Research: Practitioner | Curator | Educator

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1
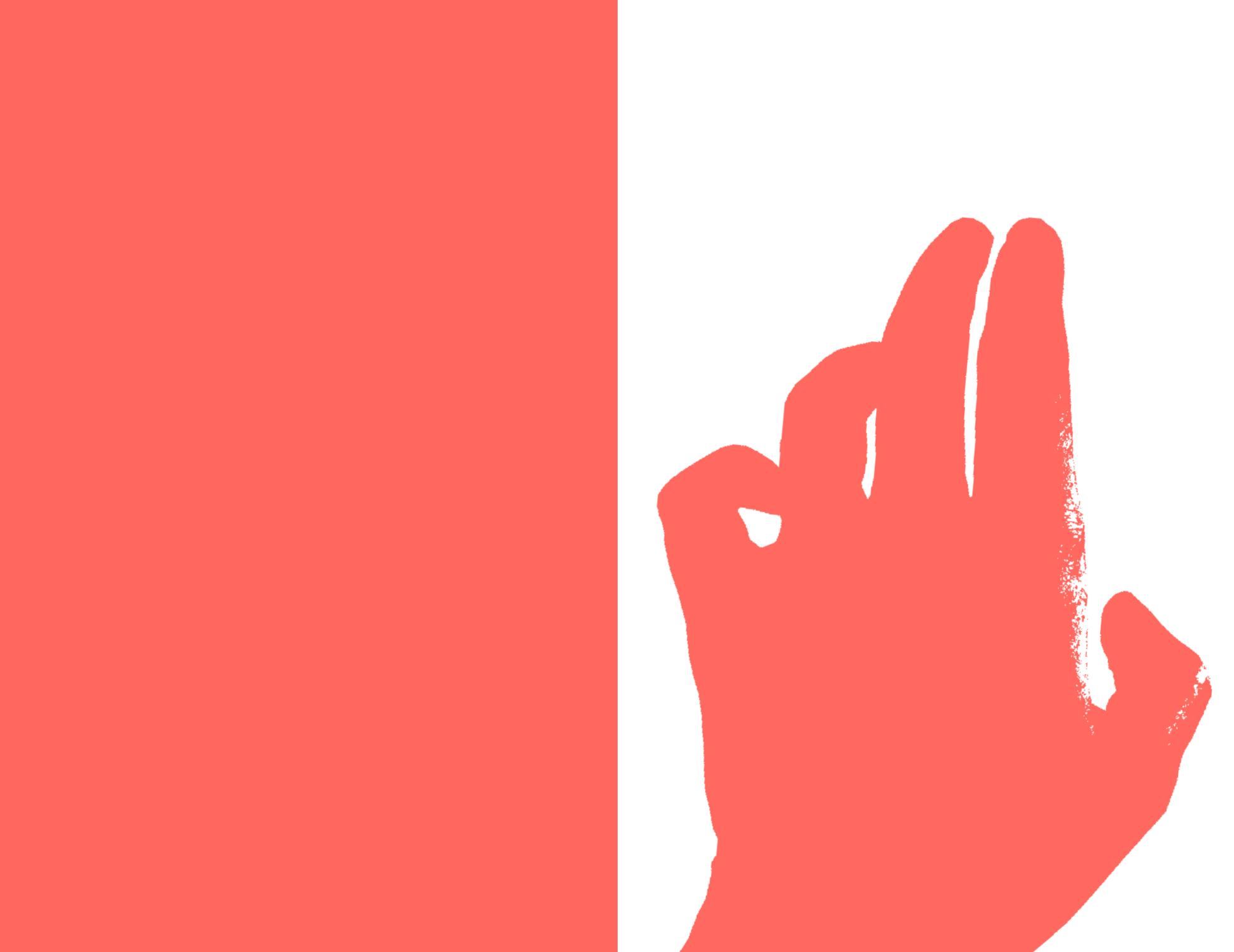
Research:
Practitioner
Curator
Educator

Table of Contents

Series Introduction

Lolita Jablonskienė and Ieva Pleikienė

Almost ten years ago, in 2011, Vilnius Academy of Arts began its practice-based doctoral studies programme in visual arts and design. From the very beginning the Department of Doctoral Studies raised questions around what it means for artists and designers to do research alongside their creative practice. And, when we say 'alongside', we're asking what it means for research to be *in addition to* or *in dialogue with* creative practice, but also and more importantly what it means for that creative practice *to emerge from and be shaped by* research?) What's the point of doing it? And, what might this kind of research look like, be, and do? We are still asking these questions genuinely and openly.

This book series comes out of the Academy's ongoing commitment to debating research from different perspectives. The titles of the four books in the Series

are (1) *Research: Practitioner | Curator | Educator* (2) *Decolonising: the Museum, the Curriculum, and the Mind* (3) *Do The Right Thing*, and (4) *What If? The Future of History in Post-Truth Times*.

The Series as a project is born of a desire to listen to, learn from, and extend the horizons of 'local' academic knowledges via a course entitled 'Research as Praxis' for PhD students led by prof. Marquard Smith who in turn invited Vilnius-based curators, practitioners, critics, academics, and educators to be in public dialogue with international guests from the arts and humanities.

The National Gallery of Art (NGA) in Vilnius, which has many long-term associations with the Academy, was invited to join the initiative with a view to opening up a debate on our shared interests in urgent topics concerning research and praxis to a wider public beyond academia including artists, designers, researchers, curators, and museumgoers.

NGA served as a site to host the majority of these discussions, and contributed to the discourse by necessarily transforming more exclusively academic concerns through the perspectives of curatorial and educational research and practice. Arguments proposed and debated during the events confirmed the critical potential of 'learning in public' as prof. Marquard Smith aptly called this joint endeavour between the Academy and the Museum. This series of books consolidates and shares the diverse knowledges generated through such a collaboration.

Introduction

Research: Practitioner Curator Educator

Marquard Smith

As artists, designers, curators, critics, educators, and academics, what is 'research' for us in the second and third decades of the 21st century? Do we conduct research? What do we do when we do it, how do we do it, and what makes up this doing? What is done, and what needs to be done? As practitioners, do we think about practice-as-research, and about research-as-practice, and if so, how so? Is research perhaps even a praxis; which is to say, is it an act, a doing action, an embodying and enacting of ideas, an act of engaging politically and ethically? What is the nature (or what are the modalities) of the work that we as researchers do, if indeed we consider ourselves researchers, and, if not, why not? And how have recent shifts in paradigms of knowledge generation and distribution – in the art and design school, the museum and gallery, and the creative and cultural industries more generally – transformed profoundly what we as researchers

do, how we do it, and to what end? Ultimately, given our shared interest in practice, practice-led or practice-based research, research-led or research-based practice, and in artistic research, how might research – and research *as a process* – be embodied in and articulated by way of art, design, history/theory, writerly, and curatorial projects? And, how might such research give rise to new knowledges, engender knowledge differently, and precipitate things divergent from or other than knowledge?

The questions raised by the contributors to *Research: Practitioner | Curator | Educator*, and with which they engage here, were broached initially at the first of five events in a public programme organized by Vilnius Academy of Arts in the academic year 2018-19; three of the five events, including the one on research, were collaborations with Lithuania's Nacionalinė dailės galerija, the country's National Gallery of Art in Vilnius. The events, in chronological order, were:

- 'Research: Practitioner | Curator | Educator'
- 'Decolonising: the Museum, the Curriculum, and the Mind', also a symposium at the National Gallery;
- 'Do The Right Thing', a project composed of an exhibition of work by 21 PhD students in the 5,000-square foot Titanikas Gallery at Vilnius Academy of Arts, a catalogue, a pirate radio broadcast, debates and workshops, a club night, and a poetry slam, all led by the students themselves;
- 'Writing: Academic, Critical, Performative', a 'conversation' at the Vilnius Book Fair; and
- 'What If? The Future of "History" in Post-Truth Times', another symposium also at the Gallery.[1]

1   Apart from the event on 'Writing', all of the others appear in book form in this Series.

These events were the public-facing components of a course I began teaching in 2018-19 entitled 'Research as Praxis' with PhD students in the Department of Doctoral Studies at Vilnius Academy of Arts, Lithuania's premier (and in fact only) art and design school. The course is structured as four two-day thematic Intensives, each including lectures, seminars, workshops and the events themselves. Each Intensive is an occasion for students to work closely together, and with visiting practitioners, academics, curators, and educators (who also contribute to the events) on a particular theme common, germane, and pressing for their studies. This first Intensive on 'PhD-ness in the art school' circled around the deceptively simply question: 'what is research?'

(Each Intensive takes as its starting point a 'key text' around which activities congregate, and for the theme of 'research' that text was 'Art in the Knowledge-based Polis' by Tom Holert, the writer, curator, artist, former editor of *Texte zur Kunst*, and recent co-founder of the Harun Farocki Institut in Berlin.)

The course encourages students to think explicitly about situating or orienting themselves, and their PhD projects in relations with:

- Practices (art and design practices above all, but also histories and theories of art and design, art and design education, and practices of pedagogy)
- Institutionally (in relation to the art school, the classroom, the studio, the gallery, the public/civic domain, the art world and design industries, etc.), and
- Planetarily (in relation to ecologies or networks of practitioners and practices, curators and curating,

critics and criticism, institutions and audiences, the market/economy, publics and their own communities of practice).[2]

It's instructive, I think, to include here the formal 'guidance' from the Handbook on the course's objectives because the supposed banalities of such rules and regulations are always telling - pedagogically, ideologically, and institutionally. The objectives of 'Research as Praxis' are to work with students on:

- Familiarizing them with the idea of a research project within the context of an art school
- Introducing them to research as itself a subject of research
- Facilitating an understanding of their PhD as a research project
- Developing their awareness of key historical/ theoretical concerns that underpin all research projects in the art school, and embed them in their PhD project
- Advancing their ability to articulate their PhD project as research to their peers, supervisors, and their artistic, intellectual, and professional communities
- Rooting in their project and their practice (as artists, designers, historians, theorists, curators, etc.) a clear sense of how their PhD project as research contributes to and advances knowledge and understanding in their field of study/research/ practice
- Beginning to establish their PhD as an independent research practice

By the end of the course, the Handbook informs us, doctoral students are expected to be able to:

2   I borrow the word planetarily from Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak,
        Death of a Discipline, New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.

Qualifications that signify completion of the third cycle are awarded to students who:	Qualifications that signify completion of the doctoral studies program in art / design in VAA are awarded to students who:	At the end of the course a doctoral student is expected to be able to:
Knowledge and understanding: have demonstrated a systematic understanding of a field of study and mastery of the skills and methods of research associated with that field;.	• Must have knowledge at the highest international level within the research field. • Must have made a significant contribution to the development of new knowledge and understanding within the research field based on artistic/ scientific research.	Understand their PhD as a research project within an art school context; and demonstrated this understanding by way of spoken, creative, and text-based contributions.
Applying knowledge and understanding: have demonstrated the ability to conceive, design, implement and adapt a substantial process of research with scholarly integrity;	• Must master the scientific methods and tools as well as other skills related to research and development tasks within the field. • Must be able to participate in the field's international discussions and disseminate scientific results and advances to a wide audience.	Be familiar with research as a subject of research (including issues of PhD-ness, research as praxis, knowledge, history, materiality, etc.); and evidence this by 'translating' the course's concerns into their work and words.

Making judgements: have made a contribution through original research that extends the frontier of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work, some of which merits national or international refereed publication; are capable of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas;	• Must be able to analyse, assess and develop new ideas, including designing and developing new techniques and skills within the field.	Contextualize their PhD project (as a research project) and their practice (as research), and 'speak on its behalf' in these terms; so that it can be understood (by them and others) as an original contribution to knowledge.
Communication: can communicate with their peers, the larger scholarly community and with society in general about their areas of expertise;	• Must be able to organise and carry out research and development tasks in complex and unpredictable contexts. • Must be able to independently initiate and form part of national and international collaboration about research and development with scientific integrity.	Speak compellingly about their PhD project as an independent research practice to their cohort, staff at VAA, and wider artistic/design communities of practice both nationally and internationally.

I share this guidance because the aims and objectives and outcomes of a course are indicative of what institutions such as art schools often understand their roles and responsibilities to be, and how they root, carry, and communicate these roles and responsibilities, in the context of the ongoing neo-liberalisation of higher education, and its instrumentalising of knowledge, and of knowledge production.[3] Such guidance is indicative of an institution's ethos in which practices of art and design – what such practices are and do – are 'purportedly render[ed] intelligible' by way of regimes of validation and legitimation such as supervision, evaluation, accountability, and judgement, as cultural critic Tom Holert writes in his foundational article entitled 'Art in the Knowledge-based Polis'.[4]

Originally published in *e-flux* (issue #3) back in February 2009, and reproduced here, in that text Holert points to a congealing of the concept of 'knowledge production' in general, but also at the same time takes to task the idea that practice or artistic research or artistic knowledge might somehow circumvent (rather than re-affirm) such discursive regimes.[5] Rather, he makes it clear that institutions themselves embody and articulate the dynamics of power-knowledge, in which the two are always already inextricably related, as Michel Foucault knew all too well, thereby shaping and dictating what comes about within them; which includes the figure of the practitioner itself, and our practices also. In the art school, then, much like in the public museum, the commercial book fair, and numerous other manifestations of the creative and cultural industries, by way of their structures, infrastructures, behaviours, and mentalities, we as practitioners are both subjects of and subject to them.

Relating to such dynamics of power-knowledge, specifically as they congregate around and are provoked by the idea of the PhD by practice in the art school, back in 2008 I asked a series of connected questions at an event I co-organised at the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, USA, that appeared in the event's subsequent publication thus:

What is practice-led research? What is a practice-led Ph.D.? How to conceive of such a project? What kind of research training is useful and appropriate for a project such as this? Should an artist or designer be familiar with existing published academic research that pertains to his or her practice, and why should he or she need to demonstrate this familiarity? How and why should his or her practice develop a position in relation to that research? What counts as 'investigation' and 'evaluation' and an 'independent and original contribution to knowledge'? How is this project meant to 'demonstrate' its original contribution to knowledge - can it or should it have to, even? (And is this knowledge as a means to an end, or knowledge as an end in itself?) Should the practice-led Ph.D. be accompanied by some kind of written supplement? And, if so, should it be a commentary, an explanation, or a contextualizing that enables

3   In this regard, and in such a context, I would like to think that the 'guidance' in my course document is not necessarily 'better', but certainly not 'worse' than similar documentation being used in PhD/doctoral programmes in art schools across the UK, continental Europe, the US, and elsewhere.
4   Tom Holert, https://www.e-flux.com/journal/03/68537/art-in-the-knowledge-based-polis/
    e-flux, Journal #03 - February 2009.
5   The neo-liberalisation of higher education is of course simply the latest power-knowledge regime at work in the art school – discourses of freedom, creativity, inspiration, experimentation, originality, failure, professionalization, skill, efficiency, participation, collaboration, risk, and so forth, are no less regimes of power-knowledge, and are themselves often allied to neo-liberalisation.

it to 'demonstrate' the research? Or should it have another kind of written accompaniment that is somehow 'alongside' or 'in dialogue' with the practice? All of which is to say, how does practice-led research make explicit – if it should even have to – the process of research that is integral to its practice?[6]

Most of these questions are still worth asking, I believe, especially in the context of a publication on research as it relates to practitioners, curators, and educators operating in and between the art school, the art gallery or museum, and the creative and cultural industries. For sure these questions were, and still are, complicit inadvertently with (perhaps even a capitulation to?) the instrumentalisation of knowledge and knowledge production by way of the neo-liberalisation of higher education, but they are also a purposeful challenge to it. While there is still no consensus on the 'status' of 'knowledge' in practice-led research, what is even more true now than it was back in 2008 is that such instrumentalizing all too often ossifies institutions and their practices – whether these practices are artistic, curatorial, exhibitionary, or educational.

That said, while industries such as higher education and those in the museum sector might be overly-regulatory in their authority and control, they also *institute*: they inaugurate the conditions of possibility for curiosity, experimentation, failure, conversation, procrastination, incomprehension, care, learning, righteousness, disagreement, dissent, protest and activism, and dissensus, initiating counter-institutional

platforms, and so much more. Art schools as regimes of discipline and control are, then, also always and already environments in which to have a practice, and to think through what it means to practice, and to do so *in practice*; they are environments where any and every practice ought to flourish. Given this flourishing as a process that's not determined in advance, it is for the institution, and for those of us that are 'representative' of the institution, to be asking of practice not 'how can we grade this?' but 'how can we [as individuals and as an institution] change to meet this?'[7]

Holert knows institutions institute such conditions of possibility. So while his article begins with concern for practice in the knowledge-based polis, where knowledge – which includes practice as knowledge – is institutionalized, instrumentalized, and commodified, *at the same time* he's interested in the potentialities of how 'art might be comprehended and described *as a specific mode of* generating and disseminating knowledge', and '*the particular kind of knowledge* that can be produced within the artistic realm by the practitioners or actors who operate in its various places and spaces'. [emphasis added]

Against the values of knowledge-based economies (efficiency, etc.) then, Holert highlights the forever changing structure, status, and shape of knowledge and knowledge formation, foregrounding practitioners working in the realms of, for instance, emergent knowledges, situated knowledges, informal knowledges, practical wisdom, and non-knowledge. With the influence and importance of feminist, queer, subaltern, and post-colonial epistemologies looming large, he argues for Foucault's idea in his *The*

6   Marquard Smith, 'Introduction: Asking the Question: Why "*What is Research in the Visual Arts? Obsession, Archive, Encounter*"?', in Michael Ann Holly and Marquard Smith, eds., *What is Research in the Visual Arts? Obsession, Archive, Encounter*, Clark Studies in the Visual Arts/Yale University Press, 2009, x-xxvi, xiv.

7   This is a question asked by Adrian Rifkin, in discussion at a conference on research entitled 'Encounter, Curiosity and Method: The Making of Practice' that I programmed at Tate Britain in October 2006.

Archaeology of Knowledge (1969) of a 'positivity of knowledge', which might be embodied in and articulated by way of 'discursive practices' that themselves may well 'refuse any such discursivity'.

The promise and prospect of such practices and refusals is why it's so vital to begin from the idea of 'research' as a subject of research, and specifically the subject of the figure of the researcher (you, me, us) as itself the locus for the discovery of knowledges (and things other than knowledge too perhaps) by way of the processual acts of searching, gathering, making/producing, decision-making, and disseminating.

Here I think it is worth being reminded that research, as I've written elsewhere, etymologically from the Old French, *recercer*, and in its verb form, is both 'to search' and 'to search again.' It is thus bursting with all of the instigating and reiterating that this implies. As a verb, research is 'to roam while digging' and 'to look for with care,' and what is stressed etymologically is *the very act of* searching and researching.[8] Research is then always and already action, process, praxis.

This is why it matters to foreground, celebrate, and question the idea of research, and especially as it relates to the figure of the practitioner, curator, and educator *as researcher* (as well as to practice, curating, and educating themselves *as research* and as praxis).

8   Marquard Smith, 'Theses on the Philosophy of History: The Work of Research in the Age of Digital Searchability and Distributability,' *Journal of Visual Culture*, Vol 12(3), 2014, 375–403. See also Marquard Smith and susan pui san lok, 'Journeys, documenting, indexing, archives and practice-based research: A conversation with susan pui san lok.' *Art Journal* 65(4), Winter, 2006, 18–35.

For it is these practitioner's *ways of doing* (research) that renders possible words imaginable. Their activity. Their acts. It is their practice, as a practice. Their labour. Their sensibility. Their choices and decisions. Their compulsions, fixations, obsessions, and repetitions; their cravings, longings. It is their curiosity. It is their curiosity as a will, as the root of inquiry, as the desire to learn and know. It is curiosity as a modality of encounter driven by a will-to-learning and a will-to-knowing which also indicates the reasoning behind their very desire to be curious, linked as it is to a sense of wonder, the excitement of discovery and the pleasures and dangers therein. Their coming-to-know by way of their practice-led research becomes an invitation to further curiosity, wonder, thinking, and change. This is why curiosity, as Foucault writes in 'The Masked Philosopher', 'evokes "concern"… the care one takes for what exists and could exist.'

