become more concrete and specific. In this sense, I would like to conclude with a final wish: that with the various forms and profiles of artistic PhDs and Creator Doctus, we can return to our main ability, i.e. to create poetic spaces.

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# Annexes 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle Doctorate Level 8 Learning Outcomes/ Competences in the Arts<sup>1</sup>

John Butler<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See <https://europa.eu/europass/european-qualifications-framework>

<sup>2</sup> As the former Head of Birmingham School of Art and Associate Dean for Research, John Butler became an Emeritus Professor of Art at Birmingham City University. A former President of ELIA (2000-04) and coordinator of the European Thematic Networks for the Art projects artesnetEurope (2000-04) and inter}artes (2004-07). He was awarded Doctor Honoris Causa by the University of Art & Design Cluj-Napoca Romania & Plymouth University, and is currently the Chief Executive Officer EQ-Arts.

The following tables describe the adopted Tuning Documents Framework for Higher Arts Education within the European Qualifications Framework for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle Doctorate level 8 in the Arts disciplines.

These tables were drawn up and endorsed by the European networks for higher arts education: Design education – CUMULUS; Fine Art education – PARADOX; Dance education – the ELIA Dance Section and Music – the Association of European Conservatoires (AEC). These were first published in 2007 as part of the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA) European Thematic Network project *inter}artes* (2007-10).

As part of the new CALOHEX European Erasmus+ programme ‘Measuring and Comparing Achievements of Learning Outcomes in Higher Education in Europe’, which is reviewing five discipline subjects, EQ-Arts is co-chairing the review of Fine Arts (all arts disciplines in higher education) learning outcomes for all three cycles of study, to ensure their currency and fitness for purpose. CrD has the opportunity to inform this process.

Theatre	
Generic Competences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An ability to recognise and validate problems.</li> <li>• An ability to critically analyse and evaluate their own findings/outcomes and those of others.</li> <li>• An ability to apply effective project management through the setting of research goals and intermediate milestones and the prioritisation of activities.</li> <li>• An ability to design and employ systems for the acquisition and collation of information and insight through the effective use of appropriate resources and equipment.</li> <li>• An ability to identify and access appropriate bibliographical resources, archives, and other sources of relevant information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An ability to be creative, innovative and original in their approach to research, demonstrating flexibility and open-mindedness while recognising boundaries and drawing upon/utilising sources of support appropriately.</li> <li>• An ability to constructively defend research outcomes, construct coherent arguments and articulate ideas clearly to a range of audiences, formally and informally through a variety of techniques.</li> <li>• An ability to develop and maintain co-operative networks and working relationships with supervisors, collaborators, colleagues and peers, within the institution and in the wider communities of research and practice.</li> </ul>
Subject-specific Competences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Original, independent and critical thinking, and the ability to develop theoretical and/or practical concepts in the field of Theatre study or practice.</li> <li>• A knowledge of recent advances in their own field of study and in related areas.</li> <li>• The ability to self-direct a significant research project, based upon a clearly focused and well-founded research proposal.</li> <li>• A mastery and understanding of relevant research methodologies, techniques and generative strategies and their appropriate application within the field of theatre research and/or practice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A broad understanding of the wider context in which their research takes place and the ability to position the outcome of their research in relation to peer review and published, performed and other public outcomes.</li> <li>• An ability to make a contribution which is at the forefront of developments in contemporary theatre practice or the contemporary study of theatre and/or its development, as well as within the wider cultural context.</li> </ul>

Design

Generic Competences

<p><i>General knowledge</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An ability to participate in the academic debates in related fields (e.g. economics, culture, technology, art) from the Design/Design research/Design theory perspective.</li> </ul> <p><i>Theoretical skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An ability to contribute to general theoretical discussions with ideas and theories developed in Design and understanding their potential for other fields.</li> </ul> <p><i>Conceptualisation skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An ability to formulate and evaluate concept-type tools in general.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Ideation skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An ability to analyse and develop general ideation philosophy, principles and practices. Processual skills</li> <li>• An ability to develop general project management concepts and methods based on experience in Design.</li> </ul> <p><i>Communication skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An ability to develop new modes of communication in written, oral and visual forms, including in one or more foreign languages.</li> </ul> <p><i>Teaching skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An ability to lecture/teach Design to students of other academic disciplines.</li> </ul>
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Subject-specific Competences

<p><i>General knowledge</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to and restructure the theoretical and historical framework of Design.</li> <li>• Initiate and lead the discussion on the position of Design in the social, cultural/artistic, political, ecological and economic contexts.</li> </ul> <p><i>Theoretical skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create and develop theoretical concepts related to own Design work and Design in general.</li> <li>• Contribute to the further advancement of Design philosophy.</li> </ul> <p><i>Creative skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully-fledged understanding of creativity in Design, ability to direct and develop creativity in other fields.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Processual Skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the general Design process.</li> <li>• Plan and manage large-scale Design/Design research/R&amp;D projects.</li> </ul> <p><i>Learning skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop learning theories and methods in Design.</li> </ul> <p><i>Communication Skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate own ideas and Design processes to academic audiences.</li> </ul> <p><i>Teaching skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach Design and/or Design-related techniques and technologies to Design students at all levels, including supervision of doctoral projects.</li> </ul>
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Fine Art

Generic Competences

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquire a systematic understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of the field of learning.</li> <li>• Prioritise research activities and set achievable intermediate goals appropriate to a project of advanced research.</li> <li>• Employ insight into the development of working processes and critical analysis during the research process.</li> <li>• Demonstrate a significant range of the principal skills, techniques, tools, practices and/or materials which are associated with the field of learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop new skills, techniques, tools, practices and/or materials.</li> <li>• Document, report on and critically reflect on research findings to specialist and non-specialist audiences.</li> <li>• Create and interpret new knowledge, through original research and advanced scholarship.</li> <li>• Exercise responsibility and a significant level of perception and accountability in contexts that are unforeseen and ethically complex.</li> </ul>
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Subject-specific Competences

<p><i>General knowledge</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to and restructure the theoretical and historical framework of Design.</li> <li>• Initiate and lead the discussion on the position of Design in the social, cultural/artistic, political, ecological and economic contexts.</li> </ul> <p><i>Theoretical skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create and develop theoretical concepts related to own Design work and Design in general.</li> <li>• Contribute to the further advancement of Design philosophy.</li> </ul> <p><i>Creative skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully-fledged understanding of creativity in Design, ability to direct and develop creativity in other fields.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Processual Skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the general Design process.</li> <li>• Plan and manage large-scale Design/Design research/R&amp;D projects.</li> </ul> <p><i>Learning skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop learning theories and methods in Design.</li> </ul> <p><i>Communication Skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate own ideas and Design processes to academic audiences.</li> </ul> <p><i>Teaching skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach Design and/or Design-related techniques and technologies to Design students at all levels, including supervision of doctoral projects.</li> </ul>
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Generic Competences

<p><i>Independence</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pursue one's own questions and ideas.</li> <li>• Comprehend the transferability of one's research capabilities to other fields and recognise any associated career opportunities.</li> <li>• Sustain and deepen one's inquiring, research-oriented approach throughout one's career and, where appropriate, across all aspects of one's work and endeavour.</li> </ul> <p><i>Critical awareness</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Question the legitimacy of self-serving or commonplace ideas, conventions, fashions, etc.</li> <li>• See one's own shortcomings and untapped potential, and devise strategies for maximising one's performance.</li> <li>• Recognise and challenge the standards within one's community of researchers, practitioners and creators.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond with understanding and responsibility to critical considerations from within one's community of researchers, practitioners and creators.</li> </ul> <p><i>Communication skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish and maintain cooperative relationships with colleagues and students within one's own institution and among the wider scholarly and artistic community.</li> <li>• Write/present/perform clearly and appropriately for the target audiences (e.g. Research reports, journal articles, presentations, performances or other artistic events intended to have a research output).</li> <li>• Improve the public's understanding and/or artistic insight in one's field of study.</li> <li>• Assess the effect of one's own behaviour on other team members, artistic collaborators, etc.</li> </ul>
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Subject-specific Competences

