

Chapter 3

Artistic Research: Defining the Field



The term “research” as a verb is full of life, movement and discovery. In the old French, *rechercher* is to find out about something thoroughly. In this artisan mode, we can share our ways of searching, within and across disciplines. Institutionally, however, we are asked to account for our research not as an artisanal practice but as a noun, as a piece of research. The institution will seek evidence to piece together a case for the “value” of the research in terms of its meaningfulness to someone else.

While the terms of the debate around “research” in artistic enquiry have been discussed for some time, the recent growth of postgraduate programmes in studio art has phenomenally expanded its impact. Writing on the British system in 1980, Jones helpfully distinguished important approaches that remain today:

What is “the question” of research in a Fine Art Department? Obviously it can be defined in a number of ways. Academically, there is the question of what can be achieved during a Master of Art (M.A.) course if it is not to be a mere continuation of the work leading to a Bachelor of Art (B.A.) degree. Administratively, the question can become one of finance, particularly when the available money is limited and decisions have to be taken about relative merits. Can research carried out by a visual artist be remotely compared with that carried out by a biologist, for example? Ideologically, the question is part of the continuous debate within art about its relationships with other disciplines, especially science and technology. In short, “the question” is really a set of questions that, though clearly related, are distinguishable from each other by context and implications.¹

Borgdorff notes a “liberalization” of what is understood as research in the academic world, quoting the definition given by the European Joint Quality Initiative in its “Dublin descriptor” for third-cycle education:

The word [research] is used in an inclusive way to accommodate the range of activities that support original and innovative work in the whole range of academic, professional and technological fields, including the humanities, and traditional, performing, and other creative arts. It is not used in any limited or restricted sense, or relating solely to a traditional “scientific method”.²

A much broader range of activity than traditional scientific research is clearly identified here, even if it contains shadows of the research, science and technology policy histories that

have been central to governmental research support. While the pragmatic character of an expanded research definition obviously reflects policy efficiencies, the intellectual justification for this tendency in “liberalization” owes much of its origin to the academic disciplines of education and psychology. For centuries the training of teachers was a key function of the university, yet the educational process itself remained little-theorized. The rapid growth in public education led to the reflexive professionalization of teachers, who began to interrogate the means by which knowledge is established and circulated in a practical-behaviourist, rather than idealist-analytic sense. A fruitful definition from this tradition comes from Cronbach and Suppes, who defined research in 1969 as “disciplined and systematic inquiry, which displays both the raw products entering into the analyses and the logical processes by which they were compressed and rearranged.” As Lincoln notes in her citation, such a definition’s “lack of methodological prescription opens up the inquiry process and scientific research to multiple methodologies and theoretical lenses.”³

The contemporary description of research as a contribution to knowledge of new perspectives or information is, especially in the English-speaking humanities, a recent formulation.⁴ Nevertheless, the discourse of research in the humanities (and the fine arts) has, through the necessities of research assessment, become re-engineered to conform research model based on the “scientific method,” becoming “systematic; rigorous; critical and reflexive; and communicable”;⁵ or having “objectivity, reliability, and validity.”⁶ The limits to these characterizations will be discussed further in Chapter 5. However, across all disciplines, contributions to knowledge are not always straightforward. Sternberg, a researcher of the psychology of creativity, sought to classify how research contributions are made to an academic field. He identified eight different kinds of contribution research might make:

1. Replication, to confirm a field is in the right place.
2. Redefinition, to redefine existing knowledge from other points of view.
3. Forward Incrementation, to move the field forward in the direction it already is going.
4. Advance Forward Incrementation, to move the field forward in the direction it is already going, but by moving beyond where others are ready for it to go.
5. Redirection, towards a different direction.
6. Reconstruction/Redirection, to move the field back to where it once was so that it may move onward.
7. Reinitiation, to move the field to a different, as-yet-unreached starting point and then to move from that point.
8. Integration, to integrate two formerly diverse ways of thinking about phenomena into a single way of thinking about a phenomenon.⁷

Elaborated in these ways, the question of who can assess a contribution and how it is done become more complex than simply authenticating the truth or falsity of a piece of research. Each of Sternberg’s contributions reflects a methodological orientation that is ideological as much as technical. Kuhn famously demonstrated that researchers who can best ascertain a

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contribution of “replication” are likely to be completely opposed to a contribution of “reinitiation,” and vice versa.⁸ As Latour describes the transformation from a “culture of science to a culture of research,” where “science puts an end to the vagaries of human disputes; research creates controversies.”⁹ Rather than being the settled end of a discussion, research is in fact its beginning.

The debate on artistic research has taken this tension as productive, and requiring further elaboration, description and reconstruction. On the one hand, a notable trend in art and (especially) design research has been to attempt to establish definitions research through creative practice as containing cognitive knowledge, in a mode often modelled on nineteenth-century scientific values of the type described above. On the other, science and technology studies continue to produce a vast number of case studies and attendant theorizations to show that sciences do not conform to analytic methodological abstractions, but are part of what Haraway describes as highly specific “material-semiotic practices” that are deeply connected to diverse peoples and worlds.¹⁰ Even when viewed “scientifically,” artistic research shuffles these conceptualizations in the double bind of emergent search for knowledge and an institutionally managed product.

Mick Wilson seeks to overcome what he describes as “the ahistorical tendency of much of the debate in respect of the Ph.D. through visual arts practice.”¹¹ His four theses attempting to reframe the debate, which are in accord with the itinerary of the university and the art school outlined in the previous chapters, are as follows:

- 1) The research university ideal must be historicised in order to overcome a monolithic and pre-critical notion of “research” which inhibits the creative reconstruction of the term, and which obscures the potential plurality of research ideals.
- 2) The Ph.D. is a contingent, multiply determined construct which has historically been applied – through the action of metaphorical transfer – across divergent knowledge domains.
- 3) It is through overcoming institutionalised amnesia in respect to prior historical debates on university practices that we may re-contextualise and broaden contemporary debate on artistic research and the Ph.D.
- 4) The Ph.D. provides an opportunity for – and indeed makes necessary – a critically reflexive pedagogy. The ongoing interrogation of the supervisor’s role is the precondition – or at the very least the corollary condition – of developing the reflexive doctoral practitioner.

While not discounting the unique “thingness” of the creative artefact, Wilson notes that problems in establishing coherence between a practice and the institutional demands of university Ph.D. assessment are not limited to the visual arts. Deconstructive literary criticism is one example where a “performative contradiction” is established as the attempted displacement of a stable truth, and knowledge is held in a thesis genre that claims to establish truth. Rather than being fearful of such contradictions, for Wilson these should be rigorously explored to foster new academic forms for the retention and

production of aesthetic knowledge in the university. Art's own established rhetorical genres of textual practice should become the basis for any attempt to use verbal knowledge to secure the status of artistic production in the university.¹² However, as we shall see, the means by which such genres can impose themselves on the structure of artistic research in the neo-liberal academy is not at all clear. But firstly, a brief recap of the artistic research debate is in order.