In their curiosity, these practitioners are self-reflexive, self-conscious of their own subjectivity and positionality as a necessary and inescapable (and even welcome) starting point for research. They are aware of the extent to which this impacts upon their approach to and engagement with their visual, material, spatial, and textual cultures, their primary and secondary sources, their documents and archives, and the 'theoretical' questions that they might engender. Likewise, they are attentive to the challenges of how to make out and describe such encounters, and why it is so vital to attend to the specificities of such encounters in their singularity. For it is the distinctiveness of such interests which offer up narratives, and alternative structures of narrative, that tell us something interesting about the order (and disorder) of things, of our arrangement and re-arrangement of such documents, images, objects, and environments, of their relations to us, and thus of ours to the world. In all of this, latent

questions, documents and archives, primary and secondary sources, visual, material, spatial, and textual cultures emerge. Such particular convergences are not determined in advance. They do not belong to anyone. They emerge as they come into being, as they take shape, and are enacted. Such particular convergences – each and every PhD student's practice – are distinctively 'institutive'.

Each manifestation of such instituting (which is the basis for each PhD student's project) emerges by way of testing and trying, curiosity and speculation, investigation and inquiry, creativity and *techné*, process and practice, and risk and failure. As such, we must be attentive to how the researcher – the artist, the designer, the writer, the curator, the educator – produces knowledge, produces new knowledge, produces something other than knowledge; and how their research utilizes (and invents their own) models and methodologies. We need to be attentive to the kinds of knowledges that art and design and writing and curating and pedagogical practices produce, the ways in which they do so, and to what end; as research is embodied in and articulated by way of art and design and writing and curating and pedagogy visually, materially, and spatially.

For at its heart, instituting itself is born of the experiment as methodology, and thus each PhD project (along in fact with all decisions in the art school as an institution) is a case study towards a nascent taxonomy, cartography, and morphology of experimentality.

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Research: Practitioner | Curator | Educator tries to identify where we're at and where we might be going *vis-à-vis* the idea of research in the art school, higher education, museums and galleries, and the creative and cultural industries more generally. By way of this book, in particular we want to ask why and how specific modes of practice (artistic practice, curating, and practices of pedagogy) operate, and what particular kinds of knowledges artistic research, the curatorial, and the educator as 'practitioner researcher' generate and disseminate.[9] (These same questions must also be asked of the PhD by practice in the art school – whether that practice is Fine Art, Design, Curating, Writing, Criticism, or a melding of some or all of these practices.)

For this book, contributors to the original event, all here, were asked to 'set the scene' with regards to their 'take' on 'research', to raise fundamental questions and concerns, and to begin to map a few directions for further consideration, and offer thoughts, however provisional, on future potentialities for research itself. That event, along with the extended discussion contributed to so actively by the audience at Lithuania's National Gallery of Art, was captured and has been transcribed, edited carefully, and forms the bulk of this publication. It is topped and tailed by Tom Holert's writing. His article is the key compulsory reading for the first Intensive on the 'Research as Praxis' course in the Department of Doctoral Studies at Vilnius Academy of Arts, as I've noted, and was a provocation and springboard for those contributing to the event at the Gallery.

9   I take this phrase from Pringle, Emily, 'Developing the Practitioner-Researcher Within the Art Museum Context', 2018 (and https://practitionerresearchintheartmuseum.com)

Tom has been kind enough to write an Afterword to *Research: Practitioner | Curator | Educator*, and I thank him warmly here, along with all the other contributors, and the active participation of audience members at the National Gallery of Art.[10]

Research: Practitioner | Curator | Educator is hopefully useful for PhD students in art schools internationally, and those working across the Arts and Humanities in institutions of higher education, as well as additional publics engaged critically with the arts and culture.

I hope it offers food for thought on pressing issues around 'research' in our 'knowledge economy'. I hope too that it offers an instance, a model even, of how a collaboration between an art school and a museum/gallery might create a public-facing context exploring matters of concern that are priorities for diverse if often overlapping and inter-animating communities of practice.

We have tried, and we are trying to go beyond the institute of higher education figured as an 'ivory tower' or as an arts factory, and to model the possibilities of further reciprocal relations between an art school, a national gallery, a book fair, between students, academics, practitioners, and publics, in ways that spill out beyond higher education's architectures of pedagogy, and that enable, demand even, that the world spill into academic discourse, transforming it anew.

Research: Practitioner | Curator | Educator is evidence of the activities of the students and staff in the Department of Doctoral Studies at Vilnius Academy of Arts, and the National Gallery of Art, of working closely with students, their interests and concerns, and how one develops a curriculum for them, *from them*, which leads (it's practice-led after all!) to conversations, public-facing events, and publications such as this. The book is a contribution to what a PhD community is and does; in fact I think of it as a PhD seminar in book form, and I think it can be used as such. Hopefully it will circulate widely (as printed matter but also and especially electronically) to other art and design schools internationally.

Hopefully it will be shared amongst PhD students who – by way of their own PhDs by Practice, their practice-led or practice-based, or practice-related artistic research – are themselves today being challenged by, and in turn challenging engagingly and unremittingly their own institutions' complicity in the neo-liberalisation of higher education and their instrumentalising of knowledge in order to imagine instituting alternative, progressive ways of being, doing, and knowing for tomorrow.

10   Thanks also need to be extended to the invisible hands that are so often instrumental in turning ideas into realities whether through labour, guidance, or rubber stamping, so thanks to Marius Iršėnas, Lolita Jablonskienė, Audrius Klimas, Joanne Morra, Julija Navarskaitė, Alfreda Pilitauskaitė, Gailė Pranckūnaitė & Marek Voida, Ieva Pleikienė, Ieva Skauronė, and Julijonas Urbonas.

Art in the Knowledge-based Polis[1]

Tom Holert

Lately, the concept of 'knowledge production' has drawn new attention and prompted strong criticism within art discourse. One reason for the current conflictual status of this concept is the way it can be linked to the ideologies and practices of neoliberal educational policies. In an open letter entitled 'To the Knowledge Producers', a student from the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna has eloquently criticized the way education and knowledge are being 'commodified, industrialized, economized and being made subject to free trade.'[2]

In a similar fashion, critic Simon Sheikh has addressed the issue by stating that 'the notion of knowledge production implies a certain placement of thinking, of ideas, within the present knowledge economy, i.e. the dematerialized production of current post-Fordist capitalism'; the repercussions of such a placement within art and art education can be described as an increase in 'standardization', 'measurability', and 'the molding of artistic work into the formats of learning and research.'[3] Objections of this kind become even more pertinent when one considers the suggestive rhetoric of the major European art educational network ELIA (European League of Institutes of the Arts), which, in a strategy paper published in May 2008, linked 'artistic research' to the 'EU policy of the generation of "New Knowledge" in a Creative Europe.'[4]

I am particularly interested in how issues concerning the actual situations and meanings of art, artistic practice, and art production relate to questions touching on the particular kind of *knowledge* that can be produced within the artistic realm (or the artistic *field*, as Pierre Bourdieu prefers it) by the practitioners or actors who operate in its various places and spaces. The multifarious combinations of artists, teachers, students, critics, curators, editors, educators, funders, policymakers, technicians, historians, dealers, auctioneers, caterers, gallery assistants, and so on, embody specific skills and competences, highly unique ways and styles of knowing and operating in the flexibilized, networked

1   Tom Holert, https://www.e-flux.com/journal/03/68537/art-in-the-knowledge-based-polis/
    e-flux, Journal #03 - February 2009, This essay was a revised and abridged version of a talk given at the conference 'Art/Knowledge. Between Epistemology and Production Aesthetics' at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, November 11, 2008.
2   R0370126@student.akbild.ac.at, 'To the Knowledge Producers', in *Intersections. At the Crossroads of the Production of Knowledge, Precarity, Subjugation and the Reconstruction of History, Display and De-Linking*, ed. Lina Dokuzovic, Eduard Freudmann, Peter Haselmayer, and Lisbeth Kovacic, Vienna: Löcker, 2008, p. 27.

3   Simon Sheikh, 'Talk Value: Cultural Industry and Knowledge Economy', in *On Knowledge Production: A Critical Reader in Contemporary Art*, ed. Maria Hlavajova, Jill Winder, and Binna Choi, Utrecht: BAK, basis vooractuele kunst; Frankfurt am Main: Revolver, Archiv für aktuelle Kunst, 2008, pp. 196-7.
4   Chris Wainwright, 'The Importance of Artistic Research and its Contribution to "New Knowledge" in a Creative Europe', European League of Institutes of the Arts Strategy Paper, May 2008, http://www.elia-artschools.org/publications/position/research.xml.

sphere of production and consumption. This variety and diversity has to be taken into account in order for these epistemes to be *recognized* as such and to obtain at least a slim notion of what is at stake when one speaks of *knowledge* in relation to art – an idea that is, in the best of cases, more nuanced and differentiated than the usual accounts of this relation.

'Far from preventing knowledge, power produces it,' as Foucault famously wrote.[5] Being *based on* knowledge, truth claims, and belief systems, power likewise *deploys* knowledge – it exerts power *through* knowledge, reproducing it and shaping it in accordance with its anonymous and distributed intentions. This is what articulates the conditions of its scope and depth. Foucault understood power and knowledge to be interdependent, naming this mutual inherence 'power-knowledge'. Power not only supports, but also applies or exploits knowledge. There is no power relation without the constitution of a field of knowledge, and no knowledge that does not presuppose power relations. These relations therefore cannot be analyzed from the standpoint of a knowing subject. Subjects and objects of knowledge, as well as the modes of acquiring and distributing knowledges, are effects of the fundamental, deeply imbricated power/knowledge complex and its historical transformations.

Figure 1. Kim Howells (speaking) and Alex Roberts during a sit-in meeting. Photograph © John Rae.

5   Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, New York: Vintage, [1975]1995.

1. The Hornsey Revolution

On May 28, 1968, students occupied Hornsey College of Art in the inner-suburban area of North London. The occupation originated in a dispute over control of the Student Union funds. However, 'a planned programme of films and speakers expanded into a critique of all aspects of art education, the social role of art and the politics of design. It led to six weeks of intense debate, the production of more than seventy documents, a short-lived Movement for Rethinking Art and Design Education (MORADE), a three-day conference at the Roundhouse in Camden Town, an exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, prolonged confrontation with the local authority, and extensive representations to the Parliamentary Select Committee on Student Relations.'[6]

Art historian Lisa Tickner, who studied at Hornsey College of Art until 1967, has published a detailed account of these events and discussions forty years after the fact. As early as 1969, however (only a few months after the occupation of Hornsey College of Art had been brought to an end by pressure from the above-mentioned local authority in July 1968), Penguin released a book on what had already gained fame as 'The Hornsey Affair', edited by students and staff of the college. This paperback is a most interesting collection of writings and visuals produced during the weeks of occupation and sit-ins, discussions, lectures, and screenings. The book documents the traces and signs of a rare kind of enthusiasm within an art-educational environment that was not considered at the time to be the most prestigious in England. Located just below Highgate, it was described by one of the participants

6   Lisa Tickner, *Hornsey 1968: The Art School Revolution*, London: Frances Lincoln, 2008, pp. 13-14.
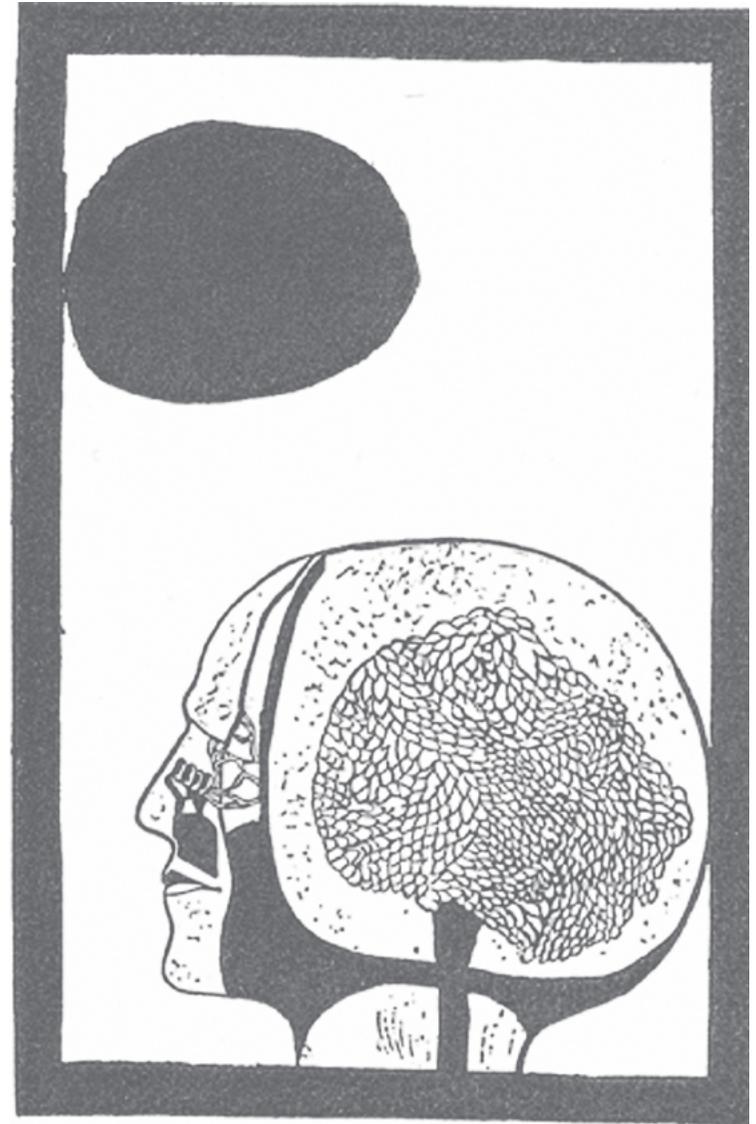
Figure 2. Poster from Hornsey Occupation, 1968, artist anonymous.

as being 'squeezed into crumbling old schools and tottering sheds miles apart, making due with a society's cast-offs like a colony of refugees.'[7] One lecturer even called it 'a collection of public lavatories spread over North London.'[8]

But this modernist nightmare of a school became the physical context of one of the most radical confrontations and revolutions of the existing system of art education to take place in the wake of the events of May '68. Not only did dissenting students and staff gather to discuss new terms and models of a networked, self-empowering, and politically relevant education within the arts, the events and their media coverage also drew to Hornsey prominent members of the increasingly global alternative-utopian scene, such as Buckminster Fuller.

However, not only large-scale events were remembered. One student wrote of the smaller meetings and self-organized seminars:

It was in the small seminars of not more than twenty people that ideas could be thrashed out. Each person felt personally involved in the dialogue and felt the responsibility to respond vociferously to anything that was said. These discussions often went on to the small hours of the morning. If only such a situation were possible under 'normal' conditions. Never had people en masse participated so fully before. Never before had such energy been created within the college. People's faces were alight with excitement, as they talked more than they

had ever talked before. At least we had found something that was real to all of us. We were not, after all, the complacent receivers of an inadequate educational system. We were actively concerned about our education and we wanted to participate.[9]

From today's standpoint, the discovery of talking as a medium of agency, exchange, and self-empowerment within an art school or the art world no longer seems to be a big deal, though it is still far from being conventional practice. I believe that the simple-sounding discovery of talking as a medium within the context of a larger, historical event such as the 'Hornsey Affair' constitutes one of those underrated moments of knowledge production in the arts – one that I would like to shift towards the center of a manner of attention that may be (but should not necessarily be) labeled as 'research'. With a twist of this otherwise over-determined term, I am seeking to tentatively address a mode of understanding and rendering the institutional, social, epistemological, and political contexts and conditions of knowledge being generated and disseminated within the arts and beyond.

The participants in the Hornsey revolution of forty years ago had very strong ideas about what it meant to be an artist or an art student, about what was actually at stake in being called a designer or a painter. They were convinced that knowledge and knowledge communication within art education contained enormous flaws that had to be swept away:

Only such sweeping reforms can solve the problems... In Hornsey language, this was described as the replacement of the old 'linear'

7   T.N., 'Notes Towards the Definition of Anti-Culture', in *The Hornsey Affair*, ed. Students and staff of Hornsey College of Art, Harmondsworth, London: Penguin, 1969, p. 15.

8   Ibid., p. 29.

9   Ibid., pp. 38-7.

Figure 3. Buckminster Fuller speaking at Hornsey College of Art, June 29, 1968. Photograph © Steve Ehrlicher.

(specialized) structure by a new 'network' (open, non-specialized) structure... It would give the kind of flexible training in generalized, basic creative design that is needed to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances – be a *real* training for work, in fact... the qualities needed for such a *real* training are no different from the ideal ones required to produce maximal individual development. In art and design, the choice between good workmen and geniuses is spurious. Any system worthy of being called 'education', any system worthy of the emerging new world, must be both at once. It must produce people whose work or 'vocation' is the creative, general transformation of the environment.[10]

To achieve this 'worthy' system, it was considered necessary to do away with the 'disastrous consequence' of the 'split between practice and theory, between intellect and the non-intellectual sources of creativity.'[11] Process held sway over output, and open-endedness and free organization of education permeated every aspect of the Hornsey debates.[12] It was also clear that one of the most important trends of the mid-1960s was the increasing interaction and interpenetration of creative disciplines. 'Art and Design', the Hornsey documents argued, 'have become more unified, and moved towards the idea of total architecture of sensory experience'; England underwent 'a total revolution of sensibility.'[13]

The consequences of the intersecting developments within the rebelling body of students and staff at Hornsey (and elsewhere), as well as the general changes within society and culture, had to become

10 Ibid., pp. 116-7.
11 Ibid. [Document 46], p. 118.
12 See ibid. [Document 46], p. 122.
13 Ibid., [Document 46], p. 124.

manifest in the very conceptual framework not only of art education, but of art discourse as such. Hence, there was a widespread recognition that in future all higher education in art and design should incorporate a permanent debate within itself. 'Research', in this sense, came to appear an indispensable element in education:

> We regard it as absolutely basic that research should be an organic part of art and design education. No system devoted to the fostering of creativity can function properly unless original work and thought are constantly going on within it, unless it remains on an opening frontier of development. As well as being on general problems of art and design (techniques, aesthetics, history, etc.) such research activity must also deal with the *educational process itself*... It must be the critical self-consciousness of the system, continuing permanently the work started here in the last weeks [June, July 1968]. Nothing condemns the old regime more radically than the minor, precarious part research played in it. It is intolerable that research should be seen as a luxury, or a rare privilege.[14]

Though this emphatic plea for 'research' was written in a historical situation apparently much different than our own, it nonetheless helps us to apprehend our present situation. Many of the terms and categories have become increasingly prominent in the current debates on artistic research, albeit with widely differing intentions and agendas. It seems to be of the utmost importance to understand the genealogy of conflicts and commitments that have led to contemporary debates on art, knowledge, and science.

Figure 4. 6137 McKeldin Library at the University of Maryland

14   Ibid. [Document 46], pp. 128-29.

2. An Art Department as a Site of Research in a University System

Becoming institutionalized as an academic discipline at the interface of artistic and scientific practices at an increasing number of art universities throughout Europe, artistic research (sometimes synonymous with notions such as 'practice-led research', 'practice-based research, or 'practice-as-research') has various histories, some being rather short, others spanning centuries. The reasons for establishing programs and departments fostering the practice-research nexus are certainly manifold, and differ from one institutional setting to the next. When art schools are explicitly displaced into the university system to become sites of research, the demands and expectations of the scientific community and institutional sponsorship *vis-à-vis* the research outcomes of art schools change accordingly.

Entitled 'Development and Research of the Arts', a new program of the Austrian funding body FWF aims at generating the conceptual and material environment for interdisciplinary art-related research within, between, and beyond art universities. Thus far, however, the conceptual parameters of the FWF appear to be the subject of debate and potential revision and extension. One should be particularly careful of any hasty grafting of a conventional image of a 'scientific' model or mode of research (whatever it may be) onto the institutional context of an art academy. This is not only a matter of epistemological concern, but of education policies and of political debate as well.

One only has to look at the history of the implementation of practice-led research in Art

and Design in Great Britain. In 1992 the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) of the Higher Education Founding Council for England (HEFCE) began to formulate criteria for so-called practice-based/practice-led research, particularly in the field of performance, design, and media. By 1996 the RAE had reached a point where it defined research as an original investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding. It includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce and industry, as well as to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship; the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances and artifacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights; and the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and construction.[15]

The visual or fine arts of that time had yet to be included in this structure of validation, though in the following years various PhD programs in the UK and elsewhere did try to shift them to an output-oriented system of assessment close to those already established for design, media, and performance arts. 'New or substantially improved insights' as well as 'substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes' are the desired outcomes of research, and the Research Assessment Exercise could not be more explicit about the compulsory 'direct relevance to the needs of commerce and industry.'