<p><i>Artistic development and skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• integrate and demonstrate original artistic insights in performing, composing, theorising and teaching.</li> <li>• extend in a significant way our artistic understanding and communicate those insights in a fully realised manner.</li> <li>• develop and realise artistic autonomy.</li> </ul> <p><i>Research skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• frame research proposals – whether pertaining to theoretical, practical or creative issues or a combination of these – rigorously, lucidly and in terms of questions to be answered, insights to be gained, and indicators of success to be applied.</li> <li>• identify and contextualise currently dynamic issues in one's field, in the sense of open questions, new topics and trends.</li> <li>• realise the goals set for one's project, through intermediary steps and appropriate methods, equipment and team members, where relevant.</li> <li>• identify and utilise the relevant literature and/or other resources in connection with one's field.</li> <li>• critically analyse and evaluate one's own and other's outcomes.</li> <li>• document, analyse and summarise the interim and final outcomes of one's projects. use project funding and evaluation systems in the development of one's own work.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Theoretical (knowledge-based) outcomes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• awareness of, and respect for, standards of excellence in one's own field; the capacity to distinguish between valuable and irrelevant inquiry, whether in the theoretical, practical and/or creative spheres.</li> <li>• thorough knowledge and understanding of the national and international context of activity and output into which one's work will be disseminated.</li> <li>• awareness of ownership rights of those who might be affected by one's project (e.g. copyright, intellectual property rights, confidential information, ethical questions, etc.).</li> <li>• awareness of the work and health implications for those involved in one's activities; the capacity to conduct research with a strong sense of responsibility and vigilance.</li> <li>• awareness of the economic potential and utilisation of one's outputs.</li> <li>• awareness of relevant methods and techniques of inquiry related to one's field of study.</li> </ul>
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# Survey Analysis: European Practices in Artistic Research Doctorates

Inês Bento-Coelho<sup>1</sup>

- <sup>1</sup> Dr. Inês Bento-Coelho is a scholar, lecturer and interdisciplinary artist working across performance, installation, and movement practices. She is a Lecturer in the MA Fine Art programme at Falmouth University (UK) and a Postdoctoral Researcher at University College Cork (Ireland) where she is developing recommendations for the new Doctoral School in Film, Music and Theatre. She is also a Researcher at The Glasgow School of Art in the Erasmus+ projects 'Advancing Supervision for Artistic Research Doctorates' and 'Creator Doctus'. Bento-Coelho holds a practice-based PhD funded by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (The Glasgow School of Art, 2019). Her doctoral research explored the choreographic in installation art, focusing on space awareness and performativity within site responsive contexts. Her current research explores best practices in doctoral education in artistic research degrees, encompassing policies and protocols, supervision, peer-learning, and student wellbeing. She published *Artistic Doctorate Resources* (<http://www.artisticdoctorateresources.com>) with Jools Gilson (2021), a major open educational resource for PhD students, staff, and institutions involved in artistic research.

## Surveying doctoral education

Doctoral education in artistic research in Europe has developed widely over the last few decades. A Creator Doctus survey in 2019 collected staff responses on doctoral programmes in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across distinct artistic research areas and institutional frameworks (universities, institutes, conservatoires, and academies). Geographically speaking, the 36 responses mostly come from across Europe – Norway, France, Sweden, Germany, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Ireland, Belgium, and Austria to name a few – with two responses from Canada. A wide variety of approaches is depicted in programmes at distinct stages of development (from established to emerging ones), however, in many respects, the policies around doctoral education are very similar. For example, the admissions process invariably follows (with some exceptions) the format of application, pre-selection, interview, and final selection of candidates, with similar application materials requested across institutions.

This thorough analysis of the survey with a focus on the European context (34 responses), conducted in 2021, represents a moment in the lifetime of the Creator Doctus project. The emphasis is on research culture, admissions, training (of supervisors and of doctoral researchers), assessment, funding, and programme evaluation. The responses provide a good overview of practices across institutions as well as geographically, allowing for a deeper understanding of how the doctoral degree is structured across Europe.

In discussing the academic context where artistic research takes place, Jenny Wilson, in *Artists in the University* writes,

When deciding how to respond to the national research policy environment, universities have the capacity to empower or constrain research activities, to encompass or exclude different methodologies, outputs and evidence, and to legitimise or delegitimise types of disciplinary research. The strategic direction they select and the values which they espouse, communicate messages about the nature and type of research which they consider important [2017, p.108].

Although Wilson is speaking about Australian universities, it becomes clear how the Creator Doctus survey responses shed light on practices that reflect and expand upon local institutional systems. Nonetheless, it remains to be critically investigated how the approaches and practices depicted in different contexts are beneficial for PhD researchers, and how they impact on their learning and doctoral experience. Thus, this analysis does not advocate for or support specific practices, but rather, outlines different approaches and the wider common or less widespread perspectives that they represent. It is thus up to the readers to draw their conclusions on the approaches that would be most suitable for the specificities of their context.

This survey analysis identifies three main factors at the core of doctoral programmes in artistic research in Europe: a focus on capacity building of staff and doctoral scholars; ongoing concerns with research funding; and the adoption of institutional processes that frame the doctoral degree. A strong focus on establishing and developing a community of peers was often highlighted as well as the importance of student agency. Below, we explore how these themes manifest across several European institutions, with all examples quoted from the survey responses submitted.



# Artistic research doctorates in Europe

The development of staff and student capacity emerges as an essential aspect of doctoral education programmes. This comprises:

- a strong focus on establishing and developing a community of peers
- establishing internal organisational structures with scope for research leadership roles
- supporting student agency throughout their degrees
- opportunities for supervisor and student training

In parallel, through the responses, we observe how research funding permeates the institutions' research agendas, relationships with external organisations, and students' financial status. Finally, we highlight similarities and differences in institutional processes, such as admissions, assessment and programme evaluation, which are more or less formal depending on the context of the programme: whether it is embedded in a university, conservatoire, or art academy. Below, we explore these matters in more detail.

## Focus on capacity building

Establishing and developing a community of peers is an essential part not only of creating a doctoral degree, but also of developing and maintaining a research culture. Developing a community takes place mostly through knowledge exchange activities, collaborations across higher education institutions, developing partnerships and networks with external organisations (academic and non-academic), and mentoring approaches to supervisory training.

## *Developing connections/peer communities*

The notion of *connection* – between doctoral researchers and staff, and between the institution and other organisations – appears at the heart of knowledge exchange activities. For instance, one respondent noted that 'events – such as Artistic Research Day, Graduate Conferences, research symposia, research workshops – all of them are *meeting places for presenting and discussing ongoing research at the Academy*' [survey, 2019, emphasis added]. The research seminars and other research activities thus become contexts for formal or informal gatherings where researchers 'talk about the research projects and exchange experiences' [survey, 2019]. Fostering connections between staff and doctoral researchers is the basis of the development of a research culture, which takes place 'through the connection of people' [survey, 2019]. This respondent added that 'in our understanding, it is *the research community* who is forming the basis of the research. We try to interconnect locally, nationally, internationally, and across disciplines' [survey, 2019, emphasis added]. This focus on connection between people as the basis for developing a culture of research is also evident across other responses: for example, seminars '*bring together* different approaches in order to stimulate *common discussions*, mutual help and to create an atmosphere of advanced research' [survey, 2019, emphasis added]. Crucially, a staff member at the Graduate School of Creative Arts and Media (Ireland) writes,

It is a further principle of the school that we should engage in constructing a permeable community – a community of dialogue that has points of entry from within and without the academic scene, and indeed from within and

without the various disciplines and practices that we engage [with] throughout our studies [survey, 2019].