Artistic Research – A Brief Itinerary

The last three decades have seen an explosion in debate around the issue of research practices in the creative arts, reflecting a larger and longer – if more sporadic – debate about the institutional position of the art school within the university, and the role of the art academy. The debates on artistic research are now well documented elsewhere, so a brief recap will suffice. The most prominent institutional milestone is the 1992 integration of the British network of university and polytechnic art and design schools into a tertiary education Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). Definitions of university research included investigations undertaken through creative work, and the art and design schools were evaluated on research performance for the first time.¹³ This incorporation was not the result of philosophical debates on art as a form of knowledge production, but a bureaucratic decision to rationalize tertiary education funding through direct assessment of research rather than historical funding structures such as block grants.¹⁴ The growth of higher education had brought a massive expansion in those studying and teaching art, not only in the UK, with almost one million students studying the visual and performing arts at post-secondary level in the United States in 2012,¹⁵ and almost one hundred thousand in Australia.¹⁶ Just as art has come to be seen as a part of a creative economy, naturally entrepreneurial,¹⁷ art education has itself become a major industry. This change would have a substantial influence on the institutional situation of art and design production.

A raft of critical discourse has followed the RAE funding event, perhaps particularly because art academics are better trained to critically examine something that is forced upon them rather than to construct organizational systems in advance. The “bureaucratic minimalist” explanation of creative arts research, mounted in a curmudgeonly fashion by art historian James Elkins’ early writings on the subject, sees the whole debate as essentially a UK policy problem that could just be ignored on intellectual grounds. Yet, the UK Council for Graduate Education noted an organizational need to account for professional creative practice among an expanding academic staff whose work contained an exploratory and innovative component, alongside the more pragmatic concern that growth in postgraduate programmes in the creative and other professional disciplines has required equivalents to the knowledge-transfer models in traditional academic fields.¹⁸ This is not to mention the artistic-professional side, which has seen a large-scale decline in artistic funding resources

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for the European “cultural development” model of arts funding over this period, during which time new research funds in higher education became a default structural replacement for the support of artistic enquiry, changing the very terms under which many artistic projects are initiated.

Closer investigation reveals that there are a range of complex issues and intellectual and institutional itineraries between artistic and scientific investigation that have been in play for a much longer period than the bureaucratic periodization would suggest. Picasso famously noted in 1923 that

The idea of research has often made painting go astray, and made the artist lose himself in mental lucubrations. Perhaps this has been the principal fault of modern art. The spirit of research has poisoned those who have not fully understood all the positive and conclusive elements in modern art and has made them attempt to paint the invisible and, therefore, the unpaintable.¹⁹

A more succinct manifesto for the conceptualism that would later dominate university art education is difficult to imagine. In the Renaissance, a scientific mode was integral to the visual production of da Vinci and his followers. Within North America, there is a long history of art/science/technology collaboration, with Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.) and Xerox Parc being two well-known examples that have functioned on this “laboratory” model. All this is evident without visiting the extensive literature on the importance of visualization and modelling in the sciences. Work in the history, sociology and philosophy of scientific knowledge has moved away from statements about what science is or isn’t and to take on a more local and material perspective, opening up whole domains of empirical and theoretical research questions – including aesthetic ones – that were seen to be settled in more idealist accounts of scientific knowledge. As Christopher Frayling notes in his widely cited article almost two decades ago, it is “once we get used to the idea that we don’t need to be scared of ‘research’ – or in some strange way protected from it – the debate can really begin.”²⁰

Four Traditions of Practice-led Research

The recent story of institutional developments in the UK-derived university systems is well documented, and as Rust et al. note in their review of practice-led research in the creative arts: “our impression through the various aspects of this work, supported by anecdotes encountered in past debates, indicates that the main focus of practice-led research is to be found in Northern Europe (particularly the United Kingdom and Scandinavia) and Australia.”²¹ This can be traced to the widespread restructuring of higher education in the 1970s and 1980s in the United Kingdom that led to the development of new degree-level programmes in the creative sector, and the integration of independent

art schools or polytechnic programmes into the university sector in the British Commonwealth.²²

Despite the United States being the home of the doctorate in fine arts debate in the mid-twentieth century, the institutional setting of the United Kingdom is a primary driver of the creative practice Ph.D. from the 1990s. Jones traces three generations of “practice-based” Ph.D.’s in the United Kingdom:

1. “Early ‘practice-based’ Ph.D.s, such as those at the University of Wolverhampton and elsewhere gave students some dispensation in the word length of the written thesis that had to accompany the work.” These theses sometimes entailed twice as much work as a standard Ph.D. (with two resolved bodies of work to be assessed).
2. “The second generation of ‘practice-based’ Ph.D.s, such as those initiated at the Wimbledon School of Art, did not prescribe a word count as such and envisioned a sliding scale of portfolio and text, whilst retaining a requirement for the written element.” While this was a laudable attempt to reduce the duplication of effort, it had the unintended downside of presuming an equivalence between text and practice without addressing their very different functions.
3. A third generation emerged at the Glasgow School of Art, where a distinction was made between “the material submitted for examination and the documentation of it for the purposes of future reference to the research content.” For Jones this is where the practice-based Ph.D. becomes equivalent to any other Ph.D., except for the manner in which outcomes are presented.²³

While there is a relatively stable understanding of the institutional context for discussion of doctoral research in the creative arts, the published literature on the issues emerges from four traditions with quite distinct approaches.

The first and longest-established tradition is from the education field, where the training of art teachers has been the rationale for university-level art studio education throughout the history of the modern university. Writers from this tradition – books by Graeme Sullivan (*Art Practice as Research: Inquiry in the Visual Arts*, 2005) and Gray and Malins (*Visualizing Research*, 2004) being influential examples – have been concerned with the psychological and developmental aspects of art, its role as a distinct style of thinking (“visual literacy”) and its emblematic position as a model of “creativity.”²⁴ In general, these writers have been the strongest advocates for the inclusion of art practices into the domain of university knowledge, to the intended benefit of both the university (by expanding the types of intelligence and understanding the university fosters) and the arts (through the removal of prejudicial barriers against it entering an elite learning institution).

In this lineage, barriers to institutionalization and codification of art as research are due to misconceptions of the artistic process as lacking cognitive value; however, Sullivan counters that the visual research methods of artists are based in practices of the studio

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and that “these are robust enough to satisfy rigorous institutional demands.”²⁵ Sullivan considers emergent visual methodologies of anthropology and cultural studies; the “new art history” and, especially, “arts-based educational research” in formulating his case for a theory of visual arts knowing, practice and research.²⁶ The influence of educational traditions is evident in the integrated theory of interaction between “ideas and agency,” “forms and structure” and “situations and action.”²⁷ The desire to theorize the process of artistic research in a systematic fashion is also a hallmark of Gray and Malins’ book. They suggest a metaphor of the “journey of exploration” to describe the research process.²⁸ Planning the travel, mapping the route and recounting the journey are the practices by which knowledge of new domains has been gathered historically, and in their view there is little to prevent creative practitioners from proceeding along similar lines to extend the maps of the known aesthetic world.