PARIP (Practice as Research in Performance) is a research group that supervises, assesses, and discusses the ongoing research in the new art and

15 Angela Piccini, 'An Historiographic Perspective on Practice as Research', PARIP (Practice as Research in Performance), http://www.bristol.ac.uk/parip/t_ap.htm.

design environment initiated by the RAE and other organizations concerned with higher arts education in the UK. A 2002 report by Angela Piccini repeatedly focuses on the relation between research and (artistic) practice, and on the subjects and subjectivities, competencies, and knowledges produced and required by this development. After having interviewed various groups of researchers and students from the field of performance arts and studies, it became clear that both concepts assume specific meanings and functions demanded by the configuration of their new settings. One of the groups Piccini interviewed pondered the consequences of the institutional speech act that transforms an *artistic practice* into an *artistic practice-as-research*:

> Making the decision that something is practice as research imposes on the practitioner-researcher a set of protocols that fall into: 1) the point that the practitioner-researcher must necessarily have a set of separable, demonstrable, research findings that are abstractable, not simply locked into the experience of performing it; and 2) it has to be such an abstract, which is supplied with the piece of practice, which would set out the originality of the piece, set it in an appropriate context, and make it useful to the wider research community.[16]

It was further argued that 'such protocols are not fixed', that 'they are institutionalized (therefore subject to critique and revision) and the practitioner-researcher communities must recognize that.' The report also expressed concern about 'excluded practices, those that are not framed as research and are not addressing current academic trends and fashion', and it asked,

Figure 5. Board Room at the African Leadership Academy.

16   Ibid.

'what about practices that are dealing with cultures not represented within the academy?'[17]

When articulated in terms of such a regime of academic supervision, evaluation, and control (as it increasingly operates in the Euroscapes of art education), the reciprocal inflection of the terms 'practice' and 'research' appears rather obvious, though they are seldom explicated. The urge among institutions of art and design education to rush the process of laying down validating and legitimating criteria to purportedly render intelligible the quality of art and design's 'new knowledge' results in sometimes bizarre and ahistorical variations on the semantics of practice and research, knowledge and knowledge production.

For applications and project proposals to be steered through university research committees, they have to be upgraded and shaped in such a way that their claims to the originality of knowledge (and thus their academic legitimacy) become transparent, accountable, and justified. However, to 'establish a workable consensus about the value and limits of practice as research both within and beyond the community of those directly involved' seems to be an almost irresolvable task.[18] At the least, it *ought* to be a task that continues to be open-ended and inevitably unresolved.

The problem is, once you enter the academic power-knowledge system of accountability checks and evaluative supervision, you have either explicitly or implicitly accepted the parameters of this system. Though acceptance does not necessarily imply submission or surrender to these parameters, a

17   Ibid.
18   See Anna Pakes, 'Original Embodied Knowledge: The Epistemology of the New in Dance Practice as Research', *Research in Dance Education*, 4, no. 2, December 2003: p. 144.

fundamental acknowledgment of the ideological principles inscribed in them remains a prerequisite for any form of access, even if one copes with them, contests them, negotiates them, and revises them. Admittedly, it is somewhat contradictory to claim a critical stance with regard to the transformation of art education through an artistic research paradigm while simultaneously operating at the heart of that same system. I do not have a solution for this. Nonetheless, I venture that addressing the power relations that inform and produce the kind of institutional legitimacy/consecration sought by such research endeavours could go beyond mere lip service and be effective in changing the situation.

3. Art in the Knowledge–Based Polis

I would like to propose, with the support and drive of a group of colleagues working inside and outside the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, a research project bearing the title 'Art in the Knowledge-based Polis'. The conceptual launch pad for this project is a far-reaching question about how art might be comprehended and described as a specific mode of generating and disseminating knowledge. How might it be possible to understand the very genealogy of significant changes that have taken place in the status, function, and articulation of the visual arts within contemporary globalizing societies?

With reference to the work of French sociologist Luc Boltanski, the term *polis* has been chosen deliberately to render the deep imbrications of both the material (urbanist-spatial, architectural, infrastructural, etc.) and immaterial (cognitive, psychic, social,

aesthetic, cultural, legal, ethical, etc.) dimensions of urbanity.[19] Moreover, the knowledge-based polis is a conflictual space of political contestation concerning the allocation, availability and exploitation of 'knowledge' and 'human capital'.

As a consequence, it is also a matter of investigating how the 'knowledge spaces' within the visual arts and between the protagonists of the artistic field are organized and designed.[20] What are the modes of exchange and encounter and what kind of communicative and thinking 'styles' guide the flow of what kind of knowledge? How are artistic archives of the present and the recent past configured (technologically, cognition-wise, socially)? In what ways has artistic production (in terms of the deployment and feeding of distributed knowledge networks in the age of 'relational aesthetics') changed, and what are the critical effects of such changes on the principle of individualized authorship?[21]

The implications of this proposal are manifold, and they are certainly open to contestation. What, for instance, is the qualifier enabling it to neatly distinguish between artistic and non-artistic modes of knowledge production? Most likely, there isn't one. From (neo-)avant-garde claims of bridging the gap between art and life (or those modernist claims which insist on the very maintenance of this gap) to

issues of academic discipline in the age of the Bologna process and outcome-based education, it seems that the problem of the art/non-art dichotomy has been displaced. Today, this dichotomy seems largely to have devolved into a question of how to establish a discursive field capable of rendering an epistemological and ontological realm of artistic/studio practice as a scientifically valid research endeavor.

As art historian James Elkins puts it, concepts concerning the programmatic generation of 'new knowledge' or 'research' may indeed be 'too diffuse and too distant from art practice to be much use.'[22] Elkins may have a point here. His skepticism regarding the practice-based research paradigm in the fine arts derives from how institutions (i.e., university and funding bodies) measure research and PhD programs' discursive value according to standards of scientific, disciplinary research. For Elkins, 'words like research and knowledge should be confined to administrative documents, and kept out of serious literature.'[23] In a manner most likely informed by science and technology studies and Bruno Latour, he argues instead that the focus should turn toward the 'specificity of charcoal, digital video, the cluttered look of studio classrooms (so different from science labs, and yet so similar), the intricacies of Photoshop… the chaos of the foundry, the heat of under-ventilated computer labs.' I think this point is well taken.

However useless the deployment of terms such as 'research' and 'knowledge' may seem, such uselessness is bound to a reading and deployment of the terms in a way that remains detached from

19   See Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot, *De la justification. Les économies de la grandeur*, Paris: Gallimard, 1991; Luc Boltanski and Ève Chiapello, *Le nouvel esprit du capitalisme*, Paris: Gallimard, 1999.

20   See Hans-Jörg Rheinberger, Michael Hagner, and Bettina Wahrig-Schmidt, eds., *Räume des Wissens: Repräsentation, Codierung, Spur*, Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1997.

21   See Caroline A. Jones, 'The Server/User Mode: the Art of Olafur Eliasson', *Artforum International*, 46, no. 2 (October 2007): pp. 316-324, p. 396, p. 402.

22   James Elkins, 'Afterword: On Beyond Research and New Knowledge, in *Thinking Through Art: Reflections on Art as Research*, ed. Katy Macleod and Lin Holdridge, London/New York: Routledge, 2006, p. 243.

23   Ibid., p. 246.

Figure 6. Art Classroom at The Calhoun School.

the particular modes of discourse formation in art discourse itself. The moment one enters the archives of writing, criticism, interviews, syllabi, and other discursive articulations produced and distributed within the artistic field, the use of terms such as 'research' and discussion about the politics and production of 'knowledge' are revealed as fundamental to twentieth-century art – particularly since the inception of Conceptual Art in the late 1960s. After all, the modernists, neo- and post-avant-gardists aimed repeatedly at forms and protocols relating to academic and intellectual work – of research and publication, the iconography of the laboratory, scientific research, or think tanks.

Administrative, information, or service aesthetics, introduced at various moments of modernist and post-modernist art, emulated, mimicked, caricaturized and endorsed the aesthetics and rhetoric of scientific communities. They created representations and methodologies for intellectual labor on and off-display, and founded migrating and flexible archives that aimed to transform the knowledge spaces of galleries and museums according to what were often feminist agendas.

Within the art world today, the discursive formats of the extended library-cum-seminar-cum-workshop-cum-symposium-cum-exhibition have become preeminent modes of address and forms of knowledge production. In a recent article in this journal on 'the educational turn in curating', theorist Irit Rogoff addresses the various 'slippages that currently exist between notions of "knowledge production", "research", "education", "open-ended production", and "self-organized pedagogies",' particularly as 'each of these approaches seem to have converged into a set of parameters for

some renewed facet of production.' Rogoff continues, 'Although quite different in their genesis, methodology, and protocols, it appears that some perceived proximity to "knowledge economies" has rendered all of these terms part and parcel of a certain liberalizing shift within the world of contemporary art practices.' However, Rogoff is afraid that 'these initiatives are in danger of being cut off from their original impetus and threaten to harden into a recognizable "style".' As the art world 'became the site of extensive talking', which entailed certain new modes of gathering and increased access to knowledge, Rogoff rightly wonders whether 'we put any value on what was actually being said.'[24]

Thus, if James Elkins is questioning the possibility of shaping studio-based research and knowledge production into something that might receive 'interest on the part of the wider university' and be acknowledged as a 'position – and, finally, a discipline – that speaks to existing concerns',[25] Rogoff seems to be far more interested in how alternative practices of communality and knowledge generation/distribution might provide an empowering capacity.

Artistic Knowledge and Knowledge–based Economies

Since the neo-avant-gardes of the 1960s (at the latest), knowledge generation within the visual arts has expanded through the constitutive dissolution (or suspension) of its subjects and media. Meanwhile, however, its specific aesthetic dimension has continued

24   Irit Rogoff, 'Turning', *e-flux* journal, no. 0 (November 2008), http://www.e-flux.com/journal/view/18.
25   Elkins, 'Afterword', p. 244.

to be marked by elusiveness and unavailability – by doing things, 'of which we don't know what they are' (Adorno).[26] A guiding hypothesis of the 'Art in the Knowledge-based Polis' conceit is that this peculiar relationship between the availability and unavailability of artistic knowledge production assigns a central task to contemporary cultural theory, as such. This not only concerns issues of aesthetics and epistemology, but also its relation to other (allegedly non-artistic) spaces of knowledge production.

To advance this line of reasoning, the various reconfigurations of knowledge, its social function, and its distribution (reflected within late modernist and post-modernist epistemological discourse) have to be considered. From the invocation of the post-industrial information society[27] to the critique of modernist 'metanarratives'[28] and the theorization of new epistemological paradigms such as reflexivity, transdisciplinarity, and heterogeneity,[29] the structure, status and shape of knowledge has changed significantly. Amongst other consequences, this has given rise to a number of specific innovative policies concerning knowledge (and its production) on national and transnational levels.[30]

26   Theodor W. Adorno, 'Vers une musique informelle', in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 16, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp,1978, pp. 493-540.
27   See Daniel Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*, New York: Harper & Row, 1973.
28   See Jean-François Lyotard, *La condition postmoderne: rapport sur le savoir*, Paris: Minuit, 1979.
29   See Michael Gibbons et al., *The New Production of Knowledge: The Dynamics of Science and Research in Contemporary Societies*, London: Sage, 1994.
30   See Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, *The Knowledge-based Economy*, Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, 1996; 'Putting Knowledge Into Practice: a Broad-Based Innovation Strategy for the EU', communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions, September 9, 2006, http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/innovation/index_en.htm.

A point of tension that can become productive here is the traditional claim that artists almost constitutively work on the hind side of rationalist, explicated knowledge – in the realms of non-knowledge (or emergent knowledge). As a response to the prohibition and marginalization of certain other knowledges by the powers that be, the apparent incompatibility of non-knowledge with values and maxims of knowledge-based economies (efficiency, innovation, and transferability) may provide strategies for escaping such dominant regimes.

Michel Foucault's epistemology offers a hardly noticed reasoning on artistic knowledge that appears to contradict this emphasis on non-knowledge, while simultaneously providing a methodological answer to the conundrum. In his 1969 *L'Archéologie du savoir (The Archaeology of Knowledge)*, Foucault argues that the technical, material, formal, and conceptual decisions in painting are traversed by a 'positivity of knowledge' which could be 'named, uttered, and conceptualized' in a 'discursive practice.'[31] This very 'positivity of knowledge' (of the individual artwork, a specific artistic practice, or a mode of publication, communication, and display) should not be confused with a rationalist transparency of knowledge. This 'discursive practice' might even refuse any such discursivity. Nonetheless, the works and practices do show a 'positivity of knowledge' – the signature of a specific (and probably secret) knowledge.

At the heart of 'Art in the Knowledge-based Polis' would be a recognition, description, and analysis of such 'positivity' as much as an exploration of the epistemological conditions in which such positivity appears. Just as the forms and discourses through which artists inform, equip, frame, and communicate

31   Michel Foucault, *Archéologie du savoir*, Paris: Gallimard, 1969.

their production have become manifold and dispersed, so has a new and continuously expanding field of research opened up as a result.

In many ways, the recent history of methodologies and modes of articulation in the visual arts is seen to be co-evolutionary with such developments as participate in the complex transition from an industrial to a postindustrial (or in terms of regulation theory: from a Fordist to a post-Fordist) regime. However, the relationship between art and society cannot be grasped in terms of a one-sided, sociological-type causality. Rather, the relationship must be seen as highly reciprocal and interdependent. Hence it is possible to claim that in those societies for which 'knowledge' has been aligned with 'property' and 'labor' as a 'steering mechanism', the visual arts dwell in an isolated position.[32] 'Immaterial labor' (a concept that originated in the vocabulary of post-operaismo where it is supposed to embrace the entire field of 'knowledge, information, communications, relations or even affects') has become one of the most important sources of social and economic value production.[33] Hence, it is crucial for the visual arts and their various (producing, communicating, educating, etc.) actors to fit themselves into this reality, or oppose the very logic and constraints of its 'cognitive capitalism'.[34]

Amongst such approaches is an informal, ephemeral, and implicit 'practical wisdom' that informs individual and collective habits, attitudes, and dialects. Moreover, the influence of feminist, queer, subaltern, or post-colonial epistemologies and 'situated knowledges' is of

32   Nico Stehr, *Wissenspolitik: Die Überwachung des Wissens*, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2003, 30.
33   Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*, New York: Penguin, 2004, p. 126.
34   Yann Moulier-Boutang, *Le capitalisme cognitif: La Nouvelle Grande Transformation*, Paris: Éditions Amsterdam, 2007.

great importance in relation to the visual arts.[35] Thus, for the purposes of inquiring into 'Art in the Knowledge-based Polis', the array of artistic articulations (both discursive and those deemed non-discursive) will be conceived as reaching far beyond common art/science and theory/practice dichotomies, while a careful analysis of the marks left on artistic epistemologies will be pursued throughout.

The relocation and re-contextualization of the knowledge issue create room-for-play absent in traditional research designs. The socio-spatial dimension of knowledge production within the visual arts should constitute another essential interest. Urban spaces are understood today as infrastructures of networked, digital architectures of knowledge as much as material, built environments. The contemporary knowledge-based city is structured and managed by information technology and databases, and the new technologies of power and modes of governance they engender (from surveillance strategies to intellectual property regulations to the legal control of network access) demand an adapted set of methodologies and critical approaches. Much of the work to be done might deploy updated versions of regime analysis and Foucauldian governmentality studies (which would by no means exclude other approaches). This urban 'network society' displays features of a complex 'politics of knowledge' that cannot be limited to stately and corporate management of biotechnological knowledge, because it is also actively involved in sponsoring the so-called creative industries, universities, museums, etc.[36] By this token, it also becomes important to investigate and explore the social, political, and economic shares held by the visual arts in the knowledge-based polis.

What is needed is a multifocal, multidisciplinary perspective with a fresh look at the interactions and constitutive relations between knowledge and the visual arts. The specific, historically informed relations between artistic and scientific methodologies (their epistemologies, knowledge claims, and legitimating discourses) should play a major role. However, as deliberately distinguished from comparable research programs, research will be guided onto an expanded epistemic terrain on which 'scientific' knowledge is no longer a privileged reference. Internal exchanges and communications between the social/cultural worlds of the visual arts and their transdisciplinary relationalities will be structured and shaped by those very forms of knowledge whose legitimacy and visibility are the subject of highly contested epistemological struggles.

An adequate research methodology has to be developed in order to allow the researchers positions on multiple social-material time-spaces of actual making and doing – positions that permit and actually encourage active involvement in the artistic processes in the stages of production *before* publication, exhibition, and critical reception. I would suggest that notions of 'research' motivated by a sense of political urgency and upheaval are of great importance here. As can be seen in what took place at Hornsey in 1968, positions that are criticized (and desired) as an economic and systemic privilege should be contested as well as (re)claimed. Otherwise, I am afraid that the implementation of practice-based research programs and PhDs in art universities will turn out to be just another bureaucratic maneuver to stabilize hegemonic power/knowledge constellations, disavowing the very potentialities and histories at the heart of concepts such as 'practice' and 'research'.

35   See Donna Haraway, 'Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective', *Feminist Studies*, 14, no. 3, Autumn 1988, pp. 575-599.
36   See Stehr, *Wissenspolitik*.

The National Gallery of Art: Curatorial Philosophy and Practice

Lolita Jablonskienė

The National Gallery of Art is happy to take part in this new format for doctoral seminars, one that is organized as a collaboration between the National Gallery and Vilnius Academy of Arts, and one that, unusually, takes place in a gallery setting, and one that is also open to the public. I have to admit from the very beginning that we explored or researched this format together with colleagues from across the Gallery, at the Academy and beyond.

Today I am going to speak briefly about curatorial philosophy and practice as we understand it at the National Gallery of Art, a museum. My starting point is the article by Tom Holert that was suggested by Marq on research as knowledge production. I am going to speculate about what kind of knowledge the museum produces, how the curatorial is integrated in this production, and how we interpret research in the Gallery as curators and educators.

To start, what are the regular fields of inquiry in an art museum? First of all it is the museum collection and archive that we research. It's certainly art and cultural history because we are an art museum. We also inquiry into the museum itself: its spaces, its content, and its interaction with the public – the museum is everything that comes into the field or is close to the field of museology and sociology, art history and cultural studies, history and the creative and cultural industries.

From the very beginning of the Gallery's operation in 2009, we encountered a… problematic situation with regards to the question of what knowledge a museum produces. In 2009, the National Gallery of Art presented to the public the first permanent display of the 20th – 21st century Lithuanian art collection held by the Lithuanian art museum. In 2018, we still had almost the same type of collection presentation; although in 2019 half of it was substantially renewed. This type of display immediately received critique, and I would say deservedly so, because of its replication of the white cube ideology, i.e. that we'd developed a narrative story about Lithuanian art through the 20th Century by mainly focusing on aesthetic content rather than potential links that the works in the collection might have to political, social, and other contexts. This stimulated us to critically reflect on what knowledge the collection presentation itself may suggest more generally, and, starting in 2009 through 2010 we organized a series of public discussions with various professionals – art historians, curators, philosophers, artists themselves, and market analysts – on the 20-21st Century Lithuanian art display in the Gallery. By having these discussions we wanted to reflect on ourselves as an institution and as professional curators and educators, and tell our visitors too, that one story, one narrative, or one research line on 20-21st Century

Lithuanian art and on a museum's collection simply does not exist. We did not want to propose that the story that we had put on display was the wrong one, but we did want to say that there could be multiple stories, multiple approaches, and various discussions and discourses that needed to be analyzed.

These considerations led us to an understanding of curatorial research as a complex, reflective and critical inquiry into the discourse – be it art, art history, museums, collections, etc. etc. And, I would put the 'etcetera' in bold for emphasis because it is a significant and impactful iterative process that emerges along the way, as we ourselves explored thereby producing these discourses.

So what are the challenges and outcomes of curatorial research understood in the way I have just described them?

First, it's about introducing new knowledge. For instance, in 2013, we organized an exhibition 'Let's Enter a New World' (curated by Margarita Matulytė) [Fig. 7] on Vitas Luckus, an outstanding Lithuanian photographer whose disruptive work represented a shift from a modern to postmodern vision in photography. After his untimely death in the mid 1980s and the relocation of his archive to the US, Luckus was hardly present in the discourse of Lithuanian photography, in particular in exhibitions. By exhibiting these 'missing' images, we definitely constructed new knowledge grounded in in-depth curatorial research and contextual reflection.