This respondent further discusses the guiding principle of ‘establishing and maintaining a community of peers, a community of dialogue’ [survey, 2019] at the core of their approach to doctoral education. To do so, they argue, it is critical to build relationships with non-academic institutions.

#### *Developing external partnerships and networks*

Developing and establishing communities of peers not only takes place internally but also externally, through collaborations with other HEIs and partnerships with arts institutions and industry. Engagement with professional organisations takes place predominantly through national research councils and international networks. Several institutions connected with research councils mention receiving funding for both resources and programme development. Links with other organisations are also widely seen as important – organisations such as other HEIs within and outside Europe, national research agencies, European and other networks,<sup>2</sup> as well as participation in European partnerships through Erasmus+ projects.

The value placed on networks is uneven across Europe: in Germany, for example, there is low interest from research councils on artistic research compared to the STEM disciplines (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), whilst in Norway, all HEIs are connected through the Norwegian Artistic Research Programme. The purpose of distinct networks should also be highlighted: for example, Le Fresnoy (France) has doctoral programme agreements with several other institutions in France and Canada, laboratories associated with other institutions and research institutes, as well as partnerships and funding from the French Ministry of Culture and other foundations. A small number of institutions mention partnerships with art organisations and festivals, such as the Venice Biennale. In addition, ‘individual researchers have relationships with national bodies’ [survey, 2019] which complements those relationships established at institutional level.

#### *Consolidating internal research structures*

Establishing internal organisational structures positively impacts capacity building, and was highlighted as one of the strategies for developing a research culture, particularly, for institutions making advancements in this area. A respondent at the Faculty of Fine Arts and Performing Arts (University of Gothenburg, Sweden) writes,

To become further successful in expanding the research fields and thus establishing an even more sustainable research environment, there is a need to strengthen the research structures and create growth within all three research fields through various structures of support [survey, 2019].

This response points towards the development of internal structures which focuses on ‘research and research education issues’ [survey, 2019] as a key strategy for developing a research environment. Some institutions mention the appointment of leadership roles

<sup>2</sup> These include the European League of Institutes of the Arts, Cumulus Association, Cirrus (Nordic-Baltic Network of Art and Design Education), European Association of Conservatoires, Society for Artistic Research, European Artistic Research Network, and the Nordic Network Nordeas.

such as ‘vice-vice-chancellor’ or ‘head of research’ to focus on research concerns, as well as creating structures such as research committees to address research matters. The development of a research strategy as well as leadership roles was pointed out:

With its provisions on strengthening research structures, the research strategy points to a new research organisation with a more professionalised research leadership that can become an operative tool for achieving an expanded and sustainable research environment. However, it is a fact that a low basic resource for research is a challenge to a timely development of the research environment [survey, 2019].

Here, we observe how the availability of funding for research not only permeates all levels of doctoral education – from establishing research centres, to developing a research culture, to funding PhD positions – but also greatly influences how a research environment might be fostered. Other important strategies to establish organisational structures are the development of research centres and the identification of areas of research associated with those. In addition, and less prevalent in the responses, is the introduction of research in 1st and 2nd Cycle education (Bachelor and Master), building research awareness across all levels of students and staff: ‘research should not start with the PhD, but should be integrated also in undergraduate education’ [survey, 2019].

#### *Supporting student agency*

Finally, we observe a strong focus on student agency at several points in the doctoral degree. As a self-led degree, there is an emphasis on the students’ responsibility to decide how and what to study. Doctoral researchers are responsible for applying to and securing funding. In a few exceptional cases (such as in the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Antwerp), the curriculum is responsive to and driven by their interests: ‘the topics chosen for research and PhDs in the arts should determine which topics are included in the curriculum (and not vice versa)’ [survey, 2019]. In some instances, the doctoral researcher decides with their supervisor which courses to attend. There is a general view that outputs are defined in response to PhD researchers’ projects and are open enough to allow for distinct forms of practice: doctoral scholars ‘select the medium and form in which to submit material’ and ‘define, choose and justify the forms of outputs coherent with his [her] research project’ [survey, 2019]. At the submission stage, they are also expected to deliver their doctorate in a suitable format, as each project ‘will take the appropriate form for it’ [survey, 2019].

#### Developing funding strategies

Building staff and student capacity is intrinsically related to funding availability for research and development. The importance of funding is evident in its impact at several levels of research: it defines relationships with other organisations, operates as a driver of research agendas, and impacts student funding. Engaging with funding bodies can also provide a platform for advocacy and for shaping the development of artistic research with a focus on student needs. Collaboration with funding entities may enable and help ‘shape the funding to the needs of artistic research’ [survey, 2019].

Several respondents note the value of ‘exploring the possibilities of expanding research funding, both [through] public funds and through external financiers’ [survey, 2019]. The association of a healthy research environment with funding is clear: ‘in order

to strengthen the research environments and make them sustainable, there is a need to encourage more fundraising for research and increase successful funding results' [survey, 2019]. Other respondents noted that this can only be achieved with 'administrative support to apply for external funding' [survey, 2019]. In this context, it is key that institutions provide adequate support to enhance funding prospects in a very competitive environment. Further, the impact of precarity in research culture is evident: funding constraints as well as the reliance on temporary and/or part time staff positions were the challenges most commonly indicated.

Funding from external organisations often guides the relationships and partnerships that institutions build with research councils and institutes. The availability of research funds can also, in some rare cases, become the driver of the whole research agenda, as this example demonstrates: 'to strategically attract funding from the widest range possible, the research groups were framed to address key artistic and societal issues as established within the framework of the Horizon 2020 themes for the Humanities' [survey, 2019]. Whilst this approach appears to be rare, it indicates an alignment of research centres towards existing funding streams.

Funding for doctoral researchers also varies from full salaried positions to no funding at all. In some cases, PhD researchers self-fund through part-time jobs, family finances or savings. Teaching does not appear to be a widespread form of doctoral funding in arts, though it is common in other fields: solely Glasgow School of Art mentions Graduate Teaching Assistantships as a source of support for doctoral candidates. In some places, students fund themselves through scholarships, bursaries, and grants from research councils and other private or public organisations. Several institutions have salaried PhD positions of 3 to 4 years financed by state funds. Gerrit Rietveld Academie, for example, offers a salary to the candidate, with extra project funding available from the societal partner supporting the research. Candidates at the academy can also fund the project and production work through other sources such as grants and bursaries. In institutions that do not offer salaried positions, a mixture of the above applies.

Differences in funding for doctoral researchers appear to be a geographical matter: in all institutions surveyed in Norway (6), Estonia (1) and Lithuania (1), the positions are salaried. This is also the case for some French and Swedish institutions, whilst in others (such as the University of Gothenburg) some doctoral candidates who do not have a salary support themselves through external sources. In Germany, Austria, Greece, and the United Kingdom, PhD students are primarily self-funded and can apply for an array of research council scholarships, bursaries, and funds from public or private organisations. It would be relevant to study how the availability of funding in distinct geographical contexts affects the development of sustainable research environments. Next, we discuss similarities and differences in institutional doctoral protocols.

### Institutional policies and protocols

The survey responses also highlighted the variety and similarity of approaches to institutional processes and protocols. The institutional framework appears to have an impact on the approaches chosen: doctoral programmes embedded in universities have more formalised processes in relation to PhD assessment, quality assessment and enhancement, evaluation metrics, and training for PhD researchers and supervisors, which normally stem from the university regulations. Art institutes and academies often take more individualised approaches with a prevalence for seminar-style learning

situations as opposed to courses, for example. Nonetheless, the protocols around PhD admissions and assessment appear to be the most formalised across the board, whilst policies around quality assessment and training often tend to be more diverse. Below, we review some of the most relevant protocols in detail.