These are both excellent and comprehensive works, and yet, as critic Robert Nelson remarks, something is missing from the point of view of the practising artist, who would generally seek an escape from such totalizing theorizations (though not from theory itself). He states, somewhat intemperately:

The problem is not that the text is flawed or wrong; rather, the terms of the discourse – nicely summing up anterior contributions in the field – are unsympathetic to everything that I sense about the artistic psyche and the way it works, its inner method, if you like [...] a key element of artistic teleology is lacking, namely the poetic.²⁹

He describes the character of such texts as “positivist,” and it is unsurprising perhaps that such texts have gained little traction with those teachers in art schools who have seen their role as fostering the development of successful artists (rather than teachers).³⁰ As far back as 1972, Fred Schwartz captures the professional artist’s antipathy towards the educationalist who evades the historical aesthetic criteria of taste, judgement and significance within a canon:

Students who attain the M.F.A. have usually worked fairly hard and have been subjected to critical scrutiny by art faculty, to a degree greater than at the undergraduate level and perhaps never again paralleled in the lives of most M.F.A.’s whose formal education terminates at that level. Creative doctorates are hybrid critters seemingly spawned by colleges of education rather than higher schools of fine arts. The doctorate with emphasis on studio production requires some kind of documentation, analysis of creative efforts, and sometimes research; hence in this higher realm of academic accomplishment, two ends at least are served, usually not too well, and the attempt to translate artistic and creative efforts into the molds and models of doctoral requirements and objectives makes for one of the most anomalous situations in higher education. Again the unresolved conflicts of art education work their insidious and unsatisfying amalgamations which terminate in degrees perhaps, but confusion certainly.³¹

Artistic Research in the Future Academy

When artists themselves engage the issues of practice-based research in an academic format, their orientation tends to be more to the philosophical than the social scientific, and this gives rise to a second tradition of commentary. In this mode the artist is seen as aiming to produce meaning through multiplicity, rather than pinning it down in a social-scientific form.

Barbara Bolt draws upon the phenomenological tradition to claim art as research due to the way the artist models the world, and “secures the world for her/his own use.”³² This modelling may be by means of form as well as content. Bolt argues that art is not research in the sense of the “mathematization of knowledge,” a “mode of thought that pre-conceives its outcome.”³³ Such an inquiry would be literally pointless when art’s operability is precisely beyond the forethought embodied in the limited style of scientific reason. As Paul Carter describes it, the issue here is not whether art works can carry cognitive meaning, but rather that they suffer from “an excess of articulateness.”³⁴ Even where a propositional question may prompt an initial artistic research investigation, it will not be done on the basis of a clearly established research problem in the field or an agreed method of resolution. Holdridge and Macleod note that findings presented through art are always *a posteriori* and are thus ill suited to the institution’s pursuit of truth and prescribed outcomes:

Meanings are made after the event, through the act of viewing or contemplation and by the artist initially. An entirely obvious fact, but one which in the culture of academic research, is an uncomfortable truth to the discipline.³⁵

Elsewhere Macleod elaborates on how the “logic” of artistic enquiry cannot be convincingly forethought. Logic appears “after the rendezvous, as Duchamp would have it, the co-efficient of the gesture (object?) and its interpretation.”³⁶ Similarly, written texts cannot secure the legitimacy of artistic knowledge through conformance to academic conventions.

Writing on David Hockney, Bolt has described a “double articulation between theory and practice, whereby theory emerges from a reflexive practice at the same time as practice is informed by theory.”³⁷ For Bolt, singularity and repetition become terms that haunt the evaluation of artistic practices as research. As she explains, “Singularity is not the conscious transgressive singular act of the artist, but rather ‘singularity’ arises in and through re-iteration and citation.”³⁸ In her essay on the “performative paradigm” Bolt notes that the concept of performativity has often been uncritically adopted by the creative arts, but that attention to speech act theory initiated by Austin and adapted by Jacques Derrida, Judith Butler and others yields the analysis of performativity as fundamentally “conventional and iterative.” Such an analysis can be linked to the question of artistic style as “the disciplinary operations of ‘art business’ encourage such repetition and re-iteration. It is to this sedimented or habitual style, that ‘art business’ attributes value.”³⁹ In the terms of the previous chapter, we can look at this style as emanating from the artist’s singular archive.

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From Carter's perspective the problem is more that artists, lacking control of the genres of interpretation established by media critics and academics, cede the terms of the debate to outsiders. His solution is to give a theoretical and critical account of a number of his own projects, in an excellent example of what we might now recognize as an exegetical style in the creative arts. His aim is not to provide a model for other projects, but to account for what might be "knowledge-generating" in a finished work.⁴⁰

A third tradition also emerges from the education literature, but rather than seeking to establish a model of visual arts research, it has been concerned with empirically establishing the roles of various actors in higher research degrees in the creative arts through qualitative research techniques such as interviews and focus groups. Studies by Hockey and Allen-Collinson in the UK, and Dally, Holbrook and Lawry in Australia, have contributed much to the sharing of knowledge on what actually occurs in the subjective experience of students, supervisors and examiners in the course of doctoral study in the fine arts.⁴¹ There is a consistent theme that the emergent and experimental nature of such programmes adds an additional layer of unease to the already anxiety-inducing doctoral process,⁴² though the institutional precedents are rarely tracked in this work.

A fourth tradition is a debate taking place among teachers of studio art (particularly those with administrative responsibilities) in university art schools. While many of these writers are artists, their concern is less with theorizing practice and more with seeking to account for the relationship between the institutional protocols of the university and the forms of and positions within artistic production and education that are increasingly subject to them. Unlike the educationalists, most of the debate in this tradition has a conflicted view of academic professionalization – Borgdorff describes it as "a certain unease, a restlessness, an agitation"⁴³ – and in particular the role of the doctorate in studio art. The key areas of concern involve:

- (1) the tension between academia and the professional norms of the art field – it is hard to imagine disciplinary quality as defined in the academy against the professional field which births the discipline, yet academic work rarely drives exhibition decisions, and many "professional" artists omit information about their employment status as academicians;⁴⁴
- (2) the definitions of research that circulate in the various institutions and shape the academic perception of the studio disciplines in general as well as (via funding) the resources available to students and staff;
- (3) genres and formats for submission and examination of relatively new doctoral qualifications, particularly with respect to documentation of creative works and the purpose of any written component.