Another example is an exhibition on the subject of crowds ('The Crowds', 2012, curated by Linara Dovydaitytė and Dovilė Tumpytė) that not only presented diverse representations of the crowd in

Fig. 7. 'Let's Enter a New World. A Retrospective of Photography by Vitas Luckus'. National Gallery of Art, Vilnius, 2013. Courtesy of the National Gallery of Art, photographer Vaidotas Aukštaitis.

visual arts from earlier times to contemporary art but also initiated a discourse about what a crowd actually means in contemporary public space and civil society. Constructing new knowledge is a particular curatorial task or I would say strategy: in the Gallery we understand it as engaging with a specific historical moment (the present, now, today), and place (here) with all of its eventual contexts. A good example is an exhibition of the work of Teodoras Kazimieras Valaitis [Fig. 8] curated by Giedrė Jankevičiūtė, a researcher from the Vilnius Academy of Arts, that not only presented the poorly known creative work of Valaitis, but also included a story within a story about the complex and ambivalent identity of an alternative artist during the Soviet period. It was a new and radical curatorial suggestion which nearly brought us into conflict with the artist's family and provoked a wider circle of people who were associated with non-official art movements in Soviet times. Simultaneous with highlighting avant-garde trends that were alternative to Socialist Realism and potentially fitted into the grand narrative of Western modern art history, the exhibition also revealed a specific socio-cultural entanglement that is urgent here and now.

The focus on a particular historical moment and a specific location is important in curating contemporary art as well. One instance of such an exhibition is of artist/filmmaker Deimantas Narkevičius entitled 'Stains and Scratches' (2018, curated by me) [Fig. 9], which included stereofilms, one of which traces the dismantling of the Soviet sculptures from the Green Bridge in Vilnius, a story about memory and the politics of memory which became urgent again right before that exhibition opened when a fierce public discussion about the results of the competition for a monument to Lithuanian freedom fighters broke out accompanied
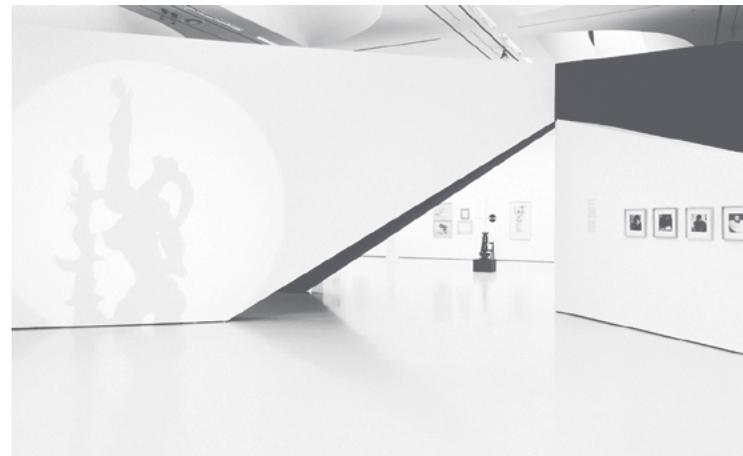
Fig. 8. 'Teodoras Kazimieras Valaitis. 1934–1974', National Gallery of Art, Vilnius, 2014. Courtesy of the National Gallery of Art, photographer Tomas Kapočius.
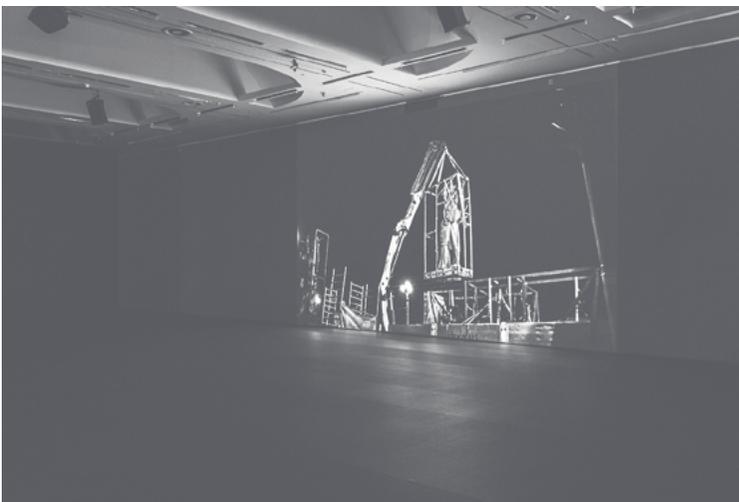
Fig. 9. 'Deimantas Narkevičius. Stains and Scratches', National Gallery of Art, Vilnius, 2018. Courtesy of the National Gallery of Art, photographer Andrej Vasilenko.

by right-wing protests against a winning contemporary concept of a monument.

In addition to constructing new knowledge by engaging with a particular moment in time and place, in our Museum there is a commitment to a deconstructing of established knowledge. The aforementioned exhibition of Vitas Luckus that introduced a new narrative was accompanied by another exhibition entitled 'A Place of Images' (curated by Ieva Mazūraitė-Novickienė) that explored changes in the meaning of photography as it relates to the place in which it is shown – an exhibition, a photo album, an art magazine, various official and popular media during Soviet times. In this instance, we were looking at the roots of how specific formats/contexts might generate and circulate different meanings.

We also work with the museum's collection using this method of deconstruction. The exhibition entitled 'Woman's Time' (2010, curated by Elona Lubytė, Laima Kreivytė, and Živilė Pipinytė) showed the Soviet period sculpture collection that is, at this particular moment, more or less mute – it's usually difficult to generate relevant meaning from such historical material, especially for a contemporary visitor. So we invited a feminist curator and also a film curator to look at the collection from a feminist perspective, identifying the roles of women that are represented in sculptures of the Soviet period thus opening up the collection for a contemporary discourse. We continue this line of thought, working with Lithuanian and international women artists, arranging their solo projects and various group shows, seeing it also as a contribution to rewriting canonic histories of art and rethinking corresponding curatorial limitations.

What we also do while curating exhibitions at the National Gallery of Art is enhancing spatial knowledge. The clearest example of this would probably be 'Monuments

That Are Not. A Walk around Vilnius' (2011, curated by Rasa Antanavičiūtė, Eglė Mikalajūnė, and Živilė Etevičiūtė) [Fig. 10] that mapped the city of Vilnius onto the Gallery. Looking at the image, on the plan below you see the Gallery's map; on the plan above there is the map of the old centre of Vilnius, including all the city's monuments that were taken down during the 20th Century. In the exhibition that suggested a walk around Vilnius across time, the curators made these memorial sites materialise both in the Gallery and in people's memory – through sketches, drawings, and documentation of various rituals performed around these monuments. The exhibition also attempted to connect architecturally with the spaces that the Gallery itself opens on to or encloses. The National Gallery is situated in a historically less developed part of the city that has been undergoing enormous changes in the 21st Century. Embracing this actual space of change facilitated the creation of a multilayered psychogeographical experience of the city outside and 'inside' the Gallery.

Another example is an international exhibition 'About Neighbours and Passers-By' [2012, curated by Eglė Mikalajūnė, shown simultaneously with 'The Crowds' exhibition] that used the peripheral spaces of the Gallery for presenting art works, also joining them with the spaces outside. The project invited a visitor to drift through the Gallery rather than follow the established sanctioned routes.

The artist/designer Julijonas Urbonas went even further in the project entitled 'Ornament' (2012, curated by Dovilė Tumpytė and Gerda Paliušytė) by re-enacting a famous Trisha Brown's performance on the outside walls of the National Gallery of Art and encouraged visitors to try out this expanded spatial experience.

Fig. 10. Plan of the exhibition 'Monuments That Are Not. A Walk around Vilnius', National Gallery of Art, Vilnius, 2011. Courtesy of the National Gallery of Art.

Last but not least, I'd want to mention two projects that are comparable or related to artistic research and fall into the category of critical knowledge production. The first exhibition was an international project entitled 'Citynature: Vilnius and Beyond' (2017, curated by Vytenis Burokas, Vitalij Červiakov, Eglė Mikalajūnė, and Eglė Nedzinskaitė) which started from artistic research, from artists invited to Vilnius to explore the city not as a cultural but a natural phenomenon. On this basis several new artworks were produced. Almost more importantly, discourses that were discovered by the artists were taken up further by the curators who found that they overlapped with relevant ongoing scientific research. For example the issue of trauma that was discussed in a work by Kader Attia resonated powerfully with paleo-anthropological research on ancient traumas in Vilnius city being conducted concurrently by scientists in Lithuania. The third layer was the selection of art works from the collection of the museum and other public and private collections, pushing still further the topics suggested by the artists and scientists. In the end, the complex curatorial approach generated hybrid knowledges on the topics that were produced, provided, in the first instance, by the artists who were invited to this show.

Another exhibition worth mentioning in this context was 'Jurgis Baltrušaitis' Manuscripts: For All and None' (2016, curated by Odeta Žukauskienė and Gintaras Didžiapetris). A museum not only produces exhibitions it also constructs certain spectatorships. Usership, or multi-usership was the topic that the curator of the exhibition together with artist Gintaras Didžiapetris was researching in this particular show. This image [Fig. 11] shows the installation, which includes rolling chairs because this was the way that the curators suggested visitors might move around the exhibition. They could

Fig. 11. 'Jurgis Baltrušaitis' Manuscripts: For All and None', National Gallery of Art, Vilnius, 2016. Courtesy of the National Gallery of Art, photographer Andrej Vasilenko.

ride these chairs to the shelves and tables where they could either make some sketches or use certain tools for seeing how anamorphic representations are coming together; there were mirrors which distort your image so you could experience anamorphosis first hand; there were tables in the middle of the room that were exact copies of Albrecht Dürer's work-tables and the curatorial idea encouraged the visitors to use them instead of just dealing with representation. Generating new knowledge through using and doing was at the core of this research-based project.

To round up, in the National Gallery of Art we find that (curatorial) research produces the following: new knowledge engaged with a particular historical moment and a specific location; hybrid knowledges; critical knowledge and certain modes of participatory spectatorship, which we hope is both active and reflective. Research also produces something else that we do not yet know…

Research in the Art Museum: Shifting Priorities and Purposes

Emily Pringle

I work at Tate in London in my role as Head of Research. From September 2017 to August 2018 I was lucky enough to have a sabbatical from my job. I had a fellowship from a government research funding body (the Arts and Humanities Research Council, AHRC), which funds arts and humanities research. I explored how practitioner-led, co-produced research practices can be embedded in the art museum. Over recent years, I have become increasingly interested in rethinking how research can be understood in the art museum, and to do so means problematizing the existing models and thinking about how we can locate museum professionals as researchers. Because so much of what these professionals do is actually research but it's quite often not understood in those terms. It was really encouraging to hear from Lolita the degree to which curatorial research is undertaken here in this Museum. In my research I've looked at five case-study organizations in the UK, in Europe, in the

USA; four museums and an arts organizations, and I've interviewed numerous arts museum professionals – educators, curators, directors, conservators, and so on. I've also drawn on my own practice as a museum practitioner; and I describe this practice as research. This ethos has guided and informed how my research over the last twelve months has unfolded. The research has come together in a book entitled *Rethinking Research in the Art Museum* that has been published by Routledge.

In the context of the idea of practice-led research in the art museum, I'm really interested in the problem, the question: what is the art museum? I'm interested not so much in how the art museum operates, but rather in problematizing *who is the recipient of research in a museum*. What and whom is museum research for? Who gets to do research in a museum? These are the questions that worry me, and which underpin the research questions posed to the people I interviewed.

My first question was, what does the term research mean to you? And the second one was, do you consider yourself a researcher? From my conversations with these museum professionals around these two questions, and also drawing on my own experience, I came to understand the way the art museum operates currently by way of four competing discourses. These discourses represent the at times conflicting agendas that determine at various times how the organisation defines itself and how it prioritises its time and resources. This, in turn, has a profound effect on the type of research that gets done in a museum. So the discourses emerge in various and multiple manifestations, for example in decisions regarding programming, in an allocation of budgets, in recruiting of staff, institutional messaging and branding. But the discourses are also present in less explicit

ways, for example in assumed codes of conduct, in tacit hierarchies, and very mysterious protocols. All four museum discourses are, I would argue, at present coexisting con-currently. However specific agendas become more or less dominant depending on external pressures, directorial priorities, and the prevailing museum *zeitgeist*. And, when one or other of these four discourses comes to the fore, it translates into a particular construction of research.

Let's take the first discourse of the collection. In this discourse the museum sees its primary role as building and carrying forwards its collection. Here, the museum is defined by its collection and those who look after the collection are the experts within the institution. It is these scholar-curators who get to do research. However, the discourse of the collection can be undercut by the second discourse of financial sustainability, the latter stating that the museum's primary role is to keep itself going financially. When this second discourse is dominant resources are transferred away from looking after the collection to generating income. This is manifest, for example, in the growth of blockbuster exhibitions that will bring people and funds into the museum. In other words, the curator's energy and capacity to undertake research is taken away from the collection and moved towards the construction of exhibitions that are going to generate income. And, further, the museum as a whole comes to focus its attention away from research and more towards marketing or branding, having a lovely café, having a lovely shop. What you have here is an expanded role for the museum where the dominant driver is generating income over the creation of knowledge. Research in this scenario can get sidelined, not least because staff are put under great pressure to deliver a high level of activity.

With the third discourse, the discourse of academia, the museum sees its role as generating knowledge that has credibility within an academic context. Here what is perceived as 'legitimate' research is limited to studies that are targeted at the academy via, for instance, an article in a peer-review journal. There is little regard within the academic discourse for more practice-based forms of research, which has implications for the status of ongoing processes of enquiry, such as pre-exhibition research that happens within the museum.

The fourth discourse, which is not in any sense a certainty within museums, is a discourse that is of growing importance: the discourse of democratic participation. This discourse foregrounds the art museum's role as a physical and intellectual space for civil discourse, for collaboration and the co-construction of knowledge. Here the expertise of the curator is seen in relation to the expertise of others who are invited into the museum, and those others may not necessarily be academic colleagues; they may well be members of the public. Recognizing that the public, or publics even, have an expertise of their own, born of their own experience, needs to be taken to account in the museum. And once again this has implications for the nature and value of research that comes through processes of collaboration and which seeks to effect change from beyond the museum itself.

When I interviewed people and asked them whether they saw themselves as researchers, interestingly most often the curators, educators and conservators that I spoke to would say NO. There are many reasons for this. I summarised these reasons in these ways: (1) people felt confused about what constituted museum-based research (2) they felt excluded from the research process mainly because they were often caught up in administration and programming

(3) they saw that research was something which was undertaken by others and (4) they were also preoccupied with a differentiation between what I came to call big 'R' research – which is aligned with a specific understanding of academic research as opposed to a more everyday forms of inquiry.

So, for example, the curators that I spoke to who were involved in exhibitions-based research and pre-acquisition research, would say that the institution does not describe these activities as big 'R' research. Thus they are not seen to be undertaking research, they were merely involved in these kinds of activity. I also spoke with educators who were involved in various forms of participatory action research with community groups beyond the museum, and *they* would say the same; that the institution does not see *that* as a legitimate research practice.

There were other factors too: that people just felt exhausted by the amount of activity they were asked to do, and frustated because they were unable to undertake research of whatever kind.

This got me thinking... because of my first question (what does the term research mean to you?) and the responses I got. Almost without exception, people defined research in terms of these four chraracteristics: research involves asking questions; research involves a systematic process of inquiry; research generates new knowledge; and that this new knowledge goes out into the world in some form, not necessarily in the form of text but it might be in a form of an exhibition or workshop or film, or a conversation. Because of these responses, the starting point for me is thus to recognise that, if we take research and understand research in these terms, then *so much more* of what is undertaken in the museum can be legitimately

understood as research. My recent research project, my blog[1] and the book, is intended to encourage museums and the academy to understand this, and to do so in these terms.

What also came out in my research, which I think adds power of this argument for rethinking how a variety of activities in a museum can be understood as research – is to really think about the variety of *purposes* for research. This goes back to the question, what and for whom is research for? Many of the practitioners I spoke with felt so strongly that the main purpose of the research they were undertaking in the museum was to improve their practice as educators, curators, etc. They wanted to do (and indeed to read about) research that directly informed their ongoing work. They were less interested in undertaking research that faced or travelled out of the institution, and more interested in thinking about what can we do, what's the new knowledge that we can generate that will help us do what we do better. Further, and very much coming from the discourse of democratic participation, there was a sense that understanding research is an opportunity to empower people beyond the museum.

So I was really interested in the example that Lolita gave of the exhibition 'Jurgis Baltrušaitis' Manuscripts: For All and None', particularly that the exhibition invites members of the public in, allows them to shift around on those chairs, and then supports them to become involved in an activity where they are asking questions. These kinds of participatory forms of inquiry, where audiences are invited to locate themselves as researchers within the museum raise crucial qustions. What does it mean for museum to start thinking in these terms?

1   I write a blog at https://practitionerresearchintheartmuseum.com.

More obviously, there are forms of research, some of which were very strongly flagged up by Lolita in her presentation: the idea that you grow knowledge of your collection, look to disseminate knowledge more widely, that you problematize existing narratives, and a way of thinking through current issues of for instance how we decolonize collections. And of course there's the idea that research enhances our public programme? It's not only about research manisfesting itself in and as an exhibition, but also to continue to think about how knowledge can contribute to an academic field, *and also* how it can raise and engage social and cultural issues.

The question I leave you with is this: if we genuinely think about all these different purposes for research within the art museum, where does that leave the dominant model of the scholar-curator undertaking collections-focused research?

How can we expand beyond that, without losing that model, because we still need those scholar-curators. I would like to argue, though, that we need more than that.

Breaking the Black Box: Modalities of Practice Research in the Art and Design PhD

Tom Corby

I am Associate Dean of Research at Central Saint Martins, which is part of the University of the Arts London. We have a large PhD programme at CSM of around 80 students. The form their work takes covers the entire gamut of arts and design, activity from architecture, fine arts, all kinds of design work, and performance, as well as research that is less practice-based and more obviously 'traditional' art and design history, historical and critical studies, and so forth. There isn't really time in the scope of this discussion to respond to Tom Holert's article in detail, but I think many of his arguments about the necessity to recognize the specific shape and form of artistic epistemes, methodologies, methods and approaches is something we can all sign up to and is non-contentious. In fact, I'd say that in my 20-year experience as a PhD student, supervisor, and examiner, I believe art and design education has been quite effective in allowing for the emergence of these forms of research.

I am heartened by the nature of much of the work I see PhD students produce in respect of their practice-based development of shared, embodied, critical, hybrid and cross-disciplinary modes of knowing; some of these I will talk about later in my case studies. I will then try to summarise what I think the practice PhD does that is different from what the conventional mode of working represented in professional practice contexts.

I want to start with some first principals; where does knowledge come from in art and design practice research and how might it differ from its close cousins in Art History for example? When I speak first with our new PhD students, I start with a set of slides that I believe give them a clear sense of this and come from an article by Christopher Frayling, then Rector of the Royal College of Art in London written in 1993 entitled 'Research in art and design'.[1] In the article, Frayling outlines three broad models of enquiry: 'research into art and design', 'research for art and design', and 'research through art and design'. For my purposes, I will refer to these as Mode 1, Mode 2, and Mode 3 research.

Mode 1 research is straightforward and describes a process where art and design (artefacts, histories, individuals) are the *subject* of research. Typically, this research is carried out by historians, theorists or other non-artist/designer disciplinary specialists. This research occurs in history of art/art history departments amongst other places, and in more contemporary contexts through emerging academic disciplines such as curatorial studies. It is analytical, theoretical and historical and is mostly embodied in texts but also exhibition curations. Its workings and knowledge are accessible, mobile and shared.

1   Christopher Frayling, 'Research in art and design', *Research Papers*, Volume 1, Number 1, London: Royal College of Art, 1993.

Mode 2 research for art and design. This is the activity required to realize the outcome of the artistic or designerly practice. Material, conceptual and subject reference material is worked through, methods of making are developed and iterated, and analysis or 'cognitive' work occurs throughout the development of the final outcome. In his article Frayling uses the example of an interview with Picasso where unusually he discusses the background work that went into *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* including his analysis of ancient Iberian sculptures in the Louvre, Cezanne's paintings and visits to the red-light district in Paris.[2] For Picasso this 'research' is of no importance, as the only thing of significance is the final work and any resultant knowledge or insights useful to the wider discipline that have arisen in production are necessarily private in this respect.

Mode 3 research, or for Frayling 'research through art and design', is a practice that encompasses production of an artefact or design, and also an articulation of the insights approaches and learning that went into and arise from the work more broadly. That is to say, the artefact in its own right may or may not constitute 'a new contribution' to the field, but the combination of that work and the higher-level analysis of how it came into being might.

If we return to the idea of 'knowledge' and where it arises in practice research, in this argument we can say that it may be embodied in the artwork as a set of internal logics and materials (and be 'original' in such terms), but also through the processes, connections and workings that arose in the production of the work. That is, knowledge in 'research through art and design' is a synthesis, or a constellation of all these elements

as set against the context of existing practices in which original features, processes and thinking are articulated.