### *Admissions process*

The admissions process for doctoral researchers presents similarities across the board. Almost half of the institutions surveyed (16 out of 34) clearly indicate that their process of admissions consists of a student application reviewed by a committee and followed by an interview. The application normally includes a research proposal (indicated by 12 institutions), a portfolio (indicated by 5), and a CV (3). It is likely that these numbers are higher as several institutions did not specify the exact materials submitted in the application stage. In fact, in a survey conducted the following year in 2020, which gathered 17 responses, over half of the respondents (9) indicated that they requested all three materials – portfolio, CV and proposal. There are local variations to the materials submitted: for example, a written sample (such as a paper) is requested at Vilnius Academy of Arts; the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts requires a list of publications and a PhD abstract; and a couple of institutions ask candidates to submit a research plan. Following the application stage, an independent committee reviews the submissions, pre-selects the applicants for interview, and decides on the final selection of doctoral candidates.

There are some variations to this structure. The Academy of Fine Arts Helsinki has a third stage after the interviews, where selected candidates revise their research plans. The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts does not conduct interviews. The University of Art and Design Linz (Austria) requires the agreement of a potential supervisor at the admissions stage. At Glasgow School of Art, a ‘good “fit” with proposed supervisory team’ [survey, 2019] is a necessary criterion to reach the interview stage. Two institutions indicate that PhD candidates benefit from staff support during the project proposal writing stage before submitting an application (Le Fresnoy and Glasgow School of Art). The composition of the selection committee also varies: it may include the potential supervisor(s), it may comprise different juries to narrow the candidates for interview and to conduct the final selection, or it may include international staff in the interview panel.

### *Qualifications to supervise*

Most institutions surveyed adopt a combination of criteria to define who can supervise doctoral degrees. The two main criteria are: having a PhD qualification (mentioned in 12 of 34 responses) and being at a certain career stage, such as reader or professor (indicated 9 times). In most Norwegian institutions, for example, supervisors need to be ‘associate professors’ or demonstrate equivalent competences. Following this, previous supervisory experience as well as relevant artistic expertise are also common criteria (mentioned in 6 and 5 responses respectively). The importance of having a supervisor with relevant ‘artistic competence within the field in question’ is at times highlighted as an expectation of the role [survey, 2019]; as is a supervisory setup where ‘at least one of the appointed supervisors’ has ‘previous experience of supervision of candidates at master’s and/or PhD level’ [survey, 2019]. These two criteria ensure that the supervisor has relevant expertise in both supervisory practice and the artistic domains where the project is situated. Only two institutions (in Ireland and in the United

Kingdom) mention the completion of supervisory training as one of the requisites for becoming a supervisor. At the other end of the spectrum, 7 institutions outline that they have no formal policy for staff to undertake PhD supervision.

### *Supervisor training*

Supervisory training varies widely across the spectrum, from a couple days of training a year (indicated in 14 responses) to no formal training at all (12 responses). Whether the institution is part of a university determines how common training is: most institutions located within a university framework (such as the University of Gothenburg) offer formal supervisory training, where staff complete training modules or courses for supervisors (at Lund University for example, the training lasts one week). In academies and art institutions, the lack of supervisory training is more prevalent, and most often, no formal supervisory training is offered. Most training takes place over one- or two-day yearly seminars for supervisors. In some institutions, supervisor training happens informally over conversations with the Head of research and throughout regular meetings in the department where PhD matters are discussed. Some supervisors get support by working with a more experienced peer: 'Early Career Researchers are typically on teams with more experienced supervisors, thereby creating an informal mentoring mode of supervision' [survey, 2019]. Recent research highlights and argues for the adoption of mentoring approaches in parallel with formal supervisory training [Hamilton, J., & Carson, S., 2015]. Mentoring as a supervisory training approach contributes to developing staff capacity through peer-to-peer dialogue and to the development of the research community. Overall, there is scope for training for supervisors 'to be improved!' [survey, 2019].

### *Doctoral researcher training*

Whilst most institutions provide some form of doctoral training, the approach, format, and content vary widely. Doctoral training programmes for PhD researchers mostly oscillate between formal accredited courses and informal seminars: a third of the institutions surveyed require accredited modules, another third deliver training through non-accredited research seminars or courses, and 4 institutions have no curriculum in the PhD programme.

Accredited training may include the equivalent of half a year of full-time studies. The number of ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) ranges mostly between 30 and 60: the standard requirement of doctoral programmes is 30 ECTS in three institutions and 60 ECTS in another three, which may comprise half compulsory and half elective modules. At the Faculty of Fine Arts Music and Design (University of Bergen) students undertake 20 ECTS, and the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and Vilnius Academy of Arts require students to complete 40 ECTS. The modes of delivery are similar across accredited and non-accredited courses and include monthly doctoral research seminars, weekly seminars, monthly 'focus weeks', workshops, intensive doctoral training weeks, conferences, and research trips. The content of the courses, although not widely described, can include research methods, ethics, artistic research, project preparation, presentations of work, exhibitions, and group meetings, to name a few. One staff member indicated that the training programme is approached as an 'individualized path developed according to the project of artistic and theoretical work of the student' [survey, 2019]. This is echoed by others who indicated that students select the courses relevant to their research in dialogue with their

supervisor.

#### *Doctoral submission and examination*

Considering PhD assessment criteria, a large majority of the institutions surveyed (70%) follow the national qualification framework in place for 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle education in their country. Two institutions, including the Royal Conservatoire of Antwerp, adopt the Florence Principles.<sup>3</sup> A small number integrate national policies with international principles for doctoral education. That is the case of the Austrian and Lithuanian institutions surveyed: The Academy of Fine Arts Vienna follows the national framework and the Florence Principles; and the Vilnius Academy of Arts references the ELIA benchmark statements in addition to those. The University of Art and Design Linz follows several key doctoral frameworks as well as the national one: 'we constantly try to improve the structure of the PhD programme by combining the recommendations from the international debate (Florence Principles on the Doctorate in the Arts, Salzburg Principles, Principles for Innovative Doctoral Training etc.)' [survey, 2019]. Two institutions indicated that they do not follow a qualification framework for doctoral education.

The doctoral examination process is highly structured and formalised, and presents similarities across European institutions. Examination normally comprises an artistic project (presented live and/or through a portfolio/documentation), a written submission, and the *viva voce*, also called oral defence. The artistic project can take a wide range of forms: exhibitions, products, concerts, websites, theatre productions, films, performances, portfolios, design or industry projects, models, design concepts, collaborative projects, music, curatorial projects, images, texts, shows, dance, animation, food art, performative writings, installations, interventions or software, for example. There is a wide variety in word count: between 25,000 and 80,000 words, with some institutions outlining no formal word count or format required. Key points to note are the equal importance of the artwork and of the dissertation, as well as the live presentation of artistic practice, which is then discussed with the examiners, who 'must be present to see the doctoral work' [survey, 2019]. The practice often drives the type of materials submitted and how they are presented: in some programmes, doctoral researchers decide the exact submission format as each project determines the submission materials.

Although it is challenging to ascertain comparability across examination protocols as responses address those freely, some patterns emerge. The *viva* takes place between two and five months from submission, and it is often led by a Chair from the institution (mentioned by a quarter of the respondents). The protocols around the *viva* vary: twelve institutions mention a public defence and four stress that their *viva* takes place in a private setting (other respondents do not mention whether their *vivas* are public or private). In some Norwegian institutions, the *viva* only takes place after the committee has passed the PhD. Exceptionally, the Ecole de recherche graphique (Belgium) has a private *viva* followed by a public one.