The latter two could be summarized as the question of university knowledge and how it is or isn't held in the creative artefact.

Artistic Research and the Question of Knowledge

The published works on the question of artistic research that explicitly engage the question of knowledge and its role in the university can be grouped into four main positions.

Firstly, there is the sceptical view that holds that art is art and research is research, and neither domain benefits from their confusion. Elkins is the most prominent exponent of the view, stating that “the initial impetus behind the terms research and new knowledge is purely economic.”⁴⁵ He believes that “words like research and new knowledge should be confined to administrative documents, and kept out of serious literature” so that the field is not be “hobbled by narrow and inappropriate administrative jargon.”⁴⁶ While some Bauhaus-influenced practices – he uses the painter Bridget Riley as an example – mimic research, her accounts of the work “will not wash on the other side of the University, except as an entertainment, because her use of concepts like research is nonsensical from a scientific standpoint.”⁴⁷

Elkins situates the conundrum in the question of disciplinarity: discussions of an artwork will draw from various disciplinary domains, but are ultimately enjoined to further the artwork in its singularity, rather than to be judged according to a complete disciplinary frame of knowledge, as in art history for example.⁴⁸ These comments echo the concerns raised in the College Art Association debates of the 1950s and 1960s, such as Kenneth Hudson’s scepticism that art can even be taught in a university in the first place, seeing only mediocrity emerging from the academic credentialing of artists.⁴⁹

This position is underpinned by a conception of knowledge that is analytically propositional, being produced by a consciously reflective mind and conveyed to a clearly defined disciplinary community through publication. Research-based knowledge from this perspective largely conforms to a nineteenth-century version of scientific knowledge, in that it must be objective, reliable, generalizable and transferable. It reflects a view of academia as a kind of Habermasian public sphere, where contributions can be clearly assessed by the community of experts against a known body of accumulated knowledge through the workings of communicative reason. As I argue through this book, neither the faith in idealist forms of university knowledge nor the thorough scepticism about the potential of aesthetic understanding in the university appears justified.

This same model of knowledge also underpins the next two hybrid views of knowledge in artistic research, which have been the most influential in the early stages of doctoral programme establishment. In these views, the research through practice must have its transferability secured through accompanying writing.

In the stronger formulation, research through art practice is possible, but clearly distinguished from routine creative practice. Scrivener, for example, is “convinced that creative-production is different to art and design making, is distinguishable from bachelor and master education, and has a value, both to the student and to society.”⁵⁰ This formulation is popular within, but not limited to, the design research community, whose rationalist ethos reflects histories in engineering science and architecture.⁵¹ On

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this account, there must be a clear and conscious attempt to frame the practical enquiry in research terms, with a theory-laden question being explored through methodologically transparent experimental investigation, which is documented in written form for the research community. Even though the discipline-specific nature of research is accepted, in this view it must still conform to the generic principles applying to research across other disciplines.

A number of conceptual and pragmatic problems present themselves from this viewpoint. Firstly, in the attempt to align practice-based research to scientific or quasi-scientific definitions of research for the purposes of academic respectability, there is an ironic cleavage established between the self-conscious “researchers” and the vast majority of creative practitioners (whose investigations may *involve* research but would not *be* research) who are employed in the university and take their cues from the history of art and design as a whole rather than the small subset of well-stated problems. This split would also then have to be made between undergraduate professional and postgraduate research study. Such a split would be unthinkable in the science disciplines – a chemistry discipline whose majority teaching population was not engaged in research but simply chemical practice would not be a university discipline to be reckoned with at all. Secondly, in art it is likely to be star practitioners rather than academic researchers who will be the key role models for research-based practice, largely because, as Hughes has noted, they “have the resources to conduct live projects with very visible, tangible results,”⁵² whereas many artists inside the university subsidize their academic research from their own meagre resources.⁵³ The university is not usually the source of models of practice except to the extent that it articulates into the professional field, though as we will see, the question of finance now drives this articulation. Thirdly, as Haseman notes, practice-led researchers rarely set propositional questions, even if they are otherwise fluent in the language of context and methodology, but instead adopt “experiential starting points” for their investigation.⁵⁴ Meaning is only to be found for them after the fact of creation. Baers, provocatively but plausibly, sees the scientific aspiration of practice-based research as a self-interested grab for institutional grounding in the face of the widespread defunding of the humanities, a set of disciplines with whom the fine arts may otherwise have more in common.⁵⁵

A more liberal viewpoint, and perhaps the most common, is expressed in the second “hybrid” model, which waives the requirement for an explicitly formulated question and accepts that knowledge in the work may become established through the investigation, in ways unforeseen when the project was initiated. However, in order to make the purposes, methods and results of the investigation transferable to the research community, there must be some kind of written accompaniment to map for one’s peers of “the route by which they arrived at that product.”⁵⁶ Biggs states this rationale plainly: “the creative artefact cannot place its content in a critical and historical context so that it can be demonstrated to be original and significant and therefore a contribution to knowledge or its interpretation.”⁵⁷ Similarly, the UK Arts and Humanities Research Board (AHRB) review of research assessment claimed that “creative works, no matter how highly esteemed, cannot in themselves be

regarded as outputs of research. They can only become so in association with explanatory or contextualising text.”⁵⁸

A representative concern underlying these claims is outlined in the later UK Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) review that a researcher must “take responsibility for work being understood and ‘read’ appropriately,”⁵⁹ rather than against the grain of intentions as can often happen in a gallery setting. Biggs also notes that “physics students make experiments and test-beds, but they do not have special doctoral submission regulations,” implying that if knowledge is to be gained, there is no reason to avoid the written format.⁶⁰ However, it was agreed by the informants to the UK Council for Graduate Education (UKCGE) review that the written component “should be more than a factual report, that it should define some critical and intellectual perspective and that it should not merely ‘justify’ the practice.”⁶¹

The characterization of the written component as the carrier of knowledge has come in for critique. Most substantive is Jones’ observation that in the various doctoral assessments in the arts undertaken to date, “the less text that is submitted the more rigorous the thesis defence.”⁶² This is because, as the various qualitative studies on art research above have demonstrated, in writing the student moves away from their visual project to a substantially different mode of production. As Candlin describes it, “the attempt to negotiate these expectations by making practice-based Ph.D.s academically respectable through the introduction of textual commentary [...] actually reinforces the distinction between them.”⁶³ While the requirement for writing may prompt reflection and criticality, a well-written academic text can also hide a multitude of aesthetic sins in the material investigation, leading to work that, at best, provides an illustration of certain theory and a profound lack of operationality in its own disciplinary domain.⁶⁴ This is not to disagree with Macleod and Holdridge’s view that, in general, the requirement for writing has “added greater depth, perception and dimension to the research process.”⁶⁵ It is simply to say that it cannot be relied upon for a guarantee of the knowledge in the work as the writing is heterogeneous to the work. A further problem exists in relation to the norms of the discipline, where it is customary for an appropriately qualified external critic rather than the artist to take the role of explaining the contribution of the work to the field. A departure from this protocol is not unknown within artistic production itself, of course, but the requirement that the artist should also adopt the position of textual critic does seem a departure from the very gap between production and interpretation that has historically allowed aesthetic work its disciplinary significance.