Within the PhD, such enquiry needs to be transparent and shareable, as opposed to hidden within a creative 'black box'. The most convincing PhDs I have examined give space to a documentation and analysis of practice as a prominent chapter in the text that lays bare the making and thinking process behind the practice. Without this, there is no evidencing of how the practice is finding solutions (material, conceptual, practical) to the research issues or questions set and how it connects with other bodies of knowledge. Alongside this, what is of crucial importance is that the work is situated within a context of existing practice, in what we call a 'contextual review' that in other disciplines would be a 'literature review'. Without this, claims to new knowledge cannot be evidenced as there is no discussion of the relation of research to existing approaches, methods, artefacts and propositions. Again, the most convincing PhDs I have examined and supervised are those that let the practice 'breath' and whose contributions *are about the nature of artmaking as an enquiry in its own right.* This is in contrast to more problematic practice PhDs that don't account for the methods of making in their thesis, and which overly focus on a theory-base that often has little connection to the actuality of practice as pursued.

I wish to discuss two examples of practice PhDs I have supervised: one is curatorial in nature by Nicola Triscott, Founder and at that point Director of The Arts Catalyst, a non-profit contemporary arts organization in London, and the other is by the artist Jonathan Kemp and focuses on his art practice.[3]

2   'Pablo Picasso an Interview', in *Artists on Art*, ed. Robert. Goldwater & Marco Treves, John Murray: London, 1985, pp.416-7.

3   Triscott is now Director of the Foundation for Art and Creative Technology (FACT) in Liverpool.

Nicola registered to do a PhD on her curatorial work going back a decade.[4] She situates her practice in a context of art curation engaging the ecological crisis setting a series of research questions around the function of interdisciplinary knowledge and strategy. Using a case study of five of her curatorial projects, Nicola detailed how the projects came into being and were pursued. These projects are further discussed in relation to ongoing theories of the Anthropocene and the nature of interdisciplinary knowledge both of which were directly pertinent to the practice and research questions. Nicola's contribution to knowledge took the form of an interpretative, practical and tactical framework for curating art-led projects that refigures curatorial practice relating to ecological issues as a collective, inquiry driven practice. This is further elaborated via a discussion of 'commoning' that is set against existing approaches that focus on the Anthropocene.

Jonathan's PhD was concerned with developing a more nuanced understanding of the materiality of computational media in arts practices and it was set within a context of arts practices employing software code, networks and other digital modalities. He hypothesised that a richer understanding of the creative potentials of computational media as artistic form could emerge if the computational was engaged not from a universalised or abstracted conception

4   It should be noted that this is a 'PhD by publication/portfolio', a mode or route available at some universities and art schools in the UK and mainland Europe for artists, curators, academics, and others who have an established career, but have not necessarily followed a 'traditional' academic route, and so do not have a PhD. It is 'retrospective', which is to say that it enables the individual to compile a portfolio of their publications/activities/practice going back a decade, and write a critical account of how that practice, in addressing a central research question in a sustained way, has contributed significantly to shaping a debate, field of study, area of practice, etc.

of the digital but via a face-to-face manipulation of the materials, minerals and substances that underpin the computer. His art practice consisted of performances, exhibitions events, material iterations and other activities through which he would literally return the constituent elements of a computer to its mineral substrates. In doing so research made a methodological, conceptual, and practical contribution to how digital media could be employed and understood as a medium beyond normative conceptions and uses of the digital as a set of interfaces, virtual processes or communication events.

What's important to understand from these examples is that the contributions to knowledge whilst contextualised within larger discourses, do arise from the methodological pragmatics of practice. Neither of the PhDs discussed could have produced their contributions without the central part that practice, its pursuit, documentation, and analysis provided.

This transparency of 'making' has unsettled traditions within the wider art community that value the notion that artmaking is a privileged form of intuition accessible only through the subjectivity of a certain kind of individual ('genius' or 'master'). The tension particularly arises with forms of art-practice reliant on market-driven mechanisms, and here I would argue that the practice-based PhD can operate as a necessary palliative to a market hegemony that insists on 'art making' as operative within an occult tradition resistant to analysis in a wider or more generous sense.

A secondary anxiety abounds that practice research seeks to make the 'experience' of art understandable, through the production of artefacts, performances and processes that are unambiguous in their dispositions

and relations to meaning; removing if you will the mystery of the encounter between an audience and artefact. In reality practice-based research does not attempt this (or shouldn't), but rather it lifts the lid on the black box of the making process by bringing to the fore the methods that led to the realization of the work, in a manner that makes this followable (if not necessarily repeatable) and accessible.

The Case of Donelaitis

Žygimantas Augustinas

This is the story of an art project that unexpectedly turned into a practice-based PhD research project, and was defended as a fine art doctorate in Lithuania in 2015. I will present a very short, very compressed version of how this story unfolded, and what came out of this unplanned research.

The story begins very prosaically, six or seven years ago, when a curator called me and said: 'Could you do something for a show dedicated to Kristijonas Donelaitis' 300th anniversary?' The idea of contributing to an exhibition on this Prussian-Lithuanian poet and Lutheran pastor sounded awful, I thought! it's so boring and uninteresting, but the curator was a friend of mine and I wanted to help. After a few weeks full of doubt I started looking for inspiration. As it happens, I was in the middle of a creativity crisis, so doing the research to find inspiration for this boring project was a welcome escape!

Like everybody nowadays, I started with Google. I Googled to see what Kristijonas Donelaitis looked like, and discovered that there was no one reliable image of him. He lived in the 18th Century, so nobody had taken a photograph of him, and, it turns out, no one had painted him either. The most popular images of this poet were created by artists using their own imaginations. And… and this should come as no surprise… the portraits bore a striking resemblance to the artists who painted them! Here [Fig. 12] is an image that shows the artists themselves (above), and their portraits of Kristijonas Donelaitis (below).

I also discovered a scientific reconstruction of the poet's head made from his own skull, which, strangely, is not particularly well-known or popular in our age of science. And…, and this time I actually was surprised… the result of the scientific reconstruction that was presented as a portrait also actually looked like the portrait of the scientist who made it [Fig. 12 the first image from the left]. So much for science!

It similarity was a very important discovery for me, because usually I paint self-portraits. I went on to check out how the reconstruction was done and found out that 'improvements' to the skull have been made: the scientist had shortened the front teeth, probably in order to make the face more attractive.

Then I became very curious about the true appearance of the poet Donelaitis, what he might actually look like. So I learned about more recent reconstruction methods, including forensic reconstruction methods for reconstructing human faces using photos of skulls. Professor Rimantas Jankauskas, a biological anthropologist at Vilnius University who was to become my PhD advisor, helped me to stay on track as I navigated my way through various methods of
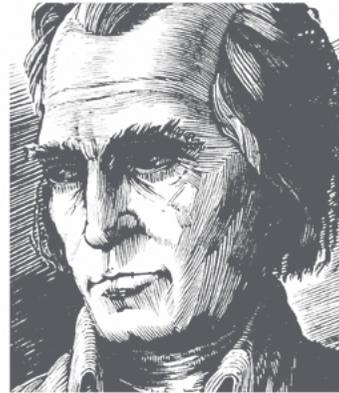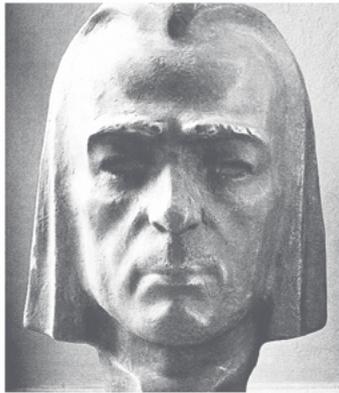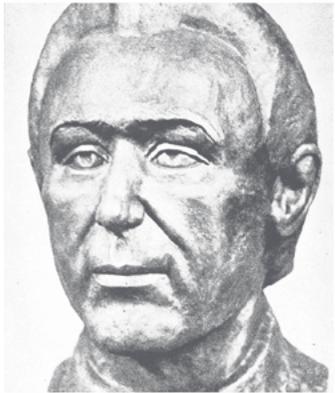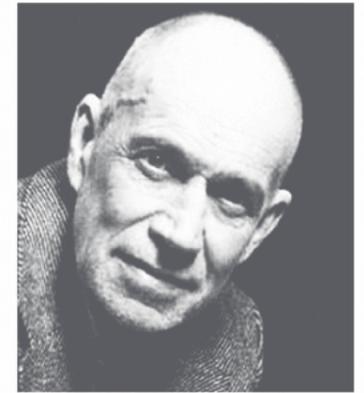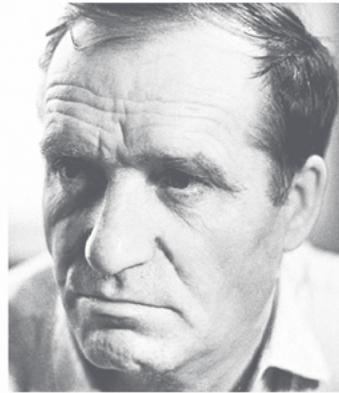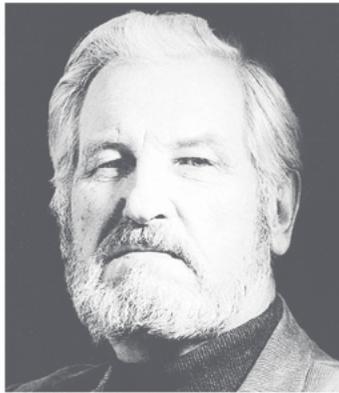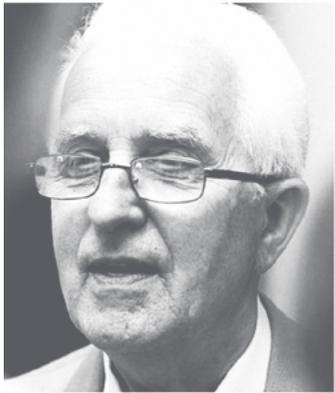
Fig. 12. Various portraits of poet Kristijonas Donelaitis (below) and their authors (above) © Žygimantas Augustinas.

reconstruction. After many months of careful study, my work for the exhibition was finished. Here you can see my version of the reconstructed poet's face, I have painted the final version of it in the style of the 18th Century [Fig. 13]. It looked completely different from all the other portraits [Fig. 12], but I liked it.

The fact that all the portraits of Kristijonas Donelaitis are different made me think about creating a 'scientifically objective' method of portraiture. It was fun. I decided to use only scientific data, with almost no creativity thrown into the mix. During my research and inquiry into the reconstruction process, the science of Craniometry was mentioned many times; it's the scientific method for measuring skulls used in the 19th and early 20th Century. Craniometry, as well as Phrenology, was used to determine people's intellect, their race, or mental abilities. Now, of course, it is considered as pseudo-science and part of the invention of 19th Century scientific racism, but at that time it was treated very seriously. The methods of Craniometry are now used for different purposes (ergonomics, design, etc.), so it turns out that one can take the craniometric measurements of Donelaitis' skull. I decided to use this data to create what you might call a scientifically objective portrait. I made two craniometric portraits: my self-portrait (on the left) and a portrait of the poet [Fig. 14]. You can compare the scientific data of my head with the data of the poet's head. These portraits should provide enough information about two very different persons.
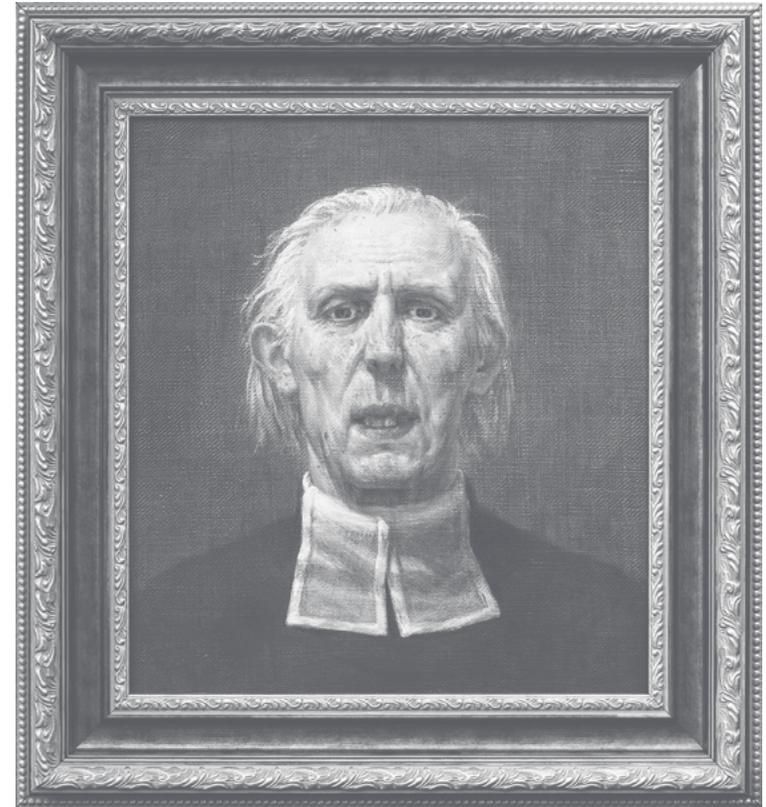
Fig. 13. Žygimantas Augustinas, *K.Donelaitis, face reconstruction from blurred photo of his skull*, 2014, oil, canvas, wooden frame 59 x 55 cm. © Žygimantas Augustinas.

Fig. 14. *Craniometric portraits of Žygimantas Augustinas and K.Donelaitis*, 2014, © Žygimantas Augustinas.

(By the way, this is what the compression of information looks like, and how it works. Unfortunately, I don't like compressed images, music or food. The portraits look to me like they were made in an age when cybernetic machines rule. And of course, I am pretty sure educated people don't believe in scientific objectivity. So I decided to connect the scientific data with my beloved traditional painting that is of course *very* subjective.)

The Ancient Greeks had at least two methods for representing their surroundings. Often synonymous, the first was mimesis *eikastikē*, based on exact measurements, exact proportions, the exact colors of nature, and so on (and often translated as 'semblance-making'); the second was mimesis *phantastikē*, a method based on the artistic imagination (and often translated as 'appearance-making').

Ancient Greece had the same problem that I had – they did not believe in pictures!

As we know from Art History, the artistic imagination won the battle against the exact depiction of reality, but the ethical issue of images lying remain unsolved. I decided to go against the flow, and use mimesis *eikastikē*! I already had the measurements of my and Donelaitis' skulls. Marks of my craniometric portrait were carefully put on canvas and then I painted my self-portrait on to them. What I got is probably a self-portrait in the style of mimesis *eikastikē* [Fig. 15 left image]. Then I also started another self-portrait; this time I marked on canvas the craniometric points of Donelaitis' skull. When they're together, you can see how I would look like if Donelaitis and I exchanged skulls [Fig. 15 right image].
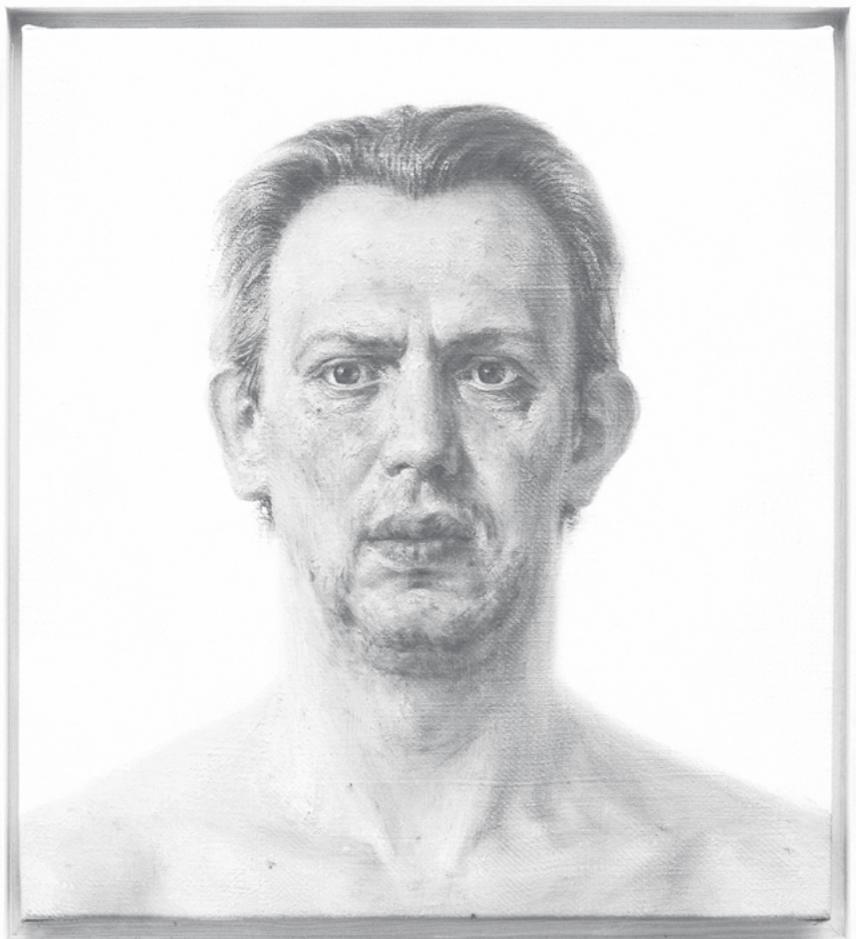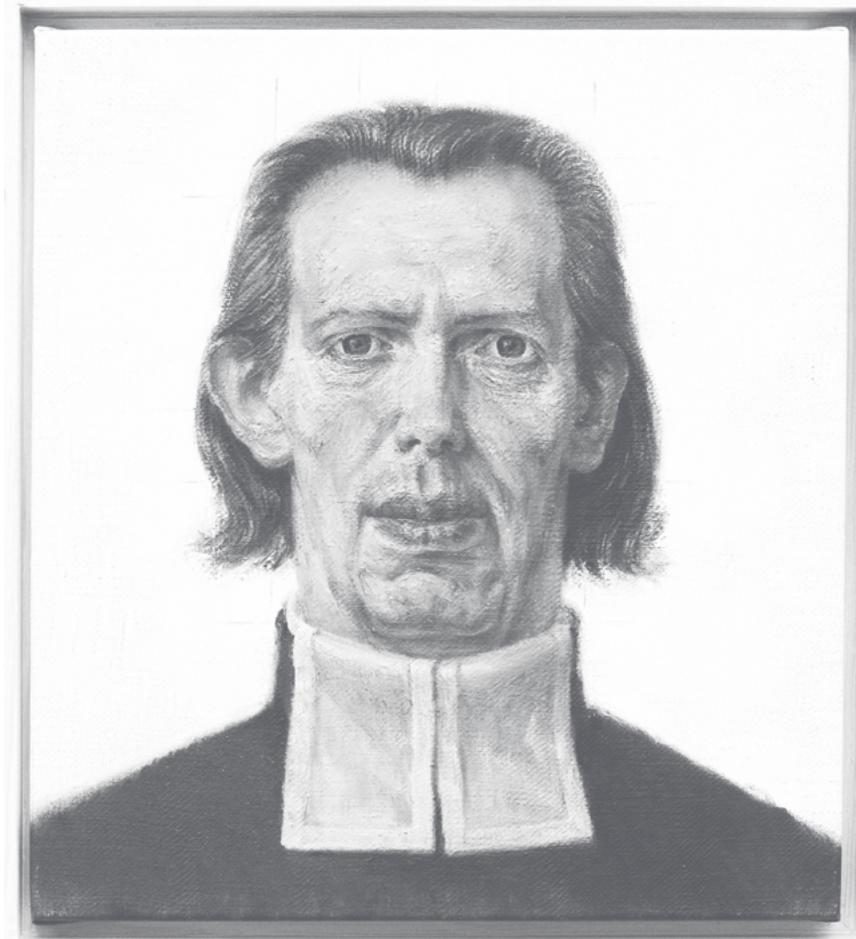
Fig. 15. Žygimantas Augustinas, *Self-portrait* [left] and *Self-portrait with the skull of K.Donelaitis* [right], 2014, oil, canvas, wooden frame 47 x 43 cm (each) © Žygimantas Augustinas.

Understanding that I could use my passion for self-portraiture in such a manner opened up my practice. A boring idea for a boring exhibition dedicated to Kristijonas Donelaitis' 300th anniversary turned into a Ph.D. I had to put my thoughts on paper, write a thesis, and it was not easy, because I don't behave systematically. I was reading lots of books and articles, and my interests were very chaotic: I would be reading Plato's theories of mimesis, and at the same time I'd indulge in the writings of Jacques Rancière and Bruno Latour, studies of classical portraits (along with painting techniques of the 17th Century) and Speculative Realism (Graham Harman et al.).