In some institutions, public defences follow a particular order of events: the Chair, the student, or one of the examiners may give an account of the PhD; followed by questioning and discussion of the doctoral work which takes place between the candidate and one or two opponents in succession; and finishing with audience questions.

3 The *Florence Principles* is a position paper on the artistic doctorate published by ELIA, the European League of Institutes of the Arts, in 2016, which outlines essential criteria for doctorates in the arts.

In both private and public defences, the panel normally withdraws to discuss before announcing their decision to the candidate. The examination panel – also called jury, examiners, board, or assessment committee – generally comprises four to nine examiners, with a balance between internal and external assessors (a third of the respondents mention external or international examiners).

Disparate views emerge on whether the supervisor is part of the assessment panel. In Norway, for instance, ‘appointed supervisors and others who have contributed to the project cannot be members of the assessment committee, nor administer it’ [survey, 2019]. This is also the case in the Malmö Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts. In a small number of institutions in France and Austria, the examination panel includes the supervisor and the co-supervisors, such as the Ecole nationale supérieure d’arts de Paris-Cergy (France), the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, and the University of Art and Design Linz (Austria). In Austria, for example, the supervisor writes the assessment report (and grades the work), and the doctoral researcher only proceeds to a public defence if the report is positive.

### *Programme quality assessment*

The Quality Assessment & Enhancement (QAE) procedures to evaluate doctoral programmes are defined by the context: institutions connected to universities follow established and standard QAE procedures of the awarding university. A few institutions mention the implementation of the Florence and Salzburg Principles, the inclusion of international external assessors as part of assessment, and participation of the programme in national and international auditing and assessment processes. A further few programmes suggest that developing quality assurance is currently being planned, but that procedures ‘have not yet been launched’ [survey, 2019], and very few suggest there are none. Several metrics are used to evaluate the success of doctoral programmes, with some institutions mentioning no metrics at all (7 in 34), and one indicating that metrics are under discussion.

The most common metric used is the time of completion of the degree (mentioned in 7 responses), perhaps because the number of completions influences the funding attributed to the university. Other metrics include the number of applicants (4 responses), of doctoral researchers (3), of grants secured (3), and of completions (also mentioned in 3 responses). Only a few programmes mention qualitative approaches such as a student survey (highlighted by 2 respondents) and student achievements (for instance, 4 institutions mention participation in exhibitions, events, conferences, publications, peer-reviewed outputs, etc. as ways of measuring the quality of the programme). Three institutions highlight regular evaluations of the programme (internally or with external experts) to measure quality and success. Surprisingly, only one institution mentions employability as a mark of success of the programme. Employability would, perhaps, be a more indicative metric of success in its contribution to PhD researchers’ career development and the long-term benefits of pursuing a doctoral degree in artistic research.

## In closing

This analysis of doctoral approaches in several European institutions shows how art academies and faculties are currently working to build staff and student capacity at different levels, through funding, training, and support for research. A take-away les-



son is the understanding that the notion of connection between peers is a driver of the development of a research culture and environment and at the heart of knowledge exchange activities. The analysis also highlights a widespread concern with securing and expanding research funding across institutions, and how that affects policies and the research produced. Further, we observe how the protocols and processes around doctoral education can be very much embedded in formal pre-existing university procedures or can stem from more informal practices which, while equally rigorous, are more prevalent in academies and art institutions.

This brings to the fore the fact that some doctoral processes – such as PhD admissions and examination – are more formalised than other protocols across the board, such as student and staff training. Finally, there seems to be a marked difference between PhD programmes located within university structures, and programmes in academies and art institutions that often follow less formalised protocols. These two institutional frameworks influence the approaches to doctoral education, and it would be potentially relevant to comparatively investigate similarities and differences in the protocols in both frameworks (such as training, supervision, examination, etc). It would also be pertinent to examine how the Norwegian model compares with other European institutions, and whether there are accentuated geographical differences between approaches to doctoral education in the arts.

This analytical overview aims to provide food for thought in ways of moving forward in doctoral education for institutions across Europe and beyond. There is an impending responsibility within the sector to develop and enhance doctoral education in the arts. The Bologna agreement on 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle education introduced in Berlin in 2003 was signed by over 40 countries, however, so far in almost 20 years, there has been very little change in doctoral education in some signatories' countries. We hope that this overview, which represents a snapshot of practices at a certain moment in time over the duration of this project, between 2019 and 2021, offers an insight into different practices in doctoral education in Europe.

Whilst policies, processes and approaches in education are constantly evolving, we begin to see some patterns emerging across arts institutions. The *3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle in the Arts* database [2021] is open for submissions: Creator Doctus invites institutions across Europe and beyond to complete a form to include themselves in the database;<sup>4</sup> this would provide a more robust picture of current practices in doctoral education in the arts.

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4 The *3rd Cycle in the Arts* database is available at: [www.3rdcycleinthearts.eu](http://www.3rdcycleinthearts.eu). The form for institutions to be included can be found here: <http://creatordoctus.eu/results/database-of-3rd-cycle-models-in-the-arts/>

# Two Distributed Learning Models in Doctoral Education

Henry Rogers<sup>1</sup> and Inês Bento-Coelho<sup>2</sup>

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## Case Study 1: *The Glasgow School of Art and the 2+2 Model (Master+CrD)*

The Glasgow School of Art (GSA) has a significant history in supporting doctoral study across its five schools: Architecture; Design; Fine Art; Innovation; and Simulation and Visualisation. Within the context of practice-led/practice-based (or perhaps artistic praxis-based/praxis-driven) doctoral study, the emphasis is placed on 'the development of creative approaches with new audiences to contribute to a better world' [Creator Doctus, 2021b].

Identifying the institution's strategic aims is a useful way to begin to think about how to build the case for the development of 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle programmes in institutions where there is no prior experience at this level of study. Strategically, GSA is committed to:

- Disruption – encouraging critical thinking and experimentation;
- Diversity – in our students and staff, thought and outlook;
- Responsibility – to our planet, each other and those we work with;
- Place – our heritage, traditions and our locations;
- "Collaboration – with our students, colleagues and external partners.

[Creator Doctus, 2021b]."

In this instance, considering these five commitments and our commitment to innovative practices has led us to focus on the potential for doctoral study to emerge from and through Postgraduate Taught (PGT) programmes rather than the more conventional Postgraduate Research (PGR) route. We believe that there are other ways of doing things that are more fitting to how we have experienced artistic research taking place in recent years, especially as a collaborative rather than solitary activity. The current need and increased demand for digital connectivity has also informed our thinking. Encouraging critical thinking and experimentation within the context of both taught elements and independent study is central to all such activities, as is the ensuing conversation that takes place between students, their peers, supervisory teams, professionals, and communities.

The development of a coherent research environment in which artistic research is both valued and supported is key, as is the creation of an infrastructure that enables both candidates and communities to know about the work being undertaken in each specific research community. Therefore, identifying the themes that established researchers are collectively invested in is crucial, as is identifying where expertise sits within the research community. Within the GSA context, openness and fluidity are important. Thematic groups enable researchers from multiple (different) disciplines to interact and work collectively and collegially, thus enhancing the overall research environment. Furthermore, there is scope for doctoral students to become Graduate Teaching Assistants, which enables them to be employed to work on specific programmes and/or support specific initiatives/projects, thus enhancing the student experience overall.

## 2+2 Model (Masters/CrD)

In response to the anxiety in some quarters of the academy about 'word counts and equivalences in material practice' we would do well to remember that this demand is somewhat misguided, as if we are being asked to '*weigh a poem to determine its value*'. Professor Carole Gray (personal communication to Henry Rogers)

The Creator Doctus structure is intended to be flexible and responsive. There is no one-size-fits-all and each of the partner institutions has developed its own ways of working within their own specific national and institutional contexts. The model proposed at GSA is only one variant to emerge; other models are possible in relation to the specific needs of communities and professions. The model is equivalent to what may be understood as a Doctorate in Fine Art (DFA) in some institutions. It has been designed as an innovative addition to the awards available in the institution and to facilitate the further embedding of artistic research in all levels of study.