The fourth approach, implied by the various administrative reforms of research funding in the United Kingdom and its colonies, is that creative works in themselves constitute a form of research which can contribute to knowledge. Such a position has an immense practical benefit in relation to the actually existing art schools in universities and the types of practitioners within them. However, there are also intellectual and philosophical reasons to support such a position. Andrew Harrison notes that for Kant “aesthetic communication – and thus any corresponding concept of consistency – requires that the communication that

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achieves common understanding must be mediated by objects of shared judgements (either natural objects or works of art), and that this cannot be avoided by any ambitious reduction to independent description.”⁶⁶ For Harrison, research must be *in* the work rather than in *descriptions* of the work.⁶⁷

Even for the reader who accepts that all creative practices involve invention in their very nature, and can therefore be evaluated as research (if not always good research), a number of problems follow in relation to disciplinary identity and research as we know it. The most troublesome factor is the assessment of actual work versus the documentation of work, and the means by which works are made “publicly available.” Unsurprisingly, it has been research in the performance disciplines, where the issue of documentation has a long and vexed history, that has been a key site of debate. Piccini notes that the research assessors usually receive “internal documentation,” a “mass of heterogeneous trace materials” arising out of the process of creating the work.⁶⁸ Within the professional field, however, “external documentation” is more common, becoming a representation of a live work that will never again appear in the way it did. The problematic then becomes whether this document, which inevitably circulates as a stand-in for the work itself, can effectively represent the work.

In this problematic we see the challenges for reconciling artistic practices with the scientific genres of research. In the scientific model of knowledge, the use of language is wholly different than is customary in the visual arts. A scientific report comes to stand in for laboratory-generated knowledge: it does not require interpretation, but simply enough information to process it. With the arts, meanwhile, a personal response to a singular work can only be linked to a broader context through the labour of criticism, where affects and concepts in the work are propositionally attached to broader forces in a public culture, and this very movement of representation must itself be available for critique. Where scientific writing seeks to settle matters of inquiry into fact in order to make a project internally robust, artistic writing seeks to move in the other direction connecting a more or less hermetic material inquiry out into a broader world, for not only the approval of specialists, but to attempt a critical intervention into a public culture. Recent scholarship in science and technology studies has begun to trouble the distinction between these two modes, indicating that scientific rhetoric may not be as inert as it seems. The next chapter will open up this tension in order to short-circuit some of the oppositions between research and practice in the artistic research debates.

The Visual Arts as Disciplinary Knowledge

The visual arts are by now widespread in contemporary universities and have become subject to discipline-focused forms of research assessment that have not been organized around their distinct modes of investigation and critique, and can thus be seen to have a corrosive effect on research. How then can we evaluate the claims of this new disciplinary field in the institution and the broader research assessment paradigm? The usual method is by establishing analogical or morphological relationships with existing disciplines. In the

case of the visual arts, the various institutional and epistemological features seem to locate the field in a “soft pure” frame that Becher ascribes to the humanities. The various design research initiatives noted in Chapter 2 notwithstanding, it would be rare to find artistic productions that could be organized according to the intellectual lineage of the sciences, or the institutional features of contemporary scientific organization in the university.

Artistic production has been viewed by some as, like many new fields entering the university, inherently interdisciplinary, and it hardly remains loyal to the disciplinary forms from which it borrows. Emerging from performance studies, the work of Robin Nelson has elaborated a model for “Practice as Research” (PaR) that “maps on to established methodologies and criteria.”⁶⁹ Nelson is optimistic about the potential of PaR to afford substantial insights (rather than answers) in an interdisciplinary mode that differs from standard practice through the specification of a research inquiry at the outset, documented moments of critical reflection during the process, and the explicit positioning of the inquiry within a “lineage of similar practices” and in relation to a broader debate.⁷⁰ Echoing Jones’ claims for the possibility of “equivalent rigour” to the sciences in a distinctly different paradigm, Nelson suggests that rigour may lie in “syncretism, not in depth-mining.”⁷¹ This presents challenges in assessment compared to the disciplinary traditions of the sciences or humanities where expertise is more tightly outlined, but for Nelson the growing population of artistic researchers solve this problem through the development of a shared understanding of a research culture. While Nelson’s interrogation of method and methodology is detailed, on this last point we return to Elkins’ sceptical theme that in some way the bureaucratic-organizational aspects of artistic research have in some way bypassed the intellectual debate and rendered it marginal to the transformation of artistic research.

In the fine arts as in the university, the often-implicit processes of community-formation are what generate value, in specific cultural contexts that are difficult to self-consciously replicate.⁷² The deconstructive mode of artistic research constantly seeks new paradigms for institutional production, and effectiveness can only really be established in the work in the context of the critical culture that underpins the visual arts communities. Borgdorff, whose 2012 book is perhaps the best guide to the conceptual and institutional problems of artistic research, identifies three attributes that constitutes its “metaphysics”:

(1) Artistic research concerns and affects the foundations of our perception, our understanding, and our relationship to the world and other people. I would call this the *realism* of artistic research. (2) Artistic research is “material thinking”: the articulation of non-propositional knowledge and experience, embodied in art works and creative processes. This is the *non-conceptualism* of artistic research. (3) Artistic research is not about theory, but about thought. It is not primarily directed at “knowing that [...]” or “knowing how [...]”. It is directed more at a not-knowing, or a not-yet-knowing. It creates room for that which is unthought, that which is unexpected - the idea that all things could be different. This is the *contingency* of artistic research.⁷³

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The challenge at the institutional level is to articulate this critical culture within a mode of research assessment drawn from a neo-liberal techno-scientific model that has been a key underpinning for the possibility of university-based artistic research, as today “research” makes up a substantial base of artistic production. Appeals to historical models of research funding for fine-arts-based research cannot be made as they have never previously existed, being held instead in separate “cultural development” funding, and the development of institutionally based practices in artistic research have been largely invoked by new regimes of research assessment.⁷⁴ Therefore, the form of the visual arts as a university discipline remains to be created, with a view to future practices. The development of process-based arts in conceptualism and post-Minimalism – with their emphasis on propositionality and documentation – has laid the foundation for artistic research and knowledge through a model that has become the default mode of production in many art schools,⁷⁵ even as they have had no enabling support from traditional research funding agencies. Unfortunately, as noted in the previous chapter, the specific traditions of visual arts knowledge as they have been held in schools or academies are rarely referenced in institutional or policy literature relating to research assessment in the fine arts. Visual arts research methods in the university differ from the scientific university disciplines currently in research funding ascendance not only in their epistemological and historical orientation, but in the material nature of the archives and outputs that can register such knowledge. Rather than looking to the disciplinary history of the visual arts to determine support structures, existing mechanisms of research, science and technology support have been renovated in order to include “practice-based research.”