All this knowledge created a huge chaos in my head. Being in an academic environment, however, forced me to be as clear as I could be. Finally everything connected in a strange way, and the subject of my research ended up sounding something like this:

'The research focuses on the portraits that both continue and question the tradition of Western European portraiture. They are all unified by their quest for realness that is based on the opposition between objectivity and subjectivity. This research aims to analyse experimentally how subjective images function within domains of objectivity and science.'

I think it could be defined as a 'research through art' according to Frayling or mode 3, as Tom put it earlier, but it also has many elements of 'research for art' or mode 2.

I have to say that I never wanted to be an academic, artistic, or scientific researcher. I did all of these things out of curiosity. I think that is the right reason to do any and all of these things. It so happened that my

project became the first Fine Art practice-based Ph.D. defended in Lithuania (2015). Later, I continued to use the methods I had discovered during my studies, and I exhibited work produced in these ways in a number of exhibitions that are often presented to the public in different ways. [Fig. 16].
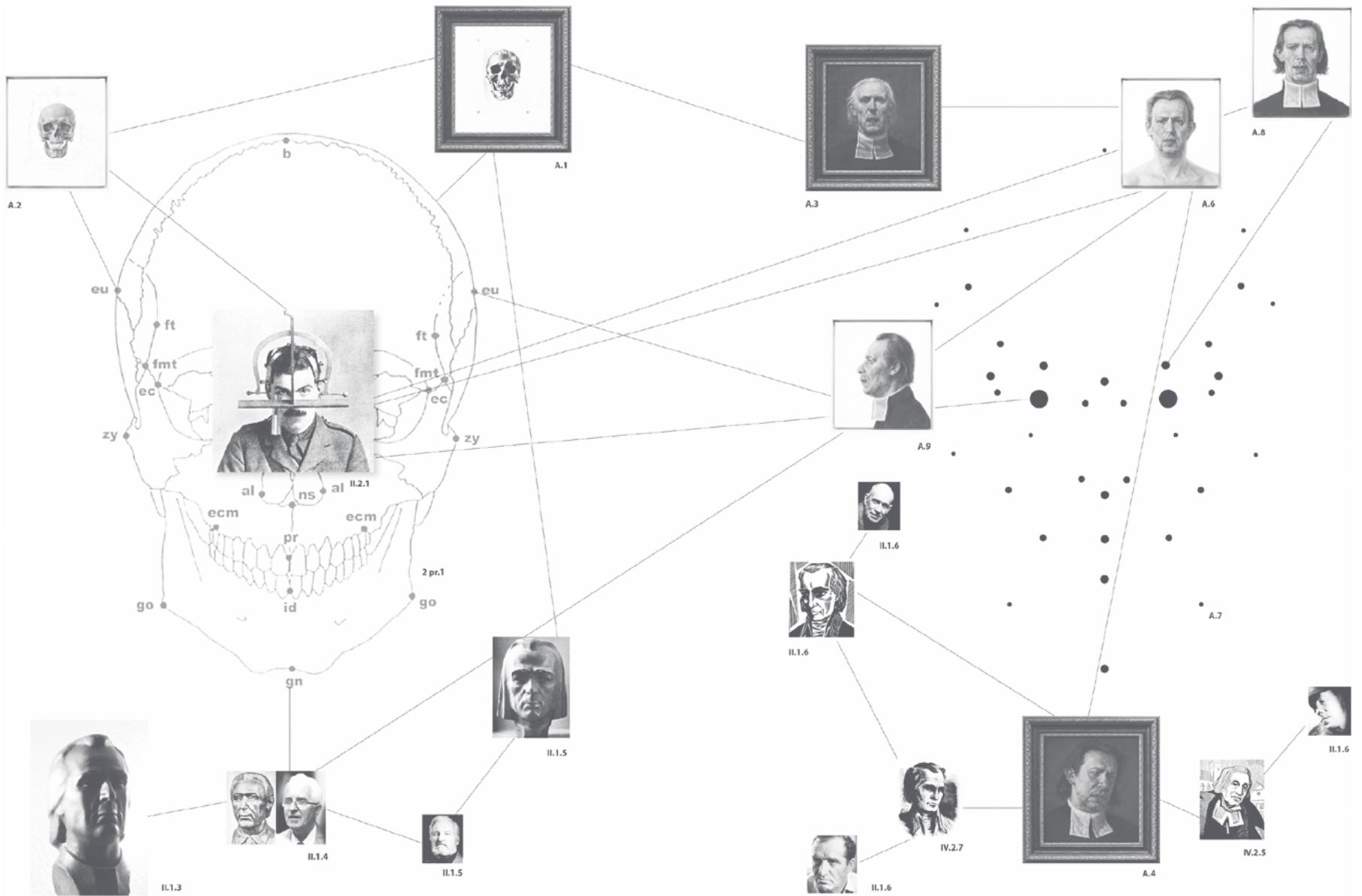
Fig. 16. Žygimantas Augustinas, *The Case of Donelaitis*, 2015, (schemata of research) © Žygimantas Augustinas.

Research as a Field of Disputation Between Different Stakeholders and About Competing Concepts

Vytautas Michelkevičius

Thanks Tom for reminding us of Christopher Frayling's propositions with regards to practice-based research. My first image (Fig. 17) is a useful lay-out of Frayling's thoughts, and I invite you to check out how Lithuanian artists and designers are interpreting this way of doing research *into*, *for*, and *through* art and design.

The title of my presentation is: 'Research' as a Field of Disputation Between Different Stakeholders and About Competing Concepts' developed by assoc. prof. dr. Vytautas Michelkevičius. Or, this is the alternative title: 'How to Save the Researchers From Being Artists and Vice Versa?' This one is presented by the curator Vytautas Michelkevičius. Here's the third title: 'Meninis tyrimas: laisvė tyrėjams, pančiai kūrėjams. Šį
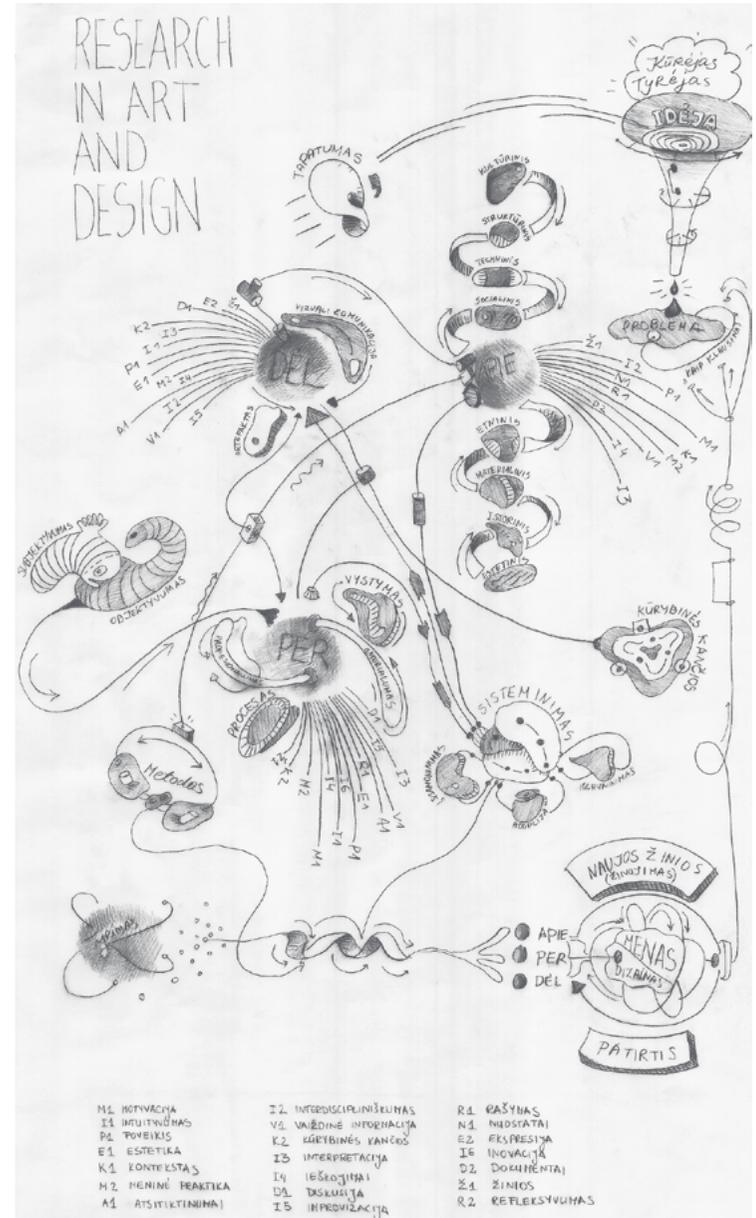
Fig. 17. Visual interpretation of the relationship of art and research by Christopher Frayling (1993). Rokas Cicėnas and Pijus Cicėnas in collaboration with Vytautas Michelkevičius during a workshop. Translation from Lithuanian: 'dėl' = for; 'per' = through; 'apie' = into.

pranešimą pristato tyrėjas dr. Vytautas Michelkevičius'[1] Oh sorry, and the forth title is again in Lithuanian: 'Meniškas tyrimas: laisvė magistrantams, galvos skausmas doktorantams' (dėstytojas doc. Vytautas Michelkevičius)[2] Oh, sorry, one more presentation title: 'Meninis tyrimas: kuratorius – irgi menininkas', pristato kuratorius Vytautas Michelkevičius.[3]

It's difficult to speak about these roles – as academic, teacher/educator, curator – in relation to a concept such as research, which in itself is such a difficult field to discuss. There is an academic version of research, there is an artistic one, a curatorial one, and what else…?

We can speak here about the basic research or fundamental research, also – applied research. And there are a lot of accompanying questions too: about for instance whether artistic research is an applied research or it is a basic, fundamental research? How can we even agree on a concept of research? I think it is impossible. There are hundreds of coexisting and competing concepts of research.

This is one example of how you can make sense of research (Fig. 18) In my opinion, there are at least three different conceptions of artistic research: one exists in academia, in universities; another exists in art academies, and the third exists in art museums and galleries, kunsthales, and contemporary art centres. These three are what I'll discuss here; and it's important to speak about multiple roles and mixed identities between these three.

1 'Artistic Research: Freedom for Researchers, Bonds for Creators', presented by the researcher Dr.Vytautas Michelkevičius.
2   'Artistic Research: Freedom for Postgraduates, Headache for Doctoral Students' (assoc. prof. Vytautas Michelkevičius).
3 'Artistic Research: the Curator is also an Artist', presented by curator Vytautas Michelkevičius.
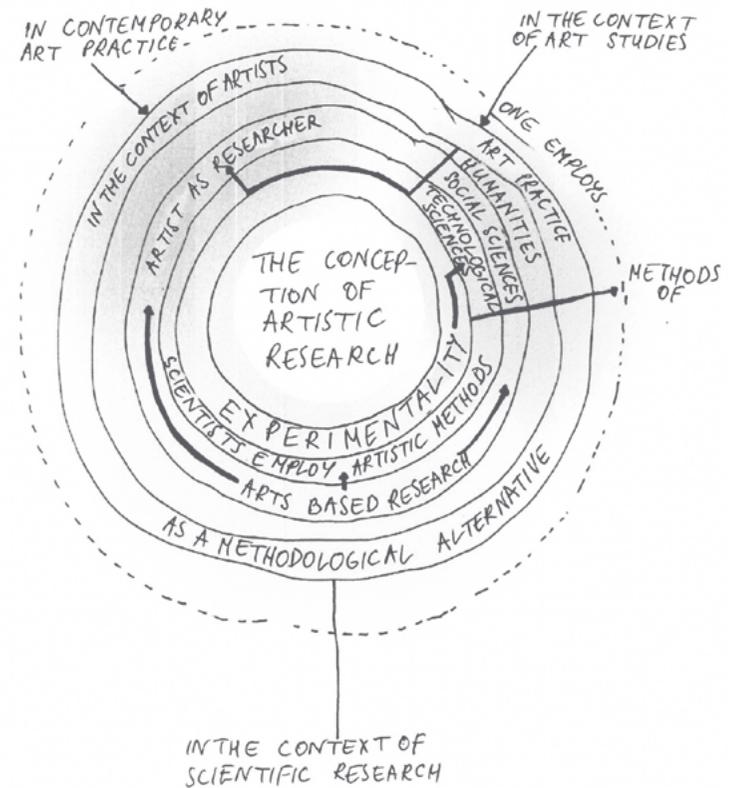
Fig. 18. Conception of artistic research in 3 contexts. Agnė Alesiūtė.[4]

Here (Fig. 19) you can see three different identities of stakeholders in the artistic research business: tyrėjas

(eng. Researcher), kūrėjas (Creator) ir kurėjas*
(neologism for 'curator') (kurėjas yra su žvaigždute, čia
greičiausiai turėtų būti kuratorius). [Eng. Researcher,
creator, and curator*]

It is also important to speak about curating or
curatorial practice as research, which includes laying
out propositions in the space and discourse. Also art
can be considered as research and curating as art,
and of course if your identity is inserted in this visual
formula, then you have an answer that curating is also
a research. In the end you can treat art as research,
curating as art and curating as research.

So it is difficult to define the battlefield of artistic
research where all of us are sitting together. So, of
course research is always based on practice, but there
are different types of practices. Some people in art
academies say that making theory or writing is not
practice, but they are not right, I think.

Also it is very important that language politics is
involved here. As you have seen from my competing
presentation's titles, not everything is readable for
an English-only-speaking audience, but unfortunately
this is the reality. We are situated in a non-native
English-speaking context and most of us are breaking
their (mother) tongues to get the message to the
audience. The majority of the audience is Lithuanian,
so I was wondering whether I should do my
presentation in Lithuanian or English. This also relates
to the aforementioned statement in my slide that the
language of research and its communication is of great
importance. Here I mean academic language. Because
the English language can be a struggle for people, and
academic English is a further struggle for those from
Non-English speaking countries.
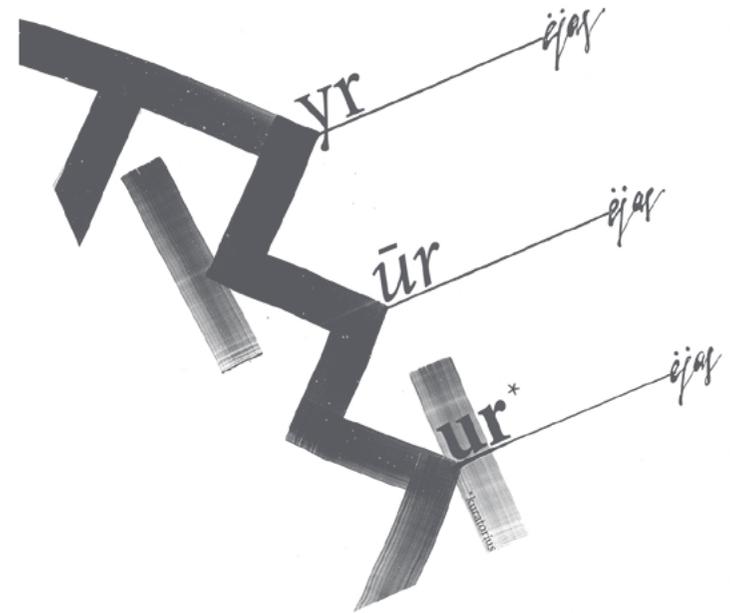
Fig. 19. Transformation
of identities: researcher
(tyrejas), creator
(kurejas), and curator
(kurejas=kuratorius).
Anastasija Sosunova in
collaboration with Vytautas
Michelkevicius.[5]

5   Vytautas Michelkevičius,
    *Mapping Artistic
    Research*, Vilnius
    Academy of Arts Press,
    2018, p. 161.

I think there is big lack of multivocal and multimodal modes of research presentation in contemporary academic traditions, and that's why a lot of art academies are fighting for this. They seek to go through big research networks that dominate the discourse and become visible internationally. And of course there is a big lack of local or rooted definitions of a small 'r', big 'R' in artistic research because most of the researchers are reading and discussing English sources. Small 'r' is a research in an everyday sense, and big 'R' is a Research in academic sense. So there are different natures and meanings of research in various fields and disciplines. There are very different natures of meanings of research in the Lithuanian language too. For example, if you open the Lithuanian Dictionary, you can see that there are seven different meanings for the word 'research', and it starts from 'stengtis suprasti, sužinoti, aiškintis' iki 'išgyventi ir justi', dėl to Lietuvos menininkams ir meno doktorantams yra labai naudinga pasinaudoti lietuviško žodyno reikšmėmis, nes čia [tyrimas-dt] yra labai arti meno sampratos, nes žodis 'tirti' reiškia ir išgyventi, ir pajusti arba įgyti praktinių žinių ir patirties. [Eng. (it starts from) 'To seek to comprehend, to learn and figure out' to 'experience and feel', therefore it is very useful for Lithuanian artists and art doctoral students to use the meanings of the Lithuanian dictionary, because here meanings of research are very close to the concept of art, as the word 'to research' means both to experience, to feel or acquire practical knowledge and to gain experience. 'To seek to comprehend, to learn and figure out' – this is the first meaning of the Lithuanian word 'to research' (Lith. tirti). The second meaning is here: 'to examine scientifically', the third meaning is 'to diagnose a condition or to examine', the fourth meaning is 'to acquire knowledge or to find out and to learn', the fifth one is 'to try, to attempt, and to test', the sixth is 'to acquire practical knowledge

or experience', and one more is 'to experience and to feel'. You can see that this variety of dictionary definitions is helping us to work on the further definition of artistic research.

This (Fig. 20) is a legend of these beautiful drawings made by the contemporary Lithuanian artist Anastasia Sosunova, you can see that these different shapes have different meanings.

And again, if we speak about the local definition of artistic research, so there was a first Vilnius artistic research salon that happened in 2014. We, fifteen artists, curators, academics, and researchers together collected these strange keywords which describe artistic research. Actually we agreed that the knowledge is a by-product of artistic research, and I want to contest this. We came up with a definition of what artistic research is from this local point of view:

> It's a groping or walking with [one's] eyes closed; a process that intuitively and consistently follows the inconsistent traces of an artist, embodies experiences, and employs original or unique methods to create emotional knowing or acquire knowledge as a by-product. The presentation of its results is just as important or even more important than the research process, and it is an epistemological engine for developing the conception of research itself and of human cognition.[6]

Let me ask an important question: what are the products of artistic research? Is it really the case that knowledge is the product? I don't think so. Art is

6 Vytautas Michelkevičius, *Mapping Artistic Research*, Vilnius: Vilnius Academy of Arts Press, 2018, p. 278.

to dry,
to attempt,

to seek to comprehend, to learn, figure out

to test

Fig. 20. Diagram
made of 7 parts with
a legend. Seven
meanings of the
Lithuanian word *tirti*.
Anastasia Sosunova

perception of information,
interpretation
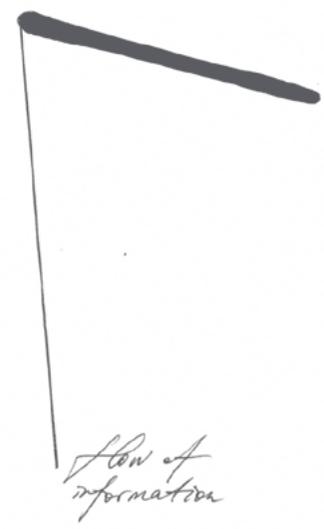
flow of
information
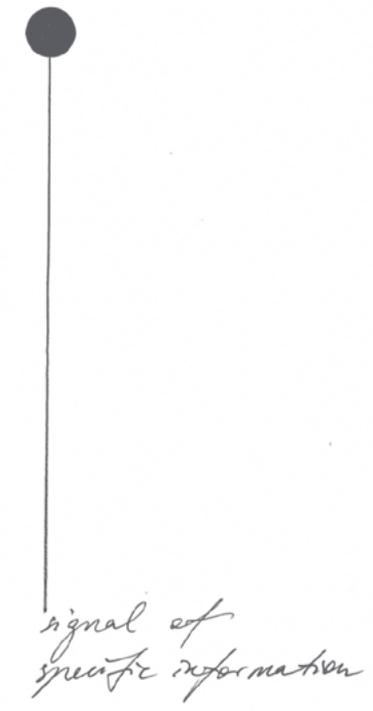
signal of
specific information

sometimes a product of artistic research, sometimes it's a thesis, then it's an article, a book, sometimes it's a symposium, and whatever… but not always knowledge… There have been and are too many discussions about this, and a lot of bureaucrats in education systems try to prove that knowledge is the most important product of artistic research because then it is easier to take account of, account for, and report on. But, for example, if you read the beautiful book by Finish philosopher Yuha Varto entitled *Otherwise than Knowing* (Aalto University, 2013) – it tries to prove why art is not a form of knowledge, that art produces something else other than knowledge and knowing.