As a collaborative award with a strong focus on practice, the CrD builds upon the development and progression of the MFA programme, allowing students who have completed it to progress to Year 2 of the PhD. At GSA, the MFA programme has a strong focus on practice with a research spine that underpins the entire programme. Students write a proposal, engage with a 'research methods and methodologies in practice' unit, followed by a 'theorising studio practice' unit, and develop a question or concern to work with. This places them at a stage of equivalence with 1st year doctoral students when they finish their MFA. In this context, the 2+2 Model offers an opportunity for the institution to develop a clear and robust progression from Master to Doctoral level, and for students to closely build on their MFA work towards a doctoral degree. It also enables us to rethink what characterises knowledge production in the context of doctoral study in our field, and how that relates to existing academic conventions in regard to education and artistic practice. With regards to the anxiety noted above about our engagement with words and artefacts, it is clear from experience that such entanglements become generative; spaces in which insights are gained and knowledge is tacit.

The model's aims are closely aligned to the aims of the CrD and of GSA's own Research Degrees Guidance. Therefore, this model clearly demonstrates where equivalences can be found between Research Degrees Training and embedded research training in PGT programmes at Master level study. The correlation between the requirements for the successful completion of the MFA programme and Year 1 of doctoral study is evidenced in the comparative table below (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Comparative table of the requirements from completion of Year 1 of doctoral study and of the MFA programme.**

Research Degrees Training Programme	MFA Equivalent
The GSA provides a cross-school generic research skills programme, which is mandatory to all first year MPhil/PhD students. This programme is also open to second year students wishing to participate.	School of Fine Art (SoFA) provides a common core course: Research Methods and Methodologies in Practice that explores both generic research skills and discipline-specific research practices in the arts. All SoFA PGT students attend this in their first year of study. This programme is also open to second year students wishing to participate.
<i>The generic programme aims to:</i>	
Provide training in generic research skills appropriate to the level for MPhil and PhD study in Art, Design and Architecture, Digital Design, Historical and Critical Studies and related fields	Provide an introduction to and training in generic research skills appropriate to Master level study including MFA/MLitt, comparable to those at MPhil and PhD study
Provide students with the necessary study, professional and transferable skills to engage in a project of advanced research in their fields of enquiry	Provide students with the necessary study, professional and transferable skills to engage in a project of advanced artistic research in their fields of enquiry
Enable students to develop the necessary critical judgement to engage in postgraduate research	Enable students to develop the necessary critical judgement to engage in postgraduate artistic research
Provide support for students in the initial stages of their programmes of study, enabling increasing independence.	Provide support for students in the initial stages of their programmes of study, enabling increasing independence.
<i>At the start of their programmes of study, students will be given:</i>	
a research degrees training programme document, detailing the content of specific sessions, the programme criteria and indicative reading lists.	a comprehensive MFA Programme Handbook a Research Methods and Methodologies in Practice schedule detailing specific sessions the Theorising Studio Practice Notes for Guidance document the programme/course specific criteria and indicative reading lists.

Source: GSA regulations for both programmes.

As Figure 2 demonstrates, research methods and methodologies are embedded within the MFA programme via the *Research Methods and Methodologies in Practice (RMMiP)* core unit of assessment (Stage 1). This enables practitioners to enter into a period of intense self-reflection towards an exposition of their practice. It sets the tone for the rest of their adventure and they are encouraged to explore the potential for creative responses as well as more conventional academic submissions. This is built on and through the writing of a proposal (Stage 2) for critical creative written submissions or dissertation; and through the submissions themselves (Stage 3), which demonstrates the practitioners' deepening knowledge and understanding of their work and context. It is through this process that for many practitioners their practice becomes infused with research, becomes more evidently praxis, an intense form of production: artistic research as attitude.

In the 2+2 Model, upon the conclusion/culmination of the Masters' experience, the practitioner can progress to Year 2 of doctoral study. However, this would not be an automatic 'rite of passage'. In order to progress to a PhD, candidates must

**Figure 2: The 2+2 MFA/CrD Model: progression throughout the degree and milestones**

MFA Programme x 2 years		CrD Year 1 FT Equivalent		CrD Year 2 FT Equivalent		Beyond Year 2		
MFA End of Year 2		End of Year 2 (PT 36 months)		6 months before submission		Autumn or Summer		
		→		→		→		
Stage 1 RMMIP Methods Paper (3,500 words)	Stage 2 TSP Research Proposal (1-2,000 words)	Stage 3 TSP Extended Dissertation/ Literature Review (10,000 words)	Progression Interview and Presentation	Progression  • 25% of final submission reviewed • Body of Practice • Supporting evidence via written submission • Detailed Year 2 Plan to submission • If appropriate, presentation	Annual report (Students, supervisors and External if appropriate)	Intention to submit form  Examiner Nomination  If not ready to submit, Extension form with support- ive material	Annual report (Students, su- pervisors and External if appropriate), Mock Viva	Intention to submit form, Mandatory Mock Viva  Examiner Nomination
Stage 1 Critical Review of Studio Practice	Stage 2 Exploring Studio Practice	Stage 3 Consolidating Studio Practice	Revised Project Proposal, Project Structure and plan of work					

present a revised project proposal repositioning their work, a project structure, and a plan of work. The candidate may then be invited to an interview. This is an important 'equivalent' moment of review; in some institutions it would be regarded as the point of 'upgrade' where the student has demonstrated that they have a viable doctoral project. Figure 2 presents the alignment with the conventional 3-year model of doctoral study and with the current regulations at GSA.

*Mode and length of study*

The CrD (PhD equivalent) modes of study will build on, work with, and enhance, those programmes already established within The Glasgow School of Art. The 2+2 (MFA/CrD) model enables students who have followed the enhanced research route embedded within their 2-year Master's to progress to a 2-year accelerated period of doctoral study. Students may undertake the CrD (PhD/DFA equivalent) full time or part time (Figure 3). In addition to full-/part-time modes, the new Mode Neutral facilitates flexible learning and allows the student to determine the pace of study. In this scenario, students may, in consultation with the supervisory team (and societal partner where one is involved), opt to accelerate or decelerate the duration of their study in relation to their professional lives and employment situation. In the spirit of life-long learning, this mode of study offers flexibility of engagement and reflects both the supported and unsupported extension of the study period defined within the regulations.

Figure 3: CrD modes of study

	Mode of Study	Minimum	Maximum
CrD (PhD equivalent)	Full Time (accelerated)	2 years	3 years
	Part Time (decelerated)	4 years	7 years

In the 2+2 Model, Research Degree study is possible in the following modes from the date of enrolment:

- Full-time (2 + 2 accelerated model) (six terms/trimesters for PhD).
- Full-time (nine terms/trimesters for PhD).
- Part-time research is equivalent to not < 1 term/trimester per academic year.
- Mode Neutral (in consultation with the supervisory team).
- Extension Periods.

*Extension periods*

Students can request Supported or Unsupported Extension periods to complete their degree. Supported Extensions of 6 or 12 months are suitable for students undertaking further research outside of the normal research degree completion time. A Supported Extension includes supervisory support, and must be requested by students to the Research Degree Sub-Committee. Students who have already substantially finished their research, who are concentrating on completing their thesis or research project, and who no longer require formal supervision, may request an Unsupported Extension. Full-time students are required to submit their work within one year of completion of study (two years for part-time students).