This becomes problematic for the development of the visual arts within the university and the broader educational system for a number of reasons. Firstly, research support in this model requires artists to establish well-formed questions and methods in advance of production, when methods and theories are formulated by the artist *in situ*. In their interviews with practice-based Ph.D. students in art and design, Hockey and Allen-Collison noted that “few interviewees were able to combine making and analysis within the same period, particularly given the divergent experiential states required. The typical pattern that emerged was one in which students would undergo a transition from full-time making to full-time writing, then return to full-time making, and so on.”⁷⁶ The relationship may be better characterized by mutual interruption, rather than the emergence of a more accurate description of a singular creative process that was theorized in advance.

Secondly, the forms of explicatory documentation customary in research assessment – whether the substantial written work to accompany doctoral submissions, or the briefer texts required in RAE-like evaluations – encourage the artist to act as the authority on the disciplinary operation of their own work in a scientific manner, which is inimical to the critical culture of the visual arts that places the customary mechanisms of judgement in the viewer. While the development of critical writings by artists is an important tendency

in recent practice,⁷⁷ once this becomes mandatory many other possible ecologies of practice are devalued.

Thirdly, the modernist visual arts tradition abandoned its historical “academic” educational model whereby the medium functioned as the determining constraint of disciplinary practice. The historical organizing practices of painting and sculpture no longer determined the disciplinary language: instead the Bauhaus model instituted interdisciplinary “creativity” as the primary goal of artistic education, with the medium reduced to a system of grammar that could be questioned and mastered after the aesthetic fact.⁷⁸ Ironically, it is the very idea of scientificity (largely borrowed from perceptual psychology) that played a role in this attack on the traditional medium-derived discipline. But the result is that institutional rather than methodological frames provide the clearest delineation of the field of art.

Fourthly, while a “knowledge base” of art surely exists, it already has a home in the institution in the field of art history, which is the study of art as post-mortem. The historian (like the market) often treats art as dead or close to death, so the stability of the object in context can be maintained, and the risk of artistic whim damaging a set of stabilized value judgements around the artist and their *oeuvre* can be minimized.⁷⁹ While the canon that artistic practice must respond to is somewhat set by the historian, in many ways the artist and art historian have as little to do with each other as the engineer and the historian of engineering.

Fifthly, curricula in art undergo little inter-institutional examination or critique, with many teachers believing that art cannot be taught.⁸⁰ Whatever coherence to the teaching of art exists could not be shared unambiguously: as artist and educator Michael Craig-Martin, a long-time teacher at Goldsmiths, asserts: “There are no basic things. What’s basic for one artist is not basic for another artist.”⁸¹ Contemporary art of significance after Duchamp is often art that “overthrows, displaces, abandons or subverts rules and conventions.”⁸² Transgression of the frame rather than “innovation” within it is the norm. Rather than the parsimonious scientific contribution to a complete base of knowledge that can be agreed upon by all, art instead puts forward a singular world that can potentially rupture or destabilize a field of knowledge. Art critic Jan Verwoert describes the intellectual community of the art academy as provocative rather than the convocative community of the sciences. He proposes *The Muppet Show* one of his ideal models of a provocative community: it is “a strange assembly of creatures finding a way to coexist that is impossible to explain.”⁸³

If the disciplines of the fine arts are going to be incorporated as university knowledge, it must be in their entirety, rather than the small number of self-consciously propositional “research” projects that exert little influence on artistic practices at large. Further, the normative “comportment” required to adopt such a quasi-scientific mode of practice is precisely the aesthetic target of many contemporary art practices. To allow such practices to be fully recognized for their functions that relate to knowledge, the role of science as the organizing paradigm for knowledge must be displaced.

Notes

- 1 Tom Jones, "A Discussion Paper on Research in the Visual Fine Arts Prepared for the Birmingham Polytechnic, England, in 1978," *Leonardo* 13, no. 2 (April 1980): 89.
- 2 Henk Borgdorff, "Artistic Research and Academia: An Uneasy Relationship," in *The Yearbook on Artistic Research*, ed. Lind Torbjörn (Sweden: The Council of Research, 2008), 91.
- 3 Yvonna Lincoln, "Life Under Construction: Autoethnography of a Researcher," in *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research, Volume 21*, ed. John C. Smart (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2006), 21:27n23.
- 4 Christopher Frayling, "Research in Art and Design," *Royal College of Art Research Papers* 1, no. 1 (1993): 1.
- 5 Darren Newbury, "Research Perspectives in Art and Design" (Birmingham: Research Training Initiative, 1996), 9.
- 6 Kristina Niedderer and Seymour Roworth-Stokes, "The Role and Use of Creative Practice in Research and Its Contribution to Knowledge," in *International Association of Societies of Design Research* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Polytechnic University, 2007), 15.
- 7 Robert J. Sternberg, "The Development of Creativity as a Decision-Making Process," in *Creativity and Development*, eds. R. Keith Sawyer et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 102.
- 8 Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).
- 9 Bruno Latour, "From the World of Science to the World of Research?," *Science* 280, no. 5361 (April 1998): 208.
- 10 Haraway, *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium.FemaleMan_Meets_OncoMouse: Feminism and Technoscience*.
- 11 Wilson, "Four Theses Attempting to Revise the Terms of a Debate," 57–65.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 69.
- 13 Katharine Barker, "The UK Research Assessment Exercise: The Evolution of a National Research Evaluation System," *Research Evaluation* 16, no. 1 (2007): 3–12.
- 14 Lewis Elton, "The UK Research Assessment Exercise: Unintended Consequences," *Higher Education Q* 54, no. 3 (July 2000): 274–83.
- 15 National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), "Enrollment in Postsecondary Education, by Level of Enrollment, Level of Institution, Student Age, and Major Field of Study: 2011–12" (March 2014), http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d14/tables/dt14_311.60.asp?current=yes.
- 16 Australian Bureau of Statistics, "4172.0 – Arts and Culture in Australia: A Statistical Overview, 2014" (July 10, 2014), <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4172.0main+features222014>.
- 17 Su Baker, "Art School 2.0: Art Schools in the Information Age or Reciprocal Relations and the Art of the Possible," in *Rethinking the Contemporary Art School: The Artist, the PhD, and the Academy*, eds. Brad Buckley and John Conomos (Nova Scotia: Press of the Nova Scotia School of Art & Design, 2009), 27–44.