And of course it's very important to differentiate between knowledge and knowing. Knowledge is kind of a product, a kind of thing we can grasp and touch, and knowing is more of a process. (In Lithuanian žinios ir žinojimas). This is the most common translation into the Lithuanian language. For example, 'Skirtingi žinojimo būdai' – 'Various modes of knowing'. And what do artists make when they do their artistic research? It's not only knowledge, they also make something. And supratimas, naratyvo kūrimas, interpretacija, rašymas, metafora, išraiška, emocijos, efektai, jausmai – visa tai gali būti sukurta meno disertacijos metu. (Eng. understanding, narration, interpretation, writing, metaphor, expression, emotions, effects, feelings) all this can be created during an art dissertation also!

Academic language or academic writing is always a barrier and struggle for artists. It's clear in many cases. They all struggle and find different ways of communicating their research in a different language. There are a lot of good examples of artists writing

novels and defending them as theses and receiving their doctor of philosophy. For example Katrina Palmer's Royal College of Art 2011 thesis entitled 'Reality Flickers. Writing with Found Objects and Imagined Sculpture', published as the novel *Dark Object* (Bookworks: London: 2010). A second example is David Maroto's *The Artist's Novel: The Novel as a Medium in the Visual Arts*, a two-volume book: Part 1 is a theoretical essay called 'A New Medium'; Part 2 is a novel called *The Fantasy of the Novel* (Mousse Publishing, 2020).

We also can ask a question about who is an academic writer? Is it certain kinds of academics? Or is it social scientists? Humanity scientists/scholars? Or maybe natural scientists? I think most of the artists would agree that they would like to follow natural scientists and their paradigms because their theses are also based on practice (various experiments and fieldwork) and less wordy than Humanities theses.

Again, we should not forget and raise the political question: whose concept of a research are we using and referring to? Is it defined by academics at university or academics at art academies, is it defined by the humanities or social sciences, or natural sciences? Maybe artists should have their own definition of research. However it might be difficult then to find a common ground for discussions with researchers from other fields of inquiry.

Another important question, that always provokes discussions: why do we need a thesis as an instrument to extract knowledge or knowing from an art project? It's a question of committees and supervisors who are not able to see knowledge in the art work and they need some facilitation from the artists with their writing. Or maybe the visual reading skills of evaluators/

examiners are not so great – that's why artists need to write? This relates to the forthcoming discussion about decolonizing (see Book 2 in this Series), because debates of decolonizing draw attention to the dominance of the English language in the realm of research globally; and there's a local context to this of course, since lots of students struggle to write a thesis (as practitioners having to use so much 'theory', so much of which is written in or read by them in English), but, contrary to this, imagine writing a thesis in Lithuania which has 3 million people and maybe 50 of them are interested in your thesis! Why write your PhD thesis in a language as extinct as Lithuanian? Maybe we should just do it in English and then we'd have a much bigger audience!

Artistic research is not only a battlefield but also a playfield until it comes fully institutionalized and taken over by the neoliberal knowledge capitalism and its systems. I think we are still living in this great time when artistic research is a little bit fresh (of course, now it is already in its middle age, like its early 30s), so still artistic research is considered as young (and in Lithuania young artists are considered under 35 and young researchers as well under 35 by official regulations in the ministries). So what shall we do? Maybe in the future artificial intelligence will help us to write a thesis and do artistic research. In 15 or 25 years, I think, we might be released from this heavy task to do research and to write!

Discussion

Marquard Smith (MS):
I have many questions that I'd like to ask, but first I want to know if the presenters have questions for each other? So first I'll open the floor to the contributors, and then, after an initial round of questions, comments, and discussions, I'll invite contributions from the audience.

Lolita Jablonskienė (LJ):
Vytautas, could you be more specific in your statement that artistic research is not a production of knowledge? I just cannot agree with that or perhaps I don't understand the statement because I don't quite understand how you actually describe or define what knowledge is.

Vytautas Michelkevičius (VM):
Yes, it's a very long discussion, worthy of its own three-day long symposium! Artistic research can produce different things that can be still treated as new, let's say, new experiences or new understandings, or some kind of new types of something, so knowledge is only one type of production.

A lot of researchers, from James Elkins to Juha Varto argue that knowledge is too narrow and we can not limit artistic research to knowledge production.

As they said, this is because of the capitalisaton of knowledge in our neo-liberal economy in which capitalism wants to extract use and exchange and surplus value from everything, including knowledge, when it's possible to do so; and the critique of the art school/university sector as neo-liberal would argue that our obsession with focusing on producing knowledge, and justifying and legitimizing practice-based research as knowledge is a direct result of this way of thinking. For me, thought, what's most important is that the artist or designer might produce a new contribution to the field, but the type of contribution and the product can be something other than knowledge or knowing.

LJ:
If I understand you correctly, you're saying that there is a world outside of knowledge or that there are outcomes or results that are outside of knowledge; that there is knowledge or something outside knowledge, but that one can not define or describe what that outside is?

VM:
There are philosophers who can speak to this better than me.

LJ:
Yes, but if there are philosophers who talk about this, so that's already the field of knowledge, right?

VM:

I just wanted to add that there are different types of knowledge, like tacit knowledge, spoken knowledge, embodied knowledge, experiential knowledge, etc., etc. But also that there are different concepts of what can artistic research produce instead of knowledge.

Emily Pringle (EP):

I think we could argue about this all day! I just wonder whether the issue is around the extent to which (and how) knowledge is hierarchical and whether there are certain forms of knowledge that are deemed to have more/less power and value than others? So, for instance, the more theoretical, generalizable knowledge that is ascribed to the sciences seems to be way up in the epistemological hierarchy, whereas more… perhaps tacit, harder-to-describe, experiential, fleeting, momentary types of knowledge that can come through an artistic process might be considered 'lower down' in that hierarchy. Because they don't share those values about that generalizable theoretical knowledge, they're just not seen as being as valuable.

LJ:

I certainly agree. I could give a very simple example; I wonder if this is tied to what you were saying. Last week, because of the opening of a new museum in Vilnius, many international guests were due to arrive, coming from various institutions world-wide. I heard… from one of the colleagues that after meeting with the Chinese delegation, they were really happy about the conversation they'd had, and it struck me that this was because as a curator, as the museum or 'institution' person, I had intuitively prepared a variety of stories about what we do here in the museum, offering accounts relating to curators working in and attentive to the specificity of the country's different regions, be they commercial dealers, public museum professionals,

etc. This is for me an instance of tacit knowledge that I've acquired, almost indirectly, as an institutional curator, how to craft a compelling narrative that's going to convince my visitors/listeners/guests of the point I'm wanting to make.

VM:

Yes, in that sense it's knowledge. I don't think, though, that understanding is knowledge or that effect is knowledge, or the experience. It is something which we can put in a different category. To understand these distinctions better we need to study various sources from John Dewey to Jurgen Habermas to Kathrin Busch, etc.

LJ:

Maybe we should ask the audience, what they think about it?

Audience (Povilas):

I'm here somewhat randomly. I studied architectural history. I think there are institutional/disciplinary backgrounds to keep in mind – the basis of certain kinds of knowledge, and knowledge formations – that are expected to be produced and reproduced, right? Different disciplines, and types of instituton even, carry different kinds of weight when it comes to what we might call, say, traditional and non-traditional forms of knowledge production, or traditional and non-tranditonal forms of research activity or practice. Talking about an artistic contest, or, rather, a context for artistic research and artistic practice, there's much more going on than the mere or sheer extraction of certain kinds of information or data or knowledge, than there woud be in a more scientific context, right? I'm being a little circuitous, but what I'm trying to say is that I think there's an academic expectation (an expectation in academia) to produce certain kinds of knowledge,

and that there are certain mechanisms in place for that to happen, for it to work, for that knowledge to get produced. You know, you interrogate the evidence and so on, and then there's knowledge! Things – other kinds of knowledges – coming our of artistic practice, and what's coming to be known as artistic research, the research activities that feed into and emerge out of artistic practice, are more, for instance, experimental, more performative, which don't necesarily comply with what is expected institutionally in academia. And that's a good thing!

Tom Corby (TC):
I am speaking specifically about the UK context here, and I think that PhD programmes in the UK that I've been involved in have welcomed these other kinds of knowledges – embodied knowledge, tacit knowledge, and so on – and I think that's long been recognized as a valid outcome of what a PhD does. I also agree, maybe the whole concept of knowledge in an art and design context needs to be interrogated, or leavened a bit more to fit the historical, cultural, and practical considerations of what art and design researches are.

I often talk with my PhD students about *the contribution to experience* of the PhD, but still it has to be articulated somehow. We have our exhibitions and we have situations, performances, and so on, and they embody the research and the contribution, but somewhere along the way one has to make that mobile. That has to be documented and discussed, and clarified and articulated.

When I examine PhDs, the very first thing I do is read the Conclusion. I read the Conclusion first, I read it back to front, because I want to know what the 'findings' (or whatever) are, as a way of making sense of what this thing is, and what it amounts to. And then I look at the documentation of the work. I say to myself: 'does this – the findings, the documentation, the thing as a whole – match up somehow?'

For historical context, at Saint Martins there were a series of Matrix conferences, in 1988, 1993, and 1995. You could cut and paste those conferences' conversations to this event. They were the same. It always comes back to this question: what is knowledge? So I'm very sympathetic to these discussions, and we need to keep having them, because no one has yet answered that question sufficiently. Yes, at the time we talked about tacit knowledge, embodied knowledge, embodied knowing, traditions of knowledge and so on. Yes, we do do that in a PhD. Beyond that, what is there to discuss!?!

VM:
I think the idea of a 'contribution to knowledge' is a little bit exclusive and reductive, when we are speaking about artistic production. What allows you to defend the thesis is its disertability; that it has qualities that can be defended, that it will contribute to the field. This is more inclusive for me.

LJ:
What field is that?

VM:
The artist or designer themselves defines the field in which they got the research done.

LJ:
To put it very simply, is it a contribution to the field of research, or to the field of art or design, or to a field of artistic research, if such a field exists? I am repeating here a point I made at the seminar on these issues

at the recent Nida Doctoral School.[1] As somebody working with students conducting practice-based PhD research, I always want myself and my students to be aware of the discourse or context in which the research is placed – is it art history, theory, science, art, etc., especially when I don't feel that the context of artistic research is being utilised. Our art research students don't necessarily know 'artistic research' that's being conducted elsewhere, outside of our own institution. So this question – 'of which context?' – becomes crucial for me. Artistic research seems to be a floating discipline. Of course I'm simplifying and making a value judgement, but what we are all discussing, 'artistic research', as a discourse, within which a variety of artistic research being made nowadays could be compared, does not really exist. We explore it, we map it, we delineate it, we discuss and describe how artistic research should be done, but the theory of artistic research seems to be drawn away from the actual results of artistic research *as practice*.

TC:
I'd like to address this question of context, because for me it's the absolutely most important part of the PhD and if that's wrong, then everything else is wrong. When I talk about context in a PhD, I talk about the context of *art practice*, I *don't* talk about artistic research to a PhD student who's doing work on artistic responses to, for instance, the Anthropocene. I want to see a review of practices and approaches across the entire spectrum of other practices that are looking at the concept of the Anthropocene, and how you make work in the context of and in response to that. I don't want to see a discussion about artistic research necessarily; although that might appear by way of a methodological discussion somewhere later on in the

thesis. If I'm working with a PhD student who has a social design practice, I don't necessarily want to see a discussion of research about social design practice; I want to see a discussion about the broad practices of social design and how their practice, their work, is aligned to, situated within or against those. I think we get into a terrible mess if we set up this distinction between art practice that happens in the academy, and art practice in a real world. I see no distinctions.

EP:
This comes back to the question with which I'm always preoccupied: who is research for? Referring for instance to Tom's case study of his former student Jonathan, would you envisage that that piece of research is informing the field of new materialist theory or artistic practice around new media?

TC:
Jonathan's himself says that his research was about contributing approaches, ideas, and theories to the field of new media art practice. That's where it was located. He located his PhD within the histories, practices, and theories of new media art.

EP:
I think this is different though. You can locate your research within a context, but whether it then goes on to make a difference in that field in another matter! We touched earlier on this idea of a field, so how do you evaluate the quality of a PhD in terms of the change it brings about? I hate the word 'impact', and I avoid it, but what kind of change to the field might come about as a result of the research?

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1   'Naked on the Beach. On the Exposition of Artistic Research'. The 4th intensive Nida Doctoral School, Nida Art Colony of Vilnius Academy of Arts, 2018.

TC:

There's a danger of thinking that PhDs are much more ambitious projects than they are. As an examiner, when I'm examining a PhD, I think all it needs to do is evidence that it's a response to a gap in existing approaches. Impact happens down the line, it happens elsewhere, way beyond what the PhD is. The PhD is a domain-constrained activity that's conducted to achieve a qualification.

EP:

That suggests to me that that PhD research is essentially for the researcher.

TC:

Not at all, it's for the discipline of new media art. It provides insights that help us rethink what a new media art practice is. I think very clearly it does that by getting away from an over-attention to notions of the virtual, especially given the nature of the work's interactivity and its relations to audience, and all this enables us to re-consider what a new media art practice could be, and its articulated as such. So that all contributes to the field by practice, and by thinking about that kind of practice. The use of theory enables him to develop a way of relating his practice to other types of thinking within other disciplines, and I think that's one of the things that can happen in a PhD. Establish a practice, identify a context, and the gap in existing approaches, then discuss and articulate how your work moves that existing context/work on. That's your PhD. It's a straightforward thing; people overcomplicate what a PhD is – as though it's a magnum opus, as though it's Einstein! It's not, it's a qualification. And it can be achieved in a quite straightforward way; albeit through very careful attention to the practice, to rich concepts, exploration and experimentation, your experience, and a sense of critical art practice too.

Žygimantas Augustinas (ŽA):

I think research shouldn't be done for itself. When I hear that we are producing knowledge and we must produce new knowledge, I want to ask if we need new knowledge at all? Why do we need new knowledge? We have a lot of knowledge and information now. Maybe we need experience? Maybe we need other kinds of experiences? I don't know. If we produce new art work, is it knowledge? After a long research, for example, we produce a new installation, a new sculpture, or something else. Is it knowledge? In my opinion, research is nothing special. It is just a part of our work.

LJ:

I absolutely agree that research is integral to any kind of art involvement, be it production, be it art thinking, art writing, etc. But then there has to be a reason or a framework/structure through which somebody doing a research-based practice is given a doctoral degree, right? Research is part of artistic practice; one could argue that it always was present. It's just that with contemporary art practices – perhaps from Conceptualism onwards – they're all research-based arts practices, just more explicitly so. And now, with the PhD in art schools and the notion of practice-based research, some get a qualification and become a doctor in arts, while others do the research they need to do without a qualification.

ŽA:

I can say that the doctoral degree nowadays means almost nothing. My salary is the same. Well, maybe I would not have been invited here, but it changes nothing. I think this is just a game. We play it and enjoy it. And that's it.

LJ:
Well, it's just a machine that keeps itself going, is self-perpetuating. There is an art school, a doctoral programme, an application process, doctoral training, schooling, regulations, and so on. Is that what you mean?

ŽA:
Yes.

Audience:
I'm fascinated that conferences and panels all look the same, they have the same format, the contributor's behaviour is usually the same, etc. There's a certain courage required as a spectators to ask a question – not here, this is very open! But there's usually a requirement to... a will to legitimacy, you have to quote X, Y, and Z, and if the panel member doesn't like your question, they'll try to make you look stupid! It's interesting hearing Tom say that the same questions come up at conferences again and again, year after year, and that they never seem to change! I come from an academic/performance/performing arts background, and here we deploy different modes to present and discuss. If you look at how a dancer presents their research, for instance, they'll present a performance or use a festival format, etc. So my question is: do you think the conference is any longer relevant as the vehicle for discussing what knowledge is or what it could be? Maybe we need to change the way discussions happen as a collective experience?

MS:
The answer is both 'yes' or 'no'! [laughs] I really like conversations, dialogue, participation in an art museum/gallery setting. I think conversations happen in lots of different ways. I've spent years collaborating with cultural organisations like the ICA in London, Tate

and Whitechapel Gallery on 'curating' public events, and I've always found them very interesting ways to stage conversations that are generative – whether that's by way of conferences, workshops, salons, and so on. I think it's vital to be attentive to format and form and the performative as the means by which we might enable conversation to do what it does. I steal a phrase from my old friend Dominic Willsdon, who's now Executive Director of the Institute for Contemporary Art in Richmond, Virginia, and before that was Curator of Education and Public Practice at SFMOMA, and before that, when I met him first, was Curator of Adult Programmes at Tate, and Dominic would speak of 'learning in public' as a way that public discourse might unfold, be performed, or play out in an art museum or gallery that is fundamentally different from the ways that discussion takes place in a university of art school. Learning in public, like this event, is open, you don't know who's in the room, it's not determined in advance, it can lead in unanticipated directions, it can be affirmative, fierce, caring, delightful! Tom Holert, who wrote the article entitled 'Art in the Knowledge-based Polis' that I was discussing with our PhD students at Vilnius Academy of Arts these last two days, and which begins this publication, discusses *talking as methodology*. I am for that.

LJ:
Can I add to what Marq said, partly becaue here I represent the museum which hosts and holds this talk. I want to reflect on my own reasoning for why I and our curators thought it might be interesting to host these doctoral seminars, as discussions in the museum.
Indeed as Marq put it, the first and most obvious reason was to have the discussion on what artistic research is, what its limitations and potential are, and to do so *in public* so that it's not simply a conversation restricted to or closed away in academia (alluding

to the academy as an ivory tower and all the other possible images). Rather in the public museum, the topic can come up for discussion for artists in general, as we've just discussed with Žygimantas, for those who consider their practice as a research-based practice or a practice-based research, but are not necessarily pursuing a degree, as well as art critics for instance who interpret the results (be they experimental, tacit knowledge, etc.) and, likewise, can't help but find it (discussions of practice as well as practice itself) falling into the field of knowledge, articulated as and by way of knowledge systems, writing, and so forth.

So the question – whose knowledge is that, or for whom it is? – is very relevant. Thus the reason for our art museum wanting to hold and host this event because, working at a particular place and at a particular moment, we thought that this time now in Lithuania really urgently needs a more public discussion about what artistic research might be, is, and could be. Because there are positions for or against the idea of artistic research that have emerged today publicly, hopefully the conversation can spread, beyond the art school or the university or us here in this art museum, and then, hopefully, even more widely to other practicing artists and designers, educators, curators, and critics.

MS:
Can I add quickly that I'd always want to make a distinction between, on the one hand, 'artistic research' as a phrase that's becoming used in/ associated with, for instance, particular societies and journals and academics, and where the term is being defined and re-defined and re-defined to the point where it's just become yet another ever-more-anemic philosophical game that, for me, very quickly congeals the term, the field, and the practices that might be (or come to be) associated with the term

and the field. Under such conditions – authoring and authorizing, legitimizing, disciplining, etc. – artistic research becomes completely redundant for me. On the other, there's a far more… generous understanding of 'artistic research' that's more generic and might characterize practitioners and historians/theorists, curators and critics that align themselves with any and all of Frayling's definitions practice-based art research: research *into* art and design, research *through* art and design, and research *for* art and design.

LJ:
Adding to what Marq just said, one can obviously see new hierarchies being constructed, somebody pushing the idea of artistic research as a discipline, or their discipline or… etc.

TC:
I just want to say that I think we need to understand that people doing PhDs in art colleges aren't trying to usurp what art is. I think that's really important to understand. So when I show that mode 1, mode 2, mode 3 of research, that isn't a teleology of what art needs to be in the future, it's just an identification of different and often overlapping and inter-animating approaches. At any given time, one person could do all those things, and maybe within the same space, in fact. Sometimes I come across a certain kind of fear: 'Oh, these people in university are trying to make art be or do this now…', but it's nothing to do with that, it's just a qualification.

Going back, though, to an earlier conversation about doing artistic research in the context of a PhD/ art school, I really do believe it's a transformative experience; for the individual, for their practice, and for their ability to articulate it as a practice, and this is in large part because of the rigor of the PhD and the tools it gave them. And these are also tools to apply

for funding, and for other opportunities, as well as also speaking 'about' and 'on behalf of' the work itself.