### *Submission for assessment*

In this variation of the CrD, the final submission may potentially follow one of the suggested formats below:

- A practical submission of a body of work in the form of a public 'exposition' (public exhibition) with a supportive written submission of circa 5,000–25,000 words;
- A predominantly practical submission in the form of a public 'exposition' (public exhibition) with an overview of 2,000–5,000 words which critically justifies the intellectual significance of the submission;
- A predominantly practical submission in the form of a public 'exposition' (public exhibition) in which the 'live time' of the *viva* (or public defence) is recorded as an essential part of the submission.
- As part of GSA's well-established engagement with artistic research at this level of study, the 2+2 Model will be developed in relation to the distributed learning model – the Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities – as well as working with professional and societal partners in national and international contexts.

### Distributed Learning Model 1

The Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities (SGSAH) (<https://www.sgsah.ac.uk>) is the first national graduate school in the world. The SGSAH Doctoral Partnership enabled and encouraged cross-institutional supervision from the outset. This led to greater choice for students in identifying potential supervisory teams, and a closer *fit* between staff, doctoral researcher, and PhD project on admission. Membership of the Doctoral Training Partnership allows the Glasgow School of Art to compete with and often exceed the offer of larger universities by offering the best of both worlds in terms of institutional scale, access to resources, shared training and supervision. It has also given staff and PhD students the opportunity to share research training, compare best practices and develop policies and strategies together. The consortium is guided by the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and there is a Cross-Higher Education PhD Supervision Agreement to which all members adhere.

Doctoral students are supported locally, regionally and nationally, which expands their research potential through interaction with peers in other institutions, shared training events, internships and residencies, and the quarterly practice assembly. Students are encouraged to attend the research training events and a whole range of activities on offer, and to expand their peer learning and support networks. The trans-institutional supervisory teams regularly include discipline-specific or multidisciplinary arts practitioners, cultural theorists, philosophers, anthropologists, queer theorists, historians and curators. Cross-institutional supervision has multiple benefits beyond those for students themselves; it encourages reciprocity in research across the partnership. Staff research has benefited by being less insular and exclusive. Research projects have been generated simply through working alongside colleagues from other institutions. Resources and training have been shared.

PhD students have also been able to establish cross-disciplinary, thematic cohorts and projects. And staff have been able to pool and share ideas and pedagogical approaches of benefit to all.



## Case Study 2: The Centre for Fine Art Research at Birmingham School of Art (2009-2016)

The Centre for Fine Art Research (CFAR) was developed in order to provide a structure to clearly define the scope of the School's research concerns. Originally there were four interrelated strands: Art in the Public Sphere; Interpretation and Documentation; Performance and Performativity and Sense and Meaning through Form. This was revised and enhanced as research interests evolved over time. As part of its infrastructure, CFAR hosted the following spaces and platforms: International Project Space (Bourneville campus), Eastside Projects (Faisley Street), the Visualisation Research Unit, and Article Press (Margaret Street). From the outset, the intention was to align Master level programmes with the research undertaken in CFAR's research clusters not only to share the School's research but also to ensure a steady flow of students progressing to doctoral study. CFAR embraced all research linked to arts practices and related fields of enquiry. Its world-leading 4 star research environment (as acknowledged in the UK's 2016 national Research Excellence Framework (REF) results) foregrounded 8 strategic clusters of excellence. There were over 35 PhD students – including several Arts and Humanities Research Council Awards (AHRC), institutional bursaries/collaborative funded research grants, and externally funded awards from Trusts and Bequests – four international/senior Research Fellows, two international research networks (The AHRC Research Network in Photography; and the Strategic Research Network in Contemporary Art, Philosophy & the Wild Sciences), two CFAR post-doctoral Researchers and 4 Artists-in-Residence.

The centre also supported *Article Press* – a longstanding unique research publishing environment that foregrounded cutting edge scholarship as well as artwork from peer reviewed and internationally exhibited artists-scholars. Over time, this was enhanced with the development of Article Gallery, an initiative that enabled staff and students to generate their own projects as well as to programme significant external projects. This was complemented by the setting up of Art Market with Birmingham City Museums. All researchers worked within the inventive intersections of *established* and *new* technologies, including drawing; painting; sculpture; print-making; photography (digital/analogue); video, film and performance; archive and installation; socially engaged and interdisciplinary practice; mixed reality labs; the electronic arts; music, composition and the wild sciences. The intention was to ensure that the School was a key contributor to the arts ecology of the West Midlands in the UK.

### Research Clusters

- Making Art in the Public Sphere
- Centre for Chinese Visual Arts
- Photography – Expanded
- Radical Matter in Art & Philosophy
- Art History, Education and Design Practices
- Erotic Praxis and the Queering of Sense
- Speculative Topologies in Art-Design
- Research in Art Dissemination and Impact

### Master level and Doctoral Alignments

Each Master level programme of study was aligned to one or more of the research clusters. The intention was to allow for a degree of fluidity across the research environment. Whilst there was scope to attract external candidates, progression to doctoral level study was cultivated at Master level. The Master level programmes aligned to research clusters were:

- MA Art and Design: Interdisciplinary Practices
- MA Arts and Education Practices
- MA Arts, Well-being and Mindfulness
- MA Arts & Project Management
- MA Contemporary Curating
- MA Fine Art
- MA Innovation and Leadership in Museum Practice
- MA Radical Media Arts Philosophy
- MA Queer Studies in Arts & Culture
- MA History and Theory of Art & Design

### Key Learning Strategies in Doctoral Education

The structure of the doctoral degree incorporated several key learning strategies which enabled distinct forms of learning to co-exist:

- *Key peer learning strategies:* As a school within a larger university setting, PhD students benefitted not only from school-specific research seminars but also from faculty-wide staff- and student-led research seminars within the less formal Research Café setting. They also benefitted from the extended network of the Midlands4cities consortium (see Distributed Learning Model 2 below).
- *Faculty Research Seminars:* 10 sessions during semester 1. These sessions led to the acquisition of a Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methodologies for which students were expected to produce a research methods paper, a literature review, and a redraft of their PhD proposal.
- *School Research Seminars:* 10 sessions per semester. All 35 PhD students in the School of Fine Art were invited to attend the 3-hour weekly sessions. The sessions were run by the Director of Research (Professor Johnny Golding, between 2012-2016) and all sessions were filmed and are available on Youtube (see for example, a session from 2015: <https://youtu.be/lmtjcDKZ7Q8>).
- *School of Fine Art Student-Led Seminars:* the student-led seminars dealt with philosophical and theoretical concerns, and with contemporary and/or professional contexts and experience. They involved the sharing of ideas and peer group learning, and encouraged links across cohorts and year groups.

### Birmingham School of Art's External Links

Central to the Centre for Fine Art Research's activities were the development of links over time, not only within the faculty but also regionally, nationally, and internationally:

#### *Regional*

- Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery; Midlands Federation of Museums and Galleries; Ikon Gallery; Eastside Projects; Midlands Art Centre; the New Art

Gallery Walsall; The Mead Gallery; VIVID; Capsule; Grand Union; Birmingham City Council; Queen Elizabeth Hospital; Birmingham Children's Hospital; Hippodrome; Creative Shift; the Drum; the REP; Selfridges; the new Library of Birmingham; Primary and Secondary Schools across the region.

- *Turning Point*: Arts Council England national priority project, developing national/regional strategies for the visual arts – Birmingham School of Art hosts the West Midlands office.

#### *National*

- National Society of Education in Art and Design; Training Development Agency; Arts Council England; Museums Association, Museums; Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) including MLA Renaissance West Midlands; Creative and Cultural Skills Council; Arts and Humanities Data Service; Association of Art Historians; Tate Britain and Tate Modern.