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- 18 UK Council for Graduate Education, "Research Training in the Creative and Performing Arts and Design," ed. Elaine Thomas (Dudley: UKGCE, 2001).
- 19 Quoted in Frayling, "Research in Art and Design," 2.
- 20 Ibid., 5.
- 21 Dennis Strand, "Research in the Creative Arts" (Canberra: Australian Government, Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs, 1998); Rust, Mottram, and Till, "AHRC Research Review – Practice-Led Research in Art, Design and Architecture," 39; Bird, "Research in Art and Design: The First Decade."
- 22 The incorporation of art and design schools into the university sector has driven creative practice within a research framework through a number of forces:
1. relationships between art, science and technology, which particularly come to the fore in the development of new media and information arts;
 2. qualification inflation and the move to degree and then higher degree-level study in applied disciplines that previously operated on a training model;
 3. development of research assessment exercises, in the UK system in particular;
 4. development of more applied research and an increasing focus on interdisciplinarity, accepting new modalities including the critique of disciplinary practices.
- 23 Timothy Emlyn Jones, "The PhD in Art & Design," in *Elia Cómhar* (Dublin, 2002), 1:np. The research context has been a closer fit for the Fine Arts than design-based disciplines. The UK AHRC Research review notes that of 406 Ph.D. completions in art and design between 1996 and 2005, Art had (148) followed by Design (99) and Architecture (81). The Fine arts have also had a higher share of academics put forward for RAE assessment: "a notable feature of RAE 2001 was the strong presence of Fine Art. Fine Art academics make up 20% of the Art and Design population but 40% of submitted staff in the RAE." See Rust, Mottram, and Till, "AHRC Research Review – Practice-Led Research in Art, Design and Architecture," 23. The development of these programmes has been accompanied by a large number of conferences about doctoral education, and in this area design has played a leading role, with three international conferences at the end of the 1990s and early 2000s. See Gavin Melles, "Global Perspectives on Structured Research Training in Doctorates of Design What Do We Value?," *Design Studies* 30 (2009): 256. There have been numerous gatherings with a fine art focus, although as Macleod notes, despite the manifold publications there "is a remarkable dearth of material which provides substantial evidence of the 'form' and 'structure' of doctorates" in the field. Katy Macleod and Lin Holdridge, "The Doctorate in Fine Art: The Importance of Exemplars to the Research Culture," *The International Journal of Art & Design Education* 23, no. 2 (2004): 156.
- 24 Graeme Sullivan, *Art Practice as Research: Inquiry in the Visual Arts* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2005); Carole Gray and Julian Malins, *Visualizing Research: A Guide to the Research Process in Art and Design* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2004).
- 25 Sullivan, *Art Practice as Research: Inquiry in the Visual Arts*, xiii.
- 26 Ibid., 129, 153.
- 27 Ibid., 190.
- 28 Gray and Malins, *Visualizing Research: A Guide to the Research Process in Art and Design*, 16.

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- 29 Nelson, *The Jealousy of Ideas: Research Methods in the Creative Arts*, 23.
- 30 Nelson's 2009 book *The Jealousy of Ideas* deserves wider circulation, as it does the most to marry an analysis of university knowledge's institutional and discursive terrain with a commitment to the autonomous para-disciplinary form of production that characterizes contemporary studio art education. In this insightful, humorous and somewhat fruity account, Nelson identifies the ancient idea of "jealousy" as central to aesthetic production:

Artistic thinking is strikingly labile, on the move and tense: it proceeds from inscrutable inspiration and is conditioned by agony [...]. The artist wants to share the idea but equally wants the idea to remain eternally fingerprinted as his or hers, to be remembered not as a general proposition but only in the special expressive incarnation that the artist has given it. The idea must not escape into the sensual or intellectual commons without an authorial tag. In the creative arts, ideas are developed not solely for the artist but for others, possibly other people across the globe. There is an optimum moment – a propitious tide among countless and nameless waves – which inclines the artist to feel that a concept is set for communication; it is judged to be publishable and the author wants to disseminate the insights.

See Nelson, *The Jealousy of Ideas: Research Methods in the Creative Arts*, 14. This characterization of the artistic process, while using the language of research and knowledge transfer, is far removed from the concept of "creativity" as a magical resource requiring individual and institutional development as it exists in the social sciences literature. For Nelson the artistic process is precisely defined by a certain reflexive departure from stable knowledge, a step into a formation of material that the author does not understand in advance, through a set of formal concerns that can be readily analysed, but driven by an immanent force that escapes rationalization as either correctness or ideology.

- 31 Schwartz, "Graduate Education in the Fine Arts," 22.
- 32 Barbara Bolt, *Art Beyond Representation*, Philosophy (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 23.
- 33 Ibid., 22.
- 34 Paul Carter, *Material Thinking: The Theory and Practice of Creative Research* (Carlton: Melbourne University Publishing, 2004), xi.
- 35 Katy Macleod and Lin Holdridge, "Introduction," in *Thinking through Art: Reflections on Art as Research* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 7.
- 36 Rust, Mottram, and Till, "AHRC Research Review – Practice-Led Research in Art, Design and Architecture," 23.
- 37 Barbara Bolt, "Materializing Pedagogies?," *Working Papers in Art and Design* 4 (2006), <http://www.herts.ac.uk/artdes/research/papers/wpades/vol4/bbfull.html>.
- 38 Barbara Bolt, "A Performative Paradigm for the Creative Arts?," September 2008.
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 There are many short publications in this genre, but a representative one might be Lesley Duxbury, Elizabeth M. Grierson, and Dianne Waite, "Thinking through Practice Art as Research in the Academy" (Melbourne: School of Art, RMIT University, 2008). For a review,