I think there are cognitive and analytical skills that come out of the PhD process, and that they're it is really valuable. If you are thinking about a creative progression… what does it give you, other than a certificate that you store at the back of a cupboard? Well, it gives you tools! It gives you a rigor and enables you to also talk across disciplines, talk to scientists because then you can share a research language, so immediately you have these interdisciplinary approaches that opened up for us as well because we've gone through a similar… not the same but a similar research process and that opens doors! And, let's not forget, it's a long game as well. I'll ask you again in ten years time, Žygimantas! [laughs]

ŽA:
I agree with you. My studies have changed me a lot. Now I can articulate my ideas better and apply for funding. But now there are too many practitioners with PhDs; nobody cares if you have it or not. If you can articulate your ideas, then it's OK, but the degree of doctor by your name – it seems to have lost its value, at least it seems so for me.

TC:
As a PhD examiner, a PhD is as difficult to get now as they were when I did them, twenty five years ago. So there may be more people with PhDs, but there are more people in the world! As far as I'm concerned, it's good that there are more people with PhDs because it means that there are more people critically and reflectively engaged with their practice.

Audience (Inesa Brašiškė):
I'm an amateur in this field of artistic research but I've been thinking about it for quite a while now. I have

two questions: if artistic research is not knowledge, then what is it? It seems so often that we're trying to bring the qualities and competencies that are outside art *to* art, but what about pushing the qualities and competencies *of* art *to* the world! And what are, or could these be? (That's my second question.) I'm thinking about what's happening in the world around for instance the epistemological recalibration of the real, post-truth, and so on. So I can think about the idea of fiction, and I can turn to Carrie Lambert-Beatty's text on parafiction and plausibility in art.[2] For me this is a good instance of something that *builds* in or from art, because of art's qualities and competencies as fiction, but it doesn't then just stay in art, it's not hermetic, it can build fact and propose something as a fact but it can also create a platform for change – social, political, even economic. I was also wondering about the need to historicize artistic research, plenty of artists (the Impressionists, Dutch landscape artists, etc.) have done research on for instance how our eyes see the world that is simultaneously research *into* art and design, research *through* art and design, and research *for* art and design.

VM:
Yes, fiction is a really strong method and also outcome of the presentation of artistic research as well. There are a lot of artists with successful PhDs who defend their fiction-based installations including text, visual and audio images. I think it's a very proper and valid method. Further, quite a few academies now are fighting for the idea of recognizing artistic practice as research without a written thesis. The latter is the common language for university scholars but not for the Academy professors and artists. There have already been a few examples of artists defending

2   Carrie Lambert-Beatty, 'Make-Believe: Parafiction and Plausibility', *October* 129, Summer 2009, pp. 51–84.

their work as research (like Simon Goldin (Goldin and Senneby), and their 'Zero Magic: Shifting the Valuation Convention' (Royal Institute of Art, Stockholm, 2016[3]).

EP:
It's really important to think about what those processes of inquiry can give to the person individually, to their field, but also beyond their field. This possibility is vital. Putting research into a book, well, that isn't enough, the point is to make change! This change can happen on so many levels. It's change that happens in the individual, as an artist, it's change for the people with whom you come into contact, those involved in that process of inquiry and its expression, and it's change that happens potentially in the wider world. Hanging on to or grounding the qualities of art making that allow for those changes to happen is really important. And it goes back to what Marq was saying: it's not just about defining those processes of inquiry in terms of what the academy or the institution requires, it's holding on to the fundamentals of an artistic way of thinking and finding out that just mustn't be let go of.

LJ:
I supervise artistic research, and I really struggle with myself: do I try to put the work being done by doctoral students into a certain field or scheme or am I trying to work out of my own discourse thereby expanding my understanding by way of their work? And I have to say – and apologies here to my doctoral students – that I always feel disappointed with myself. I somehow cannot really get to grips with that.
That's why, for instance, when the student produces an artwork… and let's take the issue of fiction for instance… is the artwork in itself a piece of fiction, and then they write a thesis as *another* piece of fiction, I

3   https://lup.lub.lu.se/search/publication/bf76d5d0-3321-41e7-91e8-39690e6d2cc9

don't see value of that. I think that perhaps there is a problem with me (that I don't understand why these two pieces of fiction have to come together), because for me one of them (as fiction) would be already sufficient.

VM:
There is no need to write two fictions. You make the one work that is an integral fiction; it has both practice and theory inside it.

TC:
To respond to the great question from the audience, which was asking the fundamental questions: what are we looking at? What are we dealing with? These are questions for wider art culture, it's not just a PhD question: what are the artistic issues of importance in the world in a time of ecological and political crisis? A really serious crisis. What is the subject for art? And that's not something that happens just in the art or just in the practice-based PhD, that's the big question that art should be asking itself, absolutely. A lot of my PhD students are dealing with that question. Like I said earlier, I think we have to get away from the binary model, that there is art that happens in the PhD, and there is real art that happens in the real art world. I don't think that's useful. I don't subscribe to it because we all have complex identities, and we cycle in and out of different institutional contexts – the 'real' art world is full of institutions, and we play games with them! Successful artists are very adept about playing these games. So I think it's a bigger question about what the subject for art is now. I agree that it should be orientated towards these matters of concern, but then I also accept that I have students coming to me who want to do a practice-based PhD on a subject like, for instance, the question of painting now! They've actually written a really, really interesting thesis, and produced a

really wonderful body of work too, but he's not dealing with the Anthropocene or climate crisis, or post-truth, or economics. It's still a valid piece of work.

Audience (Inesa Brašiškė):
That's why I've mentioned epistemological crisis or recalibration. With regards to artistic research, for me at least it's about methodology, not about certain subjects like the Anthropocene, which is a topic, a subject, an object, right? We're wanting to talk about the toolkit.

MS:
All image making and all writing practices are fictions. Are always already fictions.

Audience (Yates Norton):
It seems to me that a large part of the talks that were given, and the discussion that is happening now, is about research *vis-à-vis* different kinds of institutional forms of support, and the research that can take place in particular institutions whether that's the university or the museum. The way in which both museums and universities are moving, in terms of how they're managed and the activities that can take place within them, they seem to be following quite parallel lines. How then do you make an institution – a museum or a university – a place to experiment or fail, and precisely not be relevant? And to do so without having the pressure to fulfil certain requirements, that the institution is imposes on the practitioner.

EP:
I think that's a really great question. One of the interesting things that we are thinking and talking about at Tate is what makes us different from university? Rather than desperately trying to be like a university, it's recognizing what we are gifted because we don't

have to account for our research practices in the same way. In the United Kingdom for instance the world of higher education is molded by regimes such as the Research Excellence Framework, a system for assessing the 'quality' of research by each individual in each department in each institution in the country, and that determines how much funding institutions will be allocated, but also it can impact on staff promotions, career progression, and so on. As a museum practitioner, I'm *completely unaccountable* on those terms. And my colleagues who work alongside me, similarly. If we're thinking about what practice-based research can be within the museum, we can make it up! We don't have an overarching academic structure to which we're accountable. Historically, though, I think museums have not recognized the benefits of taking advantage of this; they've been too busy trying to think about how they can be credible in relation to an academic model of research. One of the ways that we can liberate the museum as a space for research is to celebrate that openness, and invite people to come in to do research knowing that it can end up any which way. It does require a shift in mindset, though.

LJ:
Thank you for this Emily, I would have answered similarly. Every type of an art institution has its own limitations that have to be rethought and experimented with, but, yes, it also has certain liberties compared with, say, academia.

VM:
Some institutions that provide doctoral degrees for artists are quite flexible and their programmes are treated as long-term residencies. The student gets funding for three or four years and do their own work, and then they prepare an exhibition. It's not only the presentation of their art work, but also articulate and

defend their arguments. The written thesis is not the most important, but I think that documentation of the disputation is very important. Every defense of an artistic PhD has to have this documentation.

MS:
You mentioned failure, Yates, and I'd like to pick up on that; I think it's a really good example that brings together many of our discussions around knowledge, practice-based research, instrumentalisation, and something other than knowledge. When one talks about how the institution is failing to support certain kinds of practices or activities, you used the examples of experimentation and failure, and I'd say that art schools are actually incredibly good at creating conditions and possibility for experimentation. And failure falls within the purview of experimentation, of the experiment. In science as in the arts and design, failure (a failed experiment for instance) is the basis for the next experiment, for making progress. (Failure is an integral part of the art school ethos of thinking-through-making, so one needs to understand the machinery of that.) An idea (like experimentation, like failure) can percolate away for hundreds of years. Then, though, it can become too mainstream, too fashionable, our minds become over-saturated with the idea, and it becomes ubiquitous. And what then for such ideas? Even when they're the basis of a practice, ways of doing, fundamental to it! Can they be walked back, re-claimed, or is it over for them in terms of their capacity to be critical, radical, generative? At the same time, the idea of failure is a very good instance, I think, of what Vytautas is getting at when he discusses something other than knowledge, something that's about knowing, or not knowing, or non-knowledge, and the possibilities therein; failure, like experimentation continues, for me at least, to be one of the many ideas that we can think about, think with, think through.

Audience (Povilas):
I have what might be a counter-argument against this idea of research in art, and its possible impact, and how an individual might contribute by way of a university compared to an institution like Tate. I'm thinking about shared knowledges, where art meets science, for instance. So I'm thinking of Lawrence Abu Hamdan, an artist/academic with a PhD in forensic architecture from Goldsmiths. He testified in a court case that convicted two Israeli soldiers of murdering two Palestinian teenagers, and his forensic architecture work was central to the court case. It's an exciting example, a departure for the field of artistic research, and it's significant that it's not just art, but it matters that we keep it in art. Art research can have actual importance in society, and it can be political, of course.

MS:
This seems like a very positive note on which to end, thanks to our contributors, and to our audience for the conversation.

Afterword: 'Art in the Knowledge—based Polis', ten years on

Tom Holert

When the article 'Art in the Knowledge-based Polis' was conceived and written in late 2008, I was a neophyte who had just entered the field of artistic research or practice-based research. Asked to conceptualize, develop and eventually implement a PhD for practicing artists at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, where I was teaching at the time, I was catapulted into the discourse and the institutional set-up that had begun to unfold around these terms from the late 1990s onwards. The Vienna 'PhD in Practice', a four-year low residency program that Renate Lorenz, Johanna Schaffer and I started in 2009/2010, resulted from this sudden encounter with an, in hindsight, quite astounding conjuncture. The program had seen terrific participants and people graduating since, and is still very much alive today (since 2011-2012 headed by Renate Lorenz and Anette Baldauf).

The curricular design of the 'PhD in Practice' reflected – at least that is what we were trying to achieve – a critical detachment from the institutional desires to align artistic practice with academic notions of research, accountability, and manageability. We insisted on the historical and ongoing struggles to conceive of art not as a removed, aloof, superior area of production but as a kind of epistemic labour firmly entrenched in global capitalist relations of production. Questions of an alleged 'otherness' of artistic knowledge were thus somewhat placed at the side, as they simply did not compel us as being particularly helpful in developing a materialist understanding of the function and potential of art in the knowledge-based polis. This stance of course did not make the program's operation within the frameworks of the Academy and the Austrian system of research funding (which had just begun to acknowledge the existence of practice-based research in the arts and was eager to demonstrate its advanced status *vis-à-vis* other European countries) particularly easy. Even better, I presume.

My sojourn in the institutional realities of artistic research may have been short lived, and my decision to leave a steady job in academia (for various reasons largely unconnected to these realities) is a different matter altogether. However, I have been following the developments from an observer's distance ever since, realizing how different things look when watched from outside of the structural and political conditions of an art school and the bureaucracy of running (and constantly defending and expanding) a program of artistic research amid them.

Re-reading the 2009 article in the context of the papers and transcriptions generated by the Vilnius seminar and discussions, I am struck by the extent to

which the terms of the debate and the questions raised appear similar to what I remember from the conferences and meetings held in the still emerging environment of organising and facilitating practice-based research and their respective academic degrees and entitlements ten years ago. And yet, the situation of course is quite different. On the one hand, there is an increased sense of impatience, saturation and, at times, outright fatigue with regard to the esthetico-epistemological and procedural conundrums created by the implication of 'research' into art education in art schools and museums that I glean from the Vilnius proceedings and that was palpable back then already, albeit to a lesser degree. On the other hand, the urgency of making a case for (and of) contemporary art and education as to be articulated in strong terms of research seems to have become even more virulent today.

In 2008/2009 I had been interested in the issue partly due to a (art) historical perspective. I was advocating work on a genealogy of the 'research' trope in modernist and late modernist discourses, arguing for a different narrative that would ground the current conjuncture of artistic research in strategic, and often ironic epistemic politics of art practitioners who were looking for ways to contextualize what they were doing differently, rather than in the conceits of academic policies and educational administration. Actually, I tried to trace a Rancièrean division of politics and police, thus making a case for maintaining the idea that claims to research in the arts are in fact expressions of a disruptive politics of redistributing the sensible.

Rather than surrendering to the protocols of the research university that lurks behind even the most well-intended incursions into artistic research, the objective was a radical critique of the application of 'research'

to art as a technology of control. The research trope could and should become useful in other, deviating ways, thus pertaining to critical developments in the area of arts and humanities and of science and knowledge production more generally.

Inesa Brašiškė made an interesting intervention from the audience to the event at the National Gallery of Art in Vilnius by shifting the focus away from well rehearsed but ultimately, I'd argue, erring questions of philosophical definitions of knowledge and knowing or of artistic PhD's relevance for the art field outside the institutions (and thus for social change) by addressing the 'epistemological crisis' of the current historical moment. Pavlovskaitė's term is 'recalibration', and I agree that the dramatic disruption of the epistemic landscape purveyed by the Far Right, but also by centrist neoliberal forces (building on conservative/Republicans' systematic denigration of scientific research and in particular the humanities for several decades) has effectively recalibrated the entire field of knowledge. It has also rendered necessary the recalibration of the terms of debate around contemporary art and its relation to a politics of truth, to the function of fiction, and to its own, potential contribution to the kind of radical inquiry and militant co-research required to cope with said crisis.

Instead of normalizing artistic research to become the expected, default mode of operating as an artist with an interest in critical theory, history, cultural studies, natural sciences, forensic investigation, or activist political organising, it should constantly be denaturalized and not taken for granted. Likewise, it should not be considered as something extraordinary that is only accessible through expensive and extensive studies and thus restricted to positionalities of

privilege. In order to become something truly liberating, world-making, and undoing, artistic research has to be wrested from the grasp of academic exclusivity and become an expressly popular endeavour of an epistemic politics relentlessly targeting the policing of knowledge.

Biographical notes

Žygimantas Augustinas

Dr Žygimantas Augustinas is an artist and Associate Professor at Vilnius Academy of Arts, Lithuania. His artworks are usually related to the representation of the human body and perception of physical and psychological realities. The main sources of inspiration are his own body and various texts. An example could be the portrait of Oskar, the literary hero of the Günter Grass book *Tin Drum* (second prize award winner in BP portrait awards, National Portrait Gallery, London, 2002). Bigger projects, sponsored by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania and Council for Culture: 'Social portrait' (2003), 'Extreme Sports 3000' (2009), 'IN' (2016) tell true and fictional stories about people, their passions and beliefs. Augustinas has won many awards for artistic creation, amongst them the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Award (Canada, 2002) and the professional art debut prize of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania (2004). His works have been acquired by the Lewben Foundation of Art, the Modern Art Museum of Lithuania, and many private collectors. In addition to making art, Augustinas has been teaching since 2006 at Vilnius Academy of Arts. He also reads public lectures, organizes workshops, and participates in conferences in Lithuania and internationally. The main topics of these presentations are painting, drawing, and a picture's relations to reality and thinking, specifically of XVI-XVII century Western European painting-drawing and self-portrait in contemporary art.

Tom Corby

Dr Tom Corby is Professor of Interdisciplinary Art and Associate Dean Research at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London. He studied Fine Art at Chelsea College of Art in 1991, returning to complete a PhD in 2000. He is an artist and writer interested in issues around climate, data and systems and is co-founder and director of the 'Experiments in Art and Science' [EAS] research group with Neal White and Nicola Triscott. His artwork (in collaboration with Gavin Baily) has been exhibited worldwide at numerous festivals, galleries and museums including at the Institute of Contemporary Arts; Victoria & Albert Museum; Tate Online; Arts Catalyst Project Space; Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography; Transmediale; ZKM, ISEA; Ars Electronica; the Madrid Art Fair, and the Intercommunication Centre Tokyo (ICC) amongst many others.

Tom Holert

Dr Tom Holert works as an art historian and cultural critic in Berlin. In 2015, he co-founded the Harun Farocki Institut. He curated *Neolithic Childhood: Art in a False Present, c. 1930* at HKW, Berlin (2018, with Anselm Franke). Currently, he is researching and developing *Education Shock: Learning, Politics, and Architecture in the 1960s and '70s*, a collaborative research project involving an exhibition at HKW (to open in September 2020). Holert has been a frequent contributor and collaborator of *e-flux journal* since 2009 (most recently with the conference 'Navigation Beyond Vision', a co-production of *e-flux* and the Harun Farocki Institut). His book *Knowledge beside Itself. Contemporary Art's Epistemic Politics* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2020) developed out of his earlier institutional involvement with the field of artistic research and practice-based PhDs.

Lolita Jablonskienė

Dr Lolita Jablonskienė is a contemporary art critic and curator based in Vilnius. From 2000 she headed the Contemporary Art Information Center (CAIC), which spun off from the Soros Foundation, and joined the Lithuanian Art Museum to work for Vilnius' forthcoming National Gallery of Art (opened in 2009). In 2002 she was appointed Chief Curator of the National Gallery. Jablonskiene was the Commissioner of the Lithuanian pavilions at the Venice Biennial in 1999 and 2005. She has curated contemporary art exhibitions in her home country and abroad, contributed art critical texts to Lithuanian and foreign press, and is Associate Professor at the Vilnius Academy of Arts. She is currently writing a book on the development of contemporary art practices in Lithuania during the 1990s.

Vytautas Michelkevičius

Dr Vytautas Michelkevičius (Vilnius, LT) is a curator, researcher and Associate Professor whose focus has gradually shifted from photography in an expanded field to media art & theory and more recently to artistic research in academia and beyond. He is teaching art practice & theory BA, MA and DA/PhD students in Vilnius Academy of Arts and served as Artistic Director of Nida Art Colony (2010-2019). Since 2019 he has been the the Head of Photography and Media Art Department and Doctoral Programme in Fine Arts in the same Academy. He has curated exhibitions of artistic research in various situations, among them the Lithuanian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. He has edited and authored more than 10 books on art and media. https://vilnius.academia.edu/VytautasMichelkevicius

Ieva Pleikienė

Dr Ieva Pleikienė is an art researcher. In 1995 she graduated from Vilnius Academy of Arts (VAA) with an MA in Art History and Criticism, and in 2005 defended her PhD thesis in Art History under the title 'Lithuanian Small Graphics. Forms of Artistic Communication by Mail (1960-1990)'. Since 1995 she has been working at the Institute of Art Research in VAA. From 2005 to 2010 and from 2015 to 2019 Ieva held the position as Head of the Doctoral Studies Department of the Academy. Since 2019 she has been a Pro-Rector of Studies at VAA. She is a member of the Lithuanian Society of Art Historians, and her major research interests, on which she's published widely, are Lithuanian art of the Soviet period, marginal art phenomena, and art and politics.

Emily Pringle

Dr Emily Pringle is Head of Research at Tate, London. She trained as a painter and worked for several years as an artist, educator, researcher and programmer. In 2010 she joined Tate as Head of Learning Practice and Research. In that role she convened the Tate Research Centre: Learning and researched and wrote specifically on the role of artists in museum education and creative learning more broadly. In 2017 Emily was awarded an AHRC Leadership Fellowship to examine research practices in art museums, the results of which are now published as *Rethinking Research in the Art Museum* (London, Routledge, 2020).

Marquard Smith

Dr Marquard Smith is Professor of Artistic Research at Vilnius Academy of Arts, Lithuania, and Programme Leader of the MA Museums & Galleries in Education at UCL, London. Marq is Founder and Editor-in-Chief of *Journal of Visual Culture*, a Board member of Arts Catalyst, and of the Live Art Development Agency. As a curator, his recent exhibition include 'How to Construct a Time Machine' (MK Gallery), 'Solitary Pleasures' (Freud Museum), and 'Do the Right Thing' (Titanikas Gallery, Vilnius). As a writer, Marq has published widely on arts education, research-as-praxis, and the archival impulse, as well as on the art, visual, material, and immaterial culture of 'the human' in capitalist modernity.

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