#### *International*

- The Centre for Fine Art Research has established links with other significant institutions both in the EU and the USA, as well as in Canada, China, Russia and Japan;
- European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA);
- France: The Sorbonne (Media Art); the Metz/Pompidou;
- Netherlands: STEIM (STudio for Electronic Instrumental Music), de Appel, the Rijks Academie; Willem de Koning Academie, Rotterdam; Royal Academie; The Hague;
- Austria: Ars Electronica, Akademie der Kunste, Wien;
- Germany: University of Cologne (Philosophy, History, Literature); Freie University of Berlin; UDK Berlin; Leipzig Academy of Art;
- Slovenia: The Academy of Art & Design, University of Ljubljana; The Academy of Sciences and the Arts, Ljubljana;
- USA: The Media Lab & The List Visual Arts Center (MIT); Parsons School of Design & The New School for Social Research (NYC); The Massachusetts College of Art (Boston); California Institution of the Arts (LA); and University of California (Berkeley, San Diego);
- Canada: The Pacific Centre for Technology, Art and Culture (Victoria);
- China: Nanjing Academy; SHAPE Hong Kong;
- Japan: The International Academy of Media Arts & Sciences (IAMAS-Ogaki City);
- Russia: The Laboratorium (St Petersburg).

#### *Funding*

- Arts Council England, The Wellcome Trust, Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), British Academy, The Gertrude Aston Bowater Bequest, and the Mike Holland Trust.

#### Distributed Learning Model 2

The Midlands4Cities Consortium (M4C) invites candidates to be part of a 'thriving community of doctoral students producing world-class research in the arts and humanities' [Midlands4Cities, 2021]. It brings together eight universities from across the Midlands: Birmingham University, Birmingham City University, Warwick University, Coventry University, De Montfort University, University of Leicester, Nottingham

Trent University, and the University of Nottingham. The consortium supports successful candidates with AHRC studentships, professional training, expert supervision across numerous disciplines and encourages trans-disciplinary projects that can draw on expertise in any number of specialist fields of study. M4C is linked to leading cultural organisations and networks not only in the UK but also internationally. Students can access an extensive range of training opportunities through the Midlands Arts Programme (MAP).

Students have two options to apply for doctoral study: the *open doctoral award*, where students find the most appropriate supervisory fit from the consortium, and the *collaborative doctoral award*, where students apply for an existing doctoral project in partnership with an M4C university and an external organisation [Midlands4Cities, 2021]. Supervisory teams may consist of both academic and professional/societal supervisors. The Midlands4Cities community is supported by the Virtual Postgraduate Platform (VPP), a single online space that enables doctoral researchers and supervisors to access student resources, help and guidance; to share profiles, records, and communication; to catalyse cohort activities and training; and to facilitate cross-institutional community-building.

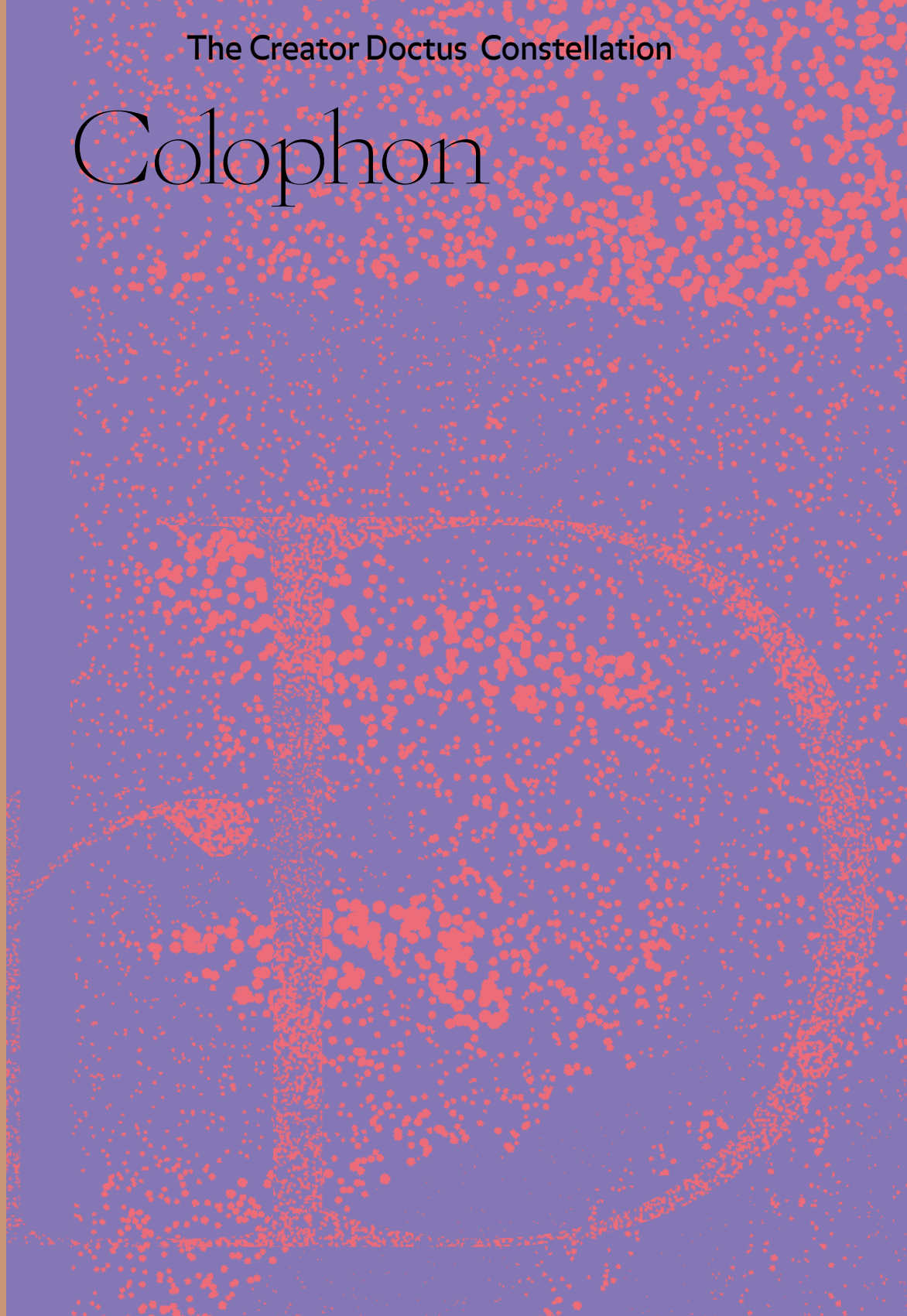
As with other consortia, students are encouraged to attend research training events and activities to enhance their peer learning experience and support networks. Midlands4Cities has an expansive range of regional, national and international partners providing training and placements, and training is geared towards research through the consortium's ethos of *Quality Thesis Plus* [Midlands4Cities, 2021]. This included the development of a number of initiatives, such as writing workshops with the Royal Literacy Fund and 'Lift the Lid', which provides workshops with creative practitioners on work and careers in the cultural industries, alongside employability training that connects the whole M4C community.

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The Creator Doctus Constellation

# Colophon



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“Although the term ‘artistic research’ has become a handy umbrella label to denote a rich and complex area of work, it can nonetheless be reductive and misleading if simply understood to represent the ‘arts’ in their most conservative sense (i.e. fine arts, music, theatre). The approach taken by Creator Doctus to artistic research, therefore, is that it is a broad community of scholars having a wide range of approaches and methodologies – not delimited or inward-facing but rich and complex in looking out towards an ‘understanding of, or coping with, the world’.”

Bruce Brown, Emeritus Professor at the University of Brighton and Visiting Professor at the Royal College of Art and Goldsmiths College, London

“The Creator Doctus [...] helps us to orient research away from exclusively the natural sciences and humanities as the final recipients, and in so doing, to also move away from their universal claim to define the concept of knowledge.”

Florian Dombois, Professor at the Zurich University of the Arts