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- see Danny Butt, "Thinking Through Practice: Art as Research in the Academy [Review]," *Second Nature* 1, no. 1 (March 2009): 140–46.
- 41 John Hockey and Jacquelyn Allen-Collinson, "Identity Change: Doctoral Students in Art and Design," *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education* 4, no. 1 (2005): 77–93; Kerry Dally et al., "The Processes and Parameters of Fine Art PhD Examination," *International Journal of Educational Research* 41 (2004): 136–62; Beverley Simmons et al., "Developing a Researcher Perspective during the Course of a Fine Art Research Degree: Issues Relating to Supervision," in *Australian Association for Research in Education 2008* (Brisbane, Queensland, 2008), 1–23.
- 42 Fiona Candlin, "A Proper Anxiety? Practice-Based PhDs and Academic Unease," *Working Papers in Art and Design* 1 (2000).
- 43 Borgdorff, "Artistic Research and Academia: An Uneasy Relationship," 87.
- 44 Judith Mottram, "Researching Research in Art and Design," in *Artists with PhDs: On the New Doctoral Degree in Studio Art*, ed. James Elkins (Washington: New Academia Publishing, LLC, 2009), 18; Timothy Emlyn Jones, "The Studio-Art Doctorate in America," *Art Journal* 65, no. 2 (2006): 124n4.
- 45 James Elkins, "On Beyond Research and New Knowledge," in *Artists with PhDs: On the New Doctoral Degree in Studio Art* (Washington: New Academia Publishing, LLC, 2009), 112.
- 46 *Ibid.*, 129.
- 47 *Ibid.*, 123.
- 48 James Elkins, "The Three Configurations of Studio-Art PhDs," in *Artists with PhDs: On the New Doctoral Degree in Studio Art* (Washington: New Academia Publishing, LLC, 2009), 162.
- 49 Weller et al., "The Ph.D for the Creative Artist," 349; Funk, "The Development of Professional Studio Art Training, in American Higher Education, 1860–1960," 165–67.
- 50 Stephen Scrivener, "Reflection in and on Action and Practice in Creative-Production Doctoral Projects in Art and Design," *Working Papers in Art and Design* 1 (2000).
- 51 Gui Bonsiepe, "The Uneasy Relationship between Design and Design Research," in *Design Research Now*, ed. Ralf Michel (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2007), 27.
- 52 Comment by Hughes in Rust, Mottram, and Till, "AHRC Research Review – Practice-Led Research in Art, Design and Architecture," 45.
- 53 Jane Prophet, "Re-Addressing Practice-Based Research: Funding and Recognition," *Digital Creativity* 15, no. 1 (2004): 2–7.
- 54 Brad Haseman, "A Manifesto for Performative Research," *Media International Australia Incorporating Culture and Policy* 118 (2006): 101.
- 55 Michael Baers, "Inside the Box: Notes From Within the European Artistic Research Debate," *E-Flux Journal* 26 (2011).
- 56 Newbury, "Research Perspectives in Art and Design," 15. See also Jones, "A Discussion Paper on Research in the Visual Fine Arts Prepared for the Birmingham Polytechnic, England, in 1978," 93.
- 57 Michael Biggs, "Editorial: The Role of Context in Art and Design Research," December 2006.

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- 58 Jon Thompson, "Art Education: From Coldstream to QAA," *Critical Quarterly* 47, no. 1–2 (2004): 224.
- 59 Rust, Mottram, and Till, "AHRC Research Review – Practice-Led Research in Art, Design and Architecture," 12.
- 60 Michael Biggs, "Editorial: The Role of the Artefact in Art and Design Research," September 2004.
- 61 UK Council for Graduate Education, "Research Training in the Creative and Performing Arts and Design," 16.
- 62 Timothy Emlyn Jones, "A Method of Search for Reality: Research and Research Degrees in Art and Design," in *Thinking through Art: Reflections on Art as Research*, eds. Katy Macleod and Lin Holdridge (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 236.
- 63 Fiona Candlin, "Practice-Based Doctorates and Questions of Academic Legitimacy," *Journal of Art and Design Education* 19, no. 1 (2000): 96–101.
- 64 See, for example, Susan Melrose, "Entertaining Other Options Restaging 'Theory' in the Age of Practice as Research" (Middlesex University, January 2002). Available at <http://www.sfmelrose.org.uk/inaugural>.
- 65 Macleod and Holdridge, "The Doctorate in Fine Art: The Importance of Exemplars to the Research Culture," 157–58.
- 66 Andrew Harrison, "Shared Judgements: Thinking for Yourself, Thinking from the Standpoint of Everyone Else, and Being Consistent," *Research into Practice*, University of Hertfordshire, September 2002.
- 67 See Colin Painter, cited in Emlyn Jones, "The PhD in Art & Design." Candlin, "A Proper Anxiety? Practice-Based PhDs and Academic Unease" is also excellent on this point.
- 68 Angela Piccini, "An Historiographic Perspective on Practice as Research" (Bristol: PARIP, University of Bristol, December 2002).
- 69 Robin Nelson, *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 26.
- 70 Ibid., 30.
- 71 Ibid., 34.
- 72 Elizabeth Currid, "The Economics of a Good Party: Social Mechanics and the Legitimization of Art/culture," *Journal of Economics and Finance* 31, no. 3 (2007): 386–94.
- 73 Henk Borgdorff, *The Conflict of the Faculties: Perspectives on Artistic Research and Academia* (Amsterdam: Leiden University Press, 2012), 124.
- 74 Most artistic researchers are well aware of the paradox. Schwab reports on a fictional "Commission Regarding the Credibility of Artistic Research" that in "analysis of 1,356 interviews conducted with so-called 'artistic researchers' it was found that a large majority (namely 82%) were either 'aware' or 'very aware' of the impossibility of 'artistic research' at the same time as believing this impossibility to be the driving factor of their work." Tom Holert, "Being Concerned? Scattered Thoughts on 'Artistic Research' and 'Social Responsibility,'" in *Intellectual Birdhouse: Artistic Practice as Research*, eds. Florian Dombois et al. (Köln: Koenig Books, 2012), 230. One is also struck by Shiekh's argument that in considering artistic research "one must thus inevitably ask what kind of practices does not involve artistic research? What practices are privileged, and which are marginalized or even

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- excluded? Does research function as a different notion of artistic practice(s) or merely a different wording, validation process and contextualization that can mold and place artistic work within traditional university structures of knowledge and learning?” Simon Sheikh, “Spaces for Thinking: Perspectives on the Art Academy,” *Texte Zur Kunst* 62 (2006): 192.
- 75 de Duve, “When Form Has Become Attitude – And Beyond,” 27; Van Gelder and Baetens, “The Future of the Doctorate in the Arts,” 103; Tom Holert, “Art in the Knowledge-Based Polis,” *E-Flux Journal* 3 (February 2009).
- 76 Hockey and Allen-Collinson, “Identity Change: Doctoral Students in Art and Design,” 86.
- 77 For an exceptional collection, see Guillermo Gómez-Peña and Elaine Peña, *Ethno-Techno: Writings on Performance, Activism, and Pedagogy* (New York: Routledge, 2005).
- 78 de Duve, “When Form Has Become Attitude – And Beyond,” 21–23.
- 79 Mieke Bal and Norman Bryson, “Semiotics and Art History,” *The Art Bulletin* 73, no. 2 (1991): 174–208.
- 80 Kevin Hamilton, “Praxis-Based Ph.D.’s,” iDC Mailing List (2007), <https://lists.thing.net/pipermail/idc/2007-January/002111.html>; Gropius, “The Theory and Organization of the Bauhaus (1923).”
- 81 John Baldessari and Michael Craig-Martin, “Conversation: John Baldessari and Michael Craig-Martin,” in *Art School: (Propositions for the 21st Century)*, ed. Steven Henry Madoff (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009), 45.
- 82 de Duve, “When Form Has Become Attitude – And Beyond,” 25.
- 83 Jan Verwoert, “Posing Singularity,” in *Agonistic Academies*, eds. Jan Cools and Henk Slager (Brussels: Sint-Lukas Books, 2011), 31.